

## Press-Information

### Frankfurt – Germany’s Traffic and Transport Capital

#### **The Main metropolis is Germany’s traffic hub for aviation, railway and road networks.**

Frankfurt’s role as a traffic hub at the centre of Europe is already alluded to in the legend about the founding of the city and the origin of its name. In the legend, Emperor Charlemagne and his troops were trying to flee from their enemies when they arrived at the Main river with its many joining waterways and islands. In their moment of greatest need a doe is said to have shown them the location of a ford to lead them over the Main, which the Franks used to escape their pursuers. It is impossible to know today how much historical truth there is to this legend, however, it illustrates that Frankfurt’s river location has always been of significance. The River Main along with Frankfurt’s location in central Europe have made the city an ideal market and trading centre since the Middle Ages. Even the poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe gives testament to the impressions he took home from his river port visits as a young boy.

Whoever should wish to Frankfurt today will find an ideal infrastructure: whether by train, plane or automobile this city has better traffic network than any other.

**Frankfurt’s Hauptbahnhof**, or main train station, is Deutsche Bahn’s busiest station. Each day, 1.100 long-distance trains and 700 commuter trains use the station’s 29 platforms, transporting over 350.000 passengers. With more than half of all ICE passengers travel to or from Frankfurt, the Frankfurter Hauptbahnhof is one of the most important stations in Deutsche Bahn’s intercity system.

It’s hard to tell whether Frankfurt gained its significance as a financial centre because of its airport, or whether the airport grew to such dimensions because of the city’s continual financial activities. Either way, **Frankfurt International Airport**, now trading under the name of “Fraport AG” since its début on the share market in 2001, has the largest number of aviation travellers in continental Europe (48.4 million in the year 2003). Every year, more than 4,200

flight routes from 102 airline companies can be used to reach 286 destinations in 105 countries from Frankfurt, or “FRA”, as it is known in international airline code.

What’s more, in May 1999 Frankfurt Airport was given a direct connection to the European high-speed express railway network. Since then, the airport has been operating two train stations. Not only does the new state-of-the-art **AIRail Terminal** house a “third” terminal for air travel, it also houses a new long-distance train station where approximately five IC (inter-city) and ICE (inter-city express) trains stop at one of the four rail routings every hour. Since the new ICE line Cologne-Rhine-Main has been completed in August 2002, the new ICE trains also stop at the AIRail Terminal. Furthermore, all regular commuter trains and regional train lines can be accessed from the airport’s **Regionalbahnhof** (regional train station), which became Germany’s first airport train station when it opened in 1972. Thanks to these outstanding connections, it only takes 15 minutes to reach the Frankfurt city centre from the airport!

The Frankfurt airport in particular shows how closely integrated train, air, rail and street networks can be. Right next to the airport’s runways is **Frankfurter’s motorway intersection** (Frankfurter Kreuz), Germany’s busiest autobahn (motorway) intersection. In 1956, the Frankfurt autobahn intersection was built next to the airport to connect the A3 autobahn (west-east) with the A5 motorway (north-south). In the year after the intersection was opened, over 47.000 cars and trucks used the autobahn intersection each day. Today more than 300.000 vehicles pass through the Frankfurt intersection, and over half of these use the intersection to change motorways. In order to keep this important traffic node up to the increasing demands of ever-growing traffic, the Frankfurt autobahn intersection was upgraded within five years and re-opened in December 2000. It is now ready for the next 20 years of traffic...

Thanks to the International Automotive Exhibition (IAA), held every two years on Frankfurt’s expo grounds, the city has become a Mecca for automotive enthusiasts. In 2003, for example, 800.000 visitors made their way to the IAA. Because such a high number of visitors automatically means that logistical regulation of autobahn usage is stretched to the limits, the Frankfurt motorways are frequently used to test traffic control measures and devices that

will later be employed all over the country. Examples for this are lane-changing signs with variable arrows, and variable speed-limit signs that suggest appropriate speed limits to drivers to ensure traffic flows smoothly even at times when traffic is dense and to avoid accidents in bad-weather conditions.

It has become evident that the Main river, which helped the city rise to its significance as a waterway route, now pales in comparison to air, rail and road networks, even though Frankfurt's port still connects to a 110 kilometre network, which is used by 2,500 boats per year to transport 14 million tons of goods. Instead, the River Main now has a new and extremely important function: Frankfurt's inhabitants value and use the riverbanks and water for recreation and relaxation.

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