

# CHANGING USES OF FREE TIME IN CZECHIA AND GERMANY

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## ABSTRACT

The article aims to describe changes in the ways people in developed countries spend their free time and the associated impacts on free time and tourism industries. The first part of the paper is devoted to general trends and theoretical concepts. The second part compares German and Czech societies and shows the impact of changes in the utilization of free time on free time and tourism industries in Germany and Czechia. Data acquired from public surveys in both countries were used for this comparison. Average household expenses for particular services and products, provided by the German and Czech Statistical Offices, were used as a second primary data source.

**Key words:** free time, leisure industry, experience society, sense society, fun society, post-materialism

## 1. Introduction

During the 20th century, the amount of free time available to the inhabitants of developed countries increased dramatically. Generally speaking, working conditions changed and the standard of living improved. Society has become more individualized and differentiated; in other words, a wide variety of new life stories and lifestyles have emerged and differences within society have increased. In addition, Western values are becoming increasingly universal in the globalized world. More free time, combined with economic development, has led to, what appears to be, an ongoing expansion of the entertainment industry. People long for new experiences and adventures and, consequently, some authors (Opaschowski 2001a; Steinecke 2000; Schulze 1992) talk about an “experience society”. All of these factors, when combined with increasing mobility and motorization, contribute to the development of increasingly diversified entertainment and tourism industries.

The objective of this paper is to discuss these issues in detail and uncover their mutual relationships with the help of theoretical concepts. A significant portion of the article focuses on Germany, because the theoretical concepts used have been introduced, primarily, by German authors. The paper is written in such a way as to enable the findings to be applied to the Czech society. Therefore, comparisons of the ways that German and Czech residents use their free time have been made as a means of ascertaining how behaviors differ or are similar. We also define general trends for Czechia. The main contribution of this paper are predictions about future developments in free time and tourism industries. The paper also proposes methodology for future research into this topic.

## 2. Methodology

Methods implemented in completing this study included, first, exploring the existing literature on free time and the changing values of modern society and, subsequently, analyzing available data. Data about ways people spend their free time in Germany come from three main sources. The first is Althenhöher's (2003a) book *Freizeit in Deutschland* [Free Time in Germany]. This book provides the most current data, acquired from public surveys and from analyses in various leisure industry areas. Other data sources include publications issued by Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und Reisen [Research company – Holiday/Vacation and Traveling], which conducts tourism industry analyses every year that include data about tourism intensity, market trends, tourism objectives and forms in Germany (Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und Reisen e.V.: Reiseanalyse 2005, Reiseanalyse 2008). The last source of data was a thesis (Konrath 1999), which provided older data concerning developments in the number of leisure time hours in Germany in particular years. Konrath utilized data from the publications of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Freizeit [German Company for leisure time], from 1993 and 1998.

Data about leisure time in the Czech society comes from the Czech Sociology Institute, specifically from the research project “Ten years of Czech society transformation”. The selected sample of the Czech population, from 20 to 69 years old, included 4750 people (Tuček et al. 2003).

We have used data about average household expenses for particular services and products provided by the German and Czech Statistical Offices. These data are based

on the international COICOP classification (Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose), which includes all non-investment household expenses. For example, expenses connected with the construction or renovation of a house/flat or expenses for garden maintenance and pets are not included (Klasifikace individuální... 2008). Household expenses in Germany were evaluated for the 1991–2007 period according to the COICOP classification. The Czech Statistical Office has only been using the COICOP classification since 1999, which negatively impacts data compatibility. Nonetheless, in this paper, we have used the expenses timeline, from 1989 to 2003, provided by the Czech Statistical Office. Items were re-sorted in order to achieve maximum published data content comparability and arranged simultaneously to correspond with the COICOP classification (Retrospektivní údaje... 2008) as much as possible. Because this time line more or less corresponds with the COICOP statistic, it was possible to add data from 2004 to 2007 and then to subsequently compare them with German data. The fact that the data could not be evaluated perfectly in accordance with the new classification should be taken into consideration. Even though the data are not absolutely comparable, they provide enough information to recognize general trends. Calculation of total leisure time expenses was carried out, according to the German Economy Institute's method (Altenhöher 2003a), which involves adding up expenses for equipment, facilities and leisure time services, found in group 9 in the COICOP classification, 59% transport expenses, 85% housing, food, room and board expenses and 60% mail and telecommunication expenses.

