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Integrated
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tourism on a
new level
Rheinland-Pfalz tourism strategy 2025

A FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW

Mid-2016, dwif-consulting GmbH was commissioned by the Ministry of Economics, Transport, Agriculture and Viniculture of Rheinland-Pfalz to review the Rheinland-Pfalz 2015 tourism strategy. More than 200 participants expressed their opinions online or in interviews by phone. They did not shun making comparisons with other destinations and project M was also tasked to provide checks on the numbers/data/facts covering tourism development over the last ten years.

STABLE GROWTH IN THE STATE, BUT LITTLE MOMENTUM IN THE FEDERAL STATE RANKINGS

Tourism is relatively more important to Rheinland-Pfalz than it is for many other states. Tourism in the state has continued to develop positively over the past ten years when measured by the number of overnight stays. But there was a lack of momentum in the federal comparisons. Rheinland-Pfalz has lost market share in recent years. The number of accommodation establishments is declining and smaller companies, especially those located in small communities, often leave the market in disproportionate numbers.

Camping tourism accounted for one third of the growth in overnight stays in Rheinland-Pfalz. The added value here is comparatively low due to the spending behaviour of the visitors.

The cities generated another third of the growth in overnight stays in Rheinland-Pfalz. With comparatively few large cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants, Rheinland-Pfalz’s benefit from the general boom in city tourism was below average.

Incoming tourism, which is important for Rheinland-Pfalz, only realised below-average growth rates in the most important European markets as well as in the emerging markets in China and the Arab Gulf states.

Day-trip tourism is also of great importance. Most of the day visitors come from Rheinland-Pfalz. The below-average growth momentum of tourism in Rheinland-Pfalz is a challenge that the state is facing both consciously and actively with its new tourism strategy.

TIME FOR NEW INCENTIVES AND CHANGES

With around 200 million residence days and a gross turnover of over 7 billion euros, tourism counts as one of the most important sectors in Rheinland-Pfalz. The turnover from day-trip and overnight tourism directly benefits the hospitality industry, the retail trade, leisure and cultural facilities, wineries, transport companies and many other sectors. Tourism secures around 150,000 jobs that cannot be exported.

Tourism also is proving to be both a hard and soft location factor in the competition for visitors, residents, employees and companies in the cities and rural areas of Rheinland-Pfalz. It is often of structural importance in rural areas. Tourism in the state needs new, strong incentives and real change in order to move forward and remain competitive in the long term. Further development of the 2015 tourism strategy is not enough. In fact, a strategic refocus on the 2025 target year is indicated.
Strengths
- Growth sector
- Growth sector with a long tradition of tourism
- Individual hosting culture
- Strong family businesses
- Comparatively high proportion of foreign visitors
- Outstanding range of wine culture and culinary art
- High density of cultural treasures
- Traditional, perceptible regionality
- Unique natural and cultural landscapes
- Typical way of life and corresponding awareness of life
- Top-quality range of hiking and cycling trails
- Huge commitment to open tourism as well as service quality

Challenges
- low growth momentum as compared to the rest of Germany
- small-sized enterprises, shortage of skilled workers, investment backlog and structural change in the hospitality industry
- Digitalisation in tourism (digital products, business models, marketing, qualifications)
- insufficient market penetration
- increase the proportion of high value-added visitors
- poor tourism awareness
- low value-added orientation of tourism offers
- small-scale organisational structures
- high weather and seasonality dependence
- global trends such as demographic changes and sustainability
- poor networking of regional players
OPEN DIALOGUE
The Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy opens up the opportunity to reinvent the state as a tourist destination. Far-reaching changes throughout the state’s entire tourism system are needed. This can only be realised together!
The tourism strategy was created from January 2017 to May 2018 by a steering group of tourism partners in Rheinland-Pfalz. It was externally moderated and technically advised by Project M. The interim results were evaluated in close coordination with disseminators and committees. They were also discussed with a broad specialist audience during two workshops and on Tourism Day 2017. The development of the tourism strategy was also accompanied by the state parliament’s committee of enquiry into the “Economic and location factors applicable to tourism in Rheinland-Pfalz” from April 2017.

