FRM

The magazine about the
FrankfurtRhineMain Metropolitan Region

FOOD Blending tradition, innovation and passion — **FASHION** How FrankfurtRhineMain establishes itself as a fashion hub — **INDUSTRY** How FrankfurtRhineMain supercharges German exports — **FREEDOM** Trade, democracy and diversity are in our veins — **INVESTMENT** Infrastructure and facilities that unleash potential — **NIGHT SHIFT** Where work only begins after the sun goes down

Issue 2026/27

> English Edition

The metropolitan region with nature on its doorstep

Explore a region where new discoveries are never far away



Frankfurt RheinMain
Become a part of it

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A STRONG BUSINESS LOCATION



CONNECTING THE WORLD WITH TOMORROW

Fraport



A SHARED REGION TO LIVE AND DO BUSINESS

FrankfurtRhineMain is a single region, but it has many different centres, from Frankfurt, Wiesbaden and Darmstadt, to Mainz, Offenbach, Hanau and Aschaffenburg. What connects us all are networks and pathways – highways and ancient trade routes, the Rhine and Main rivers, many long-distance railway stations serving routes across Germany and Europe, along with Frankfurt International Airport and the DE-CIX Internet Exchange. Out of their historic relationships as neighbours, these cities and regions have forged a shared region in which we live and do business.

In this edition of FRM Magazine we turn our attention to a fact that is often overlooked, that connections are about much more than just infrastructure. They are essential to freedom, openness, participation and sharing and exchanging ideas, values and opportunities. These are all traits which thrive here in FrankfurtRhineMain, and they are particularly evident in Frankfurt itself. They can be seen in the democratic movement which began at St Paul's Church, and in the Frankfurt School of philosophers and social scientists associated with Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer and Jürgen Habermas. The trade fairs bring together people from across the world to network, and there are the neighbourhoods of Frankfurt, where people from almost 180 different nations live together.

Here in the heart of Europe, networking is our strength, but at the same time, it demands ongoing nurturing, modernisation and wise decision-making. After all, liberty cannot be taken for granted. It relies on trust, rules and infrastructure which connects us, rather than dividing people.

I hope that reading this inspires you to reflect on the pathways which connect us all.



Mike Josef
Mayor of the City of Frankfurt am Main



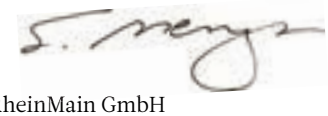
A SPACE TO GROW

Economic strength flourishes in places where great ideas grow into tangible projects. FrankfurtRhineMain is the ideal environment for this to happen, with its diverse economic landscape, outstanding research, international connections, and direct access to major markets. It's in environments such as ours that businesses find the space they need to drive innovation.

Across science, industry and commerce, universities, research institutions, start-ups, SMEs and international corporations work hand-in-hand in FrankfurtRhineMain. These links facilitate innovation in healthcare, raw materials, engineering and digital solutions. Our strengths attract investors from within Germany and around the world, as we reveal on page 28 of this edition of FRM Magazine. International businesses are investing billions in new manufacturing facilities, research clusters, research centres and logistics infrastructure. Here they find skilled workers with excellent qualifications, high-performance networks and conditions they know they can trust. But above all, they can count on easy access to customers, suppliers, science and funding.

The strength of the economy of FrankfurtRhineMain comes from the fact that we're a close-knit neighbourhood with international reach here The region offers businesses the chance to tap into new markets, build partnerships and cultivate long-term growth. Freedom like this unlocks opportunities and overcomes boundaries, allowing us to achieve new goals and build our future together. Come with us to discover a region which is always in motion and filled with limitless potential.

I hope you enjoy finding out all about FRM!



Eric Menges
CEO of FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH
International Marketing of the Region

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRANKFURT

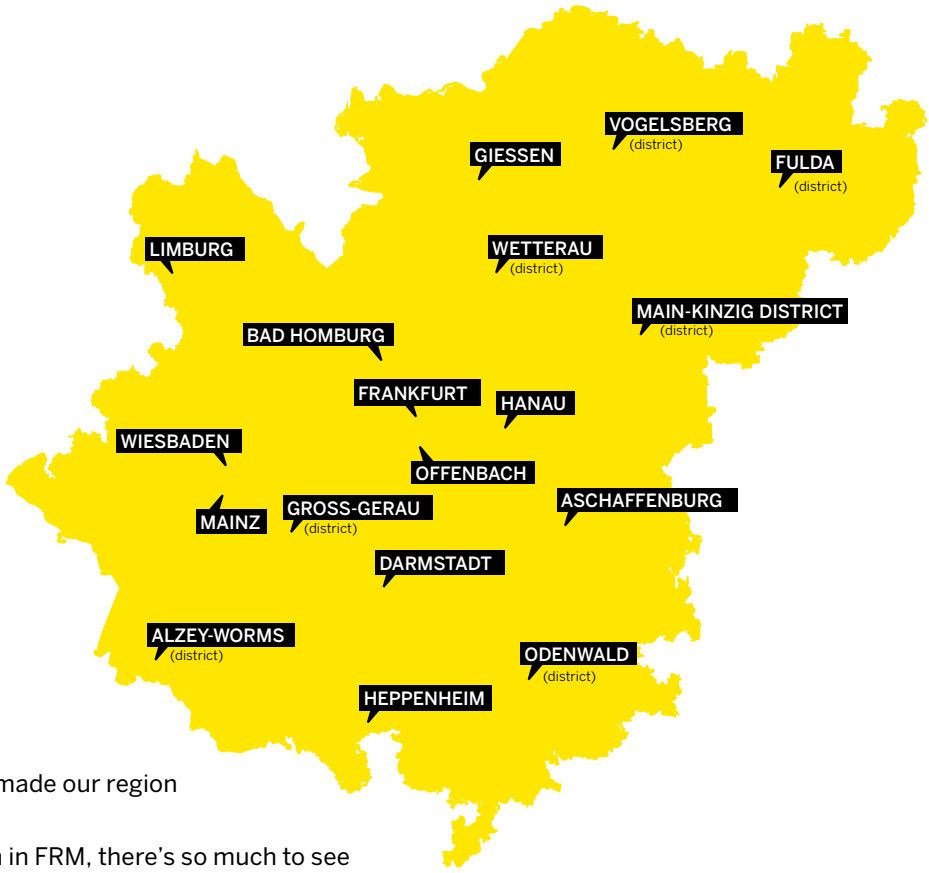
BRONZE

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Discover FRM
The cover photo shows the Regionalpark Hohe Straße route – turn to pages 14–15 for more.

PUBLICATION DETAILS

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ECONOMIC
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Stay ahead.

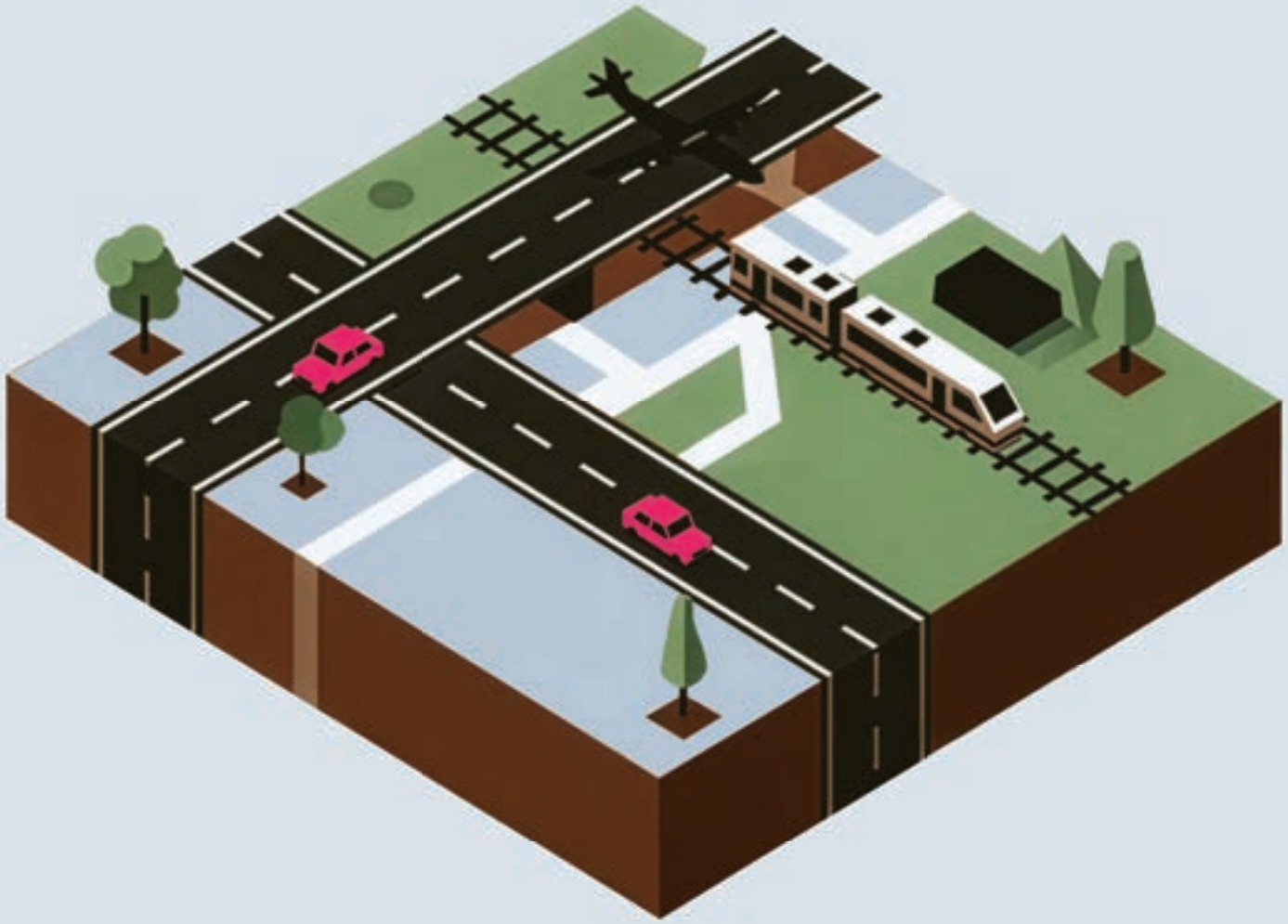
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COUNTLESS CONNECTIONS, ONE FRM

FrankfurtRhineMain has many different centres. What connects them all are our **transport links, hubs and networks** which have grown up over centuries and express the region's unique political history. To this day, they are vital to our economy, identity and everyday lives.

KIM BERG

An ICE express train rolls into the station at Frankfurt Airport with a squeal of brakes and a brief swirl of wind along the platform, followed by the soft hiss of the opening doors. Holidaymakers manoeuvre their cases while people in suits hurry past, trying not to spill their coffees. A family counts the number of coaches on the train. You can see the sky through the glass wall beyond the tracks, but even that never stands still, either, with the endless procession of planes taking off or coming in to land. The deep roar of their engines passes over the station, and as it fades, you make out the low hum of traffic on the A3 Autobahn. If you stand here for even just a second, you'll understand what makes this region different: we have fantastic connections.

But that hasn't always been the case. The FrankfurtRhineMain region was once a patchwork of diminutive states, an origin which still makes itself felt today in the metropolitan region's many different centres that share a space but still live separate lives.

