

BUSINESS TRIPS IN GERMANY ARE STILL VERY IMPORTANT



Despite the advance of modern communication technologies since the beginning of the Corona pandemic, business trips in Germany play an important role. It has been confirmed by a survey conducted by AirPlus International; 110 top managers in Germany, including CEOs, heads of finance and heads of sales were surveyed.

According to the survey, the majority of respondents (93 percent) expect business trips in their own companies to be replaced by video conferences to varying degrees compared to 2019. However, managers are quite critical of this: **they see the lack of face-to-face meetings as the biggest risk (cited by 81 percent) of virtual communication.**

Almost every other respondent also points out the lack of networking opportunities (46 percent) and data security risks (45 percent) as disadvantages of online meetings. For as many as one in three, the costs of the digital infrastructure represent a risk, while the energy requirements of modern communication technologies play a rather subordinate role (mentioned by 16 per cent of respondents).

The business purpose of the meeting is crucial in deciding whether one prefers to stay at the laptop or get on a plane, train or car. When it comes to building trust and relationships, the majority of respondents (84 percent) agree that face-to-face meetings are essential. The majority of respondents also prefer face-to-face meetings for negotiations (mentioned by 76 percent), occasions with emotional communication content (73 percent), meetings of confidential and sensitive content (71 percent), customer acquisition and retention, trade fair visits and industry meetings (70 percent each) as well as strategic internal meetings (56 percent). In contrast, occasions such as the exchange of knowledge or collaboration in project teams can continue to take place virtually in the future in the view of the respondents.

Business trips in Germany are the basis for a functioning business relationship. After more than two years of working from the home office and communicating mainly virtually, **German companies are now seizing the opportunity to make up for what they missed.** Bookings by German business travelers have been steadily increasing again since the beginning of the year and reached their peak in May since the beginning of the pandemic. In terms of billing volume, Germany was at almost three-quarters of the May 2019 level, and in some other markets even over 90 per cent.

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