



# *Added value of sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination*

**Selected results for the Interreg VB NSR project “PROWAD LINK –  
Protect and Prosper: Benefits through linking sustainable growth  
with nature protection”**



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## 1 Introduction

This brochure summarises the main results of the transnational visitor survey undertaken by the three countries of the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage area: Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. The survey was conducted in the summer and autumn of 2020 and the spring of 2021. Even though it took place during the Corona pandemic, at the time of the survey people were allowed to travel. The results show that sustainable tourism plays an essential role in the region and that guests are increasingly aware of its importance. It is evident that guests appreciate the unique nature of the Wadden Sea and acknowledge the importance of its protection. These are clear indications of the need to further improve and develop sustainable tourism in the region. This summary also points out areas of improvement, such as sustainable transport or internet access.

The survey results are complemented with a compilation of best practice examples in sustainable tourism from the five countries participating in the Interreg project PROWAD LINK showing the economical, ecological and social aspects of sustainable tourism.

The up-to-date data of the survey together with the examples of sustainable businesses demonstrate the added value of sustainable tourism in the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage area. It provides the basis for supporting and further improving sustainable tourism and business development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the regions. The brochure wants to promote further development of sustainable products and services and so to continue working together towards a sustainable future.

The PROWAD LINK project, which is co-financed by Interreg VB North Sea Region, aims to create benefits for small and medium-sized businesses by linking sustainable growth with nature protection. The PROWAD LINK project group consists of 15 project partners (ministries, municipalities, national parks authorities, research organisations, universities, and business organisations) from five countries: Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK.

As part of the PROWAD-LINK project, this transnational visitor survey was initiated and implemented for the first time in the entire Wadden Sea World Heritage region. All three countries agreed to use a largely uniform questionnaire. Despite differences in the survey method, for the first time fundamentally comparable data are available for the three participating countries Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark.



## 2 Results of the transnational visitor survey

### Characteristics of the transnational visitor survey



Within the PROWAD LINK project, and coordinated by the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park Administration (NPV/LKN.SH), a transnational visitor survey was conducted for the first time in the Wadden Sea regions of Denmark, Germany (covering the coastal regions within both states, Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein) and the Netherlands. The survey was conducted simultaneously and coordinated in terms of content. Among others, this survey aimed to provide information on the perceptions of guests, the importance of sustainable tourism and the World Heritage status of the Wadden Sea. A harmonised questionnaire was produced in seven versions due to different languages and regional peculiarities (e.g. Schleswig-Holstein is the only region with Halligen).

**Please note:** This visitor survey was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. In the survey periods (summer and autumn 2020, spring 2021) social restrictions were lifted, people were allowed to move freely within the Schengen area and holidays were possible.

However, it is likely that the structure of guests and the availability of local tourism offers in the Wadden Sea area have changed compared to pre-pandemic times. For instance, due to some ongoing restrictions for international travel (especially regarding testing and quarantine), it can be expected that more people than usual travelled to domestic destinations, thus leading to more first-time and/or domestic visitors than normal for the Wadden Sea regions. In addition, the usage of some tourist offers (such as public events or indoor offers) may have been limited during this time.

As similar guest surveys were successfully conducted in 2013 and 2017 in the German Wadden Sea region, it is possible – at least for this region – to assess whether the pandemic has influenced the guest structure or holiday behaviour. The comparison shows that the results for the German Wadden Sea are generally comparable to those of 2017. Relevant differences are pointed out in the corresponding section under 2.2 Holidays at the German Wadden Sea.

As the three regions used different methods to collect data for the visitor survey, these will be briefly described below.

### Face-to-face interviews in the Danish Wadden Sea region



**Survey period:**  
August – October 2020  
April – June 2021



**Respondents:**  
 **579**

The visitor survey in the Danish Wadden Sea region was conducted using face-to-face interviews. Day visitors and overnight guests aged 18 years and over were interviewed using the standardised questionnaire. The Nationalpark Vadehavet was responsible for the implementation of the survey, the survey languages were Danish, German and English.


Interviews were carried out at eight different locations, in places that are frequented by tourists (locations: Ho/Skallingen, Varde By/Varde Ådal, Evt Esbjerg, Fanø, Rømø, Ribe, Mandø and Tøndermarsk). The selection of these locations was chosen based on arrivals per month and region from previous years, but sampling was also influenced by day, weather, number of guests and their willingness to participate. The visitors were approached randomly by the interviewer, making sure to interview couples without children, families with children, single travellers as well as travel groups. A total of 579 interviews were completed for the Danish Wadden Sea region.

**Please note: Face-to-face interviews, though having the advantage of being able to address all types of visitors, are limited to the selected regional hotspots. As the interviewer is approaching potential respondents, the self-selection rate for this method is low. The bias by the interviewer when selecting visitors must also be considered as well as the effect of social desirability.**

### Paper-pencil survey in the German Wadden Sea region



**Survey period:**  
July – November 2020  
April – June 2021

**Respondents:**  
 **640**

- Schleswig-Holstein 330
- Lower Saxony 310

The visitor survey in the German Wadden Sea region was a paper-pencil survey of overnight guests aged 14 years and over, staying in commercial and private accommodations (excluding sanatoria, rehabilitation clinics, youth hostels and campsites). NIT (based in Kiel) was responsible for carrying out the survey. The survey language was German.

The survey method was based on the method of the state-wide guest survey in Schleswig-Holstein, which was successfully used for the surveys in 2013 (as part of the Interreg project PROWAD) and in 2017. Paper-pencil surveys were sent to preselected overnight accommodations. The selection was based on regional and sectoral quotas, and the number of questionnaires per establishment was defined by actual arrivals in the region, sector and season. The host handed the (paper-) questionnaire to the guest(s), the guests completed the questionnaire themselves and returned it via a prepaid envelope to the NIT.



The data were reweighted by absolute arrivals in the survey period. Thus, the data are representative for the described accommodation structure. This resulted in 640 completed questionnaires for the German Wadden Sea region, 330 from Schleswig-Holstein and 310 from Lower Saxony.

**Please note: The self-completion paper-pencil survey in accommodations has a clearly defined population and sampling, it is, however, limited to overnight guests and excludes day visitors. The self-selection rate for this method is high.**

### Online- and paper-pencil survey in the Dutch Wadden Sea region



**Survey period:**  
July – November 2020  
April – June 2021

**Respondents:**  
757

The visitor survey in the Dutch Wadden Sea region was an online survey of overnight guests and day visitors in the Dutch Wadden Sea region, supplemented by a paper-pencil survey of overnight guests aged 14 years and over in accommodation establishments. The survey was supervised by ETFI, Stenden, and was conducted in Dutch and English.

**Online survey:** The link to the online survey was distributed via a social media campaign through Visitwadden.nl and via welcome-home emails from one holiday accommodation agency who mainly operates on the islands. In addition, business cards with the QR code directing to the online survey were distributed by around 50 accommodation partners of holiday homes, holiday parks and marinas. To increase the participation in the online survey, an incentive was given for completing the questionnaire.

**Paper-pencil survey:** Information about the survey was announced via email to regional partners of Waddensee.nl and via tourist offices on the islands. This way, 20 accommodation establishments were willing to distribute questionnaires to their guests on the mainland and on the islands. The questionnaires were handed out either upon arrival or before departure, or were available in the rooms and usually collected in person by the staff. Due to the very low response rate of this method in 2020, most partners relied exclusively on the online survey in spring 2021.

Overall, 757 people participated in the survey for the Dutch Wadden Sea region.

**Please note: This self-recruitment approach includes all types of visitors but the self-selection rate is very high with unclear bias. The decision to participate lies solely on the visitor.**

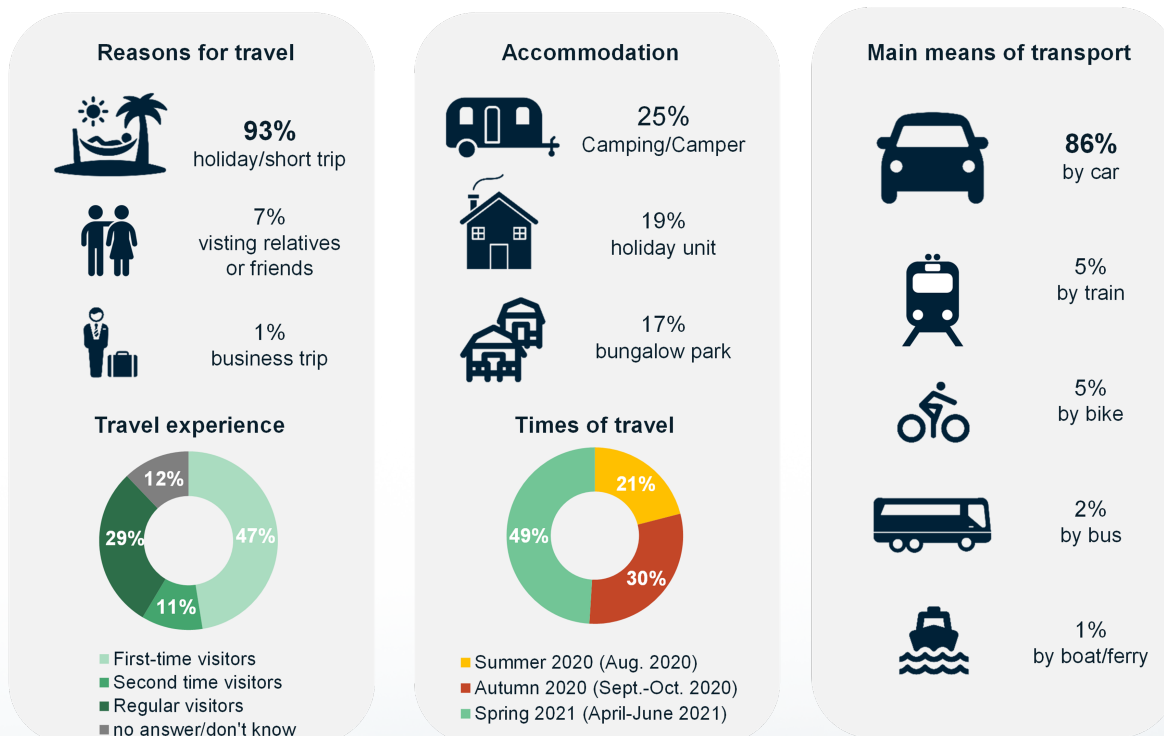
Due to the different methods, a comparison of the results between the regions is limited. However, after describing all results per region in detail, there will be a short comparative overview of the highlights at the end of this chapter (see section 2.4).

## 2.1 Holidays at the Danish Wadden Sea

### Visitor characteristics from the Danish Wadden Sea

The main reason for travelling to the Danish Wadden Sea region is a vacation (93%). Only a small percentage of guests visited friends or relatives and even fewer were on a business trip. Half of those guests were first-time visitors at this location (47%), while almost every third guest can be considered a regular customer as they have repeatedly (at least more than three times) visited this region before (29%). During their vacation, most guests stayed in a camper (25%), in a holiday unit (19%), or a bungalow park (17%). About every tenth guest booked a bed & breakfast, a private room or an Airbnb (9%) and even fewer a hotel room (8%). Since the summer interviews were only conducted during August, the number of reported trips is the lowest in summer 2020 and highest in spring 2021. When it comes to travelling, by far the most frequently used means of transportation was the car (86%). Other transport options played only a minor role when travelling to the Danish Wadden Sea.

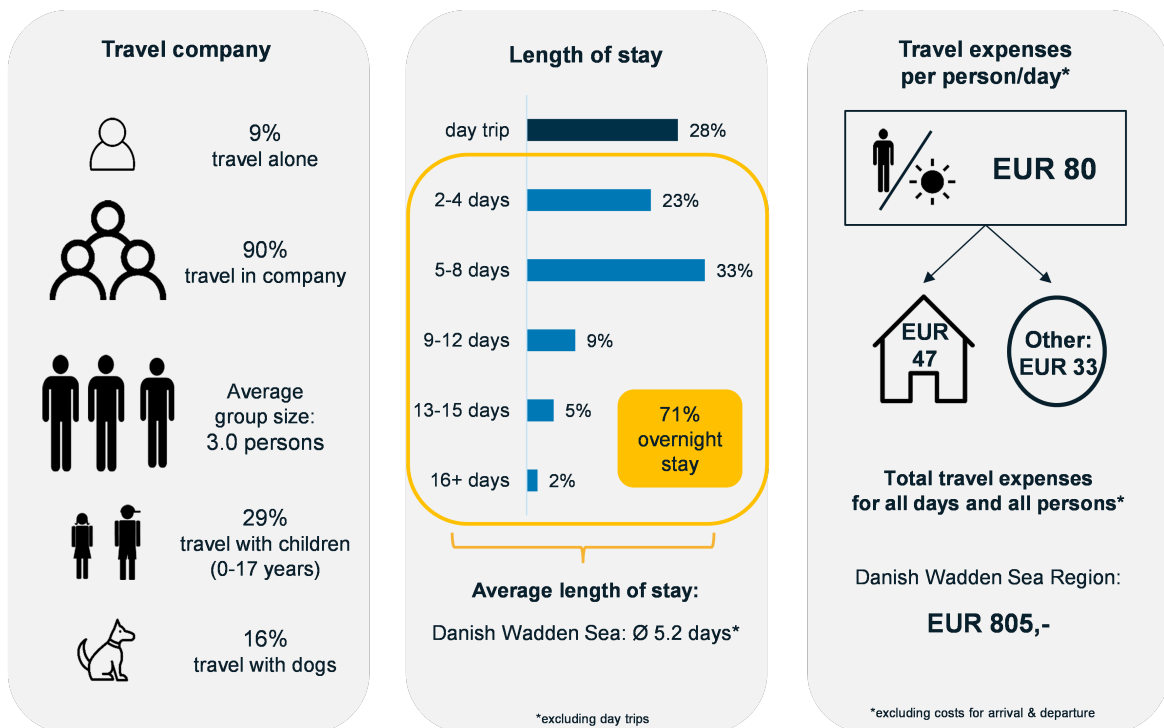
### Reasons for travel, travel experience, accommodation, times of travel and main means of transportation to the Danish Wadden Sea



Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021

The vast majority of the Danish Wadden Sea visitors travelled in company (90%) with an average group size of 3.0 persons. About one-third of visitors travelled with children (0-17 years) and every sixth visitor travelled with their dog (16%). When on an overnight trip, guests stayed mainly between two to four days (23%) or around a week (33%). On average, an overnight trip to the Danish Wadden Sea region lasted around five days. About one-third of the surveyed guests visited this area for a day trip (28%). Regarding the expenses for their trip, the guests reported average costs of 80 Euros per day and per person. Of these, 47 Euros were spent on accommodation and 33 Euros on other services, excluding the cost of travelling to and from the region. Total travel expenses for all days and all persons were 805 Euros.

### Travel company, length of stay and travel expenses at the Danish Wadden Sea



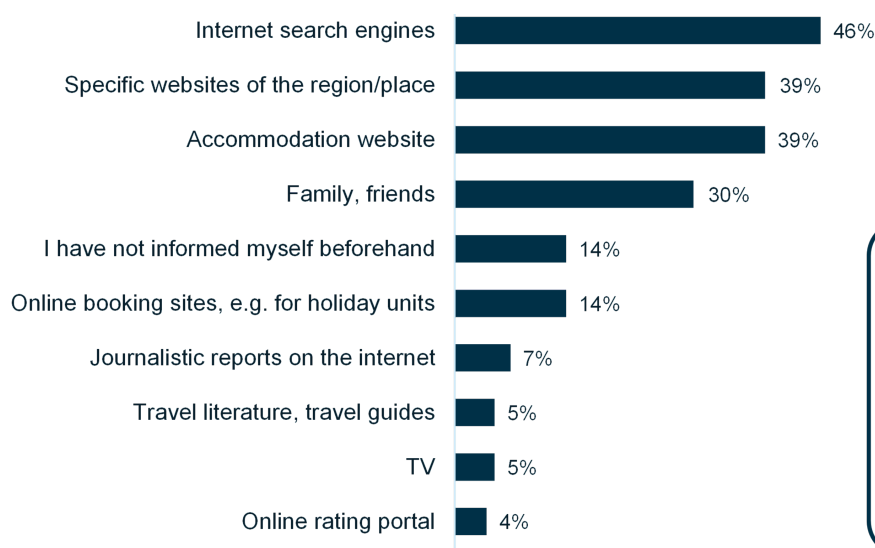
Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021



## Information sources consulted before travelling to the Danish Wadden Sea

When selecting a suitable holiday destination, visitors are faced with a variety of information sources. From this mix of online and offline sources, guests consulted four main information sources before deciding to travel to a Danish Wadden Sea destination. Almost half of them used internet search engines to get a first idea about the area, which can be a result of the high number of first-time visitors and day visitors. Websites of the region/place and the accommodation were the second most important sources, closely followed by family and friends (30%). With 14% there was also a considerable proportion of guests who visit the area without informing themselves beforehand. All other information sources (e.g., the more traditional ones such as TV and travel literature) only played a minor role.

### Top 10 information sources used before the stay

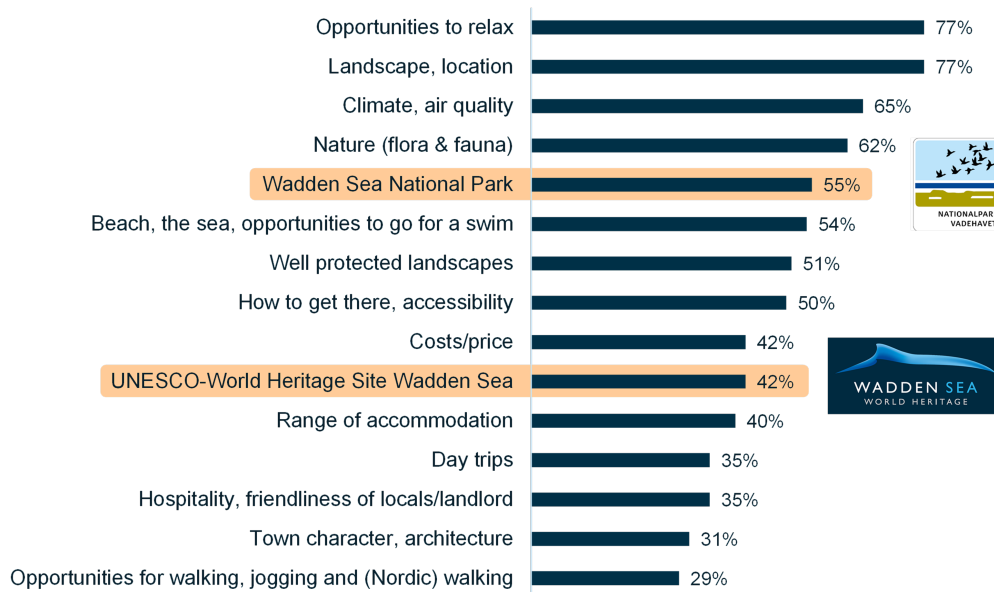


Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Question: Where did you find information about your current travel destination? (multiple answers)

## Reasons for travelling to the Danish Wadden Sea destination

Since the vast majority of respondents were on vacation in the Danish Wadden Sea area, naturally the most important aspects for choosing the current destination were the opportunities to relax and the landscape and location. In line with these, the climate and air quality as well as the local flora and fauna also played an essential role for around two-thirds of the respondents concerning their travel decision. The Wadden Sea National Park combines all of the above aspects in a perfect way which is why the National Park was the reason for more than half of the visitors to travel there, giving it rank 5. It can therefore be stated that it is above all nature and the recreational character that attract guests to the area. The status as a national park is more relevant for visitors than more practical aspects such as costs or accessibility. The status as a UNESCO World Heritage site was ranked tenth.