### 3. Current society and free time spending

Any time frame can be divided into two basic parts – into work time and spare-time. Leisure time plus fixed time are included in spare-time activities. Fixed time is used for daily routines connected with the necessities of human physiological existence (sleep, personal hygiene, food, household duties, shopping and so on). Leisure time is the time available after the accomplishment of these duties and necessities. All three parts can blend together in different ways and the result is sometimes called “semi-free time” (Duffková, Urban, Dubský 2007). For instance, for many people shopping is fun and, therefore, not seen as a duty. Some people consider cooking or gardening to be fixed time, while others classify these same tasks as leisure time activities, because they consider them to be a hobby.

For most people, leisure time means time when they are free to do what they like, generally things that evoke a positive association. For example, according to German research from 1997, 70% of those surveyed considered free time to be time when they can do what they enjoy, while only 30% of respondents considered leisure time to

be time spent not working (Opaschowski 1997 quoted in Konrath 1999).

Important changes crucial to observations concerning different ways of spending free time have become evident in the societies of developed countries since the 1960s (1990s in post-communist countries). Firstly, society has become more individualized. Secondly, the population as a whole has been aging. And finally, the traditional family model, prevalent in earlier times, may not apply as much for families, during the past twenty years. These changes, collectively referred to as the second demographic transition, are characterized by a change in reproductive behavior, including decreasing fertility, increasing mother's age at her first child's birth and increasing life expectancy (Kalibová 2002). These changes are connected with increased individualism and family value changes, in which the family is not necessarily the highest priority. Current social relations result less from traditional patterns and are more dependent on a person's individual choice, which could give preference to career or entertainment instead of family (Goronzy 2006). Logically, the birth rate in a country decreases because of this situation. At the same time, scientific progress results in an aging population. Because the “traditional” family is getting smaller, and the number of seniors is getting larger, a shift can be observed in most economic areas, including spare-time industries and tourism. Seniors, for example, place different demands on tourism than families with children. According to Opaschowski (2001b), seniors prefer peaceful, relaxing forms of tourism. They travel less – 45% of German seniors over 65 do not plan to travel in the future. Considering the group of seniors eighty years old and older, this figure increases to 67%. In contrast, among people from 50 to 64, 21% do not plan to travel compared with only 15% from the 30–49 age group (Opaschowski 2007). At the same time, the number of so-called “Singles” and childless couples has increased. These are young people who often have ample free time and money, making them an interesting segment of the overall demand for leisure activities. As is the case with seniors, they also have different requirements than families with children. Several integrated theories, including the above-mentioned as well as those introduced in the following text, have been developed to describe recent societal changes.

According to Schulze (1992) the formation of a new society, significantly focused on experiences and personal satisfaction took place in the beginning of the 1980s. Schulze (1992) associates the development of this society with economic development and with the provision of the basic needs of developed countries' populations. The meaning of life for these people is not merely to survive and to earn a living or to stave off threats but to satisfy one's subjective needs. This is more or less carried out, although Schulze (1992) does indicate certain external problems, which arise out of such behavior. Having an experience is becoming an

important motivational element and people have been investing increasingly more energy, time and money in order to acquire experiences. This lifestyle change influences almost all areas of people's lives, not only leisure pursuits. People are searching for experiences in other areas as well – even something as mundane as shopping is becoming an experience. Schulze (1992) talks about moving from an outer-oriented market to inside-oriented market. Not only is the functional quality of a product important, but also the emotions connected with the shopping experience. Consider soap or shampoo, for instance. The product not only serves the purpose of hair care or body wash, but it has become more and more aesthetic with the goal of inducing a feeling among customers that using a particular product will evoke a certain experience. Phrases such as “Enjoy your life” and “An unbelievable experience” have become almost magical in advertising.

Drawing on Schulze's “Erlebnisgesellschaft”, Romeiß-Stracke (2003) uses the expressions “Spaßgesellschaft” (fun society) and “Sinngesellschaft” (sense society). She defines “fun society” as a society, which emerged at the end of the 20th century and is characterized by a desire for any kind of entertainment. The primary goal of people in this society is to be at the center of events, “on center stage”, and to have the most extreme and most exotic experience possible. Nonconformity in behavior is encouraged, standards are frowned upon, and the trends for this society constitute a mix of different styles. Romeiß-Stracke (2003) uses the key expressions “extroversion, extreme, exotic and eclectic”. The proliferation of amusement parks in Germany (“Erlebniswelten”), which seek to offer “unlimited” amusement, adrenalin experiences and a huge diversity of possibilities, is connected with the creation of this society. It is a period of time when the popularity of commercial mass settings, intended for spending leisure time, is increasing.

