Project "Promotion of Sustainable Tourism in Germany - Good Examples and Problem Solutions (NTiD)"

Ö.T.E.

ÖKOLOGISCHER
TOURISMUS IN EUROPA
E.V.

Specialist conference

Shaping sustainable tourism in Germany:

Requirements for sustainable mobility and climate protection

Wednesday, November 3rd, 2021, ZOOM online event

10:00 am - 3:30 pm

ENGLISH SUMMARY

The conference starts with an introduction by Rolf Spittler from the host organization (E.T.E.), welcoming and thanking all 226 participants to this year's event, facilitated by E.T.E. and NatureFriends Germany on the topic: 'Requirements for sustainable mobility and climate protection'. The conference is part of the project: Fostering sustainable tourism development in Germany - Solutions and good practices.

Setting the course: a mobility turnaround for tourism

Speaker: Philipp Kosok; AGORA-Verkehrswende

The first speaker to take the floor is Philipp Kosok from AGORA-Verkehrswende, presenting solutions[1] for a mobility turnaround in tourism in Germany. He reports no progress and constant emissions in sustainable mobility over the past 30 years. Everyday journeys make up most of the mobility and it is not enough to equip the current mass of cars with batteries. This would not be covered by renewable energies. Therefore, a rethinking of a new transport system is urgently required in the next 5-10 years to at least achieve the climate protection goals. Holiday travel also plays a role in achieving the climate goals - on the one hand through long-distance travel, but also through medium-haul flights. Medium-haul flights have increased significantly. There is the great potential for shifting to rail transport.

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[1] Prognos, Öko-Institut, Wuppertal-Institut (2021): Climate-neutral Germany 2045. How Germany can achieve its climate goals before 2050. Summary on behalf of the Climate Neutrality Foundation, Agora Energiewende and Agora Verkehrswende.

https://www.agora-verkehrswende.de/fileadmin/Projekte/2021/KNDE_2045/Klimaneutrales-Deutschland-2045.pdf

He notes that rail and air transport are in direct price competition. The latter is the biggest competitor to climate-friendly travel options also due to unfair price competition.

Therefore, a rethink on a new transport system is urgently needed in the next 5-10 years. In this context, air and car transport must be put on the agenda.

Conclusion: Political decisions are urgently needed to promote climate-friendly mobility. For example, Germany can tax flights and paraffin (also EU-wide) to reduce price competition between air and rail transport. Rail transport still has great potential, for example with the introduction of night trains. He expects the next federal government to provide tailwind for the mobility turnaround on the ground.

Travel mobility in Germany: how much, where, with what? - The travellers' decision-making calculations and options for action for the actors involved

Speaker: Angelika Schulz; DLR – Institut für Verkehrsforschung

The next speaker, Angelika Schulz, from the German Aerospace Center, Institute for Transport Research, reports on a study that she carried out in 2017 on long-distance travel in Germany[2]. The analysed data within the study shows, among other things, that 8% of the traffic volume is outside of the familiar surroundings and is responsible for 51% of the traffic volume and that in turn 2% of the traffic volume is long-distance travel providing 46% of the traffic volume.

In addition, there is a surprising result: German vacationers do not necessarily prefer a destination far away from their hometown, but primarily a travel destination that is "different" from the familiar surroundings. The national park can also be 50 kilometres away, so kilometres do not play a role in the holiday selection. Environmental pollution of the various means of transport also only plays a subordinate role in the decision-making process. There is an environmental awareness, but this is not reflected in the travel decision. Two thirds of all travellers are also unfamiliar with CO_2 compensation for travel and 20% of users of compensation tools state that they no longer want to use this instrument in the future. There should be much better incentives here.

Conclusion: Identified areas of action for sustainable mobility in tourism for Germany and the actors involved are:

- strengthening of nearby vacation destinations
- influencing travel organization and procedures
- strengthening of the train and bus as a means of transport
- reduction of motorized individual transport
- reduction of air travel
- influencing long-distance travel
- efficient handling of long-haul traffic
- monetary approaches (pricing, budgeting, compensation)

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[2] Schulz et al. (2020): Climate-impacting emissions from German travel. Texts 141/2020. Project on behalf of the UBA, FKZ 3717 16 108 0.

https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/1410/publikationen/2020-07-20_texte_141-2020_emissions-reiseverkehr_0.pdf

- socialisation of children/ youth: promoting the use of environmentally friendly means of transport
- development of a sustainable mobility culture and communication strategy
- digitalisation, virtualisation

Image turnaround: Selling sustainable mobility emotionally

Speaker: <u>Michael Adler</u>; tippingpoints GmbH, agency for sustainable communication

Michael Adler, the managing director of tippingpoints GmbH, agency for sustainable communication, identifies too little advertising for internal tourism and therefore advocates a different image of tourism - the local area must be worked up, that means better advertising for "exotic offers" in Germany to promote local short breaks. This change in behaviour requires a change in relationship, i.e., holidays in Germany must be made more attractive and more environmentally friendly and properly marketed.

