

CZECH TOUR OPERATORS SOLD 15% LESS VACATIONS IN 2009



In 2009 Czech tour operators sold 15 per cent less holidays and recorded a 20 per cent decline in revenues. Lower profits were caused not only by fewer tours and vacations that were sold but also by the fact that travelers rather opted for cheaper vacations.

In 2008, the tour operators in the Czech Republic managed to sell 2.3 million vacations for €572 million (CZK 15 billion). According to the annual analysis conducted by the Association of Czech Travel Operators **last year the number dropped to 1.95 million vacations (15 per cent less) sold for €458 million (CZK 12 billion)**. With respect to vacations including air transport, which represented only 20 per cent of the whole market, the sales dropped by 30 per cent. The figures suggest that Czech tourists traveled less and rather opted for cheaper vacations in 2009.

As regards the time when the vacations were sold, similarly to the previous year 40 per cent of the vacations were 'first minute' sales, 40 per cent were 'last minute' and 20 per cent were sold for catalogue prices. The amount of vacations sold online increased to 25%, which is however still less than common in Western European countries. Here, on average 35 per cent of all vacations are sold online, while in the U.S. it is even 40 per cent.

As in the previous years the most popular tourism destinations for Czechs in 2009 were Croatia, followed by Slovakia and Italy. In fact, these three countries represented the destination of choice for half of all Czech travelers going abroad with a tour operator.

Furthermore, last year several tour operators had to close their business - out of the 950 tour operators that operated on the Czech market, five went bankrupt.

Such proportion corresponds with the amount of bankrupted tour operators in the rest of EU. On the other hand, the number of clients that were affected in the Czech Republic was not standard.

Approximately 16 thousand travelers were hit by the collapse of the biggest Czech tour operator that went bankrupt - Tomi Tour.

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