

THE MICE SEGMENT IN GERMANY IS ON THE MOVE



After vacations and private trips, the international business travel market is slowly approaching the pre-crisis level of 2019. However, the weighting of the individual market segments is changing.

The MICE segment is recovering faster than traditional business trips and is gaining market share. At the same time, social trends, such as the work-life balance issue and dynamic changes in the world of work, shape demand. **The intersection between business and private trips is growing.** This creates opportunities but also challenges for tourism service providers.

New trends have been observed, e.g., "work from anywhere" or collaborative working support bleisure travel, a combination of business trips with private stays/holidays. The tourism industry's responses to these challenges can contribute to greater sustainability. This is the conclusion of current studies commissioned by the German National Tourist Board (GNTB) and the German Convention Bureau (GCB).

Even after the COVID-19 pandemic, Germany continues to maintain its position as the top business travel destination globally. Of the 117 million foreign business trips taken worldwide in 2023, 13.5 million were to Germany, representing a twelve percent market share. In 2023, over a third of all foreign business travelers seized the opportunity to blend their business trip to Germany with a personal stay or vacation.

This positions Germany as the leading bleisure destination in Europe for 2023 and the third globally (after the USA and Mexico, and ahead of France and Spain). As part of its Stay Longer initiative, the GNTB is strategically promoting the extension of the length of stay of international guests in Germany to reduce the ecological footprint per travel day.

Approximately a quarter of trips to Germany that involve a combination of business and leisure, known as "bleisure" trips, are traditional business trips. In contrast, the remaining three quarters fall into the MICE segment. Forty-three percent of attendees at congresses, 31 percent of those traveling for meetings or conferences, and 41 percent of visitors to trade fairs or exhibitions take advantage of combining their business trip to Germany with a vacation or private stay. This presents opportunities for additional business by actively promoting MICE offers that include a private travel component.

Bleisure trips can significantly extend the length of stay and reduce the proportionate CO2 footprint per travel day. On average, business travelers stay in Germany for 6.7 nights, while in the Bleisure category, this number increases to 8.8 nights. More than two-thirds of Bleisure trips last at least four nights.

The economic aspect of bleisure is not to be underestimated. An average expenditure of 1,767 euros per person per trip to Germany surpasses that of pure business trips, which stands at 1,432 euros. This data underscores the MICE segment's potential for increased revenue and business growth.

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