

Workshop on the development of river cruise tourism in Vorpommern

Minutes

- Date:** March 20, 2019
- Time:** 10:00 – 15:30
- Venue:** Maritimes Jugenddorf Wiek, Yachtweg 3, 17493 Greifswald-Wieck
- Participants:** River cruise ports, municipalities of port locations and tourism associations/ TIs: selected tourism service providers (= potential destinations for future shore excursion programs), tour operators and land program providers
- Aim:** Obtaining of market knowledge about the river cruise market, current trends and developments, discussion of the potential for the river cruise market in Vorpommern, exchange of experiences on target group expectations and booking behavior
-

After the welcome by the managing director of the Economic Development Corporation Vorpommern (WFG), who was the organizer, the workshop started punctually with the content-related topics.

Lecture by Ms. Bornschein from Sartori & Berger

- Contents:
 - o Target group requirements / new trends in the tour planning of the land programs (topics, tour lengths, variety, attractions from the point of view of the cruise guest)
 - o Cooperation with the destination - requirements & challenges
 - o Source markets & requirements for tour guides
 - o including examples from the region

- The content presented can be found in the attached presentation by Ms. Bornschein

- Notes on the presentation:
 - o Shipping companies / tour operators bring own guides and sometimes also buses → regional actors are not used
 - o Nicko Cruises' main business is river cruise. However, the company also enters the ocean cruise segment in 2019
 - o The cooperation with land actors / service providers is immensely important, however, saturation / scarcity of resources seems to have already begun in many places. Indications are, for example, arbitrarily raised prices and the resulting heterogeneous price structure. A normal competitive behavior is partially no longer recognizable.

- River Cruise Tourists value land programs with a focus on history, culture and nature.
 - clear demarcation to sea cruise guests, who prefer predominantly club vacations
- The offer of city guides is very important under the following aspects:
 - Availability
 - Multilingualism
 - Quality (region connected, deep knowledge, "storyteller")
- Local representatives of the destination should board before reaching the destination in order to market the land supply and generate revenue for the region. Keep information as print and online. Guests should be able to move as independently as possible with the information.
- Unlike lake cruise guests, river cruise guests stay in the region.
- Age of river cruise guests: ≥ 60 years.
 - Rejuvenation of the audience is imperative

Lecture by Mr. Hampel from the Historical-Technical Museum Peenemünde

- Contents:
 - The design of land programs for river cruise guests - from the perspective of the region - *From the experience of a service provider*
- The contents presented can be found in the attached presentation by Mr. Hampel
- Notes to the lecture
 - The Historical-Technical Museum Peenemünde deals with the topics of the Second World War and the Cold War until the reunification of the two German states
 - The museum hosts the annual Usedom Music Festival
 - The port of Peenemünde is structurally very well developed for the river cruise. There can be up to six ships at the same time#
 - For the year 2019, 90 ships' calls are planned.
 - Peenemünde offers for the cruise passengers already land excursions to the entire island of Usedom.
 - Also the offer directly at the port is already well developed
 - Confirmation: Age of the river cruise Guests: ≥ 60 years.
 - After events, the organizer will be on board himself and will be available for questions. Personal contact of the guests to the organizer is considered very important.
 - Even before the destination is called, guests are given access to information about the destination itself and about land programs.
 - Peenemünde offers exclusive deals for river cruise guests. Example is a concert series, which is only offered to these guests.
 - targeted consideration is given to bring sea cruise guests by boat tenders to the destination Peenemünde.
 - The operators still see great tourist potential for Peenemünde

Lecture by Mr. Wittenbecher from Greifswald Marketing GmbH on behalf of the University and Hanseatic City of Greifswald

- Contents:
 - o The design of land programs for river cruise guests - from the perspective of the region - *From the experience of a service provider*

