



**Mapping and Performance Check of the Supply of  
Accessible Tourism Services  
(220/PP/ENT/PPA/12/6491)**

*Case Study 2*

**Frankfurt am Main, Germany**

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European Commission  
Enterprise and Industry Directorate General (DG  
ENTR)

“Mapping and Performance Check of the Supply of Accessible Tourism  
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**Case Study: Frankfurt am Main**

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## Executive Summary

Tourism is one of Germany's booming and lucrative economic sectors that promotes Germany in a positive and friendly way. Tourist services increase the appeal and popularity of cities and regions and thereby strengthen Germany's position as a place for business and investment overall. Tourism is a multifaceted industry, encompassing tour operators and travel agencies, hotels and restaurants in urban and rural areas, trade fairs, convention and event centres, museums, theatres and other cultural facilities, camping sites, car, boat and bike rental, sporting facilities, preventive health and rehabilitation clinics, nature reserves and leisure parks, bus, rail and air transport companies, and some of the retail sector all of which offer attractive services to both private holiday makers and the business traveller.

Tourism plays a key role in the German Economy. By the end of the 2012 international visitors had made a total of 68.8 million overnight stays in Germany and Germany was the second most popular destination for European travellers. Accessible tourism has also been recognised in Germany as a key driver to growth in the German economy and in one of the objectives of the German National Tourist Board for 2013 was to ensure that tourism in Germany is accessible to everyone.

Frankfurt am Main is recognised nationally and internationally as a global city located in the heart of Germany and Europe. It is a major air, rail and highway transport hub as well as the largest financial centre in continental Europe, ranking among the world's leading financial centres.

Tourism plays a key role in Frankfurt. Most travellers to Germany from the overseas markets enter via Frankfurt or Munich. It is also home to the fifth largest exhibition centre in the world (MesseFrankfurt<sup>1</sup>) which plays host to the world's largest book, auto and music exhibitions. Frankfurt is also home to numerous museums, galleries, historical sites, shopping centres, restaurants, Opera Houses, cafes and great entertainment venues.

The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board is the primary point of contact for visitors of Frankfurt am Main. The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board is the marketing company for the city of Frankfurt am Main relating to tourism and conventions. It is the board's responsibility to promote a positive image of Frankfurt around the world

The Board has recognised that the demographics of the world are changing and that older people and people with disabilities cannot be ignored in promoting Frankfurt as a tourist destination. With this in mind, one of the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/en.html>

Board's strategic objectives is to make the city's touristic offers fully accessible to people with disabilities.

The Tourist and Congress Board has been working on a number of accessibility initiatives mainly focused around the 'Frankfurt am Main barrier-free' Brochure which was launched in 2012. This case study explores the work carried out by the Tourist and Congress Board and highlights how the Board is promoting Frankfurt as an international accessible city, increasing awareness amongst service suppliers, contributing to the improved accessibility of Frankfurt and how it is becoming one of leaders in promoting barrier free travel within Europe.

## 1.0 Introduction

This case study reviews how the City of Frankfurt is addressing accessibility for all, in particular how the the Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board is promoting accessibility and working with key stakeholders to make Frankfurt a tourist destination which is fully accessible to people with disabilities.

### Tourism in Germany

Tourism plays a key role in the German Economy. By the end of the 2012:

- International visitors had made a total of 68.8 million overnight stays in Germany – an increase of 8.1 per cent (the third year in a row that Germany have achieved an increase). Since 1992 the number of overnight stays in Germany made annually by international visitors has increased by 80 per cent, growth in real terms of 30.6 million.
- Germany was the second most popular destination for European travellers. Germany has made up further ground on Spain, which holds on to the top spot, and the gap between Germany and their competitors France and Italy, in third and fourth place respectively, had increased again by the end of 2012.
- Germany was the number one worldwide cultural travel destination for Europeans for the first time in 2012. In 2012, across all European countries, a total of 45.8 million trips were made to Germany, 7.3 per cent more than in the previous year.
- According to figures from Commerzbank, revenues from inbound tourism, rose by 5.5 per cent to €29.4 billion.

According to the German National Tourist Board (GNTB) Annual report in 2012<sup>2</sup> "Tourism also offers work and training opportunities that are tied to a specific location. Germany's inbound tourism industry is a key provider of impetus for our thriving economy. Despite a generally weak level of economic growth across Europe, more people in Germany are working than ever before. In the fourth quarter of 2012, according to the Federal Statistical Office, Germany had almost 42 million people in gainful employment. This is the highest level since reunification".

As well as benefiting the economy, tourism also promotes a positive and friendly image of the country. To gain a clearer picture of how Germany is perceived around the world, the GNTB in 2012 drew on the results of the Anholt GfK Roper Nation Brands Index (NBI) and the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index, published by the World Economic Forum. A medium-term analysis of the NBI confirms that the brand image of Germany in this comparison of 50 countries is firmly established as a world's leader in this area. For three years in a row Germany has finished in second place behind the USA in the NBI rankings<sup>3</sup> for the last three years.

## Frankfurt am Main

'Frankfurt am Main' commonly known as Frankfurt, is the largest city in the German state of Hesse and the fifth-largest city in Germany, with a 2012 population of 687,775. The city is at the centre of the larger Frankfurt Rhine-Main Metropolitan Region which has a population of 5,600,000 and is Germany's second-largest metropolitan region.

The city of 'Frankfurt am Main' is located in the heart of Germany and Europe is often described as a dynamic and international financial and trade fair city with one of the most impressive skylines in Germany. The city also boasts a lot more than an impressive skyline and financial and trade fair city. For example:

- Frankfurt is the largest financial centre in continental Europe and ranks among the world's leading financial centres. It is home to the European Central Bank, Deutsche Bundesbank, Frankfurt Stock Exchange and several large commercial banks.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.germany.travel/de/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> This annual survey is based on interviews with 20,000 people from 20 countries. Respondents are asked to evaluate six key factors relevant to a country's brand image Tourism, Exports, people, governance, culture and immigration/investment. In all these individual categories, Germany is in the top ten.

