



Deutscher Bundestag

The Committee on Tourism

Ausschuss für Tourismus

Informationen in englischer Sprache



New
2023
version
20th electoral term



“Germany has a wealth of tourist attractions to offer people living in Germany and visitors from all over the world. Our towns and cities, landscapes and leisure amenities are more popular than ever. Yet the tourism industry is under enormous pressure as a result of the pandemic and the global political situation, and needs our engagement now more than ever. With more than three million workers, the many businesses and self-employed contractors in the tourism industry give our municipalities and our country a distinctive human face, and we want to support them in this. The Committee is developing ideas to achieve this in partnership with associations and industry representatives.”



Jana Schimke, CDU/CSU
Chairwoman of
the Committee on Tourism

The German Bundestag's decisions are prepared by its committees, which are established at the start of each electoral term. Four of them are stipulated by the Basic Law, the German constitution: the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Defence Committee, the Committee on European Union Affairs and the Petitions Committee.

The Budget Committee and the Committee for the Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure are also required by law. The spheres of responsibility of the committees essentially reflect the Federal Government's distribution of ministerial portfolios. This enables Parliament to scrutinise the government's work effectively.

The committees of the German Bundestag

The German Bundestag sets political priorities of its own by establishing additional committees for specific subjects, such as sport, cultural affairs, human rights or tourism. In addition, special bodies such as parliamentary advisory councils, committees of inquiry or study commissions can also be established. The committees are composed of members of all the parliamentary groups, reflecting the balance of these groups in the German Bundestag. The distribution of the chairs and deputy chairs among the parliamentary groups also reflects their relative strengths in the plenary. In the current electoral term, the committees have between 19 and 49 members.

The committees discuss and deliberate on items referred to them by the plenary. They also have the right to take up issues on their own initiative, allowing them to set priorities in the parliamentary debate. When necessary, they draw on external expertise – usually by holding public hearings. At the end of a committee’s deliberations – especially on bills and motions for which it is the lead committee – it adopts a recommendation for a decision and a report, which serve as the basis for the plenary’s decision.

Over the years, it has been clear that Germans love to travel. More recently, however, the coronavirus crisis and the associated global restrictions have made it more difficult to go on holiday. “Staycations” within Germany have thus become even more popular, and many Germans have discovered more of Germany’s rich variety of options for tourists. Forecasts show that people’s love of travel is undiminished. Internal tourism, in particular, is continuing to recover; there has been a significant rise in the number of overnight stays. While holidays are the most enjoyable days of the year for some,

The Committee on Tourism

they represent work and a living for others. The Committee on Tourism therefore operates in a field that is subject to these competing demands. It discusses travellers' consumer rights and good parameters for tourism businesses, and in this context it looks not only at Germany, but also at destinations worldwide. How can the German tourism industry hold its own in the face of global competition? What action can be taken to tackle the shortage of skilled workers in this sector? What opportunities does the digital revolution offer travellers and companies? How can travel be made more sustainable and its greenhouse gas emissions be reduced? The 19 members of the Committee, chaired by Jana Schimke (CDU/CSU), grapple with all of these issues.

Tourism is a cross-cutting sector which touches on many policy fields. Turnover and jobs in the tourism industry are of great interest from the perspective of economic policy. Improving tourism infrastructure is an area where the members of the Committee on Transport are also involved, while protecting travellers' rights is also a matter for the ministries responsible for justice and consumer protection. In addition, tourism policy in Germany is structured on federal lines. The federal level is responsible for shaping and developing the general parameters for tourism, while the *Länder* (federal states) and municipalities are responsible for concrete planning, imple-

- 6 ■■■■■ SPD
- 5 ■■■■ CDU/CSU
- 3 ■■■ Alliance 90/The Greens
- 2 ■■ FDP
- 2 ■■ AfD
- 1 ■ The Left Party

Number of members: 19

Chairwoman: Jana Schimke, CDU/CSU

Deputy Chairwoman: Gülistan Yüksel, SPD

mentation and support. Unlike some other countries, however, Germany does not have a separate government ministry for tourism. This makes the role of the Committee on Tourism at the parliamentary level all the more important, as it brings together all issues relevant to tourism. Given the Committee's wide spectrum of topics, the members collaborate with various experts from politics, business, academia and civil society in the framework of hearings and consultations, working groups and on-site visits.

