



The Apostolic Journey of Pope Leo XIV

6-12 June 2026



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Context

The Apostolic Journey of Pope Leo XIV

Thanks to our **Smart Steps** platform for crowd mobility analysis, we have been able to analyse the **Apostolic Journey of Pope Leo XIV to Spain**, which took place between **6 and 12 June 2026** in Madrid, Barcelona, and the Canary Islands.

The Apostolic Visit, under the motto *"Lift up your eyes"*, brought together worshippers and visitors for more than **20 official events** spread over seven days, making it one of the most significant events in terms of crowd mobility held in Spain in recent years.

The analysis enables an assessment of both the number of visitors attending the various events and days, and their profiles in terms of origin, providing a detailed insight into the **behaviour and composition of the audience**.

DATE	CITY	DAY
Saturday 6 June	Madrid	Day 1
Sunday 7 June	Madrid	Day 2
Monday 8 June	Madrid	Day 3
Tuesday 9 June	Madrid + Barcelona	Day 4
Wednesday 10 June	Barcelona	Day 5
Thursday 11 June	Canary Islands	Day 6
Friday 12 June	Canary Islands	Day 7



Main figures of the trip

Trends that we identified during the Pope's visit

Most relevant findings recorded between 6 and 12 June 2026:

EVENT	VISITORS	MOVILITY
Madrid · Vigil (6 June)	+250% Lima Square · Domestic visitor numbers almost triple (12% → 32%) · The US leads the way in international visitors	Night-time movement: Ciudad Jardín ×12.8 · Fontarrón ×10.5 at 7 km · The vigil holds participants in Madrid
Madrid · Mass at Cibeles (7 June)	Cibeles and surrounding area ×3 compared to the norm · Residents predominate · International visitor numbers fall	Sharp increase in Retiro: Fuente del Berro ×27 · Recoletos ×25 · After mass, participants spread out across the parks
Barcelona · Lluís Companys Vigil (9 June)	++126% Montjuïc · Midday footfall falls by 22% → 13% · The US leads the way, and Argentina joins the top ranks	Hostafrancas ×47 · Vila de Gràcia ×41 · Sarrià ×41 (night 22:00–24:00)
Barcelona · Mass at the Sagrada Família (10 June)	Midday activity falls by 26% → 16% · The most marked change of the entire visit	Barri Gòtic ×97 domestic visitors · Pilgrims head to the historic centre after Mass
Gran Canaria · Stadium (11 June)	+50% stadium · Midday activity falls by 21% → 14% · Madrid is the top-ranked source of domestic visitors (44%) · The US is almost ×3	Exodus at 22h: Las Palmas city centre ×4.3 · Tamaraceite ×3.4 · Isleta-Puerto ×3.3
Tenerife · Mass at the Port (12 June)	+261% on the esplanade · Residents and regional visitors quadruple their numbers · Las Palmas is the top-ranked source of domestic visitors (45%)	Gradual dispersal: Puerto de la Cruz ×2.3 late afternoon–evening · La Laguna ×1.46

Trends we identified during the Pope's visit

Most relevant findings recorded between 6 and 12 June:



DAILY VISITOR NUMBERS

Madrid attracts the largest crowds of the entire tour.
All events exceed the area's usual average attendance by 50%.



VISITORS BY ORIGIN

The visitor profile is predominantly domestic and resident. Local visitors and those from the rest of Spain account for more than 70 per cent of attendance at all the events.



VISITORS BY NATIONALITY

The US tops the list of foreign visitors at 4 of the 6 events. However, its share is relatively small compared with the national profile.



VISITORS BY TIME SLOT

Midday attendance is down across all events compared with the reference days. The day's attendance shifts towards the time slot in which the event takes place: late afternoon and evening for the vigils, and morning for the masses.



The tour by cities

Madrid



Official programme – Madrid

Saturday 6, Sunday 7, Monday 8 and Tuesday 9 June 2026

SATURDAY 6 JUNE

- 10:30 Arrival at Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport. (Official reception.)
- 11:30 Welcome ceremony at the Royal Palace
- 12:00 Visit to the King and Queen of Spain
- 12:30 First official address to the authorities and the diplomatic corps
- 18:00 Visit to the CEDIA 24 Horas social project (Caritas Diocesana de Madrid)
- 20:30 Prayer vigil with young people (Lima Square)

SUNDAY JUNE 7

- 10:00 Holy Mass and Corpus Christi Procession (Cibeles Square)
- 16:30 Private gathering of the Order of St Augustine (Movistar Arena)
- 18:00 "Tejer Redes" cultural event

MONDAY JUNE 8

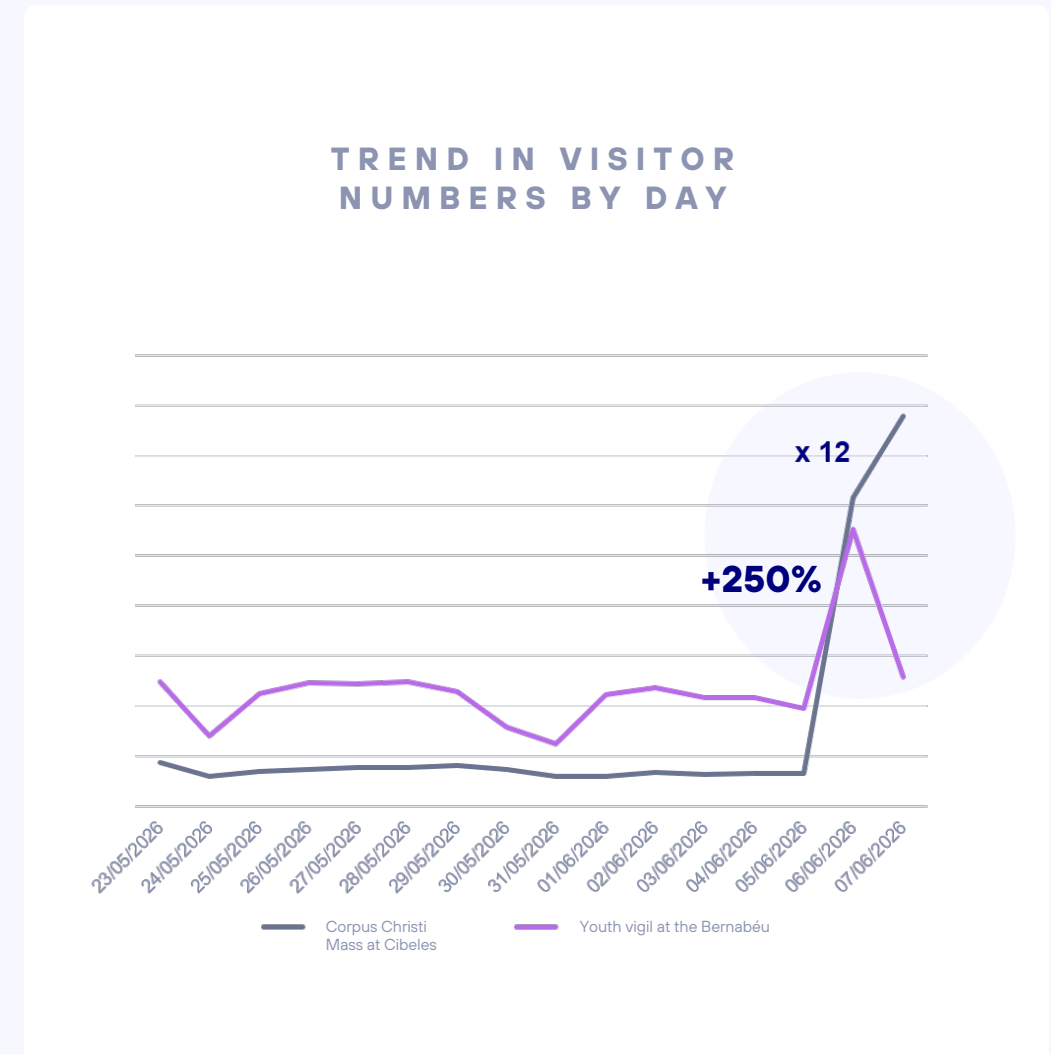
- 09:30 Meeting with the Prime Minister (Apostolic Nunciature)
- 10:30 Meeting with Spanish parliamentarians (Congress of Deputies)
- 11:30 Visit to the Spanish Episcopal Conference (Lunch with the bishops of Spain)
- 18:00 Prayer and tribute to Our Lady of Almudena (Almudena Cathedral)
- 19:00 Mass gathering with the diocesan community (Santiago Bernabéu Stadium)