- Notes to the lecture:
 - o The University and Hanseatic City of Greifswald was able to record 60 ship calls for the year 2018.
 - o Exclusive offers for the river cruise Guests are very meaningful and increase the attractiveness of the destination.
 - o The city of Greifswald has a museum harbor in which the river cruise ships can not enter because there are logistical exclusion criteria.
 - o Land offers in the indoor area should be focused, as offers in public space are covered with "pseudo" guides from the shipping companies / tour operators. From this, no revenue can be generated for the region.
 - o The welcome culture must be developed / improved significantly!
 - o The destination Greifswald is currently offered by 12 shipping companies.
 - o The communication between the destinations and the shipping companies is very poor
 - o Based on the experiences of the city of Greifswald with the river cruise segment, the question arises whether Greifswald-Wiek should remain a river cruise destination.
→ Reasons for this are the burden of noise and dirt and the associated risk of image loss.
 - o The port of Greifswald-Ladebow has been the subject of discussion for years as an alternative investment location, so that Greifswald-Wiek is not subject to any further burden. The port Greifswald-Ladebow is not nearly developed accordingly. An expansion of the port is not expected over the next few years.

After the lunch break, guests, speakers and organizers went to the actual workshop. Three working groups (WG) were formed, which differed in their thematic emphasis. The cast of the AGs changed twice each after about 30 minutes. This ensured that each participant in each WG had the opportunity to work on any subject specific to the workgroup.

In the following, the work results of the WGs are summarized in a nutshell.

WG1: The design of land programs in ports of Vorpommern

- Creation of exclusive offers for river cruise guests
- Land programs are to be offered and carried out by locals
- The region needs to convey credibility and authenticity
- Creation of a first regional, then supra-regional destination network
- Mobility from quay - accessibility and distribution of guests to the service providers
- Visions:
 - o Seaward line traffic between the destinations
 - o Setting up a "own" shipowner

- Establishment of a purposeful network -

WG 2: Infrastructural prerequisites in Vorpommern

- Nationwide availability of shore power connections (2 x 125A)
- Bus parking in the immediate vicinity of the pier
- Infrastructure for fresh water, sewage and waste disposal at every destination
- Creation of barrier-free quaysides
- To put political regulations on the subject of EEG levy and shore power on the way to reduce emissions (pollutants, noise, ...)
- Modernization of guest areas, e.g. free wifi
- Establishment of welcome areas / information stands / tourist information
- Connection to public transport
- Improve communication between shipping companies and destinations
- Standards for sea and shore infrastructure for ports in Vorpommern
- Establishment of an informal network of ports in Vorpommern

- Establishment of a purposeful network -

AG 3: The marketing of Vorpommern as a river cruise destination

- Creating awareness of the river cruise segment among Vorpommern actors
- Identification of focal point offerings
- Identification of potentials and purposeful marketing
- Need for qualified, multilingual specialist personnel from the region
- Consideration of nature conservation aspects
- Definition of quality requirements towards shipping companies
- Creation of a post for a Cruise Coordinator in the region Vorpommern
- Formation of a regional network to increase the external perception

- Establishment of a purposeful network -

The core task of the workshop was to develop river cruise tourism in Vorpommern. From the lectures and working groups it could be worked out that a few destinations already have good concepts and implement them, but most of them are only weakly or not developed for the river cruise segment. There are many reasons for this, but it can be said that the event was of great interest and that all participants cooperated constructively.

The questions, which gained more and more importance at the end of the workshop, were: What's next? How can the knowledge gained be processed?

The results of the individual working groups clearly show the need for a regional network.

At the end of the event, a few more conversations were held. The WFG addressed individual protagonists in order to accelerate the formation of a core group for the establishment of a regional and theme-based destination network, which will be dealt with in a separate event.

The core group is made up of people from the fields of tourism, city information, press, tour operators / shipowners, marketing and associations. Also 2 captains of river cruise ships will form with their expertise a part of this core group.

The Economic Development Corporation Vorpommern will take over the planning and organization of an event to elaborate the mentioned requirements and participate in the event as moderator and content supporter. The follow-up date is said to have taken place by the end of the second quarter of 2019. WFG is open to further involvement of WFG in a potential network of destinations.

