Visitor Activities and Inner-City Tourist Mobility: The Case of Heidelberg

11

Tim Freytag

11.1
Purpose and objective

This Chapter has a focus on Heidelberg, a university town that traditionally stands for one of the most popular urban tourism destinations in Germany. The city is marked by a particularly high tourism density that is reflected by a ratio of approximately seven annual bednights per inhabitant, which brings Heidelberg into a leading position among all German cities with a size of at least 100,000 inhabitants. This Chapter will take Heidelberg as a case study to identify current trends in European city tourism. A second aim consists in exploring several methods and techniques to obtain tourism information and comparative data that allows evaluate the general destination performance based on key tourism indicators, get a better understanding of visitor activities and assess inner-city visitor mobility in time and space.

11.2
Introduction

An increasing demand for the consumption of urban environments has led to a rising popular-ity of city tourism. This trend holds for both, leisure oriented tourist mobility and professional business travel. Regarding the tourist consumer patterns we can observe a general shift from the classical mode of leaving only once per year for an extended summer holiday towards a series of short trips, which are undertaken throughout the whole year (Becker, 2000). Among the most favoured destinations are mainly greater cities and metropolises providing important sights, a wide range of leisure and cultural activities, entertainment and attractive shopping facilities (Jagnow and Wachowiak, 2000). Moreover, a specific urban air and a high level of publicity contribute to the success of tourism destinations (Law, 1993).

The ongoing growth dynamics underpin the importance of city tourism as a resource for the local economy. Consequently, we can observe more and more interurban competition that is reflected in considerable efforts in tourism and city marketing activities. However, a key factor for developing successful tourism marketing strategies consists in having a good knowledge about the individual profile of a city and the specific interests and characteristics of its visitors. Destination marketing has to be grounded on reliable information about tourism trends, visitor activities and tourist mobility within the city. One needs to understand urban tourism and related marketing activities as a proc-

ess which is driven by innovation and ongoing competition. Visitors tend to adopt new trends: They like to explore cutting-edge destinations and tourism attractions, and they are keen on trying novel types of visitor activities. For all these reasons, tourism professionals put much effort in constantly developing the local tourism infrastructure, providing innovative services and, for example, bringing forward major cultural or sporting events.

Discussion point

Urban tourism experienced rapid growth and increasing competition during the past few years. Discuss the economic potential of these dynamics and related challenges for urban planners and tourism professionals.

11.3
Tourism studies about the city of Heidelberg

The empirical grounding of this report is provided by substantial research activities that were carried out in Heidelberg over the past ten years. Applying both, quantitative and qualitative research methods, several tourism studies were conducted in the context of research projects and teaching courses at the Department of Geography at Heidelberg University. The guiding idea of these activities was to understand local tourism development through combining various perspectives in order to create a multi-faceted picture of Heidelberg as a tourism destination that is shaped by tourism professionals, urban planners and the visitors.

The major data sources include:
(1) Tourism statistics compiled by the Baden-Württemberg statistical office (Statistisches Landesamt),

(2) Heidelberg visitor survey 2000–07 with a total of 10,000 interviews,
(3) 200 tourist interviews and related mobility tracks recorded with GPS loggers,
(4) Additional data and information based on 25 expert interviews with local tourism professionals, pedestrian counting etc.

Empirical data from the official tourism statistics (Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg, 2009) was used to sketch out general trends in Heidelberg tourism development. The regularly published volumes contain data on accommodation facilities and overnight visitors. The existing variables include the number of arrivals and bednights, length of stay and country of residence. All available data is presented in aggregated format on the municipality level.

On behalf of the local convention and visitors' bureau and in cooperation with the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, the Heidelberg visitor survey was conducted by the Department of Geography, Heidelberg University. A total of 10,000 face-to-face visitor interviews were carried out during six annual data collection cycles between April 2000 and July 2007. The questionnaire was available in German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Chinese (Putonghua) and Japanese versions. A random sample of travellers (at least 16 year-old overnight visitors or day-visitors that live and work at least 30 kilometres away from Heidelberg) was interviewed at several locations within the city of Heidelberg.

Plausibility checks on the basis of overnight stays, which are documented in the official statistics, confirm that the visitor survey provides a sample that roughly reflects the seasonal distribution of tourism and the travellers' countries of residence. With approximately five per cent of the interviewees, business travel is clearly underrepresented in the sample. Consequently, the Heidelberg visitor survey has to be regarded primarily as a data base for leisure tourism studies (Freytag, 2002).

In May and June 2008, a total of 200 visitor interviews combined with tourist mobility tracking were carried out in Heidelberg by the Department of Geography. The tracking was accomplished with GPS loggers. This innovative technique has a strong potential for mobility studies in tourism research and other fields of human geography and social science in general (Shoval and Isaacson, 2006). The Heidelberg sample was exclusively produced for day-visitors who started their visit in the tourist information office next to the central railway station. The collected spatial data was analysed with ArcGIS software.