According to some authors (Romeiß-Stracke 2003; Opaschowski 2004), changes have occurred in terms of the desire for a different types of experiences and amusement in German society, since the end of the 1990s, in contrast with earlier time periods. Romeiß-Stracke (2003) calls this time period “the second modernism” and its society “sense society” (Sinngesellschaft), which means a society that is more interested in the sense of things. Because of the wide variety and abundance of choices, people are often forced to choose, and it is not possible to do everything (Opaschowski 2004). This leads people to question “What good are my actions?” or “What will I get out of it?”. According to Romeiß-Stracke (2003), people who live in accordance with this second modernism not only try to discover the meaning of their behavior, they also frequently abide by the rule “less is more” and try to find their own life direction. This helps them to become oriented in today's diversified world. This “sense society” is defined by “introversion, intensity, integration, and intimacy”

its emergence is related to growth in wellness tourism, ecotourism, study tours, alternative housing and passive forms of entertainment that were popular during the previous period (Romeiß-Stracke 2003).

The societal changes mentioned above are reflected in Inglehart's (1997) notion of a shift from materialism to post-materialism. Those who concentrate first and foremost on the satisfaction of material, basic needs are identified as materialistic. Post-materialists, in contrast, pay most of their attention to the achievement of esthetic and social values; their main objective is personal self-fulfillment and self-expression, which manifests itself in higher political involvement and interest in the environment (Inglehart 1997). This development is based upon the rising standard of living in developed countries where people often take basic needs for granted and, analogous to Schulze's statements in his theory of “experience society”, they frequently turn to other spheres to find fulfillment. This shift does not signify a decrease in material values but rather their postponement. Inglehart's (1997) conclusion that society is becoming more and more post-materialistic is in harmony with Romeiß-Stracke's statements about the current movement towards a “sense society”.

It is impossible not to mention technological developments which change the way people spend their free time. These include motorization, transportation infrastructure improvements, decreases in the price of air transport and internet access for a broad spectrum of people.

## 4. Comparisons concerning the utilization of free time in Germany and in Czechia

### 4.1 The relationship between free time and working time

Over the last hundred years the amount of free time has increased significantly for people in Germany and in Czechia – work-free life phases have increased in duration (pension/retirement, studies), working time has decreased and leave has increased. At present, the amount of hours devoted to spare-time routinely exceed time devoted to work and it is expected that the amount of free time will continue to increase in the future. (Opaschowski 2004).

In Czechia, an eight-hour working day and six to eight weeks vacation were established in the First Republic. In 1966, people were given two Saturdays off, and in 1968 the working week was reduced to five days (Fialová 2000). Since World War II, holiday time has been prolonged up to the current 20 days, designated by law (Act No. 262/2006 Coll.). German law also prescribes 20 days of holiday time (Section 3 (1) BUrlG). The standard for providing extensive holiday time is quite common in both countries – e.g. in Germany the average number of days, was 29 in 1997 (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Freizeit 1998 in Konrath 1999).

The number of working hours varied between 46.4 for women and 53.1 for men, in the 1960s in Czechia (Bezoušek, Vytlačil 1967 in Borovská 2006). In 1993, the average was 53.4 hours and, in 1999, 45 hours (Tuček et al. 2003). This means that since the 1960s, time devoted to work has decreased with a slight and temporary upswing shortly after the transformation period began in the early 1990s. This upswing was associated with the emergence of a business class that works more and an increase in working overtime. However, after few years, the number of working hours went down again (Duffková, Tuček 2003).

A trend of decreasing weekly hours is also evident in the former West Germany. Working hours fell from 44 to 38.5 between 1962 and 1990, and further to 37.5, in 1999 (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Freizeit 1998 in Konrath 1999). The data show a similar trend in Czechia; however, the decrease is steeper. A less dramatic decrease took place in former East Germany (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Freizeit 1998 in Konrath 1999), which is, from a historical point-of-view, more similar to Czechia than West Germany.

