Press releases for the
Meeting & EventBarometer 2015

Press Conference, May 19, 2015

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Frankfurt, May 19, 2015
Press Information

Meeting & EventBarometer 2015: Facts & Figures
Germany’s international meeting guests reach 25.6 million

Germany meeting delegates increase for the sixth year, international participants grow nine percent as industry expertise and other compelling factors resonate for meeting planners

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015. Germany saw the number of international meeting guests soar nine percent in 2014 to a total of 25.6 million, according to the just released Meeting & EventBarometer 2015. Other key findings of the report illustrate how expertise, technology, sustainability, value and infrastructure are among the leading factors why planners choose Germany again and again. The report was issued today at IMEX in Frankfurt.

The annual Meeting & EventBarometer surveys Germany's meetings industry. It is conducted by the European Institute for the Meetings Industry (EITW) on behalf of the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC), the German Convention Bureau (GCB), and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). This is the ninth year the Meeting & EventBarometer has been conducted.

Petra Hedorfer, Chief Executive Officer of the GNTB, concluded: "The rising share of international participants helps Germany remain the leading business destination in Europe by far."

Germany by the numbers
In 2014, the number of international meeting guests in Germany reached 25.6 million, up nine percent over 2013, with the market for technology, innovation and medical meetings particularly strong. More than 383 million people overall participated in meetings in Germany, representing a 3.3 percent growth over 2013 and the sixth year of consecutive growth.

The number of conference hotels, centres and venue spaces grew to 7,152 across the country, up 1.7 percent from last year. Additionally, 3.04 million conferences, meetings and events took place in Germany in 2014, up one percent.
Commenting on this and the overall strength of the German meetings industry, Matthias Schultze, Managing Director of the GCB, said: “The continuous growth of the German meetings industry shows that we are well-positioned in the international meetings market, but we can never rest on our laurels. We continuously analyse important trends, issues and opportunities to further strengthen our offerings for global planners and visitors. The Meeting & EventBarometer 2015 is one way we do this.”

Joachim König, President of the EVVC, added: "Based on the results of the annual Meeting & EventBarometer, the GCB and EVVC have initiated different projects on topics such as metrics, future meeting space and political outreach, so that we can give German service providers and destinations practical support to strengthen conference and meetings development and marketing."

**Expertise is in demand**

Germany's global leadership as a meetings destination is based on a combination of high quality, good value venues, travel accessibility and access to Germany’s extensive expertise in key industries such as technology, innovation, finance, healthcare, automotive and aerospace.

For a number of years, Germany has marketed expertise as a major component in the destination decision-making process. Companies and associations are increasingly selecting destinations and venues that complement their own industry focus; by doing so, they realise they can naturally tap into local expertise, resources and talent that add value to their meeting’s focus and their attendees’ professional development.

**Tech is on the rise**

It should come as no surprise that organisers attach great importance to technology before, during and after an event: Nearly two thirds (65.9 percent) of event planners surveyed expect to use mobile applications on site, 45.5 percent expect to use online discussion forums, and about one-third expect to use cloud services and be able to live-stream lectures or workshops.

In line with this, approximately 13 percent of events last year in Germany were booked via conference portals according to event organisers.
**Sustainability ensures a higher quality of events**
More than half of organisers value providers with a sustainability management system compared to just one third in 2011. About 35.6 percent also believe that sustainability efforts of suppliers result in a noticeable improvement in quality.

Almost half (43.2 percent) of surveyed suppliers have sustainability management systems in place - an increase of 16 percent compared to 2011. German suppliers are also highly aware of the need for accessibility: around 80 percent said that accessibility is part of their corporate philosophy compared to just over 60 percent of event organisers. More than half of the suppliers currently have accommodation measures in place.

**Budgets and optimism up**
The Meeting & EventBarometer 2015 indicates that 38.5 percent of event planners in Germany see budgets increasing over 2014. What’s more, 51.7 percent of suppliers and 58 percent of organizers are more optimistic about the industry, an improvement over last year.