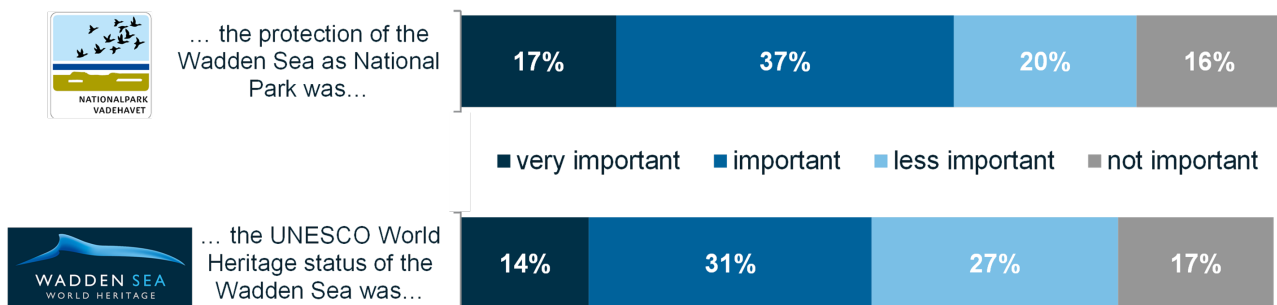
## Top 15 reasons for travelling to the Danish Wadden Sea



Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: Which of the following aspects/features were very important to you and played an essential role in your decision to travel to this destination? (multiple answers)

As the designation of the Wadden Sea as a UNESCO World Heritage site was only important for less than half of the guests when deciding to travel, the question arises whether the guests were aware of this status at all. The overwhelming majority of 92% of the respondents are aware of it. A more detailed inquiry of the relevance of the status as a national park as well as a UNESCO World Heritage site revealed that the protection as a national park played a (very) important role for more than half of the respondents while the UNESCO World Heritage status was slightly less relevant while planning the trip.

## WHEN PLANNING THIS JOURNEY...



Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021, percentage missing to 100% = no answer.  
 Question: How important were the following aspects when planning this journey? Four-level scale (very important, important, less important, not important).

## The importance of nature and sustainability while staying at the Danish Wadden Sea

The reason(s) given for the decision to travel to the Danish Wadden Sea coast demonstrate that guests came primarily for the recreational opportunities of this unique landscape and its nature. In line with this, protected nature and experiencing intact nature were (very) important environmental aspects for almost all respondents (91% and 90% respectively). While looking for and experiencing intact nature on vacation, most visitors do not want to be affected by crowds of tourists. In addition, over 80% of the visitors are very interested in learning more about the region and the place as well as the nature at their travel destination. Thus, people come to the Wadden Sea to experience and understand nature first-hand, but only one-third of the guests are interested in participating in nature tours. This indicates that the majority of guests prefer to have these experiences on their own.

Considering the significance of protected nature for guests, it is interesting to look at their attitudes towards sustainability. More than a third of the Danish Wadden Sea guests would be willing to donate a small amount of money to financially support nature protection at their travel destination (35%). However, considering that almost all guests expect protected and intact nature during their stay, this number shows that this expectation does not fully translate into specific (in this case financial) action. A similar discrepancy can be seen in the relevance of eco-labels for accommodation. While 41% consider it important to choose such an accommodation, only about a third of the guests are willing to pay a higher price for it. Overall, almost half of the guests prefer businesses that show some contribution to environmental protection and nature conservation.

### HOW IMPORTANT IS IT FOR YOU...



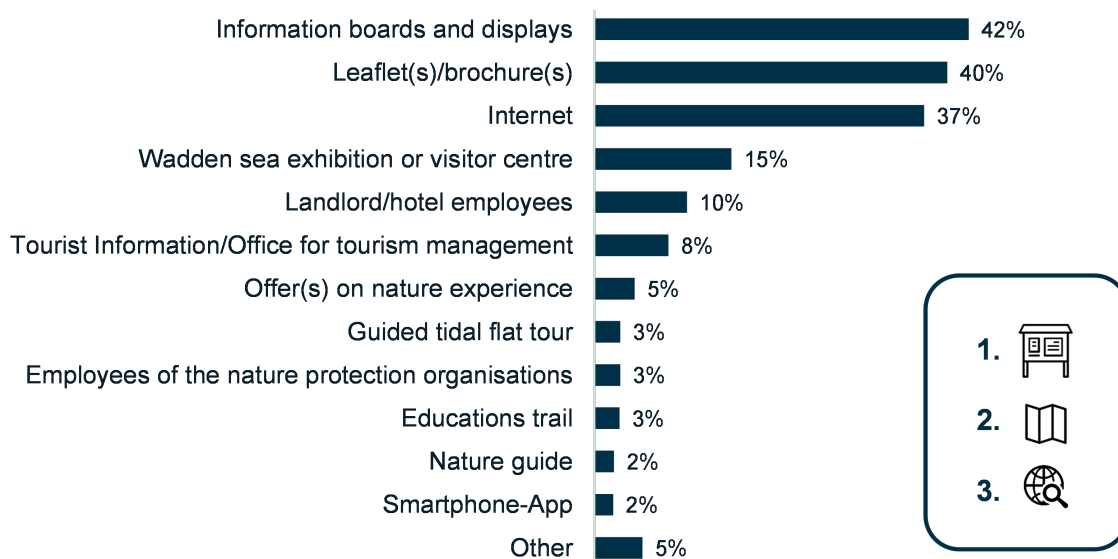
Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021

Question: When on holiday there are things that are very important to us, and others which are less important. Please indicate the importance of each aspect listed below during your holiday. Four-level scale (very important, important, less important, not important).

## Information sources used while on site

Since learning about nature and the region was one of the more important aspects for guests, the visitor survey also provides insights into the information sources guests used during their stay to learn more about the Wadden Sea. The three main information sources for guests are information boards and displays on site; leaflets and brochures; and the internet. This choice of information sources also supports the impression that guests like to experience and learn things by themselves – following their own pace and interests. Guests also seemed to prefer easily accessible information, thus specific information that can be found at the Wadden Sea exhibition centre or tourist information offices was only used by 15% and 8% of the guests, respectively. Personal information sources such as tour guides or hotel employees are mentioned even less.

### Relevance of information sources for learning more about the Danish Wadden Sea on site



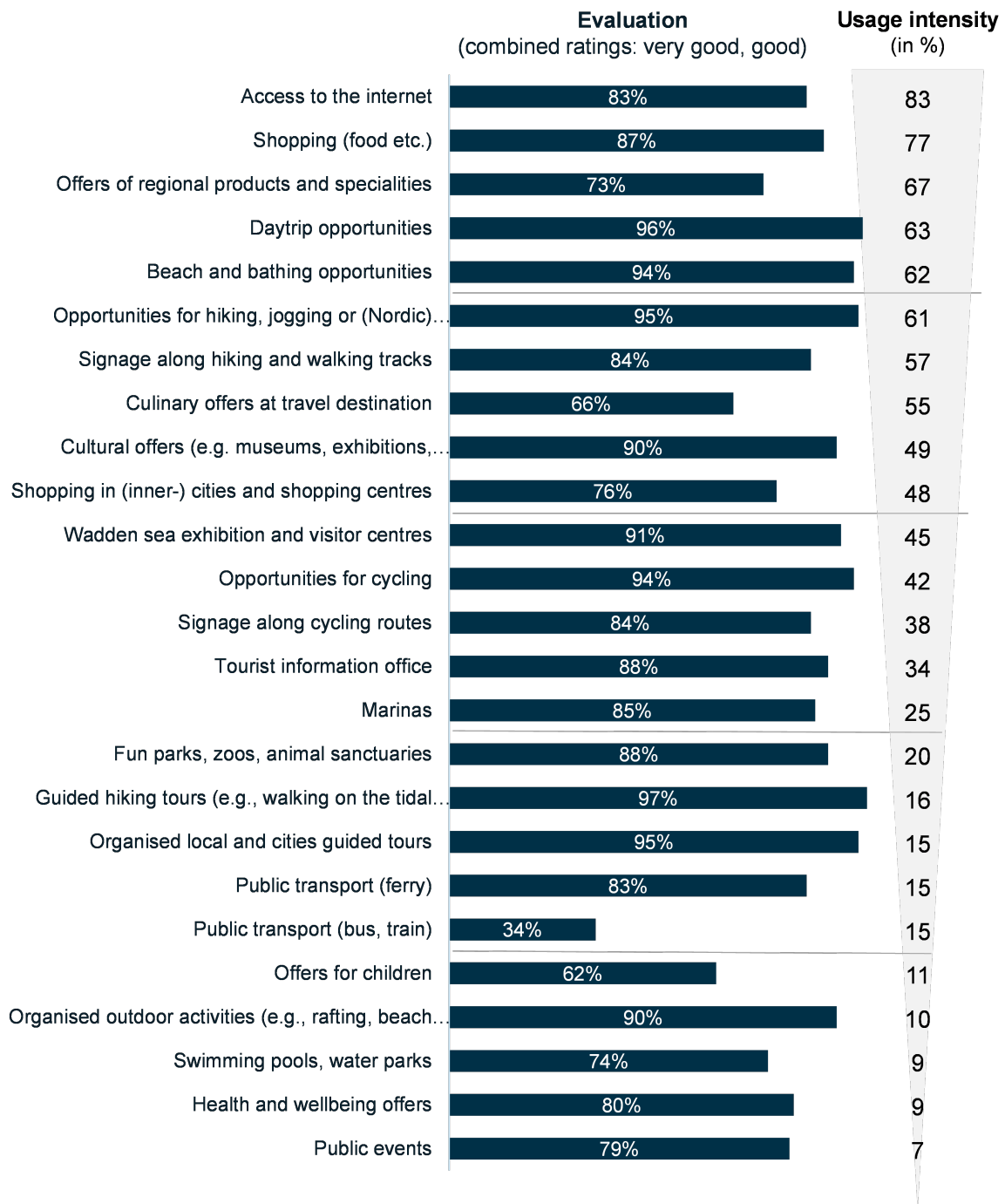
Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Question: Where did you get the most information about the Wadden Sea on site? (Multiple answers)



## Tourist offers on site

To create suitable and satisfactory offers for tourists, it is important to know how existing tourist offers are used and evaluated. In the guest survey, respondents were therefore asked to rate the tourist offers at their current destination with a scale from 1 = very good to 6 = very poor. This provides the possibility to identify tourist offers that are frequently used but receive low ratings, which indicates opportunities for improvement.

### Evaluation and usage intensity of tourist offers



Base: Respondents with indication to respective offer, Danish Wadden Sea region in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: How would you rate the following aspects at your travel destination? Please rate only those that you used yourself using the scale from 1 (very good) to 6 (very poor). Here accumulated ratings of 1=very good and 2=good.

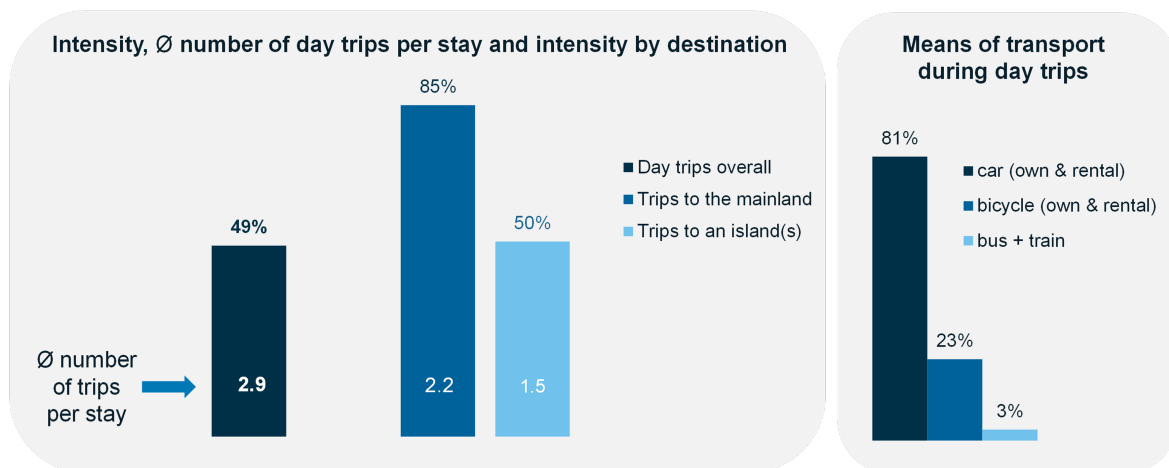


Most of the guests used internet access, shopping and other activities such as the opportunity for day trips, bathing, hiking, cycling and culinary offers at the destination. The majority of the more frequently used offers (= used by more than 50% of guests) are rated as good or even very good by at least two-thirds of the users. This is a positive sign for the Danish Wadden Sea region, as it shows that most users are satisfied with the experiences of these offers. Offers of regional products and specialities, culinary offers as well as shopping in (inner-) cities and shopping centres have the weakest ratings among the top 10 used offers. Improving these aspects would increase the satisfaction of the guests even more. It must be kept in mind that some offers may simply not have been available because of the pandemic condition. Overall, visitors at the Danish Wadden Sea used on average nine tourist offers during their holiday.

Activities related to the Wadden Sea (such as visiting the Wadden Sea exhibition and visitor centre or participating in guided tours) scored very good evaluations but the usage rates could be improved (45% and 16%, respectively). In these cases, it would be valuable for the destination to encourage more guests to use these offers as it would most likely lead to more satisfied guests. With this in mind, the following section is dedicated to investigating overall interest in specific nature experience offers.

### Excursus: Day trips at the Danish Wadden Sea

Even though day trip possibilities were only mentioned by about one in three respondents as an important reason for travelling to the Danish Wadden Sea, almost half of the guests undertook at least one – the average was three – day trips during their stay. 85% of those went on a day trip to the mainland while 50% visited an island. By far the most excursions were made by car, less than a quarter by bicycle and only 3% by bus or train.



Base: Respondents who did at least one trip during their stay. (n= 286) Danish Wadden Sea Region in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: Did you do any day trips from your current location? If yes, how many day trips did you do?  
 Question: What was the destination of these day trips? (Please provide the respective number of your trips or write zero.)  
 Question: If yes, how many such day trips did you do by... own car? ...rented/shared car? ...own bicycle? ...rented/shared bicycle? ...bus or train?

## Interest in nature experience tourist offers

In addition to the general tourism offers, the Wadden Sea provides guests with a variety of Wadden Sea-specific experiences that offer in-depth nature experiences and information on the topic. For Danish guests, nature experience trails and the Wadden Sea exhibition or visitor centres were of particular interest; almost every third visitor was enthusiastic about an excursion to the seal colonies. About one in four or five visitors could imagine taking part in guided excursions, e.g., to the islands, dunes, tidal flats or birdwatching tours. However, a look at the usage rates of the tourist offers shows that guided tours/excursions were only used by about one in six guests. This discrepancy reveals some great potential: if it is possible to design attractive offers here and/or to advertise them as widely as possible, e.g., via the much-used information boards and leaflets/brochures on-site, the use of these offers might be increased. This way the holiday experience at the Wadden Sea can be adapted even better to the guests' wishes.



Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Question: Which of the following nature experience offers are of interest to you during your current stay? (Multiple answers)

## Restrictions due to nature conservation regulations

Those who choose to spend their holidays in a protected nature area inevitably come into contact with the strict nature conservation measures in place. Even though the landscape, nature and the National Park itself were among the top 5 reasons when deciding to travel to the Danish Wadden Sea, the question arises whether guests feel restricted by these measures. As no respondent stated that they felt restricted by the protective measures, this reflects the success of the many years of efforts made by all those involved on the ground to gain acceptance for these measures.

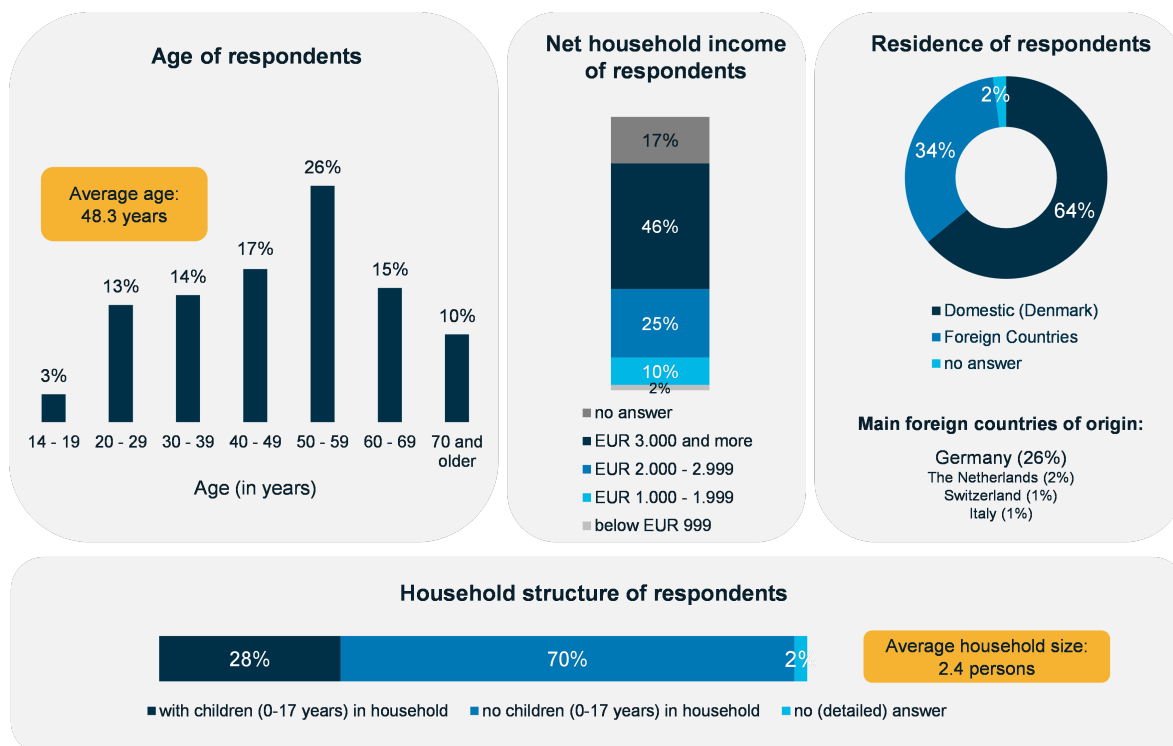
## Willingness to recommend the Danish Wadden Sea region

The willingness of visitors to recommend the place of their current stay at the Wadden Sea was high: The average rating for the Danish Wadden Sea region was 8.7 on a 10-point scale with 10 = highly likely. Overall, almost nine out of ten guests are likely to recommend the current region as a holiday destination to family, friends and/or colleagues (values of 8 or higher). This value demonstrates a very high satisfaction with the current holiday experience at the Danish Wadden Sea.

## Socio-demographic characteristics of the visitors

Half of the respondents in the Danish Wadden Sea region were 50 years and over. The average Danish traveller was 48.3 years old. In terms of salary, the average North Sea visitor has a relatively high income. Almost half of the Wadden Sea visitors have a net household income of 3.000 Euros or more. Two-thirds of the guests were domestic travellers and one-third comes from different countries, mainly Germany.

