

BERLIN NEEDS TOURISTS AND SHORT-HAUL FLIGHTS TO SURVIVE



The end of the Covid-19 crisis is finally in sight. Berlin is attracting tourists and airlines are preparing to expand their offer. However, aviation has come under fire in the context of the climate debate and the Green Chancellor candidate Annalena Baerbock is advocating for the discontinuation of short-haul flights.

During the crisis, Berlin slipped from overtourism in a few places into city-wide undertourism. And this has brought many negative effects to the city.

Why does Berlin need tourists?

Many families have lost their source of income, but also the cultural scene is affected, seeing as 75 to 95 % of the visitors of Berlin's cultural events came from outside Berlin.

That is why it is so important for the cultural scene that Berlin hotels are allowed to receive tourists yet again. During the pandemic, the citizens of Berlin learned that what they perceived as the flair of the city is largely paid for by visitors. And that this biotope dies quickly when nobody comes.

It must be noted, however, that the effect of the crisis on the industry has been devastating. Many hotels closed and some are uncertain to open again after the pandemic. There is a lot of uncertainty in the industry, which will presumably be cleared up during the summer.

The Importance of Short-haul Flights

In the last couple of months, there have been a lot of discussions in the political spectrum with regards to short-distance flights and their sustainability, especially in Germany, but also in other European countries, like France.

According to experts in the German tourism sector, Berlin needs good flight connections, also within Europe, in order to be connected internationally and be considered an important hub. Moreover, they add that there is a general necessity for cooperation between airlines and railway companies.

Experts in the airline industry, for their part, say that they are only serving the demand that there is. "If there was no demand for certain destinations because there is an attractive rail connection, we would not offer it," said Sephan Erler, Head of Easyjet Germany.

Thus, he implied that the overall railway connectivity is not satisfactory and the necessity to connect European cities with short-haul flights is essential to guarantee connectivity at a high level on the continent.

How Will Tourism in Berlin Change?

Generally, the quality of tourism is set to increase. In this context, **it is interesting to note that the average Berlin guest is 41 years old, not a young person who goes clubbing, dances**

through the night and leaves the next morning without a hotel stay.

As a rule, highly interested, well-educated individuals come to Berlin to recharge their batteries culturally, to eat well, to sleep well and to be inspired. Berlin was well prepared for this core target group even before the pandemic, and that will continue to grow.

Finally, it must be concluded that the number of long-haul flights to Berlin is set to increase in the coming months. In this sense, it seems very likely that more guests from Asia will be arriving in the German capital.

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