Accordingly, the entire mobility culture must change[3]. Inner cities must be made more pedestrian and cyclist friendly, cars should have more trouble driving within the centres and renting in rural areas must be made easier, relying on smaller e-cars and autonomous cars. Public transport also needs a change and cycling, bus and train traffic must be made more attractive in cities. As, for example, the railway's capacity to take bicycles is greatly exceeded at peak times.

<u>Conclusion:</u> The above-mentioned problems and solutions can be addressed through targeted communication, advertising and redesign. This is proven by many good examples from other countries in Europe. "Sustainability has to be the party in town that sells out." (Ed Gillespie)

<u>Practical examples: Sustainable mobility in destinations</u>

Region 1: Elbe-Brandenburg river landscape biosphere reserve

Mobility in rural areas: can everything be reached? Problem definition - possible solutions

Speaker: <u>Jan Schormann</u>; biospherereserve Flusslandschaft Elbe-Brandenburg

Jan Schormann from the Elbe-Brandenburg River Landscape Biosphere Reserve presents the problem and possible solutions of mobility in rural areas. The biosphere reserve has the lowest population density in all of Germany and therefore faces a lack of public transport on a daily basis, which is due to the socio-economic framework conditions. He criticizes the focus of politics, which is still on individual transport by car. Due to the lack of supply and practicality, perspectives of users are on cars. The introduction of the 'BrandenburgCard' is intended to encourage visitors to use local public transport, a feasibility study questioned local decision-

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[3] Best-practice projects from the chat: https://www.eggensberger.de/de/hotel/nachhaltige-energie/ https://www.imba.com/our-focus; https://ammer-loisach-energie.moqo.de/ ; https://www.omobi.de/ https://www.ueberlingen-bodensee.de/just-explore-bodensee; https://ioki.com/

makers and received cautious reactions[4]. In Mr. Schormann's opinion, there is a need for more courage and innovative strength for a traffic turnaround.

Solution approaches for the biosphere reserve were inspired by best practice examples from all over Germany. Since the region is a popular and established cycling region, the focus is on expanding the bike rental network, the 'Plus Bus', which provides a connection to long-distance transport and the visitor centre and simplifies the transport of bicycles, complementing an on-call bus system. The VLP's E-bus initiative is currently testing ten vehicles which will then be operating in the biosphere reserve.

Conclusion: A start has been made for the "traffic turnaround in rural areas", in which sustainable mobility makes an important contribution to resource-conserving regional development and climate protection. There is a will to move forward a sustainable mobility development, but there is still a lack of political and practical framework conditions to pave the way.

Region 2: Destination Harz

Hatix - Mobility Ticket Harz: Promotion, offer design and acceptance

Speaker: Friedhart Knolle; Harz National Park

Dr. Friedhart Knolle presents a public transport solution in the Harz National Park. 'HATIX' is a guest card issued in the respective accommodation and a 'free' ticket for local public transport. A contribution of 25 cents per night and per person will be charged. Interestingly: In order to implement HATIX, the law was circumvented in the Eastern Harz, which was later adjusted - an example of the flexibility of a district government.

The first effects for the region were already recorded in the pilot phase:

- Competitive advantage for the travel destination Harz: The special service offer of free road-bound public transport generates a competitive advantage for the Harz
- Increase in the number of overnight stays and higher added value for the region
- Reduction of the individual traffic of guests
- Acceptance of the guest contribution increases
- The accuracy of the hosts' reporting increases
- Higher utilization of the road-bound public transport contributes to securing the future of existing bus connections and enables improvements in the line network, added value also for locals
- Active contribution to climate protection in the Harz has an image-promoting effect

Comments in the chat denounce the benefits of HATIX for day tourists and, above all, locals, Dr. Knolle agrees that HATIX needs to expand.

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[4] Similar offers, studies and finance analyses in Germany from the chat: https://www.schwaebischealb.de/albcard; https://www.fahrtziel-natur.de/aktuell/kostenlos-mobil; https://www.dwif.de/infopool/publikation/nachhaltige-mobilitaetskonzepte-fuer-touristen-im-oeffentlichen-verkehr-mit-fokus-auf-regionen-im-bereich-von-grossschutzgebieten-heft-56-2016.html ; https://dwif.de/images/news/PDF_2020/Potenzialanalyse_Tourismus_Erreichbarkeit_Hessen_dwif.pdf

Topic: Tourism is best done on foot

Speaker: Roland Stimpel; Fuss e.V.

Roland Stimpel from Fuss e.V. advocates the most important and natural form of mobility in tourism: mobility on foot. After explaining the advantages of this form of mobility, he makes clear how infrastructure should be designed for it. Here, the main focus is on the areas of:

- Paths,

- paths-environment,

- continuous networks

- orientation.

