

Tourism: upbeat prospects for 2010 season

Some 80% of Europeans continue to travel for their holidays according to a new Eurobarometer survey on 'The attitudes of Europeans towards tourism 2010'. Only 20% of over 30,000 randomly selected citizens were almost certain that they will not travel in 2010, which is significantly below the proportion of non-travellers in 2009 (33%). EU citizens increasingly prefer to spend their holidays in traditional tourist destinations (57%), while 28% would rather go "off the beaten track" to emerging destinations. Tourism is one of Europe's most important service industries, accounting for 5% of Europe's GDP and 6% of employment.

Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani, responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship, said: "The 2010 survey results are encouraging for the tourism industry. We need to work further on developing the tourism industry, which ranks third in terms of GDP and employment in Europe. The Lisbon Treaty now gives us the opportunity to tackle this sector from a European perspective. Nearly 50 % of EU residents have already decided that they will go on holiday in 2010 and their perceptions about being able to finance their holidays have also slightly improved."

The most important findings are:

- **Continuing trend towards discovering Europe and own country:** again in 2010, 50% of Europeans intend to spend their holidays in their own country or in another EU country.
- **More confidence to be able to finance their holidays:** about half of EU citizens who are planning to take a holiday in 2010 felt they will have sufficient funds (46%) - this is 5 percentage points higher than in 2009. However, as in 2009, 10% said they have serious financial problems that could impact their holiday plans.
- **Travelling remains popular:** about two-thirds (65%) of EU citizens travelled for leisure in 2009, and travelling is most popular amongst residents of Norway (84%) followed by Finland (83%), The Netherlands (79%) and Ireland (78%).
- **"Local attractiveness" is** cited as the major factor (32%) when choosing holiday destinations, followed by "cultural heritage" (25%) and "entertainment possibilities" (16%).
- **Seeking "rest and recreation"** (37%) is the main motivation for EU citizens to travel, followed by "sun and beach" (19%) and "visiting friends and relatives" (17%).
- **Arranging holidays themselves:** the number of EU citizens who organise their main holiday themselves further increased in 2009 to 58%; Candidate Countries Croatia (83%) and Turkey (82%) lead in this respect.

- **The most popular choices:** Spain (10.4 %) was already the most popular destination in 2008 and 2009 and dominates also the current plans made for 2010. It is closely followed by France (9.9%) and Italy (9.2%). However, 17 % of EU residents planning to go on holiday in 2010 have not yet decided on the destination.

Over 30,000 randomly selected citizens aged 15 and over were interviewed for the Eurobarometer survey in February 2010 in the 27 EU Member States as well as in Norway, Iceland, Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It is for the third time in row that the Commission has done such an extensive survey, which offers to all tourism stakeholders a wealth of information, presented analytically in country and demographic categories.

The Commission intends to conduct this kind of survey once a year in order to closely follow short and medium term travel and tourism trends of European citizens. These surveys will allow tourism stakeholders of the countries surveyed to react to changing trends in tourism demand, and so will constitute an important instrument for tourism policy.

Click here for [the full report on the Eurobarometer survey on 'the attitudes of Europeans towards tourism 2010'](#)