HISTORIC BOUNDARIES AND PATHWAYS

From early on, the area between the Taunus mountains and Main and Rhein rivers needed routes that were more reliable than political boundaries. Roads were needed for traders to transport their goods or for generals to move their armies, roads to carry messages, coinage and, in later years, printed books. Out of a mass of tiny



© Regionalpark RheinMain

The Hohe Straße regional park follows the route of an ancient trading road. At 38km in length, the park offers visitors views right across the FrankfurtRhineMain region.

regions ruled by dukes, princes and bishops there gradually emerged a cohesive region where people could live and trade.

One of the oldest routes runs over the hills to the east of Frankfurt. Today, the "Hohe Straße" ("high road") is a popular destination for day-trippers to enjoy the views over the region. Historically, though, it formed part of the Via Regia, a network of long-distance roads across Europe first created over 2,000 years ago. The Hohe Straße was a reliable way for travellers to cross between whole regions, long before modern roads and railways came into being. It connected settlements, markets and trading centres from eastern to western Europe. Towns and villages along these long-distance roadways reaped the rewards of the traffic that passed by, as travellers always needed things to buy and sell, craftsmen to repair vehicles, and businesses to provide services. But trails such as the Hohe Straße served as more than just economic arteries. They also provided pathways for power for messengers and armies, while customs and border posts marked out boundaries. In this way, the Hohe Straße prefigured the infrastructure that makes mobility possible today, and which expedites trade and exchange across FrankfurtRhineMain.

While highways have left their mark on the region, historic boundaries shape us, too. In the Taunus mountains, you can still see the remains of the Limes, the border wall which long delineated the northern limit of the Roman empire. Along the Limes was a string of forts, roads and supply networks, which drove up demand for food, craftspeople and transport services, providing a boost to the region thanks to trade between the military, the civilian population and surrounding areas. Nowadays, visitors can walk the Limeserlebnispfad, a route that runs 86km through the Taunus mountains, taking in historic monuments, museums and nature trails.

THE WATERWAYS OF THE METROPOLITAN REGION

Settlements, trade and traffic have all grown up along the Rhine and Main rivers, but they have also fed the region's very identity. Nowadays, the two rivers form part of a network of rivers and ca-

nals that connects the Rhine, Main and Danube rivers. Every year, millions of tonnes of freight are carried by goods vessels along this route, which is also popular with river cruises.

The Rhine is one of the most important waterways in Europe, connecting FrankfurtRhineMain with North Sea ports, the Upper Rhine, and the European single market. The Main serves as the key regional axis. Thanks to its connection to the Rhine and canalisation, it provides a reliable route for transport and logistics deep into South Germany. The Main-Danube Canal provides a further connection towards South-East Europe. Thanks to these great waterways, the region has become a vital link in a transcontinental network.



A container ship passes Bacharach, famous for its vineyards high on the slopes above the Rhine. The village sits in the UNESCO Rhine Gorge World Heritage Site

FRANKFURT HAUPTBAHNHOF – A KEY EUROPEAN HUB

Rail transport plays a vital role in mobility in the region. The rail network in and around Frankfurt connects long-distance services with suburban and regional trains, while RMV Rhein-Main-



The Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain supports outstanding cultural projects and promotes cultural collaboration in the region.

KULTURFONDS
Frankfurt RheinMain

The non-profit fund is financed by the State of Hesse, Frankfurt am Main, the Hochtaunus District and the Main-Taunus District, Darmstadt, Wiesbaden, Hanau, Bad Vilbel, Offenbach am Main, the Rheingau-Taunus District and the Offenbach District.

www.kulturfonds-frm.de
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Verkehrsverbund manages a 1,450km track network across the region. Every day, 2,100 regional and 1,000 suburban train services operate across the RMV region.

From Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof travellers can reach destinations across Europe in a matter of hours. It takes only three hours to get to Brussels or Basel, and you can be in Paris or Amsterdam in four hours. Direct services to London and Oslo are also on the cards. Every weekday, 400,000 people pass through what is Germany's second-largest railway station. The ICE high-speed line between Frankfurt and Cologne has made a profound difference to the region, cutting travel times to the Rhine and Ruhr regions and giving a huge boost to the economic integration of the two metropolitan areas, as well as transforming Frankfurt into a key hub for traffic between southern and north-western Germany. Connections to rail corridors towards Wiesbaden, Mannheim, Fulda and Kassel have created a network which not only creates close links across FrankfurtRhineMain as a region, but also forges strategic connections to regions across the country, delivering huge benefits to businesses, trade fairs, logistics operators and commuters in the region.

SUPER-POWERED TRANSPORT HUB

The A3 and A5 Autobahns in FrankfurtRhineMain comprise two key transport corridors which connect the region with the rest of Germany. The A5 serves as a north-south spine, linking FrankfurtRhineMain with central Hesse and North Germany, as well as Darmstadt, Rhein-Neckar and the Upper Rhine to the South. Running east-west, the A3 is the primary corridor between the Rhein-Ruhr region and Wiesbaden, Mainz and Frankfurt, as well as Offenbach, Hanau, Aschaffenburg and destinations in the Franconia region of northern Bavaria. What really supercharges the region isn't just the two motorways, though: it's the fact that these two routes connect just outside Frankfurt, where traffic flows converge to concentrate commuter, business and goods traffic. On average, 370,000 vehicles every day pass through this junction, which celebrated its 70th birthday in summer 2026. bi The "Frankfurter Kreuz", as it's known in German, is one of the busiest and most important road junctions in Europe.

ENGINE FOR GROWTH AND GATEWAY TO THE WORLD

Frankfurt Airport lies only a short distance from Frankfurter Kreuz. It is one of the largest passenger airports in Germany, an international hub which connects the region with destinations across the globe. According to data from Fraport, 88 airlines served 283 destinations in 92 countries in summer 2026. Over 4,700 aircraft carrying up to 871,100 passengers took off every week from Frankfurt Airport this summer. In April 2026, Fraport Terminal 3 opened its doors to passengers, with capacity for 19 million travellers a year and scope for up to 25 million. With in-



Frankfurter Kreuz motorway junction, where the A3 and A5 Autobahns intersect close to Frankfurt Airport.

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Every weekday, 400,000 people pass through Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof station.

vestment totalling €4 billion, Terminal 3 is considered the largest privately financed infrastructure project in Europe. Frankfurt Airport also celebrated another highlight in 2026, when Germany's largest airline Lufthansa, which is headquartered in Frankfurt, marked its centenary. Established on 6 January 1926, the name recalls the Hanseatic trading network which flourished in the late Middle Ages.

FROM HARD CASH TO DIGITAL MARKET INFRASTRUCTURE

If Frankfurt is famous for one thing, it would be the city's banks. Centuries ago the city was already the financial centre of Germany as people from many different regions came here for fairs and markets, bringing with them varying types of currency with different rates of exchange. In a bid to bring order to this "coin chaos", merchants agreed a consistent exchange rate in 1585, bringing the Frankfurt Stock Exchange into being. Today, the primary means by which currency comes into the region is through digital infrastructure. From its offices in Frankfurt and Eschborn, the Deutsche Börse consolidates core functions of the financial markets. As the home of the European Central Bank, Frankfurt is responsible for ensuring price stability across the Eurozone and safeguarding the purchasing power of the euro.

Three questions



© Kulturfonds, Foto: Vlada Shcholkina

Dr Susanne Völker,
Managing Director,
Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain

FRM: FRM has many different centres. What connects them most deeply?

SV: FrankfurtRhineMain has one of the strongest metropolitan regional economies in Germany. On top of that, it boasts a central position and diverse cultural life and academic landscape. In the areas around Frankfurt are other urban centres, picturesque landscapes and major historic cities. Here you find fields and forests, vineyards and infrastructure that links it all. Ultimately, what binds us together comes from the people who identify as this region.

FRM: How has this poly-centrism influenced the region's cultural development?

SV: Frankfurt, Wiesbaden, Darmstadt, Offenbach and Hanau are all centres of creativity and the arts. Each exemplifies different cultural priorities between tradition and modernity. The Rheingau and Taunus regions have hills and castles, vineyards and a rich Roman history. Spa towns, hot springs and a rich tradition of music and other types of festivals are another of our region's strengths. They all help forge a shared cultural identity across FrankfurtRhineMain. It's a powerful driver of development.

FRM: What makes this region so attractive for people from all over the world?

SV: Our central location in Europe with outstanding connections plays a critical role in international partnerships. Our prestigious universities, technical institutions and international schools also play a significant part in that, as do the career opportunities available at our many businesses, banks and research institutions. People from over 170 nations call this region home, which creates a diverse mix of cultural traditions in art, music, festivals and gastronomy, all of which foster a pluralistic environment where everyone feels welcome.



HOW THE DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT TRANSFORMED COMMUNICATIONS

They may be impossible to see, but data streams and communication networks are even more important than finance. Long before the birth of the Internet, these networks have played a key role in Frankfurt since the 19th Century. St Paul's Church in Frankfurt is considered the cradle of German democracy, as home to the first parliament for the whole of Germany in 1848–1849. Delegates debated rights, a constitution and the system for political governance. Needing to get messages quickly to other centres of power, MPs used the recently invented electric telegraph, which allowed information to be sent over long distances in minutes instead of days. The direct connection between Frankfurt and Berlin proved to be particularly important as a means for urgent messages to get from Frankfurt to the then capital of Prussia.

At peak times, networks connected to the DE-CIX exchange can move data at up to 18.11 terabits per second.

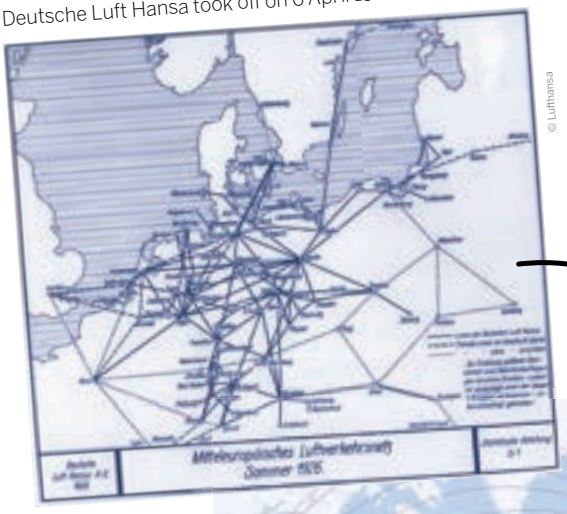
Today, Frankfurt's role as a networking centre continues unabated. Its proximity to DE-CIX puts Frankfurt at the heart of the region which is home to Europe's largest internet exchanges, with direct connections for ISPs, cloud providers and content delivery services. DE-CIX was set up in 1995 to make it quicker and cheaper to transfer data in Germany, as up till then, much of Germany's Internet traffic was still routed through the United States. At peak times, networks connected to the DE-CIX exchange can move data at up to 18.11 terabits per second.

Above all, FrankfurtRhineMain is a region with outstanding connections in the heart of Europe. It's a place to switch modes, change direction and move forward, be that by rail, on the road, by air, or online. A space has emerged out of ancient pathways and modern networks which is not held together by a single central point. Instead, its connections transform a polycentric metropolitan region into a cohesive social fabric.

THE CRANE THAT WENT GLOBAL

Luft Hansa went into service in 1926.
Since then, its routes have expanded into a global system. **Let's see what has changed.**

The first scheduled flight operated by Deutsche Luft Hansa took off on 6 April 1926.



