

# More passengers, more stops: The Wittlich shuttle now also operates as a vaccination transport

**Wittlich Shuttle registers over 20 percent more passengers in 2020, despite corona crisis • Importance of on-demand service for the city of Wittlich is growing: as of January 2021, also connected to local vaccination center • Service as a cornerstone of general interest and mobility assurance, especially in uncertain times**

*(Wittlich, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021)* Despite the ongoing pandemic, the Wittlich Shuttle, a digital on-demand bus operated by the city of Wittlich in partnership with DB Regio Bus and ioki, is showing a positive development: In 2020, the service was able to transport over 20 percent more passengers than in the previous year – despite weeks of restrictions on social life. Since January 2021, the Wittlich Shuttle also provides on-demand and secure mobility to the vaccination center.

After the hospital was directly connected to the public transport system for the first time in 2020 with the Wittlich Shuttle, citizens now also benefit from another important stop directly in front of the local vaccination center. The vaccination center in Wittlich is responsible for servicing the entire district. With its decision to make the ride to and from the vaccination center free of charge for its citizens, the town of Wittlich is once again underlining its understanding of a genuine, demand oriented provision of public services.

A total of almost 12,000 passengers used the digital call-bus service of the Wittlich Shuttle in 2020 – even though ridepooling has been suspended since spring 2020 due to the Corona measures. Joachim Rodenkirch, mayor of the city of Wittlich, also takes stock after just under a year of the Corona crisis: "The rising user numbers of the Wittlich Shuttle show that our service is highly trusted by passengers – especially in uncertain times. The shuttle has become an essential part of our citizens' everyday mobility. A mission we take seriously," he explains.

In this way, the Wittlich Shuttle is responding adequately to the challenges of its primarily older target group, even in times of crisis. "A minimum of mobility is indispensable even in the greatest moments of crisis. Because even in times of social distance, necessary routes such as to the doctor or to the shops do not completely disappear for the population and not everyone has their own car. We are very happy that, in partnership with the city, we can contribute more than ever to securing public mobility and services of general interest in Wittlich through our digital call-bus solution," adds Guido Verhoefen, Chairman of the Central Region, DB Regio Bus.



All the adjustments and, in some cases, last-minute changes to the service caused by the current situation can be implemented efficiently thanks to the flexible on-demand platform from project partner ioki: "With our so-called operating system for digital mobility, we implement demand response in its entirety – promptly, appropriately and reliably. This is precisely where we see the central potential of digital on-demand services, especially at the present time. By providing intelligent mobility solutions, we can provide target-oriented support in overcoming current challenges, such as organizing vaccination transports," says Dr. Michael Barillère-Scholz, summarizing the strengths of the on-demand approach used by the Wittlich Shuttle.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, masks have been mandatory in both vehicles of the Wittlich Shuttle. In addition, all surfaces of the shuttle are regularly disinfected. This means that the Wittlich Shuttle always operates in compliance with the latest hygiene measures and distance regulations.

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### **About ioki GmbH**

ioki develops smart mobility solutions for the future. Whether for transport companies, local authorities or businesses, whether in rural areas or in the city: as an expert for mobility analyses, the Deutsche Bahn subsidiary identifies needs and provides data-based advice for the planning of new services. With the help of its intelligent platform, the DB business unit, as a technology partner, also enables flexible on-demand mobility that is integrated into public transport, thus strengthening public transport in the long term. ioki supports its customers from A to Z: from identifying meaningful areas of use to the development of a user-friendly app to the actual implementation on the road. In this way, mobility becomes accessible for everyone, anytime and anywhere – sustainable, accessible and demand-responsive.

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