

# GERMANY DISCOVERS THE POTENTIAL OF GERMAN-AMERICAN TOURISTS



Four hundred years ago, the first Germans left their country for the United States. Now they form the largest self reported ancestry group in the U.S. outnumbering the Irish and English. There are approximately 50 million Americans with German ancestors living in the USA representing great tourism potential for their home country.

German Tourism Association (DTV) recently announced the completion of several months long special project focusing on German American travelers. **The aim of the project was not only to promote Germany as a heritage tourism destination in the U.S. but also to make the local providers know about the potential German Americans represent for the travel trade.** The project was funded by Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology.

"There are 50 million German-Americans living in the USA. This is a huge amount of potential tourists motivated to come to Germany because of their roots. Germany has to simply encourage them to come," said Ernst Burgbacher, the Parliamentary Secretary of the Federal Minister of Economics and Technology, reported DTV

Many Americans are closely linked with the country from which their families come from. **However, in Germany this sector has been overlooked by most of the travel service providers.**

As a part of the project, DTV for example presented the history of German immigrants in Bremerhaven, where the German Emigration Center can be found. Several politicians and representatives of various cultural institutions signed there a joint statement supporting the idea of developing the regions from where the emigrants mostly come from and to make these destinations more attractive to them.

For service providers, DTV also organized six workshops. The aim of the events was to advise tour operators and other stakeholders how to develop their offer and services to make them more tempting for Germans living in the U.S.

**According to the latest figures, there are 1.9 million tourists coming to Germany from USA every year.** 700,000 of them are descendants of German emigrants. Since 2008 the number of

German American tourists coming to their “home country” has been however in decline.

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