© Lufthansa



© Marius Walter/Unsplash



© flightconnections.com

Now, Lufthansa and its partners fly to over 300 destinations around the world, serving 200 just from its home hub in Frankfurt.

Mathematikum Giessen



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50 km



Büdingen historic town

Treetop Walkway Bad Camberg

Hessenpark Open Air Museum

20 km

Idstein historic town

Großer Feldberg

Bad Homburg Palace Park

Burg Ronneburg Castle Museum

5 km

Hohe Straße

Lohrberg

Hanau-Wilhelms-bad State Park

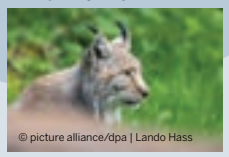
Schlachthof Wiesbaden

Frankfurt Museumsufer



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Alte Fasanerie Wildlife Park



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Johannisburg Palace Aschaffenburg

Mainz Market Breaktfast



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Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt



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50°10'24.0"N
8°51'54.2"E

The middle point of FrankfurtRhineMain lies north-east of the village of Wachenbuchen. The 190-kilometre Regionalpark circular route also passes through the area. It takes cyclists through FRM's varied landscape, with sights, cultural highlights, panoramic views and historic buildings along the way.

DISCOVER THE REGION IN AN HOUR

Whether you're **on foot, out on the bike or in your car,** the FrankfurtRhineMain region is full of delights for visitors to discover. Let's take a look at some of the sights less than an hour from the centre of FRM.

KIM BERG

So where exactly is the centre of FrankfurtRhineMain? It lies 8.8650513° east by 50.1733401° north, to be precise. And what can you do within an hour of the heart of FrankfurtRhineMain? So much! Less than 5km on foot, 20km by bike or 50km by car, you'll find adventures galore, magical walks, and delicacies to savour. How about taking time out for a coffee in Hanau-Wilhelmsbad State Park? Strolling between the stunning facades of historic building and the oldest permanent carousel in the world is a great way to unwind. If you're in the mood for a walk on the wild side, you'll find lynx, wolves and European bison at Alte Fasanerie Wildlife Park. Lovers of live music are in for a treat at Schlachthof Wiesbaden, from hip-hop to punk. The region is a treasure trove for fans of the great outdoors, too. On weekends, cyclists and walkers head to the hills, flocking to summits such as the Feldberg, the Lohrberg and the trails of the RheinMain Region Park, which includes the ancient route of the Hohe Straße. Perched 28m above the ground, the Bad Camberg treetop pathway offers fabulous views of the whole region. Culture vultures will find themselves spoilt for choice by the region's museums, palaces and charming historic towns. And if you're in the mood for a glass of wine or two with breakfast, the Mainz Market Breaktfast is the perfect spot.



Katharina and Florian cook along with their guests at their farm-to-table workshops in their market garden.









A DIVERSE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

FRM is a place where local produce rubs shoulders with food cultures from all around the world. **Cooking in FrankfurtRhineMain** is as diverse as the people who live here. We visit four kitchens which express the region's diversity and inspired us to explore the food on offer in FRM.

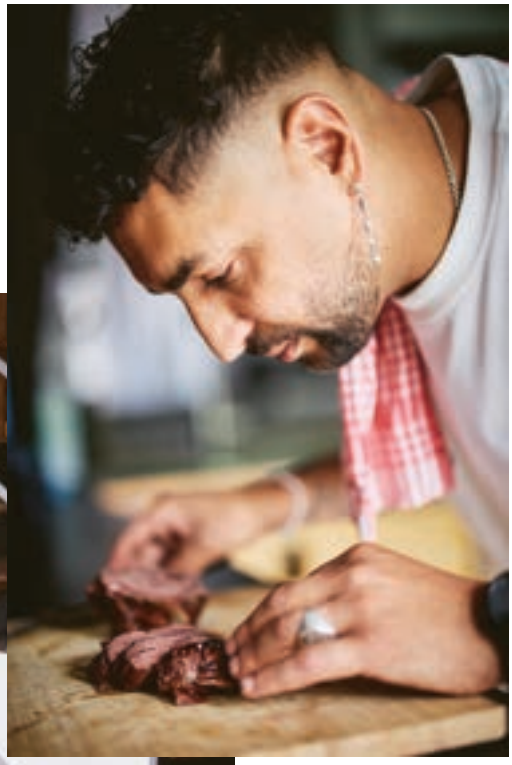
KIM BERG (TEXT), JONAS RATERMANN (PHOTOS)

The aroma of fried vegetables and warm butter drifts across the meadow. Holding a basket of fresh tomatoes, Katharina Liebe comes out from behind a greenhouse and stands next to her husband, who is cooking on two hotplates in the garden. Today at Ottos Liebe market garden in Bad Homburg there's spaghetti alla Nerano and a tomato salad with burrata. The spaghetti with courgettes, butter and parmesan is the perfect dish for the season. "The courgettes come from our field," says Florian Otto. The tomatoes his wife is slicing are grown in their own greenhouses.

Florian and Katharina take an unhurried approach to cooking in their improvised kitchen, which they have set up under an apple tree with two hotplates and a marquee table. "Right from the start we conceived of our market garden as a mixed business model,' Florian says as he fries off the courgettes. In addition to selling their produce, they also hold workshops. "What we do here is something we want people to be able to experience, such as our farm-to-table workshops, where we come together to cook things we have harvested," Florian explains.

On several occasions they have partnered with a chef who runs a Frankfurt supper club to transform their garden into a kitchen. "We are thinking about holding our own events around the topic of food in the market garden," Florian says as he turns the spaghetti in the butter. Their guests are effectively eating vegetables straight off the plant. "You can't get any closer to the source than that," he says.

The market garden was established in 1878, and Florian and Katharina took over in 2018, the fifth generation of Florian's family to hold the reins. There aren't many places like Ottos Liebe left in FrankfurtRhineMain. "Most nurseries have moved their operations to the fringes of urban areas," Katharina says. But Ottos Liebe is different (the name literally means "Otto's Love"). The market garden and its land are right in the town. "There's a shortage of housing across the whole region," Florian explains, but he and Katharina didn't want to put up fences around their land. They wanted to open it up. "Our concept is based on that whole principle. We want to create somewhere for people to meet, and where they only take out their phones to take photos."





Mehdi loves the freedom of preparing food. He never follows a recipe, relying instead on instinct and taste.





BLENDING CHAOTIC CREATIVITY AND SUCCESS

Mehdi Mellij loves taking photos on his phone, especially photos of his food. Born in Morocco, Mehdi became a chef out of his passion for food. “I believe anyone can cook,” he says as he drizzles olive oil over a baking tray full of garlic cloves. Today, Mehdi is working at an agency in Frankfurt. “The managing director wanted to give his team an incentive to come into the office more often, so he asked if I could cook here every Friday,” he explains.

Now a private chef, Mehdi never actually had any formal training. During the Covid pandemic he started serving food to guests at home – always abiding by the rules, naturally. “That was the first thing which encouraged me to turn my hobby into my career,” he says. His philosophy is “cooking comes to you”, where he brings that restaurant feeling to his customers at home. Mehdi calls his business “Auswärtskochen”, and he creates bespoke experiences for private evenings or groups of friends. They also provide small-scale company events, where in addition to preparing the food, he and his team choose the location and serve guests. “Everyone I work with knows me really well and understands what I expect,” Mehdi explains as he slices spiced meat which has been cooked sous-vide.

He loves the freedom he has in the kitchen, without having to follow recipes. “A trained chef would definitely raise an eyebrow at how I work,” he says with a laugh. In the kitchen he often jumps from one process to doing something completely different. “You couldn’t work like that in a professional kitchen. There you have to complete each job in order, otherwise it descends into chaos,” he says. But for Mehdi, cooking is all about the outcome, not how you get there.

Mehdi became a father some years ago, and he hopes to pass on his love of cooking to his daughter. "Many people from my generation grew up associating cooking at home with stress," he says. Cooking was always about getting things done quickly. "But talking about what you want to eat, shopping for ingredients and preparing them – that's what makes cooking special. That's my real passion."

FROM FIELD TO TABLE

Elena has cooking running through her veins. She was born in Romania, and now works as a chef at Dottenfelderhof farm in Bad Vilbel, just north-east of Frankfurt. Like Mehdi, she never follows a recipe. "Before I became a cook I loved shopping here," she explains with a laugh as she slices a pepper. Dottenfelderhof is a biodynamic farm where about 100 people live together and tend the fields as a collective. Across the 200 hectare site, the farm combines arable, produce and fruit production, along with various forms of animal husbandry. This approach yields a largely self-sustaining agricultural cycle. In industrial agriculture, other farms of a similar size tend to be operated by just one family. But the collective at Dottenfelderhof wanted to prove that a farm on this scale could generate enough income for a large number of people.

Much of what the farm produces is sold through the on-site cheese counter, bakery (complete with its own wood-fired oven), and patisserie. The large farm shop and cafe serve organic produce from the farm and surrounding areas, from fresh vegetables to bread, cheese and hot dishes. There's even a research office on site, where the farmers cultivate their own varieties, such as plants which are less susceptible to disease or are better adapted to a changing climate.

"The people who live here get full board meals all year round," says Barbara, who works in the kitchen alongside Elena. In addition to residents, others come to work on the farm but live elsewhere. Barbara and her team prepare meals for around 140 people every day, not to mention visitors to the farm cafe. But there's nothing amateurish about their cooking. The stainless steel cupboards hold pots and pans of all shapes and sizes. Carrots are braising in a large steam cooker, while mince and onions are sizzling on a plancha, a type of large griddle pan.



Left: Elena and Caro at work in the kitchen. Below: Barbara fetches vegetables from the greenhouse for lunch.





“It’s usually pretty loud in the kitchen. The equipment makes a lot of noise, but so do we.”

Elena, chef at Dottenfelderhof





Top: Residents at Dottenfelderhof enjoy full-board catering. Leftover bread and veg is fed to the farm pigs.

Six women work in the kitchen: Barbara, Elena, Thushanthini, Caro, Tatyana and Erika. “I love working here because it’s so meaningful. We all feel the same way. People come in from the fields at lunchtime and are so pleased to see that there’s food on the table. After lunch, they go back out to the fields re-energised,” says Barbara. But they make time to have fun, too. “It’s usually pretty loud in the kitchen,” explains Elena. “The equipment makes a lot of noise, but so do we.” Unlike in a restaurant, the women in the farm kitchen have space to express their creativity. There is a weekly plan, but they are flexible about how they use the produce. It all depends on what is available.

THE ROBOT IN THE KITCHEN

The scene in the takeaway kitchen at Vipho could not be more different. A robot is preparing the food at the Vietnamese restaurant, always under the watchful eye of two chefs. The robot produced by a manufacturer in Hamburg can prepare up to eight dishes at once. Meanwhile, the chefs check its creations and supply it with fresh ingredients. “The robot can work completely autonomously,” explains Hung Quach, owner of Vipho. It fetches ingredients and sauces which are stored in two fridges whenever it needs them. Then it plates up the food in its own little universe – and even does the washing up!

