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# MAKING TOURISM MORE SUSTAINABLE

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## Sustainable development goals

The 17 sustainable development goals adopted by the UN world climate change conference, along with the 169 related targets, provide the GNTB with a framework for the focus and implementation of its sustainability strategy.

All initiatives and activities are allocated to the relevant SDGs, and verifiable key performance indicators (KPIs) are defined for them.



# MAKING TOURISM MORE SUSTAINABLE

**CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**GREEN MEETINGS**

**RURBANISATION**

Cradle to cradle

**LOW-IMPACT TOURISM**

Inclusivity

**RURAL REGIONS**

Structural change

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Travel

**WATER QUALITY**

Communicating knowledge

**CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

Carbon emissions

Seasonality

**PROTECTED NATURAL LANDSCAPES**

Economy for the common good

**SLOWING DOWN**

Offsetting emissions

**BIODIVERSITY**

**PROTECTING RESOURCES**

Environmental communications

**AVOIDING WASTE**

Public transport

Social responsibility

**MANAGING VISITOR FLOWS**

**DIGITALISATION**

Regionality

**TRANSFORMATION**

**QUALITY TOURISM**

Environment

**ACTIVE HOLIDAYS**

**SDGS**

Authenticity

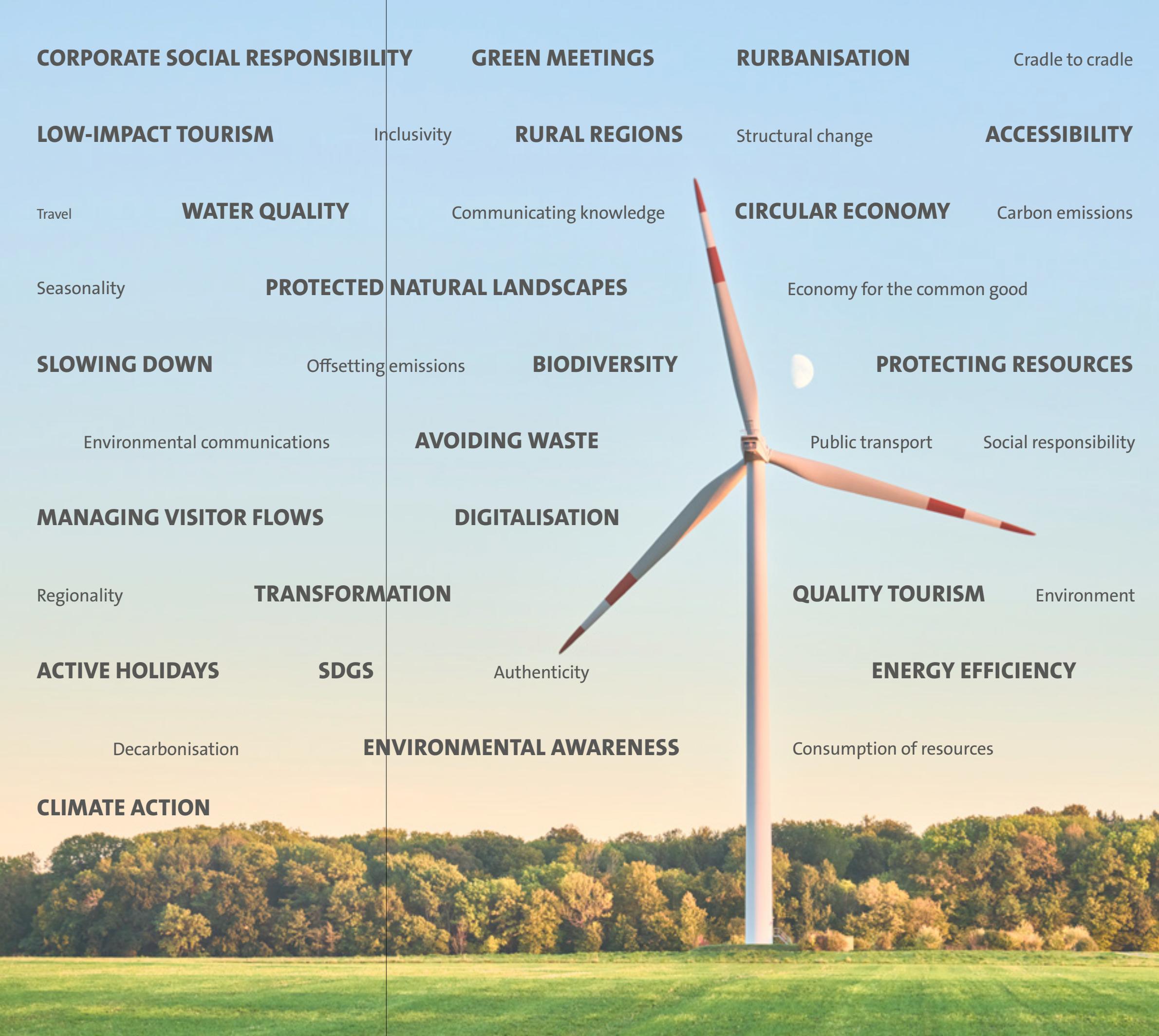
**ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

Decarbonisation

**ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

Consumption of resources

**CLIMATE ACTION**



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## **Claudia Müller** **Member of the** **German Parliament**

Federal Government Coordinator for  
the Maritime Industry and for Tourism

The extreme weather events of the recent past, from heat waves and drought to severe storms and floods, have driven home the point that climate change is starting to hit us with full force. If we fail to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, this human-made climate crisis will escalate to a fully fledged climate disaster. We need to take decisive action and protect the natural environment – the basis of life for all of humankind – with much greater rigour and resolve.

The German government has set clear targets for Germany that are aligned with the European Union's Green Deal. We want to achieve climate neutrality by 2045 and increase the proportion of renewables in the energy mix to 80 per cent by 2030. Delivering on these ambitious goals will require all forces within our society, from policymakers and business to science and academia, to pull together in order to get all sectors on track for the 1.5°C target.

Climate change also affects the tourism industry, of course, which is more dependent than most on the preservation of the environment and the authenticity of the local culture. The sector generates a substantial contribution to the gross value added of the German economy and helps improve international relations by bringing people of different cultures together. In many countries around the world, especially in the Global South, tourism is an important source of income and opens up opportunities for development. At the same time, tourism also accounts for a significant share of carbon emissions, which mainly arise in connection with the journey to and from the destination.

All stakeholders in the tourism industry need to rally behind the cause of transitioning the sector to a sustainable model. In this context, it is important to avoid sustainability being interpreted purely in regard to the environment. To ensure people are still able to travel freely in the future, but can do so in a climate-friendly

# *The approach must be to seek solutions that reconcile economic, environmental and social interests.*

**Claudia Müller, Member of the German Parliament,**  
Federal Government Coordinator  
for the Maritime Industry and for Tourism

and responsible manner, a number of highly complex challenges need to be resolved. The approach must be to seek solutions that reconcile economic, environmental and social interests. Relevant trends and factors range from the digital transformation and changes in the world of work to demographic change and the development of rural and urban areas.

On 6 July 2022, the cabinet of the German government adopted a set of key points for the further development of the national tourism strategy. The objective was to boost the competitiveness of sustainable tourism and to pave the way for the advancement of the national tourism strategy as envisaged in the German government's coalition agreement. Against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic, the sector needs a fresh start in more than one way. Firstly, the transformation of the tourism industry has to be put into action, which means transitioning to climate-neutral, sustainable practices and equipping the sector for the digital future. Secondly, the many structures that we managed to preserve and protect throughout the pandemic need to be maintained and used as a platform to build on, while the industry as a whole must be made more resilient and more competitive. We want to support the tourism industry as it tackles both fronts of this relaunch. The focus will be on three core topics: achieving climate neutrality, driving digitalisation and tackling labour shortages.

An effective and future-proof tourism policy needs to coordinate and link up the efforts of all stakeholders at national level, federal state level and within the sector itself. We are therefore setting up the 'Future of Tourism' platform as a central tool for the implementation of the national tourism strategy. Our aim is to collaborate closely with representatives of the federal states and the tourism industry on this project. I encourage all of us to use this platform as part of our efforts to actively support the national tourism strategy and its objectives.

We know that many organisations are taking action in a broad range of areas, from the development of products and services to the design of their internal processes, in order to get ready for the future. And in this context, a lot is happening in the sustainable travel space.

The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) identified sustainability and accessibility as important areas of action more than ten years ago and has consistently treated them as key facets of Destination Germany's core brand ever since. Now, the GNTB is going even further by using its familiar 'Germany Simply Inspiring' slogan to create a narrative focused on sustainability-oriented, future-proof and quality-conscious tourism. In doing so, the GNTB supports our shared objective of making Destination Germany resilient to crises and climate-friendly as well as a fairer and more innovative place to live, work and visit, and thus strengthening its competitive position in the international arena.

I would like to thank the GNTB and its CEO, Petra Hedorfer, for their hard work and commitment in this regard.

For the first time, the GNTB is publishing a progress report on sustainability in collaboration with the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. This report examines the global challenges in this field and their implications for the tourism industry, documents what Germany's inbound tourism sector has achieved so far, and sets out strategic goals and presents current projects. It is therefore an up-to-date source of practical insights for anyone seeking to promote sustainable tourism.

I hope you will find this report an enjoyable and interesting read.

Claudia Müller





## Dr Dirk Glaeßer

Director for Sustainable Development of Tourism  
at the United Nations World Tourism Organization  
(UNWTO)

*Our approach must be geared towards making tourism sustainable, inclusive and resilient.*

**Dr Dirk Glaeßer,**  
Director for Sustainable Development of  
Tourism at the United Nations World  
Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Tourism has become an integral part of modern life, and its economic importance is now widely recognised. Globally, tourism has grown into a huge industry. In 2019, international arrivals reached a historic record mark of 1.5 billion. And there is more and faster growth to come, driven mainly by a steadily expanding global middle class. As a result, the forecast figure of 1.8 billion international arrivals in 2030 will likely be exceeded by a substantial margin. Such analyses and projections often neglect the domestic tourism sector. But the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), for example, estimates that the total number of journeys made for tourism purposes in 2030 could actually total nearly 38 billion if domestic tourism is included.

However, there is no guarantee that things will go this way. Think of how the tourism industry turned out to be among the sectors hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and measures imposed to contain it, with estimated losses amounting to more than US\$ 3.5 billion for the previous two years.

And as pandemic-related pressures have now eased around the world thanks in part to vaccination campaigns, we risk forgetting that pandemics are often driven by the same environmental impacts that accelerate climate change and the loss of biodiversity. This highlights the extent to which the success of the tourism industry depends on the determination of all sectors to become more sustainable.

We need to seize this moment to transform the way we do things and make sustainability a key factor for competitiveness in the industry. Our approach must be geared towards making tourism sustainable, inclusive and resilient.

And we should always remember the unique power of tourism and positive travel experiences to inspire people and influence how they see and engage with the wider world.

We hope that Germany will be at the forefront of delivering this kind of sustainability-oriented inspiration.

*“Accessible  
tourism must be  
inclusive, i.e. open  
for all, in order to  
be sustainable  
and viable for  
the future.”*

**Jürgen Dusel,**  
Federal Government Commissioner for  
Matters relating to Persons with Disabilities

The fundamental need and desire to venture outside your own home, explore the unknown and expand your horizons is felt as keenly by people with disabilities as by anyone else. However, the world of travel and transport is one in which barriers are still ubiquitous. This applies to all steps in the travel experience, from the planning stage (think: disabled-friendly website design) to the journey there and back, the accommodation and the activities on offer at the destination.

But in fact, accessibility is a standard of quality that everyone benefits from. Accessible tourism must be truly inclusive, i.e. open for all, in order to be sustainable and viable for the future. It is important to really take all types of disability into account, from wheelchair users to people with hearing impairments, visual impairments or learning difficulties, to name but a few.

There are lots of examples of good practice out there already, but the focus has to remain on making Germany a more fully accessible, more innovative and more sustainable destination for tourism. Using accessibility as a key marketing angle is an important and positive step forward.



## **Jürgen Dusel**

Federal Government Commissioner for  
Matters relating to Persons with Disabilities



## **Brigitte Goertz-Meissner**

President of the Board of Directors  
of the German National Tourist Board

### **DEAR READER,**

This is the first progress report on sustainability published by the GNTB. It documents the ways in which the organisation's global work to promote inbound tourism to Germany has made sustainability – that complex balancing act between the interests of the environment, the economy and society – a key area of action for more than ten years. The report sets out the strategic objectives that need to be pursued in order to implement the sustainable development goals adopted by the UN World Climate Conference. It also contains the targets that the GNTB has defined to map out the path towards a more sustainable model of tourism.

We all know that sustainability is one of the most pressing societal challenges of our time. The systemic imbalances that have become entrenched over decades span all countries and sectors.

Climate change is probably the most obvious manifestation of this trend. Extreme weather events, species dying out, melting glaciers and rising sea levels are sending a very clear message: It is high time to change the way we think and to do things differently.

Developed, industrial economies have a pivotal role to play here. Not only because they generate the lion's share of harmful emissions, but also because they have the knowledge and economic muscle required to turn the tide.

But of course significant challenges lie ahead, including for the German tourism industry.

# *Environmental protection and climate action are core elements of the strategic focus.*

**Brigitte Goertz-Meissner,**  
President of the Board of Directors  
of the German National Tourist Board

The GNTB wants to set the tone and the pace for the transition to a more sustainable model of tourism, both at international level in the markets in which it operates and in collaboration with all its partners in the German travel industry. All marketing activities, from the development of campaign concepts to the production of promotional materials, take account of sustainability. Environmental protection and climate action are core elements of the strategic focus, along with the digital transformation that is required to unlock more sustainable solutions.

Last but not least, the organisation is leading by example with its own internal sustainability initiative. As well as simple energy-saving measures, this wide-ranging approach includes transparent procedural guidelines and a commitment to establishing an ESG-compliant working environment.

For over a decade, the GNTB has been building its role as a leading source of expertise in the field of sustainability. The Board of Directors expressly supports the Executive Board's efforts to work together with all employees at the organisation's head office and in its markets, and with its international network, in order to strengthen this role.

We wish the GNTB every success as it continues on this journey.



Brigitte Goertz-Meissner

# CHALLENGES AND AREAS OF ACTION



## **Climate action – a global mission for international tourism**

Tourism obviously has some major drawbacks with regard to its impact on the environment and on cultural assets. But, at the same time, destinations benefit from the economic value that incoming visitors generate. This actively contributes to alleviating poverty, improving people's quality of life, conserving nature and protecting the climate. Tourism, as a form of cultural exchange, also helps to make the world a more open and tolerant place.

These conflicting impacts represent the central challenge for the travel industry. The first steps towards transitioning global tourism to more sustainable models have already been taken. That is good news, because transforming the industry is crucial to unlocking the full potential of tourism as a source of positive social change.

# 12 Reflections on a ‘sustainable new normal’ in inbound tourism to Germany

by Petra Hedorfer, Chief Executive Officer of the GNTB

## 1 Even against a backdrop of various crises, sustainability remains a key challenge for international tourism.

More than two years blighted by the coronavirus pandemic, inflation at levels not seen for decades, a war in Europe and a corresponding energy crisis, and widespread shortages of labour. These are the complex challenges facing international tourism in all major source and target markets.

When it comes to striking a balance between the needs of the economy, the environment and society, sustainability remains a pivotal topic. The aforementioned challenges all feed into that delicate balance and are all inextricably linked to tourism.

In the context of the coronavirus crisis, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has expanded its growth-oriented focus to specifically incorporate a ‘build back better’ strategy, as set out in the publication ‘One Planet Vision for a Responsible Recovery of the Tourism Sector’. This vision also guides the long-term strategic approach for positioning Destination Germany as a sustainable, high-quality travel destination in the international market.



