

# WILL FEWER TOURISTS IN IRISH PUBS MEAN THEIR END?



Because of the bad economic situation and drop in numbers of tourists more and more Irish pubs have problems. Their income is lowering and some of them are forced to close down.

One of the symbols of Ireland, the Irish pub is threatened by the current economic development. The famous Irish pubs that survived British occupation, waves of immigration, famine, fights in streets, strikes as well as terrorist attacks and even the ban on smoking are nowadays facing decline. **Some of the pub owners are unable to cover their expenses.** Not even alcohol addicts can stop that because they prefer to buy spirits in supermarkets where the prices can be even three times lower than in pubs.

“We were among those who asked the government to lower the minimum wages for the sake of small and medium businesses,” says Ben from an Irish pub Black Crow. Ben's personnel were paid 8.65 euro per hour for the last five or six years, which is a good sum of money if you add the tips and the free meals and drinks and now it should all end.

Ben told the Czech internet daily Novinky.cz that there were times when they did not have enough chairs and tables and the profit was good. Nonetheless, **fewer and fewer tourists are coming to Dublin and some of his friends from other pubs recorded a 20 to 30 per cent drop in number of customers.** The suppliers tried to lower their prices to help the pubs but it is still not enough. Some pubs are already out of business because they could not cope with the downturn.

Banks offer loans but not everyone could earn enough to pay it back which is likely to make more pubs close. **The problem is not only fewer tourists who spend less money in the pubs but also a high number of pubs in bigger cities,** especially in Dublin. These factors combined with the global economic downturn will probably put even more Irish pubs out of business.

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