FOCUSING
The new tourism strategy is based on previous successes, but it also focuses on long-term growth incentives and interdepartmental cooperation.
The cornerstones of the new tourism strategy will be targeted support of the hospitality industry and the initial development of a Rheinland-Pfalz brand.
Business sectors will be introduced as a superordinate concept and marketing instrument to form the basis for a clear profile.
Increasing the added value will be at the forefront of all tourism activities.

TARGETED COOPERATION
Targeted cooperation between tourism and related industries and sectors such as wine and culture, trade, crafts and services, agriculture and forestry, architecture and building culture, health, nature conservation and landscape experience, regional and municipal development as well as mobility and transport will be sought.
The citizens of Rheinland-Pfalz are also of great importance as visitors and they are to be won over as ambassadors for tourism.

FUNDAMENTAL OPTIMISATION
Fundamental optimisation of tourism structures and a clear division of tasks at all levels, pooling of resources and digital transformation are prerequisites for future marketing success.
Funding will focus on incentive investments and key infrastructures and this should trigger private and public commitments.

DYNAMICS AND COOPERATION AS THE SUCCESS FACTORS
The Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy 2025 is designed as a dynamic strategy. It sets itself high aims that will be regularly reviewed and adapted as necessary.
The new tourism strategy aims to strengthen and develop tourism in the state with a view to the future and to motivate change. It is the players in the tourism industry, who, together with the associated industries and sectors, can bring this project to life and lead it to success. I wish: to be inspired and open to cooperation, new ideas and ways!
JOINT TOURISM STRATEGY

The Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy 2025 is the new collective basis for the development of tourism in Rheinland-Pfalz. It is aimed at all of the players in the tourism industry as well as the related industries and sectors.

The tourism partners in Rheinland-Pfalz will bring the new tourism strategy to life: They will consistently focus their activities on the implementation and promote the participation of all players in the tourism industry as well as the associated industries and sectors.

TOURISM PARTNERS IN RHEINLAND-PFALZ

The Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy was developed in partnership with IHK-Arbeitsgemeinschaft Rheinland-Pfalz, dehoga Rheinland-Pfalz e.V., Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH and Tourismus- und Heilbäderverband Rheinland-Pfalz e.V., under the leadership of the Ministry of Economics, Transport, Agriculture and Viniculture of Rheinland-Pfalz.

The partners have formed a steering group in which representatives from the tourism regions and the local umbrella organisations were also involved in an advisory capacity.
The tourism strategy is clearly structured into objectives, strategic paths, strategy projects and implementation management. Firstly, ambitious objectives have been defined for all players in the tourism industry. The Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy envisages five strategic paths that will influence and reinforce each other so that these objectives can be realised.

The strategic paths can only be implemented through strategy projects. They all have task, time and resource plans as well as a participation concept. The implementation management will coordinate the realisation of the tourism strategy. The implementation progress of the strategic paths and strategy projects will be continuously monitored and the tourism strategy will be adapted whenever necessary.

WORKING TOGETHER IN RHEINLAND-PFALZ

The partners in Rheinland-Pfalz tourism have agreed on the method of collective impact, i.e. “working together”. In accordance with the understanding of the collective impact, complex tasks can be successfully implemented, especially through the cooperation of the relevant players. The tourism partners in Rheinland-Pfalz will be jointly responsible for the creation and implementation of the Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy.

COOPERATION AS A FUTURE TASK

The tourism partners in Rheinland-Pfalz will strive for targeted cooperation within tourism as well as with related industries and sectors, especially wine and culture, trade, crafts and services, agriculture and forestry, architecture and building culture, health, nature conservation and landscape experience, regional and municipal development as well as mobility and transport in order to further increase added value in tourism.

Other players will be invited to help shape the implementation of the new tourism strategy through their own ideas.