On the tourism supply side a series of expert interviews were conducted by the Department of Geography, Heidelberg University, with 25 executive managers and decision-makers in hotel business, gastronomy and tourism marketing in Heidelberg in 2005. The composition of the interview sample reflects the existing variety of companies in terms of size, type of enterprise, range of accommodation prices and different locations within the city of Heidelberg. Semi-structured expert interviews with an average length between 45 and 60 minutes delivered some important insights, which are presented as quotations in the following paragraphs. Due to the confidential character of the conversations, interview quotations are anonymously presented. All interviews were recorded, transcribed and presented to the interviewees for optional specifications and additional remarks. MAXqda software was used for documenting and analysing the interviews.

Lastly, this report is supported by unpublished results from several teaching courses to explore tourism in Heidelberg, that were carried out by the Department of Geography at Heidelberg University between 2002 and 2007. The main aim of the teaching activities was to study inner-city pedestrian tourist mobility and to identify perspectives for a future tourism development beyond the old town area in Heidelberg.

11.4
Heidelberg as a tourism destination

The actual resident population of Heidelberg comprises roughly 140,000 inhabitants. A total of 30,000 students underpin the predominant role of the university that constitutes together with tourism the two key components of the city. Heidelberg owes its high popularity among international travellers to the long lasting reputation as a leading university town, which was often praised as perfect materialization of a beautiful and typically German landscape in harmony with the city's location on the river banks of the Neckar, delightfully embedded by the slopes of the Odenwald (see Figure 1). Heidelberg castle, which was destroyed by the French troops of Louis XIV during the war of Palatine succession (1688–97), was considered a major place of national memory and identity throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. Starting with the work of poets and musicians during the era of German romanticism, the myth of romantic Heidelberg was created and perpetuated in various cultural productions, orchestrations and movies. The romantic image was used as a suitable basis to successfully promote Heidelberg as a tourism destination during the second half of the 20th century (Fink, 2002). Whereas the enchantment of a romantic Heidelberg meanwhile only fascinates a small proportion of the German visitors, it keeps being fascinating and to some extent exotic for long haul travellers whose time and travel budgets do not allow more than taking a few short impressions from Germany and Europe. In this sense, the city conveys the encounter with a typical historic German university town. This makes Heidelberg a suitable stopover on a round trip across Germany or Europe (Freytag, 2008).

Particularly beneficial for tourism in Heidelberg are the excellent transport connections. Being located at the edge of the upper Rhine

Fig. 1 Heidelberg castle and the old town (Source: Bienia, 2003, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/ File:Heidelberg.jpg, site accessed 17 February 2009, GNU Free Documentation License)

valley between Basel and Frankfurt near the A5 motorway, the city also disposes of a good connection with Frankfurt am Main International Airport, the largest passenger airport in Germany. In addition, Frankfurt-Hahn Airport has become an important air base for low cost carriers during the past few years. Heidelberg University and several greater international companies, which are based in the city or within the wider Rhine Neckar metropolitan region, tend to induce incoming travel. Moreover, the resident population of Heidelberg and its surroundings supports local tourism being visited by friends and relatives.

In the early 1990s, a general concept for sustainable tourism development was created in Heidelberg. Established with the help of experts and the local population, this concept contains strategies and recommendations for implementing a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable tourism (Stadt Heidelberg, 1993, p. 11). The main aim of the local agenda is to put more emphasis on qualitative

than quantitative aspects of tourism development. Although the new concept has only limited power to serve as an efficient controlling and steering tool, it can be assumed that the local political actors try to balance the interests of resident population, retail business, tourism sector and the visitors in the city.

Discussion point

Heidelberg established a local agenda for sustainable tourism development in 1993. Discuss the key features of this planning strategy and the major challenges to put them into practise.

11.5
General trends for incoming tourism in Heidelberg

Heidelberg counts approximately three million visitors per year, which are mainly day-visitors (roughly 80 per cent). With more than one million admission tickets purchased per year, Heidelberg castle constitutes the uncontested tourism highlight in the city. The existing 74 hotels and eight other local accommodation facilities registered a total of 962,155 bednights and 527,509 arrivals in 2008. In general, Heidelberg is a tourism destination that is shaped by a particularly high proportion of foreign overnight visitors (39.7 per cent in 2008).

Heidelberg achieves the highest visitor frequencies in June, July and September, whereas the month of August is characterised by a slight decrease of bednights, which can be regarded as a general pattern in urban tourism. Overall the seasonal distribution shows a rather well-balanced picture which points out that the existing accommodation facilities are intensely used during the months of summer, but also attain a satisfactory occupancy level in winter time (see Figure 2).