You can’t miss the fact that Hung loves the latest tech. But the idea of employing a robot arose when he faced problems with finding enough suitable staff for his kitchen. Hung and his wife Thu Dinh have run their restaurant in Frankfurt’s Nordend district since 2012. “Right from the start we found it difficult to find people with the right skills,” Thu explains. And although the restaurant was becoming more and more popular with customers, competition for the best chefs was





Left: Thu and Hung. Below: The robot chef at work in their delivery restaurant. Below-left: Chefs still prepare food in the main restaurant.



growing, too. “When we first opened, there was only one other cafe in the area. Most of the other businesses were small boutiques,” Thu says. Now, though, there’s one restaurant after another along this stretch of street. That’s not to say Thu and Hung are losing customers as a result, though. The dining room is busy at lunchtimes and for dinner service – the woks are always sizzling, and the couple are expanding the restaurant’s delivery service further and further afield. “Our restaurant is so popular that we thought about opening a second branch,” Hung explains, but that comes with a lot of risks. In the end they decided to open a kitchen in Frankfurt’s Gallus district to handle deliveries – along with its very own kitchen robot.

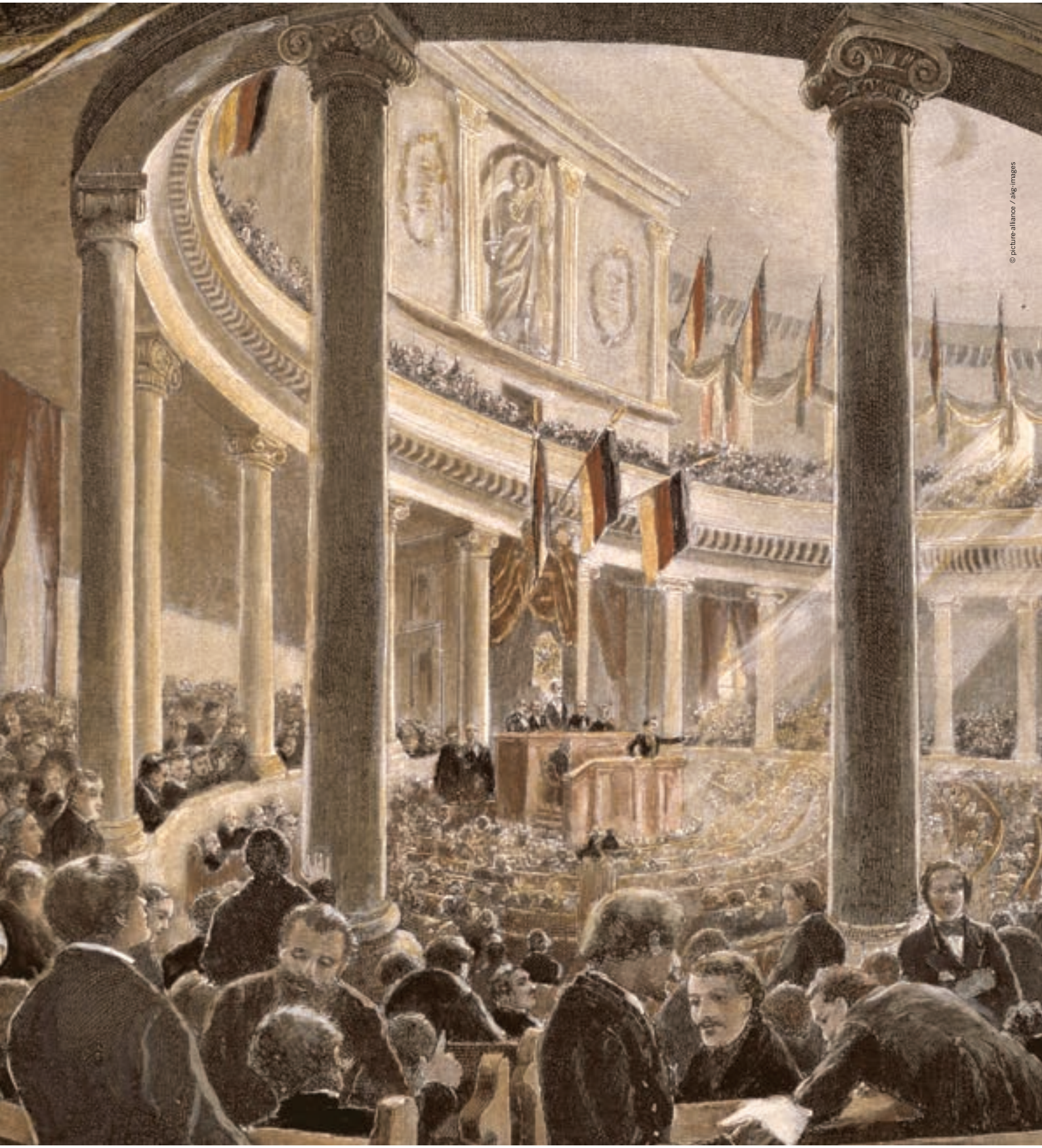
Teaching the robot to prepare the dishes on their menu was no mean feat. “Normally we cook in a wok over an open flame, but here we use induction hobs,” Hung says. But there was a huge difference in the amount of heat produced by the two different systems. Month after month Hung and Thu continued their experiments until they were happy with the ingredients, quantities and cooking times. “We’re still experimenting now,” laughs Thu. All that testing is paying off, too. “Once we’ve programmed in a dish, it comes out exactly the way we want it every time, without exception,” Hung says. For all that, they are not planning on getting rid of their chefs. After all, for Hung and Thu, a kitchen without a chef isn’t a kitchen at all.

Germany's best place?
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On our skilled worker portal you find everything you need to know about living and working in the FrankfurtRheinMain region with a single click!



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The first freely elected parliament for the whole of Germany met in St Paul's Church in Frankfurt in 1848.

FREEDOM TO SPEAK, FREEDOM TO MOVE

For centuries, FrankfurtRhineMain has been a place where people come, go and settle down. It's a place where freedom flourishes through **trade, democracy and diversity.**

WOLF ZINN

At Frankfurt Airport, the world is already up and about while everyone else is still in bed. Business people, families, backpackers, suitcases, pushchairs, the aroma of coffee, languages you can't speak but somehow still understand – it's all here. Some people gaze up at the huge departure boards, and in that momentary pause, one idea in particular takes on a definite form: freedom. You can come. You can go. And of course, you're welcome to stay.

After all, freedom is part of who we are in FrankfurtRhineMain. We trade and negotiate, work, play, laugh, fall out and fall in love. Freedom isn't an abstract theory here. It's how we live our lives. Merchants have been coming to Frankfurt since the Middle Ages. In 1240, Kaiser Friedrich II placed visitors to the Frankfurt autumn market under his protection. The liberty of the market, known here as Messefreiheit, allowed outsiders to come here to proffer their wares and agree contracts, protected by rules they could trust. It's an ancient principle, but it's certainly not out-of-date.

THE GENESIS OF GERMAN DEMOCRACY

In 1372 Frankfurt became a free city of the Holy Roman Empire, which allowed it to conduct its affairs largely on its own terms. Without doubt, the building which symbolises our desire for freedom and self-determination is St Paul's Church, under whose roof a political adventure began in 1848, with the meeting of the first freely elected parliament for the whole of Germany. Delegates from regions across the land debated matters such as the constitution, fundamental rights, the freedom of the press, and equality before the law. The revolution may have foundered, but the spirit of St Paul's Church lived on. Many ideas discussed there had a lasting impact – even making their way into modern Germany's constitution, the Basic Law.

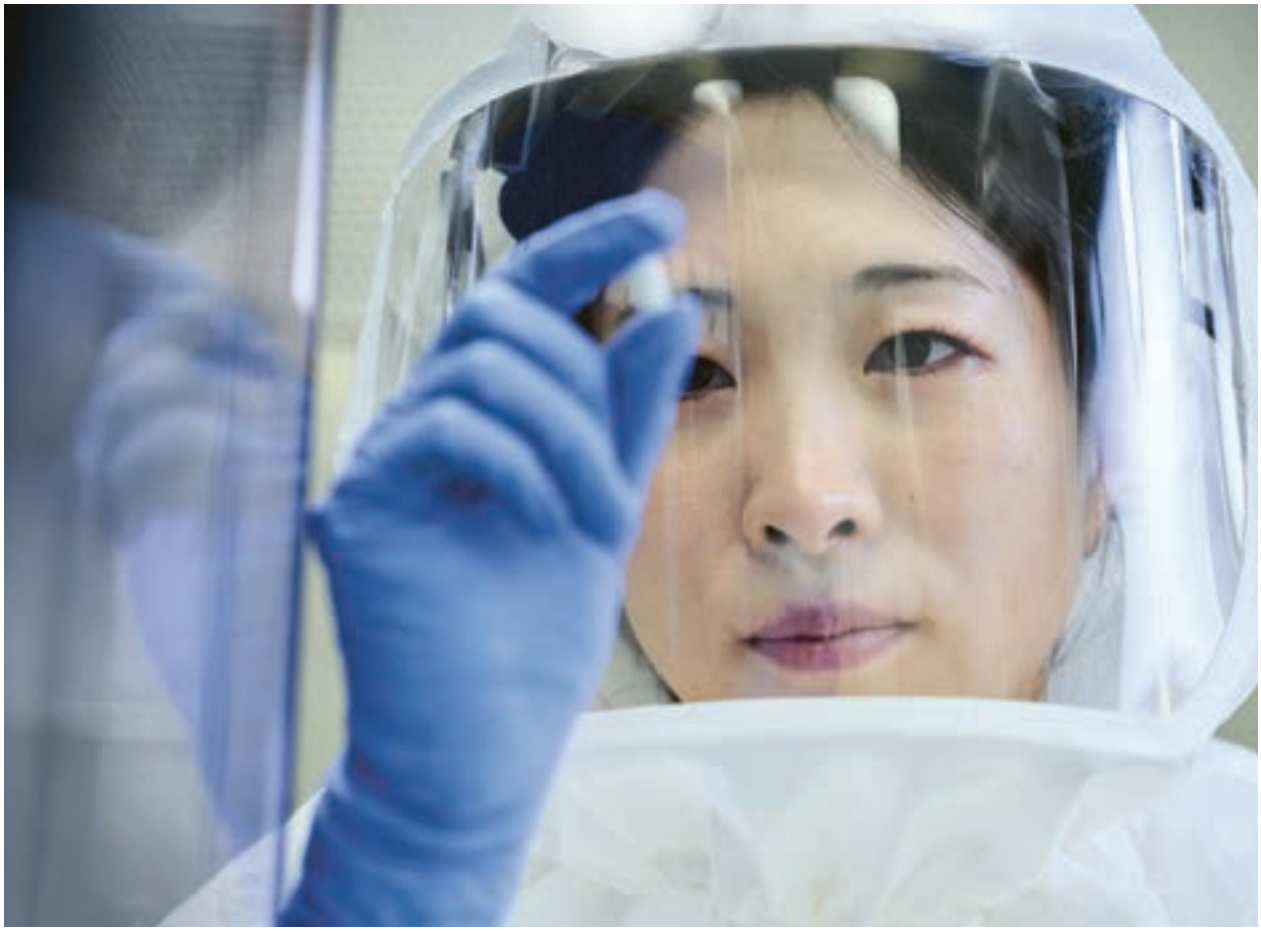
Throughout its history, this region has brought forth countless free spirits, such as the poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, born in Frankfurt in 1749. In his great drama "Faust", Goethe proclaimed that, "Of freedom and of life he only is deserving Who every day must conquer them anew." The writer, physician and revolutionary Georg Büchner, from the nearby town of Goddelau, uttered this cry in his 1834 pamphlet, "The Hessian Courier": "Peace to the huts! War on the palaces!" In Büchner's words, freedom demands social justice. Bettina von Arnim, a member of the Brentano family of writers and thinkers from Frankfurt, wrote, "I must retain my liberty!" For a woman in the early 19th Century, this was a manifesto of female self-assertion.

