



DIGITAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

## kvgOF Hopper now largest DRT in the state of Hesse

**ioki provides on-demand software for a successful mobility concept • Expanded public transport services in the district of Offenbach • Flexible and convenient booking via app and phone**

*(Dietzenbach, 18th July 2023)* With approximately 360,000 people and an area of 356 square kilometres, the district of Offenbach is since July the catchment area of the modern, app-bookable DRT shuttle called Hopper of the Kreisverkehrsgesellschaft Offenbach mbH (kvgOF). The recent expansion of the Hopper's service area to include the four cities Dietzenbach, Dreieich, Neu-Isenburg and Rodgau has resulted in an increase of approximately 45 percent in potential new passengers in the last three weeks. This achievement marks an important milestone in the test and trial phase of the kvgOF Hopper, which is scheduled to run until the end of 2024, and signifies the completion of the final expansion stage of the pilot project.

Back in the summer of 2019, kvgOF became the first local public transport organisation in the Rhein-Main-Verkehrsverbund (RMV) to launch this innovative mobility service in the eastern part of the district of Offenbach. The kvgOF Hopper operates without a fixed timetable or route and can be booked on demand through app or phone call. The minibus primarily serves municipal infrastructure and covers the last mile of the public transport route. Since 2022, the kvgOF has been offering the DRT service in six other municipalities. Since the beginning of July, all thirteen municipalities in the district of Offenbach have access to the DRT.

To date, nearly 400,000 passengers have utilized this new service, giving it an average rating of 4.9 out of 5. The kvgOF operates 60 exclusively electronically eVitos from Mercedes Benz. By the upcoming timetable change in December 2023, each municipality will also have a wheelchair-accessible vehicle in operation. As a result, kvgOF now boasts the largest DRT service in the state of Hesse by a significant margin.

The driving service, scheduling and charging concept for the kvgOF Hopper have been entrusted to the company CleverShuttle Südwest GmbH, a company employing 260 individuals in the district of Offenbach. The development of the software relies on the Deutsche Bahn subsidiary ioki GmbH, which specialises in on-demand software. Both companies were selected through a Europe-wide tender process. The software provided by ioki is made available to kvgOF through a framework agreement with RMV.

In 2020, kvgOF joined nine other partners in the project "On-Demand Mobility for the Frankfurt/RhineMain Region" of the Rhine-Main Transport Association (RMV). This project, supported by the funding programme "Digitisation of Municipal Transport



Systems," with a total budget of around 27 million euros, falls under the immediate action programme "Clean Air 2017 – 2020." It is scheduled to run from 2019 to 2024.

"Within four years, despite some delays caused by the pandemic, all citizens will be able to enjoy the convenience of this modern and digital public transport service, while making their personal contribution to environmental protection. I am incredibly proud of this accomplishment," explains First District Councilor Claudia Jäger. "At the launch of the Hopper in 2019, as pioneers of DRT shuttles in the Rhine-Main region, we faced scepticism. Now, we are the first district in Hesse with a fully comprehensive DRT service. However, we must look ahead and determine how to continue this convenient service beyond the pilot period until 2024, ensuring its financial sustainability. The goal is to make the DRT service an integral part of the public transport system in the Offenbach district, alongside suburban trains and buses."

RMV CEO Prof. Knut Ringat remarks, "In 2019, the Hopper was the first DRT shuttle in the RMV area and the first to expand its service area due to high demand. Now, just four years after its introduction, the Hopper is so popular that we can expand the service to cover the entire Offenbach district. This makes us proud and emphatically demonstrates that DRT is an excellent addition to public transport and thus an important part of the mobility revolution."

Michael Barillère-Scholz, co-founder and CEO of ioki GmbH, highlights, "The kvgOF Hopper is a flagship project for seamless mobility via smartphone. Currently, kvgOF utilises various features offered by our ioki on-demand technology. For instance, passengers can access alternative public transport connections through the app. If comparable bus and train travel options are not available, customers can travel at a reduced fare. Through technological innovations, citizens receive a convenient and high-quality service that adapts to their needs now and in the future."

Bruno Ginnuth, CEO and co-founder of CleverShuttle, adds, "With the expanded service area, we now enable flexible on-demand mobility throughout the entire district of Offenbach in collaboration with kvgOF. The Hopper comfortably takes passengers to their destinations without the need to transfer buses, providing real added value to the existing public transport system. As the operator, we reliably deploy vehicles in all 13 municipalities and manage the digital traffic control."

Max Breitenbach, Mayor of Rodgau, expresses his anticipation, saying, "The kvgOF Hopper rollout in Dietzenbach, Dreieich, Neu-Isenburg and Rodgau fills the gaps in the network of an innovative new form of public transport in the district. In Rodgau, we are excited to offer this new service and to gain initial experience with the Hopper. Based on these experiences, the service can be optimised."

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## **About ioki**

ioki is one of the leading platform providers for digital on-demand solutions in Europe, offering over 100 demand-responsive transport services. It is the market leader in the DACH region, where over 90 percent of on-demand transport with ioki software



complements public transport in suburban or rural regions. Since 2017, companies, cities, and municipalities have relied on ioki's expertise to optimise and digitise transport according to demand. Flagship projects include ioki Hamburg (now hvv hop) and the largest Europe-wide project for on-demand transport in the Rhine-Main area. As a pioneer in 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. With over 140 employees from more than 20 nations, ioki develops equitable and modern mobility solutions for sustainable and attractive local transport from the heart of Europe.

### **About kvgOF Hopper**

For more information on how the DRT kvgOF Hopper works, the service area and the fare, please visit [www.kvgOF-Hopper.de](http://www.kvgOF-Hopper.de). You can also follow the kvgOF Hopper on Facebook and Instagram (@kvgOF.hopper).

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