**Petra Hedorfer**  
Chief Executive Officer of the GNTB

## 2 Sustainability has been a dominant topic in public discourse for decades. But the time for talking is over. It’s time to take action.

Founded in 1968, the Club of Rome provides a forum for experts of various disciplines, including academia and industry, to discuss big questions concerning the future. The need for humankind to shift their mindset has been a recurring theme since the organisation’s first major publication, ‘The Limits to Growth’. 1983 marked the formation of Germany’s Green Party, which has gone on to become a powerful voice for sustainability in the political sphere. The same year also saw the formation of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, whose report ‘Our Common Future’, known as the Brundtland report, appeared in 1987. This groundbreaking publication was the first to describe the triangular relationship between the environment, the economy and social responsibility, a model on which countless sustainability strategies have since been based.

**CONCENTRATION OF CO<sub>2</sub>  
IN THE ATMOSPHERE  
TODAY IS**

**48%**

higher than in  
pre-industrial times

Source: Statista 2022.

**UN CLIMATE GOAL  
FOR 2050**

max. **2°C**

Source: UNEP 2021.

In spite of broad global consensus on sustainability matters, initiatives aplenty and notable progress, climate change is descending on us at a faster pace than experts had anticipated even a few years ago. And tourism needs to adapt to these new conditions.

**3 Tourism and climate change are very closely linked. Sustainable tourism has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to climate change mitigation.**

According to the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) of the German Federal Statistical Office, tourism-related activities generated 24.6 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in Germany in 2019 – equivalent to 2.6 per cent of all emissions produced in the country that year.

## Facts, figures and information

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

At the UN Climate Conference in Paris in 2015, the member states of the United Nations adopted 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) with the aim of shifting global development onto an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable path by 2030. The 17 SDGs are supplemented by 169 sub-goals that define specific fields of action. The UNWTO is very vocal about the fact that tourism has an influence on all 17 SDGs.



### EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

A concept developed in order to reduce the net greenhouse gas emissions of EU member states to zero by 2050. The goal is for Europe to become the world's first climate-neutral continent. The targets and measures defined under this programme are grouped into eight topic areas. All of these have a connection to the travel industry's activities and sphere of influence.



Source: European Commission, 2019.

The sector is taking action at three levels in order to reduce its carbon footprint. Firstly, it is focusing on technological advancements such as new drive technologies and alternative fuels for different means of transport. Secondly, companies are constantly working to improve their sustainability performance at an operational level, for example through carbon offsetting schemes. And thirdly, providers are incentivising customers to travel more sustainably, for example by offering programmes that favour rail or coach travel or by extending the duration of trips in order to reduce the carbon footprint per travel day.

For the tourism industry, environmental protection, the prudent use of resources and respect for people and communities are more than commendable objectives – they are survival strategies.

**GLOBAL WARMING TODAY**  
(change in temperature compared with pre-industrial levels)

**+ 1.2°C**

Source: United Nations Environmental Programme 2021.

**POTENTIAL GLOBAL WARMING BY 2030**

**+ 1.5°C**

Source: United Nations Environmental Programme 2021.

## CONTRIBUTION OF GLOBAL TOURISM TO CLIMATE CHANGE

**6.66 TONNES** of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita globally (2020)

**21.3 TONNES** of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for one long-haul family holiday

Source: Statista 2021.

**3/4 OF GLOBAL CARBON EMISSIONS** caused by tourism are attributable **TO TRANSPORT:**

- 40% air travel
- 32% car use
- 3% rail and coach travel

Source: United Nations Environment Programme 2021.

Global tourism accounts for:

- 10%** of global **GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT**
- 7%** of total global **EXPORTS**
- 10%** of **GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT**
- 5%** of global **CARBON EMISSIONS**

Source: United Nations Environment Programme 2021.

**A SHORT-HAUL FLIGHT** generates **SIX TIMES MORE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS** than the equivalent journey by train

Average greenhouse gas emissions (in grams per person per kilometre) of different means of transport:

Plane 201g	Car 139g	Train (long distance) 36g	Coach 32g
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Sources: Statista / German Environment Agency 2019.

# 61%

of international travellers say the pandemic has motivated them to **TRAVEL MORE SUSTAINABLY IN THE FUTURE.**

Source: 2021 booking.com Sustainable Travel Report.

Potentially

# 44 million

**TRAVELLERS** in the top seven source markets for inbound tourism to Germany who are interested in sustainable tourism.

Source: Destination Brand 2021.

**4** Compared with other nations around the world, Germany already has a very strong reputation for sustainability. The task now is to make this strength a core feature of the way Germany is perceived as a travel destination.

The conditions are clearly ripe for Germany. Participants in the 2021 Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index survey not only named environmental protection as the most pressing challenge facing the world right now, but they also ranked Germany in second place out of 20 countries in their assessment of which nation was most likely to come up with effective solutions.

The German government is setting itself very ambitious targets in order to strengthen this positioning. Under the current coalition agreement, the aim is for Germany to become climate-neutral by 2045 and for all sectors of the economy to be brought on track for limiting global warming to 1.5°C. And as an industry that cuts across many different sectors, tourism needs to play its part.

## GERMANY'S RANKING IN INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKS

**6TH PLACE** in the **SDG INDEX**

**GERMANY**

**5TH** place out of 117 countries in the Travel & Tourism Development Index of the World Economic Forum

**ONE OF THE TOP TEN** countries in Europe in the YouGov Travel & Tourism Sustainability Ranking

According to our GNTB Industry Expert Panel, three-quarters of international CEOs think of Germany as a sustainable destination and two-thirds expect demand for sustainable products to increase in the coming years.

**5** The German National Tourist Board promotes sustainable and forward-looking inbound tourism in line with the objectives of the German government.

The **German sustainability strategy** (Deutsche Nachhaltigkeitsstrategie, DNS) is the federal government's primary policy framework in this field. The current version, as amended in 2021, is aligned with the UN SDGs and thus follows internationally agreed parameters for sustainable national development. It also provides a comprehensive foundation for the adoption of sustainable practices in all areas of society, research, politics and business.

The **German government's national tourism strategy** sets out clear guidelines for developing and promoting tourism that is environmentally friendly, climate-conscious and socially responsible.

Implementing the national tourism strategy for inbound tourism to Germany is an extraordinarily complex undertaking. Partners need to be supported with the development of products that are compatible with the climate and the environment. These products then need to be positioned in the international market. And travellers in Germany's main source markets for inbound tourism have to be enthused about the country as a sustainable destination.

*During this legislative period, the German government intends to push ahead with the national tourism strategy and improve the coordination of tourism policy in order to make Germany a sustainable, climate-friendly, fair and innovative tourism destination in the post-pandemic era.*

*As a first step towards this goal, the government has published the following action plan, which comprises cross-sectoral and sector-specific measures and projects from different government departments that relate to climate neutrality, environmental protection, digitalisation, the labour situation and competitiveness.*

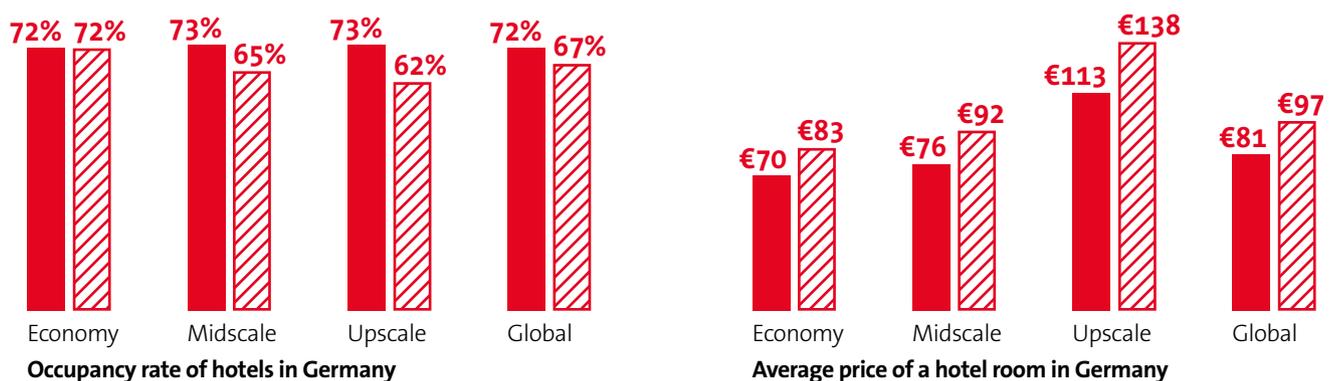
National tourism strategy – government action plan, October 2022

## 6 The many prevailing challenges are likely to ramp up the competition in the international tourism market.

According to data published by Deutsche Bank Research, inflation for 2022 as a whole is expected to be 8.0 per cent in Europe and 8.3 per cent in the US. Travel data provider ForwardKeys has calculated that passenger seat capacity on flights within Europe in the key summer months of July and August 2022 was down by 6.0 per cent compared with May and June. At the same time, hotel prices in Germany were significantly higher in August 2022 than before the pandemic.

### AS HOTEL PRICES RISE, DEMAND SHIFTS TOWARDS THE ECONOMY SEGMENT

■ Aug 2019 ■ Aug 2022; source: MKG Consulting 2022.



# 43%

of international tourists are **'STRONGLY' OR 'VERY STRONGLY' INTERESTED IN SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL.**

Source: Destination Brand 2021.

# 42%

of international travellers perceive Germany as a **SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL DESTINATION.**

Source: Destination Brand 2021.

In this environment of increasingly tough competition between destinations, a stronger focus on sustainability and high-quality tourism could give the Destination Germany brand an edge. The fact that Germany's global image as a tourist destination aligns very well with the preferences of sustainability-oriented holidaymakers supports this theory.

To capitalise on this opportunity, we are repositioning our successful 'Germany Simply Inspiring' slogan as the headline to a new climate-friendly and sustainable narrative. The aim is to highlight Germany's enormous potential as a destination for climate-friendly and quality-conscious tourism in the European market.

## **7 Thorough market research and focused customer targeting are crucial when it comes to marketing sustainable products and services.**

This is the approach we use to expand our market research methodology. Digital sources that deliver data at quick intervals and with short lead times supplement the established data collection methods. We are exploring new areas of research with a focus on international travellers' interest in climate change mitigation and environmental responsibility and the perception of Germany as a sustainable destination in the international market. These areas of research are integrated into the GNTB Inbound Travel Data dashboard, providing partners with useful tools to support their business decisions.

To this end, we are conducting a lifestyle-based analysis of different social groups ('Sinus-Milieus') in the source markets with the aim of establishing their stance towards sustainability. The general Sinus meta-milieu indicators are being supplemented with dedicated surveys of the cultural and sustainability-related affinities of international travellers. The resulting updates and adjustments to the modelling are then incorporated into all communication measures.

Going forward, the 17 SDGs will serve as a guideline when defining KPIs for managing and monitoring the GNTB's activities in the markets.

## **8 Community building will be key to laying solid foundations for a more sustainable vision of tourism in source markets and in Germany as a travel destination.**

Sustainability is not a solo project. We are driving forward community-building efforts through strategic partnerships and cooperation within the German travel industry. Among our many partners in this area are the German Tourism Association (DTV), the Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry (BTW), the German Travel Association (DRV), the German Hotel and Restaurant Association (DEHOGA), the International Coach Tourism Federation (RDA), Travel for All, Deutsche Bahn, the UNESCO World Heritage sites, the associations managing our natural landscapes ('Nationale Naturlandschaften'),

the German Ramblers' Association, the German Cyclists' Federation, the German Wine Institute, Historic Highlights of Germany and the Magic Cities.

As a national tourist board, we have broad and long-standing expertise and a far-reaching network that enable us to provide valuable input and help shape relevant processes together with international tourism industry partners. For example, we have established a very successful cooperation with rail operators from Austria, Switzerland and France and are keen to expand this scheme to rail companies in other European countries.

## 9 Socially responsible tourism can make travel open to all.

Social responsibility means taking account of all customers' needs as part of an inclusive approach. It is extremely important to us that tourism is treated as a social good that everyone can enjoy equally. After all, the greater the breadth of our accessible tourism offering, the more Germany will appeal to the full spectrum of international visitors. Demographic change is further cementing this link.

A national labelling system for accessible services is already in use in Germany. This scheme was originally initiated and funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action in partnership with the National Coordination Board Tourism for All (NatKo) and was implemented by many organisations and associations in a collective effort led by the project's main sponsor, the German Seminar for Tourism (DSFT). The GNTB was closely involved in the development of this project and used its international reach to communicate the Travel for All initiative. Now, we need to further boost the visibility of these services across all marketing channels and establish accessibility as a criterion for assessments of service quality and comfort levels. The inclusion of accessible offers in the knowledge graph project is a significant step forward.



## 10 The digital transformation can unlock breakthroughs in the provision and efficient marketing of sustainable tourism.

Investing in the digital transformation of the industry means investing in sustainable tourism. This has already become evident at many stages of the customer journey.

Digital innovations can inspire customers across a wide range of channels while also facilitating more detailed and efficient travel planning. Customers can be targeted with tailored offers that are not only attractive but also highlight sustainable travel choices, for example with regard to transport options.

Projections based on the analysis of booking system data and real-time digital traffic information can be combined with AI applications in order to manage visitor flows and prevent overcrowding.



The national tourism strategy lays it out clearly: Digitalisation paves the way for progress in key areas of action such as reaching climate neutrality, protecting the natural environment, tackling labour shortages and strengthening the competitiveness of the German tourism industry.

And thanks to our open data/knowledge graph project, the German tourism industry now has access to a flagship data infrastructure project that spans a broad spectrum of sectors and businesses. It provides a clear policy framework, rests on strong consensus (thanks to close collaboration between experts from the research and application sides) and taps the opportunities that open data can offer in terms of elevating the visibility and marketing of sustainable tourism.

The knowledge graph is not just a technical solution but also has the potential to help make tourism more sustainable from an environmental, climate-related and social perspective.

## **11 Sustainability and economic success have become inextricably linked.**

Striking the right balance between economic viability and environmental and social responsibility requires us to think about much more than just protecting nature and our climate. Compliance with ESG (environmental, social and corporate governance) criteria has become a core stakeholder value. More and more consumers are rethinking their behaviour and placing greater importance on environmental and social responsibility and inclusiveness. They engage on a more emotional level with products and businesses that they perceive as sustainable. Investors and companies are also keen to highlight their positive environmental and social impact in order to demonstrate a future-oriented mindset.

In this context, our priority is to prominently communicate how the adoption of sustainable business practices can generate a positive economic impact.

The core topics defined in the German government's national tourism strategy – climate neutrality/environmental protection, tackling labour shortages, digitalisation, and making tourism competitive – clearly focus on this angle. In each of these areas of action, the transition to greener practices is linked to very specific economic development processes. Better resource management, regional partnerships, measures to train and educate employees, digitalisation and support for rural communities are just a few examples of how engagement with sustainability-related topics can make businesses in the tourism industry more successful.

Our research in various source markets shows that customers are willing to spend more on sustainable products if these products meet today's elevated expectations. Sustainability, high quality and social responsibility are thus reflected directly in business performance.

**12 Sustainability is not a distant issue. The onus is on all of us to take action now – including in our own organisation.**

Our approach focuses on instilling a strong sense of responsibility within our own organisation, for example by appointing sustainability coordinators in all departments and obtaining relevant certifications.

Ten years ago, we also sent a clear signal to external stakeholders when we established our innovations management team and defined sustainability as a strategic area of action. Our annual Green Globe certification proves that we have successfully reduced our organisation's own environmental footprint.

In keeping with the German government's sustainability strategy, we have incorporated the sustainable development goals into our corporate governance system as guiding principles for our operations.