TUESDAY JUNE 9

- 10:20 Volunteers' meeting (Hall 3, IFEMA)
- 11:10 Departure for Barcelona

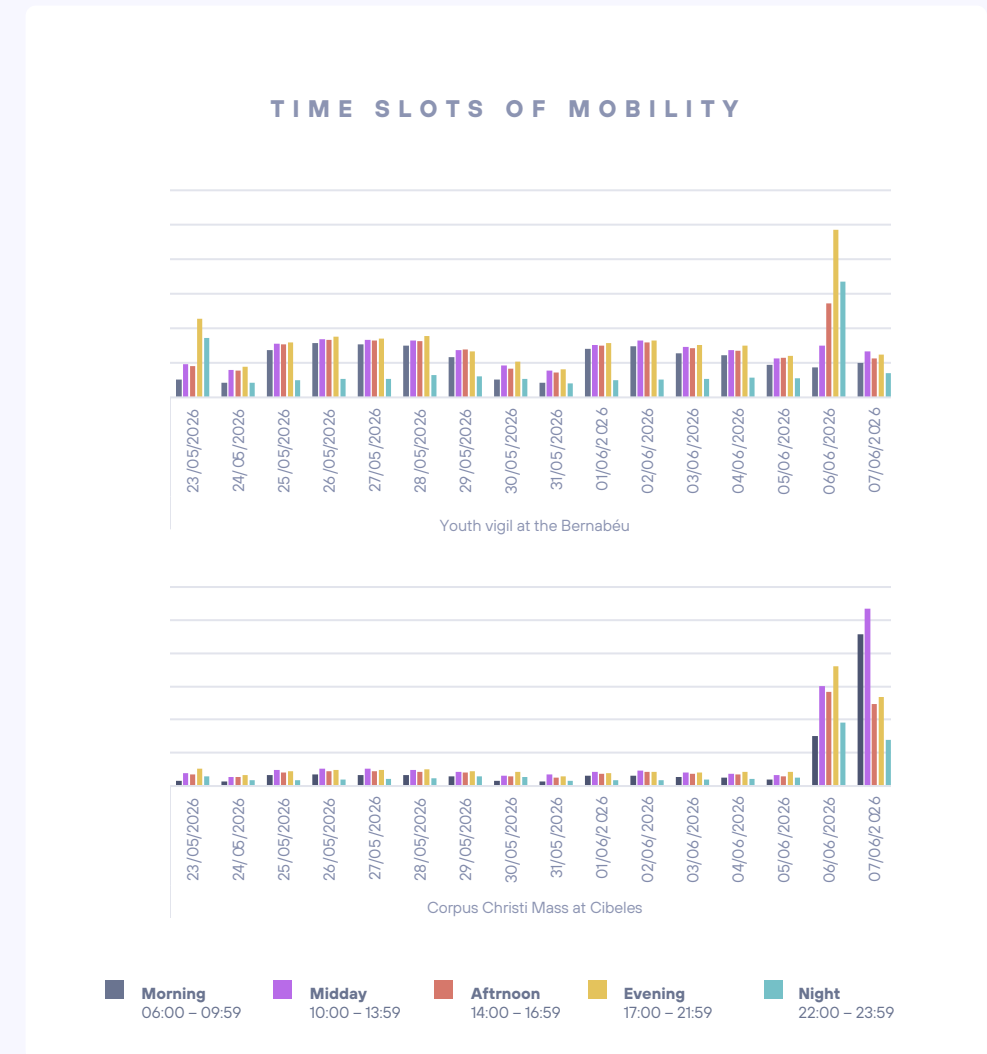
The trend in visitor numbers by day

- Vigil · Saturday 6 June:** Lima Square saw its usual Saturday footfall increase more than threefold, with a rise of over **+250%** compared with the standard. The event generated an absolutely extraordinary influx of people to the area, which normally sees residential and sports-related footfall centred around the Bernabéu. The opening of access points at 16:00 and the Pope's arrival at 21:00 marked the two busiest moments of the day.
- The Mass at Cibeles was the most remarkable event of the entire visit: the area recorded an increase of more than **+1,100%** on its usual Sunday activity, with footfall more than twelve times its normal rate. An area with low pedestrian density on a typical Sunday absorbed the largest gathering in Spain in over a decade. The impact also extended to the entire central axis of Madrid, with other surrounding areas — such as the Congreso-Colón corridor — also recording increases of almost **+100%**.



Mobility patterns across time periods

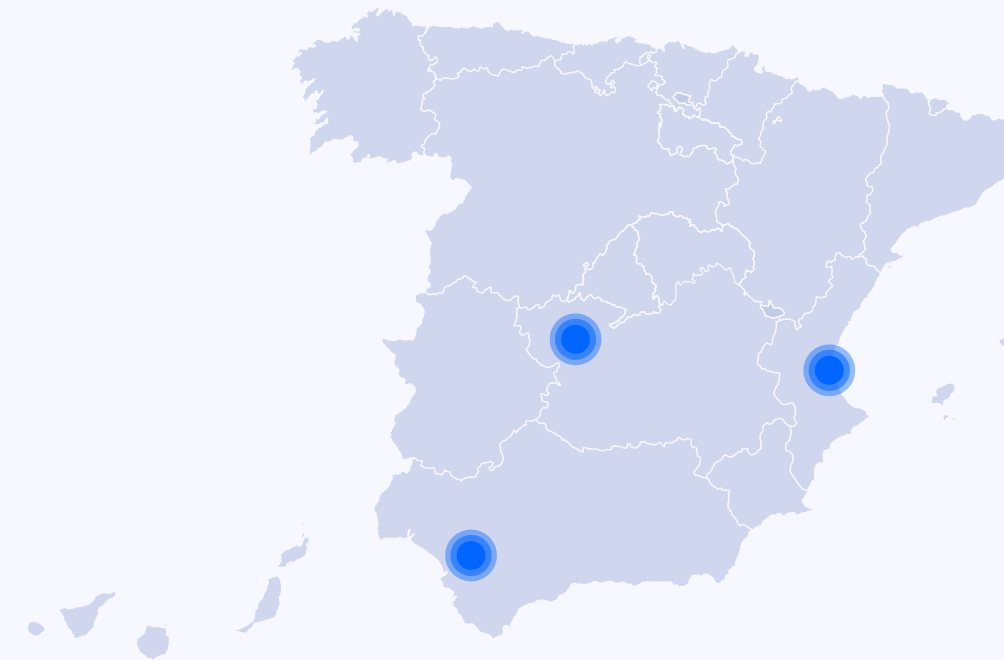
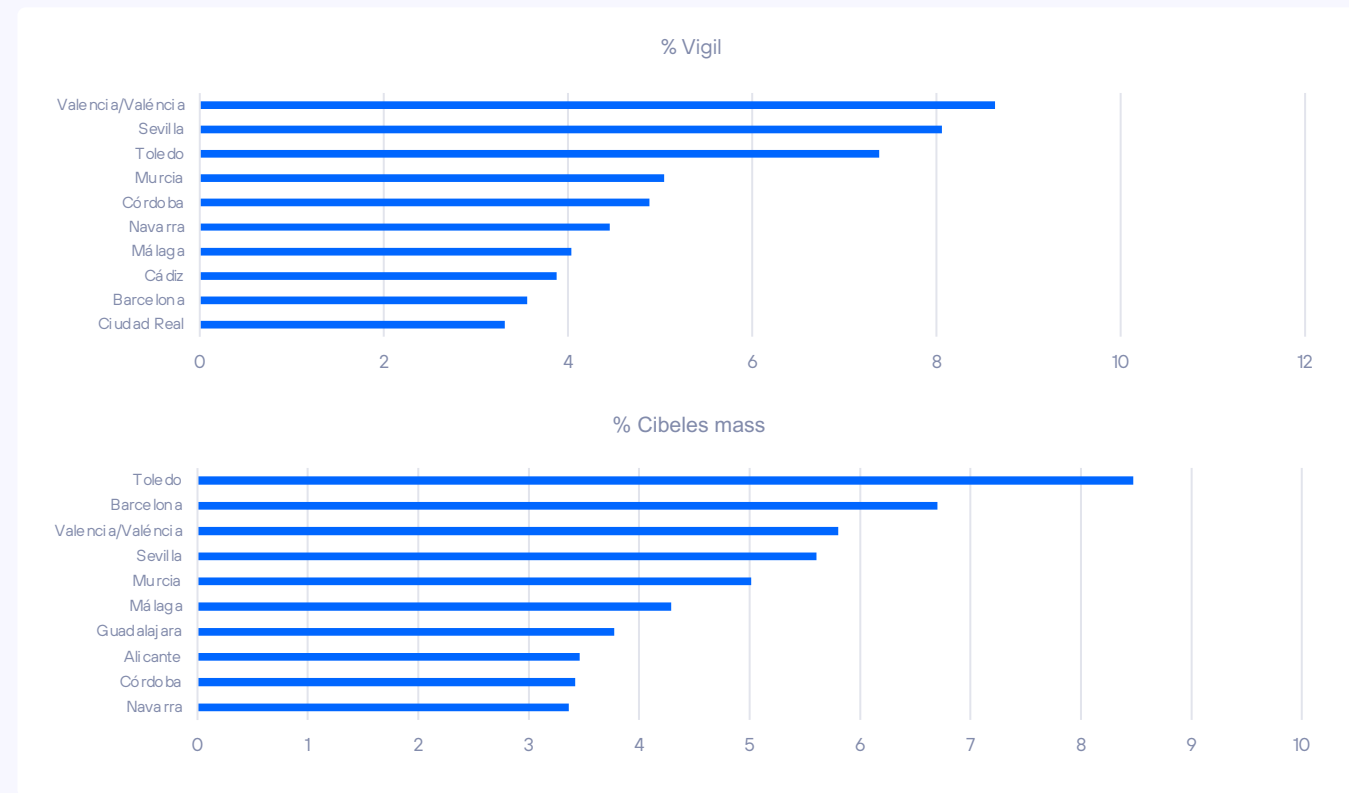
- Vigil (day 6):** The hourly pattern was completely reversed compared to a normal Saturday. The late afternoon and evening – the period from when the access points opened (16:00) until the Pope's arrival (20:30) – saw the highest volume of the day, well above the usual levels. The night, which on a typical Saturday accounts for only a marginal proportion of the total, saw a significant increase, becoming the second busiest period, as it covered the post-vigil exodus until 23:15.
- Cibeles Mass (day 7):** The morning event generated an unusual concentration of footfall for a Sunday. The early hours and the first part of the morning saw unusually high activity, indicating that thousands of pilgrims had already gathered around Cibeles several hours before the beginning of the event (10.00). The morning period saw the highest absolute concentration of traffic, with a gradual decline throughout the day as the area cleared.



