



# **International B2B status report**

**- in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic situation**

**March 2020**



**JAPAN**

## The current situation

- *What are your biggest challenges right now?*
  - For all companies, the biggest challenge is that all tours scheduled up until the end of April are cancelled. Further, all companies are seeing cancellations for May and June as well. Some companies expect a return of traffic for July and August, but this is based on current speculation. All companies are therefore hedging the return of traffic not during the high season but during the coming fall and winter months.
  - With most destinations designated at “Level 2” on the Japanese government’s travel restriction list, which discourages travel outside of Japan, the current scenario will likely continue until this is lowered.
- *Are you still getting a lot of cancellations? Are customers still keen to travel to Norway in the future?*
  - All companies have indicated a constant stream of cancellations. All companies state there are no departures through the end of May. Per the above, all companies anticipate more cancellations for June and possibly into July and August if the travel restriction level is not lowered. The desire to travel to Norway is still there with the customers that initially booked their trips, but it is questionable whether all of them will re-book for future travel (more about this in section 4).
- *How has the cancellation process with the Norwegian suppliers been? Have you experienced any changes in cancellation terms and conditions as a result of the situation we find ourselves in?*
  - Tumlare Corporation, Finn Corporation and Hankyu International indicated that during the period when Norway was still “open” while the Japanese side was volatile and tours were canceled, Norwegian suppliers still demanded cancellation fees, hence negotiations were necessary. However, once the situation changed with Norway becoming volatile, the suppliers have changed their cancellation policies for the benefit of the buyers. Tabikobo, which works only with FITs, stated that Fjord Tours was very fast in waiving cancellation fees for their “Norway in a Nutshell” product. This was very much appreciated by Tabikobo.

# The current situation

- *When speaking to your customers – have you been encouraging them to rebook for later? Have they wanted to rebook, or have they wanted to cancel completely?*
- All companies have encouraged customers who have canceled to rebook for later dates, but with varying success. This is due to the fluidity of the situation, as well as customers not being able to change their travel plans. One company says the rebooking rate of 20% while another has experienced only a 10% rebooking rate. All companies are contemplating to develop new products for the coming shoulder and winter season and hope they will recapture some of the customers lost during this period.



## Market insight relevant for the Norwegian tourism industry

*With the Olympics cancelled, IF the world is on the recovering side, the airlines need to fill seats with guests out from Japan. This can be positive for Norway. The Nordic countries will also be seen upon as a safe destination, compared to the rest of Europe.*

*The focus should be for Autumn (if the pandemic ends this Summer) and Winter.*



Tusen takk!  
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