Ensuring that measures can be quantified and reviewed is crucial in the current phase. Every initiative that we launch as part of our sustainability strategy and every action that we are taking is linked to specific SDGs and performance metrics. The results delivered by these metrics lay the groundwork for the evidence-based refinement of our strategy and the design of specific projects.

Against this backdrop, we have produced this progress report on sustainability. Using the SDGs as a framework, it provides an overview of our strategic objectives, presents outcomes that have already been achieved and defines specific targets.

▼ The GTM Germany Travel Mart™ is representative of the multi-faceted nature of the GNTB's strategy. Workshops and pre-convention tours focus on particular themes and the entire event is hosted as a 'green meeting'. The 2023 GTM will take place in the city of Essen in Germany's Ruhr region.

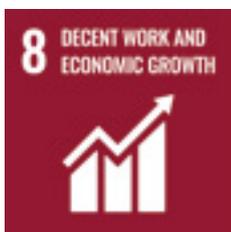


# BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE



## Sustainability through insight

A comprehensive understanding of global socio-economic trends and customer behaviour is essential to an effective evidence-based tourism marketing strategy that is viable for the future. The international perception of Germany's sustainability credentials, both in general and as a travel destination, plays a key role here. Connected insights into climate change, declining biodiversity and the resulting challenges can help to raise awareness of the issues among customers and the trade.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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### TARGET PARTICULAR MARKETS AND GROUPS WITH AN EXPRESS FOCUS ON ASPECTS RELATED TO SUSTAINABILITY AND CULTURE

- Collate market-specific research for business decisions concerning inbound tourism
- Define the lifestyles led by people who would have an affinity for climate action and sustainability ('Sinus-Milieus')
- Bring together all relevant data for the purposes of marketing Germany as a destination for sustainable tourism

### FURTHER DEVELOP MARKET ANALYSIS FOR ACTIVE DATA MANAGEMENT

- Integrate innovative digital tools into business intelligence
- Use sources that deliver data at frequent intervals and with short lead times

### INTENSIFY KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- Share current market-specific expertise
- Develop new ways of sharing knowledge

## OUTCOME

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### DATA ANALYSIS

- Relevant primary data on eco-friendly travel collected through proprietary surveys (e.g. Quality Monitor) and commissioned reports (IPK International)
- Secondary data from existing research (e.g. Destination Brand, Euromonitor, EPI, booking.com) analysed and incorporated

### KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- 'Inbound Travel Trends Germany' dashboard created as a tool for decision-makers in the travel industry to quickly and easily access a wide range of insights into their markets
- Business insights relating to sustainability and climate action incorporated into all publications of GNTB

### COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

- Launch of a B2B expert panel comprising more than 250 key accounts from the international travel industry
- Ongoing dialogue with partners in the German travel industry, for example in the form of workshops at the GTM and participation in the Sustainable Travel Destinations Excellence Initiative and Green Tourism Camp
- Germany presented as a sustainable travel destination at international forums such as the World Travel Market and events hosted by the UN World Tourism Organization and the European Travel Commission

## NEXT STEPS

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### PSYCHOGRAPHIC SEGMENTATION

- Collect data on lifestyle-based 'milieus' in 19 markets and use this to fine-tune strategies for targeting particular groups
- Targeted collection of data on affinities of certain lifestyles for sustainability-related and cultural topics in addition to standard Sinus meta-milieu indicators

### INBOUND SUSTAINABILITY TRAVEL TRENDS GERMANY DASHBOARD

- Market-specific data on sustainability and climate aspects for all source markets, including general interest, perception

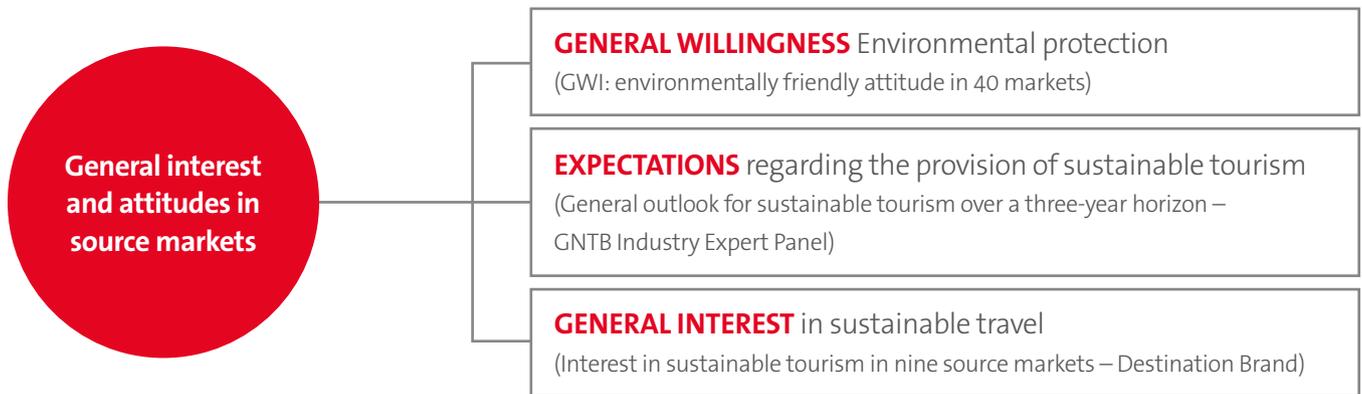
(whether the destination is a good fit for a marketing theme) and behaviour (as a traveller)

### EVIDENCE-BASED KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT CONCERNING WEB3/METVERSE

- Establish an advertising presence in the metaverse (programmatic)
- Promote current campaigns such as Embrace German Nature, FeelGood and the VR application 'German natural landscapes'
- Use insights as a basis for decisions on further steps in relation to Web3 and share these insights with partners

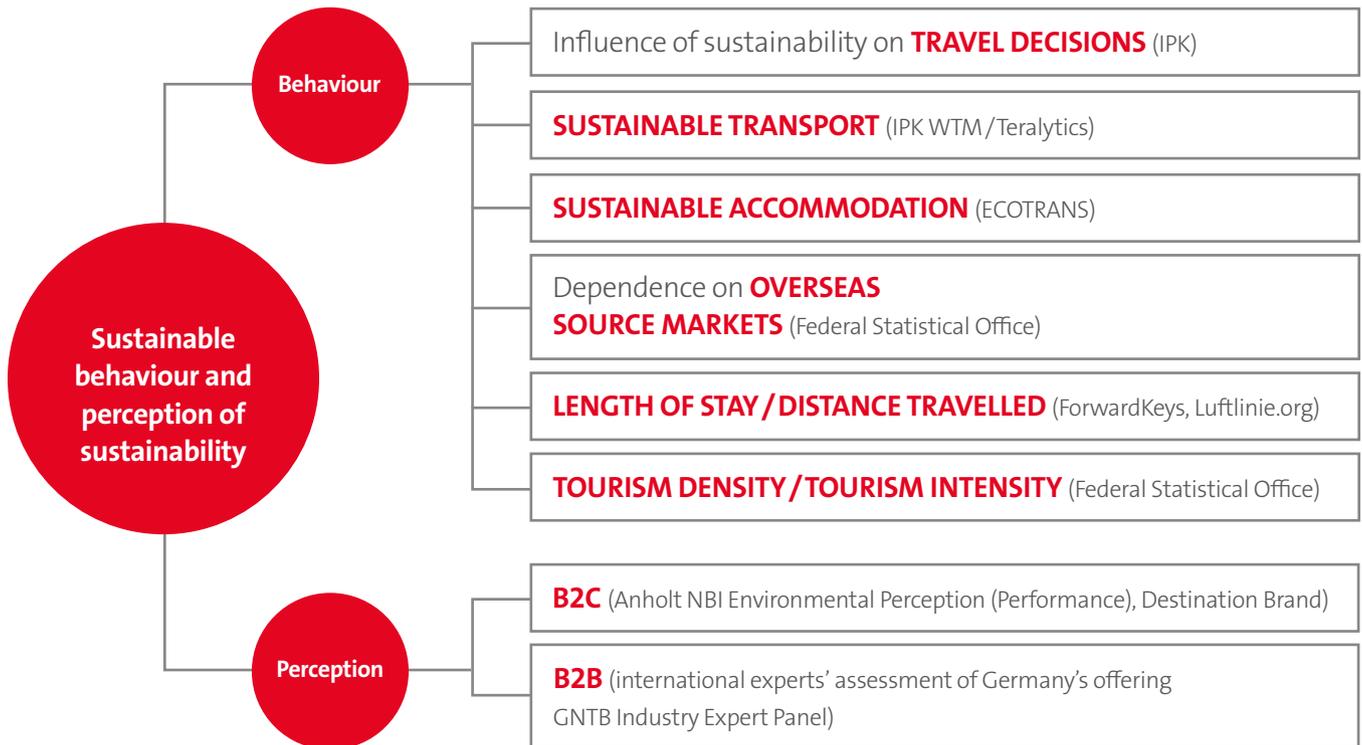
## Assess the status quo – define goals – measure success

The GNTB aims to harness business intelligence in order to understand actual sustainability behaviour. To this end, we are conducting detailed analyses of databases and key figures concerning the relevance of neighbouring and overseas markets for Destination Germany, the duration of stays, shifts in the modal split and tourism density and intensity. The GNTB obtains this data from analyses of the World Travel Monitor (IPK International), statistical databases (ECOTRANS for sustainable accommodation), incoming tourists’ responses to its proprietary Quality Monitor survey of the German tourism industry, and official government statistics.



**Tools to monitor** sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism: **SDG 12 B1 Index**

**Carbon footprint:** Dependence on overseas markets, GHG intensity of tourism, carbon footprint per day/person (kg CO<sub>2</sub>)



In order to use this data even more effectively for the development of sustainable products and associated marketing activities, the GNTB is working on a KPI-based approach in 2022/23 for monitoring performance on an ongoing basis. It has also been adding sustainability-related aspects to the existing research/survey infrastructure this year. These focus, for example, on Germany’s reputation for sustainability in areas such as transport, accommodation, food and drink, and leisure activities.

## Business intelligence as a strategic area of action

The GNTB's Business Intelligence (BI) function collects information on markets, trends and opinions, analyses data sets, studies and publications, identifies topics that will shape the future and incorporates the insights it gains from these into the organisation's processes. In order to provide effective support to the GNTB in its efforts to make tourism more sustainable, BI endeavours to accurately reflect Germany's positioning, report transparently on progress and implement future-oriented approaches for data-driven solutions. The tools provided by BI support important decisions on inbound tourism to Germany by decision-makers at the GNTB, its partners in the German travel industry, and relevant stakeholders in the international travel trade. The distillation of these analyses into a KPI-based approach creates a consistent basis on which Destination Germany can be positioned as a sustainable destination at international level.

## Proprietary surveys and analysis of third-party data as an evidence-based foundation for sustainability-oriented initiatives

### COLLECTION OF INTERNATIONAL DATA ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

The GNTB continually analyses general attitudes towards sustainable practices worldwide, using the GlobalWebIndex and the Destination Brand series of surveys by inspektour for the consumer side and the GNTB Industry Expert Panel for the B2B side.

### RESEARCH INTO GERMANY'S IMAGE AROUND THE WORLD

As part of its analysis of the annual Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index survey, the GNTB examines how Destination Germany is perceived internationally in terms of eco-friendliness. In addition, the GNTB uses the findings of the Destination Brand surveys to track Germany's suitability for promotion as a sustainable travel destination. Rankings within the NBI can be used to draw comparisons between competitors. The NBI has provided a yardstick for Germany's own performance since 2010.

## GNTB Industry Expert Panel

### LEADING DECISION-MAKERS FROM ACROSS THE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TRADE FORM THE GNTB INDUSTRY EXPERT PANEL

**70%** anticipate continued **GROWTH IN DEMAND** over the next three years

**55%** are already seeing an **INCREASE IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM BOOKINGS**

Source: GNTB Industry Expert Panel Q3 2022.

The GNTB set up the Industry Expert Panel, which screens the opinions of around 260 key accounts in the international travel trade at quarterly intervals, in order to gain a better understanding of sentiment in the B2B segment. The findings are used to prepare information such as the experts' three-year outlook for sustainable tourism bookings.

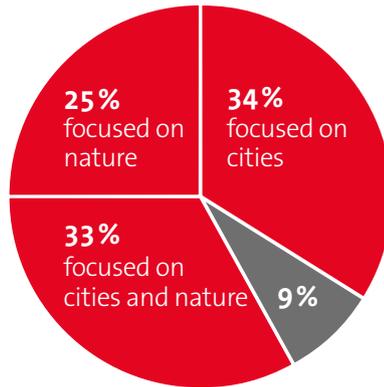


# Strategic objectives of the GNTB in the field of sustainable tourism

## COMBINE CITY BREAKS AND HOLIDAYS IN NATURE IN ORDER TO LEVERAGE THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF RURAL REGIONS

Interest of travellers from around the world in holidays that combine city and countryside locations

(Responses to the question: “Would you be interested in combining a city break with exploring nearby countryside?”); source: IPK, September 2022.



**91%**

are interested in combined city and nature holidays

9% are not interested

## LONGER STAYS BRING DOWN THE CARBON FOOTPRINT PER TRAVEL DAY

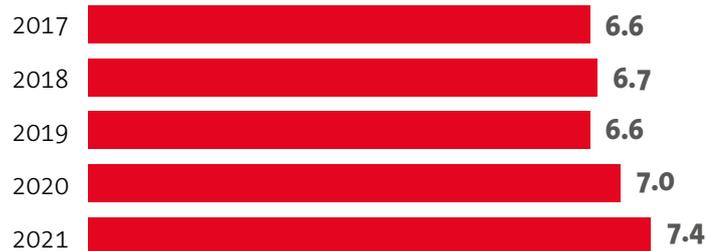
Travel from European countries to Germany  
Average length of stay in days



Overseas travel to Germany  
Average length of stay in days



Overall average  
Average length of stay in days



Sources: World Travel Monitor® 2017–2021, IPK International, preliminary figures for 2021.