**Meeting & EventBarometer Germany**
*The Meeting & EventBarometer 2015 is the only study in Germany that examines both the conference and events sector. The initiators are the European Association of Event Centres e.V. (EVVC), the GCB German Convention Bureau e.V. and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). The study was carried out by the European Institute for the Meetings Industry (EITW), partner for the ninth year running.*

For the complete press kit for the Meeting & EventBarometer 2015, including presentations, graphics and texts on key topics, visit the newsroom at [www.germany-meetings.com](http://www.germany-meetings.com)
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Meeting & EventBarometer 2015: Image

Germany most popular destination for meetings and events

*Berlin most sought after city with Munich #2 and Frankfurt #3. Cologne is 4 and Hamburg is No 5*

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015 – In figures just released in the Meeting & EventBarometer 2015 report, Germany is shown to be the leading destination choice with meeting planners ahead of the U.S. and Spain.

The annual Meeting & EventBarometer, conducted by the European Institute for the Meetings Industry (EITW), is the only report to survey Germany’s congress, meetings and events industry and is organized by the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC), the German Convention Bureau (GCB), and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). This is the ninth year the Barometer has been conducted.

Industry Expertise Is In Demand

Behind this global leadership as a meetings destination, is Germany’s proven reputation for delivering high quality and good value venues & hotels and easy travel accessibility, combined with access to deep German expertise in key industries like technology, innovation, finance, healthcare, automotive, aerospace and many more.

Commenting on these benefits, the Managing Director of the GCB Matthias Schultze offered, “Germany’s excellent infrastructure is a strong foundation for the performance we have as a meeting destination. Through our GCB membership and partnerships we are also deeply committed to having planners and delegates from around the world tap into the key industries expertise that lives in our cities, towns and regions, our companies, academic institutions, research facilities and industry experts.”

Berlin Leads in Popularity, Munich then Frankfurt in Top 3

Providing insights into the popularity of various German meeting destinations, the Barometer also shows Berlin squarely in the lead with Munich occupying second.
Frankfurt is slated in third place and in fourth is Cologne. Hamburg rounds out the top 5.

“Germany’s major cities have a strong international reputation as conference destinations but we are also seeing great potential in smaller towns and regions attracting excellent meetings. One of the reasons for this is individual and joint marketing efforts between German destinations and service providers which is an opportunity available for all,” said Joachim König, President of the European Association of Event Centers. “In fact, the EVVC and GCB are currently conducting a Germany-wide survey on the organizations and budgets around Destination Marketing by city and town size to build an even stronger foundation for growth and marketing going forward.”

The Meeting & Event Barometer 2015 is the only study in Germany that examines both the conference and events sectors. The initiators are the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC), the German Convention Bureau e.V. (GCB) and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). The study was carried out by the European Institute for the Meetings Industry (EITW), partner for the ninth year running.

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Meeting & EventBarometer 2015: Digitisation

Digital technology offers great added value for organisers and participants

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015. Organisers attach great importance to digital technology - before, during and after an event: Nearly two thirds (65.9 percent) of event planners surveyed expect to use mobile applications on site, 45.5 percent expect to use online discussion forums, and about one-third of event planners would expect to use cloud services and be able to live stream lectures or workshops.

This is a key finding of the Meeting & EventBarometer 2015, the only study in Germany that examines both the conference and events sector. The initiators are the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC), the German Convention Bureau (GCB) and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). The study was carried out by the European Institute for the Meetings Industry (EITW).

"Digital offers are increasingly becoming a fundamental component of modern events and open up new opportunities for both organisers and participants. This includes video sessions for delegates to help them prepare for an event or research a particular topic. These sessions can be tied into viral marketing activity thereby helping participants to gain additional insight into an event," explains Matthias Schultze, Managing Director of the GCB.

Free Wi-Fi is fundamental
A fundamental condition for many event organisers is free Wi-Fi on site - almost all (98 percent) view this as standard. "A fast and free wireless connection for events is an absolute must," concludes Joachim König, President of the EVVC. "Here German providers must make improvements in order to remain competitive."

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Online bookings rise
In selecting a destination, the supplier's website has for the first time overtaken the personal recommendations in terms of importance. Meeting portals and social media channels are also becoming increasingly important as sources of information.

When it comes to booking an event, the internet plays an increasingly important role: 13 percent of events last year were booked via conference portals, according to the organisers. These were mainly smaller meetings with up to 250 delegates.

Meeting & EventBarometer Germany
The Meeting & EventBarometer 2015 is the only study in Germany that examines both the conference and events sector. The initiators are the European Association of Event Centres e.V. (EVVC), the GCB German Convention Bureau e.V. and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). The study was carried out by the European Institute for the Meetings Industry (EITW), partner for the ninth year running.