- Chart showing the evolution of visitors by time slot

Participants' origins

The participants' regions of origin were analysed. The most common places of origin were Valencia, Seville, and Toledo.

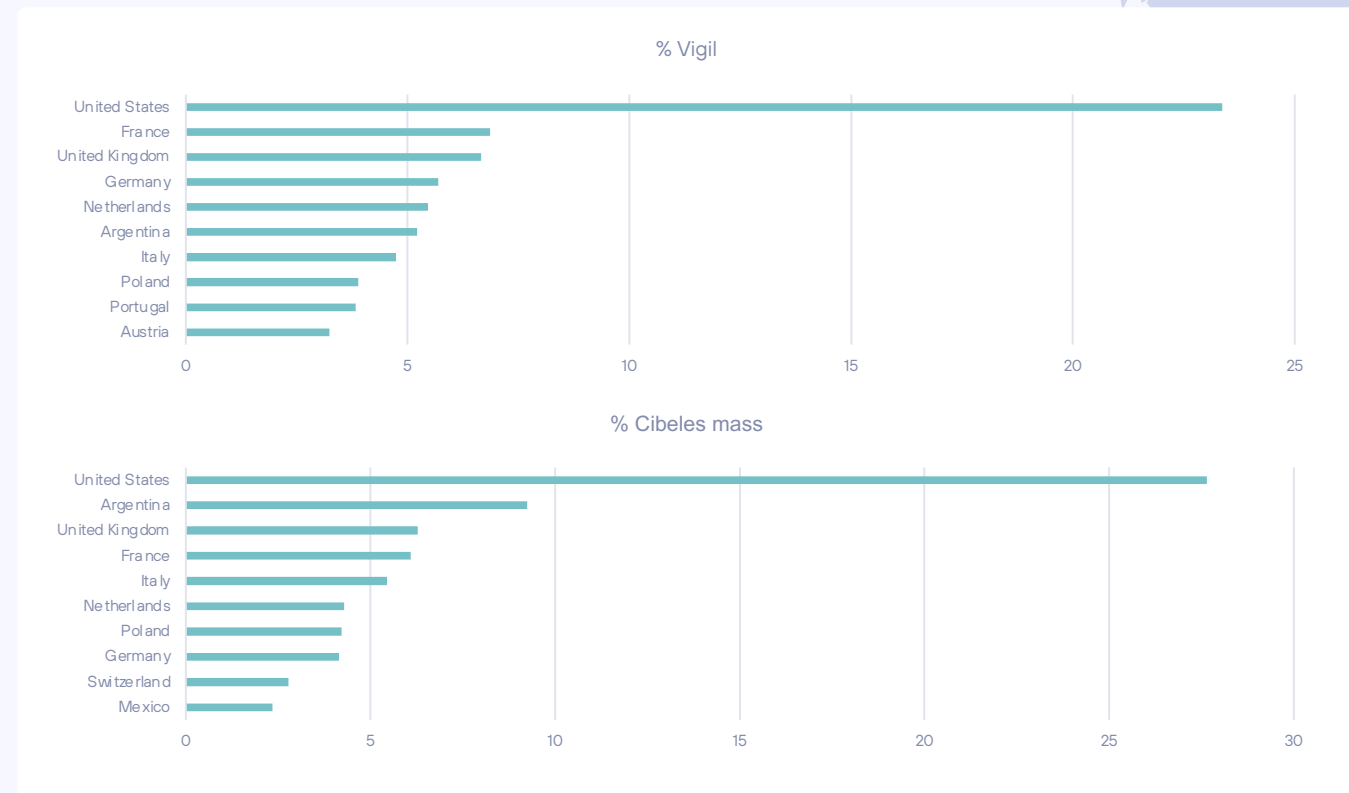


Vigil (6th): The national origin covers the whole of Spain, with no concentration in any specific geographical area. Valencia, Seville and Toledo top the rankings. Navarra, Cádiz and Córdoba complete a map of the Catholic Spain whose faithful travelled to Madrid.

Cibeles Mass (7th): The pattern remains similar to that of Saturday, with a slight shift towards southern provinces (Andalusia gains ground on Sunday) and a greater presence from the Community of Madrid and its metropolitan area, consistent with the ease of access to Cibeles for regional residents.

Participants' origins

International visitors had clearly planned their trip in advance; although 40 per cent arrived on the day of the event, one in eight had been in Spain for more than 10 days. The United States was the main country of origin for both events.

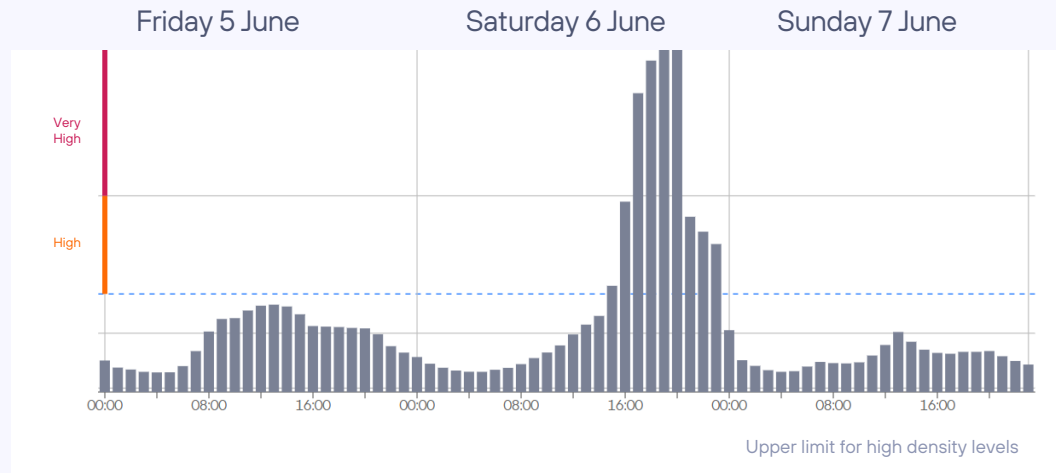


Vigil (day 6): The US is clearly in the lead, with three times as many visitors as the country in second place. Argentina stands out as the only Latin American country in the top 10, with a presence that is proportionally far greater than its usual share of tourists in Madrid – a direct reflection of Argentina's Catholic devotion. Portugal features in the top 10, with groups of Iberian pilgrims who crossed the border specifically for the event.