Although historically the amount of free time has increased, the working time, especially for people in high-ranking positions in some developed countries has been increasing again, due to aspirations of increased competitiveness (Schröder 2006). While at the beginning of the 20th century only the most wealthy managed to allocate time which they could devote to entertainment and average people had much less free time, the situation is different nowadays. People with lower social status in Germany as well as in Czechia have significantly more free time. For instance, people with a higher education work an average of 45.1 hours weekly, while those in business work 56.4 and freelance workers 52.3 hours per week (Duffková, Tuček 2003). On the other hand, people with higher social status have more disposable income that they can spend on free time and, as a result, they become important free time and tourism customers. For these people, the value of free time is increasing. Gotledge and Stimson (1990, p. 108) mention that, in such individuals' work "Time is considered as a very rare commodity, which competes with money". On the contrary, unemployed people do not have as much disposable income, even though, in theory, they have more time, and, for this reason, they do not consider it a positive. Changes in normal work hours is a recent, ongoing trend and many companies allow employees to organize their time individually. Other companies request employees to work at unusual hours. This leads to significant differences within society and to differences in individual uses of free time. In many cases, it is becoming increasingly difficult to harmonize weekly, weekend or afternoon free time for all family members.

#### 4.2 Free-time expenses

Free-time expenses comprise 24% of total household expenses in Germany and 22% in Czechia (Fig. 1).

Free-time expenses have been increasing at a rate similar to that of total household expenses in both countries (Tables 1 and 2), so their share has not been increasing. In fact, there has been a slight decrease in the percentage of total household spending for free-time activities in recent years (Fig. 1).

In addition to total expenditures, it is also important to examine their structure. If we look at the individual components of consumption that can be designated as recreation or culture, according to the COICOP classification, there are some differences between the two countries. There is also a noticeable difference between the wealthiest and poorest households in Czechia.

An average Czech household spends the majority of its recreation and culture expenses on organized trips (about 22% during the last five years), on recreational and cultural services (also 22%) and on short-term consumption products for recreation and pets (about 20%). The share of expenditures for trips has declined dramatically over the last five years. Conversely, expenditures for long-term consumption products for recreation and culture and for recreational and cultural services have risen. In contrast, the share of expenditures for organized trips has been very low in Germany since the 1990s (about 3 to 4%) and the highest share has been for recreational and cultural services (about 35%). The newest trends in Germany show that the expenditures for durable consumer products have increased over the last five years. Between 1991 and 2007, the above-average growth in expenditures for trips (2.6 times) and recreational and cultural services (1.8 times) took place. These trends are reflected in a 50% increase in total expenditures for recreation and culture in Germany during the same period. Considering culture and recreation expenses, expenditures for services grew in contrast to expenditures for short-term and long-term consumer products, designated for free-time use. The difference between the amount of trips in Germany and in Czechia can be explained by the significantly lower relative price of trips (according to average income in the country) in Germany and also due to the number of days of holiday allocated in both countries.

There are also differences between higher income and lower income households. Households with higher incomes spend more in overall free-time expenditures and a larger amount of money on total expenses for free time activities. The table 3 shows that between 1965 and 1992 the portion of free-time expenditures decreased in different types of households in the former West Germany. More recently, there has been a similar trend in Czechia (Table 4). This pattern runs contrary to the growth of inequality in both societies during this period (Opaschowski 2004; Tuček et al. 2003; Nosek 2006). According to Opaschowski (2004), Germans tend to save money on a daily basis and, subsequently, they tend to use the saved money for entertainment, which represents non-material consumption. Opaschowski (2004)

describes these two tendencies – the growth of differences in society and simultaneously emerging alternative approach to particular kinds of consumption – as “once luxury, next asceticism”. People save money in one area to be able to afford luxury in another area. This trend corresponds with the concept of second modernism and with the post-materialistic value shift (Romeiß-Stracke 2003; Inglehart 1997). “Second modernism” is characterized by the so called “sense society”, which is forced to choose from the many possibilities available for spending free time and which prefers the more valuable of these options.

In Czechia, significant differences are evident between the poorest and wealthiest households (Table 4) in expenses for free time as a portion of total expenses; however, as in Germany, these differences have been reduced over time. Essentially, this means that the increase in free-time expenditures in the wealthiest households is less dramatic when considered in light of the increasing level of free-time expenditures in an average household. It suggests that free-time expenditures are limited by limited amounts of available free time. Also, the structure of free-time expenditures is different in the poorest and

the wealthiest Czech households. First, expenditures for organized trips are not the largest portion of expenditures in the poorest households as in the average and most wealthy households. Such expenditures have increased in the poorest households only during the last five years as did spending for durable consumer products. This trend, leading to the convergence of free-time expenditures in the wealthiest and poorest households, is congruent with the characteristic tendency of the post-materialistic “sense society” to save in areas other than free time (Romeiß-Stracke 2003).