Understanding tourism on a new level

Goals

Strategic path

Strategy project

Implementation management

Functional structuring of the Rheinland-Pfalz Tourism strategy 2025

VALUE ADDED ACROSS SECTORS

Tourism has positive effects in many sectors and areas of life. It has a cross-sectoral function. The backbone of tourism is the hospitality industry. The retail trade, service providers, manufacturers of regional products or craft enterprises all earn directly and indirectly from tourism. There is hardly an economic sector that does not benefit from tourism. It supports the regional added value chains. The new tourism strategy brings tourism’s comprehensive benefits and added value into the focus on tourism thinking and action.
IMPORTANCE OF DOMESTIC DEMAND

dwif determined that the state benefited from high domestic demand in 2016. Day-trip tourism accounted for almost two thirds of gross turnover, whereas overnight tourism accounted for just one third. 50 to 60 percent of day trips were made by citizens of Rheinland-Pfalz.

In the future the new tourism strategy will be consistently geared to the needs of visitors and this should increase the domestic demand potential.

TOURISM ECONOMIC AND LOCATION FACTORS

The more attractive a region is regarding tourists, the higher its leisure and recreational value will be for its inhabitants. The shopping and supply options are often better as well. This creates quality of life and has a positive effect on the choice of location for companies and their recruitment of labour. Municipalities and citizens will benefit from tax revenues and the increase in the quality of locations and supplies. Tourism can provide the impetus for local and regional developments, especially in rural areas.

If tourism, with its functions as a source of revenue for accommodation, gastronomy, the retail trade and the service sector, as a job engine, a strengthening factor for infrastructure and location quality and as an identification factor for the citizens of Rheinland-Pfalz, is perceived and valued and if its potential is specifically further developed, then it can be a driving force for economic development, prosperity and quality of life in the state. Many players in the tourism industry describe tourism as a leading economy.
1. Object of the tourism strategy Rheinland-Pfalz 2025

2. Strategic path 1: “Making Rheinland-Pfalz a brand”

2.2 Strategic path 2: “Developing family businesses into becoming the strong backbone of the tourism sector”

2.3 Strategic path 3: “Creating effective economic incentives”

2.4 Strategic path 4: “Bundling structures and processes together logically”

2.5 Strategic path 5: “Focusing financial resources on incentive investments”
The outstanding objective of the Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy is to increase the added value from tourism.

Spending per visitor is comparatively low in Rheinland-Pfalz. Spending by visitors is presently restricted in existing visitor structures and tourist offers. The new tourism strategy will change towards more added-value visitors and a qualitative adaptation of the offers in order to increase added value. The focus will be on overnight tourism, as this is where the greatest added value per visitor will be created. Additional overnight visitors should also be gained outside the peak season.

Targeted marketing will play an important role here. The new tourism strategy will make provisions for branding in addition to profiling the tourism offer.

The importance of tourism as an economic and location factor is still too little known to the decision-makers and the population. Tourism shapes the state’s identity. The Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy will increase awareness of the holistic benefits of tourism. The tourism industry’s image and the inhabitant’s quality of life will be improved. The citizens of Rheinland-Pfalz should become “ambassadors”. Health, nature conservation and landscape experience, regional and municipal development as well as mobility and transport is to be intensified.

The Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy aims to optimise the fulfilment of tasks and organisational structures in order to exploit previously untapped potential. Value-added cooperation between cities and their surrounding areas as well as tourism with related industries and sectors such as wine and culture, trade, crafts and services, agriculture and forestry, architecture and building culture, Tourism is committed to sustainable development. The tourist trade is balanced and in harmony with economic, ecological and social aspects. Open tourism is the basis for securing tourism potential.

With the new tourism strategy, tourism in the state should overcome the below-average growth momentum and catch up with the development of other comparable states. The five objectives of the Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy will be further specified into five strategic paths and implemented as part of eight strategic projects. The implementation management will make it possible to measure the degree to which the objectives of the Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy have been realised.

The intended impact of the strategy will become transparent and verifiable through the monitoring and controlling processes. The need to adapt the tourism strategy will be regularly assessed and integrated into the ongoing development processes.
The objectives of the Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy are exemplified by five strategic paths. They are closely linked in terms of content and they mutually contribute to each other. The specific steps for each strategic path indicate their implementation up to the 2025 time horizon.