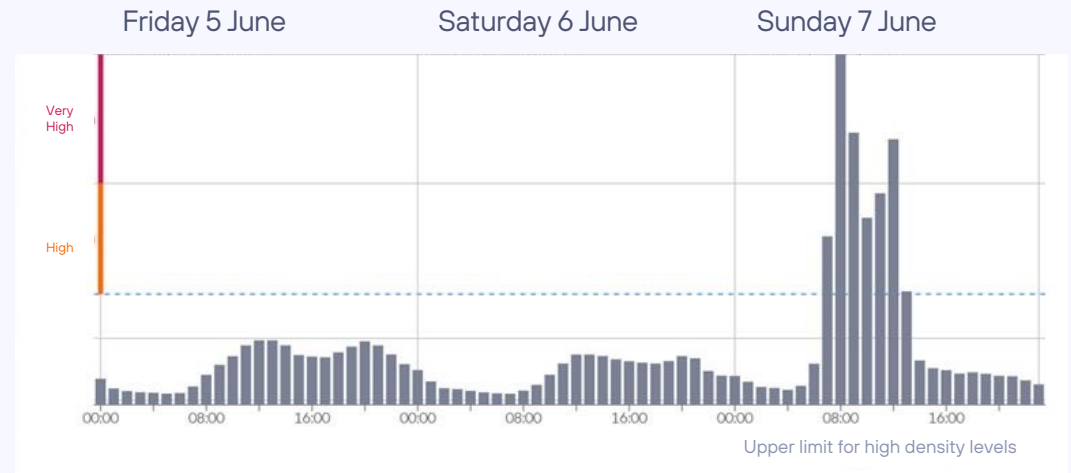
Cibeles Mass (day 7): The international map has expanded and diversified compared with Saturday. The Mass, as the most universal and globally covered event of the visit, attracted a broader spectrum of European nationalities. France and the United Kingdom have consolidated their positions as the leading European source countries.

Trend in number of attendees by hour

Youth Vigil (Lima Square + Castellana)



Cibeles Mass (Cibeles Square and surrounding area)



*Source: Near Real Time (NRT) - Smart Steps

Barcelona

An aerial photograph of Barcelona, Spain, showing a dense urban landscape with red-tiled roofs. The Sagrada Família, a large Gothic Revival church, is the central focus, surrounded by a mix of modern and traditional buildings. The word 'Barcelona' is overlaid in large white text on the left side of the image.

Official programme – Barcelona

Tuesday 9 and Wednesday 10 June 2026

TUESDAY 9 JUNE

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 12:25 | Arrival at El Prat Airport |
| 13:00 | Midday Prayer (Cathedral of the Holy Cross and Saint Eulalia) |
| 20:00 | Prayer Vigil with the Youth (Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium) |

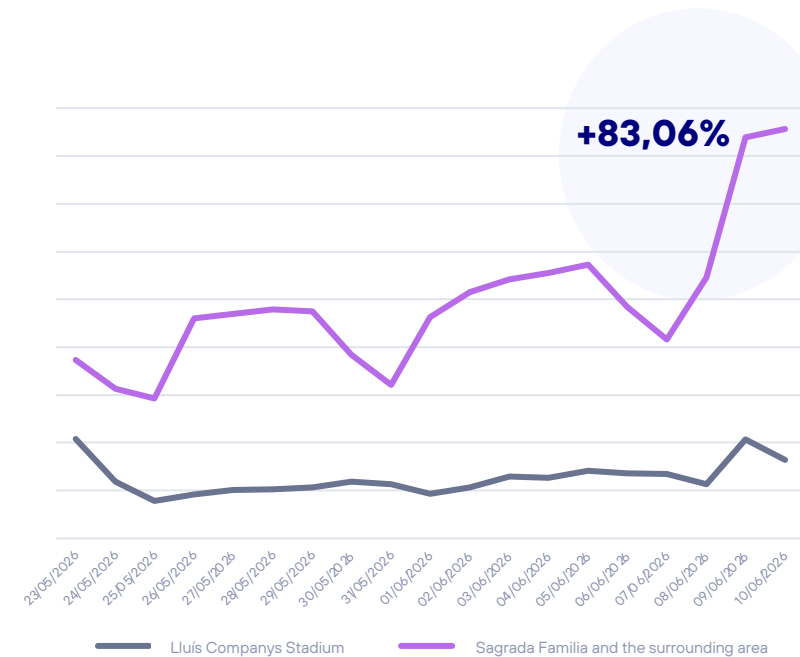
WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 10:50 | Visit to Brains 1 Prison |
| 12:00 | Prayer of the Holy Rosary (Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat) |
| 13:00 | Lunch with the Benedictine community of Montserrat |
| 16:30 | Meeting with diocesan charitable organisations (Church of St Augustine) |
| 19:30 | Holy Mass and inauguration of the Tower of Jesus Christ (Basilica of the Sagrada Família) |

The trend in visitor numbers by day

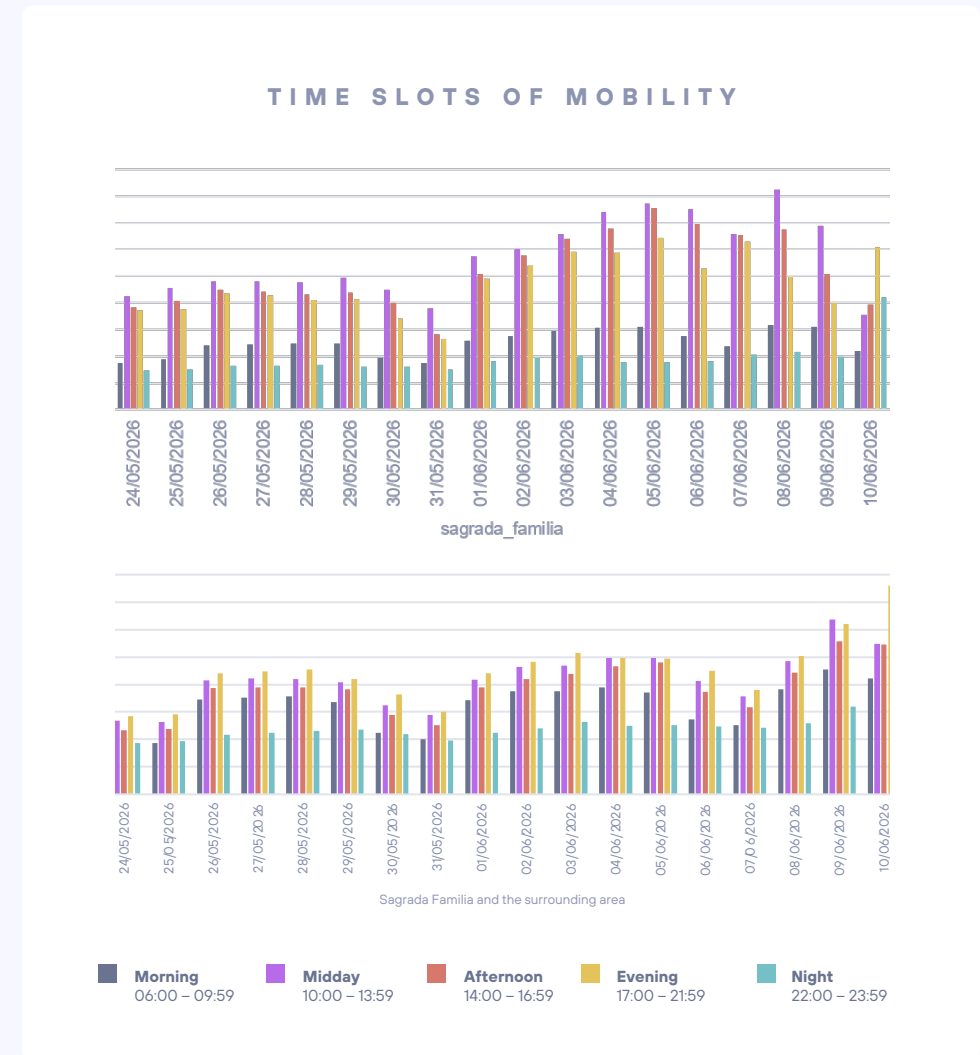
- Vigil · Tuesday 9 June – Lluís Companys Stadium:** The Montjuïc area saw its usual Tuesday activity more than double, with an increase of **+126%** compared with the standard. This represents the peak for the stadium during the period analysed. The event generated an extraordinary influx of people for an area that, under normal circumstances, mainly sees sporadic sports and leisure traffic. The opening of access points and the Pope's arrival in the popemobile inside the stadium marked the two busiest moments of the day.
- Mass · Wednesday 10 June – Sagrada Família and surrounding area:** The impact on the immediate vicinity of the basilica was only **+12%** above its usual baseline – consistent with an event requiring strict accreditation for entry. The real impact was on the streets: extending the analysis to the main routes of the popemobile (Consell de Cent and Passeig de Gràcia), the index rises to **+83%**, showing that although the event inside the basilica was a closed-door affair, the Eixample district absorbed a concentration of visitors far greater than on any ordinary Wednesday.