Czechs and Germans thus exhibit similar consumer behavior with respect to relative free-time expenses, in spite of ongoing differences in Czech and German overall household expenditures. Standard of living influences the absolute amount of expenses as do price differences (consider the price of trips). In both countries the difference in free time expenditures between the poorest and the wealthiest is decreasing. Differences between the expenditures for package holidays in Czechia and Germany also seem to be decreasing. In general terms, therefore, the free-time consumer behavior of the inhabitants of both countries appears to be converging.

**Tab. 1** Free time expenditure and total consumer expenditure in Czechia between 1991 and 2007 (CZK)

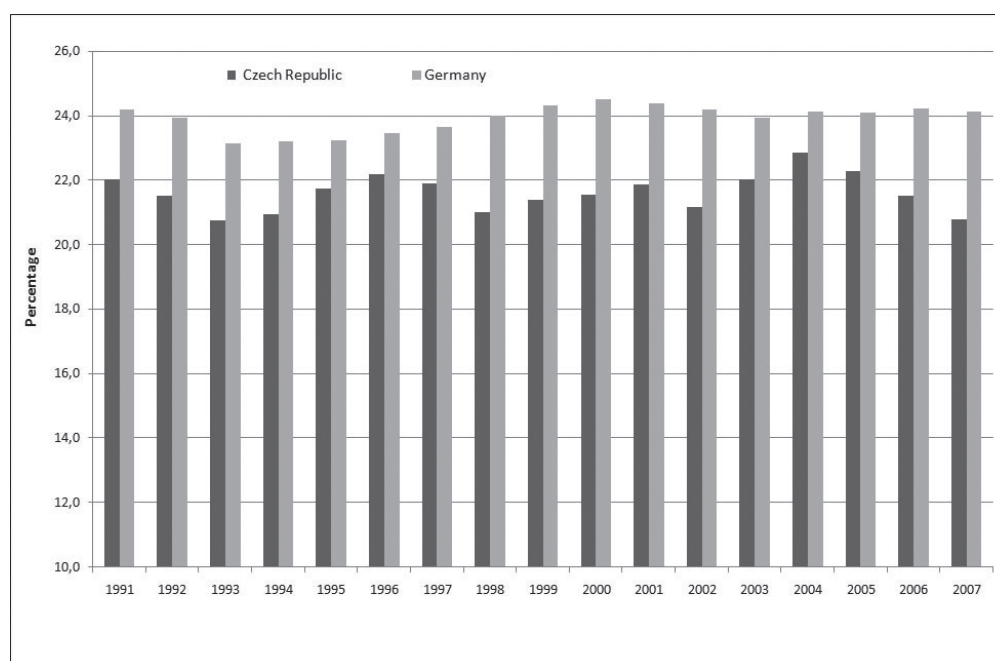
Year	Free time expenditure (person/year)	Change index (1991 = 1)	Total consumer expenditure (person/year)	Change index (1991 = 1)
1991	6,188		28,082	
1992	7,445	1.20	34,573	1.23
1993	8,161	1.32	39,309	1.40
1994	9,303	1.50	44,415	1.58
1995	11,354	1.83	52,207	1.86
1996	13,461	2.18	60,621	2.16
1997	14,936	2.41	68,151	2.43
1998	15,438	2.49	73,472	2.62
1999	16,728	2.70	78,209	2.79
2000	17,156	2.77	79,625	2.84
2001	18,423	2.98	84,288	3.00
2002	18,404	2.97	86,874	3.09
2003	20,124	3.25	91,365	3.25
2004	21,525	3.48	94,098	3.35
2005	22,095	3.57	99,165	3.53
2006	23,160	3.74	107,585	3.83
2007	25,007	4.04	120,208	4.28

Source: Retrospektivní údaje statistiky rodinných účtů..., Czech Statistical Office (2008)

**Tab. 2** Free time expenditure and total consumer expenditure in Germany between 1991 and 2007 (EUR)

Year	Free time expenditure (person/year)	Change index (1991 = 1)	Total consumer expenditure (person/year)	Change index (1991 = 1)
1991	2,553		10,552.8	
1992	2,683	1.05	11,205.1	1.06
1993	2,683	1.05	11,590.3	1.10
1994	2,793	1.09	12,028.2	1.14
1995	2,877	1.13	12,385.4	1.17
1996	2,976	1.17	12,675.9	1.20
1997	3,064	1.20	12,948.3	1.23
1998	3,167	1.24	13,187.5	1.25
1999	3,298	1.29	13,556.4	1.28
2000	3,428	1.34	13,976.4	1.32
2001	3,533	1.38	14,483.6	1.37
2002	3,513	1.38	14,515.7	1.38
2003	3,525	1.38	14,718.0	1.39
2004	3,613	1.42	14,963.4	1.42
2005	3,673	1.44	15,240.2	1.44
2006	3,792	1.49	15,657.9	1.48
2007	3,831	1.50	15,869.7	1.50