Listed below are the points raised on March 20 which could / should be handled by the intended network to give an idea of the issues discussed.

Network-Concept

<i>Type:</i>	Noncommercial
<i>Size:</i>	Any
<i>Actors:</i>	Tourist centers, representatives of the press, tour operators, shipping companies, marketing, providers of land programs, scientific representatives, restaurateurs, experience providers, cultural institutions, tour guides, route planners, decision-makers ...
<i>Purpose:</i>	Creating a high-level external perception to market the Vorpommern region as a river cruise destination with significant involvement of regional actors in securing and developing economic factors in the region
<i>Bearer:</i>	Independent association e.g. under the umbrella of the tourism association Vorpommern
<i>Field of application:</i>	International
<i>Possible benefit:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exchange of experiences - Knowledge store - Support between the network partners - Development of experts - Image expansion - International guests - Economic security and development for all involved - Environmental Protection
<i>Conceivable tasks:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a coordination office - Establishment of a Cruise Coordinator Region Vorpommern - Determination of market potential using IST / SWOT analysis (s) - Establishment and maintenance of statistics for the purpose of strategic planning - Collection of data on water and landside infrastructure (nautical + technical factors, possible vessel sizes, shore power availability and -data, ...) → Create and maintain network-internal database - Development and definition of standards (land-based infrastructure, harbor usage regulations, information concept, ...) - Shore power instead of diesel generators → political work → environmental Protection - Development of technical and qualitative requirements towards shipping companies and tour operators - Development of targeted and exclusive land offers - Increase quality of offers for visitors and destination - Training of tour guides - Establishment and expansion of the "personal" level of the network and its actors to the ship's captains and crews - Constant expansion of the network - Joint development of land offers

*Conceivable
focal piont
offerings:*

- Nature
→ e.g. Oder delta as interface for river / ocean cruise.
Use / marketing of transnationality with Poland
→ POI-Tours
- Art, Culture
→ Example Peenemünde
→ Concert-Tours
→ Painting-Tours
- Historical
→ Monuments and historical places / buildings

*Basic
clarifications:*

- Is a common marketing of the region Vorpommern even wanted?
- Is the river cruise market already saturated? / What are the plans of the shipping companies? → Market (potential) analysis
- Is the region even interesting for shipowners?
- Are funds available for analysis?
- Which ships and shipowners does Vorpommern want? (Environmental aspects!)
- Who has the competence to approach relevant decision-makers in the river cruise industry? → Cruise Coordinator
- Who could take on the role of the Cruise Coordinator?

In conclusion, the workshop on the development of river cruise tourism in Vorpommern on 20 March 2019 was very well received and very successful. The results presented confirm this conclusion. The fact that there will be a follow-up meeting through the results achieved is very pleasing and fully in line with the intentions of the support program. We, the WFG, are hoping that this follow-up event will pave the way for the founding and lasting establishment of a network with the necessary actors in order to organize the segment of the river cruise in Vorpommern and to establish it with high quality and thus secure and strengthen as well as expand regional economic power.

Thank you for taking part in the workshop on the development of river cruise tourism in Vorpommern on March 20, 2019 in Greifswald-Wiek.

If you have any questions about the workshop, the documentation or further action, we are at your disposal.

We remain with best regards from Vorpommern. Germanys sundeck *

* Reviewed to the last 10 years, the Vorpommern region has a sunshine duration on average 2.000 hours ascertained by meteomedia, weather station Hiddensee. So Vorpommern is the region with the most sunshine in Germany.

Mario Heinrich
Project Manager for EU-
Projects

heinrich@invest-in-vorpommern.de
+49 (0) 3834 550 – 603

Jennifer Mutrack
Project assistant for EU-
Projects

mutrack@invest-in-vorpommern.de
+49 (0) 3834 550 – 610

Steffen Piechullek
Consultant

piechullek@invest-in-vorpommern.de
+49 (0) 3834 550 – 608