### Socio-demographic characteristics of visitors at the Danish Wadden Sea



Base: Respondents Danish Wadden Sea region (n=579) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021

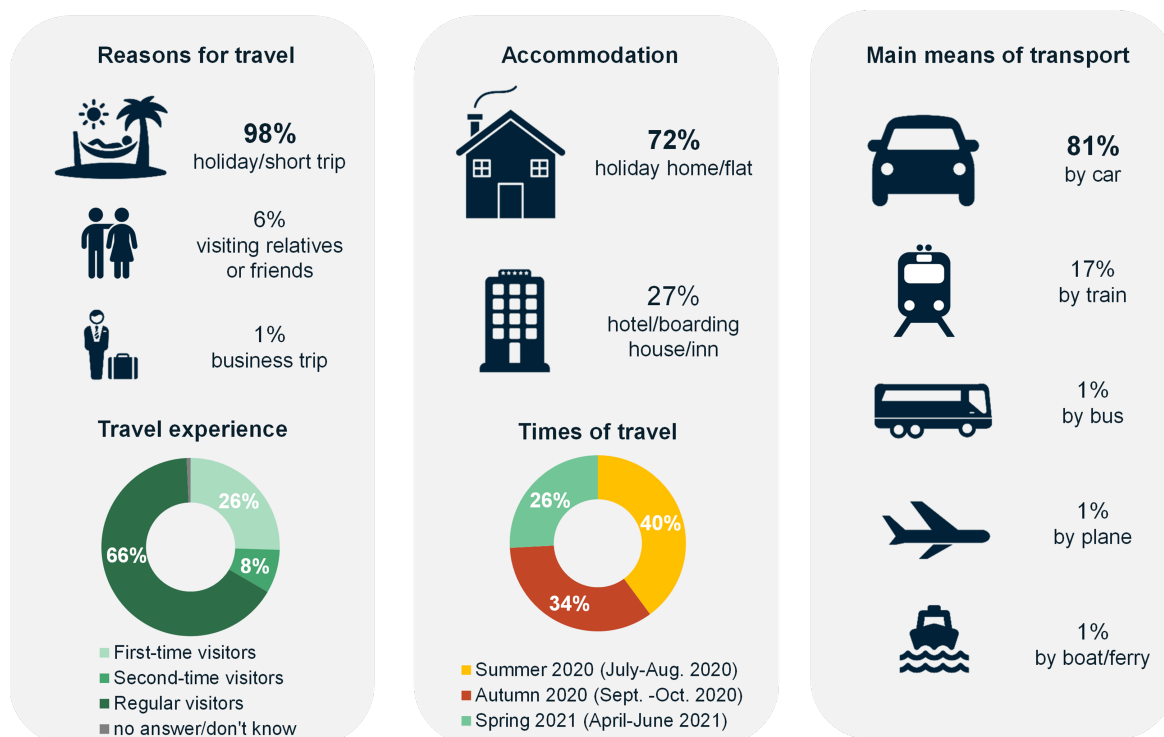


## 2.2 Holidays at the German Wadden Sea

### Visitor characteristics from the German Wadden Sea

The German Wadden Sea is a classic destination for vacation trips. Almost all visitors visit this region predominantly for a holiday or a short trip (98%). Visiting relatives or friends and business trips played only a minor role. The guests also showed a high loyalty to this region. Two-thirds of respondents were regular guests, visiting their holiday destination for the third time or more. The proportion of regular guests was significantly higher in Lower Saxony (88%) than in Schleswig-Holstein (48%). About a quarter of the guests were first-time visitors to this region, with figures being significantly higher in Schleswig-Holstein (39%) compared to Lower Saxony (11%). The majority of guests stayed in a holiday unit. In Schleswig-Holstein (SH), this proportion was slightly above the average for the region (71%), while in Lower Saxony (LS) it was slightly below (56%). About a quarter of the guests stayed in a hotel or boarding house (LS: 34%; SH: 22%). Only about one out of ten guests rented a holiday home and only 1% a private room. 40% of the reported trips were made during the summer of 2020, 34% in the autumn of the same year, and 26% in the spring of 2021. When it comes to travelling to the German Wadden Sea, by far the most frequently used means of transport was the car (81%), and only 17% of guests used the train. While people in Lower Saxony travelled to the North Sea even more frequently by car than in Schleswig-Holstein, the reverse was true for travelling by train. All other means of transport played only a minor role.

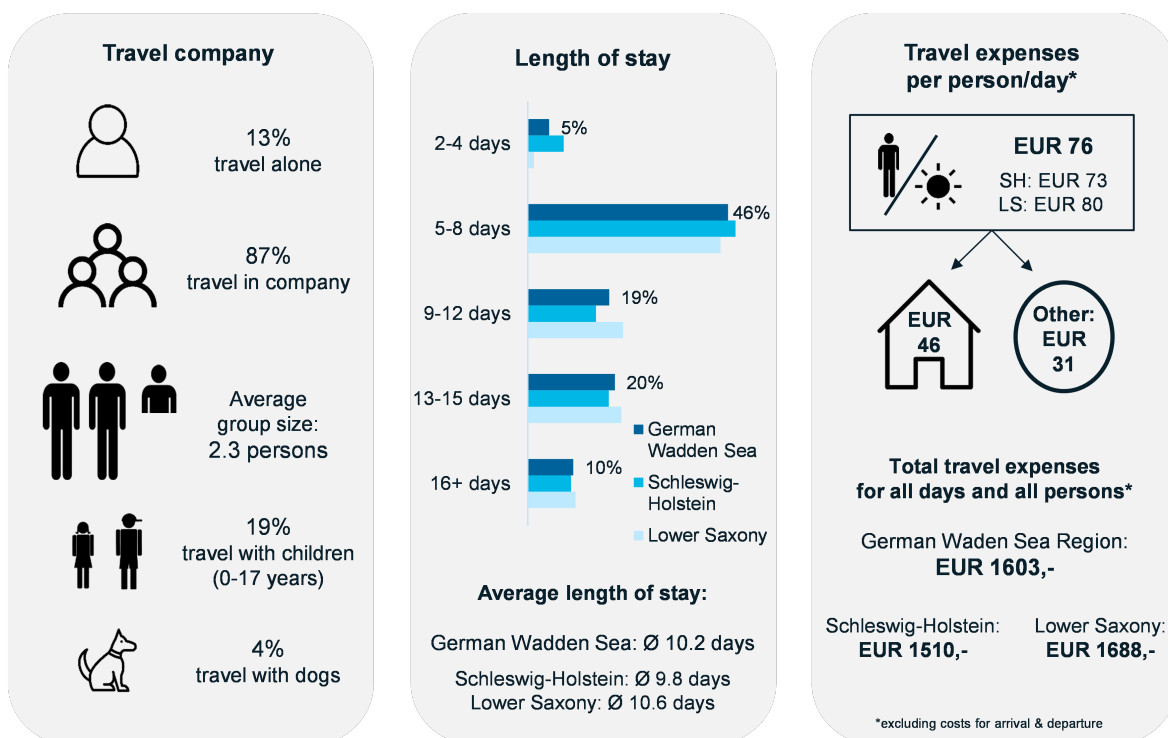
### Reasons for travel, travel experience, accommodation, times of travel and main means of transportation for the German Wadden Sea



Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021

The majority of visitors travelled in company (87%) with an average group size of 2.3 persons. In both investigated regions around one out of five travel groups were accompanied by children (0-17 years). Only one visitor out of twenty was accompanied by a dog. A trip to the German Wadden Sea region lasted on average about 10 days. About half of North Sea visitors stayed a maximum of one week and 39% stayed for up to two weeks (9-15 days) in both regions of the German Wadden Sea. On average, guests spent 76 Euro per day and per person (LS: 80 Euro; SH: 73 Euro), with 46 Euros accounting for accommodation and 31 Euros for other services, not including the cost of travel to and from the region. Total travel costs were slightly higher for Lower Saxony (1688 Euros) than for Schleswig-Holstein (1510 Euros).

### Travel company, length of stay and travel expenses at the German Wadden Sea



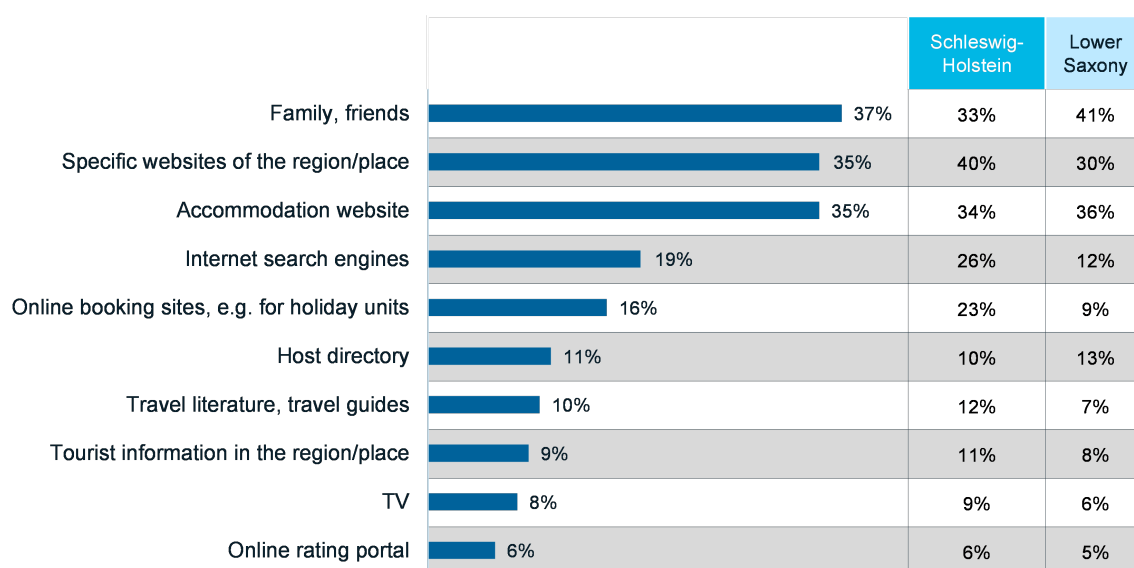
Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640), Schleswig-Holstein (n=330), Lower Saxony (n=310) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021

**Please note:** When comparing these results to previous guest surveys some aspects differ, namely the reason for travel and travelling in company. In previous years – before the pandemic – nearly 40% of the travels were taken in spring, one-third in summer and less than a third in autumn. This distribution has shifted to most arrivals being in summer and least in spring, which was directly related to the condition caused by the pandemic. In addition, in this survey, the average group size was smaller than in previous survey years (2020/21: 2.3; 2017: 2.8 and 2013: 2.9) and fewer people travelled with children (2020/21: 19% vs. 2017: 23%). These differences may be attributable to the special circumstances caused by the pandemic.

## Information sources consulted before travelling to the German Wadden Sea

For the German Wadden Sea region, there were three main information sources that guests rely on to learn more about their holiday destination before their travel. However, there were notable differences when comparing the two German Wadden Sea regions. These differences can be attributed to the higher number of first-time visitors in Schleswig-Holstein and the higher number of regular visitors in Lower Saxony. Also, family and friends played a greater role when planning to visit the Wadden Sea in Lower Saxony, while specific websites of the region or place were the main channel for guests of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea. This indicates that visitors to Lower Saxony had a clearer idea of what to expect, where to go and where to stay, while visitors to Schleswig-Holstein tended to do more general research. All other information sources (e.g., more traditional ones such as TV or travel literature) only played a minor role.

### Top 10 information sources used before the stay

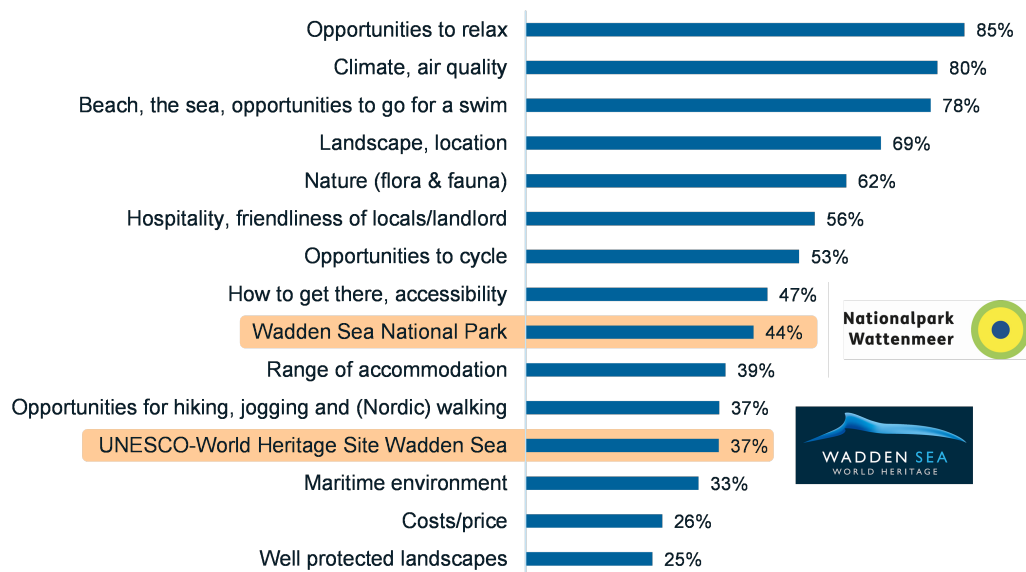


Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640), Schleswig-Holstein (n=330), Lower Saxony (n=310) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: Where did you find information about your current travel destination? (multiple answers)

## Reasons for travelling to the German Wadden Sea destination

Visitors were asked to indicate which aspects were the main influence for their trip to the German Wadden Sea. Eight out of ten guests mentioned the opportunities to relax, the climate as well as the air quality, the beach, the sea and the opportunities to go for a swim. For guests of the Wadden Sea in Lower Saxony, the beaches and the opportunities to swim were even more important (87%) than for Schleswig-Holstein guests (70%). In line with these prerequisites, around two-thirds of respondents also named the landscape, the location and the local flora and fauna as essential reasons for their travel decision. These top five reasons demonstrate the relevance of classic holiday themes when choosing a destination.

## Top 15 reasons for travelling to the German Wadden Sea

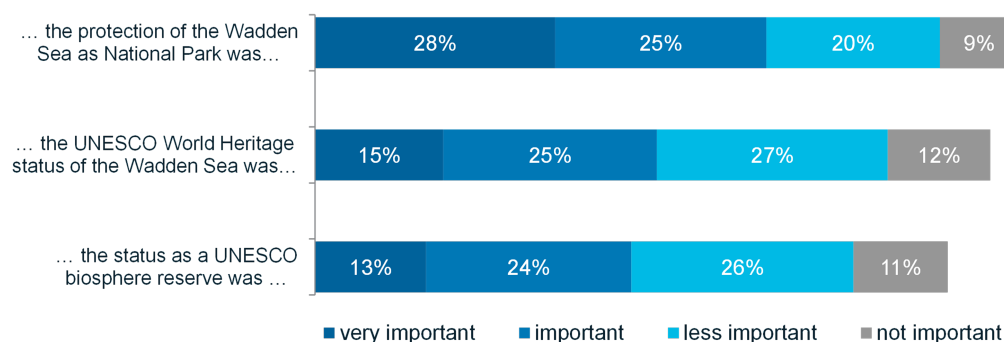


Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: Which of the following aspects/features were very important to you and played an essential role in your decision to travel to this destination? (multiple answers)

While these are more general attractions of the destination, the status as National Park and UNESCO World Heritage site are specific characteristics that were mentioned by almost every second and third guest, respectively. This shows that these criteria played an important, but not essential role, in the decision for the Wadden Sea as a holiday destination. However, an overwhelming majority (97%) of guests were aware of the status as a UNESCO World Heritage site indicating very successful communication and public relation work done by the local stakeholders.

When asked what role the protection of the Wadden Sea as a National Park played when planning the holiday, more than half considered this aspect (very) important. The UNESCO World Heritage status and the status as a UNESCO biosphere reserve were slightly less important but still (very) important for about 40% of visitors. A comparison of these ratings between the two German Wadden Sea regions shows that all three aspects played a slightly greater role for guests in Lower Saxony than in Schleswig-Holstein.

## WHEN PLANNING THIS JOURNEY...

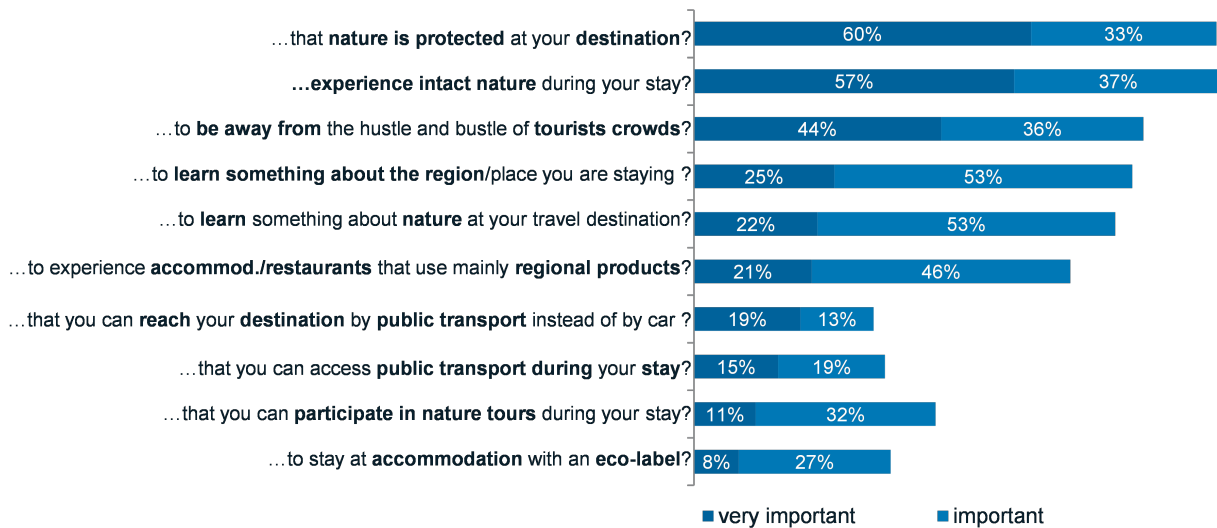


Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640), Schleswig-Holstein (n=330), Lower Saxony (n=310) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 percentage missing to 100% = no answer.  
 Question: How important were the following aspects when planning this journey? Four-level scale (very important, important, less important, not important).

## The importance of nature and sustainability while staying at the German Wadden Sea

The more detailed inquiry on the importance of nature and other environmental aspects on vacation showed that protected nature and experiencing intact nature was a (very) important aspect for almost all respondents (94% each)

### HOW IMPORTANT IS IT FOR YOU...



Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: When on holiday there are things that are very important to us, and others which are less important. Please indicate the importance of each aspect listed below during your holiday. Four-level scale (very important, important, less important, not important).

While looking for and experiencing intact nature on vacation, most visitors do not want to be disturbed by crowds of tourists and were very interested in learning more about the region and the place as well as the nature at their travel destination. Compared to the results in 2017, it was now more important to be away from tourist crowds and less important to have access to public transport – these changes may be related to the pandemic.

Especially when visiting protected areas like the Wadden Sea, it is interesting to get an insight into visitors' attitudes towards sustainability. Almost half of the guests to the German Wadden Sea would be willing to donate a small amount of money to financially support nature protection at their travel destination (45%). However, considering that almost all guests expected protected and intact nature during their stay, this number shows that this expectation does not necessarily translate into a willingness to actively support nature protection at the destination. Furthermore, one-third of the guests preferred businesses that make some contribution to environmental protection and nature conservation. This attitude was in line with the number of guests who consider staying in an accommodation with an eco-label as (very) important. Less than a third would be willing to spend more money on a hotel or other accommodation if it has an eco-label.



## Information sources used while on site

The guest survey also provides insights into the information sources guests used on-site to learn more about the German Wadden Sea. By far the most frequently used sources of information were information boards and displays on site. This can be explained by the omnipresence of these boards on site, as most visitors walk past them. The great attention paid – rather accidentally – to this medium makes them an excellent platform to advertise further opportunities to learn more about the destination (such as guided tours etc.).

All other information sources used require active engagement by the visitor, such as participating in tours or asking for information. Surprisingly, less than one-third of the visitors indicated that the Wadden sea exhibition or information centres were the source of relevant information to them when in fact more than half do visit such a centre (54%) – and rate it good to very good (88% - see the following section). In this respect, the information effect achieved through guided tidal flat tours seems to be much greater, as the number of guests participating in such tours (30%) was similar to the number of those indicating these tours as a relevant source of information (27%). Tourist information offices (TIO) seemed to play only a minor role when it comes to learning more about the Wadden Sea. Although every second visitor reported having visited a TIO (see the following section), only 15% of guests mentioned them as a relevant source of information in this context.

