



THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL AGENTS'  
AND TOUR OPERATORS' ASSOCIATIONS

Ref. PM09-104/448

Per e-mail:

President Akis KELEPESHIS  
The Members

Brussels, 23 October 2009

Dear Members,

**Re: Survey on the attitudes of Europeans towards tourism – autumn 2009**

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The European Commission has published a Eurobarometer survey on the attitudes of Europeans towards tourism to collect EU citizens' views on travel, details of their (planned) holidays and travel in 2009 and their expectations regarding holidays in 2010. This Eurobarometer follows a previous Eurobarometer published in March 2009 on holidays and travel in 2008 (see letter PM09-040/448 sent on the 2th of March 2009).

The full survey is available at the following link:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item\\_id=3729&tpa\\_id=136&lang=en](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3729&tpa_id=136&lang=en)

The fieldwork was conducted in September 2009 and over 24.000 randomly selected citizens aged 15 and over were interviewed in the 27 EU Member States.

Among the main findings of the survey:

- *Travel in 2009* - In 2009, 63 % of Europeans travelled or is planning to travel (compared to 67% in 2008 according to the previous Eurobarometer).
- *Holiday Destinations* - 48% of the respondents has chosen to travel in their own country (compared to 43% in 2008) and 19% in non EU destinations (compared to 25% in 2008). The most popular holiday destinations of the EU holiday makers are still Spain, Italy and France, while USA, Turkey and Croatia are the most popular non EU destinations.
- *Vacation scheduling* - The vast majority (83%) of respondents took their main 2009 holiday in the period between May and September, July and August being the most popular months (selected by 26% and 31%, respectively). Off-peak holidays tend to be preferred by over- 54 year-old and those who have the lowest level of education. The majority of those who travelled outside the EU for their vacation did so out of the peak season (59%).

- *Holiday arrangements* - 12% of European travelers booked their holiday using a last minute offer – among these 54% did so in order to get a cheaper price, 38% for a late decision about the holiday itself and 21% for a late decision on where to go. Variations according to socio-economic segments remain extremely limited, whereas age seems to have a stronger impact: the youngest EU citizens are almost twice as likely (15%) as the oldest (8%) to book their holiday at the last minute. Travelers outside the EU are more likely than others to book last minute (15%), while domestic travelers are slightly more likely than the average to book in advance.
- *Vacation spending* – 39% of the respondents indicated that they had cut back on the budget they allocated to their holiday(s) in 2009: 34% did so simply because they lacked the necessary finances (81% of which between 25 and 54 years-old) and they had to cut back while 5% made voluntary restrictions on the budget as a precaution in the unfavorable economic environment. As per the ways to reduce vacation spending, 40% reduced the length of holiday, 39% chose a cheaper accommodation, 28% chose a destination closer to home and 23% reduced the number of trips (not alternative responses).
- *Holiday decisions* - The most important factors when deciding on holiday destination or accommodation appear to be the following: Value for money (indicated by 44% of respondents), Cultural attractiveness (31%), Price (27%), Quality of service (23%), Safety/security (11%).
- *Ecological Concerns* – 31% of the respondents indicated that environmental considerations already have an impact on their holiday plans and an 11% declared that they will consider environmental issues in the future, but did not consider them yet.
- *Holiday plans for 2010* - 60% of respondents felt that they would be able to take a vacation away from home next year. Among those who have already decided, 27% is planning a long holiday (more than 13 days), 26% is planning a holiday with more than 4 nights stay, 6% a short stay and 8% a combination of long and short vacations.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

With kind regards,

Paolina Marone  
Manager