2.1

**STRATEGIC PATH 1: “MAKING RHEINLAND-PFALZ A BRAND”**

Digitalisation has led to a considerable increase in the density of information. Today a clear message that has been reduced to its essentials and can be grasped in the shortest possible time is needed in order for it to be noticed in the competition for tourists. Brands are becoming increasingly important. They convey central messages that are both pointed and emotional in a concise and understandable way.

Tourism is to be established as an important sector in the Rheinland-Pfalz business location brand, which will represent the attractiveness and quality of the location for companies, investors and visitors alike. The objective is to make the state and its regions effectively visible. The brand will also be an identification point for the citizens of Rheinland-Pfalz.

A brand profile for Rheinland-Pfalz should enable us to achieve a unique position, competence and market leadership.

In the tourism sector, the brand must convey the unique, unmistakable qualities of the Rheinland-Pfalz tourist region. This includes wine and culture as well as the varied natural and cultural landscape experiences. The distinctive identity and regionality, the typical cuisine and regional products as well as the building culture are further components of the brand building process. Cosmopolitanism and hospitality as well as enjoyment and joie de vivre are success factors in Rheinland-Pfalz tourism. This typical way of life can shape the emotional language of the brand.

The brand development should incorporate any existing brands. An interconnected and coordinated system of mutually supportive brands can be created through this link. The brand should also be capable of being incorporated into other content in the future.
STRATEGIC PATH 2:
“DEVELOPING FAMILY BUSINESSES INTO BECOMING THE STRONG BACKBONE OF THE TOURISM SECTOR”

The quality of the tourism industry in Rheinland-Pfalz is to be maintained, systematically strengthened and used for brand management and market development. Above all, family businesses that are identity beacons offer opportunities for branding, marketing, targeted development and storytelling.

Tourism policy framework conditions will be reviewed and entrepreneurial competence will be systematically expanded. It is essential that we increase the attractiveness of the sector and the companies as employers in order to be able to turn companies into important brand ambassadors for the state and the business location brand.

The host landscape in Rheinland-Pfalz is extremely diverse. All of the providers have a place here.

In particular, the strong family businesses will make outstanding ambassadors. They embody the tourism profile both internally and externally, are sought-after employers and they are often pioneers of innovative developments as well. Visitors and locals particularly appreciate the familiar atmosphere with an honest host culture, the fresh and delicious cuisine as well as the distinct service mentality and service quality.

Such family businesses are represented in all sectors of the tourism added value chain, in the hospitality industry as well as in agriculture and wine, trade and crafts, the transport industry and in culture and leisure as well.

The tourism industry in Rheinland-Pfalz is confronted by many challenges. Digitalisation is demanding companies to acquire new skills. The recruitment and retention of skilled and unskilled labour, bureaucratic hurdles and company succession are further challenges, especially for small and medium-sized companies.

STEP 1: Creating provider networks of strong family businesses, networked to form a community of values (e.g. cooperation, exchanges, innovation and succession)

STEP 2: Strengthening entrepreneurial competences, e.g. through coordinated advisory and further training offers, qualification and acquisition of competence in the digitalisation sector, updating of specific funding opportunities, reviewing framework conditions.

STEP 3: Developing other companies into strong family businesses and incorporating them in provider networks

STEP 4: Initiating an industry-wide tourism campaign in Rheinland-Pfalz through the intensive incorporation of strong family businesses in external marketing campaigns.
**STRATEGIC PATH 3:**

**STEP 1:** Development of business sectors as well as measures and action plans

**STEP 2:** Linking target groups and source market strategy for national and international market cultivation with the development of the business sectors

**STEP 3:** Implementation of target group-oriented measures in the business sectors as a joint process between tourism and related industries and sectors

Creating effective economic incentives

Tourists look for special experiences, authentic enjoyment and places to stay with a feel-good ambience. They are interested in tourist highlights as well as small encounters, such as typical regional culinary specialities. Tourism activities must focus on the visitor’s needs. Customised offers can be developed and effective economic incentives triggered by strengthening cooperation both within the tourism industry and with related industries and sectors. Consistent visitor orientation and the strengthening of tourism awareness as well as new networks will be the starting points for the development of value-added offers, which will also fill the Rheinland-Pfalz brand with life. Business sectors must be defined for this, their potential clarified and developed in a targeted manner. Profiled primary products must be created in the business sectors that will serve as role models and exhibit charisma. Networks within tourism and related industries and sectors will play an important role in the development of the business sectors. Thematic target group marketing will be incorporated in a business development. The Rheinland-Pfalz target group process will become an important basis for this. Profiled business sectors will offer cities and regions as well as the hosts a variety of market development opportunities. The objective is to address added value visitors, especially international ones, and to develop season-expanding products.