- The Frankfurt Stock Exchange is one of the world's largest stock exchanges by market capitalization and accounts for over 90 percent of the turnover in the German market. In 2010, 63 national and 152 international banks had their registered offices in Frankfurt, including the headquarters of the major German banks.
- Frankfurt is considered a global city (alpha world city) as listed by the Loughborough University group's 2010 inventory. Among global cities it was ranked 10th by the Global Power City Index 2011 and 11th by the Global City Competitiveness Index 2012.
- Due to its central location within Germany and Europe, Frankfurt is a major air, rail and highway transport hub. Frankfurt Airport is one of the world's busiest international airports by passenger traffic and the main hub for Germany's flag carrier Lufthansa, the largest airline in Europe. Frankfurt Central Station is one of the largest terminal stations in Europe and the busiest junction operated by Deutsche Bahn, the German national railway company, with 342 daily trains to domestic and European destinations<sup>4</sup>.

## Tourism in Frankfurt am Main

Tourism plays a key role in Frankfurt. Most travellers to Germany from the overseas markets enter via Frankfurt (or Munich). Frankfurt also has one of the five largest exhibition centres in the world (MesseFrankfurt<sup>5</sup>) (578,000 square metres and ten exhibition halls). Major trade fairs include the Frankfurt Motor Show, the world's largest motor show, and the Frankfurt Book Fair, the world's largest book fair take place in MesseFrankfurt. The bustling city centre is famous for its cosy Ebbelwei pubs, historical sites, museums, shopping centres, restaurants, Opera Houses, cafes and great entertainment venues.

Thanks to its varied and comprehensive cultural offering, Frankfurt am Main enjoys an excellent reputation at both the national and international level. One of the main highlights of the Frankfurt cultural scene undoubtedly includes the 'Museumsufer', where 11 well-known museums are lined up like a string of pearls on both sides of the Main. Around 50 other museums and exhibition halls, including, for example, the Schirn Kunsthalle, are situated in the immediate vicinity or in a central location of Frankfurt<sup>6</sup>.

In 2012, there were over 266 accommodation providers within Frankfurt and over 40,000 bed spaces. The number of visitors staying in accommodations in Frankfurt was approximately 4.29 million guests who stayed on average 1.7

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<sup>4</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankfurt> and <http://www.frankfurt.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=317596>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/en.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ecmw.eu/accommodationavenues/frankfurt-tourism.html>

days. Nearly 66,000 conferences took place in Frankfurt in 2012 and approximately 3.9 million people attended these events.

The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board issues a monthly update of the city's international visitor statistics and compares them with the same figures of the same month of the previous year. It was noted that from January 2013-October 2013 there had been over 3.74million overnight stays in Frankfurt compared to 3.57million for the previous area (an increase of 4.63%)<sup>7</sup>.

### The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board

The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board is the primary point of contact for visitors of Frankfurt am Main. The Tourist and Congress GmbH Frankfurt am Main is the marketing company for the city of Frankfurt am Main relating to tourism and conventions. It is the board's responsibility to promote a positive image of Frankfurt around the world. At the same time it is a business enterprise that provides services to visitors of Frankfurt. The Board provides a number of services including:

- **Hotel Service:** Room reservation in Frankfurt am Main and the surrounding region for over 260 hotels; Providing private accommodation available during trade shows; Attractive and low-priced weekend arrangements available outside of major trade fair times and organising special group rates for groups of 15 and more persons.
- **Congress Bureau:** Arrangement of suitable event venues; Accommodation service including room allocation for conferences and events; Support in the selection and organisation of fringe programmes; Organisation of site inspections and sale of congress tickets and Congress+Museum tickets.
- **Sightseeing Services:** Daily motorised city tours for individuals and smaller groups available in 8 languages; Arrangement of professional tour guides in 22 languages for motorised city tours and city walks; Thematic tours and trips to the surrounding areas and the arrangement of coaches and limousines.
- **Frankfurt Card:** Special ticket offering free and unlimited use of Frankfurt's public transportation system within the Frankfurt city districts incl. Frankfurt Airport. Up to 50 % discount on admission to various museums, Frankfurt Zoo, the Palmengarten as well as for motorised city tours, river cruises and further institutions. Restaurant and shopping vouchers.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/cms/tourismussuite/en/meta/tourism\\_frankfurt\\_germany/statistics\\_travel.html](http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/cms/tourismussuite/en/meta/tourism_frankfurt_germany/statistics_travel.html)

- **Information Service:** General information on Frankfurt am Main; Current calendar of events; Brochures and city maps; Illustrated books and guides and Frankfurt souvenirs.
- **Multimedia Service:** At [www.frankfurt-tourismus.de](http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de) you'll find a selection of special Frankfurt motifs available as downloads in perfect print quality, Further motifs are available on a photo CD Image DVD Frankfurt Rhine-Main
- **Open-Air Events:** Organisation of folk fairs and open-air events, including: Dippemess folk festival in spring and autumn Wäldches Day, Main Festival, Rheingau Wine Festival, Museum Embankment Festival and the Christmas Market.

One of the objectives of the Frankfurt Tourist + Congress Board (TCF) is to make the city's touristic offers fully accessible to people with disabilities and is described in further detail throughout this report. For further details on the Tourist and Congress Board see:

- <http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/cms/tourismussuite/en/home.html>

## 2.0 Overview and background information

A number of initiatives, legislative requirements and organisations have been particularly important for the development of accessible tourism in Germany and Frankfurt over the past few years. This section provides a brief overview of the legislation and some of the organisations that have been instrumental in the development of accessible tourism in Germany and in particular in Frankfurt.

