



Press release

f.re.e 2024 impresses with strong result

February 18, 2024

- **Exhibitors and visitors extremely satisfied**
- **Tremendous interest in the partner region of Upper Bavaria**
- **Successful alliance with Munich Auto Days and IMOT**

Around 1,000 exhibitors from 50 countries showcased innovations and trends from the areas of Travel, Caravanning & Camping, Cycling, Water Sports and Outdoor & Fitness on February 14–18. Together with the parallel events Munich Auto Days and IMOT – the International Motorcycle Exhibition – Bavaria’s largest travel and leisure trade fair attracted more than 140,000 visitors.

At the end of the five-day exhibition, Dr. Reinhard Pfeiffer, the Managing Director of Messe München, expressed his satisfaction with the exhibition: “With this result, f.re.e underscores its role as one of the leading consumer trade fairs in southern Germany. Furthermore, the decision to select Upper Bavaria as a partner region was exactly the right one to make. The concept of promoting vacations in our own country was a resounding success.”

For Exhibition Director Katrin Leideritz, the variety of products and services on offer contributed greatly to the trade fair’s success. “The individual subject areas at f.re.e intermesh perfectly. If you want to buy equipment such as a bike, canoe or SUP, you can not only test and purchase it here, but you also can get tips on some great travel destinations. This added value generated by f.re.e is also highlighted by its combination with the two events Munich Auto Days and IMOT.”

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The quality of the visitors received top marks from exhibitors across all subject areas. In addition, 94 percent of visitors rated f.re.e as good to excellent. Ninety-five percent of visitors also stated that they would visit the trade fair again.

Regionality is very popular in tourism

Vacationers are increasingly thinking about sustainability and the environment when they plan their vacations. Destinations in Germany and Bavaria in particular benefit from this.

Oswald Pehel, the Managing Director of the Upper Bavarian Tourism Association, said he was extremely pleased about Upper Bavaria's role as a f.re.e partner region 2024: "We want to show visitors just how easy it is to reach many of these destinations by bus, train or bicycle," Pehel said. "They need no car at all. The decision to become a partner region was exactly the right one to make – it also showed how the state capital of Munich as the co-exhibitor and the surrounding region go hand in hand."

Thomas Dachs, Exhibition Manager of the Eastern Bavaria Tourism Association, emphasizes the relevance of the event: "Bavaria is our most important core market, and f.re.e is our most important trade fair presence. Visitors to the trade fair were very interested in our excursion destinations and our hiking and cycling vacation opportunities. There was strong demand for the wellness facilities in the Bavarian Forest and the spas and thermal baths in Lower Bavaria."

In the three halls dedicated to travel, more than 680 exhibitors presented travel opportunities that ranged from Bavaria to the Alpine region and the Mediterranean to long-distance trips to Asia or America.

The Spanish region of Costa Brava took part in f.re.e for the first time. Booth manager Gérard Franch described the region's debut as a complete success: "The f.re.e audience fits perfectly with our target group for active and sustainable tourism. The trade fair enables us to present Costa Brava as a destination that vacationers can visit all year round."



Great visitor interest in the Caravanning & Camping area

The halls B3 to B5 proved once again to be a favorite for visitors this year. The trend toward mobile travel with a caravan, van or motor home remains fully intact.

Ninety-two percent of visitors gave the themed area top ratings of excellent to good.

This popularity among visitors was also confirmed by Thorsten van Kooten, a member of the Campwerk team for the trade fair: “At Campwerk, we saw a great deal of interest in our roof tents this year, as well as even greater interest in our versatile tent trailers. We also had some great conversations with campers. You can really feel their enthusiasm.”

For Wohnwagen Gérard, a company that has had a booth at f.re.e for more than 50 years, this year’s edition was very successful. As Managing Director Marie Gérard explained: “Once again, it was a great trade fair for us. f.re.e is the perfect way to start the year and present our company and our caravans.”