According to the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, tourism is an economic heavyweight, generating 105 billion euros in gross value added, 3.9% of total gross value added in Germany. Its contribution is comparable to retail (3.3%) and engineering (3.5%). The industry's mainly small and medium-sized businesses employ almost three million people, or 7% of all workers. Tourism is thus the sector employing the third-highest number of workers in Germany – behind the health sector and retail, and well ahead of sectors such as engineering and agriculture. Tourism is so important to a region because it also has an impact on other sectors, such as retail, energy producers, insurance, construction companies and medical services; it safeguards incomes and jobs in these areas.



The German tourism sector faces global competition from tourism in other countries. Germany must therefore constantly raise its profile as a travel destination in order to avoid being displaced by other countries. The variety Germany has to offer, in particular, is what makes it a special destination. As well as enjoying active holidays in the mountains or at the seaside, holidaymakers can explore a large number of cities, visit cultural attractions, or relax and recharge surrounded by nature. Germany represents good value for money and this plays a major role in making it an attractive destination, as by comparison with other countries Germany offers a combination of very inexpensive accommodation and outstanding quality and service levels.

None of this has happened by chance, however. It is the result of years of work, which the Committee on Tourism has monitored and supported. To ensure that Germany can retain its market position in future, the parliamentarians not only support tried and tested approaches, but also respond to trends and discuss them at the Committee's meetings. Key trends include, for example, the digital revolution, climate change, and promoting sustainable development in tourism. Modern, efficient and green tourism requires smart transport solutions and a well-developed and functioning infrastructure – and so these topics, too, are often discussed by the Committee.



The diverse nature of the Committee's work is highlighted by a glance at the topics covered at its meetings and the guests invited to attend them. For example, the members hold in-depth discussions about the shortage of skilled workers in Germany and its impact on the tourism industry. The effects of the coronavirus crisis on the tourism sector are also discussed regularly. In addition, the Committee often meets the German National Tourist Board to obtain information about marketing abroad. Representatives of many sectors within the tourism industry report to the Committee about their work and the challenges they are facing.

Each March, ITB Berlin, the world's leading travel trade show, is held in the German capital. The Committee members take this opportunity to hold talks with representatives of the tourism industry from around the world. The members are delighted that this dialogue can once again take place in person in Berlin, after several years as an entirely virtual event.



The Committee regularly requests reports from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action on the wide range of subjects relating to the tourism industry. For example, the Federal Government briefs the Committee on the national tourism strategy it has developed, and on the prospects for the recovery of tourism in Germany following the coronavirus crisis. Federal Government legisla-

tion, motions and communications are referred to the Committee for it to discuss and adopt a position. However, it can also take up matters on its own initiative and set its own priorities. In the current electoral term, the Committee has decided to significantly increase the number of public hearings it holds, and thus give everyone who is interested an opportunity to follow the Committee's work. In short, the Committee on Tourism, which brings together the German Bundestag's experts on this subject, has a key role to play on all issues relating to tourism in Germany.



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Political scientist,
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Bundestag Member
since 2013



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Committee members

The 19 members of the Committee on Tourism

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Bundestag Member
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Information online

The Committee on Tourism

www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a20



The German National Tourist Board

www.germany.travel/en



The German Tourist Association

www.deuschertourismusverband.de



The Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry

www.btw.de



Website for downloading and ordering
the German Bundestag's information materials

www.btg-bestellservice.de



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The German Bundestag takes decisions on what are at times highly complex and controversial bills and parliamentary initiatives relating to the entire spectrum of policy fields. The committees play a central role in parliamentary deliberations. They are the forum where the Members thrash out compromises and draw on expert advice before submitting their reports and recommendations for decisions to be voted on by the Bundestag as a whole.

www.bundestag.de/en/committees



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