### Legislation

Under German law, people with disabilities are entitled to help and assistance in order to avert, eliminate or improve their disability. In 2002, the German Federal Disabled Persons Equality Act (BGG) came into force, followed by the corresponding regional laws in the respective federal states in subsequent years. According to section 15 of the BGG, it is the task of the Federal Government Commissioner for Matters relating to Disabled Persons to ensure that the Federal Government ensures equal living conditions for people with or without disabilities, is complied with in all areas of social life.

Therefore the general goal of legislation in Germany is to overcome, as much as possible, the disability's effects and to enable the disabled to participate in all areas of society, especially in the labour market and in community life. The Federal Government is obliged to ensure barrier-free design and construction of public buildings, streets, etc. is implemented and to provide barrier-free access to communication, especially in the field of administrative Internet sites, official forms and notifications. In the area of public transportation, all

facilities and means of transportation (bus, train, aircraft) are also required to be barrier-free.

Severely disabled people enjoy special employment protection rights, additional allowances and benefits, such as tax relief, free public transport, and exemption from radio and television fees.

The German Bundestag passed the law with the consent of the Bundesrat which was necessary for ratifying the Convention and the Optional Protocol. The law entered into force on 1 January 2009. Germany ratified both the Convention and the Optional Protocol. The instruments of ratification were deposited 24 February 2009 at the UN Headquarters. Germany has translated both the Convention and the Protocol into sign and easy-to-read versions. The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) are responsible for all matters relating to the implementation of the UN CRPD.

With the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Germany must lead the way to guide the public and private sectors to make tourism accessible to all citizens<sup>8</sup>.

### **German National Tourist Board**

The GNTB has been working internationally to promote Germany as a travel destination for more than 60 years. It communicates the diverse appeal of the country to a worldwide market, thereby promoting a strong and attractive brand – 'Destination Germany'. The GNTB also plays an important role in the promotion of Germany as a travel destination on the international market. Its activities include the development of new marketing strategies and concepts based on specific themes, events and attractions and also bringing together and optimising the diverse marketing activities of partners in the German travel industry. It also takes an active role in the form of far-ranging sales activities in new growth markets. In this respect, the GNTB relies on its close collaboration with the German travel industry, partners from commerce and trade associations.

The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) in their annual Report 2012 highlight that “The basic tourism themes of ‘Towns, Cities and Culture’,

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<sup>8</sup> For further information see:

- [http://www.behindertenbeauftragte.de/EN/Englisch.html;jsessionid=12329AA8830BC71F71A14FA6BAB6DF8C.2\\_cid355?nn=2950120#doc2967342bodyText2](http://www.behindertenbeauftragte.de/EN/Englisch.html;jsessionid=12329AA8830BC71F71A14FA6BAB6DF8C.2_cid355?nn=2950120#doc2967342bodyText2)
- [http://www.germanlawjournal.com/pdfs/Vol05No11/PDF\\_Vol\\_05\\_No\\_11\\_1373-1392\\_Private\\_Kock.pdf](http://www.germanlawjournal.com/pdfs/Vol05No11/PDF_Vol_05_No_11_1373-1392_Private_Kock.pdf)
- <http://www.germanlawjournal.com/article.php?id=515>
- <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>

'Business Travel' and 'Health & Wellness' ensure consistency is maintained in the GNTB's international marketing. Annual themes and sideline PR campaigns marking special occasions help to establish a multifaceted and diverse image". In line with this strategy one of the themes for 2013 was Barrier free travel.

The GNTB highlight in the 2012 annual report that:

"In line with its newly established innovations management, the GNTB will in future be placing even greater emphasis on the topic of accessibility. In Europe alone, there are now some 80 million people with disabilities or restricted mobility; that equates to 16 per cent of all Europeans. In light of demographic developments, this figure will continue to rise over the coming years. Whether travelling on business or for leisure, people with physical or mental disabilities, people with temporarily restricted mobility such as patients in rehabilitation, older tourists, and families with children, have very specific requirements of a travel destination. The GNTB website provides information for these target groups including links to partner associations, German states, towns, cities and regions as well as associations and organisations that can help mobility-restricted travellers with planning and arrangements for their holiday or business trip to Germany".

### **The National Coordination Office for Tourism for All Association (NatKo)**

The German National Coordination Office for Tourism for All (NatKo) was created in 1999 to combine and coordinate the activities of a variety of self-help organisations working towards this end and thus help to improve travel facilities for disabled people. NatKo is the central representative body for barrier-free tourism in Germany.

NatKo's goal is Tourism for all. In cooperation with tourism companies, public transportation services and associations NatKo are helping to develop and market barrier-free offers; advising on constructional aspects and working with basic and advanced training centres to train tourism staff members with the aim of making them aware of accessible tourism offers and to help them offer "Hospitality for All" For further information on NatKo see <http://www.natko.de/>

In recent years the Deutschen Seminar für Tourismus (DSFT) Berlin eV and NatKo have recognised that within Germany and Europe there have been many successes and progress made through accessible tourism initiatives at various levels. However, the DSFT and NatKo still believe there a number of

shortcomings that need to be addressed to ensure an accessible tourist service chain. For example:

- There is a lack accessible facilities, services and inclusive products throughout the tourist service chain.
- The level of awareness and qualifications of tourism services providers is inadequate to address the needs of people with disabilities.
- There is a lack of transparency amongst service providers due to the lack of uniform criteria, terms, conformity assessment and accreditation markings and criteria.
- There is no regional and nationwide pooling of existing barrier-free deals and marketing quality.
- Lack of transparency due to the lack of uniform criteria, terms and markings

Since 2011, Deutschen Seminar für Tourismus (DSFT) Berlin eV, user organisations and the tourism industry, in collaboration with the NatKo (National Coordination Office for Tourism for All) have been developing a labelling standard scheme for accessible facilities and services, which includes awareness training. The project "Tourism for All" (2011 - 2013) is being promoted as a measure under the National Action Plan of the Federal Government to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. The project is being funded by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWt) with a budget of €600,000 allocated to the project (EUR 500,000 donation; capital EUR 100,000).