Numerous new exhibitors were among the approximately 200 exhibitors in the Caravanning & Camping section of the fair. They included the Austrian-based caravan provider Freechili. Mario Kozuh-Schneeberger, the Sales Director at the company, expressed his delight with the company’s successful premiere: “Our booth attracted a lot of visitors because we focused on the sustainability of our product. f.re.e is the first trade fair outside Austria that we have attended, and we will be back next year.”

Starting spring with a new bike

Bicycles and e-bikes are in particularly high demand at the start of the year. In Hall B6, visitors had the opportunity to test drive various models. In addition to a bicycle and mountain bike course, the trade fair included a course for children up to the age of 12 and a running-bike course for toddlers, all of which were very well received.

The latest models from well-known manufacturers were in great demand from visitors, said Daniela Rempe, the Marketing Manager of Hercules Bikes: “We take part in f.re.e because it offers us a unique platform to present our Hercules bikes to a wide audience. We are extremely satisfied with f.re.e and are already looking forward to our successful participation next year.”



Stefan Nolte, Managing Director of Zweiradcenter Schröder, said participation in the trade fair paid off for his company as well: “The general public is very interested, and we had some great conversations with visitors. f.re.e enables us to sell bikes in a region where we, as a company from North Rhine-Westphalia, are not represented.”

Enjoying exercise with water sports and outdoor & fitness

With two pools for canoeing, kayaking, SUP and diving as well as a climbing tower and a new fitness area, Hall A6 offered sports enthusiasts numerous opportunities to get active and join in. For Guido Meier, the owner of Bavarian Waters, these opportunities created special added value: “The SUP pool attracts many families and especially children. They are the future visitors of the trade fair. It is great to see that young people are already excited about this sport and the equipment.”

Christian Lehner, the owner of Kajak Hütte, agrees: “The trade fair was very well attended once again. The visitors were really interested in our products. The opportunity to test directly on site in the pool is very convenient for our sales pitches.”

Successful alliance with Munich Auto Days and IMOT

Parallel to f.re.e, the Munich Auto Days took place from Wednesday to Sunday and the IMOT – International Motorcycle Exhibition – from Friday to Sunday.

Dirk Scheider, the organizer of the Munich Auto Days, said the combination could not have worked better: “Our exhibitors are more than satisfied. The mix of German premieres for vehicles and the opportunity to touch, test and test drive was very well received by the public.”

Petra Zahradka, the Managing Director of the IMOT, is already looking to the future: “The partnership between f.re.e and IMOT went smoothly again. The travel and leisure theme areas perfectly complemented our motorcycle theme area – it was a win-win situation for both sides and especially for all visitors. We look forward to working together in the coming year.”

The next edition of f.re.e – Bavaria’s largest travel and leisure trade fair – will be held on February 19 – 23, 2025, at the Munich Exhibition Center.



You can find images of f.re.e 2024 [here](#)

f.re.e – Fair for Leisure and Travel

f.re.e is Bavaria's largest fair for leisure and travel, with the topics of Travel, Camping & Caravanning, Water Sports, Outdoors & Fitness, as well as Bicycles. Visitors will receive a comprehensive market overview in these areas, be able to book journeys directly and test and experience products right on site. The varied supporting program promises additional information and entertainment.

Messe München

As one of the world's leading trade fair organizers, Messe München presents the world of tomorrow at its more than 80 international trade fairs. These include eleven of the world's leading trade fairs such as bauma, BAU, IFAT, electronica, and ISPO. Its portfolio comprises trade fairs for capital and consumer goods, as well as for new technologies. Together with its subsidiaries, it organizes trade fairs in China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey, Singapore, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Thailand, and the U.S. With a network of over 15 associated companies and almost 70 offices worldwide, Messe München is active in more than 130 countries. The more than 150 events held annually attract around 50,000 exhibitors and around three million visitors in Germany and abroad.