TREND IN VISITOR NUMBERS BY DAY



Mobility patterns across time periods

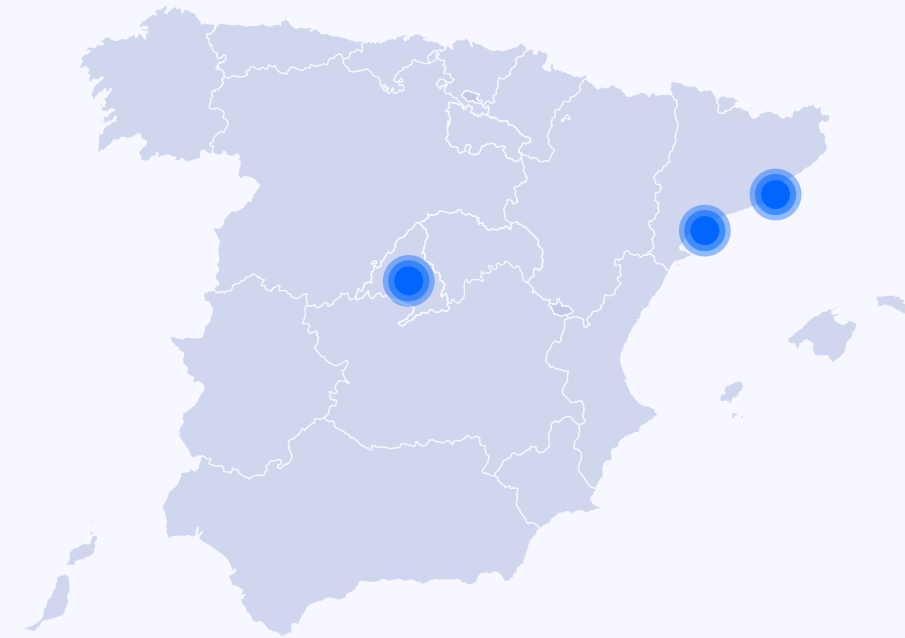
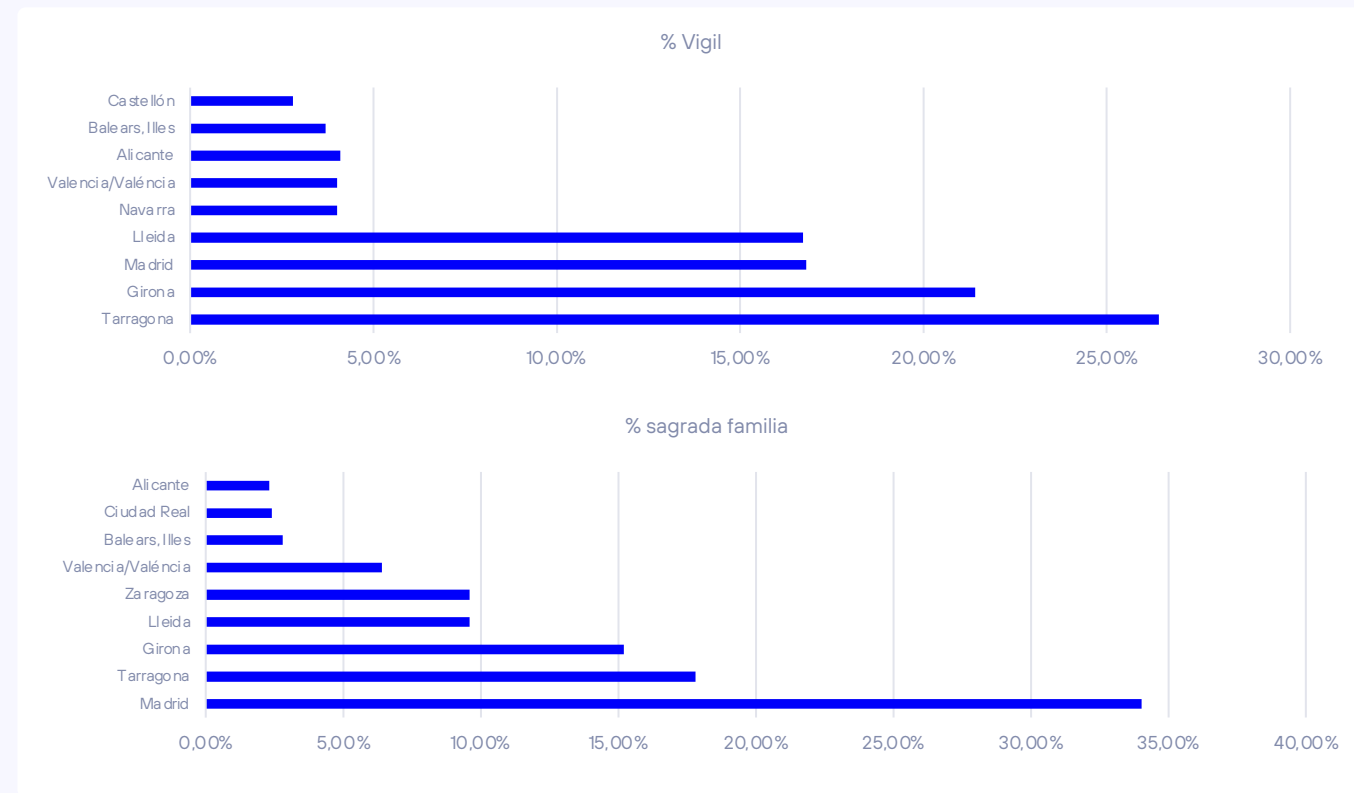
- Vigil (day 9 · Lluís Companys):** Tuesday's traffic pattern was completely reversed compared to a typical day at the stadium. Midday, which under normal conditions accounts for 22 per cent of daily traffic, fell to 13 per cent – the lowest period of the day (due to road closures). Activity shifted entirely towards the afternoon: the **late afternoon and evening were the dominant period, accounting for 31%** (compared with the usual 24–25%) and the **night-time period almost doubled its usual traffic, rising from 13% to 21%**. This pattern accurately reflects the structure of the event: access from 18:00, the Pope's arrival at 21:00, and the night-time exodus concentrated on the roads leading down from Montjuïc.
- Sagrada Família Mass (day 10):** The Sagrada Família usually sees its peak at midday and in the afternoon (daytime tourism). On 10 June, this pattern was completely reversed: **midday figures dropped from 26 per cent to 16 per cent** – a direct reflection of the security perimeter that blocked normal tourist access from the early hours. In contrast, **visitor numbers in the late afternoon and evening rose to 28%** and **night-time figures almost doubled their usual level, from 9% to 19%**: thousands of visitors surrounded the basilica whilst the popemobile was present and remained in the area long after the event had ended.



- Chart showing the evolution of visitors by time slot

Participants' origins

The participants' regions of origin were analysed. The most common places of origin were Madrid, Tarragona, and Girona.

