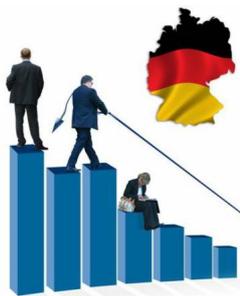


# GERMANY REMAINS EUROPE'S LEADING MEETING & CONFERENCE DESTINATION



Recently it has been stated that Germany is still Europe's leading destination for meetings and conference events. This conclusion was made by 600 experts in this particular field of tourism who responded to a recent survey. In fact, Germany is second behind the USA as the world's leader in hosting business events. Germany's closest European rivals are France, Austria and Spain respectively. Berlin, somewhat unsurprisingly, has been singled out as the number one location for congresses within metropolitan

and industrialized regions, closely followed by the Rhine area. Munich, Cologne and Hamburg share third place. This is an important field for the future of Germany's overall tourism market, as 86% of experts predict that virtual communication will not replace live meetings in the near future. It had previously been suggested that conferences and travelling abroad to meet business partners would become a thing of the past as the internet would take over. However, critics have now stated that this is unlikely to happen.

Germany is number one on the European list and number two in the world for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is almost directly in the centre of Europe. Secondly, the climate is favourable as it is not too hot, unlike in some of the Mediterranean countries, nor is it too cold, as, for example, Russia. Thirdly, the infrastructure is superb and hosts of meetings and congresses can choose from a wide range of hotels, business centres, special meeting rooms and conference halls. Germany also offers the option of extraordinary locations such as parks, theme parks and entertainment centres. Germany has the added advantage that its inhabitants tend to be linguistically talented, and security and service levels have always been high. When we put all of these factors together, plus the fact that the 2006 World Cup boosted publicity even further; it is clear why Germany leads Europe in meeting and conference tourism.

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