The long-term development of Heidelberg as a tourism destination is revealed in Figure 3. Between 1984 and 2008 we can observe a considerable growth of accommodation facilities and bednights such as a slight increase of the length of stay. The rising number of overnight stays corresponds with a general trend in European city tourism, although the average annual growth rate in Heidelberg remains below the European average (Freytag, 2007). In terms of the registered bednights a first peak was achieved in 1990, when the broader context of the political unification in Germany led to increased travel activities for both, national tourism and incoming international tourism. At this time of particularly intense tourism activities, the Heidelberg concept for sustainable tourism development was created. In the following years, we can see a slight decrease of
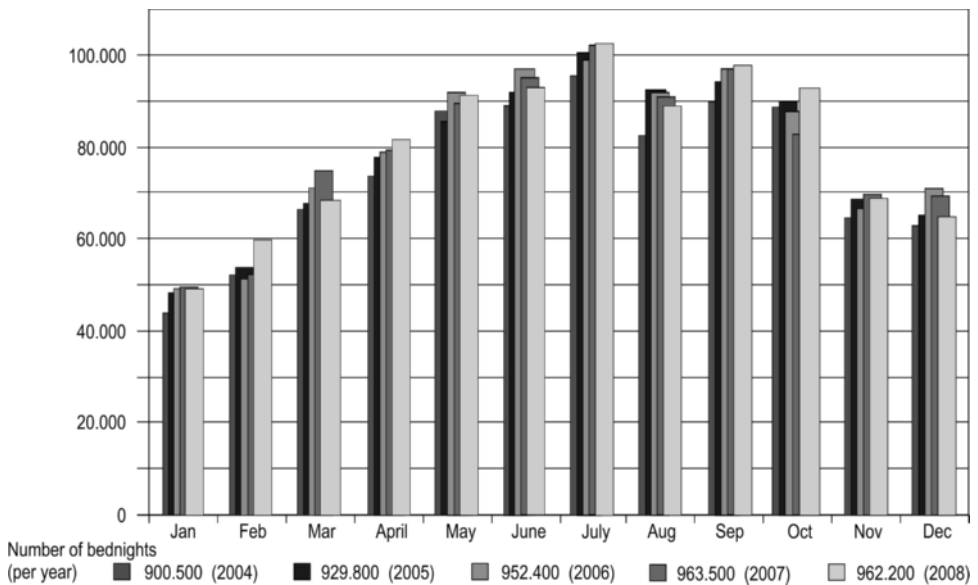

Fig. 2 Seasonal distribution of bednights in Heidelberg 2004–2008 (Source: Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg)
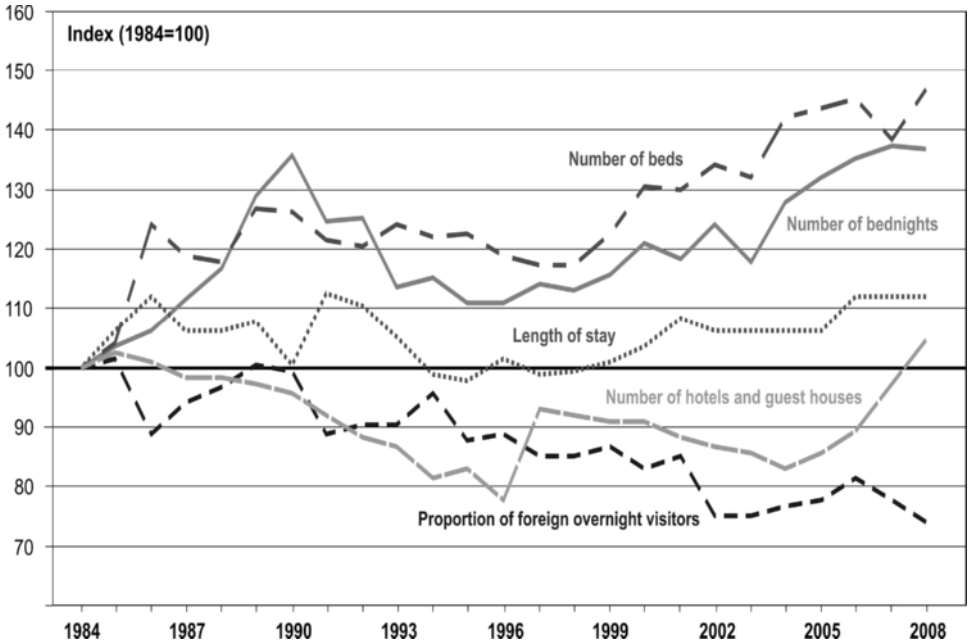
Fig. 3 Key indicators for overnight tourism in Heidelberg 1984–2008 (Source: Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg)

bednights. However, since 2003 a second period of growth started to emerge and reached its provisional peak in 2007. Figure 3 illustrates that the long term trend for bednights is paralleled by the amount of available accommodation facilities, which underpins a good balance of demand and supply sides in Heidelberg tourism.

The depicted increase of bednights suggests at first sight a rather steady growth process, but taking a closer look at this trend we can identify considerable shifts in the national markets that constitute the demand side of tourism in Heidelberg (see Figure 4).

The United States of America are the most important incoming market for tourism in Heidelberg with approximately 100,000 bednights per year. This is partly influenced by the US armed forces that are stationary at several military bases in Heidelberg and the Rhine Neckar metropolitan region. Many tourism professionals expected a significant decline in US

travel as a consequence of the second Gulf war (1990–91), the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the US-Iraq war in 2003. However, the registered bednights in Heidelberg show only short-term effects of minor importance for US incoming travel.

Discussion point

Heidelberg has a very high proportion of long haul visitors compared with other major German cities (with at least 100,000 inhabitants). Discuss the specific advantages and possible risks of vulnerability that result of the international visitor profile in Heidelberg.

