Wakacje.pl – decision of the President of UOKiK

* **The President of UOKiK, Tomasz Chróstny, imposed a fine of over PLN 1 million on the wakacje.pl website.**
* **The prices of many trips presented on the wakacje.pl website were out-of-date or incomplete – one price was displayed in the search engine, a different price was displayed after clicking to see the details of the offer.**
* **This made it more difficult for website users to make effective purchase decisions.**
* **An investigation is also underway against Travelplanet.pl, and preliminary investigations concerning the presentation of prices by travel agencies are on-going.**

**[Warsaw, 03 January 2024]** The President of UOKiK, Tomasz Chróstny, issued a decision concerning the wakacje.pl website that offers a search engine and sells trips of various trip organisers online. The President of UOKiK challenged the misleading information about prices.

Each consumer may enter their criteria on that website and search for offers of trips abroad based on those parameters, sort them from cheapest to most expensive, and filter by prices. Next, a list of offers is displayed together with prices, which in many instances did not match the prices stated after clicking on offer details: they were higher or lower. In many cases, they did not include the mandatory contribution to the guarantee fund or they were historical prices. The monitoring of the wakacje.pl website carried out by UOKiK in the course of the investigation showed that the problem of price differences applied to at least 40% of analysed offers. This resulted in the distortion of search results: some of them should have been ranked differently on the ranking of the cheapest offers, whereas others were not visible.

When browsing and analysing search results, consumers did not receive reliable and comparable information on trip prices, where the purpose of the so-called listings is to enable consumers to compare offers without the need to analyse and verify each offer separately. In effect, consumers did not find offers that would meet their criteria, while wasting their time examining offers that did not. Due to unreliable operation of the search engine, consumers were being misled and thus could have made non-optimal purchase decisions.

**Examples:**

* 7 days on Cuba, 1 person. Search results: PLN 7,127, after clicking on offer details: PLN 8,475; price difference is PLN 1,348.
* 7 days in Egypt, 1 person. Search results: PLN 2,480, after clicking on offer details: PLN 3,112; price difference is PLN 632.
* 7 days in Spain, 1 person. Search results: PLN 3,737, after clicking on offer details: PLN 3,975; price difference is PLN 238.

*“Prices shown on websites and in search engines should be current and complete, so that the consumer does not have to verify the actual cost of a trip in order to make the most optimal purchase decision for them. An undertaking operating a website that allows to search for and sort offers by price is responsible for presenting them in a transparent way, therefore pursuant to the law it must ensure that the price includes all mandatory fees and specify them at each stage when providing information about trip costs. It cannot be expected that consumers will approach provided information with suspicion, same as it is not allowed to create a situation where a search engine is misleading consumers,*” says Tomasz Chróstny, President of UOKiK.

**For engaging in an unfair practice, Wakacje.pl was fined over PLN 1 million (PLN 1,060,138) by the President of UOKiK.** The President of the Authority ordered that this practice be discontinued. Information about the decision will appear on the company’s website and its social medial profiles. The decision is not final – the company may appeal against it.

These are not the only actions taken by the President of UOKiK with respect to the presentation of information about trip prices to consumers – an investigation is also underway against Travelplanet.pl.

Furthermore, the Authority is also carrying out preliminary investigations into the presentation of prices on the websites of travel agencies, the handling of complaints by tour organisers, and the contents of settlements concluded with consumers in regard to complaints. In addition, the Authority is analysing the compliance of tour organisers with pre-contractual obligations regarding the delivery of information necessary to enter into a contract to consumers. The Authority is also looking into the rules for moderating opinions on the websites of travel agencies and examining how consumers are informed about a change of hotel or that the tour price has increased. The preliminary investigation covers tour operators, including Nowa Itaka, Coral Travel, TUI and Rainbow Tours.