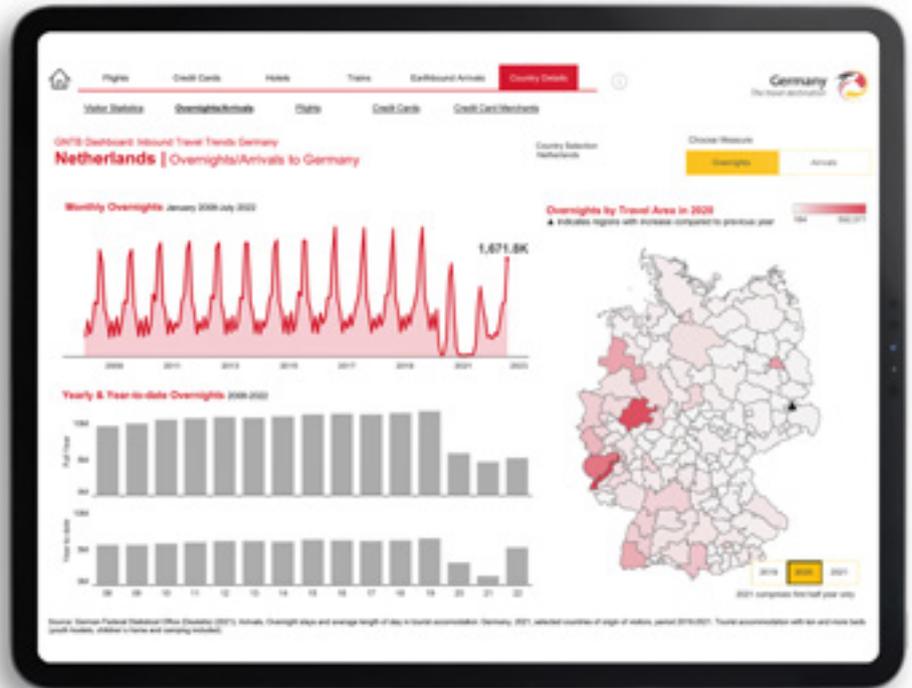
The GNTB is continually driving forward its use of business intelligence data as **THE BASIS FOR DESIGNING AND COORDINATING STRATEGIC CAMPAIGNS.**

# Ramping up the analysis of digital data sources

## INBOUND TRAVEL TRENDS GERMANY DATA ANALYSIS DASHBOARD

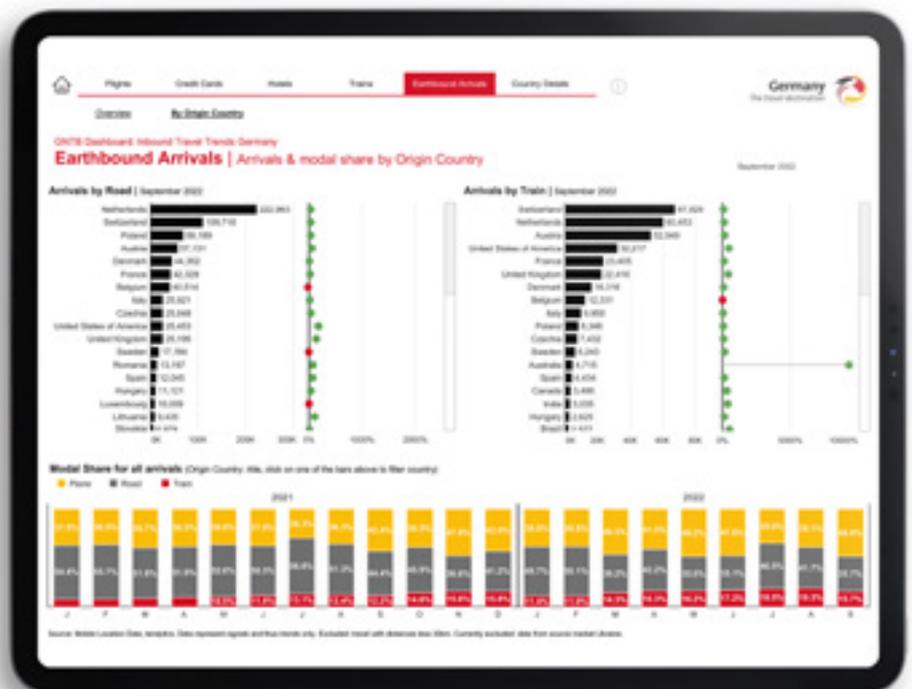
The GNTB has developed the Inbound Travel Trends Germany (ITTG) data analysis dashboard as a means of granting organisations in the German travel industry rapid access to the latest business insights. This innovative market research tool is one of the means by which the GNTB is helping to make inbound tourism to Germany even more sustainable.

By providing access to a range of digital data sources, the ITTG enables users to monitor market movements far more quickly. It also allows for much more precise forecasting as real-time bookings data filters down incredibly rapidly into the system.



## TIME SERIES ANALYSING THE MODAL SPLIT OVERALL AND BROKEN DOWN BY SOURCE MARKET

Since mid-2022, the ITTG has also been providing data on international tourists travelling to Germany via overland routes. By analysing aggregated, anonymised mobile phone data and overlaying this with the locations of Germany's travel infrastructure, a picture can be built up of how many international arrivals from different source markets use rail and road transport to arrive at their final destination. This enables all market participants to promote climate-friendly transport choices for travellers in a targeted manner and to subsequently measure the success of such marketing activities.



# GLOBAL MARKETING



## **Making sustainable tourism a USP at international level**

The stated aim of the GNTB's global marketing activities is to firmly establish sustainability as a core feature of the Destination Germany brand on the international stage. All marketing themes and tools are being reviewed regarding their potential to contribute to this sustainability-oriented strategy and are adjusted as necessary.

As well as running campaigns on specific themes, the GNTB collaborates closely with the travel sector and global online platforms in its source markets in order to promote sustainability topics. The GNTB supports partners in Germany's inbound tourism industry with their initiatives for the development of climate-friendly and environmentally responsible offerings.

KPIs are defined for all measures in order to monitor performance and provide insight for future decisions on strategic positioning.

# Strategic focus of the GNTB's global marketing activities on a sustainable future for tourism

## THE GNTB IS STEADILY EXPANDING ITS ACTIVITIES AIMED AT POSITIONING GERMANY AS A SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL DESTINATION.

Against the backdrop of current societal challenges, it is incorporating additional angles into the content of its brand communication. This strategic approach is accompanied by a whole host of structural measures in the marketing function.

# GERMANY SIMPLY INSPIRING

stands for

**PRUDENT USE** of resources

**HIGH-QUALITY TOURISM**

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**TRAVEL CONCEPTS** that are  
**KIND TO NATURE AND THE CLIMATE**

## A NEW NARRATIVE USES THE 'GERMANY SIMPLY INSPIRING' SLOGAN TO CONVEY DESTINATION GERMANY'S POWERFUL BRAND IDENTITY

The GNTB has been using its 'Germany Simply Inspiring' slogan since 2017 in order to communicate Germany's positive image as a travel destination and its wide-ranging tourism experiences to a global audience.

In the post-pandemic recovery phase, and against the backdrop of the transition to a more sustainable and more digital economy and society, the GNTB is relaunching 'Germany Simply Inspiring' as a new brand narrative that portrays Destination Germany as a champion of sustainable tourism. While sustainability and accessibility have been an integral element of the core brand across the product lines for the past ten years, they are now being put front and centre in the brand communication. In terms of content, the GNTB is sharpening the focus of its brand communication with a strong emphasis on 'green' marketing.

All aspects of marketing are being systematically aligned with the sustainable development goals, right up to the use of visuals in campaign communications. The narrative is being shaped by themes such as protected natural landscapes, the combination

of city and countryside experiences, the use of climate-friendly transport options and renewable energies, regional products and barrier-free travel.

Green marketing also includes the responsible use of technology and service providers.

Verified compliance with certain sustainability standards will become a mandatory part of supplier selection. Aspects that will come under scrutiny include the carbon footprint of hosting service providers in IT, environmental and climate protection measures in the context of film productions, and compliance with ESG criteria by producers of marketing materials.

Moreover, the GNTB is taking an important step forward not only in its collaboration with partners in Germany's inbound tourism sector but also with regard to the expansion of its international travel industry network. Where the tourism products or services on offer had previously been the benchmark, the GNTB is now also placing a greater emphasis on the CSR profile of potential partners in certain areas.



# Health tourism

Germany's stringent certification standards for spa and health resorts constitute a significant competitive advantage at international level. Promoting these assets to a global audience supports the German government's objective of developing tourism in rural regions. All in all, Germany boasts more than 350 spa and health resorts, spread out over the entire country. They are another important selling point for Destination Germany's sustainable, high-quality tourism offering. In its international marketing activities, the GNTB focuses on the sustainability-related aspects of health tourism. These include the preservation of traditional treatment methods, Germany's commitment to protecting the environment, location-specific treatments and remedies as drivers of regional prosperity, and examples of sustainable energy management.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

Help spa and health resorts to get certified and highlight the wealth of culture that they offer

Communicate strong focus on accessibility

Strengthen rural areas by using the huge choice (350-plus certified spa and health resorts) as a marketing angle

Emphasise that spa and health tourism can be enjoyed in all parts of the country

Entice international travellers to stay for longer

Promote alternative reasons for travel, such as preventive therapies, health treatments and wellbeing

## OUTCOME

### MORE PUBLICITY FOCUSED ON REGIONAL DIVERSITY, SUSTAINABILITY, TRADITIONAL SPA CULTURE

- 243,000 visits registered on microsite promoting sustainable tourism, e.g. outdoor holidays and natural remedies
- 163.3 million social media impressions
- 52 million contacts generated through articles in the media
- Sustainable facets of Destination Germany have become a topic for discussion among experts

### TARGET AUDIENCE EXPANDED

- Tailored promotion of specific key topics (medical services, rehabilitation, prevention, wellness, spa/health treatments) to different target groups

### CLOSER COLLABORATION WITH MARKET PARTICIPANTS

- Specialised providers brought on board as new partners

## NEXT STEPS

### CONTINUE TO PROMOTE RELEVANT TOPICS / TIE-IN WITH THEME-BASED CAMPAIGNS

- FeelGood, Embrace German Nature

### POSITION RELEVANT TOPICS AT EVENTS FOR INDUSTRY EXPERTS AND THE MEDIA

- Trade events such as Accessible Tourism Day
- Press trips, etc.

## BEST PRACTICE

### GERMAN.SPA.TRADITION. CAMPAIGN WITH THE GERMAN SPA ASSOCIATION

The GNTB's global German.Spa.Tradition. campaign presents Germany as a holiday destination with a high-quality health and wellness offering and a long tradition of spas.

### Further examples of best practice

- Publication of health and spa resorts brochure in print and online (2013)
- Google Display campaign promoting health-focused travel to Germany (2014)
- Publication of 'Enjoy with ease' consumer brochure (2015)



# Natural landscapes and active holidays

Germany ranked

**2<sup>nd</sup>**

**AS A NATURE-BASED  
TRAVEL DESTINATION  
FOR EUROPEANS  
IN 2021**

Source: IPK 2022.

Growing interest in low-impact tourism is helping to achieve climate goals and making tourism more resilient. People wanting to holiday in nature and enjoy outdoor activities are spoilt for choice in Germany. More than one-third of the land area is under special protection as a nature park or national park, and it has around 200,000 kilometres of walking trails and 70,000 kilometres of long-distance cycle routes. Moreover, Germany's high scores in the Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index (NBI) are a strong USP for international marketing purposes. In 2022, Germany achieved a score of 4.92 for environmental responsibility, which put it in tenth place out of the 60 developed countries ranked by the NBI.

The GNTB has been promoting the natural beauty and outdoor tourism assets of Germany as a travel destination for over a decade.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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**Raise the profile of protected natural landscapes**

**Increase the number of overnight stays by foreign visitors in rural parts of Germany**

**Promote nature-based experiences and activities**

**Collaborate with experts to highlight the huge breadth of activity-based holiday options available in Germany**

## OUTCOME

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### VISIBILITY OF OUTDOOR OFFERING BOOSTED AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

- #WanderlustGermany campaign featuring six content creator videos; 151 million impressions and 86% view through rate
- 2022 Embrace German Nature campaign

### ‘GERMAN NATURAL LANDSCAPES’ VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE PRODUCED

- Immersive, interactive 3D world for exploring Germany’s natural landscapes and options for active holiday pursuits

### HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT PRODUCED IN COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS

- Nationale Naturlandschaften e.V. (formerly Europarc), German Ramblers’ Association, Association of German Nature Parks, German Cyclists’ Federation (ADFC)

## NEXT STEPS

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### CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN RURAL REGIONS

- Compose a top-ten list of walks and cycle routes that venture into the countryside from an urban starting point

### 2023 ‘EMBRACE GERMAN NATURE’ CAMPAIGN

### FACT-FINDING AND INFLUENCER TRIPS TO PROTECTED NATURAL LANDSCAPES

### USE OPTIONS FOR VIRTUAL EXPLORATION TO BOLSTER APPETITE FOR TRAVEL

- International roll-out of immersive VR experiences showcasing natural landscapes
- Increase the use of immersive technologies

### PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE CONTENT ON CAMPING AND TREKKING

## BEST PRACTICE

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### 2020 #WANDERLUSTGERMANY CAMPAIGN

In the first year of the coronavirus pandemic, the GNTB put outdoor holidays in the spotlight, focusing on ways to explore Germany’s stunning natural landscapes on foot and by bike. After global tourism ground to a halt due to lockdowns, customer preferences shifted away from group travel and towards nature-oriented holidays and travel by car. The campaign used digital communication to generate momentum for the reopening of tourism.

### Further examples of best practice

- Pocket guides for walking and cycling (2013)
- ‘Naturally unique’ marketing campaign (2014) promoting sustainable tourism concepts in selected natural landscapes
- ‘Holidays in the heart of nature’ theme-based campaign (2016)
- Embrace German Nature campaign (2022)
- 360° films themed around cycling and Germany’s coastal regions

# Environmentally friendly travel



The largest share of a trip's carbon footprint is produced on the journey to and from the destination. It is therefore encouraging to see that the proportion of people opting to travel by train rose to a 15-year high in 2021 (IPK International 2022). In order to further promote this trend, the GNTB is continually ramping up its collaboration with transport operators that facilitate low-carbon travel. Where air travel is unavoidable, we want to encourage longer stays in order to reduce the carbon footprint per travel day.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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**Increase the visibility of climate-friendly products and services**

**Strengthen partnerships with European rail and coach operators and put out more content about these**

**Intensify initiative to raise awareness among partners**

**Step up climate-friendly measures**

## NEXT STEPS

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**USE CLIMATE-FRIENDLY TRANSPORT FOR MARKETING-RELATED TRAVEL**

- Continue to build up the green transport options for influencer and press trips
- Ensure that participants of GNTB events can reach the venues by climate-friendly means of transport

**OFFSETTING**

- Look into alternatives to offsetting such as sustainable aviation fuels

**SUSTAINABILITY CAMPAIGN**

- 2023 FeelGood campaign with increased focus on green transport

**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

- Raising the subject of innovative transport solutions at events such as the GNTB's Sustainable Tourism Day

## BEST PRACTICE

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**CAMPAIGNS ('SPARSCHIENE') WITH THE AUSTRIAN FEDERAL RAILWAYS (ÖBB) SINCE 2014**

**Further examples of best practice**

- 'Get onboard and explore' campaign in partnership with Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) and Rheinalp (Switzerland)
- 'Germany off the beaten track' macro-regional influencer campaigns in south-west Europe
- 'Discover Germany by bike' VR application
- 'Undiscovered gems in Germany' campaign with three rail companies in Sweden (since 2019)
- FeelGood sustainability campaign with Deutsche Bahn as a premium partner
- 2021 FeelGood influencer campaign, e.g. with organic hotels

## OUTCOME

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**PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS WITH COACH AND RAIL OPERATORS EXPANDED**

- Marketing activities with rail companies in neighbouring European countries ramped up
- Strategic partnership with Deutsche Bahn expanded
- Cooperation with the RDA International Coach Tourism Federation expanded

**INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY FAMILIAR WITH RELEVANT PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPTIONS**

- Climate-friendly forms of travel regularly feature in trade communication

**OFFSETTING**

- The GNTB offsets any emissions associated with business and marketing air travel, including workshops, trade events and familiarisation trips as well as press and influencer tours
- Based on projections from May 2022, offsetting payments for flights in 2022 are expected to amount to €20,626

**CARBON CALCULATOR**

- Carbon emissions calculator for transport integrated into the germany.travel website

**FORECASTING IMPROVED TO FACILITATE BETTER DEMAND MANAGEMENT**

- New technologies for forecasting transport utilisation introduced
- Monthly tracking of the modal split based on collection of mobile phone data

# Cultural heritage and UNESCO



With 51 World Heritage sites, over 6,000 museums, the highest density of theatre and opera venues in the world and around one million events a year, Germany is the top travel destination for culturally minded Europeans. This provides a great starting point for promoting it as a high-quality destination with a broad range of options for sustainable tourism. Germany's appeal for this target audience springs not only from a wealth of interesting places of cultural and historical significance but also from UNESCO World Heritage sites and a rich tapestry of cultural landscapes that have evolved over time.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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**Combine city breaks with attractive excursions into the surrounding countryside**

**Encourage longer stays by promoting attractive multi-destination travel programmes**

**Raise the profile of Germany's position as the no. 1 destination for culture-oriented travel in Europe**

**Communicate cultural identity  
Bring history and values to life**

**Collaborate with the German UNESCO World Heritage Sites Association on sustainability initiatives**

**Publicise sustainable, high-quality experiences at and around UNESCO World Heritage sites**

## NEXT STEPS

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**FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED CONTENT MODULES FOR UNESCO SITES**

**BUILD MULTI-DESTINATION PROGRAMMES CENTRED AROUND WORLD HERITAGE SITES**

**CREATE DIGITAL FILM MATERIAL TO STRENGTHEN BRAND AWARENESS AND BRAND COMMUNICATION**

## BEST PRACTICE

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**'TIMETRAVEL' GLOBAL CAMPAIGN IN 2014 FOCUSED ON UNESCO THEME**

Campaign objectives included raising the profile of UNESCO World Heritage sites, driving up the number of overnight stays by international visitors and boosting the economies of less well-developed rural regions through the promotion of tourism. Alongside traditional marketing tools, the GNTB is increasingly using digital communication channels such as the World Heritage mobile app and the blogger-led Time Travel by Train campaign, which was delivered in collaboration with UNESCO Germany.