More than any other German city, Heidelberg can be regarded as a particularly important destination for Japanese visitors. Between 1992 and 1996, the Japanese completed more
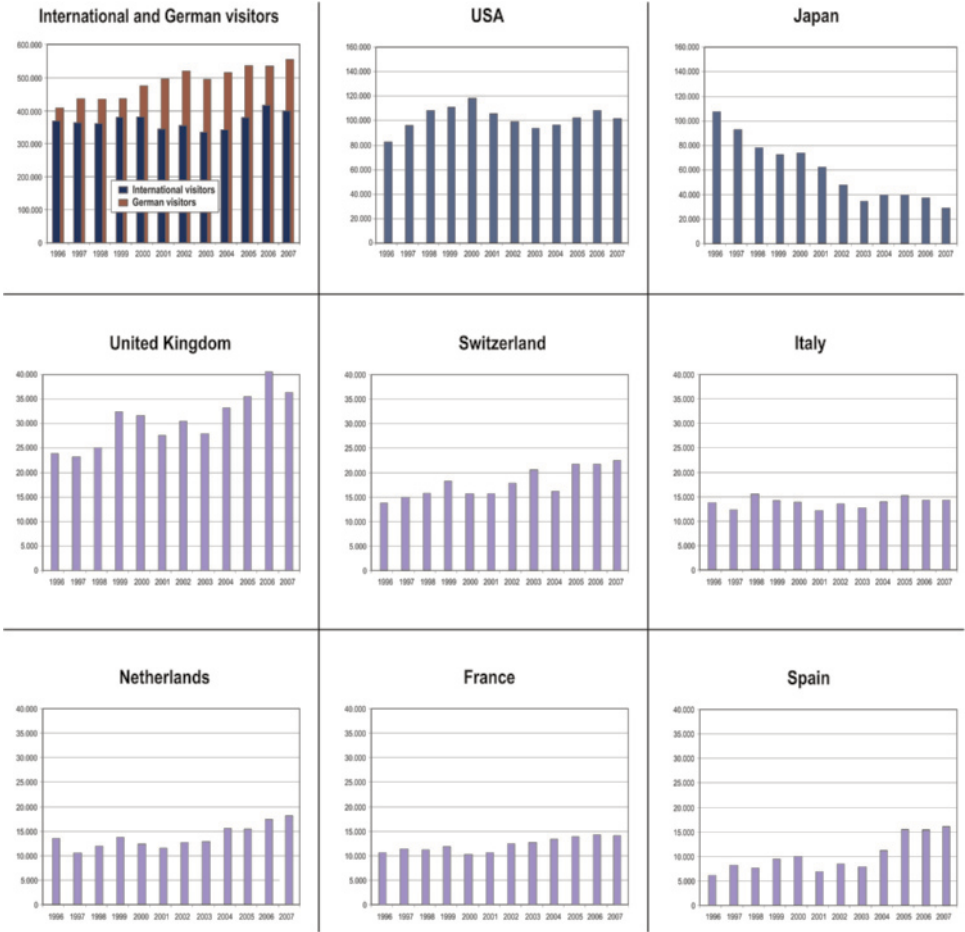
Fig. 4 Heidelberg tourism bednights by nationality of visitors 1996–2007 (Source: Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg)

bednights than any other foreign nation in Heidelberg. This was a result of, both, intensive Heidelberg tourism marketing initiatives that were carried out in Japan and, even more decisively, the boom of the Japanese economy that strengthened the yen compared to the US dollar and the European currencies and gave more buying power to Japanese travellers. A local gastronome and hotel manager critically reflects the heyday of Japanese tourists in Heidelberg during the 1990s. The manager states that he focussed sometimes too much on wel-

coming Japanese visitors instead of paying attention to other travellers, as well. 'This is not good, neither for the Japanese […] nor for the supply side of tourism. I remember that we had 200 Japanese guests here for lunch. So, the Japanese were surrounded by Japanese only, I mean, this is terrible' (interview no. 22).

Having reached a peak of more than 130,000 bednights in 1994, the number of Japanese overnight visitors experienced a significant decline since the mid 1990s. Consequently, Japan lost its leading position among the inter-

11

national visitors in Heidelberg. In 2006, Japanese bednights were ranked only at the third position after the US and the UK, and in the following year even less than 30,000 Japanese bednights were registered in Heidelberg. The decline of Japanese incoming tourism has to be seen in the wider context of the economic crisis that affected Japan in the second half of the 1990s. During this period the number of Japanese visitors dramatically declined all over Germany and presumably as well in the neighbouring countries. In the case of Heidelberg an additional factor plays in. Due to the fact that the local hotel prices clearly exceed the national average, Japanese travel groups changed their logistics and now rather tend to book less costly accommodations in the rural parts of the country and to visit Heidelberg as day-visitors. A local hotel manager complains that Asian 'groups travelling by coach [visit] the castle and a little bit of the old town before they have to' move on (interview no. 14).
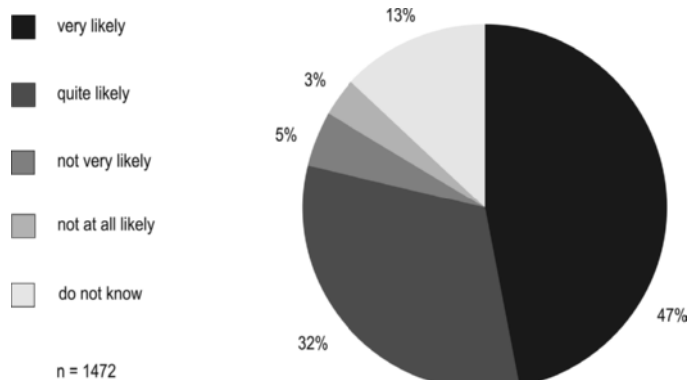
During the past few years Heidelberg tourism was shaped by a slight diversification process with regard to the international visitors. Figure 4 depicts a growing number of German bednights, which can be seen as a result of increased business travel sustained by companies and institutions in the Rhine Neckar metropolitan region. Consequently, Heidelberg started to reduce its high level of dependency on incoming travel from the US and Japan. This trend is supported by rising numbers of