### Relevance of information sources for learning more about the Wadden Sea on site

		Schleswig-Holstein	Lower Saxony
Information boards and displays	65%	65%	65%
Leaflet(s)/brochure(s)	36%	36%	37%
Wadden sea exhibition or visitor centre	28%	28%	28%
Guided tidal flat tour	27%	26%	29%
Internet	26%	23%	28%
Educational trail	21%	15%	27%
Landlord/hotel employees	18%	15%	20%
Tourist Information/Office for tourism management	15%	14%	15%
Offer(s) on nature experience	9%	8%	11%
Employees of nature protection organisation	7%	11%	3%
Smartphone-App	7%	5%	8%
Nature guide	5%	6%	4%
Other	5%	6%	3%

Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640), Schleswig-Holstein (n=330), Lower Saxony (n=310) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Question: Where did you get the most information about the Wadden Sea on site? (Multiple answers)

## Usage intensity and ratings of different tourist offers

Respondents were asked to rate the tourist offers at their current destination with a scale from 1 = very good to 6 = very poor. This provides the possibility to identify tourist offers that were frequently used but receive low ratings, which indicates opportunities for improvement.

### Usage intensity of tourist offers and their proportion of (very) good ratings



Base: Respondents with indication to respective offer, Danish Wadden Sea region in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: How would you rate the following aspects at your travel destination? Please rate only those that you used yourself using the scale from 1 (very good) to 6 (very poor). Here accumulated ratings of 1=very good and 2=good.

The majority of the more frequently used offers (= used by more than 50% of guests) were rated as good or even very good by at least two-thirds of the users. This is a positive signal for the German Wadden Sea region, as it shows that most users were satisfied with their experiences of these offers. The ratings of internet access and offers of regional products and specialities show that improving these aspects could increase guest satisfaction even more. This also applies to shopping in (inner-) cities and shopping centres. The opportunities for hiking, jogging, Nordic walking and cycling as well as the beach and bathing opportunities received the highest scores among the frequently used offers. In addition, the Wadden Sea exhibition and visitor centres and guided walks (e.g., walking on the tidal flat) are also rated as very positive. These offers were used by every second and third guest, respectively. However, an increase in the intensity of use of the very well-rated offers (e.g., guided tidal flat tour) can even improve guest satisfaction. On average, guests in the region used more than thirteen offers during their holidays.

**Please note:** Compared to the previous results of 2017, the current results show an overall higher usage of outdoor activities (e.g., hiking, biking, swimming) and a lower usage of indoor or group activities (e.g., cultural offers, guided city tours) or public events. These findings are directly linked to the restrictions in place due to the pandemic. Even if social restrictions were lifted, it was still recommended to maintain a safe distance, thus people preferred outdoor activities with limited contact with others. In addition, some offers may simply not have been available because some facilities may have been closed or public events may not have been allowed during the survey period.

#### **Excursus: Day trip at the German Wadden Sea**

During a holiday at the German Wadden Sea, it was very common for travellers to undertake day trips to various destinations. More than two-thirds of the guests made at least one (on average seven) such excursion during their holiday. The proportion of guests who undertook day trips was considerably higher in Schleswig-Holstein (84%) compared to Lower Saxony (54%). Of those who made at least one day trip, this was rather to an island (60%) than to the mainland (43%). In Lower Saxony, the share of excursionists who visited a mainland destination during their stay is higher than in Schleswig-Holstein (55% vs. 47%). In the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea region, every third visitor made a trip to a Hallig.

Two out of three visitors used a bicycle to travel to the day-trip destination while half of them used the car and one in ten used a bus or train. Car-sharing systems or rental cars played a minor role as a means of transport for day trips and almost every fifth bicycle used for day trips was either rented or shared (bike-sharing-system). Overall, the proportion of car users was significantly higher in the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea region compared to Lower Saxony (54% vs. 37%).

## Interest in nature tourist offers

Besides general tourist offers, the Wadden Sea provides a variety of area-specific tourism offers where visitors can experience the unique nature and learn more about it. The classic tidal flat hiking tour was a 'must' for almost half of the guests at the German Wadden Sea. Every third guest was interested in visiting a Wadden Sea exhibition or visitor centre, nature experience trails or guided saltmarsh tours. Guests on the North Sea coast of Schleswig-Holstein showed above-average interest in tidal flat hiking tours, trips to seal colonies and island/hallig tours with a ranger. Guests from Lower Saxony were more interested in nature experience trails. Each guest indicated an average of 2.6 nature experience offers as interesting for them. Overall, the guests of the German Wadden Sea showed a high interest in the available nature experience offers.



Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640), Schleswig-Holstein (n=330), Lower Saxony (n=310) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Question: Which of the following nature experience offers are of interest to you during your current stay? (Multiple answers)

## Restrictions due to nature conservation regulations

Finally, the question remains whether guests felt personally restricted by nature conservation regulations. Fortunately, this was only the case for a very small proportion of guests. Only 1% stated that they felt restricted by nature conservation regulations. This is a very encouraging result and indicates a general understanding of necessary measures that ensure a holiday experience in line with what most visitors expect from a stay at the Wadden Sea.

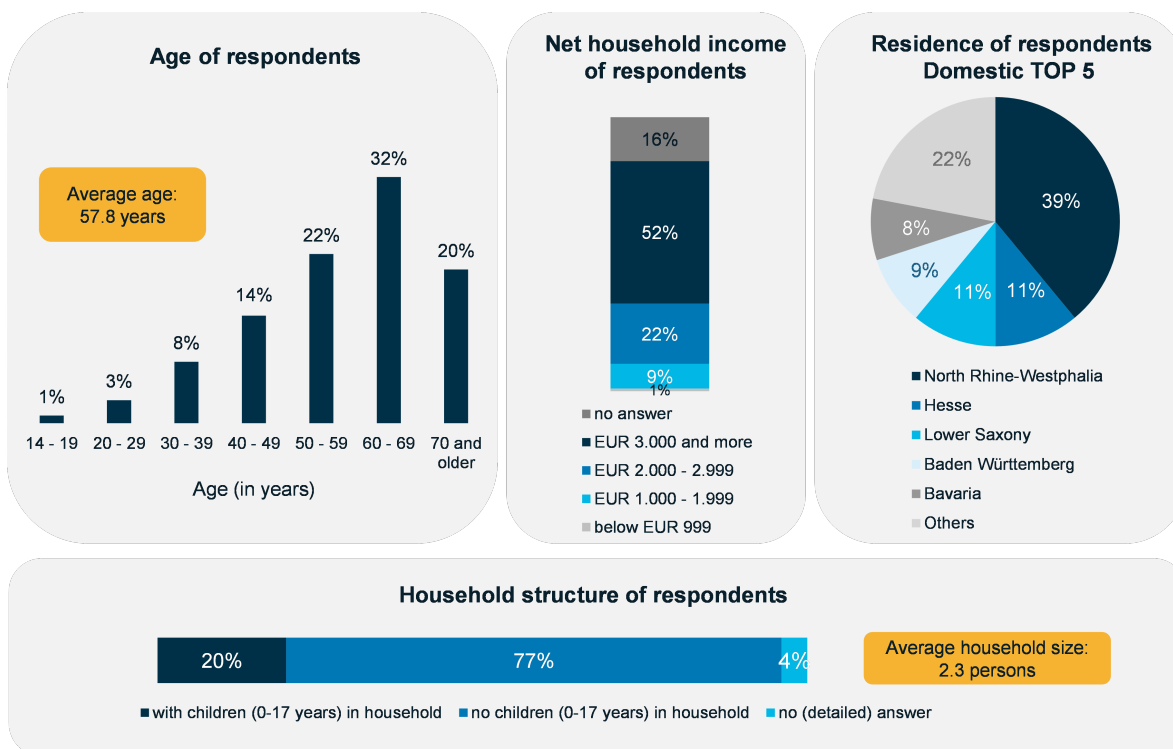
## Willingness to recommend the German Wadden Sea region

The willingness of visitors to recommend the place of their current stay in the Wadden Sea was high: The average rating for the German Wadden Sea region was 8.9 on a 10-point scale with 10 = highly likely. Overall, nine out of ten guests were likely to recommend the current region as a holiday destination to family, friends and/or colleagues. This value demonstrates a very high satisfaction with the current holiday experience at the German Wadden Sea.

## Socio-demographic characteristics of the visitors

Three-quarters of the visitors to the German Wadden Sea region were 50 years and over (average age: 57.8 years). In terms of salary, the average visitor has a relatively high income. Half of the North Sea visitors have a monthly net household income of 3.000 Euros and over. The respondents from the German Wadden Sea region were almost without exception domestic travellers. The most important source markets in Germany were North Rhine-Westphalia (39%), Hesse and Lower Saxony (11% each).

### Socio-demographic information of visitors at the German Wadden Sea region



Base: Respondents German Wadden Sea Region (n=640), Schleswig-Holstein (n=330), Lower Saxony (n=310) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021

**Please note:** Compared to the previous guest surveys in 2013 and 2017, the average guest in 2020/21 was slightly older (2013: 54.4 years; 2017: 55.8); there were fewer households with children (2013: 28%; 2017: 24%), and guests had a higher income (2017: 40% above 3.000 Euro). These differences are not necessarily due to the pandemic, as they follow the trend observed since 2013.

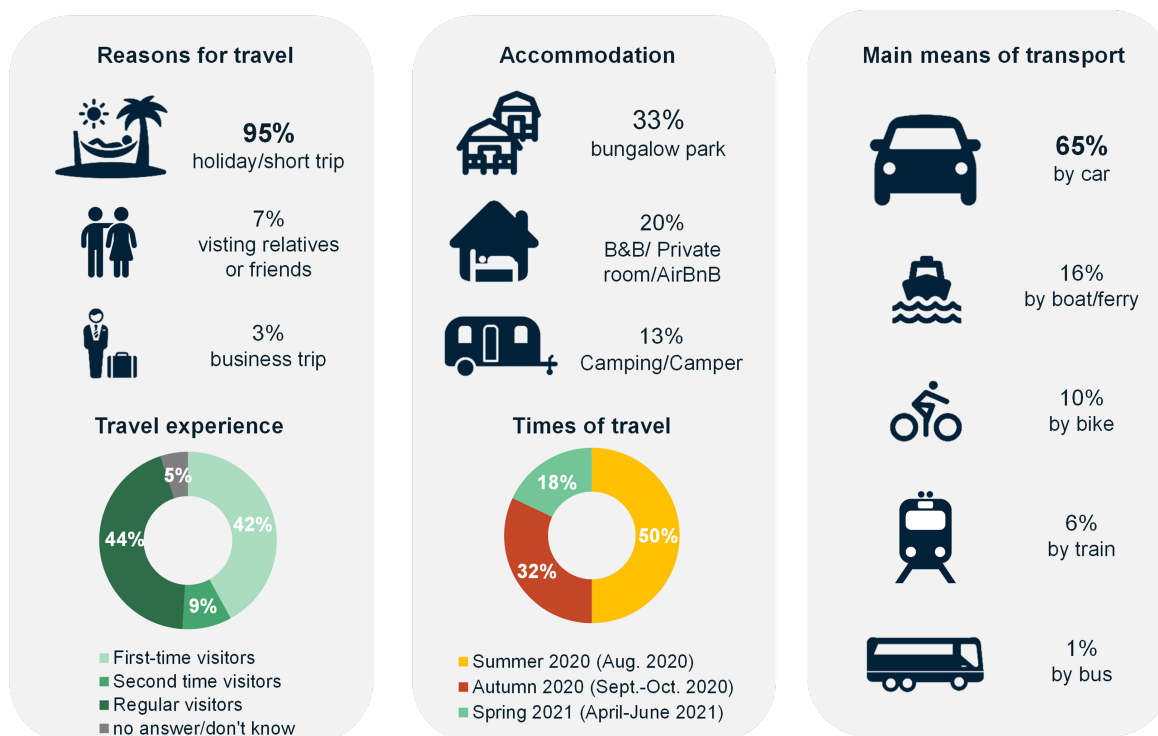


## 2.3 Holidays at the Dutch Wadden Sea

### Visitor characteristics from the Dutch Wadden Sea

The typical reason for travelling to the Dutch Wadden Sea region was a vacation (95%). Only a small percentage of guests visited friends or relatives and even fewer were on a business trip. 2% of respondents either had a seasonal pitch at a camping site or own an apartment/holiday home at the current location. There were about the same number of first-time visitors and regular visitors (three visits and more) in the region. Guests were spread across different types of accommodation, with just under half staying in a bungalow park or camper (33% and 13%, respectively) during their vacation, just under a third stayed in a B&B/private room/AirBnB or vacation rental (20% and 11%, respectively) and only one in ten guests booked a hotel. When it came to travelling to the Dutch Wadden Sea region, two-thirds of the guests travelled by car (65%), a considerable amount (16%) came by boat/ferry and one out of ten guests arrived by bike at the holiday destination. Travelling by bus played only a minor role, nobody arrived by plane.

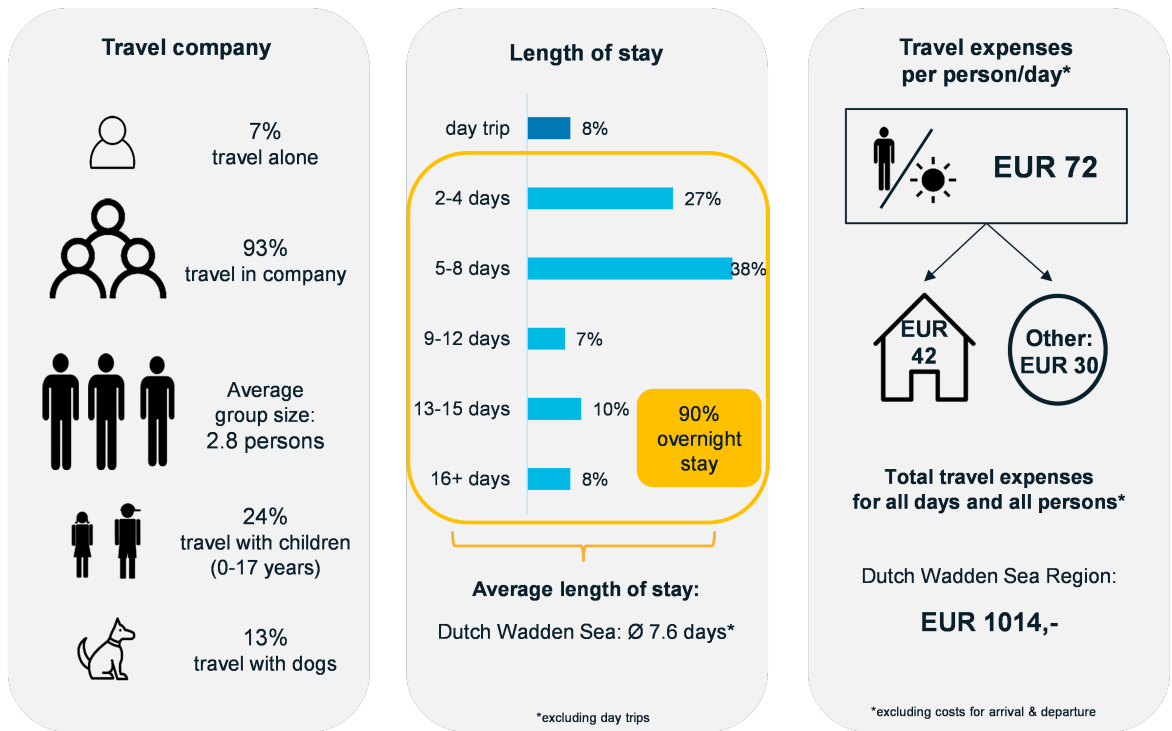
### Reasons for travel, travel experience, accommodation, times of travel and main means of transport-



The vast majority of the Dutch Wadden Sea visitors travelled in company (93%) with an average group size of 2.8 persons. About a quarter of the visitors travelled with children (0-17 years) and 13% travelled with their dog. When on an overnight trip, guests stayed between two to four days (27%) or around a week (38%). On average an overnight trip to the region lasted about eight days. Only 8% of the surveyed guests visited this area for a day trip.

Regarding the expenses for their trip, the guests reported average costs of 72 Euros per day and per person. Of these, 42 Euros were spent on accommodation and 30 Euros on other services, not including the cost of travelling to and from the region. Total travel expenses for all days and all persons in the Dutch Wadden Sea Region were 1014 Euros.

### Travel company, length of stay and travel expenses for the Dutch Wadden Sea for the Dutch Wad-

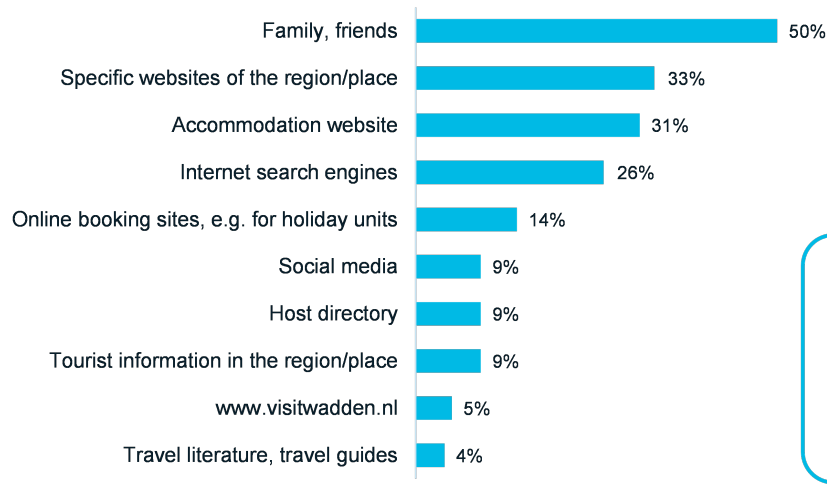


Base: Respondents Dutch Wadden Sea region (n=757) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021

### Information sources consulted before travelling to the Dutch Wadden Sea

Before starting their holiday, visitors look for information regarding travel preparation, organisation and booking. Even though the top 10 sources of information for the Dutch Wadden Sea are mainly online sources, the most important source was a personal one: half of the respondents relied on personal information from family and friends when preparing for their trip. All following sources in the ranking were online media, such as the region's and accommodation's websites and internet search engines in general.

#### Top 10 information sources used before the stay

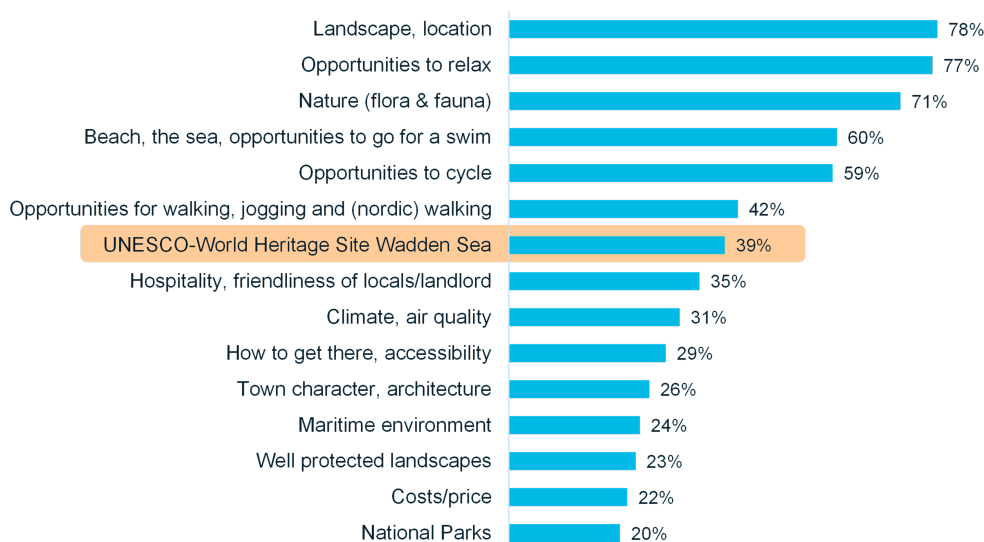


Base: Respondents Dutch Wadden Sea region (n=757) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Question: Where did you find information about your current travel destination? (multiple answers)

## Reasons for travelling to the Dutch Wadden Sea destination

As the majority of guests came to the region for their holidays, the landscape and location, the recreational opportunities and nature in general, were for three out of four guests the most important reasons for travelling to the Dutch Wadden Sea. These are followed by opportunities for (light) activities, such as swimming in the sea, cycling, or walking. The UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage site uniquely combines the wishes for nature, landscape, sea and recreation and has thus ranked 7. This aspect was more important for the guests than more practical aspects such as price, accessibility or even the friendliness of the providers.