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Meeting & EventBarometer 2015: Themes and Trends
Sustainability: a competitive advantage

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015. Sustainability initiatives are now considered an essential attribute in the event industry with more and more operators from Germany and abroad preferring suppliers who can demonstrate activities and recognition in this area such as a certificate of a sustainability management system.

This is a key finding of the Meeting & EventBarometer 2015, the only study in Germany that examines both the conference and events sectors. The initiators are the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC), the German Convention Bureau e.V. (GCB) and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). The study was carried out by the European Institute for the Meetings Industry (EITW).

Sustainability ensures a higher quality of events
More than half of organisers in this year’s survey value providers with a sustainability certificate compared to just one third in 2011. For organisers this goes beyond a tick box exercise -35.6 percent of respondents believe that the sustainability efforts of providers are accompanied by a noticeable improvement in quality.

Almost every other provider with Sustainability Management System
Almost half (43.2 percent) of the surveyed providers have a sustainability management system in place - an increase of 16 percentage points compared to 2011 (27.4 percent).

"Sustainability has always been key and its importance has increased in recent years. As part of Germany’s leading position in this sector, the EVVC and GCB held the third Green Meetings and Events Conference in February this year which inspired some 400 delegates to incorporate more sustainable elements into the organisation of conferences, congresses and events", explains Matthias Schultze, Managing Director of the GCB. The fourth Green Meetings and Events Conference is scheduled for 2017.

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Accessibility awareness is anchored
German suppliers also highly aware of the issue of accessibility: around 80 per cent said that the issue is rooted heavily in its corporate philosophy compared to just over 60% of event organisers.
Providers have also implemented several practical steps - 93 percent of providers state that their venues are fully or partly accessible and more than half currently have measures in place for wheelchairs, allergies/intolerances and disabled people. These three groups are considered top priority. In terms of services for guests with hearing or vision difficulties, there is currently higher supply than demand.

Communicate more deals
The study raises the need for greater communication – only half of the venues indicate the relevant accessibility information on their websites. This indicates much room for improvement with 65 percent of those surveying claiming this level of communication is insufficient.
"In terms of accessibility, the providers are very well positioned. However the best offers are worthless if they are not sufficiently communicated. Here, the study shows need for urgent action to ensure that the German suppliers clearly communicate their hard work on this important issue", comments Joachim König, President of the EVVC.

The Meeting & EventBarometer 2015 is the only study in Germany that examines both the conference and events sectors. The initiators are the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC), the German Convention Bureau e.V. (GCB) and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB). The study was carried out by the European Institute for the Meetings Industry (EITW), partner for the ninth year running.

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Meeting & EventBarometer 2015: Methods and Classification

Background and special nature of the survey

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015. This is the ninth time that the European Institute for the Meetings Industry has conducted the Meeting & EventBarometer for the German meeting and event market. The comprehensive survey analyses this important segment on behalf of the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC), German National Tourist Board (GNTB) and German Convention Bureau (GCB).

Special nature of the Meeting & EventBarometer
The Meeting & EventBarometer is the only survey to examine the entire meetings and events market – including both the conventions and special event segments - in Germany and provide an insightful picture of the industry. It differs significantly from all other surveys that only focus on one aspect. The Meeting & EventBarometer provides up-to-date facts and figures but also highlights directional trends and developments.

Database and methodology
Around 7,000 suppliers (convention centres, meeting hotels and special venues with at least 100 seats in the largest hall (theatre-style seating) in Germany and almost 8,500 organisers of meetings and events (companies, associations and agencies) world-wide were interviewed via web-based questionnaires in March 2015. On average the questionnaire return rate was 3.6 per cent providing the industry with valuable results and conclusions.

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Profile

European Association of Event Centres (EVVC)

The professional network for the European events and meetings industry

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015. Representing the rich versatility of the European meetings industry, the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC) represents nearly 750 event centres, congress locations, arenas and special event venues across Germany, Austria, Switzerland and neighbouring European countries. Among its esteemed members are event and meeting planners from congress services, as well as concert and sports event managers at approximately 350 companies. 70 event and meetings suppliers also support the association and its members as partners. The main goals of the EVVC are to inform, provide counsel for, and facilitate a positive business environment for its members within a professional networking framework whilst at the same time offering a strong communications platform.