Source: VGR des Bundes – Konsumausgaben der privaten Haushalte, Statistische Bundesamt (2008)



**Fig. 1** Free time expenditure and total consumer expenditure in Germany and in Czechia between 1991 and 2007. Source: VGR des Bundes – Konsumausgaben der privaten Haushalte, Statistische Bundesamt (2008) Retrospektivní údaje statistiky rodinných účtů..., Czech Statistical Office (2008)

**Tab. 3** Free time expenditure/expenses as a part of private consumption in various West German households (as a %)

Year	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1992
Households with lower incomes	5.5	6.8	7.8	9.1	10.2	12.2
Middle incomes	10.7	12.3	15.7	16.6	16.2	15.6
High incomes	14.9	16.1	17.6	19.4	18.1	17.6

Source: Schäfer 1995

**Tab. 4** Free time expenses as a part of private consumption (as a %) in 10% of Czech households with lowest incomes and 10% of Czech households with highest incomes

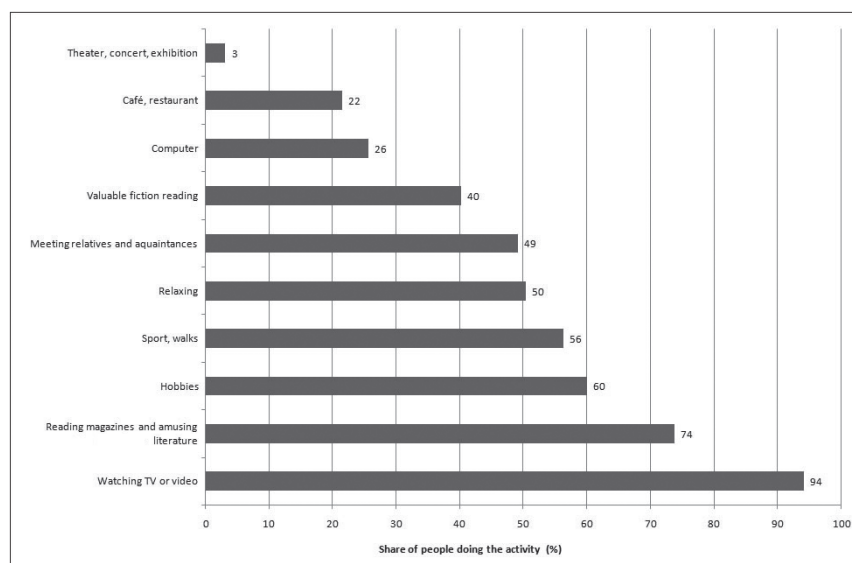
Year	10% of households with lowest incomes	10% of households with highest incomes
1989	19.09	25.11
1990	18.49	25.98
1991	20.23	24.25
1992	19.34	25.02
1993	18.57	23.45
1994	18.70	24.66
1995	18.45	26.73
1996	19.11	26.56
1997	20.09	25.79
1998	19.61	22.11
1999	19.85	22.93
2000	20.67	22.47
2001	20.35	22.28
2002	20.67	22.34
2003	21.02	23.10
2004	22.76	28.67
2005	22.38	28.03
2006	20.65	21.34
2007	21.28	20.01

Source: Retrospektivní údaje statistiky rodinných účtů..., Czech Statistical Office (2008)

### 4.3 Everyday free-time activities

Recently, Czech and German households have gravitated towards leisure activities that can be done at home (see Fig. 2 and table 4). Media consumption has become more important (Fig. 2 and 3). Dufková, Urban and Dubský (2007) and Mazochová (2006) point to an increasing

number of Czechs who spend their free time at home. Fig. 2 shows that media consumption increased while weekend trips decreased by 20% in Germany between 1997 and 2004. Everyday free-time activities in Germany and in Czechia do not differ much, apart from a higher number of Czechs, who list meeting relatives and acquaintances as a regular activity.