bednights for travellers from several European countries, such as the UK and Spain (to be seen as a result of increasing low cost air travel) as well as the Netherlands and Switzerland. In the future, a key strategy for Heidelberg as a tourism destination consists in enhancing the current diversification process and fostering tourism cooperation within the Rhine Neckar metropolitan region.

11.6
Visitor activities

The majority of the travellers who come to Heidelberg tend to either combine several purposes in one trip (i. e. sight-seeing, visiting friends or relatives, professional travel) or to include Heidelberg as a stop-over to be visited on the way to or from another travel destination. In general, Heidelberg appeals to all kinds of visitor types, no matter of what age the tourists are, and no matter if they are travelling alone, with their partner or family and children, with friends or as part of an organised group. In general, the proportion of overnight visitors is comparatively small in Heidelberg. Most of the tourists do not spend more than four to six hours in the city. As a hotel manager puts it 'many travellers come here, do Heidelberg in a rush and drive on to the following destina-

Fig. 5 Likelihood of a repeat visit in Heidelberg (Source: Heidelberg visitor survey 2006–2007)

very likely

quite likely

not very likely

not at all likely

do not know

n = 1472

13%

3%

5%

32%

47%

tion – possibly Rothenburg, or they leave Heidelberg in the late afternoon to spend the night in Munich. This is what we call the classical programme' (interview no. 2).

Almost half of the interviewees know Heidelberg from a previous visit. This underlines not only that the city is particularly popular among tourists but also that former Heidelberg students from Germany and abroad like to return to their university town later in their lives. Almost four out of five interviewees stated that they are likely to renew their visit in the future.

Given the reputation of Heidelberg as a major tourist destination and the high proportion of repeat visitors, many incoming tourists dispose of a good local knowledge and should have rather specific plans for their stay in Heidelberg. A common source for travel advice and recommendation are friends and relatives of the visitors. Additional information is taken from travel guide books and the local tourism information office. During the past few years the internet has gained extraordinary importance as the leading source of information for the travellers. Three out of four visitors do use the internet on a daily basis. The most important web pages for preparing a trip to Heidelberg include the websites of the city of Heidelberg and the local tourism information as well as the Heidelberg entry in the wikipedia online encyclopaedia. The Heidelberg visitor survey 2006–07 revealed that more than one third of

the travellers use the internet in order to prepare their trip. Their main aim is to get practical travel information, such as city maps and event notes. As a result of technological change a growing number of visitors would like to request internet services during their stay in the city. Location based services are becoming an increasingly important marketing tool for city tourism (Meng et al., 2004).

The more and more frequent use of online media is confirmed in the field of accommodation booking. Whereas in the year 2000, most of the travellers were rather reluctant towards this new technology and stated to be afraid of insecure websites, the acceptance of online booking systems has rapidly increased. User friendly and more secure websites and a rising familiarity with online shopping have led to a growing number of accommodation bookings on the internet. According to the Heidelberg visitor survey 2006–07 almost one out of two accommodation bookings were carried out either by e-mail (28%) or with an online booking system (21%). The telephone is still the most common booking media, but during the next years it will be continuously substituted by e-mail and the internet.

The proportion of privately accommodated overnight visitors was more than 30 per cent between 2000 and 2007. However, the majority of the overnight visitors stay in a hotel. In average, hotel guests spend roughly 70 euro per person per night in Heidelberg. Among the

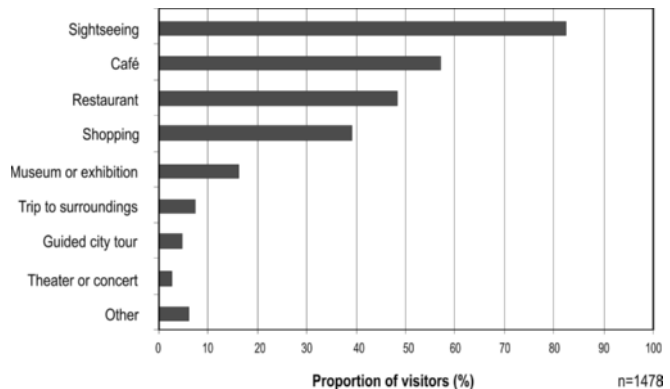**Fig. 6** Visitor activities in Heidelberg (Source: Heidelberg visitor survey 2006–2007)

