

Press release

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Adding value with sustainable business practices

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For Messe Frankfurt, sustainability means acting as a responsible corporate citizen while continuing to strengthen the Group's performance – it is something that encompasses economic, ecological and social factors. Social, economic and ecological aspects of sustainability are key components of our business and are reflected in the various activities of all parts of the Group worldwide. Our sustainable business practices are geared towards the ten principles of the UN Global Compact and the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. CSR activities are divided into four areas: Environment/Sustainability, Social Responsibility, Education/Science and Commitment to Culture and Sport.

As a trade fair company, Messe Frankfurt is constantly active in the interests of its sectors with its expertise and worldwide network, focusing on the business interests of exhibitors and visitors. Partnerships are of particular importance – partnerships with stakeholders, customers and sectors at Group events and partnerships with guest organisers. The constant aim of the Group is to generate added value for its customers, for its shareholders and for its employees.

One of the ways in which Messe Frankfurt demonstrates its commitment to CSR is by participating in sustainability networks. Since 2010, Messe Frankfurt has been a member of the United Nations Global Compact – the first German trade fair organiser to join its ranks. The worldwide CSR network is committed to sustainable corporate management and to the ten principles set out in the areas of human rights, labour standards, environmental protection and anti-corruption activities. In addition, the company supports the “fairpflichtet – rightandfair” industry code for the sustainable organisation and implementation of events. Messe Frankfurt is also a member of the Charter of Diversity.

The Frankfurt exhibition grounds are among the largest and most modern anywhere in the world and are constantly being enhanced with regard to appearance, functionality and environmental efficiency.

The Kap Europa congress building, which has been in operation since mid-2014, was the first congress building worldwide to be awarded Platinum Certification by DGNB (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Nachhaltiges Bauen). The DGNB certification process looks at a building's entire life cycle.



Energy efficiency and the conservation of resources are of central importance for the company. Messe Frankfurt's energy policy is defined by a common understanding of energy and by strategic paths of action. Suitable measures in the area of energy efficiency and resource protection were defined as part of long-term energy monitoring activities. By using efficient exhibition hall technology and tailoring systems operation to actual needs, it is possible to bring about a sustainable reduction in the consumption of electricity, water and heating energy. There are currently two photovoltaic systems on the roof of Hall 10 and the Rebstock multi-storey car park. Since autumn 2018, the third photovoltaic system on the grounds – located on the roof of Hall 12 – has been generating energy from the sun's rays. Taken together, all three photovoltaic systems on the exhibition grounds help to reduce CO₂ by an estimated 1,200 tonnes a year. They allow us to harvest around 2.3 GWh of solar energy (2020).

Since the beginning of 2020, Messe Frankfurt has changed over completely to green power. This includes the power supply for the stands, halls and exhibition grounds at its Frankfurt base. Efforts to reach the objective of permanently reducing the base load consumption on the exhibition grounds by ten percent are being implemented resolutely. As well as optimising the efficiency of our operations and systems, we want to use an energy-saving campaign to make all colleagues and service providers even more aware of the importance of energy efficiency – both at work and at home.

All new buildings and renovations feature forward-looking, energy-optimised construction and efficient operation, for example with compound cooling systems between the exhibition halls.

Messe Frankfurt leads the sector with the systematic separation and recycling of waste at its exhibition grounds, with up to 90 percent of waste generated each year being fed back into the material cycle.

A key factor contributing to sustainable mobility and logistics is the central location of the Frankfurt exhibition grounds, which offers excellent connections with all important transport routes. With a light rail station situated in the middle of the Frankfurt exhibition grounds and an underground train and tram connection at its City/Festhalle Entrance, Messe Frankfurt has an environmentally friendly public transport system that takes the strain off the city's traffic. Given its close proximity to Frankfurt Central Station, train travel is a viable and environmentally friendly option. Exhibitors and visitors with a combination ticket can use public transport at no additional cost.

Messe Frankfurt has one of the most advanced digital traffic management systems in the trade fair sector. By optimising the flow of traffic to and from our events, this helps to reduce set-up and tear-down times for events. This strategic management helps to alleviate traffic congestion and also to reduce traffic build-up caused by drivers looking for parking in and around the exhibition grounds. This in turn lessens noise pollution and emissions as well as the considerable burden on the immediate environment.

The issue of environmentally sustainable business practices also affects the catering sector. At Accente Gastronomie Service GmbH, our catering subsidiary, this begins with the purchase of predominantly local and regional food. Wherever possible, we avoid using disposable packaging and food containing dyes, preservatives and additives.

The 80 or so catering companies that provide meals and refreshments during events only use reusable dishes and easily biodegradable materials.

Messe Frankfurt's commitment to culture is a reflection of its business fields, events and communities and is documented in the organisation of events, sponsorships and awards for outstanding achievement in music, architecture and design. As well as this, the company is involved in a series of social projects such as collecting donations for children's charity Children for a Better World e.V. at its Frankfurt base in keeping with the slogan "With Children. For Children". In India, a reservoir was built together with the Planet Water Foundation, providing clean drinking water for the village of Jaunti, near New Delhi.

Messe Frankfurt is one of the main sponsors of the Frankfurt Marathon. The spectacular final stage of the 26-mile race takes place in Messe Frankfurt's Festhalle.

As innovation platforms, it stands to reason that Messe Frankfurt's flagship events are also a driving force when it comes to sustainability. Its worldwide flagship events are ideal platforms for communicating future trends and the importance of social responsibility. In many segments of the textile industry, Messe Frankfurt and its flagship events are putting their weight behind efforts to create a green future market, from home and household textiles to technical textiles, textile processing, textile care and fashion. With its Texpertise network, Messe Frankfurt actively supports the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals are to be presented gradually at the 60 or so textile events in order to shine a spotlight on the most pressing challenges facing the textile and fashion industry worldwide. Messe Frankfurt's global textile network has the ideal platforms for raising awareness of the need for greater sustainability in the textile industry.

Sustainability is not a passing trend in the consumer goods industry but rather a paradigm of the modern age, one that is documented in many ways at Messe Frankfurt flagship events. Under the umbrella of technology exhibitions are, among other things, innovative platforms for efficient building management, intelligent networking, security of supply, design and sustainable usage of scarce resources, namely energy and water. Messe Frankfurt is also active worldwide in the area of Environmental Technologies, currently with five environmental trade fairs. Sustainable pioneering technologies also play a key role in the Mobility & Logistics business field in a wide cross-section of areas such as alternative drives, lightweight construction and energy efficiency.

Background information on Messe Frankfurt

The Messe Frankfurt Group is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with its own exhibition grounds. The Group employs approximately 2,300* people at its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main and in 30 subsidiaries around the world. In 2021, the company had to contend with the challenges posed by the pandemic for the second consecutive year. Annual sales will be approximately €140* million after having been as high as €736 million in 2019 before the pandemic. Even in difficult times caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we are globally networked with our industry sectors. We have close ties with our industry sectors and serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of the Group's key USPs is its closely knit global sales network, which extends throughout the world. Our comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. We are expanding our digital expertise with new business models. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services. Headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent).

For more information, please visit our website at: www.messefrankfurt.com

* Preliminary figures for 2021