### Top 15 reasons for travelling to the Dutch Wadden Sea

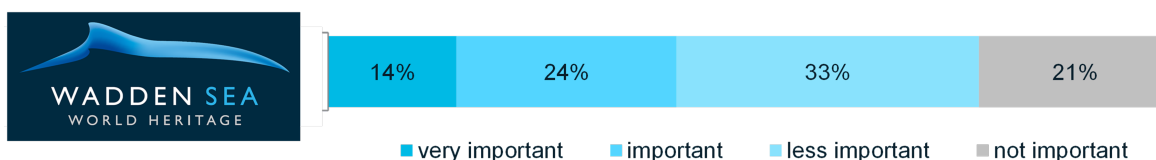


Base: Respondents Dutch Wadden Sea region (n=757) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Question: Which of the following aspects/features were very important to you and played an essential role in your decision to travel to this destination? (multiple answers)

To examine the significance of the World Heritage designation for the travel decision in more detail, we first asked about the awareness of this aspect among the guests. An overwhelming majority of 96% of the guests were aware of this distinction, thus proving successful communication on the part of the providers in the Dutch Wadden Sea. When asked how important the World Heritage designation was when planning their trip, almost 40% answered that it was (very) important to them.

## HOW IMPORTANT WAS THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE STATUS WHEN PLANNING THE JOURNEY...

How important was the UNESCO World Heritage status of the Wadden Sea when planning the journey?



Base: Respondents Dutch Wadden Sea region (n=757) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021, percentage missing to 100% = no answer  
Question: How important were the following aspects when planning this journey? Four-level scale (very important, important, less important, not important).

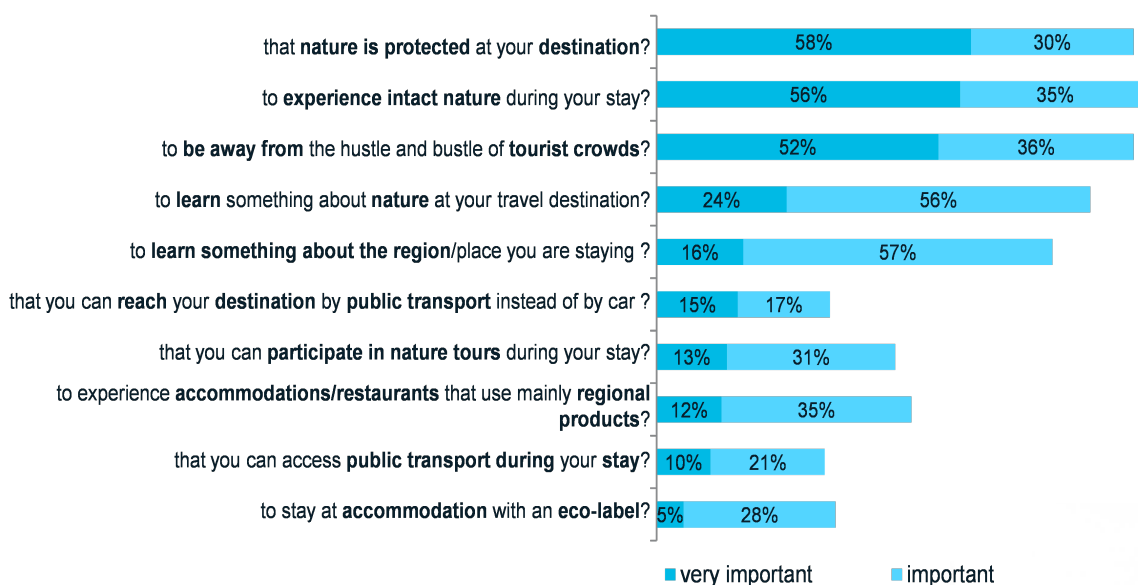


## Importance of environmental aspects and sustainability

It is noticeable that the guests in the Dutch Wadden Sea were mainly interested in aspects related to nature and landscape when looking at the reasons for travelling (see the previous section). This is also reflected in the wishes for a holiday at the Wadden Sea. About nine out of ten guests found it important that the local nature is protected (88%) and that this intact nature can be experienced undisturbed (91%), far away from tourist crowds (88%). There was also a great interest in learning more about nature and the region (80% and 73% respectively). However, this knowledge does not necessarily have to be acquired through guided tours, because only 44% of guests find it (very) important to participate in such excursions.

In terms of attitudes towards sustainability, the majority of respondents preferred establishments that show they contribute to environmental protection and nature conservation (86%). Although every third person considered it (very) important to stay in an accommodation with an eco-label, only a quarter of the guests were willing to pay more money for it. The same can be observed when it comes to making a financial contribution to environmental protection and nature conservation. Almost all respondents expected protected and unspoiled nature, but less than half were willing to make a financial contribution to this (44%). It can therefore be summarised that guests valued sustainability and environmental protection, but were not willing to pay extra for it.

## HOW IMPORTANT IS IT FOR YOU...



Base: Respondents Dutch Wadden Sea region (n=757) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021

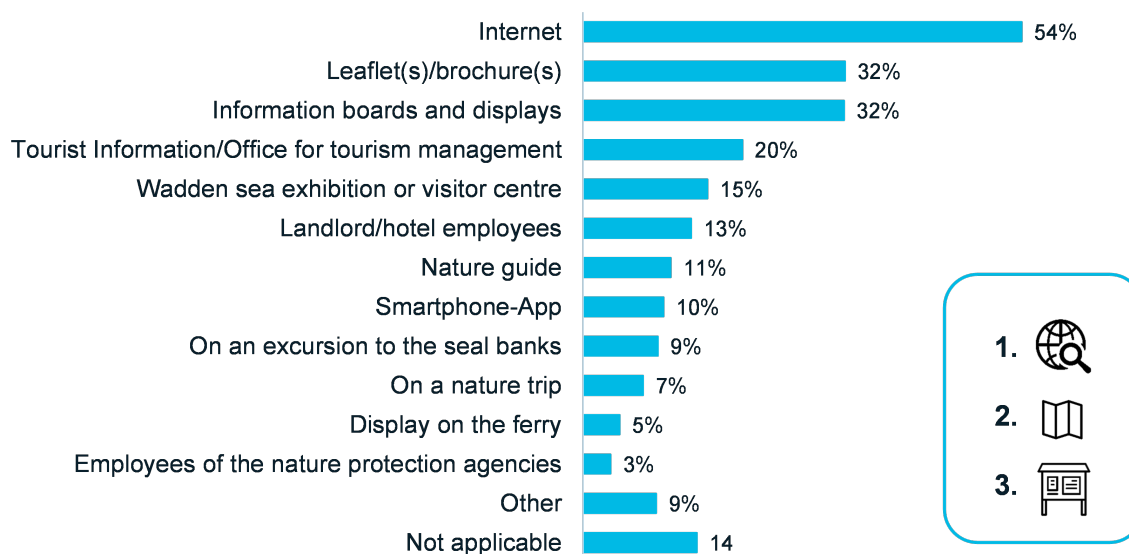
Question: When on holiday there are things that are very important to us, and others which are less important. Please indicate the importance of each aspect listed below during your holiday. Four-level scale (very important, important, less important, not important).



## Information sources used while on site

More than half of the guests used the internet as a source of information to acquire more knowledge about the Wadden Sea, and almost every third person read information boards and brochures or leaflet on the topic. The desire to gain knowledge on the topic tended to be fulfilled independently and less through direct offers on-site. Wadden Sea exhibition and visitor centres, for example, served as an important source of information for only 15% of the guests, while the staff of Wadden Sea facilities, natural history guides or guided excursions were mentioned even less frequently. However, this is also related to the relatively low usage rates in some cases (see the following section).

### Relevance of information sources for learning more about the Dutch Wadden sea on site for the



Base: Respondents Dutch Wadden Sea region (n=757) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Question: Where did you get the most information about the Wadden Sea on site? (Multiple answers)

## Tourist offers on site: Evaluation and usage intensity

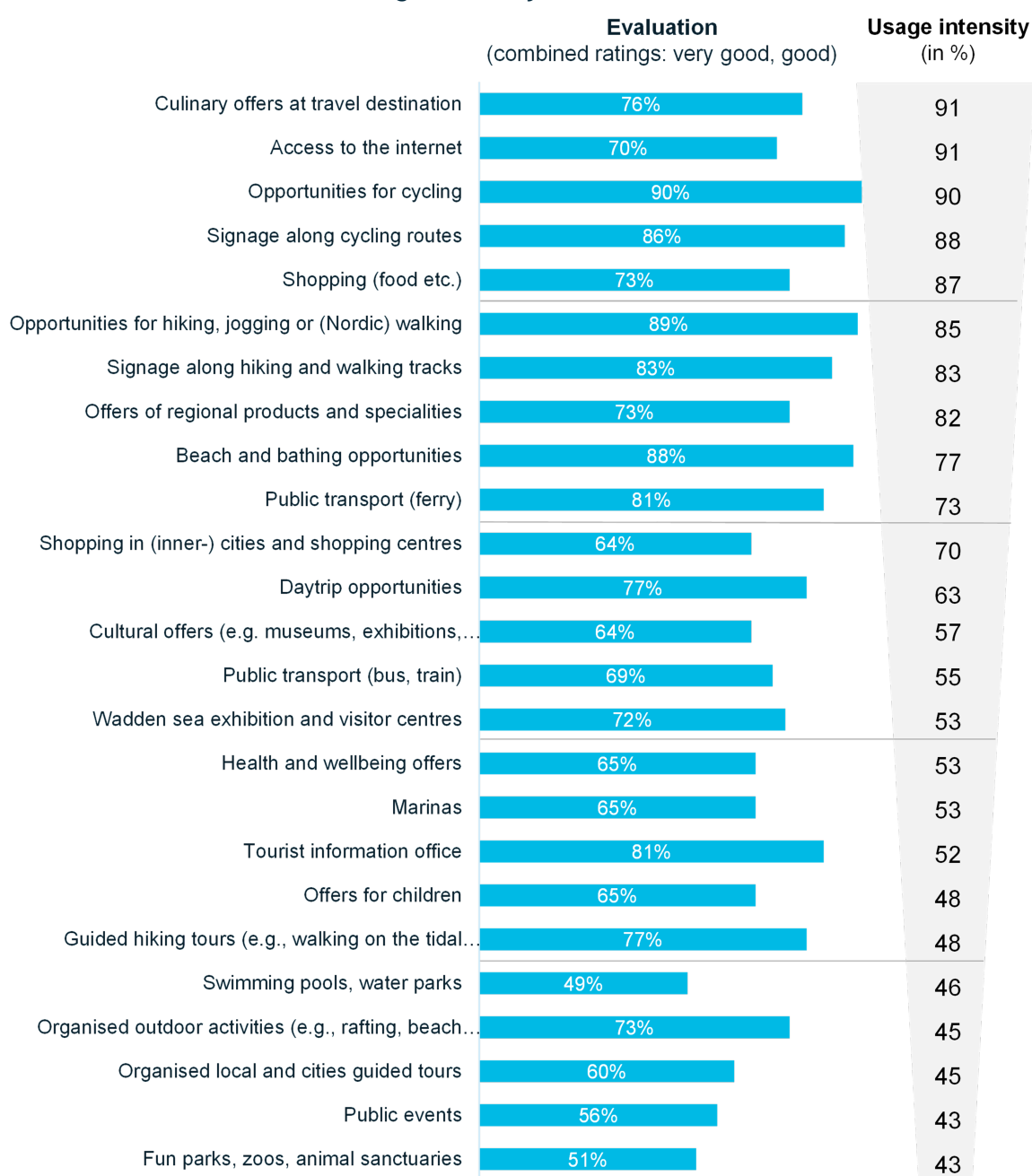
The Wadden Sea destinations provide a variety of general tourist offers, but also Wadden Sea-specific offers. The respondents were asked to rate the local offers on a scale from 1 = very good to 6 = very bad. This way a usage profile of the offers can be shown (in percentage) and at the same time the satisfaction of the guests with this particular offer.

More than three-quarters of guests enjoyed culinary offers (incl. regional specialities) or shopping facilities, internet access as well as opportunities for cycling, hiking and bathing. Especially the active aspects have the best ratings among the very frequently used offers. Here, particularly the shopping facilities, offers of regional specialities and the internet access have the potential for improvement. Guests at the Dutch Wadden Sea used an average of sixteen tourist offers during their holidays.

Among the frequently used offers (usage intensities of 50-74% of the guests) tourist information offices, day trip possibilities and ferries (as a means of transport) scored best but were rated below the options for cycling, hiking or swimming.

What stands out in the Dutch Wadden Sea was the overall very high usage intensity of all offers – even the less used offers were still used by more than 40% of the guests. In this area, however, there were still some offers that scored comparatively low in the evaluation and considering the nevertheless frequent use, these aspects should be given special consideration. Among those are swimming pools, water parks and fun parks, zoos and animal sanctuaries. Restrictions due to the pandemic may have had an impact on these offers in particular. Wadden Sea-specific offers such as a visit to the Wadden Sea exhibition or visitor centres or guided hiking tours scored well with about three-quarters of positive evaluations each, but they have room for improvement compared to other offers. Both offers were used by about half of the visitors.

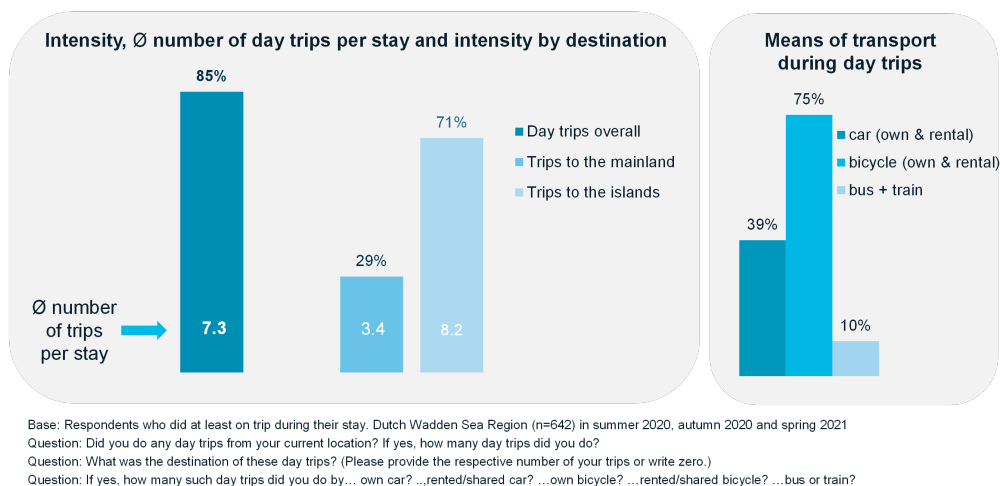
### Evaluation and usage intensity of tourist offers Wadden Sea



Base: Respondents with indication to respective offer, Dutch Wadden Sea region in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: How would you rate the following aspects at your travel destination? Please rate only those that you used yourself using the scale from 1 (very good) to 6 (very poor). Here accumulated ratings of 1=very good and 2=good.

## Excursus: Day trips at the Dutch Wadden Sea

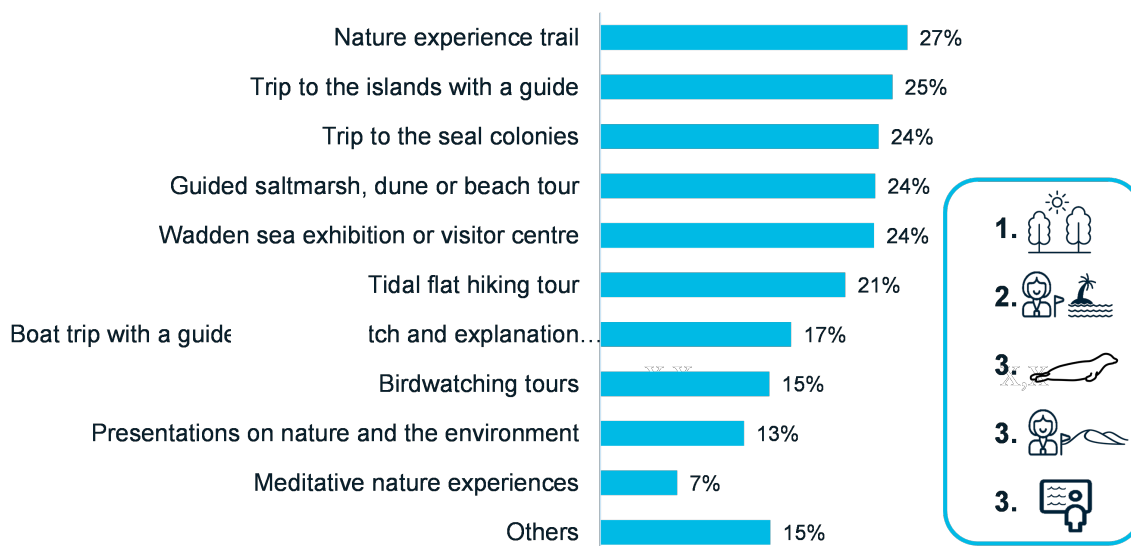
In a more detailed query regarding day trips, the vast majority of guests (85%) indicated undertaking at least one (with an average of seven) day trips during their entire stay. The most popular destinations for day trips were on the islands – more than two-thirds of the trips go there. Just under a third of the excursions have a destination on the mainland. Concerning the means of transport used, the bicycle has prevailed here: three-quarters of the excursions were undertaken by bicycle and almost half of those with rented bicycles. Only a few trips were made by bus or train.



## Interest in nature tourist offers

Complementary to the tourism offers presented, the Wadden Sea offers guests a variety of Wadden Sea-specific experiences that provide ‘pure nature’ experiences and in-depth information on the topic, entirely in the sense of the guests. About a quarter of the guests at the Dutch Wadden Sea was interested in nature discovery trails, excursions to the islands or the seal colonies, or participating in guided dune tours as well as visiting a Wadden Sea exhibition and visitor centre. Every fifth person would like to take part in a guided tidal flat tour. Overall, the guests were interested in 2.3 different nature offers.

### Interest in nature tourist offers



Base: Respondents Dutch Wadden Sea region (n=757) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: Which of the following nature experience offers are of interest to you during your current stay? (Multiple answers)

## Restrictions due to nature conservation regulations

During a holiday in a protected nature area, guests inevitably come into contact with the strict nature conservation measures in place. Even though the landscape and nature itself were among the top 5 reasons for travel for Dutch Wadden Sea guests, the question here was whether guests felt restricted by these measures. Only 5% of respondents felt restricted by protection measures during their holiday. This reflects the success of many years of efforts by all stakeholders on the ground to gain acceptance for the protection measures.