## OUTCOME

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**GTM GERMANY TRAVEL MART™**

- Around 160 German tourism organisations, 200 international buyers, 90 journalists

**SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED COLLABORATION WITH THE GERMAN UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES ASSOCIATION KICK-STARTED**

- Sustainability in tourism a focus of workshops and other formats for sharing experiences

**KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT**

- UNESCO content and objectives for 2023 presented

**INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TRADE BRIEFED ON UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES**

**GROUNDWORK FOR FORECASTING PUT IN PLACE TO SUPPORT MANAGEMENT**

- Travel industry surveyed as part of the GNTB Industry Expert Panel
- Market research focused on cultural highlights and UNESCO

**GERMAN.LOCAL.CULTURE. CAMPAIGN**

- 775,000 views on the microsite
- 34 million impressions via programmatic marketing

**Further examples of best practice**

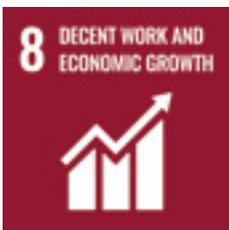
- Theme-based PR projects for the Luther Decade (2007–2017)
- 100 years of Bauhaus in 2019 – activities included an international media summit
- PR events in connection with the 2020 Beethoven anniversary
- Collaborations and PR events in selected markets to prepare the ground for the 2022 Passion Play in Oberammergau
- 2015 tour of blogger Kash Bhattachariya, visiting all German UNESCO sites by public transport in 40 days

# Traditions and customs

## Rural regions



Thriving traditions and customs and their regional roots are an integral element of the Destination Germany brand. The GNTB collects testimonials to make local communities a part of its campaigns and thereby builds bridges to ensure that the regions benefit from the value created by tourism.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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**Strengthen tourism in rural areas**

**Highlight regional examples of the sustainable circular economy**

**Raise the profile of different regional traditions**

**Promote travel outside peak season**

## OUTCOME

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### NUMBER OF OVERNIGHT STAYS BY INTERNATIONAL VISITORS IN RURAL AREAS INCREASED

- 29 per cent rise between 2009 and 2019  
(source: Federal Statistical Office 2010/2020.)

### SHARPER FOCUS ON HOLIDAYS IN NATURE AND TRIPS BASED ON OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

- IPK surveys in 2021: One in three travellers interested in visiting Germany had plans to go on a nature-oriented holiday within the next six months.

### PORTFOLIO OF FACT-FINDING TOURS EXPANDED

- More than 20 group press tours in 2021 and 2022 to destinations other than major German cities
- At the 2022 GTM Germany Travel Mart™, buyers and journalists got to know small communities and towns in Upper Bavaria as part of a programme of more than 15 tours.

## NEXT STEPS

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### EXTEND DURATION OF STAYS BY ADDING REGIONAL ACTIVITIES TO PROGRAMMES

### CAMPAIGNS FOR 2023

- UNESCO World Heritage
- FeelGood
- Embrace German Nature

## BEST PRACTICE

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### GLOBAL 'TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS' CAMPAIGN IN 2015

By showcasing authentic traditions and the ways in which communities have integrated them into modern life, the GNTB highlighted cultural facets outside the ever-popular city breaks segment. It tapped into a resurgence of interest in traditional lifestyles, drove forward efforts to promote rural regions and bolstered Germany's image as a sustainable travel destination. For the first time, an interactive 'social wall' was created that used the #joingermantradition hashtag to pool content produced in connection with the campaign on Twitter and Instagram.

### Further examples of best practice

- 'Beyond the cities – holidays in the German countryside' campaign (2014)
- 'Germany off the beaten track', an annual macro-regional influencer campaign (since 2018)
- Digital 'Spellbinding winters in Germany' campaign in collaboration with Secret Escapes (2019)
- Cross-media digital campaign 'Message in a bottle' as part of the 'Young Danube' initiative, published in Bergwelten (2021)
- Christmas campaigns (since 2021)
- 2021/22 German.Local.Culture.



# Food and drink

According to the Quality Monitor survey of the German tourism industry, 7 per cent of foreign holidaymakers choose to visit Germany because of the variety and quality of the food and drink on offer. Going to restaurants and cafés is the second most popular holiday activity, behind only sightseeing in the top ten (survey period: May 2015 to April 2022). As demand from consumers for vegetarian and vegan options increases, the regional diversity of German food and drink puts Destination Germany in a strong position to attract visitors who are keen to try out the local cuisine.



Relevant SDGs



Scan to watch the teaser video  
for the Culinary Germany campaign

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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**Showcase seasonal and regional specialities**

**Demonstrate regional economic cycles**

**Highlight the sustainability efforts of cafés and restaurants**

**Present the diversity of the German culinary experience**

- Regional and seasonal specialities
- Local markets, food festivals, street food, food trucks
- Simple dishes and high-end cuisine

## OUTCOME

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**GNTB SUSTAINABILITY STANDARD INTRODUCED**

- Focus trained on regional food and drink at GNTB events, such as workshops, press trips and trade events
- Vegan and vegetarian dishes integrated

**INTERNAL GNTB GUIDELINES INTRODUCED FOR ALL EVENTS RUN BY THE FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVE OFFICES**

**COOPERATION EXPANDED**

- German Wine Institute
- Cittaslow

**GNTB'S GERMAN BROTZEIT ALEXA SKILL RELAUNCHED**

## NEXT STEPS

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**PROMOTE VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN OFFERINGS INTERNATIONALLY**

**UPDATE THE 'EXPERIENCE & ENJOY' SECTION OF THE WEBSITE WITH NEW CONTENT, INCLUDING ON LOCAL PRODUCERS AND SUSTAINABLE CAFÉS AND RESTAURANTS**

## BEST PRACTICE

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**CULINARY GERMANY CAMPAIGN (2018)**

The rich variety of regional cuisines and local delicacies, and all the many places to enjoy them, are one of the strengths of Destination Germany. By emphasising regional and seasonal produce, the GNTB is supporting Germany's positioning as a sustainable travel destination and promoting tourism in rural areas.

**Further examples of best practice**

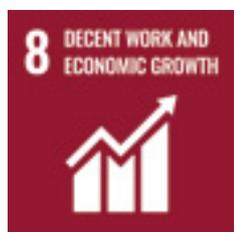
- Theme for 2012: wine heritage and nature in Germany
- German.Local.Culture. campaign (2021/22)

# Spotlight on sustainability in the city break segment



Germany is firmly established as Europe's number-one destination for cultural and city breaks. Visitor numbers are now steadily increasing following the decline in international tourists visiting towns and cities during the pandemic. In the period January to July 2022, German cities with a population of over 100,000 accounted for 53.4 per cent of overnight stays by visitors from other countries. In its international marketing, the GNTB is increasingly shining the spotlight on cities' efforts to be more sustainable. This is communicated alongside the many authentic experiences on offer in urban settings, the cities' ties to their regions and the extensive tourist attractions in the local area.

In the fifth edition of the Arcadis Sustainable Cities Index, Arcadis – a planning and management consultancy for built assets, environment, infrastructure and water – examines the success factors that enable cities to improve prosperity and quality of life through sustainable solutions. Of the 100 cities included in the index, three of Germany's major urban centres have made it into the top 20: Berlin (fifth place), Frankfurt (16th place), Munich (19th place).



Relevant SDGs



Scan to access the microsite for  
the German.Local.Culture. campaign

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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**Entice international travellers to stay for longer**

**Promote the areas surrounding the cities**

**Shine the spotlight on German cities' efforts to be more sustainable and accessible**

**Present the full range of urban destinations, from small towns to big cities**

## OUTCOME

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### SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Cooperation established with Cittaslow (the international network of cities where living is good), Magic Cities and Historic Highlights with the aim of promoting sustainability

### GERMAN.LOCAL.CULTURE. 2021 AND 2022

- Marketing focused on themes such as urban gardening, artisan crafts and local producers, and regional and seasonal dishes

### SUSTAINABILITY-CONSCIOUS CITY BREAKS FEATURED MORE HEAVILY IN THE FEEL GOOD CAMPAIGN

- Incorporated into marketing
- Quality of sustainable products and services in cities presented during journalist and influencer trips

## NEXT STEPS

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### STRENGTHEN SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED PARTNERSHIPS

- Collaborate with Magic Cities, Historic Highlights and the German UNESCO World Heritage Sites Association in 2023

### INCORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY INTO MARKETING ACTIVITIES

- Promote cities' sustainable tourism offerings in the GNTB's 2023 UNESCO campaign

## BEST PRACTICE

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### GLOBAL GERMAN.LOCAL.CULTURE. CAMPAIGN 2021 AND 2022

The GNTB's German.Local.Culture. campaign is a cross-media endeavour highlighting exciting facets of German towns and cities, such as customs, artisan crafts and local producers, food and drink, culture and architecture, and the countryside and nature on the cities' doorstep.

### Further examples of best practice

- 'Germany off the beaten track' annual influencer campaign (since 2018)
- German Summer Cities inspiration campaign (2019/2020)
- 2017 Berlin International Garden Show as a marketing theme
- 'Sustainability and nature in urban areas' campaign (2017)

# FEEL GOOD – flagship campaign for sustainability-related communications



The impact of the climate crisis has made travellers around the world even more concerned about sustainability. Unspoilt nature and careful use of resources are becoming increasingly important to them.

As part of its wider sustainability strategy, the GNTB is using its international FeelGood campaign to communicate positive examples of sustainability to consumers, the travel industry, journalists, influencers and other market players.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

**Elevate the international visibility of the products, services and high standards offered by Germany as a sustainable travel destination**

**Raise international travellers' awareness of climate-friendly travel**

**Work with service providers and stakeholders in order to promote sustainable travel to Germany more widely**



## OUTCOME

### SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS RECOGNISED

- 2021 World Responsible Tourism Award from the World Travel Mart
- 2021 Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism award

### HIGH-QUALITY TOURISM STRENGTHENED, INCLUDING IN RELATION TO SUSTAINABILITY

- Microsite set up to promote sustainability-focused towns, cities and regions and certified hotels in all federal states

### BEST PRACTICE

- Internationally publicised selection of certified sustainable

accommodation on the interactive germany.travel map, at international sustainability conferences (e.g. in Glasgow) and at the 2022 Global Conference of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) recognised as best practice

### OPTIONS FOR OFFSETTING EMISSIONS PRESENTED

- Carbon calculator integrated into the germany.travel website, providing a direct comparison between journeys by plane and car and giving the option of offsetting the carbon emissions

### COLLABORATION EXPANDED

- Close collaboration with certification experts Futouris

## NEXT STEPS

### INTEGRATE SUSTAINABILITY ASPECTS INTO ALL GNTB CAMPAIGNS AND MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

### STRENGTHEN THE INTERNATIONAL POSITIONING OF THE WIDE RANGE AND HIGH QUALITY OF DESTINATION GERMANY'S SUSTAINABLE TOURISM OFFERINGS

## BEST PRACTICE

### FEEL GOOD IN GERMANY

- Following the campaign launch in 2020, the targeted markets and the featured content were broadened in 2021.
- Advertising on international social media directs users to a microsite containing a selection of high-quality certified towns, cities, regions and hotels in all federal states.
- Since 2021, a campaign video has shown interviews with

people who have launched or who run exemplary sustainability projects.

- In 2022, a new carbon calculator was integrated into the germany.travel website, providing a direct comparison between journeys by plane and car and giving the option of offsetting the carbon emissions.

## Awards

### FEEL GOOD CAMPAIGN WINS SILVER AT THE WORLD RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS

The FeelGood sustainability campaign won silver at the 2021 WTM World Responsible Tourism Awards. The prestigious accolade is a central feature of the WTM Responsible Tourism Programme and recognises the best responsible tourism initiatives across the world.



# FEEL GOOD

FeelGood sustainability campaign  
**Winner of multiple awards**

### TOP INNOVATOR 2022

In 2022, the GNTB made it onto the TOP 100 list of innovators in Germany for the second time. The projects praised by the judges for making good use of digital technologies included the *#DiscoverGermanyFromHome* empathy campaign for the international market, an interactive data dashboard, an AI chatbot for communicating with prospective travellers and market insight webinars for partners in Germany's inbound tourism industry.



### GREEN GLOBE RECERTIFICATION: GOLD STATUS SINCE 2018

The GNTB was certified as a Green Globe organisation for the ninth successive year in 2021, retaining its gold status in the Green Globe programme.

The Green Globe Standard is a globally recognised certification for the travel trade. Participants must document their activities covering sustainable management and social/economic, cultural heritage and environmental indicators in the Green Globe system. An accredited, independent auditor conducts an on-site assessment of the organisation.



### EUROPEAN CULTURAL TRAVEL NETWORK HONOURS SUSTAINABILITY CAMPAIGNS

FeelGood was runner-up in the 'Walking Tourism and Slow Travel – Synergies with Cultural Tourism' category at the 2021 Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism Awards organised by the European Cultural Travel Network (ECTN).

Also among the five finalists was the nature and active holidays campaign *#WanderlustGermany*, which won the prize at national level.

### ECOPROFIT® ORGANISATION IN 2021

In 2021, the GNTB's head office in Frankfurt was certified as an ECOPROFIT organisation for the seventh year in a row.

The ECOPROFIT organisation in Frankfurt (ECOLOGICAL PROject For Integrated environmental Technology) aims to improve environmental protection by reducing the amount of resources that local businesses use and optimising their energy efficiency, while at the same time lowering operational costs.



## A call for sustainability-themed marketing ideas

In 2022, the GNTB called on the foreign representative offices (FROs) and sales and marketing agencies (SMAs) in its international source markets to pitch sustainability-themed marketing ideas as a way of incorporating their international presence and expertise into the strategy for sustainable tourism.

All GNTB offices around the world were asked to develop market-specific ideas for campaigns that use creative and innovative approaches to promote Germany as a destination for sustainable travel. An internal panel judged the submitted project proposals, selecting six winners that were granted a special budget with which to bring their ideas to fruition.



### DENMARK

## Smartphone quiz on cinema app

**CONCEPT** The FRO in Copenhagen developed a quiz on sustainability that can be accessed at various cinemas through the BioSpil cinema app. Participants take part in the quiz using their own smartphone. This allows approximately 18,000 people to play along at a time. Vox pops are also distributed on social media.

**OBJECTIVE** Reach a technology-savvy, environmentally conscious target group that combines quality awareness with a preference for green, local and high-end products.

### UNITED KINGDOM

## Immersive tunnel with digital, audio and smell elements

**CONCEPT** At London King's Cross St. Pancras station, from where Eurostar and Thalys international train services depart for France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany – a fully immersive tunnel combines large-scale static displays with digital, audio and smell elements and aims to inspire people to visit Germany by showing sustainable products and services.

