



Multi-cultural heart of the metropolitan region
The city sandwiched between the Rhine and the Neckar is superbly placed in a number of respects.

Stadt Mannheim

“The Mini-Metropolis”

The grid-plan city of Mannheim is one of the five most innovative, most progressive cities in Germany

Mannheim already has one huge fan—its mayor, Dr. Peter Kurz. He extols the virtues of his city as follows. “I always call Mannheim “the mini-metropolis”, because it provides all the amenities of a major city, yet is of a manageable size and does not feature the anonymity prevalent in major metropolitan regions. Mannheim is a city where you can live and work. People can find and achieve their own personal work-life balance here. The city is green, is located on two rivers, provides an exceptional range of cultural activities, has excellent shopping facilities, great surroundings with a well-developed public transport network and features a melange of different cultures. Mannheim is a city of science and research, creativity, a superb spot to make something of your life, a career stepping stone and a great place to settle down.”

If you take a look at life in the city, at its history, its flair, its future plans and projects,

you soon realise that Mannheim has a lot to offer. For example did you know that not only bicycles, tractors and cars are “made in Mannheim”, but also the elevators? Or that Mannheim is a primary and secondary education role model—the current schooling system is derived from Mannheim’s 1901 system—and that one of Baden-Württemberg’s first all-day primary schools was set up in Mannheim in 1998. Did you know that you can study pop music in Mannheim and become a “pop academic”? Or that the city has its own music industry start-up centre?

Practical Quality of Life

In order to meet current and future challenges, Mannheim has initiated an extensive urban development process. The city put its Change2 programme in place in 2008 with the objective of achieving seven strategic goals by 2013. They are key to determin-

“Cultural and religious diversity is characteristic of our city. Where else would you find a mosque in the city centre, located next door to a Catholic church, in which a former Protestant clergyman conducts guided tours?”

Dr. Peter Kurz, Mayor

ing where municipal action should focus and develop issues such as education, culture, business and the economy, integration, an urban mind-set and participation of the citizens. In this respect the city is very ambitious. Mannheim wants to become a “metropolitan model of co-existence”. This is a particular challenge, given that 37 percent of Mannheim’s population has an migration background: people from around 170 different countries continue to leave their mark on the city. Do people have any preconceptions? This is practically impossible in a city like Mannheim. Therefore not only does a glance at the city’s history demonstrate that integration and tolerance have always been part of the fabric of Mannheim society. “Multiculti”—almost everybody from Mannheim, when asked to describe their city, lists that as one of its advantages.

Driving Urban Development Forward

Mannheim appreciates its diversity and regards it as an opportunity. The creative sector is one of the businesses that Mannheim is focusing on and in which it intends to play a pioneering role by providing targeted assistance. The city’s range of skills also includes medical technology, energy & environmental engineering as well as manufacturing and process technology, whilst regional strengths—the automotive industry, chemicals and logistics—are to be enhanced as well. This is the intention expressed in Mannheim’s economic policy strategy, which was agreed at the beginning of 2010—also as part of Change2. Mannheim is therefore positioning itself as a distinctive business location and concentrates on those sectors, in which it has been in the forefront ever since. ❁

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