



Association „Barrier-free Destinations in Germany“ – a powerful alliance

Presentation abstract

Association „Barrier-free Destinations in Germany“ – a powerful alliance:

Association “Barrier-free Destinations in Germany” as an example for networking and participation

A Destination for All is a complex issue that requires great expertise not only from the service providers but also from the destination management. The transfer of knowledge within/ throughout the destination area is easier in a well-established network. Through working together, developing products and exploiting synergies new opportunities are arriving. Used as a marketing platform a network can facilitate communication with the target groups and open new markets. A network should cover local and regional level and – very important - the entire service chain of tourism.

The “Barrier-free Destinations in Germany” Association was founded in 2008 by a group of tourist destinations which are committed to accessible tourism in Germany.

The Association comprises now the following members:

Eifel Tourismus GmbH, Erfurt Tourismus & Marketing GmbH, Ostfriesland Tourismus GmbH, Tourismusverband Fränkisches Seenland GbR, Tourismusverband Ruppiner Seenland e.V., Tourismusverband Sächsische Schweiz e.V.; Tourismusverband Lausitzer Seenland e.V., Magdeburg Marketing Kongress & Tourismus GmbH, Südliche Weinstraße e.V., Rostock und Warnemünde Tourist Information.

The “Barrier-free Destinations in Germany” Association is thus a group of cities and tourism regions which are especially committed to accessible tourism in Germany and which work to continuously develop and communicate barrier-free tourism in cooperation with partners. Accessible tourism is located in the member destinations on the top of the tourism hierarchy.

The group works now on a national and interregional level. The Eifel region also has an international dimension (joint activities with Belgium and Luxembourg) and Saxon Switzerland works very close with the Bohemian Switzerland region in the Czech Republic. East Frisia works together with the Netherlands (Region Friesland Holland and Groningen). The member regions are all areas of exceptional geographical and cultural interest.

Their goal is to implement and further develop “Tourism for All” within the tourism destinations and throughout Germany. Sharing know-how and experience and expanding their network is an important part of the association’s work. Together it’s easier to promote accessible tourism, find new partners and to intensify the collaboration with politicians, local authorities and other associations on a Germany-wide basis. This has led amongst others to a rewarding collaboration with the “The German National Tourist Board” who grants the association access to an international stage. Another valuable partner is the “German Railway (Deutsche Bahn AG)”.

The group's central communication hub is the joint website www.barrierefreie-reiseziele.de / www.barrier-free-germany.com. The website is used to promote corporate marketing initiatives and Accessible Tourism and gives each region the possibility to present itself and its sights and attractions. Of course the focus lies on accessible tourism products and activities. It helps to create transparency in the provision of accessible products and services.

Also, the facebook page of the association could build a large community (<https://www.facebook.com/BarrierefreieReiseziele>)

The member regions are characterized by:

- The Eifel region with its national park, a landscape of forests, lakes and volcanoes
- The City of Erfurt with its medieval quarter and its impressive architectural ensemble of cathedral St. Mary and the Church of St. Severus and the Merchant's Bridge
- The Franconian Lakes for swimming, windsurfing, sailing and cycling in a varied natural setting.
- Lusatian Lakeland will become one of the largest lakeland areas in Europe as several of its former open-cast lignite mines are being flooded and recultivated
- The City of Magdeburg, regional capital of Saxony-Anhalt with its historical city
- East Frisia features ancient moorlands, parks, fen canals and the unique natural heritage site of the Wadden Sea
- The Ruppiner Lakes with its lakes, canals and rivers making the experience of outdoor tourism accessible to all
- Saxon Switzerland with its unspoilt national park and the impressive scenery of the Elbe Sandstone Massif
- Rostock & Warnemünde, the 800-year old Hanseatic City with a flourishing Seaside Resort with white-sand beaches, brick Gothic architecture and maritime charm
- Southern Wine Route – with gently rolling vineyards, culinary delights and outdoor adventures in the Palatinate Forest Biosphere Reserve

The member regions offer a wide choice of accessible accommodation, service facilities and opportunities for active holidays, and are dedicated to removing any remaining barriers. To become a member, the association has developed a list of criteria which its members have to fulfil. This list of requirements includes enshrining the principle of accessible tourism in the mission statement of the city or region, willingness to allocate appropriate human and financial resources to this area and the existence of a regional working group which regularly discusses issues relating to accessible tourism.

Lead speaker : Kostja Gosau

Organisation : Association Barrier-free Destinations in Germany

City (Country) : Erfurt(Germany)

Biography : Kostja Gosau is developing and promoting accessibility in Tourism in the Regions Brandenburg and Berlin in Germany. Working in the touristic region Ruppiner Lakes he was managing regional and European accessibility projects as a leading partner. The focus has always been on the creation of accessible touristic products, including services and infrastructure. Together with "Barrier-free Destinations in Germany" and regional partners he developed criteria for accessibility in tourism, managed partner networks and sensitized the political and societal environment to advance accessibility for all. Promoting accessibility in tourism is part of his today's work as a freelance consultant and project manager.

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Organisation : --

City (Country) : -- (--)

Biography :