From today’s perspective, the following business sectors are especially suitable as incentive generators for promising innovations in Rheinland-Pfalz tourism:

**The enjoyment culture:** Culinary delights such as wine and other regional products, building culture, ambience and lifestyle for high-quality tourism, quality of life, health and wellness

**Cultural enjoyment:** Attractiveness of the cultural richness of Rheinland-Pfalz, experiencing the identity and regionality, cultural journeys with wine and other culinary delights as well as accommodation with an individual character

**Enjoying nature:** Nature and landscapes as a sector that can be experienced for its tourism and leisure quality, outdoor activities such as hiking, cycling, e-biking, water sports in combination with enjoyment experiences

**Conference enjoyment:** Enjoyable days in cities and in the countryside with top-quality supporting and follow-up programmes, seminars, incentive trips with wine and culinary delights, regional conference venues and Rheinland-Pfalz accommodation already has a variety of starting points in sectors such as wine and culinary delights as well as outdoor activities in natural and cultural landscapes. This also applies to local and regionally-specific conference facilities in cities and rural areas, e.g. at wineries or vineyards, in historical surroundings or in the countryside. The potential exists – it must be pooled and further developed to create added value.
STEP 1: Defining the requirements and tasks of the tourist levels as well as the resource facilities needed.

STEP 2: Organisational analysis of tourism structures at all tourism levels and identification of any changes that are needed, implementation of monitoring and controlling systems.

STEP 3: Align the marketing, promotion and financing mechanisms with the implementation of the change processes.

STEP 4: Consistent and permanent task and structure optimisations.

2.4 STRATEGIC PATH 4: “BUNDLING STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES TOGETHER LOGICALLY”

The tourism structures in Rheinland-Pfalz have clearly proved to be too small when compared to the rest of Germany. The majority of tourism organisations are not sufficiently capable to be successfully noticed on the market. Increasing cost and financing pressure for market development on the one hand, and tight restrictions on revenue generation and the financing of tourism by municipalities on the other, pose major challenges to tourism organisations in Rheinland-Pfalz.

The tourism system in Rheinland-Pfalz must be reorganised against the background of digital cooperation and digital data management requirements. The greatest possible market impact and more growth will be realised in the future through the efficient use of resources.

Structures and processes are to be bundled, duplicate structures dismantled and resource requirements adapted in order to optimise tourism tasks and their top-quality fulfilment. This requires a clear task demarcation, larger tourist units and new, flexible cooperation within tourism and with related industries and sectors. Marketing, promotion and financing mechanisms must be adapted accordingly.
Incentive investments must either be significant throughout the state or demonstrably trigger local or regional added value effects. They must create incentives for subsequent investments or the relocation of hosts. Investments in key infrastructures will have a profile-building effect, support the business sectors as well as the brand and create benefits for as many companies as possible.

Planning, decisions and promotions should be focused on incentive investments. Intercommunal cooperation and cross-sectoral actions should also be promoted. The focus will be on tourism infrastructures as a source of impetus for tourism development, market success and location binding. The visitors will expect quality and attractive offers. Accompanying digital marketing, digital business processes as well as digital products and services are becoming increasingly important. The effectiveness of the focus on incentive investments will be evaluated.

Not every tourist infrastructure is of equal importance. Public and private funds will be primarily channelled into key tourist infrastructures. Systematic location management for private-sector investments will supplement Strategic path 5.
IMPLEMENTATION

1. Strategy project
2. Implementation management
The objectives and the strategic paths in the Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy will be implemented by the strategy projects.

The objectives, content and tasks are shown in the strategy projects. A project management coordinator has been appointed. Strategy projects include costs, financing and time planning. They are clearly structured and their effects can be measured and successes made visible.

