



## European Consumer Centres Network

### TOURISM IN GERMANY

**This brochure will provide you with information on travelling by train in Germany. You will find practical advice and important legal information covering the different topics. We have tried to include all the relevant information concerning travel to Germany and your stay in Germany; however the information provided is not fully detailed on all points and should be viewed as a guide not as a verbatim statement of the law.**

#### Travelling by train

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- ◆ Germany has an extensive rail network that covers almost every part of the country. Transport by train is mainly provided by a single company, DB (Deutsche Bahn). InterCity (IC), InterCity Express (ICE) and EuroCity (EC) are connecting more than fifty German towns. Regional trains (RE and RB) connect the smaller towns.
- ◆ For the moment, most trains have smoking and non-smoking areas, although most seats are located in non-smoking areas. Please note that from September 2007 on, the trains will be completely non-smoking-trains.

#### *Buying a ticket*

- ◆ Internet booking is the easiest and most convenient way to obtain your ticket. You can book your tickets online and directly print at home. Please note that those tickets are only valid for the person who books – therefore you need to present your BahnCard, Credit card or Maestro card to prove your ID, also on board.
- ◆ Of course, you may also buy tickets in the DB ticket shops. You will find those only in Germany. The staff provides you with personal advice. You can purchase national and international tickets, get timetable information and make seat reservations.
- ◆ There are about 3.000 touch screen ticket vending machines at almost every train station in Germany. You may also make a seat reservation by means of self service. By using the express booking function you can obtain your ticket quickly, only a few minutes prior to departure. You can choose between 5 languages.
- ◆ Authorised German Rail travel agencies sell tickets and offer advice. You may also book your train when you are still in your home-country – please ask your local travel agency.
- ◆ Another possibility to book a ticket and/or to make seat reservations is to call the DB Call Center, telephone n° 11861. You can also call from abroad: +49 1805 996633. Please note that this service is not for free, for tariff information, please look on the website of DB ([www.bahn.de](http://www.bahn.de)).

- ◆ Children under 14 travelling with a parent or grandparent can travel for free. When you are booking, your (grand-)children should be added as travellers on the ticket.
- ◆ On board of long-distance trains, you can also purchase your ticket on the train. Please note that you will have to pay an extra-fee. You may pay cash or by credit cards. If you are on the train without a ticket (especially on board of a short-distance train, in which you are normally supposed to have a valid ticket) please directly contact the ticket inspector.
- ◆ Please note that DB has multiple special offers for travellers. For further information please ask the DB.
- ◆ English information is available on the DB website: [http://www.bahn.de/p/view/international/englisch/help/eng\\_tips.shtml](http://www.bahn.de/p/view/international/englisch/help/eng_tips.shtml)

#### *Ticket inspection*

- ◆ On DB trains it is not necessary to stamp your ticket before you get on board. Your ticket will be checked at least once per journey. You might have to show your ticket again if staff changes or when you change the train. The attendant will then stamp the ticket.
- ◆ If you have booked online, you will have to show the printed ticket and the chosen ID-proof (see above).

#### *Ticket Refunds*

- ◆ As a rule, tickets can be exchanged and refunded without paying an extra fee before first day of validity. From the first day of validity on, exchange or refund is only possible if you pay a fee amounting 15 €.
- ◆ Please note that an exchange and refund is not possible or only under special conditions if you have booked a ticket with a special tariff. For further information, please contact the DB.

#### *Seat reservation*

- ◆ On most German trains, seat reservations are not compulsory. You can reserve your seat (excepting RE and RB) up to three months in advance for 3,50 € for one train and one connecting reservation per direction. If you make your train reservation when buying the ticket, you only have to pay 1,50 €. Please note that for some trains there are special prices and booking conditions (e.g. night trains). It is possible to reserve a seat only, without purchasing a ticket.
- ◆ Your reservation will only be retained for 15 minutes after the departure of the train. If you have not taken your seat until then, your reservation may be cancelled and your seat may be taken by other passengers.

#### *Service*

- ◆ Should you be in need of assistance during your journey, please ask the DB staff on your train.
- ◆ You may take your bicycle on all local trains and many IC/EC trains. You will be charged between 4,50 € and 9 €.

- ◆ All local trains and long distance trains have compartments for the disabled.
- ◆ You can lend a trolley for a deposit of 0,50 € or 1 €.
- ◆ ICE trains, some EC trains and most IC trains have a bistro offering light snacks and meals. Hot and cool drinks are also available.
- ◆ At various main stations you will find porters who carry your luggage and help you to get on board.
- ◆ If you often travel in Germany, a BahnCard might be interesting for you. You can buy a BahnCard 25, 50 or 100. With BahnCard 25 you get 25 % discount on the standard fare ticket and you can use it together with special offers. With BahnCard 50 you get 50 % discount on the standard fare ticket, but you can not combine it with special offers. The BahnCard 100 allows you to travel for free on all DB trains for 12 months from the date of issue. For further information please contact the DB.

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If you, as a foreign consumer, are feeling mistreated by a German professional, the European Consumer Centres (ECCs) will be pleased to help you to find an amicable settlement of the dispute. You can find further information and a complete list of all ECCs under: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/consumers/redress/ecc\\_network/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/consumers/redress/ecc_network/index_en.htm)

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