



Munich, 23. February 2020

## Press release

### Final Report

## **f.re.e 2020: Anniversary Fair Ensures a Good Mood**

- **More than 130,000 visitors**
- **New Topic Areas Photography & Boat Sports Very Popular**
- **Very high level of satisfaction among visitors and exhibitors**

**f.re.e, Bavaria's largest travel and leisure fair, celebrated a successful anniversary from February 19 to 23, 2020. Fifty years after the first time the trade fair was held, more than 130,000 visitors visited the Munich exhibition fairgrounds this year to get ideas for leisure time and vacation from the more than 1,300 exhibitors from 60 countries. The high satisfaction values of the visitors show how well the mixture of advice, sales, testing and stage program was received. For example, 97% assessed the trade fair as excellent, very good or good. The exhibitors also assessed the exhibition as positive in all aspects.**

Dr. Reinhard Pfeiffer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Messe München GmbH, was extremely satisfied with the trade fair results: "f.re.e has developed into a genuine institution in Munich and Bavaria over the past 50 years. For many of us, the vacation season begins there. Our visitors particularly appreciate the fact that they are individually and extensively advised at the trade fair."

Hubert Aiwanger, Bavarian Minister of State for Economy, Regional Development and Energy, also congratulated f.re.e on its special anniversary at the festive opening ceremony, stressing the importance of f.re.e for tourism in Bavaria: "I congratulate Messe München on the successful 50 years of f.re.e, which is an indispensable part of the trade fair calendar of the tourism industry. In its anniversary year, f.re.e again impressively demonstrated how innovative, professional and customer-oriented the tourism industry is in Bavaria. With more

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than 100 million overnight stays and 40 million arrivals in 2019, Bavaria stands for tourism like no other German federal state.”

Together with f.re.e, the two partner events Munich Car Days and Golf Days Munich also opened their doors in 2020. The trio of events again harmonized excellently this year. Accordingly, the organizer of Munich Car Days Andrea Schaller from Münchner Zeitungsverlag drew a very satisfied conclusion: “The Car Days were again very popular this year. We were able to record more than 3,000 test drives on the five days of the fair. Numerous visitors took advantage of the unbeatable trade fair discounts and bought a new car on site. Advisory services were also very well received.” Ingo Klöver, Managing Director of Planetfair and organizer of Golf Days (Golftage), was equally pleased: “The 11th Goff Days was again a complete success! 140 exhibitors from all segments of golf, including the leading club brands, numerous golf destinations, hotels and clubs inspired the Bavarian audience.”

### **New Special Areas Generated Enthusiasm**

This year, the biggest public attractions included tried-and-tested highlights such as the extensive travel offer, the bicycle course, the large lake landscape in the water sports hall and the climbing tower. With the two topic areas of photography and boating as well as the start-up camp, f.re.e also provided three innovations this year that trade fair visitors enjoyed very much. “Visiting f.re.e is almost compulsory for many of our visitors. To ensure that this remains the case, we are continuously developing the trade fair further. We are therefore very pleased that our new special areas were so popular,” Jessica Tilly stated, Project Manager of f.re.e.

### **Travel Topic Area**

The large booth of this year's partner country Italy provided a real Dolce Vita flair, where seven regions, among others, provided information about the extremely diverse vacation and leisure opportunities in Bella Italia and spoiled visitors with culinary delights. Monica Bonaspetti, Marketing Officer at the Italian Tourism Association ENIT, therefore drew a positive conclusion: “f.re.e 2020 ran

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very well for us. We had a lot of visitors – especially in the morning. We were particularly pleased that we were also able to show the unknown sides of Italy.”

In addition, the three travel halls once again provided an opportunity for a small trip around the globe this year. Not only the numerous long-distance travel providers and Mediterranean destinations enjoyed great popularity, but also the providers from Bavaria and Germany were highly frequented. This was confirmed by Barbara Radomski, Managing Director of BAYERN TOURISMUS GmbH: “The Bavarian event space once again attracted numerous visitors this year. “Vacation in the home country” is inspiring more and more people. Thanks to our Bavarian partners, visitors to f.re.e experienced authentic and impressive experiences, which traditionally make a vacation in the Free State of Bavaria different. They could taste, smell, feel, hear and see Bavaria.” Corinne Miseur, Managing Director of Dresden Marketing GmbH, who was represented at f.re.e for the first time, is also satisfied: “People are increasingly planning their trips and especially city trips individually and are happy to be inspired by trade fairs. That is why we have significantly expanded our presence at consumer trade fairs, and we have found a format with f.re.e in Munich that fits our strategy and our target groups perfectly.”