Value creation orientation and cooperation are fundamental components of strategy projects. Through cooperation within tourism and with related industries and sectors such as wine and culture, commerce, crafts and services, agriculture and forestry, architecture and building culture, health, nature conservation and landscape experience, regional and local development. Incentives for added value developments in tourism as well as mobility and transport are to be created.

Previously untapped potential can be exploited through increased cooperation between cities and their surrounding regions.

Implementation of the Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy will start with eight strategy projects. These will be adapted whenever necessary.

The new tourism strategy is open to further strategy projects with dynamic further development.
Strategy project 1 covers the development of the Rheinland-Pfalz business location brand. Brand architecture and brand content must be developed and brand management must be coordinated with the sectors that are involved. A corporate design will be created for the brand based on this. The new brand will be introduced in external and internal marketing afterwards.

Strategy project 2 will focus on developing strong family businesses in Rheinland-Pfalz. These businesses will be made visible as tourism brand ambassadors. A network of providers will be established to create cross-sectoral cooperation and to develop role models with special entrepreneurial skills. The networks will be continuously expanded with other qualified companies.

The possible new "enjoyment culture", "cultural enjoyment", "conference enjoyment" and "enjoying nature" business sectors will be examined in Strategy project 3 with regard to their development potential. The marketing and product strategies will be planned afterwards. The new business sectors will form the basis for the state's tourism marketing in the future.

Strategy project 4 will include an analysis of the tasks, cooperation structures and organisation used in the three-level tourism system. The future division of tasks, the customising of the organisational units as well as personnel and financial resources will be presented in a concept covering the optimisation of structures and processes. Digital data management and digital market development will be the key parameters.

The objective in Strategy project 5 is to stimulate private follow-up investments through public investments and to trigger the creation of added value. The current investment and promotion practices will be analysed. The criteria for future incentive investments will be defined and a concept for key tourism infrastructures will be developed from this. The promotions will be orientated to the results and supported by active location management afterwards.

A monitoring system based on the analysis of the economic structure of the hospitality industry will also be introduced. The review of the legal conditions applicable to the hospitality industry, the optimisation of existing promotional approaches and the establishment of a new specific promotional programme are all components of Strategy project 6. A state-wide counselling and qualification programme will also be developed.

Strategy project 7 will involve an internal information campaign to improve the perception of tourism as an important industry in Rheinland-Pfalz. This will be used to raise awareness of the cross-sectional function of tourism and to strengthen tourism awareness.

Strategy project 8 will re-orientate tourism marketing within the state. An impact analysis of our current marketing will be undertaken initially. Interfaces to other sectors will be prepared at state level. A strategic marketing plan will be developed based on them. The marketing activities will be implemented in a state marketing campaign that will run for several years.
The Rheinland-Pfalz 2025 tourism strategy will only be successful if it is widely accepted and implemented with conviction and consistency. This will require cooperation between players in the tourism industry and related industries and sectors such as wine and culture, trade, crafts and services, agriculture and forestry, architecture and building culture, health, nature conservation and landscape experience, regional and municipal development as well as mobility and transport.

The commitment of the participants should be coordinated by the implementation management team. The accompanying implementation management for the new tourism strategy will be a joint task between the partners in Rheinland-Pfalz tourism.

Essential contents of the implementation management process will include:

- Implementation planning and control
- Monitoring of impacts and controlling
- Dynamic updating of tourism strategy
- Overall coordination of strategy projects
- Committee work
- Strategic communications and communicating the tourism strategy
- Networking

The Ministry of Economics, Transport, Agriculture and Viniculture of Rheinland-Pfalz will be responsible for the overall control of the implementation management process. Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus GmbH will be entrusted with the operational tasks.

The partners in tourism in Rheinland-Pfalz have formed a working group for the joint implementation task under the leadership of the Ministry of Economics, Transport, Agriculture and Viniculture of Rheinland-Pfalz. More members should be included.

The tourism partners in Rheinland-Pfalz remain bound to the joint objective implementation process, i.e. mutually strengthening the activities and continuous communications.
Any comments or fresh ideas – please send an Email to TOURISMUS@MWVLW.RLP.DE