**OBJECTIVE** Encourage sustainably minded train passengers to visit Germany by presenting impressive and memorable content that highlights Germany's many attractions.

### NETHERLANDS

## TV and online video campaign

**CONCEPT** A TV and online video campaign consisting of two 20-second adverts based on the existing media mix of social media, online advertising, DOOH and OTC. It focuses specifically on promoting travel during the low season. Both adverts feature travel by train, thereby putting sustainability in the spotlight.

**OBJECTIVE** Stimulate the recovery of travel from Destination Germany's no. 1 source market with the specific aim of strengthening sustainable tourism.



▲ Poland, OOH campaign with eco-murals that help to purify the air

## AUSTRIA

# Programmatic DOOH

**CONCEPT** The GNTB's Vienna office has opted for a new and unique form of programmatic digital out-of-home advertising (DOOH). Data-driven, real-time personalisation in a one-to-many medium based on publisher deals, contextual targeting, demographic data and Adsquare targeting enables advertising to be tailored to the following target groups: LOHAS, nature lovers and sustainability-conscious young people.

**OBJECTIVE** Increase efficiency by addressing specific target groups directly, integrate content from the FeelGood campaign and generate leads through an integrated competition organised with Austria's national rail operator, ÖBB.

## POLAND

# OOH campaign with eco-murals that help to purify the air

**CONCEPT** An out-of-home (OOH) campaign with eco-murals promotes sustainable holidays in Germany and is itself sustainable thanks to the use of cutting-edge technologies. The eco-murals purify the air and thus help to reduce smog, one of the biggest problems in Polish towns and cities.

**OBJECTIVE** Reach at least twelve million contacts with ten murals in Polish towns and cities during the two-month campaign.

## SOUTH EAST EUROPE

# Short footprint-themed films

**CONCEPT** Short footprint-themed films focus on exploring the regions on foot and tell the stories of local ambassadors. The stories create a link between conservation and old customs, sharing the message that traditions contribute to a sustainable future.

**OBJECTIVE** Position Germany as a sustainable destination in the Slovenian, Czech, Hungarian and Croatian source markets using attractive advertising channels with a substantial reach.

# ACCESSIBILITY



## Opening up travel for all

Nobody should face barriers to travel, which is why the GNTB has defined accessibility as a core overarching topic. Dedicated information for people with disabilities has been available on the GNTB's website since 1999.

The sustainability strategy is underpinned by the notion that accessibility is needed at every stage of the value chain. The requirements of a wide variety of groups have to be taken into consideration. Whether travelling on business or for leisure, people may have very specific requirements of a travel destination – because of a disability, temporary or otherwise, because of their age, or because they are travelling with children.

In established tourism markets, demographic change is affecting the age structure of visitors and thus influencing the types of product and service required. Inclusivity is therefore becoming more and more broadly recognised, both as a feature and as a quality criterion.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

### IMPROVE INCLUSIVITY

- Make partners aware of the economic potential of accessible tourism offerings

### INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF ACCESSIBLE TOURISM OFFERINGS

- Position Germany as a destination with a wide variety of exemplary offerings for accessible tourism
- Promote the Travel for All labelling system internationally
- Give international visitors, trade partners and journalists access to the certified accessible products and services

### STEP UP COMMUNITY-BUILDING EFFORTS

- Expand networking activities with international partners
- Work more closely with disability associations

### ADAPT MARKETING TO MEET ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Intensify communication with stakeholder groups from the markets
- Design marketing activities to be accessible

## NEXT STEPS

### CONTINUE TO BUILD UP ACCESSIBILITY EXPERTISE AT GERMAN AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

- Put a greater emphasis on accessibility in seminars and webinars
- 2023 Accessible Tourism Day

### DESIGN COMMUNICATIONS ACROSS ALL GNTB CHANNELS TO BE ACCESSIBLE

- Ensure digital applications are accessible
- Produce accessible publications

### CONTINUE TO EXPAND THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF EXPERTS

- Cooperate with the new tourism working group of the German Disability Council (DBR)

## OUTCOME

### SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE AND NETWORKING

- Trade workshops carried out in international source markets for German partners in order to present accessible products and services
- Webinars on accessible tourism held for GNTB partners
- GTM pre-convention tours, press trips and market-specific influencer trips and fact-finding tours on accessible tourism organised in Germany
- Regular dialogue initiated with German and international associations and experts in order to share information and experiences

### ACCESSIBLE TOURISM DAY

- Event format developed and established as an internationally recognised umbrella event
- Dialogue between disability associations, the tourism industry, policymakers and academia facilitated in order to share experiences
- Event organised with simultaneous interpreting, sign language and captioning as a model of accessibility for the industry

### NATIONAL LABELLING SYSTEM

- Development of the Travel for All national labelling system and database intensively supported
- Travel for All database integrated into the germany.travel website
- Travel for All national labelling system and database promoted internationally at flagship trade fairs, conferences and workshops

### GNTB PUBLICATIONS

- Germany's accessible tourism offerings featured in consumer publications (print and digital)
- Trade publications produced on the opportunities and challenges of accessible tourism

### CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Inhouse CPD provided to make employees more aware of the requirements of people with disabilities

### MARKETING

- Digital applications made accessible, e.g. VR experience 'German natural landscapes'

## Broad European dialogue on inclusivity

*Democracy  
requires  
inclusivity*

Jürgen Dusel,  
Federal Government Commissioner for  
Matters relating to Persons with Disabilities

The European Disability Expertise (EDE) report 'European comparative data on Europe 2020 and persons with disabilities' found that, in 2018, approximately 24.5 per cent of people aged 16 or older had declared a disability. Around 7 per cent had a severe disability and roughly 17.5 per cent had a moderate disability. The provisional data for 2019 shows similar figures. Demographic change will cause these percentages to rise in the years ahead.

Building on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European

Union, the EU and its member states are working to improve the social and economic situation of people with disabilities.

The EU's Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030 is aimed at achieving progress on all aspects of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at both EU and member state level.

In Germany, the Equality for Persons with Disabilities Act (BGG) implements the principle of equal treatment set forth in the German Basic Law and contains rules on accessibility in a broad sense.

▼ 2014 Accessible Tourism Day



## Accessible Tourism Day

For the past ten years, the GNTB's Accessible Tourism Day has provided the international travel industry with fresh ideas on how they can cater to growing demand for products and services that meet the needs of people with physical or cognitive disabilities.

The first Accessible Tourism Day took place in 2012 during the ITB travel fair. The National Coordination Board Tourism for All (NatKo) organised the programme, with the GNTB contributing to the content. At this inaugural event, some 300 delegates from the tourism industry and politics took up the invitation to examine opportunities, challenges and the future prospects of accessible travel and to discuss specific next steps.

In 2013, the GNTB was commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) to organise the event as part of the ITB. Since then, the GNTB and its partners – NatKo, the Tourism for All working group of the German federal states and GNTB sponsor the Association of Barrier-free Destinations in Germany – have established the Accessible Tourism Day as a regular fixture on the Friday of the ITB, featuring new topics and high-profile speakers each year. The focus topics, which change annually, shine the spotlight on different aspects of inclusivity and are underpinned by examples of best practice. Sign language, captioning and simultaneous interpreting are provided so that everyone can follow the presentations.

The high priority attached to accessible travel by the German government is illustrated by the annual attendance of the German Federal Government Commissioners for Tourism, Iris Gleicke, Thomas Bareiß and Claudia Müller, and the Federal Government Commissioners for Matters relating to Persons with Disabilities, Verena Bentele and Jürgen Dusel.

In 2020 and 2021, the Accessible Tourism Day was held as a virtual event due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant that experts and interested parties all over the world were able to participate for the first time alongside the ITB delegates. More than 530 participants registered to take part in the virtual event, which was around twice as many as for the in-person events in previous years.

### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AT THE ACCESSIBLE TOURISM DAY INCLUDED

- **Taleb Rifai**, Secretary-General of the UNWTO
- **Antti Peltomäki**, Deputy Director of the Directorate-General for Internal Market and Entrepreneurship at the European Commission
- **Victor Calise**, Commissioner in the New York City Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities
- **Helena Dalli**, European Commissioner for Equality



▲ Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General of the UNWTO, at the 2015 Accessible Tourism Day



Scan for more information about the 2022 Accessible Tourism Day

## OUTCOME

TEN EVENTS IN ELEVEN YEARS

DISTINGUISHED INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS AMONG THE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

OVER 3,000 PARTICIPANTS FROM 45 COUNTRIES

## Breaking down barriers for over a decade

These are just some of the activities carried out by the GNTB to boost inclusivity in international tourism.

### 2010

**Extensive cooperation with relevant players;** the association Barrier-free Destinations in Germany and the National Coordination Board Tourism for All (NatKo) become GNTB sponsors.

### 2012

**Film project ‘GOLD – You can do more than you think’** in collaboration with the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV); presentation to coincide with the Paralympics in London.

### 2013

**Multimedia campaign in the UK market** to promote Germany as an accessible travel destination.

**GNTB 360° publication ‘Accessibility in Germany’s inbound tourism industry’** containing reports on the experiences of international influencers and examples of best practice from partners and regional marketing organisations.

**Germany is voted one of the top three destinations for accessible travel** at the World Travel Market in London.

### 2014

The GNTB participates in a broad-ranging **project of the BMWK to introduce universal quality criteria and clear labelling for accessible tourism**. As well as a certification scheme, the initiative also encompasses training courses and standardised labelling for use across Germany.

**‘Barrier-free Germany’ campaign in the UK market**, featuring specific travel offers and opportunities for cooperation with German partners.

**First ‘Destinations for All’ world summit in Montreal;** the GNTB presents news on accessible travel products and services in Destination Germany.

### 2015

**Second phase of the BMWK’s Tourism for All project;** products, services and information on accessibility across Germany are appropriately presented for the target groups in a database.

**GNTB publication ‘Barrier-free travel in Germany. Travel made simple’** featuring top accessible tourism offerings; also published online as an accessible PDF.

### 2016

**German-Brazilian partnership to coincide with the hosting of the Paralympics;** the GNTB’s project with its Brazilian partners consists of a launch event in Berlin, a handbook on inclusivity in German and Portuguese, information events for tour operators and journalists in São Paulo and an event at the German House during the Paralympics.

**GNTB workshop for travel experts from South Korea;** the German organisations giving presentations include the GNTB, National Coordination Board Tourism for All (NatKo) and Deutsche Bahn.

### 2017

**Extensive cooperation with relevant players;** the GNTB becomes a sponsor of the NatKo.

### 2018

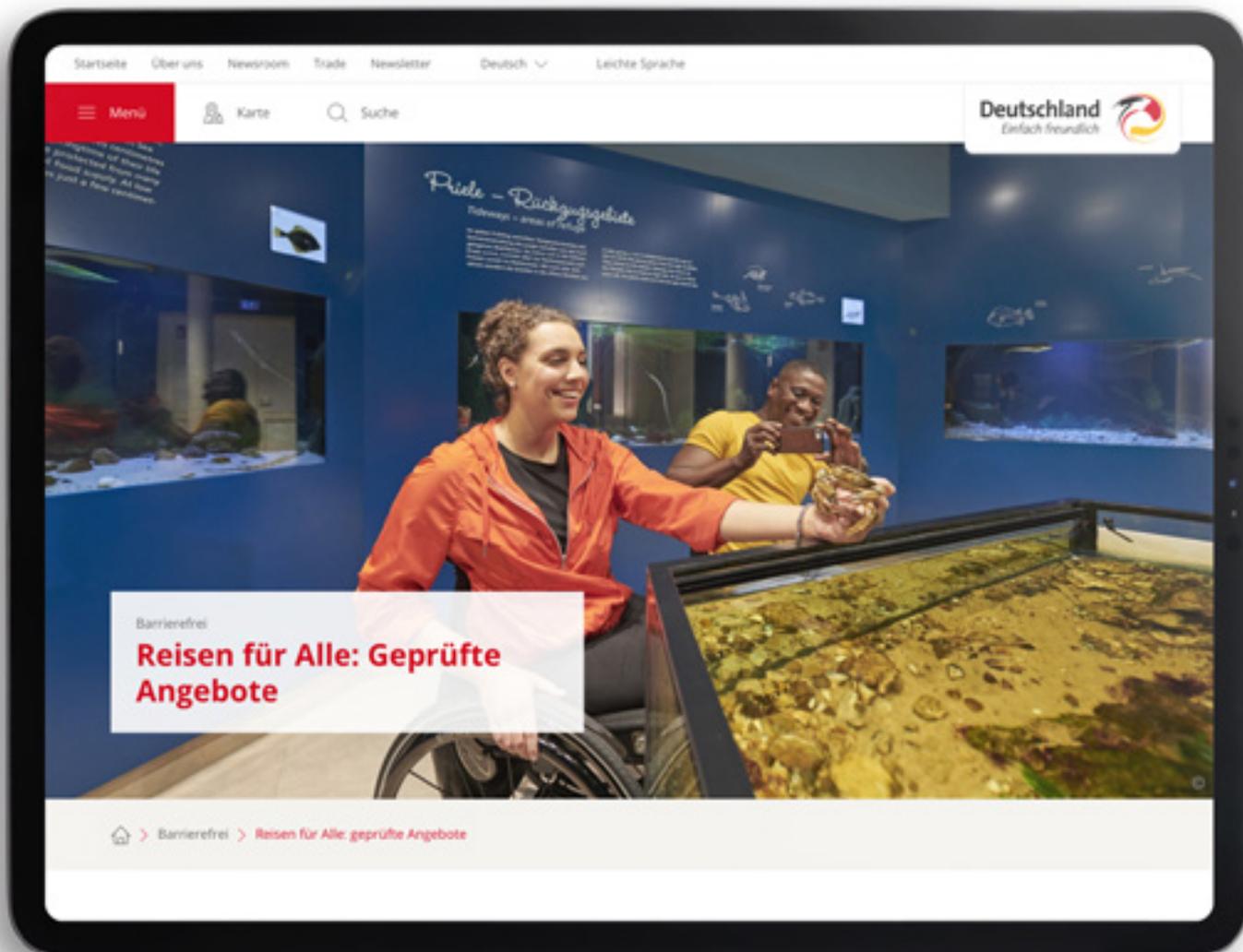
**Second ‘Destinations for All’ world summit in Belgium;** the GNTB takes part as a gold partner.

**Wheelchair Basketball World Championships in Hamburg;** in cooperation with the organisers, the GNTB presents a wide range of accessible travel offerings in Germany, including via a manga-style video on social media in selected markets.

**2018 Fespo travel show with a special feature on accessible travel;** GNTB presentation with 34 partners



▲ For more than ten years, the GNTB has been organising special pre-convention tours on sustainability and accessibility for international delegates attending its annual Germany Travel Mart™.



▲ Travel for All database at germany.travel

## 2019

**Travel for All database in the 'Barrier-free travel' section of the germany.travel website;** for the first time, international visitors and partners in the international travel trade have access to a central repository of information on accessible tourism amenities in Destination Germany (available in German and English). The GNTB uses the database to promote examples of best practice internationally.

## 2020

**The GNTB website germany.travel is relaunched with a new design,** incorporating accessible design and technology elements: strong contrasts, uncluttered layout, tab navigation, ARIA labels.

## 2021

**Relaunch of the website's 'Barrier-free travel' section,** featuring specific products and services categorised by core target group in the accessible travel segment, along with information in simple English, audio files and films with sign language.

**An internal handbook on accessible communications is produced;** since then, the aim is for nearly all GNTB communications to be accessible.