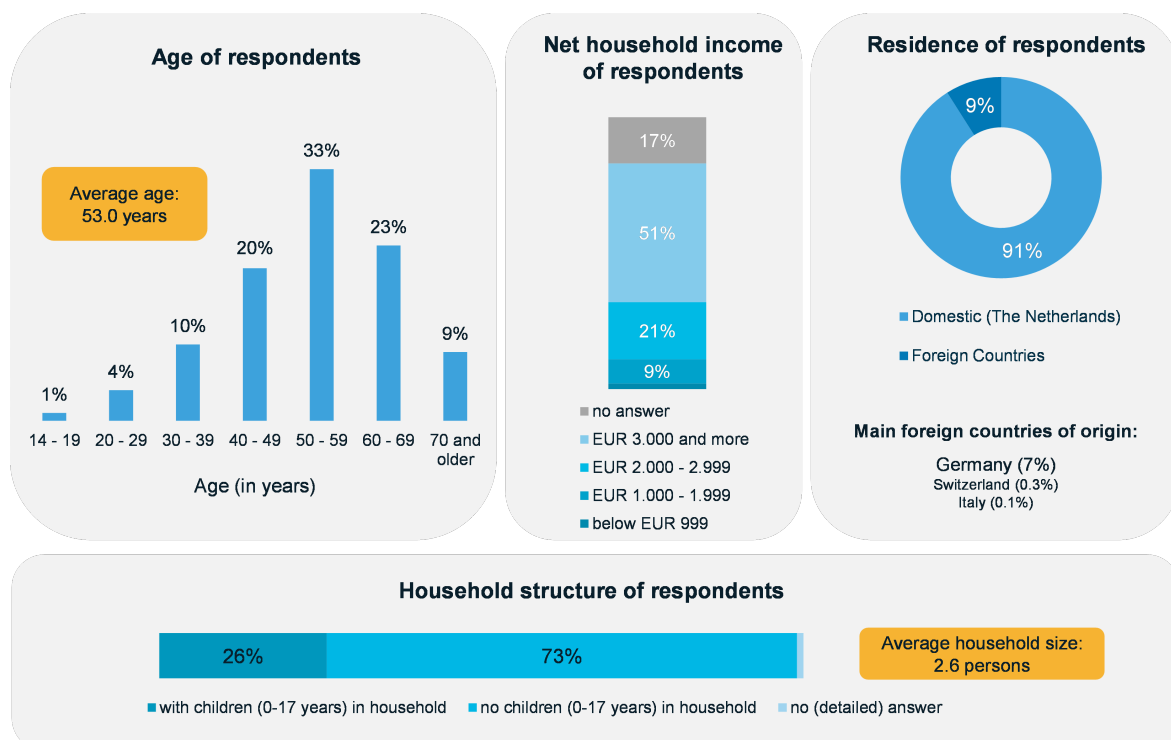
## Willingness to recommend the Dutch Wadden Sea region

The willingness to recommend the place of the current Wadden Sea trip was high: the average rating for the Dutch Wadden Sea region was 8.4 on a 10-point scale with 10 = highly likely. Overall, more than eight out of ten guests were likely to recommend the current region as a holiday destination to family, friends and/or colleagues (values of 8 or higher). This value demonstrates a high satisfaction with the current holiday experience at the Dutch Wadden Sea.

## Socio-demographic characteristics of the visitors

Two-thirds of the visitors to the Dutch Wadden Sea region were 50 years and over. The average Dutch Wadden Sea traveller was 53.0 years old. In terms of salary, the average North Sea visitor had a relatively high income. More than half of the Wadden Sea visitors have a monthly net household income of 3.000 Euros or more. Nine out of ten guests were domestic travellers and only 9% come from different countries, mainly Germany.

### Socio-demographics of the visitors to the Dutch Wadden Sea region



Base: Respondents Dutch Wadden Sea region (n=757) in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
Values <3% are not labelled



## 2.4 Overarching results of all three Wadden Sea regions

### Introduction

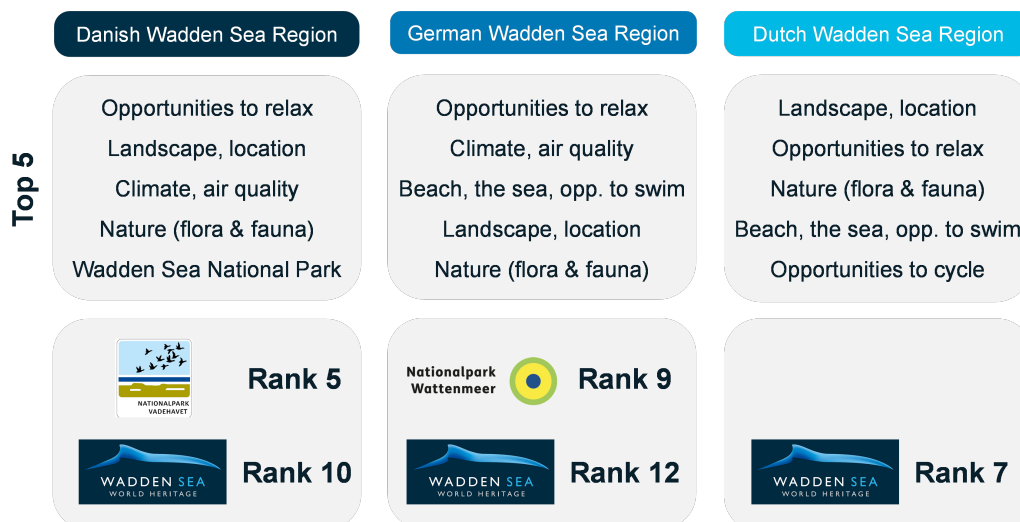
After the detailed results of the guest survey per region have been presented, a look at similarities and differences between the three Wadden Sea regions will be taken. Even though no direct comparison is possible due to the different methods used (see Chapter 2), scores and rankings can be considered side by side. In the following, a selection of striking similarities that apply to the whole Wadden Sea area and some aspects that differ between the regions are presented.

**Please note: Differences between the respective samples should also be taken into account. For example, the different proportions of day visitors on the Danish and Dutch Wadden Sea coasts (and the exclusion of day visitors in the German sample), the different numbers of first-time and regular visitors in the regions and the different proportions of domestic and foreign travellers may influence the results.**

### The UNESCO World Heritage status is a reason to visit the Wadden Sea

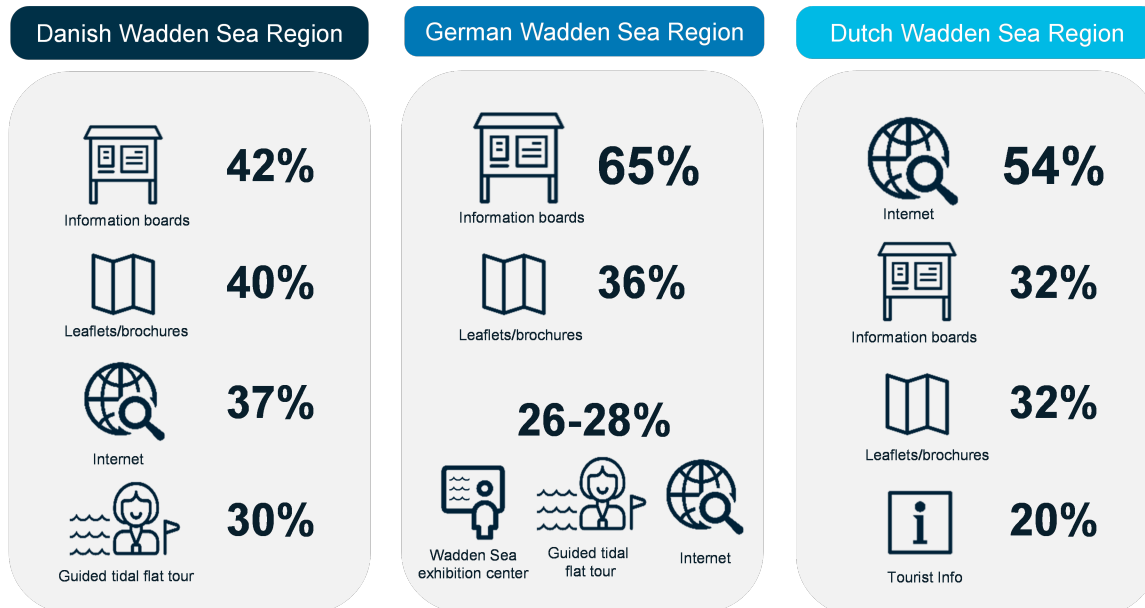
Among the guests of the entire Wadden Sea region, knowledge of the designation of the Wadden Sea as a UNESCO World Heritage site was very high (well over 90% each). Additionally, it was associated with a rather high relevance for the travel decision. For example, this aspect was (very) important for 45% of the guests to Denmark and about 40% each of the guests to Germany and the Netherlands when planning their trip. The decision to spend a holiday at the Wadden Sea was made for similar reasons in all three countries. They are always closely related to nature, landscape and recreational opportunities. The UNESCO World Heritage designation was also among the top 15 travel reasons in all regions. The designation thus played a role everywhere: even if it was not the main reason for the decision to travel, the status as a UNESCO World Heritage site was a - sometimes not insignificant - factor.

### Reasons for travelling to the Wadden Sea and the role of the National Park and World Heritage



Base: Respondents Danish (n=579), German (n=640), Dutch (n=757) Wadden Sea Region in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: Which of the following aspects/features were very important to you and played an essential role in your decision to travel to this destination? (multiple answers)  
 Please note: Methodological differences must be taken into account when putting the results side by side in a comparative way.

## Main sources of information on the site



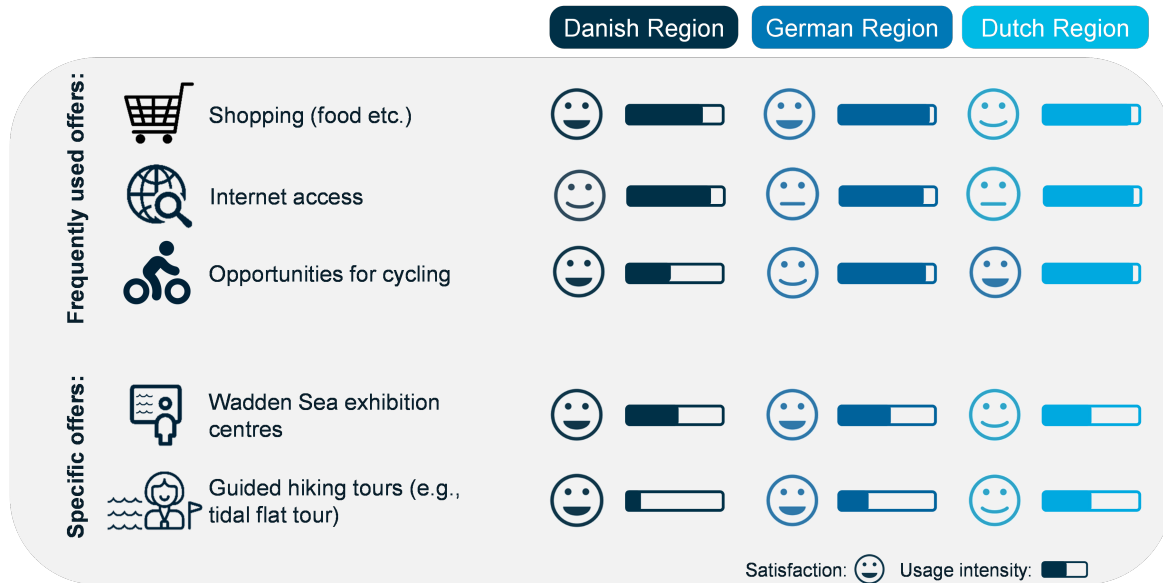
Base: Respondents Danish (n=579), German (n=640), Dutch (n=757) Wadden Sea Region in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: Where did you get the most information about the Wadden Sea on site? (Multiple answers)  
 Please note: Methodological differences must be taken into account when putting the results side by side in a comparative way.

Closely related to the reasons for travelling were the guests' wishes for their holiday at the Wadden Sea. Here, too, the guests were remarkably unanimous: for more than 80% each, it was (very) important that the local nature is protected and that this intact nature can be experienced without tourist crowds all around them. More than 70% also wanted to learn more about the region and the local nature. However, the way this information was acquired varied from region to region.

The guests of the German and Danish Wadden Sea Region stated that information boards on site were the most important source of information. Brochures/leaflets and the internet followed in second and third place. In the Dutch Wadden Sea, visitors preferred the internet as the main source of information, followed with some distance by information boards and brochures. However, the guests agreed on one thing: The top three sources of information serve as self-guided and independent information acquisition. External information provided by guided tours or by a visit to a Wadden Sea exhibition and visitor centre or a tourist information office was less relevant in all three regions.

The use and evaluation of the general tourism offers also differed surprisingly little between the regions. However, this is also because the typical Wadden Sea holiday is very similar. The majority of all guests used the internet, the culinary offers and shopping possibilities on-site as well as the possibilities to actively organise the holiday, be it by hiking, cycling or bathing/swimming. While the internet and culinary activities were rated rather moderately, the latter activities scored above average in all three regions. With these activities, the guests were able to optimally realise their wishes for a first-hand experience of the untouched nature in the entire Wadden Sea region.

## Tourist offers of the destinations - ratings and usage intensity



Base: Respondents Danish (n=579), German (n=640), Dutch (n=757) Wadden Sea Region in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: How would you rate the following aspects at your travel destination? Please rate only those that you used yourself using the scale from 1 (very good) to 6 (very poor). Here accumulated ratings of 1=very good and 2=good.  
 Please note: Methodological differences must be taken into account when putting the results side by side in a comparative way.

The Wadden Sea-specific offers show a more differentiated picture. On the one hand, the Wadden Sea exhibition and visitor centres were often visited with very good ratings. The guided hiking tours, on the other hand, were used to varying degrees – despite very good ratings in all regions.

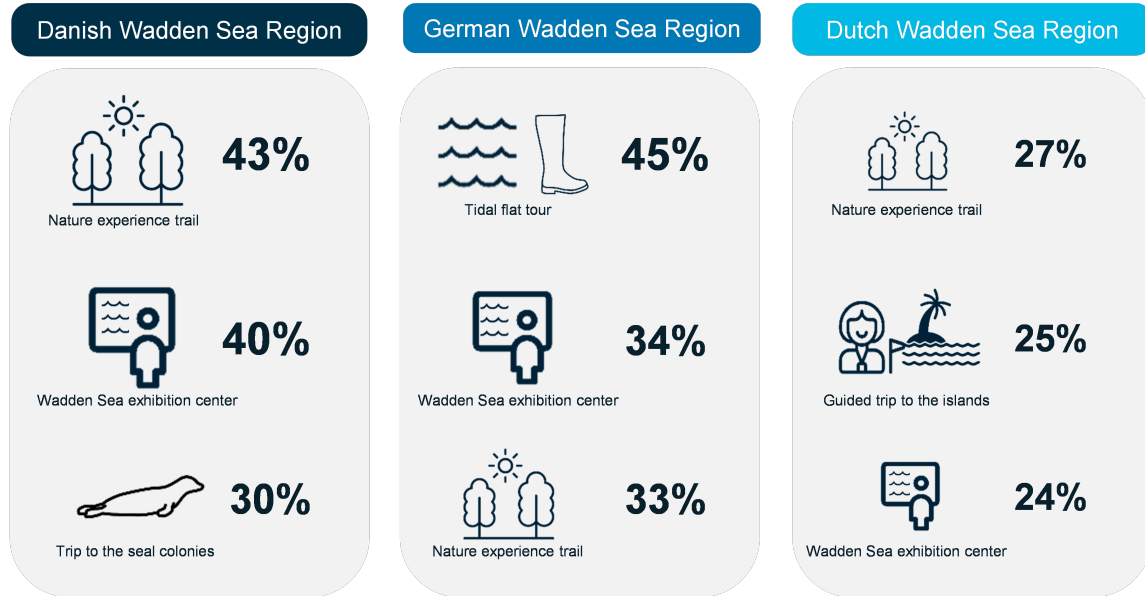
At the Dutch Wadden Sea, about half of the guests took part in such tours, whereas in Germany it was about one-third of the guest. In the Danish region only one-eighth of the guests took part in such tours. Considering the high level of satisfaction, the use of these offers could certainly be intensified.

With this in mind, looking at the guests' interest in different nature experience offers can be helpful. Again, there were some differences between the regions. While on the German Wadden Sea coast the tidal flat tour generated the greatest interest, in the Danish and Dutch regions, it was the nature experience trails. The Wadden Sea exhibition and visitor centres followed in second and third place. Once again, this shows the great potential of these facilities. If this interest can be translated into actual visits, the use of these facilities and satisfaction of guests are likely to increase. Overall, all guests were interested in several nature experience offers and were thus open to the various offers on-site.





## Interest in nature tourism offers - top 3 of all three regions



Base: Respondents Danish (n=579), German (n=640), Dutch (n=757) Wadden Sea Region in summer 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021  
 Question: Which of the following nature experience offers are of interest to you during your current stay? (Multiple answers)  
 Please note: Methodological differences must be taken into account when putting the results side by side in a comparative way.

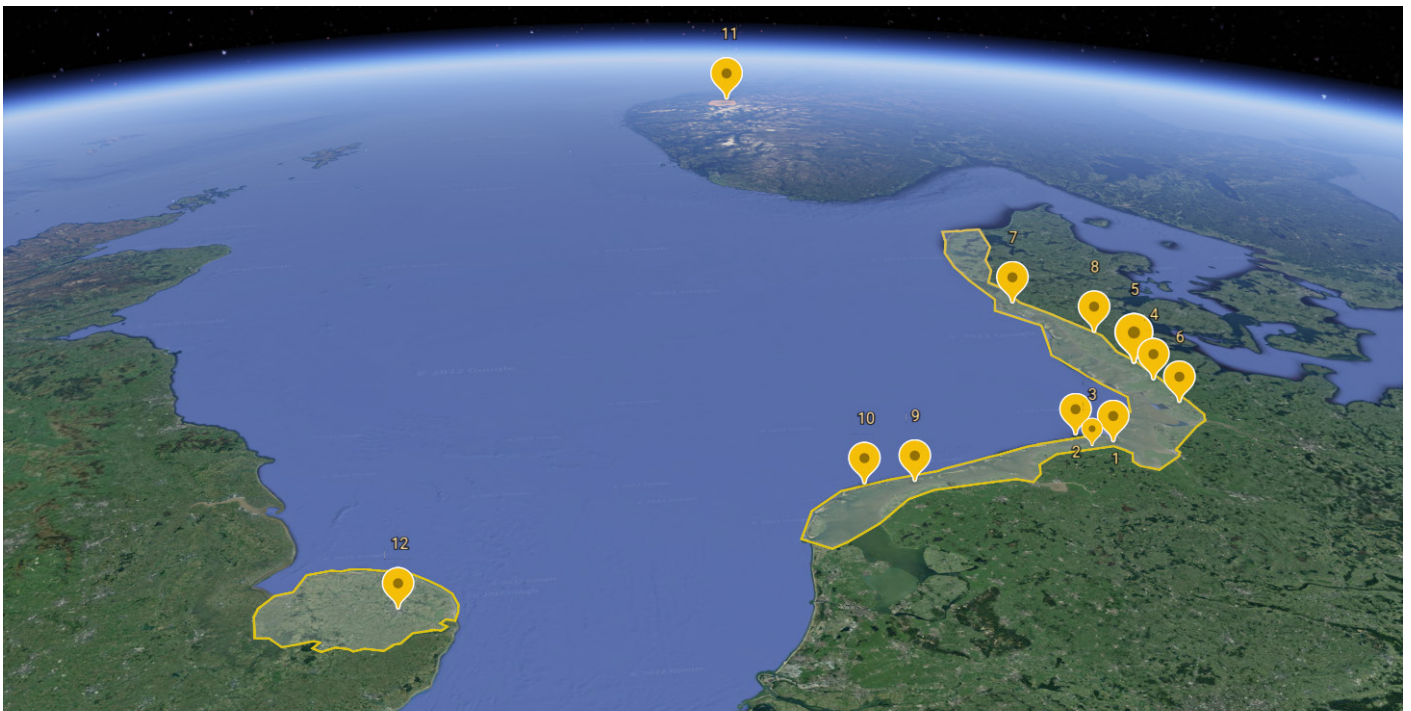
Finally, one common feature should be emphasised: the willingness to recommend the current destination to others was very high in all three regions. This means that a holiday in the Wadden Sea – regardless of the region – primarily fulfils all the wishes of the holidaymakers so they would undoubtedly recommend this place to friends and family. This high ‘Willingness to recommend’ across all regions is a clear and strong message of the success of the efforts of all stakeholders in the Wadden Sea regions.