CRITICAL THINKING FLOURISHES IN FRANKFURT

In the years after the Second World War, philosophers and social scientists such as Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer and Jürgen Habermas transformed Frankfurt into a forum of critical thinking. The "Frankfurt School" investigated the question of freedom and liberty in modern societies, as opposed to blind obedience, ideology and resorting to prejudice. Habermas was one of the most important postwar philosophers until his death in March 2026. For him, democracy and debate were inseparable: freedom means having the chance to make a better argument.

Today, you will encounter this idea every day on local trains, at trade fairs, in offices and auditoriums, in exhibitions, at restaurants or in clubs. People from over 170 nations live in FrankfurtRhineMain. The Frankfurt Book Fair brings together writers, publishers and readers from every corner of the world. Frankfurt Airport connects the region with hundreds of destinations. Businesses attract people from abroad who come here to work as researchers, developers, programmers and designers. It's only logical that FrankfurtRhineMain is pulsing with life, charged with energy – and occasionally noisy and chaotic. Freedom isn't always cosy and comfortable here. But we wouldn't exchange it for anything in the world.

Boehringer Ingelheim is Germany's largest drug manufacturer.



© Nippon Boehringer Ingelheim Co., Ltd.

EXPORT MOTOR INNOVATION HOTBED

The FrankfurtRhineMain metropolitan region is one of **Germany's key industrial regions**. FRM is where new drugs are developed and manufactured for global markets. The region is also leader in cutting-edge chemistry, optics and engineering.

GÜNTER HEISMANN

BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM: RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FOR STRONG GROWTH

Boehringer Ingelheim is a standout example of the culture of innovation in the region's industrial sector. Measured by turnover, the pharma giant is Germany's largest manufacturer of medications. In 2025, Boehringer Ingelheim invested €6.4 billion in research and development. That same year, the group brought out two new drugs which are in high demand, especially in the USA: Jascayd, which is used to treat pulmonary fibrosis, And Hernexeos, which has been hailed as a breakthrough in the treatment of a particularly aggressive form of lung cancer. "Both these therapies mark a major step forward in areas with high levels of unmet demand," says Boehringer Chairman Shashank Deshpande. The new drugs were key factors in the family firm seeing turnover rise 16% to €15.8 billion in the first two quarters of 2026. Boehringer markets its medications in around 130 countries globally.

Boehringer markets its medications in around 130 countries globally.



© SCHOTT

A worker pours glass at SCHOTT. The Mainz firm developed Ceran, a ceramic glass used in hobs.

SCHOTT: FRESH IDEAS IN GLASS

Humans have been working with glass for approximately 7,000 years, but its potential is by no means exhausted. Chemists and engineers at SCHOTT in Mainz are developing glass panels which allow greater levels of precision in the manufacturing of computer chips. SCHOTT has a long history of creating innovative products out of glass, such as Ceran, a ceramic glass used in hobs. At the other end of the scale, SCHOTT has been working on mirrors for the Extremely Large Telescope (ELT), since 2017. With a diameter of 39 m, the main mirror will be the world's largest optical telescope. The firm's latest developments include ultra-thin foldable protective glass for smartphone displays, and specialised glass for augmented reality devices.

HERAEUS: SUPPLIER TO THE SEMICONDUCTOR INDUSTRY

Heraeus' roots extend back to the 17th Century. Over the centuries, what began as a pharmacy has grown into a key player in global technology and materials. Heraeus supplies high-tech materials used in the production of medications, semiconductors and other industrial applications. Precious metals constitute a significant aspect of the family firm's core business. Heraeus recovers gold and platinum from scrap materials, before purifying them to the highest degree of quality and supplying them back to industry. The company also manufactures high-purity specialist materials such as quartz glass. In 2025, the company turned over €43 billion. It also invests 5.5% of profits (excluding precious metals) in research and development.

JUMO: HIGH-PRECISION REALTIME TEMPERATURE MEASUREMENT

Headquartered in Fulda, JUMO supplies automated sensor and measuring technology for use in industrial applications such as monitoring heat levels in district heating systems. JUMO devices also allow users to measure temperatures in ovens, breweries and chemical facilities with absolute precision. The firm's sensors also measure flow rates in water and wastewater pipes, and even monitor pH levels in swimming pools. Cloud-based services make it possible to analyse data captured by the sensors in real time.

KION: AI FOR LOGISTICS

Forklift trucks are everywhere in factories and logistics centres. Based in Frankfurt, KION is the world's second-largest manufacturer of the vehicles, many of which operate autonomously. Germany's leading development and manufacturing base for forklift trucks is located in Aschaffenburg, where engineers are working on complex, novel AI-based control systems for use in logistics.



KION is developing new AI-based control systems for autonomous forklift trucks.





© Opel / Stellantis



Rüsselsheim has been home to Opel's headquarters, research division and manufacturing facilities since 1862.

© Opel / Stellantis

ISRA VISION teaches machines to see and develops sensors for robots.



© ISRA VISION GmbH

ISRA VISION: MACHINES THAT CAN SEE

Enis Ersü set himself an ambitious goal: machines should learn how to "see". While still a research assistant at TU Darmstadt, Ersü founded ISRA VISION in 1985. The firm he established develops and manufactures sensors for robots. A second area of its work comprises optical quality control systems, built with steel, glass and other materials. Today, ISRA VISION is a global leader in machine vision technology.

WEISS TECHNIK: CLIMATE SIMULATION MARKET LEADER

Discovering a niche market can provide a route to success, even in challenging times, as Weiss Technik from Reiskirchen near Giessen learned. The company specialises in environmental simulation. Their testing cabinets allow customers to see how well their products will cope with the stresses and strains they will face in use. The cabinets can simulate a range of tests, such as temperature, climate, vibration, corrosion, emission, altitude, pressure and combined stresses. These highly specialised cabinets can mimic the conditions in outer space, allowing aerospace businesses to test their satellites and interplanetary spacecraft in a vacuum, while subjecting them to the radiation and extreme temperatures found in space. Weiss Technik is a global leader in this sector of the market. Part of Schunk Group, an international technology group based in Heuchelheim, Weiss Technik also manufactures clean rooms and specialised air-conditioning systems.

OPEL: THE CULT CAR FROM RÜSSELSHEIM

FrankfurtRhineMain has a long tradition of innovation and taking risks. Take Adam Opel, for example, who established his business in Rüsselsheim in 1862, first as a sewing machine manufacturer, before moving into bicycles. In 1899, Opel started making cars. Over the decades that followed, legendary models rolled out of the Opel factory gates, such as the "Laubfrosch" (literally, the "tree frog"), Olympia and Rekord. To this day, Rüsselsheim is still at the heart of the brand, home to its headquarters, research division and manufacturing facilities. Opel is now part of the Stellantis group of companies, which announced plans in June 2026 to develop and assemble the next generation of the compact Astra model in Rüsselsheim.



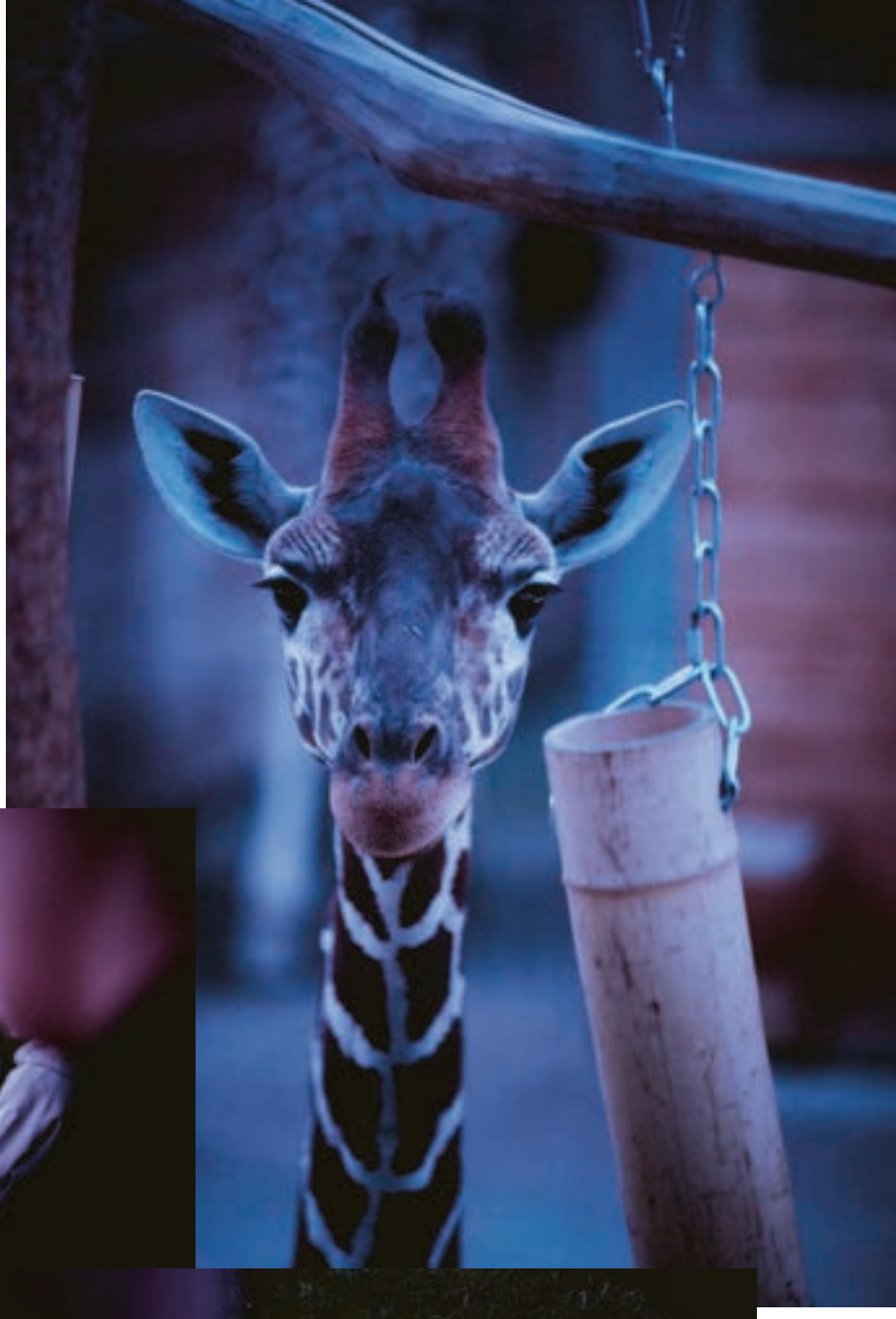
Opel is building a new 100,000 m² carbon-neutral campus in Rüsselsheim.

IN THE MIDNIGHT HOUR

For many people in FrankfurtRhineMain, their working day only begins when **the sun goes down**. By the very nature of their careers, they have a different outlook on the region after dark. These people know how brilliant FRM can be by night.