**Fig. 2** Free time activities done at least once a week (Germany 1997 and 2004). Source: Kronibus 2007, Altenhöher 2003a

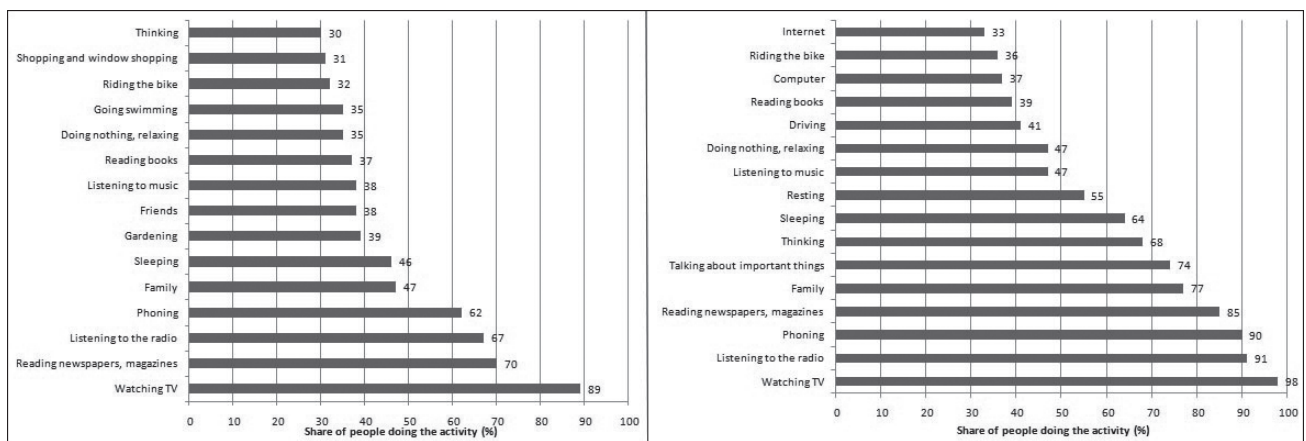


Fig. 3 Free time activities done at least once a week (Czechia 1997 and 2004). Source: Data 1999 in Duffková 2000

Tab. 5 Other free time activities done at least once a week (Germany)

<i>How many polled people out of 100 does a given activity at least once a week?</i>					
Year	1992	2001	2002	Difference 02/92	Difference 02/01
Shopping and Windows shopping	32	36	33	-1	-3
Visit to the cinema	10	14	12	+2	-2
Visit to catering establishment	28	28	27	-1	+1
Pub visit		19	18		-1
Sport event	13	12	11	-2	-1
Going away for the weekend	27	8	7	-20	-1
Amusement park visit	7	6	5	-2	-1
Playing with children		25	26		+1
Thinking	34	34	36	+2	+2
Housework		21	23		+2
Gardening	38	39	43	+5	+4

Source: Altenhöher 2003a

## 5. Tourism trends in Germany

The newest trends include interest in “alternative” forms of tourism, e.g. wellness tourism or simply the desire to relax in the countryside (Table 6). This presents a departure from mass tourism.

According to a survey carried out by the German Research Institute for free time (Opaschowski 2001b) the highest percentage of polled respondents (57%) consider two things to be most important in determining their future vacations: clean nature and intensive experiences. Senior citizens, in particular, emphasized these things. The second most common preference (35% of respondents) is a vacation at a beach – the form of holiday which

is currently the most common. Families with children seem to prefer this type of holiday.

The third most common preference (20%) mentioned by all age groups is to have a vacation that combines wellness, fitness and relaxation. 19% of the respondents and especially young people indicated that they prefer to get to know new vacation spots, which offer a combination of experiences, such as yachting, tropical climates, shopping centers, and small villages. 16% of the respondents expressed the desire to travel to faraway, exotic destinations. People have expressed such a preference for a many years now. Even if the number of journeys to exotic countries has increased lately, it represents more of a wish than a reality, because common and close destinations



are much more popular and viable (Opaschowski 2007). Usually young people prefer this form of vacation.

Urban tourism was mentioned with the same frequency as far-away destinations. It is popular for all age groups with a slight majority among young childless people and its popularity has been growing steadily. The number of days spent by tourists in cities with more than 100 000 inhabitants grew by 73%, between 1994 and 2004, and the number of one-day trips increased by 122%, during the same period (Kronibus 2007). The popularity of urban tourism is associated with shortened holidays. People travel more often during the year, but spend less time at destinations. This makes short holidays to cities an ideal destination choice. In 2005, short-term holidays comprised approximately 40% of holidays in Germany, which represented a 17% increase compared to 1970 (Sierck, Meinken 2006). Lower prices for air travel have also contributed to the increasing popularity of urban tourism.