### **Caravanning & Camping**

The caravanning & camping boom is continuing unabated. The number of new registrations increased sharply again in 2019. Accordingly, f.re.e's offer in this segment was even bigger this year. In a total of almost three halls, there was a wide selection of tents and accessories as well as more than 300 vehicles of 75 brands to see and buy. Daniel Onggowinarso, Managing Director of Caravanning Industrie Verbands e. V. (Caravanning Industry Association [CIVD]), can only confirm the extremely positive development: “The popularity of caravanning was also evident at f.re.e, because visitors were very interested in the recreational vehicles and caravans on display. Many well-known manufacturers exhibited their latest models.” f.re.e provides visitors with an interesting mixture of leisure, travel and health, and exhibitors an attractive target group composed of affluent, travel-loving people with an active lifestyle. It is therefore an important date in the

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calendar of the caravanning industry.” Marie Gérard, Managing Director of Caravan Gérard GmbH, can also look back on a successful trade fair: “f.re.e 2020 was a great trade fair for us. We had a lot of fun, great customers, many interested people as well as good conversations and felt very comfortable with our colleagues here. We are already looking forward to f.re.e 2021. We are proud that we, as the longest partner of f.re.e, formerly called C-B-R, have been here at the fair for 50 years now and hope to participate for the next 50 years.” Karl Hansmann, Business Developer DACH at the camping equipment company Outwell, was also very satisfied with f.re.e 2020: “We considerably enlarged our area at f.re.e. We appreciate the different areas of outdoor, caravanning & camping and bicycle and meet different target groups. We are pleased to meet so many active campers and families again and again in Munich, have had many discussions and are very satisfied with the interest in our products and sales.”

### **Water Sports**

The topic of water sports was again very popular in 2020. On one hand, the focus was the paddling and stand-up paddling (SUP) lakes as well as the diving pool and again on the extremely popular action areas. On the other hand, the extensive range of kayaks, canoes, SUP boards, diving equipment and much more offered by the numerous exhibitors were also big hits. The good course of f.re.e in the water sports hall is reflected in the statement by Oliver Bungers, President of the Bavarian Canoe Association (Bayerische Kanu-Verband e.V.): “We are delighted that our offer at f.re.e in the water sports world reaches more people interested in canoeing than on hardly any other occasion. That is why we make great efforts to participate again every year.”

### **Bicycle Topic Area**

The topic of bicycles proved to be a major attraction this year. There was a great deal of demand at the stands of the numerous suppliers as well as at the two courses for testing new bike models. In addition, many children and young people use the pump track and the gorilla playground for a test drive. Andreas Josef Nickl, Managing Director of the bicycle manufacturer ANJONI, therefore drew a positive balance “f.re.e is an excellent trade fair to showcase innovative

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products such as our ultra-lightweight e-bikes. We were able to greatly increase awareness of our products and establish a lot of new customer contacts.” This was also confirmed by Petra Husemann-Roew, Managing Director of ADFC (General German Cycling Club), Bavarian Regional Association: “f.re.e was also a complete success for us this year.”

In addition, f.re.e also generation enthusiasm in the other topics of cruises & ship trips, health & wellness as well as outdoor. Franziska Zander from AIDA Cruises is therefore convinced of the fair’s merits: “Our stand had a lot of visitors again this year, who had very positive impressions of it. Of course, our show stage from AIDAnova was again a big attraction – a short trial vacation is something very special! We were able to inspire many guests with our great, unique product and send them directly on vacation.”

The next f.re.e will take place on the grounds of Messe München from February 24 to 28, 2021.

**Detailed information about f.re.e can be found at [www.free-muenchen.de](http://www.free-muenchen.de)**

#### **Travel and leisure trade fair f.re.e**

f.re.e is Bavaria's largest travel and leisure fair with the topics of travel, cruise & boat travel, health & wellness, caravanning & camping, water sports as well as outdoor and bicycle. Visitors get a comprehensive market overview in these areas, can book trips directly and test and purchase products on site. Additional information and entertainment ensure a very varied supporting program. In 2020, f.re.e had more than 1,300 exhibitors from almost 60 countries and more than 130,000 visitors on an area of approximately 88,000 square meters. The travel and leisure fair f.re.e takes place annually at Messe München, and the next one will take place from February 24 to 28, 2021.

#### **Messe München**

Messe München is one of the world's leading trade-fair organizations with approximately 50 trade fairs for investment goods, consumer goods and new technologies. More than 50,000 exhibitors and approximately two million visitors take part annually in more than 200 events on the Munich trade fair grounds, in ICM Internationales Congress Center München and in the MOC Veranstaltungszentrum München as well as abroad. Together with its subsidiaries, Messe München organizes trade fairs in China, India, Brazil, Russia, Turkey, South Africa, Nigeria, Vietnam and Iran. With a network of associate companies in Europe, Asia, Africa and South America as well as more than 70 foreign representatives covering more than 100 countries, Messe München has global presence.