CONSTANZE KLEIS (TEXT), JONAS RATERMANN (PHOTOS)

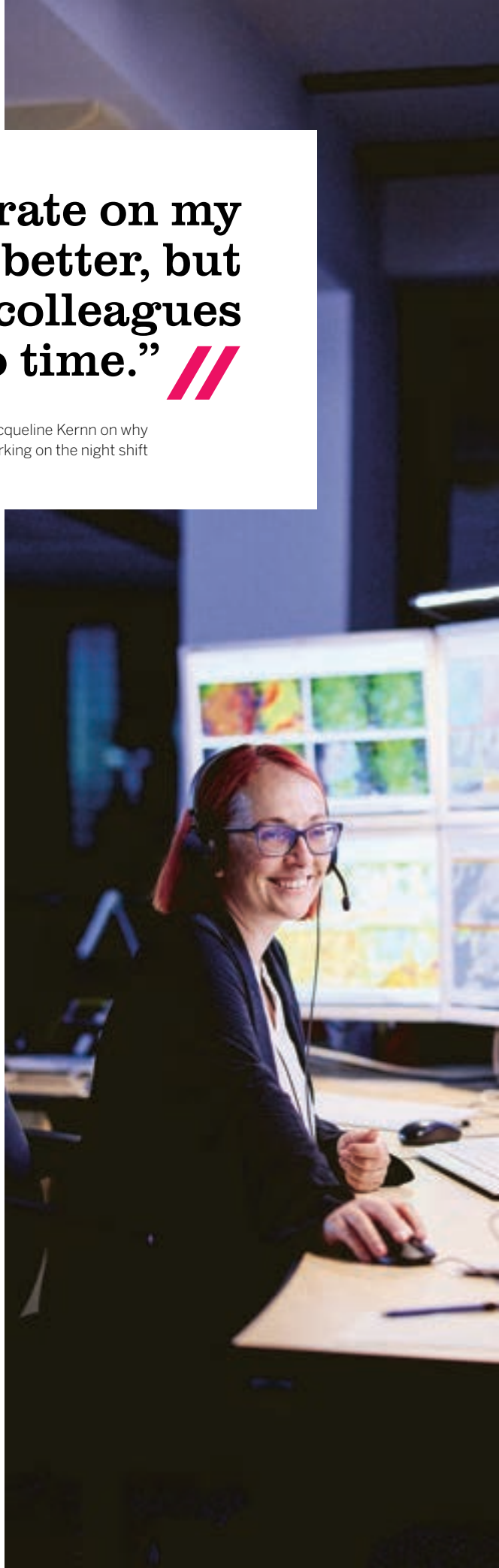
There's something uniquely magical about seeing the dark silhouettes of the six African elephants Kariba, Lilak, Cristina, Tamo, Neco and little Kaja appear to merge into the gathering gloom at sunset. Or when an eagle owl swoops right past you through the aviary with a faint rush of air from its 1.8 m wingspan. Or when foxes, lynx and deer come out to play after all the other animals have gone to bed. Unlike other zoos, the Opel Zoo in Kronberg in the Taunus region offers night-time tours to visitors. The private tours start after the turnstiles have closed to other visitors and offer a new way of seeing the 200 or so species which live in the zoo. "At night time you see nature and the animal kingdom in a completely different way to what you see during the day," says Jenny Krutschinna, a biologist who is responsible for publicity at the zoo. Dr Tanja Spender, who runs the zoo's educational programme, loves the hours after the sun sets. "The atmosphere at night time is very special. You often perceive sounds and smells much more keenly," says the trained biologist. Spender explains how observing animals in a quiet environment such as this often inspires much greater respect for what they can do and for the diversity of the natural world. Watching nocturnal animals brings home how well adapted they are to life in darkness, she adds.



Opel Zoo biologist Jenny Krutschinna
with visitors on a twilight tour.





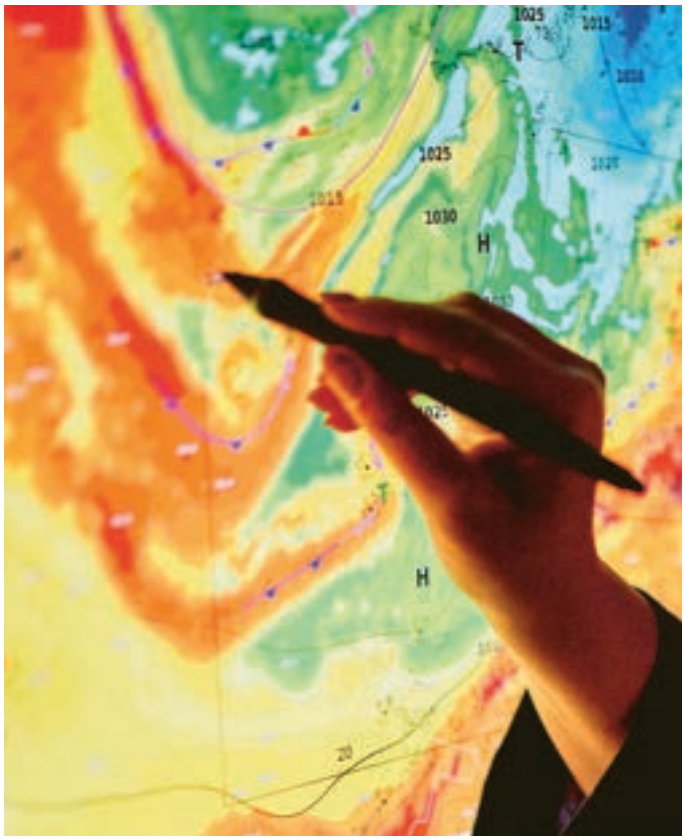


> “I can concentrate on my work so much better, but still speak to my colleagues from time to time.”

Meteorologist Jacqueline Kernn on why she enjoys working on the night shift

KEEPING WATCH OVER WIND AND RAIN

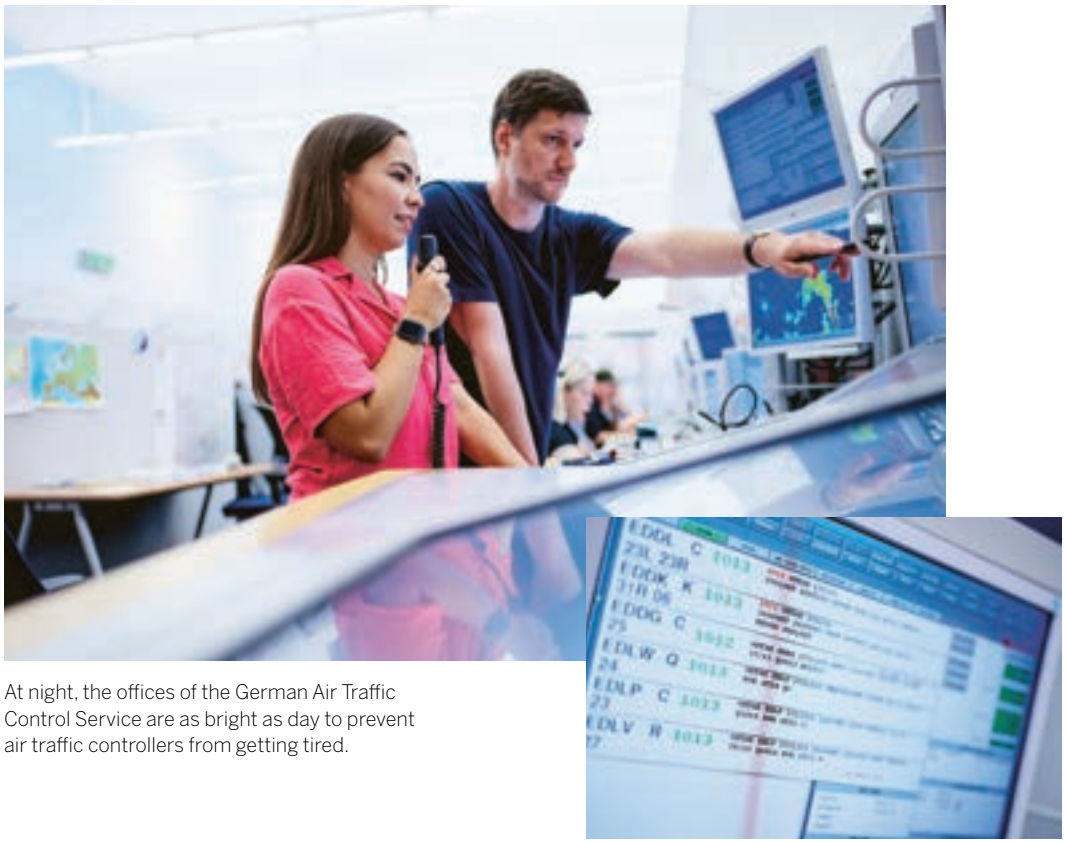
You could say much the same of Jacqueline Kernn and her aptitude for working in the small hours. Jacqueline joined the German Meteorological Service in 2017, where she particularly enjoys working night shifts. Thanks to her ability to close her eyes and fall asleep at any time of day or night, she says, she always arrives at work fresh and ready to go. But she also cherishes the unique atmosphere which only comes after night has fallen. “There are only three of us at those times, but during the day there can be up to 13 people here,” she says, adding that night shifts are more intensive, focused, sensitive. “I can concentrate on my work so much better, but still speak to my colleagues from time to time.” There’s always plenty to do in the hours of darkness, since the weather never sleeps. Storms, downpours and fires are just as likely at night as they are during the day. In cases of extreme weather events, the meteorologists of the German Meteorological Service must quickly provide vital information about rainfall and wind strength to the emergency services, farmers and people who live in the affected areas. Without it, lives could be at risk. “If it really comes to it, we can issue a new forecast every 15 minutes,” Kernn explains. “Where’s the wind coming from? How is the temperature changing? We update our warnings at very high frequency in situations such as thunderstorms.” When dealing with weather conditions that affect much larger areas, such as sustained rainfall, high winds or heavy snow, the warnings are updated less often. Warnings can be shared with the public quickly through apps on their phones. But Kernn knows one thing for sure: when the phone rings at night, “Someone is in deep trouble.” Not like during the day, when people just have to find out if it’s going to be sunny for their barbecue on Saturday evening.



At night Jacqueline Kernn monitors the weather in Germany at the German Meteorological Service in Offenbach. She sends out alerts in case of emergency.

OUT AND ABOUT AFTER DARK

Nighttime is buzzing, that's for sure. But while Jacqueline Kernn keeps a weather eye out at her desk in the small hours, by no means all of the region's 5.8 million inhabitants are tucked up in bed. The day's dark sister possess her own magnetism, more magical, creative, wild – but unhurried, too. It's addictive. Thousands of people turn the night into day in clubs, bars and restaurants across the region. All without stress, too, as local trains, metro services and some trams run all day and night over the weekend, connecting the cities of FrankfurtRhineMain. During the week, night buses get people from A to B, or you can use an on-demand shuttle service. Travellers can take local trains to key destinations such as the airport at any time of day or night during the week. It all makes Frankfurt and the entire region a hit with night owls.



At night, the offices of the German Air Traffic Control Service are as bright as day to prevent air traffic controllers from getting tired.

SAFE IN THE SKIES

Olivia Rubelt is one of them, but in her case, it's all in a night's work. Olivia is an air traffic controller. She loves her work, especially when she's on the night shift from 10 pm to 6 am. "Even when I was at school, my ability to concentrate peaked at 8 pm sharp every day," she laughs. Tonight, she's at her desk at offices of Deutsche Flugsicherung (DFS) in Langen by 10 pm. Around 30% of European air traffic still passes over Germany, despite the country accounting for only 3% of European airspace. This means that DFS has to manage one of the busiest patches of sky in the world. Each air traffic controller looks after a specific area. In Olivia's case, it's "half of North Rhine-Westphalia."

