



Deutscher Bundestag

The Committee on Tourism





“Every year, more and more people spend their holidays in Germany. Tourists from Germany and abroad value our varied landscapes, our rich cultural heritage, and the people living in our regions with their varying customs and traditions. Almost three million people in Germany work hard to ensure that holidaymakers enjoy themselves. Tourism is a powerful driver of job creation and an important economic factor for our beautiful country. The Committee on Tourism wants to ensure that there is a positive framework both for our visitors and for workers in the tourism industry, and that Germany remains a safe and popular destination.”



Sebastian Münzenmaier, AfD
Chairman 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 the Affairs of the European Union and the Petitions Committee. The Budget Committee and the Committee for 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 Bundestag committees

The German Bundestag sets political priorities of its own by establishing additional committees for specific subjects, such as sport, cultural affairs 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 nine 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, a majority of its members adopt a recommendation for a decision and a report, which serve as the basis for the plenary's decision.

Looking back at recent years shows that Germans' love of travel is undiminished. More than half of Germans go on at least one holiday a year, many of them within their own country. Yet holidays, the most enjoyable days of the year for some, represent work and a living for others. The Committee on Tourism therefore operates in a field that is subject to competing demands. It discusses both tourists' consumer rights and good parameters for tourism businesses. In this context, the Committee not only looks at Germany, but also at destinations worldwide. What funding models will exist for tourism in the future? How can rural tourism be shaped? What rights do tourists have when things go wrong? And what does accessible travel actually mean? The 18 members of the Committee, chaired by Sebastian Münzenmaier (AfD), grapple with all of these issues.

The Committee on Tourism

Tourism is a cross-cutting sector which touches on many policy fields. Politicians specialising in economic affairs take an interest in turnover and jobs in the tourism industry; politicians specialising in transport policy have a role to play when it comes to improving tourism infrastructure; and the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection is responsible for protecting travellers' rights. In addition, tourism policy in Germany is structured on federal lines. As a result, the federal level is responsible for shaping and developing the general parameters for the tourism sector, while the *Länder* (federal states) and municipalities are responsible for concrete planning, implementation and support. Unlike other countries, however, Germany does not have a ministry for tourism.

This makes the role of the Committee on Tourism, which brings together all issues relevant to tourism, even more crucial. Given the Committee's wide spectrum of topics, the Committee 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. Tourism generates 105 billion euros in gross value added (GVA) for Germany as a whole – 3.9 per cent of the country's total GVA – making it an economic heavyweight. Its contribution is comparable to retail (3.3 per cent) and engineering (3.5 per cent).

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

Number of members: 18

Chairman: Sebastian Münzenmaier, AfD

Deputy Chairwoman: Astrid Damerow, CDU/CSU

Tourism companies also serve an important function as employers. Almost 3 million people are directly employed in the tourism industry, or 7 per cent 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. Another reason why tourism is so important to a region is the fact that it does not simply benefit companies falling directly within the tourism sector. It also has an impact on other sectors, such as retail, energy producers, insurance, construction companies and doctors; it safeguards incomes in these areas and ensures jobs cannot be relocated elsewhere. Besides its cross-sectoral significance, the tourism

industry has other special features. Notably, it is dominated by small and medium-sized enterprises. Two-thirds of accommodation establishments offer fewer than 20 rooms, and the same proportion have an annual turnover of less than 500,000 euros. This has implications for the equity-capital ratio of the individual companies and is a factor in investment backlogs in some parts of Germany. The Committee on Tourism therefore welcomes industry initiatives to foster greater innovation and professionalism, and champions simpler access to loans, including for small businesses and micro-enterprises.



The German tourism sector faces global competition from destinations around the world. Germany must therefore constantly raise its profile in order to avoid being displaced by other destinations. Offering visitors something unique, special and distinctive is key in order to stand out. Germany's diversity, in particular, is what makes the country a special destination. As well as enjoying active holidays in the mountains or at the seaside, holidaymakers can explore a large number of cities, go on shopping trips, or relax with wellness breaks at spas. 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 Members of the Bundestag specialising in tourism policy 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, public acceptance of tourism, demographic change, and the individualisation of society. Modern, efficient and environmentally compatible 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 agendas and guest lists for its meetings. For example, the Committee members regularly discuss the shortage of skilled workers in Germany and its impact on the tourism industry. Accessibility along the entire travel chain is another subject examined by the Committee at regular intervals. The Committee also meets representatives of 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 currently facing. For example, the Committee has met the president of the German Hotels and Restaurants Association and the president of the German Aviation Association.

Each March, ITB Berlin, the world's leading travel trade show, is held in the German capital. The Committee members use it as a platform for dialogue with politicians specialising in tourism and representatives of the tourism industry from around the world.

The Committee also invites ambassadors from a wide range of countries to its meetings. They report on the general situation in their home countries, and in particular on the latest developments in their tourism sectors. The Committee also regularly requests reports from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy on subjects relating to the tourism industry. These reports reflect the wide range of issues dealt with by the Committee. For example, the Federal Government has briefed the Committee on the EU Package Travel Directive and on the EU's plans to reform rail passenger rights. In addition, the Federal Government presents its Report on Tourism Policy once in every electoral term.



Federal Government bills, motions and opinions, as well as EU items of business, are regularly 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. Accessibility, in particular, is a subject which the Committee examines regularly. A hearing was held at which the members examined the potential for an expansion in accessible travel services, and this important topic is regularly raised at many other meetings as well. The Committee is also setting special priorities with regard to rural areas, as the tourism industry can be an important

employer in lagging regions in particular. The members have adopted a motion calling for closer links between cultural affairs and tourism, especially in rural areas, in order to make better use of the available potential. In addition, the Committee has held a public hearing on the value added by tourism in large-scale conservation areas, such as national parks and nature parks. In short, the Committee on Tourism has a key role to play on all issues relating to tourism in Germany.



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Bundestag Member
since 2017



Committee members

The 18 members of the Committee on Tourism

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Business administrator,
b. 5 Nov. 1962
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Bundestag Member
since 2009



Michael Donth,
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Paul Lehrieder,
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b. 23 Dec. 1978
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Dr Klaus-Peter Schulze,
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since 2013



Martin Burkert,
SPD
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Bundestag Member
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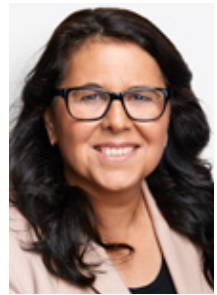
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SPD spokeswoman
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Christoph Neumann,
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Markus Tressel,
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Information online

The Committee on Tourism

www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a20

The German National Tourist Board

www.germany.travel/en

The German Tourism Association

www.deuschertourismusverband.de

The Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry

www.btw.de/der-btw/about-btw-engl

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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