

Development of barrier-free tourism products and services in travel destination Germany

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(presenter)*

A lot has been done in Germany in order to improve tourism products and services for people with disabilities within the last years. Cities, regions, federal states, organizations and companies have invested a lot to create services in the sense of "tourism for all". To give examples:

- a) Berlin received the award "Accessible Cities of Europe", by the European Commission.
- b) Tourist regions and cities in Germany created an organization for quality proofed barrier-free tourism services along the service chain.

Germany offers a wide range of tourism products for people with handicaps such as special tours in national parks for blind people or people in wheel chairs, city experience, sport holidays, beach holidays, and adventure travel for handicapped people etc.

Over the last years, many systems and methodologies have been created in order to guarantee a high quality of barrier free tourism offers. During this time, it was not easy for potential tourists and tour operators to get an overview and to compare travel products.

For this reason the Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy (BMWi) launched a program to create a nationwide system for the certification of tourism products. The sophisticated system is now ready to use and hundreds of hotels, tourist information centers etc. already have been certified. Now Germany has a standardized system for the whole country which includes a certification system, training of the certifier, training of staff, icons to communicate in how far the tested object is barrier-free and promotion material which can be used by the certified companies. Several partners from organizations with very different interests worked for more than 3 years on the development of this system and finally agreed to accept and use this new certification system. Participants were organizations like the national coordination organization "Tourism for all", several organizations covering different interests of handicapped people, tourism marketing organizations, hotel organizations, transport organizations like German rail (Deutsche Bahn), German car association (ADAC), German National Tourist Board and others. This system is a milestone for the German tourism sector and enables handicapped people to get reliable information about travel products and services in the whole nation.

Past: different symbols and explanations:

ROLLSTUHL GERECHT GEEIGNET	BEDINGT GEEIGNET	WENIG GEEIGNET	SEH- BEHINDERTEN- GERECHT	HÖR- BEHINDERTEN- GERECHT

behindertengerecht bedingt rollstuhlgerecht

barrierefrei rollstuhlgeeignet

behindertenfreundlich

bedingt barrierefrei

rollstuhlgerecht generationengerecht

Mobil mit Handicap **barrierearm**

Today: one central system for the whole nation:

Barrierefreiheit geprüft				