With four screens in front of her, she sends out radio messages second by second, confirming the altitude, speed, distance and best course of every pilot passing through her sector. "We always work in two-strong teams and look after between 40 and 60 planes an hour," she says. Olivia explains that, in contrast to what many people believe, her work is more about communication than technology. She is allowed to work for two hours at a time, then she has to take a break. "You get two hours off in an eight-hour shift," she says, adding that what she values most about her work is her colleagues and the team spirit. She is close friends with some of her co-workers. "You spend a lot of time alongside people who are in the same rhythm as you," she explains.

Working at night has shown her a very different side to the region. Sometimes, Olivia says, she sees stags and deer on the fields as the sun is coming up, moments which fill her with happiness. Perhaps those of us who work during daylight hours might enjoy getting up at the crack of dawn every now and then – or going to bed in the wee small hours. Night time in the region has an fascination all of its own, even if you're being paid to stay awake.



Olivia Rubelt loves her work as an air traffic controller, especially on the night shift.



© Unsplash/Phis Halili

WHY FRM IS BRINGING IN BILLIONS

From data centres to pharmaceuticals and air freight, investors are flocking to seize opportunities across the FrankfurtRhineMain metropolitan region.

WOLF ZINN

For most people, the first things that come to mind when they think about the FrankfurtRhineMain economy are banking skyscrapers in Frankfurt and the airport. And they're not wrong. Frankfurt is one of Europe's leading financial hubs, Terminal 3 at Frankfurt Airport has just undergone a massive expansion, and Lufthansa is celebrating its centenary in 2026. But what's going on away from the familiar images is just as exciting. New factories, labs, research clusters, data centres, logistics hubs and modern working environments are springing up across the entire metropolitan region.

This growth is being driven by a number of simultaneous trends. Businesses are looking for reliable supply chains and production facilities in Europe. The digital economy relies on real-world infrastructure, from grid connections and square footage to cooling, fibre optic cables and robust networks. Across the life sciences research, manufacturing and clinical practice are becoming ever more closely linked. In FrankfurtRhineMain, our combination of industrial zones, universities, hospitals, specialist service providers, international logistics and proximity to European markets allows us to reap the rewards of these developments.

INVESTMENT IN THE PHARMA INDUSTRY

You need only look at Sanofi's new BioCampus in west Frankfurt to see the scale of these new trends. There, the leading pharmaceuticals manufacturer plans to set up a 36,000 m² insulin production facility at Höchst Industriepark. The budget? Approximately €1.3 billion. Sanofi's goal is to provide a secure long-term supply of insulin for Europe. A facility such as this attracts staff with highly specialised skills in fields such as plant engineering, automation and quality management, as well as locking in expertise for decades to come.

From its base in Darmstadt, the pharma and tech group Merck is investing over €300 million in a life sciences research centre with space for 550 staff. The new centre will focus on antibody and mRNA applications. Merck is also putting up €200 million for a new Translational Science Center in the healthcare business sector.



€1.3 billion

is being invested by the Sanofi pharmaceuticals company in its BioCampus at Industriepark Höchst.



Merck's investments at its main site in Darmstadt add up to €500 million.



© Stadt Hanau

A large-scale high-performance data centre operated by the French DATA4 group is taking shape in Hanau.

The city of Mainz isn't hanging around, either. Life Science Hub Mainz, which is administered by the city's biomindz development agency, is attracting eight-figure investments from firms such as J. Molitor/G.L. Kayser and Kadans Science Partner to develop new laboratory and office space. Spanning tens of thousands of square metres, the new facilities will house research and new start-ups.

In Marburg, plans are in place for a new 11,500 m² Innovation Hub which will provide lab facilities for start-ups and SMEs. Thirty kilometres to the south, the US pharma giant Eli Lilly is building a high-tech production facility in Alzey, which is slated to go into operation in 2027. The project has already brought over €1 billion into the area.

FRM – A CORE DATA HUB

At the same time, the region's digital foundations are also growing, with Frankfurt acknowledged as a key Internet exchange point and core web traffic hub. A study carried out by IW Consult, which focused on the area of FRM within the federal state of Hesse, reported that the number of data centres was expected to grow from 76 to 112 by 2030, with a footprint of 268 hectares. These forecasts are in line with major projects such as Google's multi-billion-euro investment

268 hectares

The predicted footprint of 112 data centres in FrankfurtRhineMain by 2030.

programme in a new data centre in Dietzenbach, expansion in Hanau, and additional investments in Frankfurt. In Hanau, the European data centre operator DATA4 is spending €2 billion on an extensive campus for cloud and AI infrastructure. In addition to this, Green Rocks is demonstrating at Ingelheimer Aue in Mainz how digital and energy infrastructure can be combined, with waste heat from the data centre being used to feed the district heating network.

NEW FREIGHT CENTRES AND WORK SPACES

"Traditional" industries, too, are modernising at pace. At Frankfurt Airport, Lufthansa Cargo is investing almost €600 million to update its cargo centre. In the city's banking district, projects such as the Central Business Tower, an office tower over 200 m tall with over 70,000 m² of floor space, are creating new space for jobs. Commerzbank will be moving into the tower in 2028 as its principal tenant. Meanwhile in Rüsselsheim, Opel/Stellantis's grEEn campus is breaking new ground in providing a modern environment for work, research and development in an area with a long heritage of car manufacturing.

All this gives us a fuller picture of FrankfurtRhineMain as an economic area. The region remains a financial centre, air traffic hub and logistics linchpin, but at the same time, it is gaining traction through its fusion of healthcare tech, research, digital infrastructure and manufacturing. With investment reaching large parts of the region, FRM's strength is plain for all to see.



© Fa. Rendertaxi

In the Frankfurt banking district Central Business Tower will stand over 200 m high.

WIR MACHEN IHNEN DAS BUSINESSLEBEN EINFACHER.*

ENERGIEDIENSTLEISTUNGEN, IT UND TELEKOMMUNIKATION AUS EINER HAND.

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WHERE STREETWEAR AND COUTURE COLLIDE

FrankfurtRhineMain has **more to offer than business looks:** The region has also made a name for itself in the world of fashion, through modern design, traditional craftsmanship and a fresh aesthetic. Find out, what a pair of boxer shorts has to do with it.

KIM BERG

Sunlight is streaming across the square outside the Alte Oper in Frankfurt. People cluster in the shade of the small cherry trees, while men and women in sharp suits sip coffee beneath the awnings of the restaurants that line the square. On a hot Friday morning in May like this, few people are out and about,

but the atmosphere in the lobby of Sofitel Frankfurt Opera hotel could not be more different. The room is a kaleidoscope of colours, while the cool air is scented with perfume. The foyer is a hive of activity, as visitors laugh, air kiss and admire one another's outfits. Kashmir, velvet, silk and satin catch the light next to glittering sequins. From classic silhouettes to relaxed looks, the whole world of fashion is here.

Today's event is hosted by Frankfurt Fashion Lounge (known as FFL), and attracts fashionistas from across Germany to admire couture created by emerging and established designers. The first FFL took place in 2019, and in May 2026 it celebrated its tenth edition. The theme this time around is "fashion for longevity", encouraging people to move away from short-term consumerism and to embrace an intentional attitude to fashion.

Fashion isn't just something to see on the red carpet, says Kathy Schrey in her opening address. "It should be experienced as a craft, an artform and expression of identity," says Schrey, who combines her career as a meteorologist on national TV with a love of fashion and design. For Nesli Mohebbi, Frankfurt isn't just a backdrop for photos and films: it's a place where economic, creative and cultural development are thriving. Mohebbi is managing director at Famous Face Academy, which trains makeup artists. "This region combines creativity with entrepreneurialism, which means it provides the ideal environment in which to develop new concepts and careers," she explains.

FFL was set up by the designer Sevinc Yerli, who had already made a name for herself with her label Chili Bang Bang. Hailing from



© @frankfurtfashionlounge, photographer: @fotograf.selinanot

The designers Kristina Laptso and Seyit Ares showed their catwalk collection at a gala dinner.

Dreieich just south of Frankfurt, Yerli found inspiration for her first collection in Los Angeles in 2014. "I wanted to design fashion that's fun, makes people happy and is in harmony with nature," Yerli says. She is passionate about sustainability, and FFL reflects this commitment. Yerli explains that the idea behind the events was to get away from treating fashion as a fast-moving product, and instead to embrace it as a craft, art and part of the creative economy. Her goal is to support Frankfurt's continued growth into a key location for fashion and creativity, a place which supports the next generation of designers. "People are making billions from fashion all over the world. Why not in Germany, too? We can do it. We just need to build the right platforms for it," says the designer, who is supporting efforts to bring manufacturing back to Germany to support domestic production.

CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION

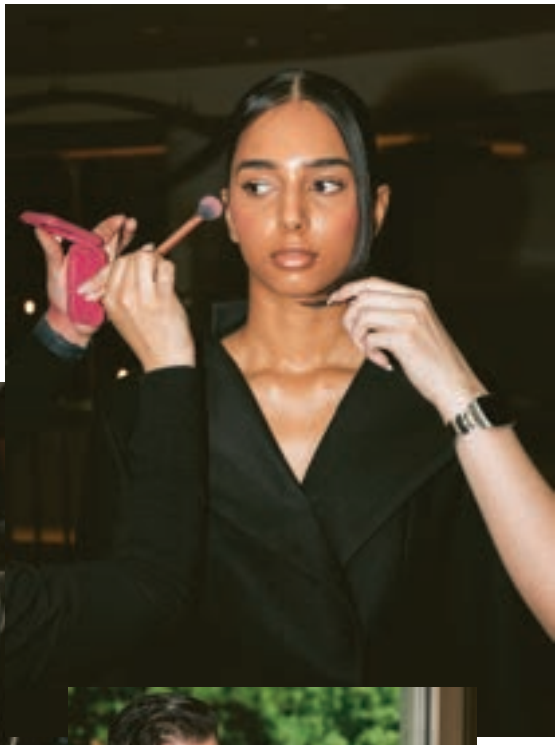
In a bid to bring on fashion stars of the future, Yerli has dedicated a special section of FFL: the Next Generation Runway Show, considered one of the highlights of the programme. It's an opportunity for young designers from fashion colleges in the region to present their graduation collections. In the tenth edition of FFL, 40 up-and-coming designers from AMD Wiesbaden, Offenbach University of Art and Design, and the University of Giessen showed off their creations, alongside couture from Pforzheim University and Griffith College Dublin. For these young designers, the event is a chance to take advantage of the high-profile event in Frankfurt. But that's not all: every day, FFL gained over one million hits on social media. The runway events were supplemented by workshops, masterclasses and talks on technology, marketing and craftsmanship. "Through fashion shows, networking events and collaborations, FFL has made a huge contribution to the fact that Frankfurt is now taken seriously as a fashion and creative hub, along with forging networks between industry stakeholders," says Mohebbi.

"I wanted to design fashion that's fun, makes people happy and is in harmony with nature."

Designer Sevinc Yerli founder of FFL.

COLLECTIONS, PEOPLE, AND PERFECT STYLING.

For a look to hit the catwalk, artists from a range of specialisms must work hand-in-hand behind the scenes. Eighty models took to the catwalk at FFL, provided by East West Models. Founded in 1989 by Marcus Streil, the Frankfurt agency is now one of the leading players in the industry in Germany. Marcus and his team look after 600 models, with a client portfolio that includes Porsche, Bogner, Louis Vuitton, Nivea, Braun and Harper's Bazaar. East West's boss, Marcus Streil, is keen to point out that it's more than just a German modelling agency. It is also a springboard for newcomers to the world of international fashion. East West models do not take a fee for appearing at FFL. "It's a way for models and make-up artists to show their support for the next generation of talent at Frankfurt Fashion Lounge," Streil explains in his opening speech.