For further information see:  
<http://www.natko.de/index.php/Projektergebnisse/tourismus-fur-alle-in-deutschland>.

### **Barrier-free Travel Destinations Association**

The Barrier-free Travel Destinations Association<sup>9</sup> in Germany is a group of cities and tourism regions which are especially committed to barrier-free tourism in Germany and who work to continuously develop and communicate barrier-free tourism in cooperation with the partners of the association. In order to be a member each city or tourism region has to meet the following requirements:

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.barrierefreie-reiseziele.de/>

- Town or city with at least 300,000 overnight stays/year or tourism region with at least 500,000 overnight stays/year
- Barrier-free tourism is enshrined in the mission statement and/or the development plan for the city or region.
- Barrier-free tourism is established as an important theme in the marketing plan of the city/region and is also referred to in its main publications.
- The city/region has a working group that regularly discusses issues relating to barrier-free tourism.
- The city/region supports the work of the Association through its own activities and regularly sends at least one representative with decision-making powers to attend meetings of the Association.
- The city/region declares that it is willing to put its own know-how in the area of barrier-free tourism at the disposal of the members of the Association.
- The city/region undertakes to publish collective advertisements of the Association in its most important publications and to include a link to [www.barrierefreie-reiseziele.de](http://www.barrierefreie-reiseziele.de) on a related section of its own website.
- The city/region shares in the joint marketing of the Association with a budget to be determined each year.

The cities and tourism regions which are especially committed to barrier-free tourism include:

- the **Eifel** region with its eponymous national park, a landscape of forests, lakes and volcanoes
- the City of **Erfurt** with its romantic, medieval old quarter and its imposing architectural ensemble of cathedral and Church of St. Severus
- the **Franconian Lakes** for swimming, windsurfing, sailing and cycling in a beautiful and varied natural setting
- **Lower Lusatia** has so many exciting places to discover and features a landscape in the midst of change
- the City of Magdeburg, regional capital of Saxony Anhalt with an ancient city
- East Friesland features ancient moorlands, romantic parks, fen canals stretching in straight lines to the horizon and the unique natural heritage of the Wadden Sea

- the Ruppiner Land region with its lakes, canals and rivers, and
- Saxon Switzerland with its unspoilt national park and the impressive scenery of the Elbe Sandstone Massif

The objectives of the Barrier-free Travel Destinations Association are as follows:

- To further develop barrier-free tourism in the regions and in Germany as a whole
- To develop a network of “barrier-free travel destinations in Germany”
- To create transparency in the provision of barrier-free products and services
- To share ideas and experiences on a regular basis
- To intensify collaboration with politicians, local authorities and other associations on a Germany-wide basis
- To engage in joint marketing activities
- To operate a joint website [www.barrierefreie-reiseziele.de](http://www.barrierefreie-reiseziele.de)

In January 2010 the association "Barrier-free Destinations in Germany" became a partner of the German National Tourist Board (GNTB)<sup>10</sup>.

### **The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board**

As indicated previously “The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board is the primary point of contact for visitors of Frankfurt am Main. The Tourist and Congress GmbH Frankfurt am Main is the marketing company for the city of Frankfurt am Main relating to tourism and conventions. It is the board’s responsibility to promote a positive image of Frankfurt around the world. At the same time it is a business enterprise that provides services to visitors of Frankfurt”.

One of the objectives of the Frankfurt Tourist + Congress Board (TCF) is to make the city’s touristic offers fully accessible to people with disabilities. The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board has been implementing accessibility initiatives in various ways since 2011 and some of the accessibility initiatives that the Board has undertaken include:

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.germany.travel/de/index.html>

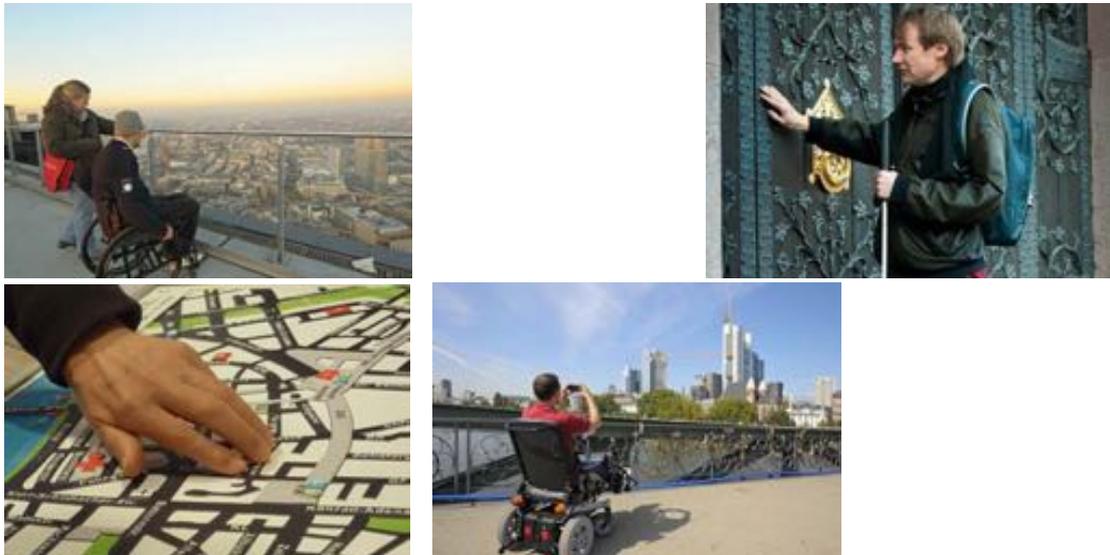
- 'Barrier-free Frankfurt Brochure: In 2012, The TCF launched a brand new brochure dedicated to providing information for people with disabilities.
- The development of a new guided city tour for the vision-impaired.
- All of the current available tours provided by the Tourist and Congress Board's may be arranged to be entirely stepless, while a sign language interpreter is also available free of charge upon prior request.
- The Tourist and Congress Board's employees have been participating in special seminars delivered by experts in the field of accessibility. The seminars were aimed at helping staff to better appreciate and respond to the specific requirements of various target groups. Some of the seminars included:
  - Dialogue in silence: All employees of the TCF attended a workshop relating to hearing-disabilities and deafness. This workshop was provided by the Museum for Communication in Frankfurt.
  - Dialogue in the dark: All employees of the TCF attended a workshop relating to blindness and visual impairments. This workshop was provided by the DialogueMuseum in Frankfurt.
  - Seminar for all employees which provided basic knowledge and awareness of people with reduced mobility.
  - Visit of a best-practice-destination and meeting with the responsible destination managers there (just for project coordinator and managers of the service department)
  - A number of staff attended a seminar on creating accessible documents including the project coordinator and TCF's graphic designer.
- The Tourist and Congress Board has held meetings with Frankfurt's service providers and presented on best-practice-destination management. These meetings have also informed service suppliers on future accessibility initiatives taking place in Frankfurt.
- The Tourist and Congress Board is an official partner of the German National Tourist Board. There is a dedicated page on the GNTB's website entitled "Accessible Frankfurt"<sup>11</sup>. This page provides information on the Barrier Free Frankfurt Brochure, Guided City Tours, relevant contact details, information on tactile maps and a brief background on accessible Frankfurt.
- A number of marketing initiatives are taking place to promote Frankfurt as a barrier free destination (Examples include attending the REHCARE Trade Fair in Dusseldorf to promote Barrier Free Frankfurt and attending the Sight City Trade Fair for blind people in Frankfurt).

