

Press information

Travel trends

Growing interest in nature and activity holidays

Coronavirus pandemic adds new dimension to international tourism – shift in customer values – short and medium-term potential for recovery of inbound tourism to Germany

Frankfurt am Main, August 2020 – Following the complete cessation of global tourism during the lockdown, shifts in the consumer behaviour of international travellers are becoming apparent around the world. Two international studies commissioned by the German National Tourist Board (GNTB) analyse the possible consequences for inbound tourism to Germany. Based on the results of these studies, the GNTB has identified opportunities for nature and activity holidays in Germany by visitors from European source markets.

“The crisis situation may lead to the emergence of mindfulness, safety awareness and value for money as social trends. We view the impact this would have on travel patterns as an opportunity. Consequently, we are adapting our evidence-based marketing to fit the changed environment,” explains Petra Hedorfer, Chief Executive Officer of the GNTB.

Tourism Economics examined the pandemic’s influence on the 15 most important source markets for Destination Germany, explored the market segments and developed various scenarios for the recovery phase. It concluded that western European source markets, including Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Austria, would be the quickest to recover, followed by France, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy. The overseas markets will take longer to get back on track.

According to IPK International, the willingness to travel is strongest among Europeans, at 61 per cent. The risk of contracting coronavirus is considered lowest when travelling by car, when travelling alone and on holidays in the heart of nature.

Cultural travel, city breaks and sightseeing tours, which have been particularly popular in recent years, are deemed to be medium-risk, while indoor activities and larger events are seen as high-risk in coronavirus terms.

Petra Hedorfer: “Germany enjoys an excellent international reputation as a destination for nature-based travel with a wealth of sustainable attractions. At the same time, Germany is winning top marks as a safe destination in terms of coronavirus risk in comparison with other countries. We are using targeted marketing measures to adapt to the changed market conditions in order to emerge from crisis mode as quickly and comprehensively as possible.”

In order to reflect the shift in customers’ personal values, the GNTB is increasing its emphasis on the segments of sustainable travel, holidays in the German countryside, rest and relaxation and outdoor activities in its brand communications. New theme-based campaigns highlight various aspects of these travel segments.

The newly launched campaign #WanderlustGermany targets visitors from nearby countries who are interested in nature and activity holidays, with a special focus on cycling and walking. The German Summer Cities Reloaded campaign showcases the ‘green’ elements of city breaks, including an exploration of the areas surrounding urban centres.

For 2021, the GNTB is developing its German.Spa.Tradition campaign, which will focus on the unparalleled quality and variety offered by Germany’s more than 350 certified spa and health resorts. It also features packages based around next year’s 200th anniversary of the birth of Sebastian Kneipp.

About the GNTB

The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) has its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. It works on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) to represent Germany as a tourist destination and is funded by the Ministry in accordance with a decision taken by the German Bundestag. The GNTB develops and communicates strategies and products to promote Germany’s positive image abroad as a tourist destination and to encourage tourists to visit the country. It has 31 agencies around the world to support its activities. Further information is available from our online press centre at www.germany.travel/presse.