Famous Face Academy trains make-up artists in Frankfurt-RhineMain. The college is one of Germany's leading make-up academies.

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Local designers showed off experimental art as part of a "Jewelry Perfomance" the day before the opening of Frankfurt Fashion Lounge 2026.

Behind the scenes at FFL, around 40 make-up artists make sure every design is styled perfectly. All the artists have come through Famous Face Academy, one of Germany's leading make-up colleges, which is based in Frankfurt. "We're not just trying to give people technical training," says Mohebbi, who is managing director of the academy. "Our aim is to accompany them on their journeys into freelance work or leadership roles in the industry." Every year, Famous Face Academy trains students from across Germany and abroad. Many graduates go on to successful careers as make-up artists, beauticians, skin experts, nail designers and lash and brow stylists, often with their own businesses.

HOW CULTURAL DIVERSITY GIVES FRM AN EDGE

What really stands out at FFL events is the sheer diversity of the ideas, styles and signatures of local designers and guests. When it comes to style, FrankfurtRhineMain is far from homogeneous: it's a place where contrasts and cross-pollination thrive. "Thanks to our central position, international airport and strong industrial infrastructure, people from many different cultures meet here," says Mohebbi. In FRM, couture rubs shoulders with streetwear, while business suits share spaces with experimental design, and international ideas of beauty sit side-by-side with local craftsmanship. The industry expert is upbeat in her assessment of the region's potential: "The combination of our strong economy, international outlook, cultural diversity, and growing creative sector is the perfect foundation for the region to establish itself as a long-term location for beauty and fashion," she says.

As the guests drift away from Sofitel, the Alter Oper is still bathed in sunshine. The sequins may disappear among the business shirts and summer dresses on Frankfurt's city streets. For a few days, Frankfurt Fashion Lounge was a concentrated cocktail of ingredients that have long existed in the region: talent, training, infrastructure and entrepreneurialism.

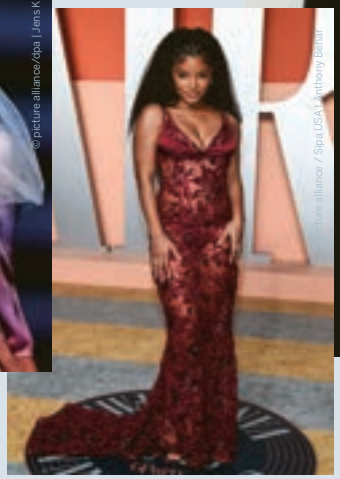
Local designs, international success



During the World Cup Final, Spanish football star Lamine Yamal wore boxer shorts made by 6PM, a label based in Frankfurt.



Anja Gockel has shown her designs on runways around the world.



Singer and actress Halle Bailey wore Samuel Gärtner at the 2025 Vanity Fair Oscar Party.



Tsatsa's minimalist bag designs are winning fans around the world.

Away from FFL, the fashion industry is going from strength to strength across FrankfurtRhineMain. The Frankfurt streetwear label 6PM by Achraf Ait Bouzalim is now considered one of Germany's most successful fashion brands. A pair of the label's boxer shorts caused a sensation around the world when the Spanish football star wore them for the 2026 World Cup final against Argentina.

Samuel Gärtner, a designer from Frankfurt, has also been celebrating international success. The singer Halle Bailey donned a lace dress from Gärtner's 2025 collection for the Vanity Fair Oscar party. Nelly Furtado is another pop superstar to showcase the German designer's styles on the big stage, wearing his creations for her tour through Germany, England and Norway.

Mainz-born and bred, Anja Gockel is a longstanding fixture in Germany's fashion industry. After setting up her own label in 1996, she has gone on to become known for vibrant colours and flowing silhouettes. Queen Silvia of Sweden, Gwyneth Paltrow, Heidi Klum and Diane Kruger are just some of the stars who wear her designs.

Eva Wilde-Gräf knows all about the breakneck pace of the international fashion industry, but she has opted for a slower tempo. After completing her training as a dressmaker at the Staatliche Modeschule Stuttgart, she spent four years at Hugo Boss followed by two years as a designer at Esprit. In 2015, Wilde-Gräf set up her own "slow fashion" knitwear label in Darmstadt. "wildes" creates jumpers, cardigans and scarves out of mohair, silk, merino, cotton and cashmere.

Lovers of beautiful bags in FrankfurtRhineMain, shouldn't miss creations by Tsatsas. The Frankfurt label run by Esther and Dimitrios Tsatsas is making waves in the industry with their minimalist, functional leather bags, produced in their family workshop in Offenbach. On the shelves of stores in Berlin, London and New York and in collaborations with icons such as the architect David Chipperfield and designer Raf Simons, craftsmanship "made in Offenbach" is attracting an international audience.

Frankfurt is home to the workshop of shoemaker Richard Aphery. From initial measurements to the final polish, each pair of shoes goes through over 200 different stages in the manufacturing process. Born in Nigeria, Aphery originally wanted to design clothes, but in the face of stiff competition he decided to take a different path with closer ties to traditional craftsmanship. In 2025 he opened his store on Römerberg in central Frankfurt, where he is doing a brisk trade in bespoke, hand-crafted shoes. Through his footwear, Aphery wants to reinterpret traditional craftsmanship as a modern luxury which lasts a lifetime.



PEOPLE TODAY

Six faces out of 5.8 million: meet the people and stories which make the FrankfurtRhineMain metropolitan region such a fascinating place.

LUCA REHSE-KNAUF

Jannik and Alojz

@jaadiee, fashion creator

Christmas 2016. Jannik asks his grandpa Alojz if he wants to try on the new clothes he has made. "To my amazement, he said yes," Jannik recalls. His family were impressed. The photos went online. Ten years on, the duo run their own fashion label, Gramps, with six million followers on social media. Jannik's grandfather came to Mainz from Slovenia in 1968 as a Gastarbeiter, and worked as a glassmaker. After ten years' retirement, he started his second career as a fashion influencer. But Jannik and Alojz care about much more than just their clothes. "We want to show growing old in a positive light," says Jannik. Older people tend to be associated with topics such as healthcare and insurance, especially in the world of advertising. "We want to get across that you're still cool and should be able to enjoy life even if you're older – or because you're old," Jannik says. Jannik recommends Frankfurt as a shopping destination. "When it comes to streetwear, it's now up there with cities around the world." And if you want to show off your latest purchases, Jannik recommends Frankfurt's local bars, the Feldberg or the vineyards around the city.



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Zoe Wilberg

@zoetastetravel, food and travel creator

Zoe is constantly on the hunt for the best places to find food and drink, sometimes in far-flung corners of the world, but usually at home in the FrankfurtRhineMain region. She grew up in the Bergstraße area of Hesse and now lives in Mainz. "What's different about this region is that many cities are so close together and easy to get to," Zoe says. She's often to be found in Wiesbaden, Frankfurt and Darmstadt. "There's so much to discover. Even I can hardly keep up!" For newcomers to the region, she recommends a trip to the Mainz Breakfast Market. Zoe is a huge fan: "It's an institution which takes place every Saturday, like a great city festival." She also organises community meet-ups for people new to the city. Her speed-dating sessions for friends are a particular hit. "I get so much out of seeing people meet others and exchange phone numbers at my events," she explains. And if they're in the mood, guests can also sign up for another of Zoe's must-dos: a "Funzelfahrt" a ride in a tractor trailer through the vineyards in the countryside, with wine, naturally.



Bernd Zehner

@bernd_zehner, chef and creator

Bernd Zehner is prepared to travel as far as it takes to discover the latest culinary delights, from Palma de Mallorca to Istanbul and even Tokyo. Everywhere he goes, Bernd is accompanied by his cameraman who captures his experiences for his million-strong social media community. Nevertheless, the globetrotting gastronome loves coming back to his hometown. "Frankfurt is the most beautiful city in the world. Where else would you rather be?" Bernd asks, as if stating the obvious. When he's at home, he makes cookery videos for viewers to try themselves. Bernd has made a name for himself with Asian cuisine in particular. "The food in the region here is normal," says Bernd, after a pause, but he means it in the best sense of the word: it's honest and down-to-earth. "Pork ribs with cabbage, Frankfurt green sauce: they will always be classics," he says, to be washed down with a beer or glass of apple wine (alcohol-free, if you prefer), or a Riesling. For anyone who's new to FrankfurtRhineMain and hasn't yet warmed to the local cuisine, Bernd recommends a visit to his own restaurant, Tavo, in the heart of Wiesbaden. It serves cuisine from around the world, from New York to Hanoi, inspired by Bernd's adventures through the magical world of food.



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Vincent Kitzinger

@kitzinger_blumen_und_pflanzen, creator

Vincent and his brother are the fifth generation of their family to run their family business, Kitzinger Blumen und Pflanzen. From its roots in Offenbach, the florist has branched out into Bad Vilbel, Obertshausen and Rodenbach – and online, too. Almost one million people follow him on Instagram for his tips on choosing and caring for plants in gardens large and small, even on balconies. "What variety can I plant and where, one that's drought resistant and perennial?" is typical of the questions Vincent answers in his content, he explains. He is also passionate about raising people's awareness of the natural world around them. Most people just walk by without a second glance, he says. Who pays any attention to the trees and plants that line the pavements? But there's plenty to see in FrankfurtRhineMain. "Thanks to our mild climate, we can plant a huge range of species, from domestic trees and shrubs to Mediterranean exotics," he explains. Plant-lovers in the region should definitely visit botanical gardens, the Palmengarten in Frankfurt, and, of course, Kitzinger Blumen und Pflanzen in Rodenbach. "We have our own nursery on site and a 5,000 m^2 warehouse filled with palms, olive trees and citrus plants," he adds.



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Linn Ehrlich

@linnehrlich & @connectingpeople.community, events manager and regional creator

Fancy a city break in Mainz, Wiesbaden or Frankfurt? Or maybe a chilled afternoon by the Rhine or Main rivers… Or how about exploring one of the castles in the region? Linn is constantly lookout for new favourite places and unique experiences in FrankfurtRhineMain. “I thought to myself, ‘It’s so beautiful here. We really need to show the world what we have to offer’,” she explains. So she started sharing tips from her own experiences of the region online. Now she has 12,000 followers. Soon, though, Linn didn’t want to just show people what was out there. She wanted to bring people together. “It’s so difficult to meet new people these days because we spend so much time online,” Linn explains. Through her @connectingpeople.community channel, she arranges events where people from the region can meet offline. It doesn’t matter whether you’re new in town, looking for friendship, or just want to meet new people – “Anyone can sign up, whatever age you are.” What Linn values so much about FrankfurtRhineMain is how close together everything is. “Then there are all of the wine events, too, coming together in a sociable atmosphere.” It’s this combination of discoveries around the region and connecting people that Linn wants to share through her two channels.



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Moving forward together

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FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH International Marketing of the Region is the official point of contact for companies looking to set up an operation in the Frankfurt RheinMain region.

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Around 150 companies have teamed up to form the FrankfurtRheinMain business initiative – everything from large international corporations to start-ups. The metropolitan region's leading business network is committed to ensuring the attractiveness of FrankfurtRheinMain for investment, innovation and professionals both today and in the future.
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