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.germany.travel/en/ms/uk-barrier-free/where-to-go/frankfurt.html>

- Developing tourist guide for people with learning disabilities.

**Figure 1: Accessibility images of Frankfurt from the German National Tourist Board's website<sup>12</sup>**



### 3.0 The integration of the supply chain

This section identifies some of the accessibility initiatives and ways that services providers across the tourism service chain (See Figure 2). It looks at a sample of different tools and methods that have been used to foster accessibility along the supply chain such as guidelines, accessibility labels, information schemes and other policy instruments from public authorities.

**Figure 2: The tourism service chain**

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.germany.travel/en/ms/uk-barrier-free/where-to-go/frankfurt.html>



### Preparation, Information and booking - Tourist information and accessibility guidelines

This section outlines two of the initiatives taken in Frankfurt to assist people with disabilities in advance of their trip to Frankfurt:

- "Frankfurt am Main barrier-free" Brochure.
- City-Guide for people with limited mobility - new edition.

**"Frankfurt am Main barrier-free" Brochure:** The "Frankfurt am Main barrier-free" brochure<sup>13</sup> introduces tourist to the accessibility offerings within the city of Frankfurt. The brochure provides detailed information on:

- Sights: This section provides an overview of some of the accessible sights throughout Frankfurt including The Emperor's Cathedral; the Römer (City Hall) and Emperor's Hall; the Old Opera House; Museum Embankment and the Banking District including the Main Tower Observation Platform to name a few.
- City Tours: Accessibility information provided on a range of accessible city tours including 'Feeling Frankfurt – A Special Tour for the Blind, the Vision-Impaired and the Sighted' and 'the Christmas Market Tour'.
- Museums: Accessibility information on 24 museums within Frankfurt.
- Stages: Accessibility information on 12 theatres, venues and opera houses within Frankfurt.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/cms/export/system/galleries/tcf/dok/18871.pdf>

- Skyscrapers: The Main Tower is the city's only publicly accessible high-rise and therefore is the only building described in barrier-free terms in this section.
- Green Frankfurt: Accessibility information on the numerous parks, zoological and botanical gardens that invite visitors to take a break from the hustle and bustle of the City.
- Shopping: Nine accessible shopping destinations are provided ranging from Fashion boutiques to grocery markets to large shopping centres.
- Cuisine: A guide to four accessible restaurants in Frankfurt and information on how to find other accessible restaurants throughout Frankfurt.
- Festivals – A brief guide on the accessibility of annual festivals in Frankfurt (i.e. The Museum Embankment Festival and the Spring and Autumn Dippemess Fair.
- Frankfurt: City of Trade Fairs – A guide to Messe Frankfurt – The worlds second largest trade fair.
- Arrival/Mobile in Frankfurt: A guide to Frankfurt International Airport; The Frankfurt Central Station and public transport within the city.
- Useful Addresses: A list of useful address to assist visitors with disabilities.

There are a number of complementary guides freely available on the internet that accompanies this brochure including:

- A supplement guide on barrier free (accessible) Hotels in Frankfurt<sup>14</sup> which includes hotels with different price categories and uses symbols to highlight the levels of accessibility in place.
- A city map<sup>15</sup> which includes information on accessibility including the locations of accessible toilets, accessible parking spaces and a public transport plan.

**City-Guide for people with limited mobility - new edition<sup>16</sup>:** This online City guide has been produced by the Department of Social Welfare and the accessibility database been collected using a standardised system, so everyone can find their way around Frankfurt easily; access and uses restaurants and cafes and book accessible accommodation to name a few. The online city guide offers information about the accessibility of many facilities in Frankfurt am Main (e.g. restaurants, cafés, shopping opportunities, hotels, parks, cultural and educational institutions, public buildings and offices and many more places). The Database currently has 450 organisations registered and the guide is aimed primarily at people with mobility

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/cms/export/system/galleries/tcf/dok/18986.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/cms/export/system/galleries/tcf/dok/18803.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.frankfurt-handicap.de/?L=1>

impairments. The website notes that people with sensory disabilities will also find the website and the accessibility information provided useful.