### 3 Best practice examples

#### Best practices of the Wadden Sea

Within this chapter 12 different businesses with unique features in terms of sustainability will be presented. Among the 12 examples, different categories such as hotels, service providers, tour guides, nature parks, and various others have been selected. Each one demonstrates their original way of contributing to the tourism industry while being conscious about their own and their visitors' impact on flora and fauna. This wide variety of best practice examples aims to serve as a motivation and demonstration that sustainable practices can be adopted by those willing to take the necessary actions to do so. Below is an image showing the location for each of the 12 best practice examples from the United Kingdom in the west to The Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and Norway in the far north. The number shown on the image refers to the numbering of best practice examples in the chapter below.



© Google Earth 2022

## Overview of best practice examples

The following best practice examples were chosen from the participating countries:

### Germany

- Nakuk Country Hotel & Restaurant – Lower Saxony
- Nordseeheilbad Spiekeroog GmbH – Lower Saxony
- Wadden Sea Hiking Centre East Frisia – Lower Saxony
- Natourtalente – Schleswig-Holstein
- Paulsens Landhotel und Restaurant – Schleswig-Holstein
- Wattführergemeinschaft Dithmarscher Nordseeküste – Schleswig-Holstein



### Denmark

- Westbrew
- Birdwatching.dk



### The Netherlands

- PUUR Terschelling
- Vogel Informatiecentrum



### Norway

- Westerås Farm, Geiranger



### United Kingdom

- The Coastal Exploration Company





## 3.1 The Nakuk Country Hotel & Restaurant in Lower Saxony (Germany)

### General introduction to the company

The Nakuk Country Hotel & Restaurant is a wellness hotel located 22 km north of Wilhelmshaven in Lower Saxony and approx. 1 km from the North Sea coast. It has a summery and natural atmosphere as it is surrounded by various colourful vegetation and an impressive view on the rough marsh landscape and dyke system that separated them from the North Sea.

In relation to its surroundings, the hotel focusses on nature and finds a great balance in combining this with both culture and regional food. In addition, the more than 100-year-old renovated and modernised hotel is still presented in its traditional form of a brick building, providing the perfect setting in which our hectic lives, stress and the constant expectation of being available are to be forgotten.

This sustainable hotel and restaurant is suitable for digital detox as it purposely does not provide Wi-Fi. Visitors are able to experience the local cuisine which is proudly serviced with ingredients coming from the Wangerland area. The hotel also has its own fruit orchard, vegetable and herb garden which supports the “farm to table” concept.

### Further unique features of the country hotel and restaurant

- The hotel and restaurant focus on ecological and environmental protection
- The building materials used for the hotel and restaurant are natural and sustainably sourced
- The architectural style allows the buildings to blend into the environment
- The hotel uses only natural cleaning materials
- Sustainable water and energy consumption measures are implemented, and waste separation procedures are in place
- Waste production is avoided as much as possible, for instance, by purchasing in bulk and in reusable containers
- The hotel promotes the use of public transport as an alternative to using a car

**ATTENTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE PROTECTION OF THE ECOSYSTEM**

# HOLISTIC AND INNOVATIVE CONCEPT!



## Activities that are offered by the country hotel

The Nakuk Country Hotel & Restaurant offers classic activities such as mudflat walking, visiting the Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage site, spending some time in the nearby towns of Horumersiel and its surroundings, or on the East Frisian Islands.

They also have wellness facilities such as sauna and wellness treatments. Or you can go for a run or walk in the area, rent a bike or enjoy the recreational garden.

## What makes it different from other hotels?

It offers basic fasting and you can take the opportunity to help out in the garden or in the kitchen of the hotel as part of deceleration.

## Certification

The Nakuk Country Hotel & Restaurant is a partner of the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea UNESCO biosphere reserve.

© Nakuk Hotel (2022)



## PARTNER

Biosphärenregion  
Niedersächsisches  
Wattenmeer



## Visibility

### Hotel Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



### Instagram



### National Park Partner Website



“Three days of rest, relaxation, enjoyment for body and soul, fantastic.”

“Familiar faces and new faces, authentic and always gladly booked for a break, in a fast-moving world there is a reliable oasis that remains.”

## Address and contact details

Wiardergroden 22, 26434 Wangerland – Horumersiel, Germany

Email address: info@nakuk.de

Telephone: +49 4426 90440

OPTIMAL COMBINATION OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION,  
WELLNESS AND MINDFULNESS



## 3.2 Nordseeheilbad Spiekeroog GmbH (Lower Saxony, Germany)

### General introduction to the company

Nordseebad Spiekeroog GmbH is the leading tourism service provider on the island of Spiekeroog. The company operates and develops the touristic infrastructure and tourism facilities together with its 75 employees. Their shipping fleet ensures year-round safe transport of both, visitors and goods, to and from the island. The Destination Management Organisation (DMO) is 100% subsidised by the local municipality and responsible for specific facilities such as the tourist information centre, the event centre, the children's playhouse, the island's bath and dune spa, the spa centre, and the beach and campsite. As Spiekeroog is a car-free island and logistics are depending on the tides. These circumstances require the DMO to work closely with the island's council and local service providers. Together they carry the responsibility of providing visitors with the best experience possible as tourism is the only industry on the island of Spiekeroog.

### Further unique features

- The unique natural diversity of flora and fauna
- A wide range of tourism offers that comply with the principles of sustainability
- All stages of the customer journey are covered on one website
- Focus on environmental protection and sustainability all year round
- A range of initiatives to reduce carbon footprint and to protect the Wadden Sea habitat
- Various sustainability projects and initiatives, e.g. drinking fountains, climate-neutral printing, car sharing, beach trash boxes etc

**COMMITMENT TO THE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATURAL HABITAT OF SPIEKEROOG**

**A PLACE OF "LONGING AND ENERGY"**

**DEDICATED INFORMATION PAGE ON THE WEBSITE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

# A HOLISTIC APPROACH TOWARDS HEALTH TOURISM!



## Activities that they offer

- Thalasso Health Centre
- Creative courses and workshops, e.g. art seminars, silversmith courses, mindfulness training, woodcarving, tango as well as Blues Harp and guitar workshop
- Art exhibitions or visits to the Curious Shell Museum or the Island Museum
- Sports activities, e.g. sailing, kite surfing, yoga, horseback riding
- Various restaurants and cafes, and shopping opportunities
- Day trips as well as beach and nature experiences
- Hiking and riding trails, bird and seal watching, deep-sea fishing
- Wittbülten National Park House and various events

## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



### Instagram



### National Park Partner Website



## Certification

- Spiekeroog has been a certified Thalasso North Sea spa since 2015
- TourCert-Qualified award for sustainable management
- Myclimate neutral kino partnership
- Partner of the Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park

“One of the most beautiful North Sea islands in Germany, simply wonderful this peace and serenity. There are no cars or mopeds here, and that’s a good thing...”

“A very beautiful and quiet island. Ideal for families. Let your soul dangle and switch off from everyday life. This was my third visit and I love the island charm.”

©Nordseeheilbad Spiekeroog GmbH (2022)



### PARTNER



### Address and contact details

Noorderpad 25, 26474 Spiekeroog, Germany

Email address: [info@spiekeroog.de](mailto:info@spiekeroog.de)

Telephone: +49 4976 9193101

**FOCUS ON BOTH ECOLOGICAL  
AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY**



### 3.3 Wadden Sea Hiking Centre East Frisia (Lower Saxony, Germany)

#### General introduction to the company

Amongst the scene of National Park and Biosphere partner enterprises of the Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park, the Wadden Sea Hiking Centre East Frisia can be considered an outstanding example. The company offers Wadden Sea tours, operates as a tour and educational activity provider, is a network and incoming agency for accommodation and gastronomy, organises concerts, runs a shop and is involved as a creative advisor for sustainable action in the field of tourism. Moreover, it advocates for qualitative improvements and transboundary networking in the Wadden Sea World Heritage area and promotes and lives the spirit of the biosphere reserve as a model region for sustainable development. The company is involved in a wide range of activities that promote sustainability. As an incoming agency for World Heritage tours, waddensea.travel leads tours with a maximum of eight participants. These small groups stay overnight in the National Park or Biosphere partner establishments of the Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park. Hiking and other excursions into the Frisian landscape and culture are led by trained National Park guides. Regarding catering, only regional and eco-friendly partners are involved that are committed to living in and with the biosphere. Wherever possible, public transport is used for long journeys.

#### Further unique features

- Protection and preservation of the region by offering locally-sourced, high-quality products
- The company operates according to the principles of environmental sustainability
- A selection of unique experiences focusing on authenticity, sustainability, nature protection and preservation with in the Wadden Sea World Heritage area
- Health and well-being-themed tours are also included in the programme to highlight the connection between nature and health
- Advice and assesses tourist service providers and destinations
- Offers seminars and workshops in the areas of nature conservation, construction, interior design, gastronomy, staff qualification, tours, bundling of offers and social media.
- The company communicates the basics of sustainable action in all areas of its business and to its visitors and is thus a role model and motivator for other national park partners as well

**VERY ENGAGED WITH THE LOCAL  
COMMUNITY**



# VERY VERSATILE SERVICE PROVIDER!



## Activities that they offer

- Tidal flat hiking
- Amber cutting course: how to create a beautiful souvenir
- Photo safari at the Wadden Sea
- Astrophotography workshop at the North Sea
- Birdwatching, especially during the Migratory Bird Days

## Certification

- Partner of the Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park
- Partner of WWF

© Wadden Sea Hiking Centre (2022)



**PARTNER**



**VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY IN THE REGION**

## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



### Instagram



### National Park Partner Website



“Great, impressive mudflat hike with Joke. An experience of a special kind. You learn a lot about the Wadden Sea World Heritage, its environment and the animal inhabitants. It was a lot of fun!!”

“Great offers, very friendly, competent staff. Beautiful premises in the old Gulfenhof. We did the amber cutting course with our 7-year-old daughter, had a lot of fun and learned interesting things about amber.”

## Address and contact details

Am Harlesiel 20, 26409 Harlesiel, Germany  
Email address: [info@wattwanderzentrum-ostfriesland.de](mailto:info@wattwanderzentrum-ostfriesland.de)  
Telephone: +49 (0) 173 99 78 231



**SUSTAINABLE AND AUTHENTIC PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES ON OFFER**



### 3.4 Natourtalente (Schleswig-Holstein, Germany)

#### General introduction to the company

Natourtalente offers team-building events, coaching and motivation for businesses and companies, students and other groups in Hamburg and throughout Schleswig-Holstein. The Natourtalente outdoor workshops and seminars run as an activity day in natural environments (such as the beach in St. Peter Ording) and promote a sense of community, creativity and body awareness. During the seminars, people grow together and develop team spirit again through targeted actions, strengthen communication and sensitise their self-perception and the perception of others. The shared experience ensures peaceful coexistence and the positive experiences let the attendees grow above themselves. Natourtalente offers tailor-made programs adapted to the specific needs of groups and motivating their team members within the beautiful surroundings of the Wadden Sea Region of Schleswig-Holstein.

#### Further unique features

- Fostering communication, teamwork and a positive attitude towards each other through different types of outdoor activities such as the Beach Challenge, Frisian fire walks and KlooStockspringen, or Team Spirit in the Woods.
- Seminars are being offered in different languages such as German, English and Dutch.

**“Thank you to the whole team at NATOURTALENTE. You promised and delivered a wonderful team event.”**  
- GP Joule Reußenköge

**FOSTERING TEAM COHESION AND COOPERATION WITH OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

**COMBINING THE EXPERIENCE OF NATURE WITH EDUCATION!**

# A HOLISTIC AND INNOVATIVE CONCEPT!



## Activities that they offer

- Offer a large and varied selection of outdoor teambuilding events for companies, students and other groups
- Activities at the beach (such as jump and run parcours, sand art, slackline challenge or raft building)
- Traditional Frisian activities (such as cloot stick jumping or the Frisian fire walk)
- Team spirit in the woods (such as archery, nature observation and mindfulness or built a bridge)

## Certification

- Partner of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park

© Natourtalente 2022

## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



### Instagram



### National Park Partner Website



### Address and contact details

Altenwunge 9, 25813 Husum, Germany

Email: [info@natourtalente.de](mailto:info@natourtalente.de)

Telephone: +49 1520 5428202



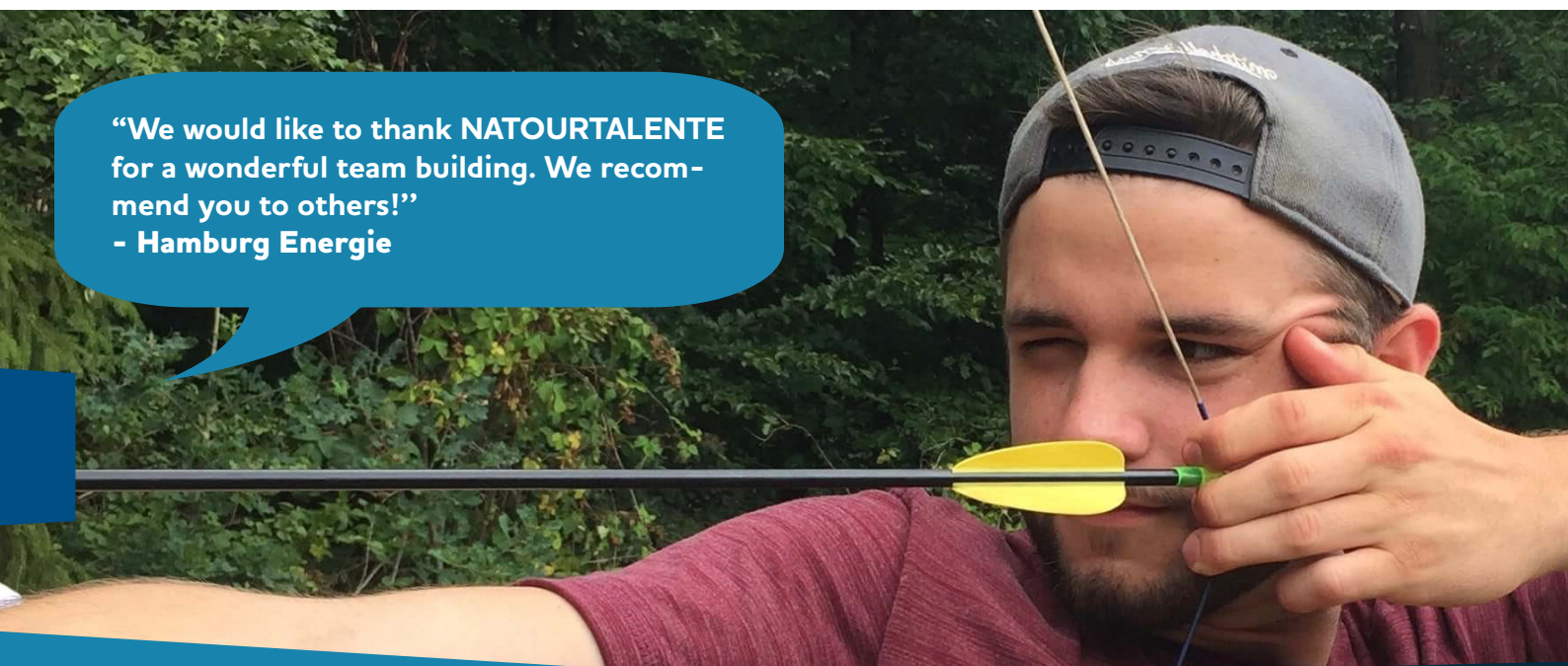
## PARTNER

Nationalpark  
Wattenmeer



“A tailor-made program and an amazing workshop! Thank you very much NATOURTALENTE.”  
- Solara Hamburg

“We would like to thank NATOURTALENTE for a wonderful team building. We recommend you to others!”  
- Hamburg Energie





## 3.5 Paulsens Landhotel and Restaurant (Schleswig-Holstein, Germany)

### General introduction to the company

Paulsen's is a North Frisian country hotel in Bohmstedt at the gates of the idyllic harbour town of Husum. It has a high demand for quality and zeitgeist that delights its guests with authenticity and very individual service. The name Paulsen has stood for warm hospitality since 1880. At Paulsen's Landhotel and Restaurant luxury is, most importantly, about a healthy lifestyle. The rural lifestyle is considered a source of inner peace, which is also represented in the love and care for its natural treasures. Documents, measures and evaluates the performance of the hotel and the impacts on the quality of life for all.

#### Address and contact details

Norderende 8, 25853 Bohmstedt, Germany  
Email: [info@paulsens-hotel.de](mailto:info@paulsens-hotel.de)  
Telephone: +49 4671 1560

### Further unique features

The company is keen to create and maintain a sustainable corporate culture via mutual appreciation, health and environmental training, coaching, building long-term employee loyalty, providing excellent working conditions, using environmentally friendly products and fostering sustainable behaviour.

The hotel follows the principles of the German Sustainability Code and applies the guidelines of the code by using regional products and paying attention to fair trade products and reusable materials (reusable bottles, biodegradable and reusable packaging etc.). The hotel also participates in the zero-waste movement.

The hotel offers excursions and activities that focus on regional culture and nature, promotes the use of non-motorized vehicles (e.g. bikes and e-bikes) which can be rented at the hotel.

The hotel is located in a "village of renewable energies."

**PROVISION OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING TO STAFF**

**COUNTRY KITCHEN WITH REGIONAL INGREDIENTS**

# THE HOTEL FOLLOWS THE GERMAN SUSTAINABILITY CODE!



## Activities that they offer

- Country kitchen with regional ingredients
- Space for various functions for up to 160 guests
- E-bike rental
- Tips for various excursions in the region, e.g. day trips to Halligen, Amrum - the island of freedom, to Föhr - the Frisian Caribbean, and the "Queen of the North Sea" - Sylt. On the mainland, the North Sea town of Husum as well as the Baltic Sea towns of Flensburg and Kiel (the Sailing City) are recommended.
- Guided tours can be booked, for example, to Bohmstedt - In the vicinity of Paulsen's, there are various golf courses as well as the Spa & Wellness facilities at Haubarg Arlewatt Hof

## Certification

- Partner of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park
- Partners of Too good to go

© Paulsen's Country Hotel 2022

*Paulsen's*  
Landhotel und Restaurant

PARTNER

Nationalpark  
Wattenmeer 

## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



### Instagram



### National Park Partner Website



"Super nice quiet hotel. Very dog-friendly, which is still very rare. The food is very tasty. Breakfast is very varied. Very nice friendly staff. If you want to have some peace and quiet, highly recommended."

"It was again a super nice evening, with excellent food in a pleasant atmosphere. The staff is 5 stars plus!!!! Always attentive and very friendly! We are already looking forward to the next time!"



**GUIDED TOURS CAN  
BE BOOKED!**



## 3.6 Wattführergemeinschaft Dithmarscher Nordseeküste (Schleswig-Holstein, Germany)

### General introduction to the company

The Wadden Sea Guide Association has existed since 1998 and is an association of experienced, local and certified National Park Wadden Sea Guides that offer expert and knowledgeable guided tours along the coast of Dithmarschen. The tidal flat guide association offers a variety of tidal flat tours in the Dithmarschen area, from the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Koog west of Marne to the Wesselburenerkoog northwest of Heide. The spectrum of tidal flat walks ranges from one-hour children's tidal flat walks to family tidal flat walks (2 hours) to giant tidal flat walks of 3-7 hours. They offer special tours for kindergartens, company trips, or family celebrations while covering various topics such as biology, geology, or local history. It is also possible to enjoy the culinary aspect of the region by enjoying a barbeque, kale, or "Mehlbeutel" dinner. In regards to sustainability, the association is a great example as they exist sustainably within the National Park and World Heritage site and aim to be diverse and inclusive, and communicate the UNESCO World Heritage and National Park status of the Wadden Sea to their guests in many different ways.