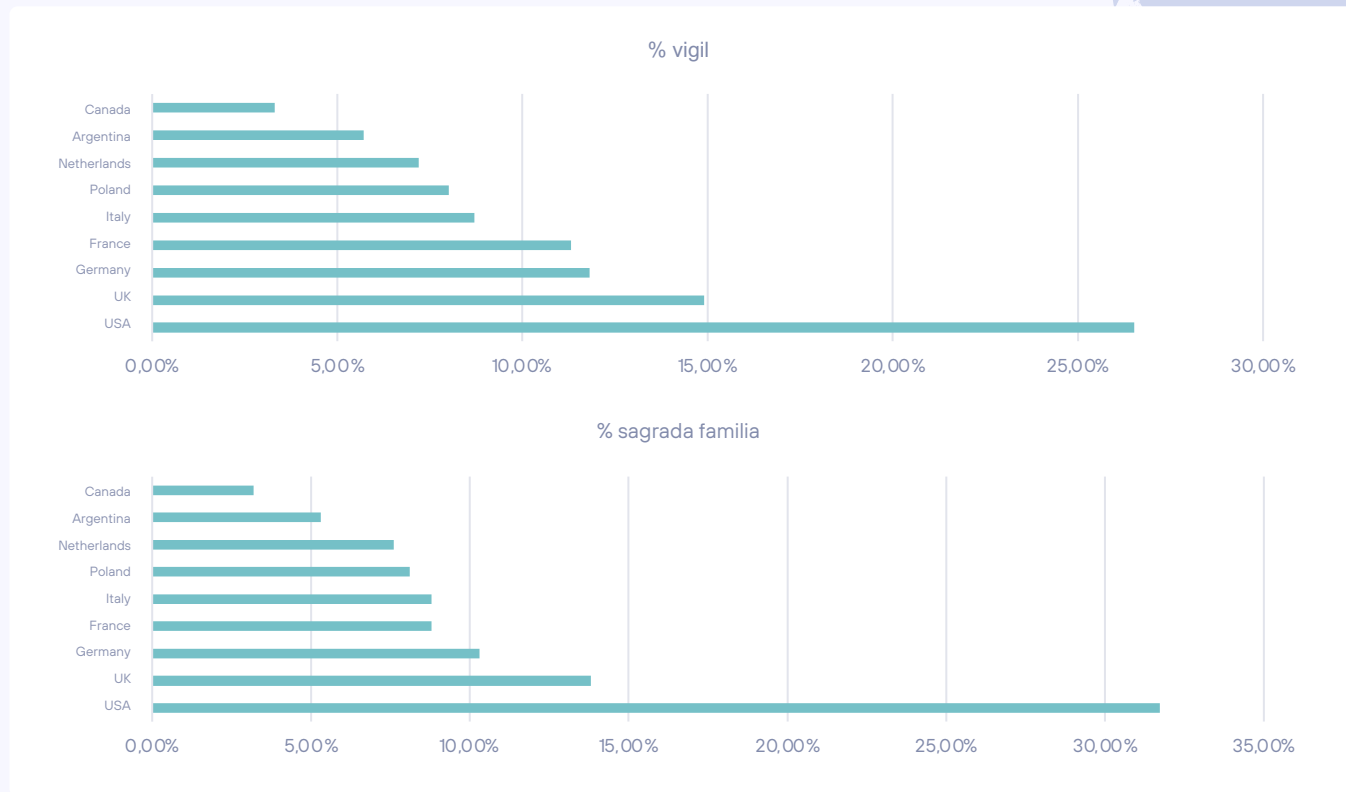


Vigil (day 9 - Lluís Companys) Tarragona and Girona lead due to their proximity, but the striking figure is Lleida, which has doubled its usual turnout. Navarra and Castellón appear without their usual presence, reflecting the involvement of organised groups from the northern interior.

Mass (day 10 - Sagrada Família) Madrid extends its lead from 19% on a normal day to 34%. Zaragoza and Ciudad Real burst into the top 10 without their usual presence — pilgrims from Castilla and Aragón arriving by AVE. Lleida once again doubles its presence.

Participants' origins

The international origins of the participants have been analysed, with the United States emerging as the main country of origin.

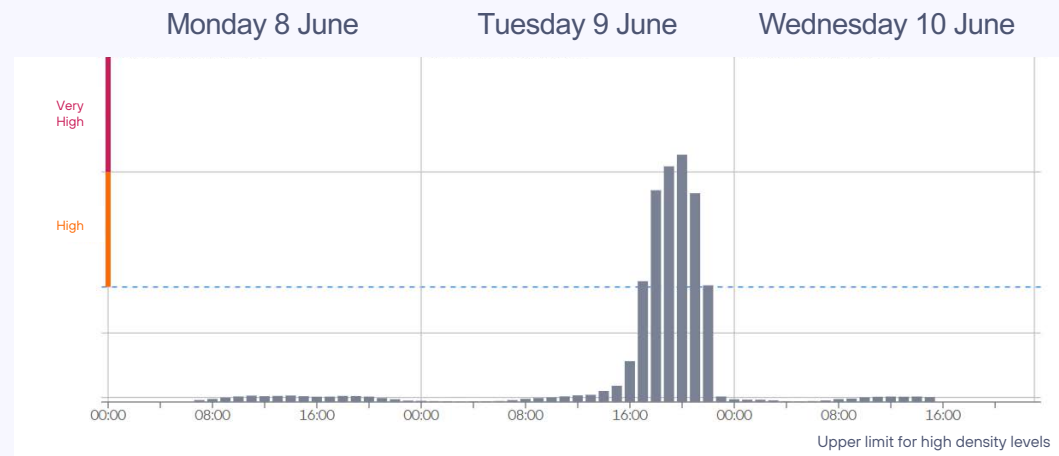


Vigil (day 9 · Lluís Companys) The US leads the way. Argentina is the only new entry in the rankings — with no regular presence at the stadium. Poland strengthens its position. Croatia, a regular feature due to sporting events, drops out.

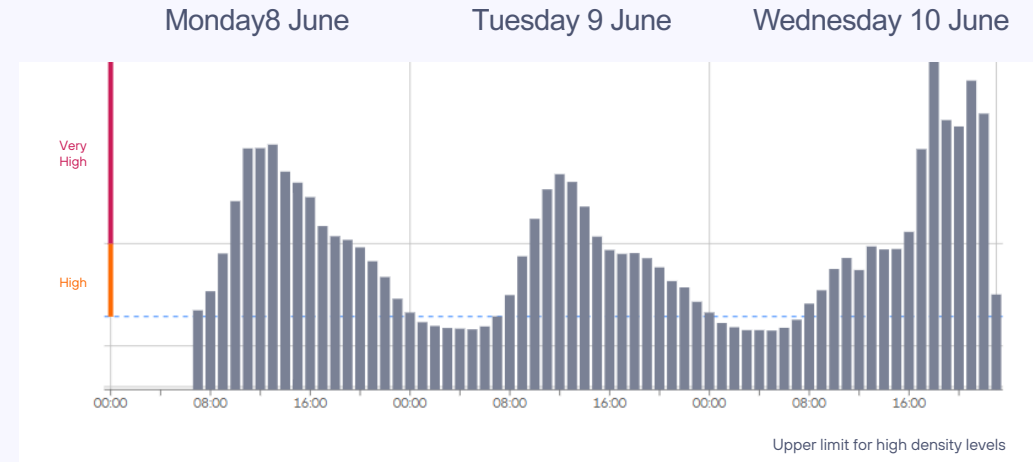
Mass (day 10 · Sagrada Família) The US consolidates its lead. Poland and Argentina, already regulars in the top 10, almost double their share (from 5–6% to 9% each). Turkey and South Korea — the basilica's main tourist markets — drop out of the ranking.

Trend in number of attendees by hour

Youth Vigil (Lluís Companys Stadium (Montjuïc))



Mass and inauguration of the Tower of Jesus Christ (Sagrada Família, Eixample)



*Source: Near Real Time (NRT) - Smart Steps

Canary Islands

An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, featuring a prominent cathedral with two towers and a large square in the foreground. The ocean is visible in the background with several ships.

Official programme – Canary Islands Thursday 11, Friday 12 June 2026

THURSDAY 11 JUNE – GRAN CANARIA

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 11:40 | Meeting with representatives of migrant reception services (Arguineguín Harbour) |
| 13:00 | Meeting with bishops, priests and pastoral workers (St Anne's Cathedral) |
| 18:30 | Holy Mass (Gran Canaria Stadium) |

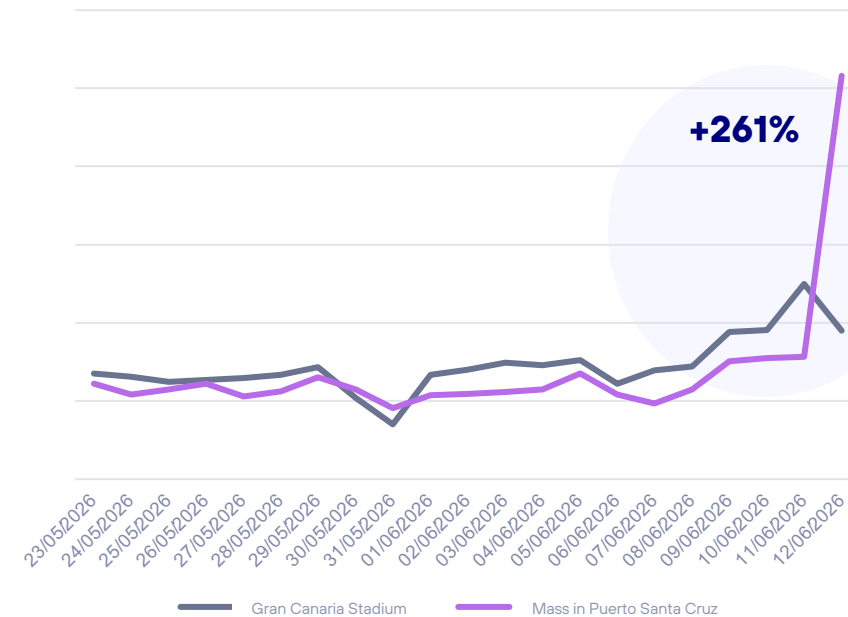
FRIDAY 12 JUNE – TENERIFE

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 09:30 | Meeting with migrants from the Las Raíces Centre |
| 10:10 | Meeting to discuss the realities of migrant integration (Plaza de Cristo, La Laguna) |
| 12:15 | Holy Mass (Port of Santa Cruz de Tenerife) |
| 14:30 | Farewell ceremony (Tenerife North Airport – Los Rodeos) |