The website also provides useful information and resources for people with disabilities wishing to travel in the area. Examples include information on 'Accessible shuttle service to Hahn Airport', Guides on accessible travel, **Mobility for the Disabled - travelling by bus and train in Frankfurt am Main and Accessible restaurants, pubs, hotels and Disabled Parking in Germany**<sup>17</sup>. A section is provided on the website to access information on accessible tourism and this is directly linked to the The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board's Barrier Free section of the website<sup>18</sup>.

**Figure 3: Image of the online City-Guide website**



### Arrival and Departure - Public Transport

In 2011, more than 56 million people travelled through Germany's largest airport Frankfurt International Airport. The airport is the third largest in airport in Europe and had approximately 480,000 take offs in and landings in 2011. The airport is committed to making its services accessible to travellers with reduced mobility. A dedicated webpage on the airport's website<sup>19</sup> provides information on arrival and departure, assistance available (e.g. Call points for calling the Passenger Support Service are located in Terminals 1 and 2).

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.frankfurt-handicap.de/81.html>

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/cms/tourismussuite/de/freizeit\\_kultur\\_sport/barrierefrei\\_handicap\\_behindertengerecht.html](http://www.frankfurt-tourismus.de/cms/tourismussuite/de/freizeit_kultur_sport/barrierefrei_handicap_behindertengerecht.html)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.frankfurt-airport.com/content/frankfurt\\_airport/en/barrier-free\\_travel.html](http://www.frankfurt-airport.com/content/frankfurt_airport/en/barrier-free_travel.html)

accessibility guides<sup>20</sup>, parking for people with disabilities, accessibility hotlines and passenger support services available.

Frankfurt's Central Station ranks amongst Europe's most important railway hubs with over 350,000 passengers and more than 1,700 trains arriving from foreign and domestic destinations every day. The Deutsche Bahn runs a Mobility Service Centre to assist passengers with reduced mobility. The Service Centre can provide advice on planning a journey, seat reservations, timetabling information, travel assistance and concessions available. Again, the Deutsche Bahn has a number of guidelines to assist customers with disabilities (only available in German)<sup>21</sup>

The Rhine/Main Regional Transport Association (RMV) is one of the biggest transport associations in Germany. It coordinates and organises regional bus and rail transport services across an area of around 14,000 square kilometres. On the homepage of the RMV there is a link to information for passengers with limited mobility. This link provides detailed transport information for people with disabilities<sup>22</sup>.

Information on travelling by subway, commuter train, tram or bus is also provided on the "Frankfurt am Main barrier-free" brochure and information on booking accessible taxis is available on the Frankfurt Barrier Free website.

### **Entertainment and Culture Museums/Attractions/Guided tours**

The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board has a strong cooperation with a variety of cultural institutions and museums in Frankfurt. Great improvement and investments have been made in the area and a number of accessible services are offered. Detailed information on Entertainment and Culture Museums, Attractions and Guided tours is provided in the "Frankfurt am Main barrier-free" Brochure described above.

Some of the improvements include greater accessibility at tourism venues and accessible information brochures and leaflets. For example, the Dialog Museum<sup>23</sup> has lobbied the owner of their building to make the venue more accessible and the museum also has a comprehensive guide on accessibility

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<sup>20</sup> [http://www.frankfurt-airport.com/content/frankfurt\\_airport/en/misc/container/assistance\\_at\\_theairport082008/jcr:content.file/file.pdf](http://www.frankfurt-airport.com/content/frankfurt_airport/en/misc/container/assistance_at_theairport082008/jcr:content.file/file.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> [http://www.bahn.de/i/view/mdb/pv/pdf/diverse/handicap/MDB90625-mobilitaetsbroschuere\\_2011-s105\\_bf.pdf](http://www.bahn.de/i/view/mdb/pv/pdf/diverse/handicap/MDB90625-mobilitaetsbroschuere_2011-s105_bf.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.rmv.de/en/Fahrgastinfos/RMV\\_fuer\\_alle\\_Lebenslagen/41136/Mobilitaetseingeschraenkte.html](http://www.rmv.de/en/Fahrgastinfos/RMV_fuer_alle_Lebenslagen/41136/Mobilitaetseingeschraenkte.html)

<sup>23</sup> <http://dialogmuseum.de/>

entitled “Orientation and Identity”. Messe Frankfurt also has a detailed guide entitled “Barrier-free exchanges” which provides information on ‘barrier-free trade fair visit and tips for your visit to the Festhalle. Messe Frankfurt also provides a page on their website dedicated to accessibility for people with disabilities<sup>24</sup>.

### **Service and assistance - Tourist Information/Accessibility point of contact/Up to date information**

The FTCB provides up to date accessibility information on its website. For example the European wheelchair basketball championships were held in Frankfurt in 2013 and information on accessibility was made available for participants and visitors.

The Barrier-free Frankfurt website also provides contact details of their accessibility representative and this representative is available to assist with accessibility queries and services as and when required.

Detailed information is provided on how to contact the Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board and staff are available and happy to answer questions/queries regarding Frankfurt and the barrier-free movement within the city. As noted previously, all staff have received training on meeting the needs of people with disabilities and the importance of barrier free travel and a number of meetings have taken place with service providers in order to promote accessibility.

## **4.0 Provisions for cross-impairments**

The previous section identifies a number of accessibility initiatives that services providers across the tourism service chain have undertaken in order to make Frankfurt accessible for all.

There is clear evidence that tourism supply chain which embraces barrier free travel in Frankfurt offers services addressing a wide range of tourist needs tourists with various disabilities and other various access requirements.

Museums, such as the Staedel Museum, Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung and Schirn Kunsthalle regularly provide guided tours for the blind and deaf people, while Opera Frankfurt provided several assisted performances for the people with vision and hearing impairments.

