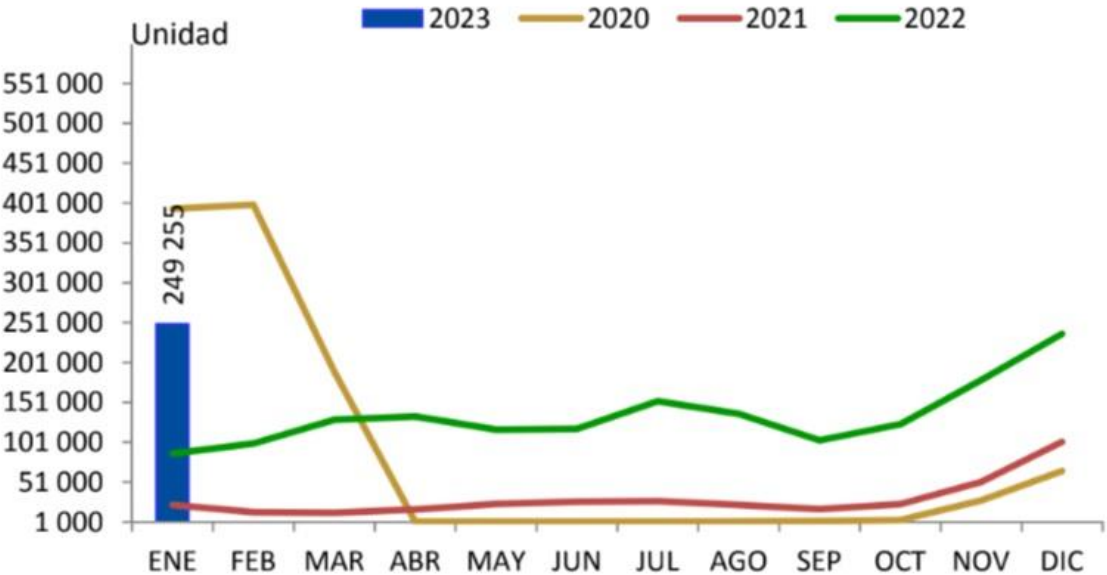


Tourism still not getting off the ground

6/3/2023

Tourism in Cuba continues to recover slowly. According to the latest figures presented by Cuba's Ministry of Tourism yesterday, the island has had 489,000 visitors so far this year, which is about half the number of guests compared to the same period in 2019. While tourism from Canada is already back to pre-Corona levels at 90 per cent, arrivals from Europe in particular continue to lag behind.



Visitors by month and year up to and including January 2023 (Source: [ONEI](#)).

The three most important sources of visitors to Cuba are currently Canadians, US Americans on family visits and "people-to-people" tours, and Cubans living abroad. 20,589 visitors came from Russia this year. This is followed by the traditionally strong Western European markets. The British came first with 13,596 visitors, followed by Germany with 13,585 guests, France (13,103) and Italy (11,373).

Among the reasons for the weakening visitor numbers from Europe, the ministry blamed the insufficient number of air connections with Europe, which continue to rank below 2019 levels. In addition, the difficult supply and energy situation also stands in the way of tourism recovery. The increased cost of living in the issuing countries themselves and the generally poor global economic situation are also likely to play their part in the outcome. However, Caribbean neighbouring countries such as the Dominican Republic were already able to achieve old visitor records again last year, with around 8.5 million travellers reported there in 2022.

In January, the island counted 249,255 international visitors. This figure slipped to around 240,000 in February, a month of the traditional high season. Besides the export of medical services and remittances from abroad, tourism is one of the three most important sources of foreign exchange for the country.