The trend in visitor numbers by day

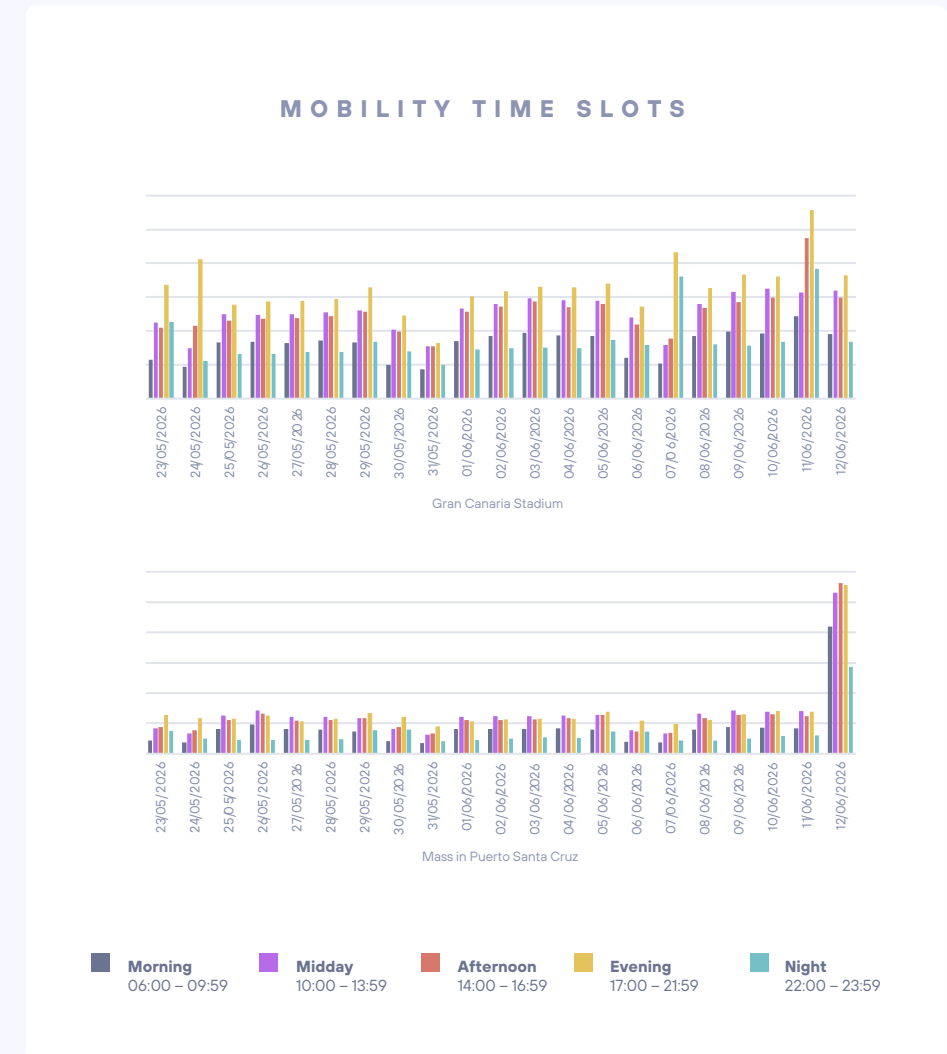
- Mass · Thursday 11 June – Gran Canaria Stadium:** The area around the stadium saw a **+50%** increase on its usual Thursday footfall, making it the day's busiest spot. Visitor numbers at the Arguineguín Quay (+27%), the Plaza del Cristo in La Laguna (+40%) and Las Raíces (+30%) show that the impact of 11 June was spread across both islands, although the stadium was clearly the epicentre.
- Farewell Mass · Friday 12 June – Explanada Portuaria de Santa Cruz de Tenerife:** The harbour esplanade and surrounding area recorded the highest figure of the entire visit to the Canary Islands: **+261%** compared to its usual activity, more than tripling its normal footfall. Unlike the stadium – an accredited venue – the esplanade is an open space with no capacity restrictions, which explains the scale of the impact. It was the event with the highest relative attendance of the entire Canary Islands leg.

TREND IN VISITOR NUMBERS BY DAY



Mobility patterns across time periods

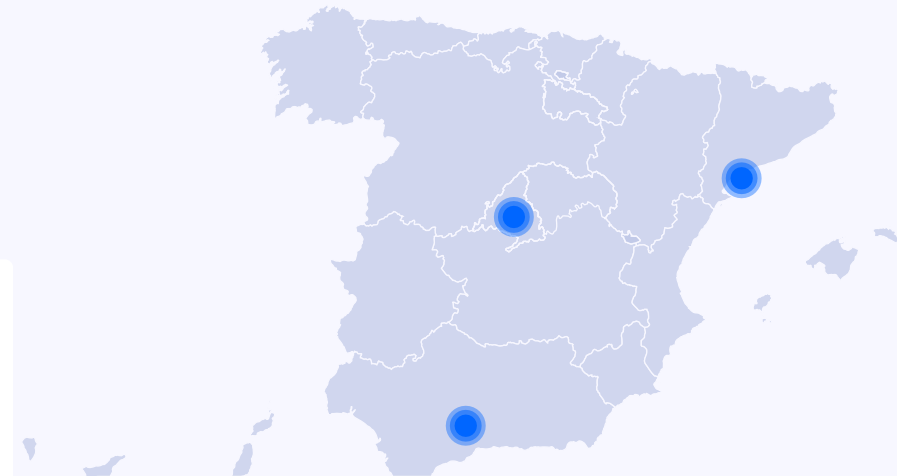
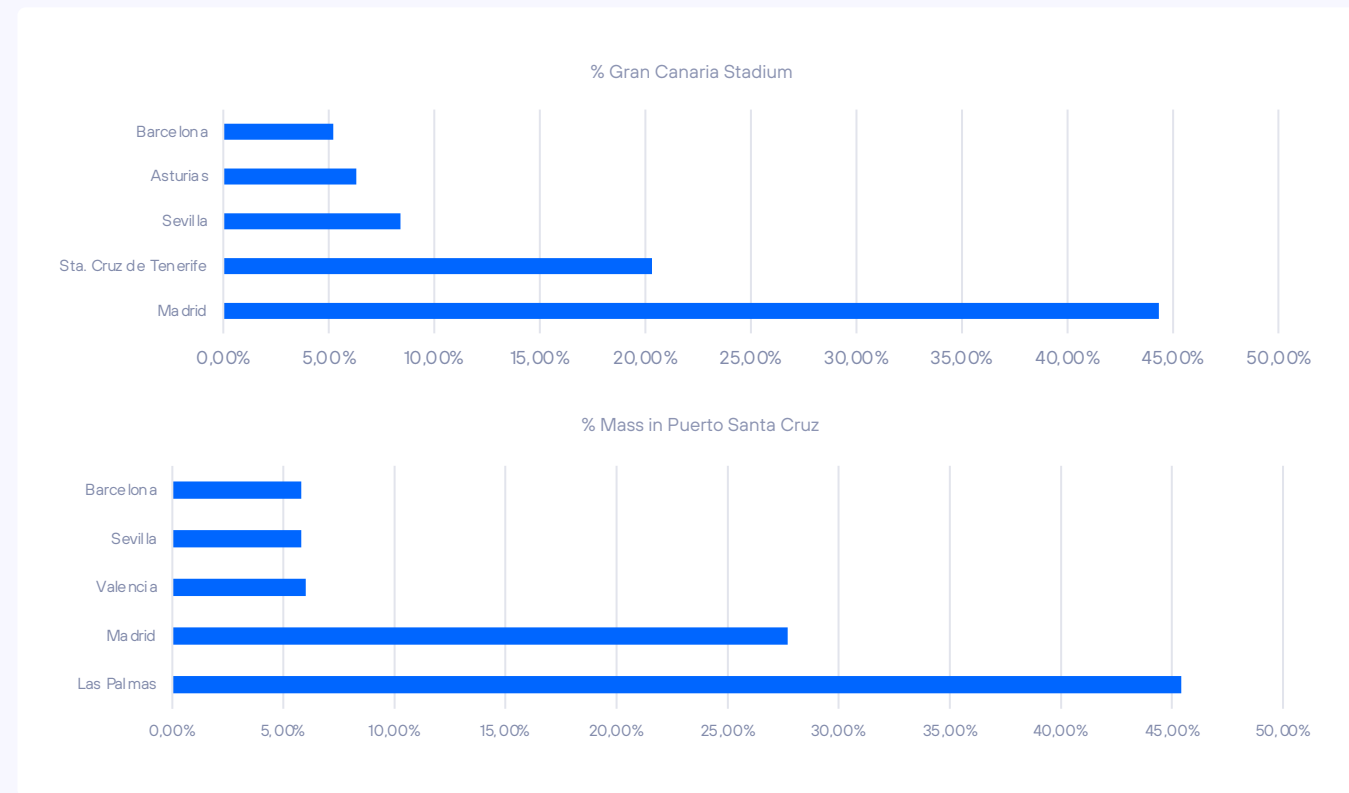
- Thursday 11 June – Gran Canaria Stadium:** Thursday's traffic pattern was significantly different from a typical day at the stadium. Midday, which under normal conditions accounts for 21% of daily traffic, fell to 14% – a direct reflection of the security perimeter and the restricted access arrangements that limited daytime activity. Activity shifted towards the times of the event: the late afternoon and early evening remained the dominant period (25.5% compared with the usual 24.6%), whilst the late evening almost doubled its usual share, rising from 12.4% to 17.6%, with the post-event exodus concentrated towards car parks and public transport hubs.
- Friday 12 June – Santa Cruz de Tenerife Port Dockside:** As this is an open space with no access restrictions, the hourly pattern clearly reflects the event's timeframe (10:00–14:00): the morning saw the largest influx, with attendees arriving early to secure a spot on the esplanade. From the afternoon onwards, activity returned to normal levels, confirming that the dispersal was swift and orderly. The impact of 12 June lay not in the distribution of visitor numbers over the day – which was similar to any other Friday – but in the volume: the area saw a threefold increase in its usual footfall (+261%).