11

Fig. 7 Visited sights and
attractions in Heidelberg
(Source: Heidelberg visi-
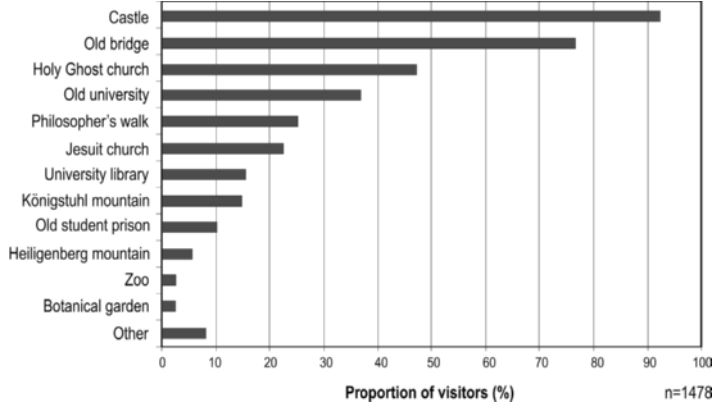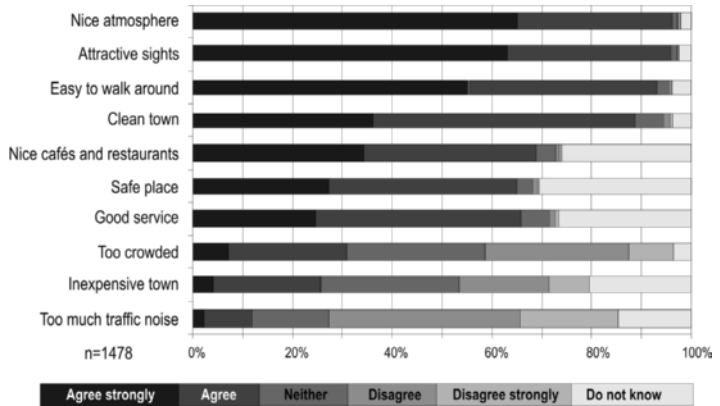tor survey 2006–2007)

Fig. 8 Perception of
the city by the visitors
(Source: Heidelberg visi-
tor survey 2006–2007)

low budget accommodation facilities the youth
hostel is of particular importance.

In Heidelberg tourists tend to combine a
sight-seeing walk with some shopping and sit-
ting in a café or restaurant. These mixed ac-
tivities are typical for urban tourism in general,
and they can be observed in similar ways for
example in Salzburg (Keul and Kühberger,
1997). In average, the visitors spend 24 euro
for food and drink per person per day accord-
ing to the Heidelberg visitor survey 2006–07.
The budget for shopping is 18 euro per person
per day. Guided city tours, cultural events and
excursions into the city's surroundings only
play a minor role among the tourist activities.

The majority of the interviewees do not
know the HeidelbergCard which offers free

use of public transport and free or reduced ad-
mission tickets for several tourist attractions
including shopping facilities and restaurants in
the city. Only one out of four visitors is aware
of this special offer, and only 3 per cent of the
interviewees purchased the HeidelbergCard for
their actual visit.

During their stay in Heidelberg, most of the
visitors like to enjoy the 'old town with its his-
toric architecture and all the restaurants' (in-
terview no. 17). Moreover they feel attracted
by the charming and inspiring 'atmosphere
when strolling through […] the old town and
[feeling], that Heidelberg [has] its own par-
ticularly romantic air' (interview no. 5). The
visitors are very much charmed by the nice
and cosy atmosphere of the old town, which is

perceived as a safe and clean environment. The only inconveniences stated by the interviewees concern the comparatively high prices of gastronomy and hotel services. In addition, some of the major tourist attractions are temporarily overcrowded with visitors during the mass tourism peaks of the summer season.

Discussion point

The economic benefits of urban tourism can be measured by the expenses of the travellers during their stay in the city. Develop feasible strategies to enhance the visitors to spend more money in Heidelberg.

11.7
Tourist mobility in Heidelberg

The Heidelberg visitor survey points out very clearly that walking and strolling around is a key activity of the travellers who tend to spend most of their time in the old town. This pattern

was confirmed by pedestrian counting that was carried out by the Department of Geography, Heidelberg University. Figure 9 depicts an area of approximately one square kilometre which is situated in the eastern part of the old town that is shaped by a concentration of visitors and tourism functions. Drawing upon the work of Duhamel and Knafou (2007) we can identify this area as the 'Central Tourist District (CTD)' of Heidelberg. This part of the city is characterised by tiny historic streets and charming squares that offer a variety of tourism services and eat and drink places. The key tourism attractions include the Old bridge, Heidelberg castle and University square (Freytag, 2002).

