

Youth Holidays - UK - May 2010

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What is this report about?

This report looks at 16-25-year-olds' holidays and attitudes regarding travel, examining what kind of trips they go on, who they go with and what the future holds. It considers consumer trends, the recessionary impact, what the prospects are for recovery, innovations of relevance and the strengths and weaknesses of the market.

The youth holiday market was certainly not immune to the travel recession of 2009. The number of trips taken by 16-25-year-olds fell as financial pressures mounted, with unemployment becoming a particular concern – recession-driven recruitment freezes have hit graduates particularly hard and created a real fear that a 'lost generation' will be the legacy. In addition, an increasing number of young adults are living at home with their parents, influencing both their attitudes towards holidays and their ability to travel.

What have we found out?

- Less than 5.4 million 16-24-year-olds travelled overseas in 2009 as the recession took its toll: an eighth down on the previous year. In 2010, Mintel expects to see a slight improvement in the number of youth travellers, but not to the pre-recessionary level of around 6 million.
- Continuing high unemployment is the main reason for any significant growth: between January and March 2010, 914,000 16-24-year-olds were out of work. Widespread recruitment freezes continue to have a disproportionate impact on young adults, leading to fears that a 'lost generation' of graduates unable to get a foothold in employment is being created. More than one in five young adults have experienced difficulty finding a job, making it harder for them to go on holiday.
- Increasingly, young adults are living at home with their parents to a later age because of financial considerations. A quarter of men and one in eight women aged 25-29 now live with their parents – as do over 10% of men who have reached their early 30s and 5% of women of the same age.
- Almost two-thirds of 16-25-year-olds have been on a holiday with their parents in the last three years. And while one in four state they are likely to go on holiday with their parents again when they're older, the same proportion reports the need to 'escape' from their parents.
- Youth travellers are much more likely than other adults to book their holiday at short notice, ie less than a month from the departure date. In addition, their use of online social networking in arranging trips has surged in recent years: a quarter used social networking to arrange trips in 2009, double the 2008 figure.
- Since 2005, beach/resort holidays have dropped off as a percentage of all youth holidays taken: from just over 40% to just over 30%. However they remain the most popular choice, ahead of city breaks.

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