- Chart showing the evolution of visitors by time slot

Participants' origins

The national origin of attendees has been analysed. The most common places of origin were Madrid and Las Palmas.



Gran Canaria Stadium (day 11)

Madrid has moved from second to first place by a wide margin — almost doubling its usual share (19.8% → 44.3%) — and clearly leading the way in terms of attendance on the mainland. Santa Cruz de Tenerife, usually number one due to its proximity, has lost its top spot and seen its percentage halved. Asturias is the most striking new entry: from almost non-existent (0.7%) to 6.3%, reflecting the strong religious devotion in the north. Cádiz and Cantabria also make the list; Granada, Cáceres and Bizkaia drop out.

Farewell Mass (12th)

Las Palmas remains in first place — thanks to Gran Canarians who crossed over to Tenerife — although it loses relative percentage (60.8% → 45.4%) because Madrid almost doubles its own (15.8% → 27.7%). Granada makes a notable entry into the top 10 (0.4% → 2.6%). Bizkaia appears for the first time. Murcia and Alicante, regulars at the port, drop out of the ranking — provinces with a more tourist-oriented than religious profile

Participants' origins

The international origins of the attendees have been analysed. The most common countries of origin were Germany, France and the United Kingdom.



Gran Canaria Stadium (day 11)

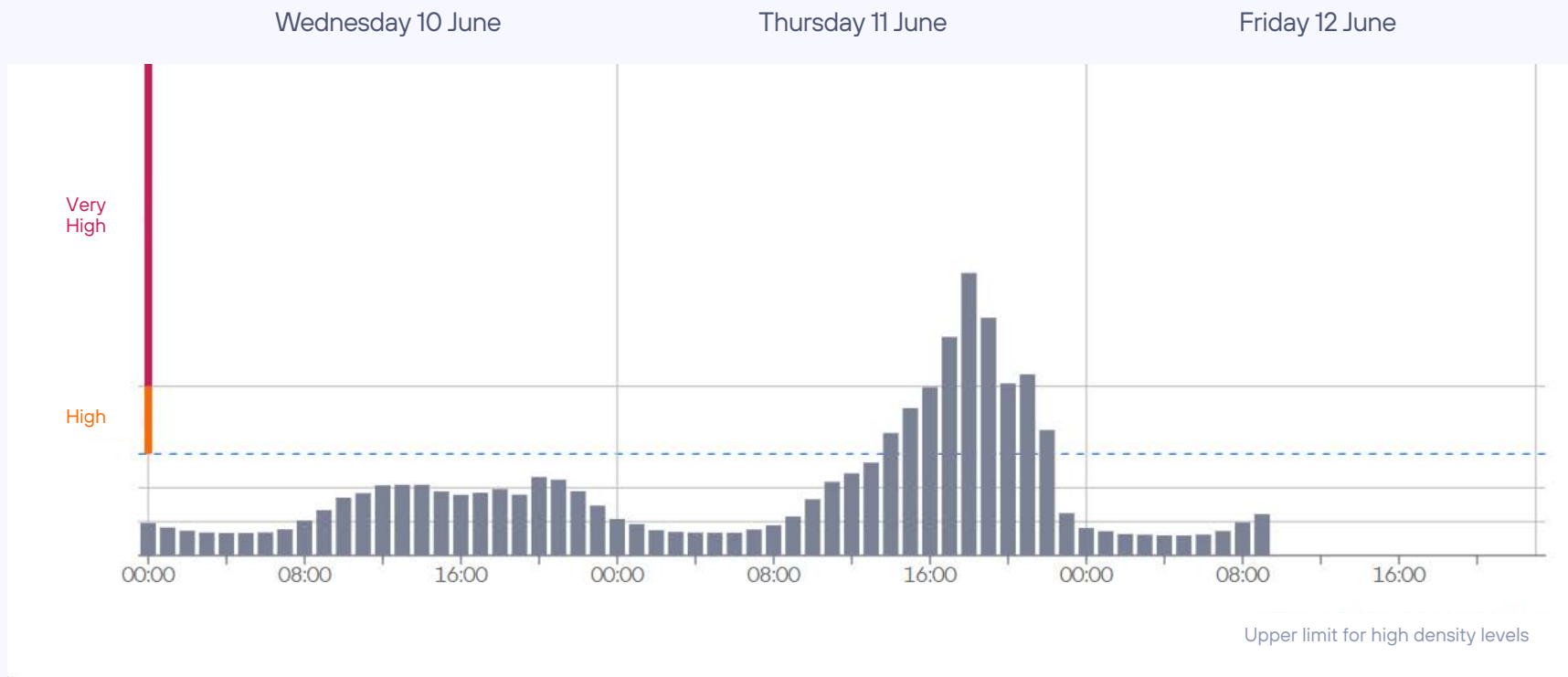
France, usually #1 in the region, drops 11 points and cedes the lead to Germany. The US almost triples its usual share (4.4% → 10.3%) – the biggest rise in the ranking, possibly linked to the American origins of Pope Leo XIV. Italy and Portugal strengthen their positions. China is the only new entry in the top 10 (0.4% → 3.1%). Denmark, a regular in this stage, drops out.

Farewell Mass (day 12)

The international ranking remains virtually unchanged – the same 10 countries, in almost the same order as usual. The impact of day 12 was essentially confined to the Canary Islands and the Iberian Peninsula, rather than being international. The United Kingdom and Italy gain some ground, whilst France loses a little. Ireland rises (2.8% → 4.0%) – consistent with its Catholic tradition.

Trend in number of attendees by hour

Gran Canaria Stadium



*Source: Near Real Time (NRT)
- Smart Steps



Smart Steps Benefits

How can this solution help with crowd analysis?



In-depth understanding of attendees

We identified who attended the events organised as part of the Pope's visit: their origin (local, national, international), profile and behaviour whilst in the various cities. This enabled us to gain a better understanding of the actual audience and tailor our offering (hospitality, experiences, pricing) to each segment.



Strategic event planning

We analysed patterns of attendance and behaviour over the course of the event to identify peaks, trends and opportunities. This improved the planning of future editions, from the schedule to the layout of spaces and services.



More effective, marketing-focused audience acquisition

We segment audiences by origin and behaviour to launch targeted campaigns (for example, to attract international tourists or a premium audience).



Optimising experiences and resources

We tailored services such as access, catering, transport, and leisure areas to reflect the actual demand from attendees. This improved the visitor experience, reduced overcrowding and optimised operating costs.

Let's Talk

Find out how our Smart Steps solution can be tailored to your needs, enabling you to make strategic decisions on promoting tourism in your area, adjust your range of services and optimise your regional marketing campaigns.

[CONTACT US](#)