The CTD is limited to the north by the Old bridge, which primarily serves as a view point and lost its traditional function as the major gateway to the city. On warm and sunny days of summer roughly 2,000 visitors enter the bridge at the southern bridge head, but only five per cent of them cross the entire bridge and move on beyond the northern bridge head. All the other pedestrians step on the bridge and then return to the old town. They simply use the bridge as a view point and visitor attraction. The eastern demarcation of the CTD

Fig. 9 Spatial concentration of tourist activities in the old town of Heidelberg (Source: modified after Freytag (2002, p. 216))

11
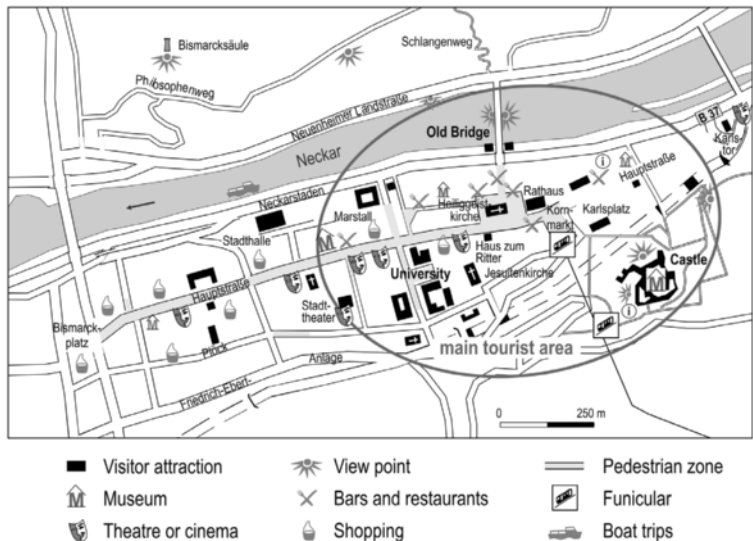
can be identified at Karlsplatz, the southern CTD limits are at the edge of the castle and its gardens, and to the west the CTD extends to Theaterplatz, where the pedestrian zone of Hauptstrasse starts to become more shopping-oriented and less dominated by tourism use. Approaching to Bismarckplatz the functional pattern of Hauptstrasse mainly consists of department stores and boutiques.

In summer 2008, the Department of Geography, Heidelberg University, conducted a pilot study on inner-city tourist mobility that was assessed by GPS loggers and subsequent face-to-face interviews of 200 day-visitors in Heidelberg. The GPS devices were distributed to incoming visitors at the local tourist information next to the central railway station. The interviews were conducted at the end of the stay, when the participants returned the GPS loggers at the tourist information. A basic analysis of the collected spatial mobility data reveals that almost all the day-visitors, who participated in the pilot study, went straight to the old town. The Hauptstrasse can be identified as a key mobility axis. Moreover, we can observe that the visitors tend to walk more slowly and spend more time in the eastern part of the old town. This pattern matches perfectly well with the concept of the Central Tourist District (see Figure 9). The tourism hot spots that are revealed by the visitor tracking include Heidelberg castle, Marktplatz located at the heart of the eastern old town, the Old bridge, and the public transport hub of Bismarckplatz at the western edge of the old town.

11.8
Conclusions

As a major urban tourism destination Heidelberg experienced a moderate growth of accommodation facilities and registered bednights during the past few years. A decline in Japanese overnight visitors that started in the second half of the 1990s was compensated by an ongoing increase of travellers from Germany and several European countries, notably the UK, Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands. Neither the fear for global terrorist attacks nor the signs of upcoming economic crises significantly reduced the number of incoming visitors in Heidelberg. The development of the tourism destination corresponds fairly well with the strategic goals of the local agenda for sustainable tourism that was established in 1993.

Taking a closer look at the visitors and their tourism practices we can observe an increasing importance of the internet for gathering information and booking activities. This trend not only applies to the travel preparations, but it also becomes more and more common during the stay in the city. Visitors are closely connected with the virtual world of the internet and they use their mobile phones, SMS and e-mail communication to keep in touch with people in other places. Consequently, many tourists do no longer tend to escape from everyday life during their trip, but they rather integrate their everyday life in tourism practices and vice versa. Spatial and temporal distances from the work and home environment, which traditionally could be seen as key characteristics of leisure tourism, tend to be reduced or even abolished by the use of modern information and communication technologies.

Discussion point

Heidelberg is a well established destination in German city tourism. Make recommendations for tourism marketing strategies to be implemented in Heidelberg during the next decade.

The visitor activities to be observed in Heidelberg seem to be rather ordinary and show a very high level of spatial concentration. The travellers spend most of their time in the east-

ern part of the old town. They stroll around the visitor attractions, do shopping and sit in cafés or restaurants. Apart from the feeling to be surrounded by the setting of an old university town with tiny little streets and historic buildings, the travellers do not seem to be interested in more place-specific encounters and activities. On the contrary, the majority of the interviewees in the Heidelberg visitor survey state that they only spend a few hours in the city before moving on to another destination. This comes out very clearly in the inner-city spatial mobility pattern of day-visitors in Heidelberg. They are heading directly for the Central Tourist District in the old town and do not really come in touch with other parts of the city.

