



DIGITAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

From the on-demand shuttle to the long-distance train: ICE and LahnStar are connecting

Discounted conditions for changing from long-distance to local public transport • cooperation between the city of Limburg, DB Fernverkehr, RMV and ioki • Limburg-Süd is the second German long-distance station after Darmstadt with a direct DRT connection

(Frankfurt/Limburg, 1st February 2023) As of today, passengers in the Rhine-Main region can board the ICE flexibly, conveniently and more cost-effectively with the on-demand shuttle LahnStar in Limburg-Süd. The offer is a collaboration between the Limburg city line, DB Fernverkehr AG, RMV (Rhein-Main-Verkehrsverbund) and ioki GmbH.

Anyone who wants to travel from Limburg-Süd long-distance station by ICE can now do so even more easily. Simply select the "long-distance ticket" slider in the RMV OnDeMo app, developed and provided by ioki, and select Limburg-Süd station as the starting point or destination. The transfer is supported by Deutsche Bahn's Long Distance Passenger Transport DB Fernverkehr AG, which sponsors the journey with the LahnStar with up to 2.60 euros. Transferring passengers thus only pay 1.10 euros and if they have a local public transport ticket, the journey with the LahnStar is even free of charge.

Innovative solution as an incentive to change

"This is a clear incentive not to use your own car when travelling to or from the ICE in the LahnStar service area," says Limburg's first councillor Michael Stanke in his function as operations manager of the city line. He sees passengers who have no or only very limited use of the existing bus lines as customers for the new service, as many changes significantly lengthen the journey time.

For RMV Managing Director Prof. Knut Ringat it is clear: "On-demand services like the LahnStar are the ideal complement to bus and rail - especially where there is no direct public transport connection. As a feeder to the ICE station, the LahnStar demonstrates all the strengths of a demand responsive service: It brings its passengers to the station without any further changeover, and it does so exactly timed to the departure of the long-distance trains. This is really a good reason to leave your car at home and I think it's great how the city of Limburg, together with DB, is creating real added value for passengers."



Cost-effective and convenient

Stefanie Berk, marketing management at DB Fernverkehr: "On-demand offers such as the LahnStar enable our customers to comfortably travel to and from the train station without additional changeover. Together with our partners, we offer an attractive and sustainable alternative to private cars for travel. We are pleased that we can expand our test area to include Limburg for a closer link between ICE and on-demand traffic and are looking forward to customer feedback."

Dr. Michael Barillère-Scholz is managing director of the railway subsidiary ioki, who provides the innovative technology for the demand-responsive transport. He is convinced: "With the better connection between LahnStar and long-distance transport, public transport for the first and last mile will become more attractive, especially for those people in the region who are currently using their car to the ICE station. The ride with the LahnStar is more cost-effective and comfortable. This is how we combine climate-friendly mobility on the road with rail."

First and last mile to the ICE: Limburg and Darmstadt as pioneers

The long-distance railway station Limburg-Süd is the second German long-distance railway station next to Darmstadt, where long-distance trains are connected to local public transport via on-demand services. In the long term, the project partners want to shift traffic from motorised private transport to public transport and rail.

This has already been successfully tested with the Heinerliner of HEAG mobilo in Darmstadt since May 2022, where passengers can itemise their long-distance ticket and large pieces of luggage in the app. Thanks to the dense network of virtual and physical stops, the flexible shuttle service is the ideal addition for the first and last mile.

Lahnstar and Heinerliner belong to the largest network of demand-responsive network in Germany under the umbrella of the RMV. Nine towns and counties are on board, whose services all use ioki's on-demand technology.



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About ioki

With over 105 demand-responsive transport services, ioki is one of the leading platform providers for digital on-demand solutions in Europe and market leader in the DACH region. Over 90 per cent of on-demand transport with ioki software complement public transport in suburban or rural regions. Companies, cities and municipalities have relied on our expertise since 2017 to optimise and digitise transport according to demand. These include flagship projects such as ioki Hamburg (now hvv hop) and the Europe-wide largest project for on-demand transport in the Rhine-Main area. As a pioneer for autonomous ride pooling, ioki has been setting milestones for digital and autonomous mobility since its founding – from Germany's first autonomous shuttle bus to the planned world's largest autonomous fleet on demand in public transport. More than 140 employees from more than 20 nations develop equitable and modern mobility solutions for sustainable, attractive local transport from the heart of Europe.

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