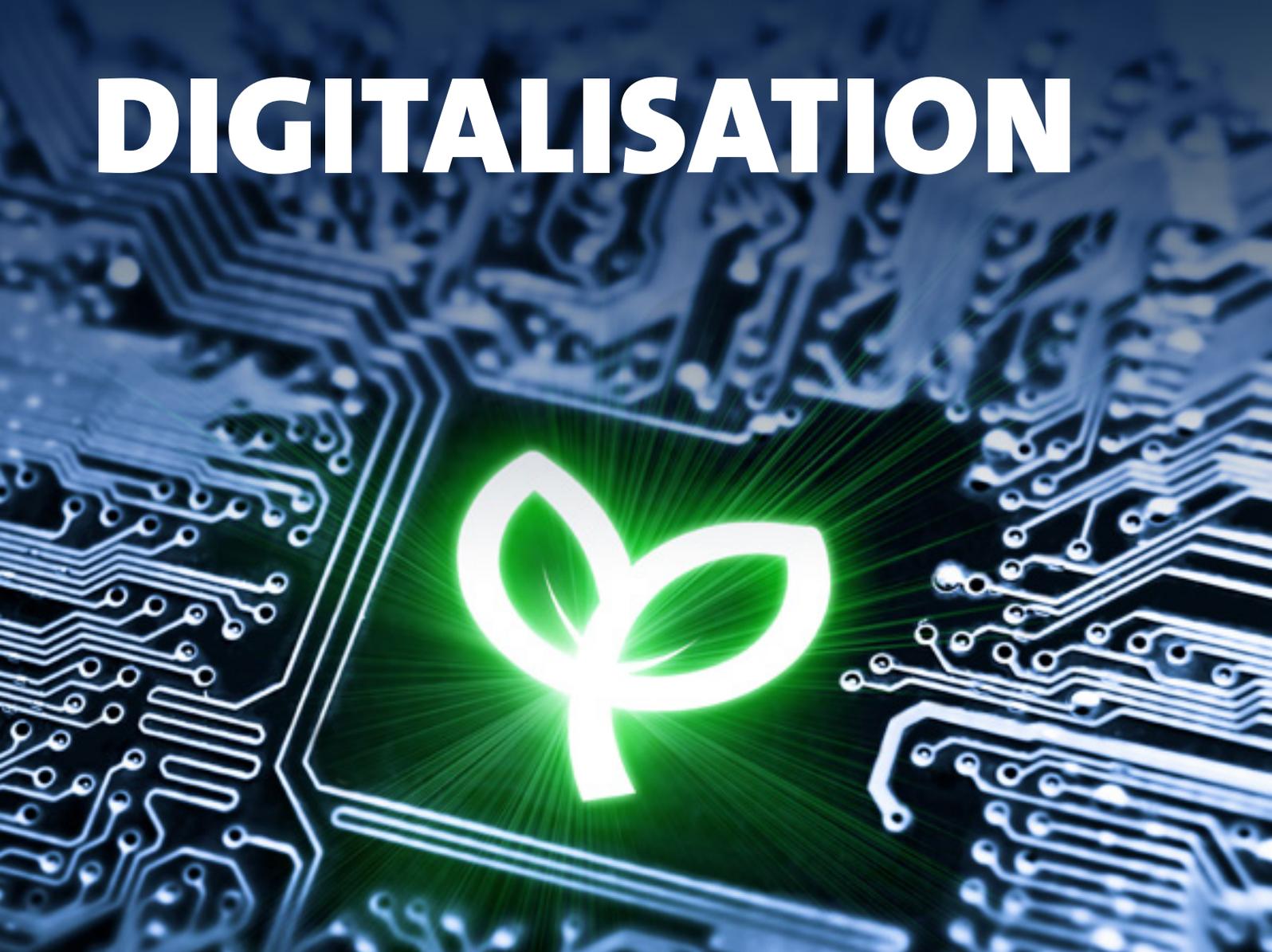
## 2022

**'German natural landscapes' virtual reality project is designed to be fully accessible.** People with restricted mobility have full access to the VR world, a teleprompter is included for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, while blind people can experience the virtual world with the help of a sound journey.



▲ GNTB workshop on Mount Zugspitze during the 2022 Germany Travel Mart™

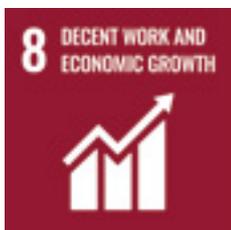
# DIGITALISATION



## Sustainable transformation driven by digitalisation

The digital transformation that is shaping tourism along its entire value chain is linked in many ways to a commitment to sustainable tourism. The GNTB, for example, is forging ahead with key technological projects aimed at marketing Germany as a climate-conscious travel destination.

In its online marketing, the GNTB has adopted new tools for addressing sustainability-minded audiences in a personalised and increasingly targeted manner. Open data will help to raise the visibility of sustainable tourism across many channels, while cutting-edge digital worlds – such as the metaverse – will provide virtual access to new dimensions of real-life tourism. Moreover, digital technologies are opening up opportunities for inclusivity, i.e. making tourism accessible for all.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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### BE A CATALYST FOR DIGITAL INNOVATION

- Initiate pilot projects based on digital tools
- Analyse which technological developments can be used in tourism
- Use new, suitable communication channels

### REDUCE RESOURCE CONSUMPTION

- Digitalise work processes
- Establish green marketing

### STRENGTHEN KNOWLEDGE IN THE INDUSTRY

- Share expertise with partners
- Create business-oriented dialogue formats

## OUTCOME

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### OPEN DATA

- Development of a shared knowledge graph initiated and coordinated for Germany's inbound tourism industry
- Data for improving the visibility of products and services integrated, particularly in order to harness the potential of artificial intelligence

### INNOVATIVE APPLICATIONS

- Augmented reality used to engage potential travellers (particularly on social media)

- Voice assistants introduced in order to optimise customer service, e.g. AI-supported chatbots
- Innovative location-based 3D technology implemented for out-of-home advertising

### VIRTUAL REALITY

- Interactive, immersive virtual reality experience established as the next step towards the metaverse

## NEXT STEPS

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### DATA CULTURE

- Create an open data structure for better data management
- Go live with the German tourism industry's knowledge graph
- Add content to the knowledge graph
- Ensure open data is permanently available

### GREEN MARKETING

- Consider the environmental impact of digital distribution tools and channels when selecting media
- Allocate SDGs to all digitalisation activities

### WEB3/METVERSE

- Establish an advertising presence in the metaverse (programmatic advertising) for campaigns such as Embrace German Nature and FeelGood and for the marketing of the VR application 'German natural landscapes'
- Distribute VR applications through VR stores
- Carry out strategic planning and first projects in the Web3 and metaverse fields
- Train employees
- Get started with head-mounted displays

## Establishing new communication channels

Whereas today, communication technology is dominated by PCs, tablets and mobile phones, the future will belong to head-mounted displays (HMDs). Controlled by voice and gesture, they are becoming increasingly comfortable, lightweight, inconspicuous and powerful. HMDs can be used to create a highly immersive, interactive virtual experience of tourism destinations. Customers can dive into digital worlds, seek inspiration and obtain information ahead of their trip, and even have their display call up useful information and services once they arrive. Sensory additions help to create a more engaging experience.

### IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGIES: INNOVATIVE APPLICATIONS FOR A NEW, CLIMATE-FRIENDLY DIMENSION TO THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Digital megatrends and developments – including immersive technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and mixed reality (MR) – can be used to attract potential visitors who are still at the stage of deciding where to go.

The GNTB's experiences with first-generation VR applications (e.g. the 360° video 'Discover Germany by bike') provide the basis for the paradigm shift within the immersive ecosystem of the latest VR headsets. The GNTB uses applications where users can interact and move around freely, both physically and digitally, in order to promote tourism experiences that have a particular emphasis on sustainability. For example, the current VR presentation 'German natural landscapes' provides a stunning rendition of these areas of natural beauty, combining them with options for interactive experiences.

For its current campaign Embrace German Nature, the GNTB is using videos incorporating 8D audio. Not only does the presentation showcase the theme, but the use of this digital tool demonstrates that Germany is a modern, digital-forward destination.



▲ VR project 'German natural landscapes' at the GNTB 2022 Knowledge Days



▲ Contribution from Dr Teo Pham on the significance of the metaverse for tourism at the GNTB 2022 Knowledge Days

## VISION OF THE FUTURE: TRAVELLING TO GERMANY IN THE METAVERSE

The metaverse represents a quantum leap from today's perspective, as it reimagines the internet as a virtual space in which users appear as avatars. This technological innovation will also open up new opportunities for sustainable tourism. Destinations can promote real-life travel experiences by offering virtual 'pre-trips' and thus help customers with their planning. Another benefit is that people can see and explore places up close that are not actually accessible to tourists. Actual trips can be taken virtually instead, reducing the impact on protected natural landscapes, for example.

By using the latest generation of VR applications (wireless VR headsets that allow users to move around freely), the GNTB is taking its first steps into the 3D world of the metaverse.

## CONVERSATIONAL INTERFACES FACILITATE ACCESS TO CONTENT AND CUT RESOURCE USE

The voice is becoming an increasingly important input/output medium for communications between humans and digital devices. Taking a voice-first approach to the development of marketing tools, the GNTB is aiming to distribute content that raises Germany's profile as a sustainable destination.

The German Travel Secrets app for smart speakers, such as Alexa, is currently offering podcasts and audio experiences that share travel tips for less well-known regions and places of interest. A chatbot for customer communications and engagement forms part of the German.Local.Culture. campaign.

For its crisis communications following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GNTB developed an AI-supported chatbot so that it could answer questions from customers 24/7 without having to deploy additional staff.

## Content reaches sustainably minded target groups

The GNTB is a first mover when it comes to using social media in tourism marketing. This includes content for sustainable travel, which is being continually expanded.

### INNOVATIVE FORMATS FOR SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS

Influencers have a huge reach, and the content they post for their followers has a clearly defined focus. The GNTB taps into this to promote target-group-appropriate themes on social media, primarily sustainability and accessibility.

In 2021, for example, the GNTB launched its *#feelgoodgermany* campaign, in which influencers from Belgium, Poland and Denmark reported on sustainable tourism in North Rhine-Westphalia, Baden-Württemberg, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Schleswig-Holstein.

The GNTB is using a mockumentary-style format for the first time in its version of the FeelGood campaign for the Danish market. The videos show two actors who embark on a fictional trip to Germany and talk about their impressions of living sustainably. The episodes can be viewed on YouTube and TikTok.

As part of its FeelGood campaign, the GNTB is using smart TV advertising in the US for the first time. The objective is to use programmatic buying options to reap the benefits of scaled targeting and to exploit the greater degree of flexibility compared with analogue TV advertising. This paves the way for highly targeted personalised ads.

### ONLINE INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

The GNTB is continually adding to that information that it offers on sustainable travel. The main hub for information and inspiration is the *germany.travel* website.

In connection with the FeelGood campaign, for example, a dedicated microsite was set up for travellers who want to find out more. In addition to travel ideas, the site also provides practical tips for sustainable holidays, an interactive map with certified sustainable amenities, a carbon calculator and much more.

The 'Barrier-free travel' section of the website was completely revamped in 2021 and significantly expanded in terms of content. An integrated database contains all the survey results of the Travel for All national labelling system in German and English.



▲ FeelGood campaign microsite

## Open data / knowledge graph project strengthens marketing of sustainable tourism

The GNTB is coordinating the German tourism industry’s open data /knowledge graph project. This intelligent data hub enables tourist information – including details of hotels, attractions, restaurants and events, route suggestions and transport options – to be collected, saved in a machine-readable format, expanded and made available for use in various applications.

The project helps to increase the visibility of tourism offerings on global platforms, which in turn supports international marketing – including the marketing of sustainable and inclusive products and services.

In addition, the semantic labelling and linking of tourism data can be used to set up and expand AI-supported applications for managing visitor flows. A range of forecasts are modelled using everything from foot traffic monitors and statistics on demand peaks to up-to-date information on visitor flows. This enables visitor flows to be managed and alternative attractions to be proactively suggested to potential visitors. This relieves the pressure on tourist hotspots and makes an active contribution to environmental protection in fragile green spaces.

The knowledge graph project is entering the home stretch. The GNTB has already initiated the pan-European expansion of the project by founding the Open Data Tourism Alliance.



Scan for more information about open data in tourism at [open-data-germany.org](https://open-data-germany.org)

### RAISING AWARENESS OF RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Tourism products and services are becoming increasingly interconnected and therefore more complex to manage. Ever-larger volumes of data are needed so that (potential) customers can actually discover and use them. This added value for tourism is where artificial intelligence (AI) can play a key role as one of the most prominent drivers of technology in the digital revolution.

The GNTB is involved in developing and delivering AI solutions in order to strengthen Germany’s international market position as a sustainable destination. AI-supported applications for managing visitor flows and preventing overcrowding are being developed in order to ease the pressure on tourist hotspots.

The open data/knowledge graph project is a major focus in this context. This data infrastructure project makes existing tourist information available to AI-based applications. Further applications being worked on by the GNTB include conversational interfaces, such as those found in AI-supported chatbots.

# COMMITTEE WORK AND STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

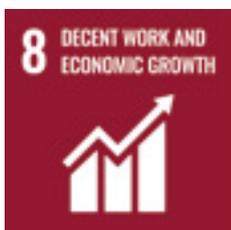


## Strengthening sustainability management through knowledge networks

It is not up to individual organisations but to the whole industry to make tourism more sustainable for the world of tomorrow. In this context, the GNTB provides fresh ideas, acts as a role model and is both an owner and sharer of knowledge. Policymakers, members and partners work closely together on developing and implementing the strategic objectives.

By helping to set the agenda, the GNTB is creating awareness of the relevance of sustainability. It is an ambassador for its sustainability strategy all over the world and supports the industry through its networks and through the sharing of knowledge.

At the same time, the long-term focus on topics that will be particularly important in the future strengthens the Destination Germany brand in a competitive, increasingly volatile international market.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

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### FIT FOR THE FUTURE

- Prepare the industry for future needs and requirements
- Support partners in Germany's inbound tourism industry by sharing knowledge
- Identify international tourism trends and harness them for the benefit of inbound tourism to Germany

### AGENDA SETTING

- Create awareness of the relevance of climate-conscious travel and sustainable tourism
- Position the GNTB as a provider of fresh ideas, role model, and owner and sharer of knowledge
- Raise the profile of specific sustainable tourism offerings

## OUTCOME

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### COMMUNICATION

- Stakeholder communications in Germany and abroad focused on sustainability topics, e.g. Global Trade Corner, B2B newsletter, presentations
- Content on climate/environmental protection in the tourism industry added to existing communication formats, e.g. Knowledge Days, podcast, blog

### OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Workshops and in-person events organised along sustainable lines
- GTM held as a green event
- GNTB sustainable event planning guidelines used

- New interactive seminars and webinar formats on virtual knowledge management created in order to reduce the environmental footprint, e.g. campaign kick-offs, market insight webinars

### SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DAY

- Centralised event format developed and implemented for stakeholders and partners

### PROGRESS REPORT ON SUSTAINABILITY

- Sustainability activities across all departments analysed and presented

## NEXT STEPS

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### EXPAND THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM NETWORK AND STRENGTHEN INVOLVEMENT

- Create a stronger focus on climate/environmental protection when planning activities and determining content in strategic partnerships, e.g. with CSR champions

### STEP UP STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS ON SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS

- Establish dialogue on environmentally friendly, climate-conscious and socially responsible tourism

### CREATE AN EVEN GREATER FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CONTENT OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING FORMATS

- E.g. Knowledge Days, market insight webinars, market-specific trade and press events

### 2023 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DAY

## Domestic activities: sharing of knowledge and networking to actively promote climate-conscious tourism

The GNTB organises target-group-specific and theme-based events in Germany in order to disseminate knowledge and step up sustainability activities in the industry. To reduce its environmental footprint, the GNTB runs a balanced mix of in-person events and virtual or hybrid formats.

### SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DAY SENDS A CLEAR SIGNAL

In view of climate change, the energy crisis, a new geostrategic world order and demographic change, concerted efforts from all industry players are needed to make tourism more sustainable and thus fit for the future.

This was the core message of the first Sustainable Tourism Day, which brought together 70 experts, decision-makers from politics and business, stakeholders and partners in Germany's inbound tourism industry. They discussed political conditions and industry-specific requirements, presented international solutions and best practice in Germany, and discussed strategies for the future.

The first Sustainable Tourism Day for stakeholders, members and partners in Germany's inbound tourism industry took place in Frankfurt on 28 September 2022 as an in-person event. The plan is to run the event annually.



### 2022 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DAY AT A GLANCE

Welcome address: **Claudia Müller**, Federal Government Coordinator for the Maritime Industry and for Tourism (video message)

Keynote: Marketing and communication of sustainability for tourism businesses, **Professor Xavier Font**, University of Surrey (Zoom)

#### Presentations and speeches:

- Facts, figures and KPIs for sustainable tourism, Matthias Hickl, Head of Business Intelligence at the GNTB
- Sustainability in the GNTB's global marketing, Olaf Schlieper, Head of Innovations Management at the GNTB
- Best practice for sustainable destinations, Tine Kastrop-Misir, Director of Communication, Wonderful Copenhagen – TOURISM FOR GOOD
- Climate reporting in tourism, Swantje Lehnert, Managing Director Projects & Cooperations, Futouris e.V.
- Innovative technologies to support sustainable tourism, Dirk Mühlenweg, Director of Government Engagement Germany, Mastercard Europe SA

#### Panel discussion:

##### Optimising sustainability in Germany's inbound tourism industry

- Iris Wehrmann, Head of Section, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action
- Martin Balas, Tourism Researcher, Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development, ZENAT – Measuring the sustainability of tourism in Germany
- Estella Schweizer, Catering Coach & Ambassador for Vegan and Climate-friendly Cuisine – Let's eat the world better!
- Benjamin Pfeiffer, Chief Commercial Officer, IOKI – New mobility and on-demand services
- Sabine Wendt, Head of Destination Management & Corporate Development, COO, visitBerlin – Accelerating change in the visitor economy

## KNOWLEDGE DAYS – SHARING KNOWLEDGE

This event centres firstly on the focus of the GNTB's themes and secondly on the technical and technological possibilities. The Social Media Days and Digital Days had already become established and successful formats and have been relaunched as the Knowledge Days.



▲ GNTB 2022 Knowledge Days at the German Film Museum in Frankfurt

### FURTHER DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES

#### Committee work to raise partners' awareness and support product development

- Involvement in the 'Practical guidelines for sustainability in the German travel industry', a project of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (as it was then called) and the German Tourism Association (DTV)
- Sustainability workshop with the regional marketing organisations
- Participation in the Green Tourism Camp for the hotel business and tourism industry
- Presentations at tourism conferences
- Webinars, workshops for and with stakeholders in Germany's inbound tourism industry

#### Networking with national organisations

- German Tourism Association (DTV)
- ECOTRANS
- Sustainable Travel Destinations Excellence Initiative
- Futouris
- Certification provider TourCert
- Cittaslow
- German Cyclists' Federation (ADFC)
- German Travel Association (DRV)
- International Coach Tourism Federation (RDA)
- Deutsche Bahn
- Magic Cities
- Historic Highlights of Germany
- German Commission for UNESCO

#### Judging panels

- Germany-wide competition '2022/2033 sustainable tourism regions'
- German Tourism Award

#### Alliances

- German Natural Landscapes Association
- Association of German Nature Parks (VDN)
- Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) and other associations; dialogue with scientists

**Sharing of knowledge on sustainable tourism among the GNTB's head office, foreign representative offices / sales and marketing agencies and their stakeholders (e.g. tour operators, journalists)**

## Creating international knowledge networks and using them to market Germany as a sustainable destination

The GNTB presents Germany as a sustainable destination to international committees and organisations, uses knowledge clusters such as the World Travel Market (WTM) and the ITB tourism trade fair, and stays in close contact with experts in sustainable tourism.

The GNTB regularly shares its expertise on sustainability and accessibility at international trade events, such as the World Travel Market's panel discussion entitled 'How do we build back better post COVID-19', and at virtual congresses of the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA, USA) and Travelability (USA).

At workshops, roadshows and trade events in relevant source markets, the GNTB brings together German providers with international travel industry representatives in order to raise Germany's profile as a destination that is firmly committed to climate change mitigation and sustainability.

### FURTHER INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

#### Presentation on the global stage

In 2017, the GNTB was a gold partner for the implementation of the UNWTO's International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, giving it the opportunity to present to the world Germany's exemplary products and services in the sustainable tourism field.

## BEST PRACTICE

### STRENGTHENING OF SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED COMMUNICATIONS WITH FACT-FINDING TOURS AND INFLUENCER TRIPS

The GNTB organises fact-finding tours for relevant media representatives and trade partners, either as group or individual tours, to give them an authentic, first-hand experience of Germany's sustainable tourism offerings. This then results in extensive publicity in the source markets.

In 2022, the GNTB developed a set of guidelines for fact-finding tours that give clear procedural instructions for planning and delivering individual tours. The aim is provide a credible presentation of climate-conscious and eco-friendly products and services.

Starting in 2022, the sustainability performance of the fact-finding tours carried out will be documented and further optimised.

#### Trade events in the markets

- Raise awareness among tour operators
- Expand the sustainability network with tour operators
- Ramp up sustainability-related communications
- Communicate German standards in the markets

#### Knowledge management and activities with international organisations

- Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)
- UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
- World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)
- European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT)
- European Travel Commission (ETC)
- Zero Foundation

#### Examples from the fact-finding tour guidelines

- Favour certified hotels and other accommodation
- Favour restaurants that use regional and seasonal produce
- Plan routes to incorporate climate-friendly public transport
- Factor in regional initiatives and regional economic cycles
- Present examples of green energy use (solar, hydrogen, wind power)
- Respect authentic expressions of social and cultural identity in the region
- Accessible amenities

## Perspectives

*Sustainability will become an international competitive advantage and create added value for visitors.*

### FROM HIDDEN CHAMPION TO SUSTAINABILITY LEADER

Switzerland has been the embodiment of sustainability for years, always doing extremely well in global rankings. Yet this is still not clear to many guests. This is where our new Swisstainable strategy comes in. Sustainability will thereby become an international competitive advantage and create added value for visitors. At the heart of this is the Swisstainable programme, which has been developed by the industry for the industry. The three-level programme is not designed as yet another certification process. Rather, it is based on existing labels and provides greater guidance and transparency for visitors and providers alike. Launched in May 2021, the programme had already signed up a total of 1,000 companies by July 2022.



▲ **Martin Nydegger**  
Director/CEO, Switzerland Tourism



▲ **Mag. Eva Buzzi**  
Managing Director of Rail Tours Touristik GmbH and President of the Austrian Travel Association (ÖRV)

*Transport is a major issue when it comes to carbon emissions. We in the travel industry are part of the problem. But we can and want to be part of the solution.*

### IMPROVING SUSTAINABLE CROSS-BORDER TRAVEL

Sustainability is a key topic for visitors travelling to and within Austria. And sustainability encompasses everything from the mode of transport to practices at the local destination and the use of sustainable and regional produce. Transport is a major issue when it comes to carbon emissions. We in the travel industry are part of the problem. But we can and want to be part of the solution. This is illustrated by our close cooperation with the GNTB, with which we have been working in partnership for 14 years. One of our achievements is the steady increase in the number of people travelling to Germany by train. This is a great way of helping to redesign the world of travel and therefore create a better future for our grandchildren.

# INTERNAL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE



## Leading by example

In line with its remit, the GNTB is seizing the opportunities and tackling the challenges of sustainability as a source of expertise, networking platform and marketing organisation for companies in Germany's inbound tourism industry. So that it can perform this role credibly, the GNTB is committed to corporate social responsibility and sustainable corporate management in its own operations. All activities initiated and implemented in the organisation as part of its sustainability strategy are brought together under the umbrella of the internal sustainability initiative.



Relevant SDGs

## GNTB OBJECTIVES

### REDUCE OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

- Allocate SDGs to all GNTB activities
- Design internal processes to be resource-efficient
- Monitor performance digitally
- Offset carbon emissions of all travel

### INCLUDE SUPPLY CHAINS IN THE SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

- Focus on sustainability in procurement

### INVOLVE EMPLOYEES FROM ALL DEPARTMENTS AND RAISE THEIR AWARENESS OF THE ISSUES

- Ensure a good work-life balance
- Provide continuing professional development (CPD) on sustainability topics
- Expand the New Work concept (remote working)
- Follow an inclusive employment policy
- Offer vocational training
- Develop high-potential workers for future leadership roles

## OUTCOME

### WORK PROCESSES

- Internal sustainability strategy implemented
- Mandatory allocation of SDGs introduced for project applications
- Scorecard developed for determining sustainability performance of events (domestic and international)
- Procedural guidelines drawn up for fact-finding tours
- Emissions recorded as part of digital performance monitoring
- Carbon emissions offset for all business trips
- Hybrid vehicle (charged with green electricity) used for business trips
- Existing lighting gradually replaced with LEDs
- IT servers moved to the cloud (more environmentally friendly)

### EMPLOYEES

- Workshops and training on initiating and implementing sustainable activities provided for all employees

- Dedicated sustainability section created on the intranet, containing useful information, videos, links, documents and forms
- CPD activities set up
- Above-average proportion of women appointed to leadership roles
- Extensive works agreement introduced for working from home
- Flu and coronavirus vaccinations offered inhouse
- Employer-subsidised travel cards provided
- Participation in degree apprenticeship scheme for tourism management

### CERTIFICATION

- Head office has been Green Globe certified for ten years, gold status since 2018
- Involved in the ECOPROFIT regional environmental programme since 2014

## NEXT STEPS

### SUPPLY CHAINS

- Make it mandatory to allocate all projects and procurement to the environmental, economic and/or sociocultural sustainability categories
- Review all suppliers with regard to ESG criteria
- Place greater emphasis on sustainability in the criteria for awarding projects

### STANDARDS (AFTER THE KICK-OFF IN 2022)

- Make it mandatory to document the sustainability performance of travel and events using digital performance monitoring

- Record travel emissions systematically and offset them through the atmosfair scheme
- Examine further options for offsetting emissions

### WORKFORCE

- Appoint sustainability ambassadors in all teams
- Offer CPD activities

### CERTIFICATION

- Obtain Green Globe and ECOPROFIT recertification

### INTRODUCTION OF SMART HOME

- Digitally connect facility management

## Best practice

### USE OF SCORECARD AS A RESULTS-DRIVEN BASIS FOR EVENT MANAGEMENT

The GNTB supports the 1.5°C climate goal by applying the avoid, minimise and offset principles. To this end, it has developed procedural guidelines that are designed to systematically reduce the environmental footprint of events and transparently present the results of these efforts.

The guidelines require every aspect of an event to be designed and planned with sustainability in mind. Event invitations proactively inform participants about choosing climate-friendly means of transport for their journey to and from the event, booking accommodation that has been certified as sustainable and off-setting emissions through platforms such as atmosfair and myclimate.

An assessment matrix for sustainable event planning is used to determine an event's overall score, which is then integrated into performance monitoring in combination with participant satisfaction surveys through Netigate or on-site surveys.

### GERMANY TRAVEL MART™ RUN AS A GREEN EVENT

Since 2012, the GNTB has run the GTM Germany Travel Mart™ – the most important sales event for inbound tourism to Germany – as a green event. The GNTB teams up with experts from Green Note to ensure and document the effectiveness of the steps taken to reduce the GTM's carbon footprint, from the design stage through to implementation.



▲ 2022 GTM, GNTB workshop on Mount Zugspitze

## Use of promotional material that is in line with the sustainability strategy

When it comes to implementing theme-based campaigns and appearing at events in local markets, sustainability initiatives play an important role for the GNTB.

Reflecting its wish to consume resources responsibly, the GNTB has continually scaled back its use of printed brochures in theme-based marketing in recent years, opting for online marketing instead.

Where promotional and printed materials are used, the focus is on producing them in an environmentally friendly, resource-efficient way.

Guidelines have been put in place, and their implementation is monitored by the Media Production/Brand & Production team at head office. To this end, the team documents the confirmed production location and the production type of the promotional materials and, where applicable, any existing green certificates (BSCI, FSC, OEKO-TEX Standard 100, etc.).

### Clear requirements have been defined for production in the GNTB's corporate design (CD) manual:

- Wood from sustainable forestry
- Recycled and FSC-certified paper
- Carbon-neutral printing
- Recycled plastic and bioplastic as an alternative to conventional plastic
- Uncontaminated materials
- Use of regional materials
- Fair-trade products and services
- Avoidance of waste and focus on reusability



▲ Upcycled makeup bags made from old GNTB tarpaulins, flags and banners

### UPCYCLING IN THE PRODUCTION OF PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Old GNTB event tarpaulins, flags and banners that were no longer needed were upcycled to create document pouches, makeup bags and key rings for the German.Local.Culture. and German.Spa. Tradition. campaigns.

### FURTHER ACTIVITIES

- Digital, paperless workflows (MACH, COBRA, event management)
- Switch to green electricity
- Centralised printer management
- Eco-friendly cleaning products
- Separation of waste for recycling
- Reduction of the company car fleet (hybrid vehicle)
- CSR training (apprentices, students on vocational courses)
- Remote working, health & safety

## What's coming up in 2023 Germany Simply Inspiring

Sustainability has become the key to success in the international competition between destinations. The GNTB is using the 'Germany Simply Inspiring' slogan to create a narrative focused on climate-friendly, sustainability-oriented and quality-conscious tourism, thereby consolidating the strong positioning of the Destination Germany brand.

The GNTB will be running three theme-based campaigns in 2023 to ensure that global marketing activities are firmly focused on sustainable tourism. The main aims are to extend visitors' length of stay and to showcase tourism products and services that have been certified as sustainable.

## UNESCO campaign

Few other countries can boast as many UNESCO World Heritage sites as Germany, which has 51 of these important reminders of human and cultural history.

The UNESCO World Heritage sites have been a key asset in many of the GNTB's marketing activities over the past two decades. They represent high standards of quality and illustrate the wealth of sustainable cultural heritage to be found in Destination Germany. The new campaign uses digital tools, such as FirstView technology, to promote the link between sustainable tourism and cultural heritage.

## FEEL GOOD

Nachhaltiges Reisen  
in Deutschland

FeelGood has been the main campaign within the GNTB's sustainability strategy since 2019. Its key objectives are to promote environmentally friendly and climate-friendly travel, to raise the profile of sustainable offerings and to support tourism in rural areas.

FeelGood communicates good examples of sustainable experiences and services to potential travellers to Germany from around the world, provides a better overview of certified products and services, and offers practical travel tips. Travellers can use an integrated multilingual carbon calculator to record and offset their environmental footprint.

The international award-winning campaign will be revamped and relaunched in 2023.

## Embrace German Nature



This campaign, which made its debut in 2022, shines the spotlight on Germany's stunning and unique natural landscapes. The GNTB achieves this using innovative tools, such as VR experiences or videos incorporating 8D audio.

### Design and layout

markenzeichen GmbH, markenzeichen.de

### Copy

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### Translation

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### Photo credits, portrait photos

**Claudia Müller** (p. 4) Stefan Kaminski; **Dr Dirk Glaeßer** (p. 6) UNWTO; **Jürgen Dusel** (p. 7) Henning Schlacht; **Brigitte Goertz-Meissner** (p. 8) Baden-Baden Kur & Tourismus GmbH; **Petra Hedorfer** (p. 11) GNTB/Faridah Diehl; **Martin Nydegger** (p. 67) Switzerland Tourism/Nicola Fuerer

### Picture credits for other photos

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