Since the 1960s, activities done outside of the house that bring no new experiences have declined in popularity; for example, dining out in restaurants has seen a decline, while “thematic gastronomy” has become more popular (Altenhöher 2003b).

Overall, the German society is presently emphasizing the importance of nature, wellness and relaxation. These changes correspond with the values and needs of a post-modern society and are consistent with the concept of second modernism. Franch, Martini and Buffa (2008) speak of a certain part of the population that disdains common mass tourism, which the authors define as the “4 Ss (sea, sand, sun, sex)”, meaning that tourists stay at a warm seaside resort, equipped with man-made experiences (water parks, adrenalin water sports, etc.). Instead, these people prefer individual tourism with “4 Ls (landscape, leisure, learning and limit)”. However, the survey shows significant differences in demands of various customers.

**Tab. 6** Interest changes regarding certain forms of tourism between 1999 and 2002 (Germany)

<i>Form of tourism</i>	<i>Change of interest (%)</i>
Wellness holiday	125
All- inclusive	65
Fitness holiday	51
Sick leave	46
Study stay	45
Urban tourism	8
Winter holiday in warm countries	5

Source: Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und reisen e. in Danielsson, Lohmann 2004

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the theories and empirical research presented in this paper, we can see that, during the twentieth century, societal changes took place that were associated with the high degree of economic security in developed countries. Subsequently, these developments also led to changes in the way people spend their free time. Decreases in working time, increases in standard of living, and longer periods of holiday led to an increase in free time. This increase has been associated with the development of the “experience society” and with the commercial entertainment boom. Since the end of the 1990s, there have also been qualitative changes in the ways people use their leisure time, and free time has been allocated less commercially. The amount of free time or its representation as a percentage of total expenditures has not changed during the last few years, even though new kinds of entertainment have developed. People are therefore forced to choose from a wide variety of possibilities. These qualitative changes have been associated with an increase in the number of people in developed countries who exhibit post-material values (Inglehart 1997). Post-materialists tend to be economically secure and, consequently, they spend more money on non-consumer products, such as free-time services, and insist upon aesthetic, social values, in addition to the quality of these products and services. It could be assumed that this trend applies mainly to high-income households. While it is true that wealthier people can afford to spend more money on non-consumer products, lower-income groups in Germany tend to save money in areas of daily consumption in order to afford luxury in their free time. This situation leads to the partial convergence of free-time expenses among higher-income and lower-income groups. Empirical surveys conducted in Czechia also demonstrate the Czech society’s slight shift towards post-materialism, between 1991 and 1999 (Rabušic 2000, Řeháková 2001).

The second demographic transition, which involves population aging and lower birthrates, has led to changes in preferences that the free-time and tourism industries are forced to adapt to. Trends in the German tourism industry show a shift towards “more meaningful” or “post-material”, non-commercial, free-time activities. The increase in wellness tourism is indicative of this shift towards healthy lifestyles and meaningful entertainment. No comparable research has been carried out in Czechia; however, if we consider similar free-time activities, the gradual convergence of free-time expenses and a similar shift towards so-called post-materialism, we can predict a similar pattern of future development for the Czech free-time and tourism industries.

The results of trend research show that countryside and nature destinations are increasingly popular for the tourism industry. In spite of this trend, common forms of vacation as well as new, diversified destinations

remain popular for certain socio-demographic groups. It is unlikely that people will completely give up mass tourism and similar forms of entertainment. It is likely, however, that forms of entertainment which can promise something new, valuable or educational will be more successful in the future. Opaschowski (2004) expresses a similar idea in stating that people will not give up consumption, but will increase its quality. In the future, we are more likely to see differentiation in the tourism market and leisure industry requiring frequent innovations and flexibility. To meet the demands of more experienced consumers, higher quality products, professionalism and standardization will have to become the norm.

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## RÉSUMÉ

### Změny ve způsobu trávení volného času v Německu a v Česku

Článek se věnuje problematice způsobu a změn v trávení volného času obyvatel vyspělých zemí a jejich dopadů na průmysl volného času a cestovního ruchu. První část je věnována obecným

trendům a teoretickým konceptům. Druhá část je zaměřena na porovnání německého prostředí s českým a naznačení konkrétních dopadů změn v trávení volného času na průmysl volného času a cestovního ruchu. Pro zpracování této části byla využita data

vycházející z průzkumů volného času mezi obyvateli obou zemí a data o spotřebním chování obyvatel. Hlavním přínosem studie by měla být určitá predikce vývoje ve zkoumané oblasti a naznačení dalších možných směrů výzkumu.

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