Messe Frankfurt provides detailed information on their website on how to ensure your visit is barrier free. An information booklet provides information

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<sup>24</sup>

[http://www.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/en/besucher/anreise\\_und\\_aufenthalt/barrierefreier\\_zugang.html](http://www.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/en/besucher/anreise_und_aufenthalt/barrierefreier_zugang.html)

on visiting with children, local public transport, services for barrier free visits, hotline information, tips for your visit and accessibility features in place.

Public transport operators and the main airport in Frankfurt provide accessibility information for passengers being accompanied by personal assistants, people with reduced mobility, people with hearing impairments, people with visual impairments and parents with young children. Detailed pre-visit information is available to allow people plan their journey and visit in advance, with points of contact also available.

Guided tours are designed to accommodate the widest range of users as possible. Guided tours are also provided for the Frankfurt Christmas Market and all guides take into account the needs of visitor.

The Frankfurt am Main barrier-free Brochure launched in 2012 uses symbols throughout to allow the end user to identify what accessibility features are in place. It is also intended to publish an easy to read version of the guide to assist people with learning disabilities.

**Figure 4: sample of the images used in the Frankfurt am Main barrier-free brochure.**



**No barriers for wheelchair users**

- Door width of at least 90 cm
- Lift door width of at least 90 cm / Cubicle size of at least 110 x 140 cm / Highest control element 110 cm
- Level access / Ramp / Threshold of max. 3 cm



**Aids available for hearing-impaired persons**



**Aids and signs available for vision-impaired persons**



**Assistance for persons with learning disabilities**

## 5.0 Business approach – building a business case for accessibility

In 2011, the Tourist and Congress Board began the first accessibility activities which started with the development of the 'Barrier Free Frankfurt' Brochure. The first brochure was only launched in 2012. As part of the press release for the launch of brochure, Thomas Feda the managing director of the Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board noted that "With the further redevelopment of our barrier-free service spectrum, we have significantly improved our overall offer range, a fact that may well be decisive in bringing even more national and international travellers to Frankfurt".

The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board also recognises that people with disabilities represent a growing target group for the tourism industry in Frankfurt and Germany. They have identified that accessibility and additional assistance is often required by a much wider audience than just people with disabilities including parents with strollers or prams, travellers with heavy luggage, and the increasing number of senior citizens. Therefore it makes good business sense to address accessibility as it is clear that the extended target group will in the near future represent over fifty percent of the overall population. By implementing barrier-free measures, the TCF is following the example of many other German cities and adequately addressing the needs of this significant target group.

Although there is currently no formal mechanism in place to monitor the benefits of accessibility in the tourism sector or no in-depth investigations into the costs and benefits for individual suppliers within Frankfurt, The Tourist and Congress Board has:

- Seen an increased awareness amongst service suppliers. For example suppliers want to know how to make their accommodation accessible and want to identify what staff training is available.
- Seen accessibility improvements throughout Frankfurt (i.e. improvements to two tourist offices, the provision of tactile maps and better accessibility within museums).
- Been contacted by many suppliers in relation to improving accessibility and getting their company on the 'Barrier Free Frankfurt' Brochure and have received numerous enquiries from their target group concerning the topic of barrier free travel.
- Redesigned their guided tours to incorporate accessibility. All tours are designed to be 'stepless' and a German sign language interpreter is available on request. A newly developed tour "Feeling Frankfurt" now tells the story of

Frankfurt and has been designed to accommodate people with visual impairments.

- Recognised that accessibility needs to be promoted by everyone and all positive initiatives undertaken by service suppliers must be recognised and promoted by the Tourist and Congress Board. The Board also recognises that marketing the good work done by suppliers will have a direct impact and knock on effect for all suppliers as they will try to improve their accessibility and thus improve competitiveness.
- Worked with other organisations in Frankfurt and received funding to develop a Tactile map for the City.
- Seen measureable impacts of providing accessible services. Examples include events like the European Championships in wheelchair basketball which was held in 2013 and Frankfurt being nominated as the hosts of the International Day of Older Persons in 2015. The hosting of this day in 2015 is expected to generate events connected with the topic of accessible tourism.

Tourism providers within Frankfurt also recognise the importance of the Business case for accessibility and one business noted that accessibility must be considered as “it is urgently needed for a growing and international City like Frankfurt”.

## 6.0 Evidence of impact

The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board can be seen as a best practice example on how a Tourist Office can improve accessibility, promote barrier free travel, engage with and get buy in from service suppliers and remove barriers for people with disabilities in the tourism sector. Examples of their work include:

- The Barrier-free Frankfurt Brochure launched in 2012 is widely promoted at national and international level. It is currently under review and the second edition is due to be published in February 2014.
- The organisation has identified the importance of staff in order to embed accessibility and mainstream it into everything the organisation does. Numerous seminars have taken place to make staff aware of the barriers faced by people with disabilities.
- Improvements have taken place at a number of Tourist Offices to remove any physical barriers and to improve communication (i.e. provision of hearing loops).
- The Board has redesigned their own guided tours to incorporate accessibility (See section 5.0 above).
- The Board ensures that barrier free travel is part of their overall marketing campaign. For example the national and international marketing of Frankfurt as a tourist destination includes accessibility and barrier free travel.

- The Board recognises the importance of providing services for an ageing population and growing market sector.
- The Tourist and Congress Board engages and assists service suppliers on a regular basis. For example the Board has held meetings with Frankfurt's service providers and presented on best-practice-destination management. The accessibility representative on the Board also engages with service suppliers on an ongoing basis and provides them with assistance and advice.
- The Boards promotion campaigns address Barrier Free Travel and accessibility. A number of promotional campaigns have also been directed towards promoting Barrier free travel. For example, the Board has participated in REHACARE in Dusseldorf (the leading international trade fair for rehabilitation, prevention, inclusion and care) and Sight City in Frankfurt ( a trade fair for blind people).
- The Board is constantly looking at new innovative ways to improve accessibility. For example the Board is striving to ensure their website is designed in accordance with the latest best practice and the Board is currently developing guidelines for people with learning disabilities.

