

# SLOVAKIA: TOURISM INDUSTRY IN CRISIS



Inbound tourism in Slovakia recorded dropping numbers of visitors. Domestic tourism also experienced considerable declines.

Slovakia, the central European country well known for beautiful mountains among hikers and a number of thermal springs among spa lovers, has recorded dropping numbers of tourists - both domestic and foreign.

Even the amount of visitors from the neighboring countries is lower now - Poles prefer other destinations, the Czechs consider the country rather expensive after its accession to the eurozone, and Hungarians are discouraged by the complicated political relations between the two nations.

**The number of domestic tourists has been going down as well and more and more Slovaks spend their holiday abroad** - Croatia and Italy are among the preferred destinations. Bulgaria, Slovenia and Montenegro are also rising in popularity. In winter, Slovak skiers travel to the neighboring Austria and Poland or even Switzerland and Italy rather than opting for the slopes of the Tatra Mountains.

According to the experts, the reason for the dropping tourist numbers is not only the aftereffects of the economic downturn but also the introduction of Euro in Slovakia, reported Slovak news server Aktuality.sk. Thanks to the accession to the eurozone, the country has turned from a budget country to a surprisingly expensive destination known for not very friendly personnel in restaurants and shops as well as limited language skills.

**Lack of promotion and insufficient investment in marketing campaigns abroad is also viewed as one of the current problems of the Slovak tourism industry.** Despite the fact that the country is a beautiful destination offering not only mountains but also long history and cultural heritage, it is not very well known outside the Central Europe.

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