In addition to offering practical support in marketing, legal and technical matters -- as well as compiling sector specific data -- the EVVC also focuses on training and education. As part of its commitment to sustainable meetings, the EVVC is also working closely with Green Globe Certification to set and drive the adoption of green best practices at event, meeting and conference venues.

With its office in Berlin Germany, the EVVC additionally works to represent the meetings and events industry in Berlin and Brussels’ political arenas. In this, the EVVC aims to inform and influence emerging proposed laws with its members’ best interests in mind. Further, the EVVC supports its members by providing significant key-data and research results to be used strategically with local political panels.

For more information visit: www.evvc.org/en

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Profile

GCB German Convention Bureau e.V.

Marketing Germany as a leading conference and event destination

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015. The German Convention Bureau’s role is to maintain and build upon Germany’s international standing as a leading, sustainable meeting and convention destination. The GCB offers its members quality market research data and research into innovations and trends issues in the meetings and conventions industry - an example of this is the innovation network "Future Meeting Space" launched in 2014.

By developing marketing activities aimed at specific target groups, the GCB has become well-established both internationally and domestically and supports its members and partners in promoting their services. In addition to its headquarters in Frankfurt, the GCB runs a representative office in New York and from summer 2015 an office in China.

The GCB has around 170 members representing over 430 companies - all leading hotels, convention centers, venues, city marketing organisations, event agencies and service providers of the German meetings and conventions industry. As Strategic Partners, German Lufthansa, Deutsche Bahn and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB) support the work of the GCB.

The GCB is a strategic partner of IMEX, a contact for exhibitors and visitors in Germany and organiser of the GCB German seminar days. As the largest exhibitor at IMEX, the GCB presents over 200 exhibitors at the Germany stand (F100) focusing on Germany’s key industry sectors, sustainability, future and innovation.

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Profile

**German National Tourist Board (GNTB)**

**Innovative marketing in Germany and abroad**

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015. The German National Tourist Board (GNTB), based in Frankfurt am Main, is the national “tourist board” of Germany. With its marketing and sales work, it pursues two objectives for Germany as a tourist destination: strengthening the country’s international reputation as a travel hotspot and the promotion of tourism into Germany. The GNTB works on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy from which it receives its funding under a resolution passed by the German parliament. The GNTB maintains a presence worldwide with 29 GNTB sales outlets. Through its presence in all relevant markets, the GNTB has precise expertise regarding market-specific characteristics.

Synergy through networking and “public private partnerships” are the fundamental concepts of the GNTB. It advises its partners on the preparation of customer-oriented offers that are attuned to the market. It secures international organisers, markets the products in co-operation with travel agents abroad and addresses end consumers in foreign source markets. Additional important sales tactics of the GNTB are its presence at trade fairs worldwide, the organisation of its own road shows in foreign markets and study trips for international media representatives and travel experts. The GNTB serves as the central contact for the media, the travel industry and the business world; it acts as the interface for contacts and information, for market expertise and know-how.

Through its website, www.germany.travel, available in 30 different languages, the GNTB is the global leader for online travel information for the holiday destination Germany. The international target groups are consumers, press, tour operators and disseminators. The GNTB’s information is optimised for conventional websites, smart phones and tablet PCs.

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European Institute for the Conference Industry (EITW)

Specialists in MICE market research and convention consulting

Frankfurt am Main, May 19, 2015. The European Institute for the Conference Industry (EITW) specialises in conducting cutting-edge analysis on innovation in the German and European meetings, incentive, convention and event management (MICE) sector. Based at Harz University in Wernigerode 94 km southeast of Hanover Germany, the EITW does research into a variety of important topics such as the economic power of congresses and meetings and the sustainability of meetings at destination levels.

In its research it also co-operates with umbrella organisations and professional associations and maintains strong relationships with scientific institutions worldwide. In recent years it has worked successfully with some 100 clients and project partners from inside and outside Germany.

From portions of this extensive research the EITW then offers the European and global meetings industry user-friendly, online market research products. For example, the EITW conducts and publishes the annual Meeting & Event Barometer, the only survey specific to Germany’s congress, meetings and events industry organized by the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC), the German Convention Bureau (GCB), and the German National Tourist Board (GNTB).

Further in the area of conference marketing, German destinations benefit from operational and strategic recommendations developed by the EITW and receive advice on the creation, financing and staffing of new convention bureaux.

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