The work undertaken by the Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board has also had a very positive impact both nationally and internationally:

- More and more people from the target groups (i.e. people with disabilities) are aware that Frankfurt is working hard to improve their accessibility and Frankfurt has become known as an accessible City Destination. The Barrier Free Brochure is published on a number of national and international websites and organisations and associations are travelling to Frankfurt to avail of the accessibility within the city. One example of this is the fact that the European Championships in Wheelchair basketball were held in Frankfurt in 2013.
- The accessibility initiatives that the Tourist and Congress Board has implemented have been mentioned throughout national and international media and through a number of national and international trade magazines (e.g. On the Road Magazine and Life InSight)
- Other destinations have contacted the Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board to identify how they can get people on accessibility road – (e.g. Destinations in the federal state of Hesse and the Rhine-Main region).
- The Tourist and Congress Board has received very positive feedback especially in direct conversations with people with disabilities at Trade Fairs and during their visit to Frankfurt. A number of customers have expressed their satisfaction with the brochure, the guided city tour for blind people and the tactile city map.

## 7.0 Conclusions

The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board has been only working to improve accessibility within Frankfurt for a number of years. The Board has recognised that there are a number of key contributors for the successful implementation of an accessible tourism service:

- Service providers need to be informed about that their target market is changing and as the world's demographics change accessibility and barrier free travel can no longer be ignored.
- Engaging key stakeholders (i.e. Disability organisations) and service suppliers is key to improving accessibility.
- Striving to continually improve standards of accessible service delivery is required in order to the tourism service remains accessible.
- A highly informed staff is key for the successful implementation of accessibility. It is critical that everyone within the organisation buys into accessibility as everyone has a role to play.
- Accessibility needs to be mainstreamed within the organisation.
- It is really important that suppliers working with you are made aware of the barriers faced by the target groups and aware of how to support accessibility initiatives.
- If suppliers are recognised for the accessibility improvements they make, more and more suppliers will buy into the process and will want to participate.
- Marketing the good work done by suppliers will have a direct impact on all suppliers trying to improve accessibility and improve competitiveness.

Finally it is clear that the Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board is dedicated to removing accessibility barriers for people with disabilities to visit Frankfurt and is continuously improving their services to ensure all people can experience what Frankfurt has to offer.

## 8.0 Recommendations

Based on the case study above and information collected when preparing this case study it is clear that accessibility and barrier free travel can no longer be ignored in the tourism sector.

- There is a business case for accessibility as people with disabilities are an important and increasing target group (80 Million people in Europe). Therefore every destination should make accessibility part of promotion and marketing strategy in order to increase the number of people with disabilities travelling to tourist destinations.

- Accessibility and universal design must go one step further and think beyond disability. According to ISEMOA<sup>25</sup> people with reduced mobility (PRM)<sup>26</sup>, comprise about one third of the European population and they all will benefit from good accessibility. For example, the majority of people who are visiting museums, galleries and theatres are often visiting to use a particular service or engage in a specific activity, such as a guided tour, to enjoy a play or to participate in an arts event. Universal Design and Inclusive Design have key roles to play in ensuring these sorts of services, within purpose-built buildings and environments, are accessible to all visitors. Problems can sometimes occur if people only think about accessibility in terms of disabled people and any issues they may experience in accessing the built environment - ignoring a bigger picture, which is about making the services accessible for all people regardless of age, size or disability.

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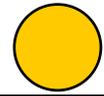
<sup>25</sup> [http://www.isemoa.eu/docs/29/ISEMOA\\_D3-5\\_WhyAccessibility-shortversion\\_en.pdf](http://www.isemoa.eu/docs/29/ISEMOA_D3-5_WhyAccessibility-shortversion_en.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> The group of PRM comprises not only of people with disabilities, old people (especially those older than 75/80 years), children, and people accompanying small children, but includes also people with learning difficulties, people carrying heavy bags or bulky luggage, people with non-average stature, people with only little knowledge of the local language, people with orientation problems, people with mental/psychological problems, colour-blind or illiterate people, people with arthritis, hip problems or coronary problems, people just recovering from surgery or illness, and people with temporary impairments such as broken legs, etc.

## Annex I: Criteria and justification for best practices

**Table 1: Criteria and justification for best practice**

Criteria	Justification	On track/off track
<b>Relevance</b>	The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board provides very informative and easy to use pre-visit guidance and information for people with disabilities wishing to access Frankfurt. The supplier has also identified that the overall accessibility for the user during their visit needs to be addressed and has made improvements to its Tourist Office, Guided Tours, improved staff awareness and improved visitor information. The marketing of Frankfurt as an accessible destination has also been considered and has lead to other suppliers within Frankfurt improving their accessibility.	
<b>Transferability</b>	The model adopted by the Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board is easily transferable to other Tourism suppliers and a number of suppliers are currently looking at the Frankfurt model as an example of best practice.	
<b>Efficient &amp; Effectiveness</b>	At this early stage, impacts haven't been strategically measured, however the City of Frankfurt has benefited from accessibility improvements and a number of accessibility events have been hosted in Frankfurt (e.g. The 2013 European Championships in Wheelchair Basketball).	
<b>Sustainability</b>	The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board maintains relationships with other businesses along the supply chain by provided information on Sights, City Tours, Museums, Stages, Skyscrapers, Green Frankfurt, Shopping, Cuisine, Festivals, City of Trade Fairs, Transport and useful addresses in their	



	promotional material.	
<b>Innovation</b>	The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board are striving to continually improve standards of accessible service delivery in order to ensure the tourism service remains accessible. Examples include the development of accessibility guidelines for people with learning disabilities and making their guided tours accessible. The Board is also engaging with key stakeholders and raising awareness of barrier free travel within Frankfurt.	