A perspective for future tourism development in Heidelberg can aim at cautiously integrating several parts of the city and its beautiful surroundings in a comprehensive tourism concept. This would allow to keep day-visitors concentrated in the Central Tourist District of the old town and, at the same time, let the tourism destination become more diverse and appealing for repeat visitors and overnight travellers. Being considered a city with high quality of life, Heidelberg disposes of charming urban quarters erected in Wilhelminian architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as Weststadt, Neuenheim and Handschuhsheim. The river banks of the Neckar, the Philosophers' walk and numerous hiking trails in the Odenwald offer a great potential for tourism and leisure activities. Moreover, Heidelberg University with its student life and ongoing research activities could be given a more prominent place within tourism marketing. This would mean to encourage the travellers to attend public lectures and to considerably enlarge the existing Heidelberg University museum. Lastly, the local population needs to be very much integrated in tourism development and marketing. Since personal recommendations are the most convincing argument to visit a tourism destination, it is extremely important that the inhabitants perceive their city as an attractive place for tourism and leisure activities. The local population can widely contribute to successful tourism marketing if they encourage their friends and relatives to come to Heidelberg and to enjoy the city and its surroundings.

It can be assumed that the actual growth of European city tourism will hold on for the next few years. A general increase of mobility due to leisure and business travel gives tourism a more and more important place in the local economy. At the same time, we can observe an increasing interurban competition. Consequently, a main aim for tourism destinations consists in developing and successfully marketing specific local tourism profiles. On the one hand, it is necessary to be alert of overall trends and changes in urban tourism in order to rapidly adjust the local marketing and management strategies. On the other hand, local decision-makers should use the existing room for manoeuvre to implement innovative strategies and to stress specific strong points to successfully promote their tourism destination.

Web sites of interest

www.heidelberg.de – The official website of the city of Heidelberg
www.heidelberg-marketing.de – The website of Heidelberg Marketing GmbH
www.heidelberg-marketing.de/content/e566/index_eng.html – Heidelberg webcam showing the castle and the old town seen from the banks of the river Neckar
www.heidelberg-mobil.de – Heidelberg mobil offering personalised virtual tour guides

11

Review questions

(1) What type of image serves as the basis for Heidelberg as a particularly successful destination for attracting long haul travellers from overseas?

(2) Since the mid 1990s the bednights of Japanese visitors considerably decreased in Heidelberg. What are the main reasons for this ongoing trend?

(3) More and more travellers use internet services during their stay in Heidelberg. How can tourism professionals take advantage from innovations in the field of information and communication technologies?

(4) Heidelberg is shaped by a spatial concentration of tourism in the old town. What are the main advantages and inconveniences of this usage pattern?

(5) A very large proportion of the visitors in Heidelberg are day-visitors. What are the underlying reasons? What are the major economic and organisational consequences of this situation which is common to many other destinations in urban tourism?

References

Becker, C., 2000. Freizeit und Tourismus in Deutschland: Eine Einführung. In: Institut für Länderkunde, (ed) *Nationalatlas Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Freizeit und Tourismus*, vol. 10, Spektrum, Heidelberg, pp. 12–21.

Duhamel, P., Knafou, R., 2007. Le tourisme dans la centralité parisienne. In: Saint-Julien, T., Le Goix, R., (eds) *La métropole parisienne: Cen-*

tralités, inégalités, proximités, Belin, Paris, pp. 37–64.

Fink, O., 2002. *'Memories vom Glück': Wie der Erinnerungsort Alt-Heidelberg erfunden, gepflegt und bekämpft wurde*, Buchreihe der Stadt Heidelberg, 9, Verlag für Regionalkultur, Ubstadt-Weiher.

Freytag, T., 2002. Tourism in Heidelberg: Getting a Picture of the City and its Visitors. In: Wöber, K. W., (ed) *City tourism 2002: Proceedings of European Cities Tourism's international conference in Vienna*, Austria, 2002, Springer, Vienna, pp. 211–219.

Freytag, T., 2007. Städtetourismus in europäischen Grossstädten: Eine Hierarchie der Standorte und aktuelle Entwicklungen der Übernachtungszahlen. *DISP*, 169 (2): 56–67.

Freytag, T., 2008. Aktuelle Entwicklungen im europäischen Städtetourismus: Das Beispiel Heidelberg. In: Freytag, T., Kagermeier, A., (eds) *Städtetourismus zwischen Kultur und Kommerz*, Profil, München, pp. 25–43.

Jagnow, E., Wachowiak, H., 2000. Städtetourismus zwischen Geschäftsreisen und Events. In: Institut für Länderkunde, (ed) *Nationalatlas Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Freizeit und Tourismus*, vol. 10, Spektrum, Heidelberg, pp. 108–111.

Keul, A. G., Kühberger, A., 1997. Tracking the Salzburg Tourist. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24 (4): 1008–1012.

Law, C. M., 1993. *Urban tourism: Attracting Visitors to Large Cities*, Mansell, London.

Meng, L., Zipf, A., Reichenbacher, T., (eds), 2004. *Map-based mobile services: Theories, Methods and Implementations*, Springer, Berlin.

Shoval, N., Isaacson, M., 2006. Application of Tracking Technologies to the Study of Pedestrian Spatial Behaviour. *The Professional Geographer*, 58 (2): 172–183.

Stadt Heidelberg, (ed), 1993. Guidelines on Tourism:Heidelberg 'Tourismusleitbild', http://www.heidelberg.de/servlet/PB/show/1123399_l2/12_pdf_TourismusGuidelines_on_Tourism.pdf (site accessed 17 December 2008).

Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg, (ed), 2009. Struktur- und Regionaldatenbank, Stuttgart, http://www.statistik.baden-wuerttemberg.de/SRDB/ (site accessed 20 January 2009).