Examples of measures for improving the infrastructure are: few interruptions by traffic lanes, continuous footpaths, for example: shared space / traffic calming zones, zebra crossings, footpath crossings, pedestrian zone.

Pedestrian guidance can be achieved through orientation infrastructure. Sufficient space should also be achieved through space management for pedestrians (pavements should be free of litter, outdoor restaurants and e-scooters should be limited in their space). Pedestrian tourism should be anchored and staffed in the administrations and planning levels.

Conclusion: A lot also needs to be done to promote foot mobility.

E-bike mobility and mountain biking: a look at the regions

Electric bicycle mobility (including mountain biking): the mood in German tourist regions

Speaker: Tilman Sobek; Mountain bike tourism forum

Tilman Sobek from the Mountain Bike Tourism Forum presents a study including an expert survey with a total of almost 250 organizations from across Germany (DMOs, municipalities, service providers and other stakeholders). The main emphasis was given to marketing with a focus on cycling and walking. The current situation sees nature cycling destinations booming, with 25% of all guests cycling (including mountain biking). The active season 2021 in particular was very successful, with a great upturn compared to 2019/20, with a great increase in e-bikes and (e-) mountain bike tourism. This development speaks for a further increase in importance for active and nature-oriented topics in the future.

In general, almost half of all cyclists use e-bikes today and an increase to almost three quarters is expected by 2030. The study shows that both opportunities (e.g. increasing the tourism value chain) and challenges (e.g. lack of infrastructure, network expansion and adjustments to the range of services necessary) are recognized by stakeholders.

Several needs for adjustment are identified across all fields of action, i.e.:

- No differentiation between bike and e-bike in terms of strategy and brand
- Consolidation of cooperation, also across regions
- Expansion of infrastructure based on the needs of e-bikers
- Addressing specific target groups across all communication channels

Another point raised by the stakeholders was the optimization of the planning processes for tourist and everyday cycling (i.e. more coordination, bundling competencies, promoting integrated concepts). Actors feel fit for developments in cycle tourism, but organizations are still under-equipped. Charging points and rental stations are already available, especially in e-mobility, but regions are still inadequately set up. However, there are plans to expand e-mobility (especially charging infrastructure, cooperation and rental systems). To this end, politics must improve the framework conditions.

Conclusion: Cycling in everyday life and tourism can be better planned together. E-mobility has a great potential that should be used in the regions.

Region 3: practical example

E-mountain biking in the mountains; increasing demand - high user pressure

Speaker: Benjamin Trotter; German Alpine Association

Benjamin Trotter from the German Alpine Association (DAV) provides information on the increasing demand and high user pressure for (e-) mountain biking. In 2020, 15% of 5.04 million bikes sold were mountain bikes of which the two largest groups are trail (59.5%) and tour bikers (22.8%). In future mountain destinations, the German Alpine Association is relying on a visitor management concept in which bans are avoided and instead is directed with offers through:

- Designation of routes
- Round tables
- Information regarding liability
- Signposting concept
- Various guides
- Public relations.

From the presentation it becomes clear that there is an area of tension between politics, nature and social compatibility, whereby social compatibility represents the greatest challenge (i.e. acceptance of property owners, various uses on one path), as also highlighted by the chat.

Conclusion: There is a tension between politics, nature and social compatibility, whereby social compatibility is the greatest challenge (e.g. acceptance of land owners, diverse uses on one path), as is also evident from the chat.

From the chat on the area of tension: social acceptability

- Large study by the FVA Freiburg sees hardly any conflicts between hikers and MTB. https://www.fvabw.de/fileadmin/publikationen/sonstiges/190625erendung_bike2.pdf
- DWV study sees few conflicts among nature users. https://natursport-umwelt-bewusst.de/download/2493/
- Our own experience from Oberstdorf confirms major conflicts between e-cyclists (not just e-MTBs) and hikers, as the number of cyclists on single-lane hiking trails has increased significantly as a result.
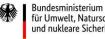
- My impression from Oberstdorf was that there are hardly any mountain bikers where there are many hikers. Because the hikers take the mountain railways to the summit. And they are difficult to reach even with an e-MTB. In 2018, I only met one mountain biker there during a 4-day holiday.

Conflict resolution through education and communication:

- The focus should be more on a nature and socially compatible coexistence of all those looking for relaxation. If everyone knows and exercises their duties and rights, and this concept is also carried and supported in (tourist) communication, it works.
- It's all a question of education and sensitization for the topic: If I know that bikers also use the route, I don't get scared when I see a biker. During the summer we deployed tourist rangers in our region who could not report any conflicts in this regard. However, it is important to educate all user groups and to encourage mutual consideration.
- Steering through attractive and diverse offers and education of all nature users instead of separating them should be more encouraged.

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