



Accessible and digital – a bathroom for all generations

Frankfurt am Main, 3 December 2024. Designing a bathroom also means thinking about tomorrow's needs. Given the increasing number of people requiring care in Germany, as well as the latest technological developments, it is important to prioritise accessible and digital bathrooms for new builds and refurbishments that can be used by people of all age groups.

In Germany, the number of people requiring care is climbing inexorably. According to the German Statistical Office (Statistisches Bundesamt) more than 5 million Germans are in need of care. And more than 80 percent of them are being looked after in their own homes – by relatives or trained care staff. To ease the pressure on the care system, it is imperative that it not be necessary to place patients with minor disabilities in residential care facilities.

Accessible – but how?

Many of the fixtures and fittings that create an accessible bathroom are also beneficial for young families. Height-adjustable elements or touch-free taps are particularly suitable for children. However, owners and builders do not have to install handrails and seats in the shower from the outset if they are unlikely to be needed for several decades. All they need to do is make provision for future requirements today by, for example, reinforcing the wall where a grab rail is to be installed at a later date. Sufficient space around the shower, washbasin and toilet should also be factored in at the planning stage so these facilities are subsequently accessible for people using a wheelchair or walking frame.

Many elderly people prefer to stay in their own home and thus in familiar surroundings. However, if they are to be cared for in their own homes, their bathrooms must be fully accessible and have sufficient space. According to the German Sanitary Industry Association, one in four bathrooms in Germany does not meet these requirements and should be modernised.

More than just a gimmick

Digitalisation and technical aids also make an important contribution to accessibility. For people requiring care and those with physical disabilities, new technologies in the bathroom are not just a gimmick, but a key element in ensuring greater safety and self-determination. Sensor-controlled lighting activates the light as soon as someone enters the bathroom, thus minimising the risk of tripping. If a fall does occur, sensors in the floor recognise who has fallen and alert relatives or the emergency services. Voice assistants can also provide support in an emergency. Furthermore, it is possible to integrate measuring devices that transmit health data to carers or relatives. Intelligent mirrors can even remind users to wash, comb their hair, brush their teeth or take their medication.

The technology is there, it just needs to be implemented

A bathroom that is both accessible and digital is particularly advantageous as we get older. However, this is also part of the problem. When they are 30, people don't want to think about their likely physical decline 40 to 50 years later. Hence, many of them fail to create the prerequisites for accessible conversions later, for example, LAN/WLAN coverage, basic electrical connections or empty ducts for data cables.

Smart bathrooms require both qualified sanitary and HVAC installers and electrical engineering expertise. In Germany, financial assistance for age-optimised bathroom renovations is available and, in acute cases, support can also be obtained from health-insurance companies. In a nutshell: it is well worth planning early and thinking about tomorrow's needs today.



Covering the spectrum from public or private bathrooms to modern bathroom installations, exhibitors in the bathroom thematic category at ISH 2025 will showcase innovative solutions that meet the needs of all generations, from young to old. Source: Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH

Modern bathroom solutions at ISH 2025

Nowadays, bathrooms are much more than just functional rooms – they have developed into wellness oases that emphasise user well-being. Be it in the private or public sector, modern bathrooms combine appealing design, luxury and sustainability with innovative technologies. Rooms with high water consumption offer a great potential for making savings, which is why the use of water- and energy-saving technologies is particularly effective in such cases.

ISH in Frankfurt am Main from 17 to 21 March 2025 represents a great opportunity to learn all about the latest developments. In the 'Solutions for Bathrooms' section, exhibitors will be showcasing innovations for private bathrooms, spas, pools and wellness facilities as well as (semi-) public and industrial bathrooms, care-sector bathrooms and bathroom installations. Information about this solution field can be found [here](#).

Next year's ISH will be accompanied by a multifaceted, complementary programme of events. One of the highlights will be the first 'Value of Water Conference' at the Congress Centre of Messe Frankfurt on 17 and 18 March 2025. At the conference organised by Messe Frankfurt and the Handelsblatt Media Group, experts and decision-makers from the sanitation, real estate and housing sectors, as well as representatives of local

authorities and NGOs, will discuss global innovations and best practices in the field of water management and hygiene.

Interior design, current trends and future perspectives in the sanitary industry are the focus of the Design Plaza in Hall 3.1. In the immediate vicinity, the 'Pop up my Bathroom' trend area will present visionary bathroom concepts as holistic room solutions. Additionally, the special 'SPAs, Pools & Wellness' area in Hall 3.1 will offer insights into modern wellness solutions while, one level lower, in Hall 3.0, the 'Public, Care Sector Bathrooms & Clean Water' area will spotlight innovative approaches for public bathrooms, care-sector bathrooms and hygienic drinking water supplies.

The latest developments and pioneering ideas combined with ground-breaking design are front and centre of the Design Plus Award by ISH. This prestigious award is given by ISH in cooperation with Stylepark, the magazine for architecture and design, and honours outstanding innovations and sustainable designs in the bathroom, heating and air-conditioning sectors. The award ceremony will take place on the first day of the fair. The award-winning products will be on display in a special exhibition throughout the fair.

Full details at a glance

Visitors will find a comprehensive overview of the solution fields and events, as well as exhibitor information, on the ISH 2025 website at www.ish.messefrankfurt.com

ISH – The World's Leading Trade Fair for HVAC and Water
The next ISH will be held from 17 to 21 March 2025.

Information and photographs for the press:

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