### Further unique features

- Various activities to learn about the protected cultural and natural landscape
- A community of expert guides focusing on preservation and creating awareness
- A wide range of tours tailored to the needs of various groups of visitors (families, children, groups, etc.)

**WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS DUE TO THE DIFFERENT PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUNDS OF ITS MEMBERS**

**THE WORLD HERITAGE AND NATIONAL PARK STATUS OF THE WADDEN SEA IS COMMUNICATED IN MANY WAYS TO GUESTS**

**PRESENT AT ALL OFFICIAL BEACHES ALONG THE COAST OF DITHMARSCHEN IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN**

# A LARGE AND VARIED SELECTION OF OFFERS!



## Activities that they offer

- Offer a large and varied selection of tidal flat tours with different topics and cater for families, children, school trips, company trips
- Tours along the Speicherkoog Dithmarschen
- "Small five tour" at Westerdeichstrich
- Shrimp and crab fishing tours
- Biological and geological tour

## Certification

- All guides are Partner of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park
- Cooperation with the National Park partner „Deichhaus“ in Nordermeldorf

© Austen 2022



## PARTNER

Nationalpark  
Wattenmeer



## Address and contact details

Isern Hinnerk 8, 25704 Meldorf, Germany

Email: [info@watterleben.de](mailto:info@watterleben.de)

Telephone: various (please check the website for details)

## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### National Park Partner Website



ALL GUIDES COMMUNICATE THE  
WORLD HERITAGE

"Informative, exciting and entertaining. Broad knowledge about the animal world and dynamics of the Wadden Sea, and we got even more information when asking questions. Top!"

"Really great tour, this time in the best Dithmarsch spring weather (stormy, wet and slightly cool :-). Highly recommended, especially for children, as not too long!!!"

FOCUS ON BOTH ECOLOGICAL  
AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY



## 3.7 Westbrew (Denmark)

### General introduction to the company

Inspired by the culture and nature of the Danish West Coast, the salt marshes and dunes, the harsh coastal climate with its tidal cycle and the wide-open space, Westbrew was established in 2019 as an organic brewery. It is located at Enghavegaard in Kjelst near Billum, right on the edge of the Wadden Sea. Beer is brewed from scratch and the brewery experiments with different brewing methods, ingredients, fermentation and maturing methods.

Several of the beer types use raw materials that come from the Wadden Sea region. Using these raw materials (such as sea buckthorn and juniper), unique tastes are created.

### Further unique features

- The brewery is located on the edge of the Wadden Sea National Park and UNESCO World Heritage site and is housed at Enghavegaard Osteri & Gaardbutik, which is a cheese dairy on the West Coast
- Several of the beer types are registered as Wadden Sea-certified products using regional ingredients
- Most of the raw materials for beer production come from the Wadden Sea region. Using non-industrial materials ensures the unique tastes and smells of the beers created.



**USES REGIONAL WADDEN SEA INGREDIENTS**



**BEER BARREL AGED STRONG ALE WAS AWARDED A GOLD MEDAL FOR ITS GOOD TASTE AND FLAVOUR.**

**MOST OF THE RAW MATERIALS COME FROM THE WADDEN SEA REGION!**



# UNIQUE TASTING BEERS!

## Activities that they offer

- Micro brewery tours and beer tasting
- Westbrew uses quality organic ingredients from the region e.g. locally grown malt barley, named "Wadden Sea Malt Barley", as well as flavours and aromas found in the West Coast nature such as Myrica gale, sea buckthorn, juniper and infant shoots from conifers
- The brewery is relatively low-tech, suitable for small-scale production and experimentation

## Certification

- Partner of the Danish Wadden Sea National Park
- In 2020 Westbrew participated in the Berliner International Beer Festival with Beer Barrel Aged Strong Ale and was awarded a gold medal for its good taste and flavour.

© WestBrew Denmark (2022)

## Address and contact details

Ho Bugtvej 17, 6850 Billum, Denmark  
Email address: [tommy.bagger@westbrew.dk](mailto:tommy.bagger@westbrew.dk)  
Telephone: +45 27 15 48 48

## Visibility

### Website



### Facebook



### National Park Products:



"Fantastic place. Tommy was spectacular and the beers we tried were exceptional. Tommy has a real passion for what he does. Highly recommended."



## 3.8 Birdwatching.dk (Denmark)

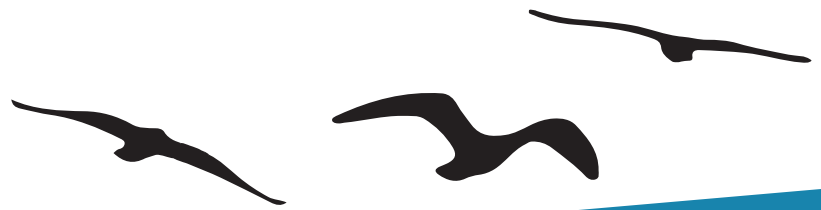


### General introduction to the company

Marit Beckmann is running Birdwatching.dk and is a qualified birdwatching guide and long-term birdwatching expert with many years of experience as a nature guide. Birdwatching.dk makes it easy and convenient for visitors to have a great experience with nature in nature. Marit works closely with both the Danish and Schleswig-Holstein National Park administrations and adapts her trips to suit her customers. The tailor-made tours range from family trips to tours with friends to company groups. Trips could include hikes, bird walks for the disabled, team-building activities and photo safaris. The offers are aimed at beginners as well as more experienced bird lovers.

### Further unique features

- A large variety of different walking tours suiting everyone and every level
- Inclusive and accessible for all
- Strong collaborations with the municipality of North Frisia
- All tours are accompanied by a bird expert and trained bird guide
- When guests are on a bird ride with Marit Beckmann driving from spot to spot, it happens silently in an electric car



**MANY EXPERIENCE AS A NATURE GUIDE!**

**AN EXPERT IN CREATING EASY AND  
CONVENIENT NATURE TOURS**

**GREAT WEBSITE FOR GUESTS FROM BOTH  
COUNTRIES, DENMARK AND GERMANY**

# DIVERSE OFFER IN TOURS, ACROSS BORDERS!

## Activities that they offer

- Tailor-made birdwatching tours
- Cultural and natural education tours
- Beginner and experienced birdwatching tours
- Tailor-made tours for families or groups
- Packages include lunch, guided bird walks, cultural education, photo safaris
- Barrier-free friendly birdwatching tours
- Offers guided birdwatching tour across the border

## Certification

- Partner of the Danish Wadden Sea National Park
- Partner of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park

© Birdwatching.dk (2022)



## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



### National Park Partner Website



“With Marit, you feel that you are in the centre of where it happens. You see and hear in a completely different way. She conveys knowledge incredibly engaged. And should you not before have been a dedicated bird watcher; you will be after a trip with Marit and Birdwatching.dk.”

“I have been on many bird trips, however, I have never been so close before and able to see even small details on the birds. In the past, it has been the guide who told us what bird species we saw on a long distance, and I trustfully noted the bird on my list.”

## Address and contact details

Sølstedgårdparken 3, 6240 Løgumkloster, Denmark  
Email address: [marit@birdwatching.dk](mailto:marit@birdwatching.dk)  
Telephone: +45 53 65 62 61





## 3.9 Puur Terschelling (The Netherlands)

### General introduction to the company

Puur Terschelling is a family-owned business that started in 2005 and is recognised as a Dutch equine tourism business. The company is located on the island of Terschelling, one of the Wadden Sea islands of the Netherlands. They use sustainable and educational tourism models to promote the heritage tourism of the Friesian horse, the Wadden Sea island archipelago, the World Heritage status and the specific cultural and natural history of Terschelling. The company has a great reputation for being sustainable, as it considers environmental aspects in everything they do, while at the same time offering activities in this area. Puur Terschelling takes pride in providing environmentally friendly camping sites, and educational and animal-friendly tours while providing culinary local specialities to their visitors.

### Further unique features

- Uses sustainability and educational models to promote the cultural, natural and individual heritage
- Provides overnight luxury camping in environmentally friendly and furnished dune tents
- Promotes sustainability by providing fully equipped sustainable tents that do not use gas
- Offers Dark Sky tours in areas with low light pollution
- Enhances visitor experiences by providing a culinary tasting of local products
- Activities are always about learning something about nature and wildlife
- Offers Dark sky tours to create awareness and lessons about the star constellations

**COMBINES ACTIVE EXCURSIONS TO TEACH ABOUT CULTURE, HERITAGE, NATURE AND WILDLIFE**

**LESSONS ABOUT STAR CONSTELLATIONS**

**OFFERS DARK SKY TOURS TO CREATE AWARENESS AND LESSONS ABOUT THE STAR CONSTELLATIONS**

# PROVIDES UNIQUE AND SUSTAINABLE ACCOMMODATIONS!



## Activities that they offer

- Horse riding with Frisian horses on equine tourism trails, full moon horseback riding
- Covered wagon rides looking for shooting stars
- Donkey walks for children
- Luxury camping in environmentally friendly and furnished dune tents
- Land Rover 4x4 rides
- Tidal flat walks, full moon, sunset or with oyster tasting
- Dark Sky tours

## Certification

- Waddengoud certificate
- Partner of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Netherlands
- Partner of Dark Sky Terschelling

© Puur Terschelling (2022)



## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



### Instagram



### Pinterest



### Video



*"A puur getaway experience! Stayed at their dune tents and it was beautiful and cosy, it has everything you need for a stay. The country feel of the island is truly refreshing and definitely a must-see experience!"*  
- Google Review, 2022

## Address and contact details

Oosterend 39, 8897 HX Terschelling  
Email address: [info@puur-terchelling.nl](mailto:info@puur-terchelling.nl)  
Telephone: +31 562 449 487

*"It was great! Thank you very much for the intense beautiful experiences, and memories that I will never forget. Thank you so much for choosing this luxury accommodation!"*  
- Trip advisor review, 2021



## 3.10 Vogelinformatiecentrum (The Netherlands)

### General introduction to the company

The Bird Information Centre (or Vogelinformatiecentrum in Dutch) was established in 2008 and is a known place for bird- and nature-loving people from all over the country and abroad. The centre aims on showing people the beauty that nature has to offer and provides answers and advice on all kinds of questions related to nature and birdwatching on the island of Texel. It provides guided birdwatching tours every week, showing different bird species on the island while donating a part of its revenue back to nature by creating birdwatching spots and breeding spots. Moreover, their revenue partially funds a co-created foundation that makes sure specific local areas are protected and well-maintained while offering birdwatching experiences for novices and professionals, alongside a shop providing high-quality birdwatching gear, and other merchandise.

### Further unique features

- Combines being a local enterprise and being actively involved in giving back to nature to support and protect local nature and bird wildlife
- Has strong collaborations with bird-nest and food producers
- High expertise and knowledge regarding birdwatching equipment such as binoculars which enables them to attract and consult all levels of birdwatching enthusiasts
- Offers a variety of tours that are attractive to both, less experienced visitors and birdwatching lovers

**A KNOWN PLACE FOR BIRD AND NATURE LOVERS TO FIND PROFESSIONAL BIRDING GEAR, MOVIES, MERCHANDISE AND GUIDED TOURS**

**WEEKLY BIRDWATCHING TOURS**

**GIVING BACK TO NATURE BY ESTABLISHING A FOUNDATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS' RESTING AND NESTING PLACES**

# GUIDED BIRDWATCHING TOURS EVERY WEEK!



## Activities that they offer

- A variety of different guided birdwatching tours are organized every week
- Birdwatching tours range from bird short to longer recognition tours, overview excursions, private tours, school trips to themed tours
- Advice on birdwatching equipment, in particular binoculars and telescopes, that can also be rented for a tour, as well as repair and cleaning services

## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



### Instagram



## Co-operations

- Providing and creating material for bird-specific videos and movies
- Close cooperation, support and establishment of a foundation for the protection of birds
- Close cooperation with producers of bird-nest boxes and food
- Close cooperation with SOVON and waarneming.nl, two large organizations that collect data on bird sightings for scientific purposes

**EQUIPMENT ADVICE THAT CAN BE RENTED FOR TOURS!**



### Address and contact details

Kikkertstraat 42, 1795 AE,  
Cocksdorp, Texel, The Netherlands  
Email address: info@natuurdigitaal.nl  
Telephone: +31 222 316249

© Vogelinformatiecentrum Texel (2022)

“Rarely have I seen so many high-quality optics at one dealer. All the glasses from Swarovski, Zeiss, Leica etc. are in the showroom. Great advice and very friendly. In addition, perfect service is offered here in terms of Swarovski optics. Highly recommended!”



RS!

NDATION



### 3.11 Westerås farm (Norway)

#### General introduction to the company

Westerås is an idyllic farmyard, managed by the same family for over 400 years, dating back to before 1600. It is a family-owned and managed enterprise combining a traditional working farm with a tourist business. The family takes pride in their role of protecting and preserving the natural landscape and their cultural heritage. Located in Geiranger village, the farm provides stunning views across the fjord and mountains. The main focus of the farm is to preserve biological diversity in their fields through old-fashioned farming techniques. While at the same time, the farm welcomes tourists by providing cabins for overnight stays and a restaurant using local and organic ingredients.

#### Further unique features

- Stunning views from the viewing platform at the restaurant
- Traditional mountainside sheep, goat and lama farm
- High-end restaurant with traditional Norwegian food from local and regional sources
- Combines tourism and farming for the preservation of biological diversity

**PRIZE-WINNING PRESERVATION AND CONVEYANCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE**

**NUMBER ONE TRIPADVISOR RESTAURANT WITHIN THE LOCAL AREA**



# AMAZING VIEW AND GREAT RESTAURANT!

## Activities that they offer

- Cabins for overnight stays
- Restaurant services
- Hiking opportunities within the area

## Certification

- Eco-lighthouse certified (Miljofyrtarn ecolabel)
- Green Fjord environmental network membership
- Received cultural landscape award in 2015 for their preservation and conveyance of the cultural landscape
- The restaurant holds the second place on TripAdvisor for Geiranger and fifth for Møre og Romsdal

## Visibility

### Website



### Youtube



### Facebook



**AMAZING FOOD AND A MUST-VISIT,  
VERY WARM WELCOME**

© Vesterås gard



## Address and contact details

Geirangervegen 320, Geiranger, Norway  
Email address: iwester@online.no  
Telephone: +47 92649537

“The best salmon wrap EVER! Find it in their restaurant that has a deck overlooking the mountain on one side and the Geiger town proper and the fjord on the other. The waffles with brown cheese are not bad either - SUPER GOOD, as a matter of fact! The Staff was friendly. Do I need to say more?!?”





## 3.12 The Coastal Exploration Company (United Kingdom)

### General introduction to the company

The Coastal Exploration Company (CEC) provides unique sail-powered boat tours into some of North Norfolk Coast's most beautiful and pristine areas. Each of the clinker-built Norfolk fishing boats has remained in and around Norfolk's waters since they were built as far back as 1951. Specifically designed and honed for hundreds of years by generations of fishermen for the unique conditions of the North Sea and along the wild north Norfolk coast, they were refurbished to meet the safety standards of the Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA). They also support The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership and similar organisations through an annual 5% contribution of their profits and by implementing the best environmental and wildlife practices.

### Further unique features

- Only use traditional north Norfolk fishing boats
- Serve the finest locally sourced food on their tours
- Explores the hidden gems along the north Norfolk coasts

**FINANCIALLY SUPPORTS THE WASH AND NORTH NORFOLK MARINE PARTNERSHIP WITH 5% OF ANNUAL PROFITS AND BY IMPLEMENTING THE BEST ENVIRONMENTAL WILDLIFE PRACTICES**

**PROVIDES REGIONAL FOOD DURING ITS TOURS**

# A LARGE NUMBER OF DIFFERENT SAILING TRIPS!

## Activities that they offer

- Sail-powered boat tours in traditional North Norfolk fishing boats
- Salt marsh sail tours and tours overnight, wild swim and coastal foraging tours, wildlife sails
- Wellness sailing with a focus on connecting to nature
- Traditional sea school to learn about the tides, navigation, knots and more
- Delivering cargo around the coast from Kings Lynn to Southwold

## Visibility

### Website



### Video



### Facebook



### Instagram



## Partnerships

- CEC has partnerships with Yarmouth Oilskins, Carrier Company, Charlie Hodson & Co - Cheese Room with Deli, Candis Chutney, Sandringham Apple Juice, Jarrolds, Fosdyke Yacht Haven, North Sea Sails

© The Coastal Exploration Company (2022)

## Address and contact details

24-25 Castle Meadow, Norwich, NR1 3DH  
Email address: [explore@coastalexplorationcompany.co.uk](mailto:explore@coastalexplorationcompany.co.uk)  
Telephone: +44 7983 642 569

“CEC is a wonderful adventure company, offering tailored tours from a local half day to something more adventurous. The natural peace of the salt marsh is enhanced by gently gliding along under sail or sculling through the creeks. Great local food & interesting & knowledgeable skippers complete the trip. Recommended.”



COASTAL  
EXPLORATION  
CO.

recharge on nature



## 4 Conclusion

This brochure provides insights into the experiences and wishes of guests while visiting the Wadden Sea region during a holiday or day trip. By presenting best practice examples, it also shows the work of dedicated small and medium-sized enterprises and their unique ways to practice sustainability in the North Sea Region, with a particular focus on the Wadden Sea area.

The brochure highlights how the uniqueness of nature inspires some people to do holidays in the region and others to start sustainable businesses there. The entrepreneurs integrate the protection of the local flora and fauna into their daily lives, thus also enabling tourists to experience and learn more about the Wadden Sea. This interaction between guests and businesses makes it clear that these businesses play an essential role in fulfilling guests' wishes and so contribute to raising awareness of sustainability.

Overall, this first transnational guest survey undertaken in all three countries of the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage Site is an important step in documenting the current value of the Wadden Sea for sustainable tourism. In all three countries (Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands), data on the guest structure, guest behaviour and the added value of sustainable tourism were collected in parallel. This not only provides a first picture of the guests and their holiday experience but also enables a – though limited – comparison between the three countries.

The overarching enthusiasm for the experience of unspoiled nature and the desire to protect it is just one of the encouraging results of the survey. However, the results also show possibilities for improvement and so can help to adapt existing measures or develop new ones. In addition, this survey provides the basis for updating the data in the future and thus enables the monitoring of trends and changes over a longer period. To achieve this, the guest survey should be conducted again at regular intervals using a uniform method to allow direct comparison of results. Regular surveys are the only way to document the results of the joint efforts of the Wadden Sea countries to promote and develop sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea UNESCO World Heritage Site in the long term and to further stimulate the joint work for a sustainable future.

## Photo credits

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In cooperation with the PROWAD LINK partners



**The Interreg VB project PROWAD LINK aims to unlock the potential of natural areas as a driver for jobs and sustainable development.**

**Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) are approached to develop nature as a brand to create benefits for both, SMEs and the environment.**

**15 project partners in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom working with interested SMEs will use the “nature-business-benefit-cycle” concept to develop new, sustainable products and offers in the pilot regions of the Wadden Sea (DK, D, NL), Geiranger Fjord (NO), Wash & North Norfolk Coast (UK).**

**The 4-year project is co-funded by and carried out in the framework of the Interreg North Sea Region Programme under the Programme Priority 1 “Thinking Growth”.**

**The programme is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) of the European Union.**

***[www.northsearegion.eu/prowad-link](http://www.northsearegion.eu/prowad-link)***