

# CZECH REPUBLIC: THE IMAGE OF A SAFE DESTINATION IS LOST



The Covid-19 pandemic has taken its toll on tourism in virtually every country in the world. This is the case of countries heavily dependent on tourism, such as Spain and Italy, but also those less dependent, like for example the Czech Republic, regarded a safe destination until recently.

According to the president of the Trade and Tourism Association of the country, Tomas Prouza, the Czech Republic is considered an example of a dangerous country due to the increase in the number of confirmed cases of Covid-19.

He added that people will remember this for a long time, **and it will be almost impossible to regain the image of a safe destination.** The effects of the situation could be felt for two more years, said Prouza.

## Restrictions for Czechs All around Europe

As of now, there are many travel restrictions in force for Czech nationals all around Europe. Earlier this week Germany proclaimed the country an epidemically risky area.

Slovakia also added the Czech Republic to the list of so-called red countries (those not considered a safe destination), while Czech tourists are forbidden to enter Denmark or Cyprus. Entry into Switzerland, Great Britain or Slovenia is possible only with a test or adherence to quarantine.

## What Is behind the Increase in Cases

According to Prouza, the Czech government caused the second wave of Covid-19 to break out by cancelling the already prepared reintroduction of face masks in August.

“It was the last nail in the tourism coffin. It is logical that other countries began to be afraid of travelling to the Czech Republic, because unfortunately we have become one of the most problematic countries in Europe,” he said.

The expert added that the **cancellation or shortening of tourist stays from Germany and other European countries has an immediate economic impact.** According to him, the bigger problem is the loss of the comparative advantage in terms of safety, which has been one of the most important reasons to travel to the country in recent years.

As per estimates, revenues from tourism will fall by 158 billion Czech crowns (5.8 billion euros), this means almost half, compared to last year. An even greater loss is expected in large cities, which are more dependent on foreign tourism inflow.

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