Press release

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#fsb

Inclusivity is rising to the top of the agenda of the FSB 2027

The successful premiere of the congress "Inclusive areas for leisure and exercise" highlights the growing need for accessible and intergenerational public spaces and supports the focus of the FSB.

Cologne, 3rd November 2026 - How can public leisure and exercise spaces be planned to ensure that they are accessible to people with different abilities, needs and requirements? This question is becoming increasingly important for local authorities, operators and planning offices. The first congress "Inclusive areas for leisure and exercise", held on 29th and 30th September 2026 in Cologne, revealed the significant need for professional discussion. At the FSB 2027, the hot topic of inclusivity will therefore take on an increased significance.

Around 150 experts from relevant fields such as landscape architecture, city planning, sport, economics and relevant associations were at the premiere of the congress at Koelnmesse. The event was held over two days by Playground@Landscape and FSB. 18 companies supported the congress as sponsors and presented an accompanying presentation "Innovations for the design of leisure and exercise areas".

The focus was on planning approaches, practical examples and specific requirements for public spaces that welcome as many people as possible. The contributions ranged from the participation of affected users to the consideration of visible and invisible restrictions, as well as the inclusive design of play areas, fitness equipment and skate/bike parks. Excursions to the play area and fitness equipment at Deutzer Hafen and the playground in Johannes-Giesberts-Park supplemented the program, providing examples of local government practice in Cologne.

From key issue to its own specialist congress

The congress was established from one of the key issues of the FSB 2025. The response shows: When local authorities, planning, economists, associations, manufacturers and user perspectives come together, professional insights can lead to real changes. The increasing interest in inclusive playgrounds and exercise equipment is not just a question of individual design details. What is needed are universal designs that combine accessibility, orientation, safety, design and quality of experience.

Inclusive and accessible design is thus neither a short-term trend nor simply a question of legal requirements. It is a task for society as a whole, to facilitate

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participation and to make public spaces available for people of different age ranges, abilities and needs. A continuation of the congress has been planned. This topic is also expected to be a key focus once again at the upcoming FSB.

Inclusivity must be thought of as a system, not a single solution

From 26th to 29th October 2027, the FSB in Cologne will demonstrate how inclusive solutions for play, exercise and public spaces can be planned, equipped and operated in the long term. The focus will be on play equipment, outdoor fitness equipment, fall protection systems, accessible route guidance and orientation aids, as well as urban furniture and common spaces for different generations and user groups.

Inclusivity goes beyond architectural accessibility. An inclusive space offers different approaches to exercise, play, sensory experience and social interaction. The point is not for everyone to use every option in the same way. What matters is that an area provides a range of opportunities for as many people as possible.

"Inclusive play areas and exercise areas provide opportunities for physical activity, social interaction and participation in community. Inclusivity must therefore not be understood as a supplement to the planning of public spaces, but rather considered from the beginning. To this end, the FSB brings together the necessary perspectives and presents practical solutions", says Bettina Frias, Director of the FSB.

Inclusivity is becoming a quality criterion

Inclusivity is becoming increasingly relevant in planning and procurement. Accessibility is increasingly seen as more than just a minimum requirement. It is becoming a quality criterion for public spaces. Inclusive areas are a real contribution to livable neighbourhoods and sustainable municipal infrastructure.

The basis of this is created in the early design stages. Access points, route guidance, orientation, fall protection, exercise equipment and common spaces must be viewed as an interrelated system. Alongside physical requirements, there are sensory, cognitive, social and age-related requirements to consider.

Cities and communities preside over the task of creating public spaces that promote health and exercise, facilitate social interaction and can be used by a wide range of members of the community. And this holistic approach is also gaining importance internationally.

International platform for planning, products and knowledge transfer

As an international platform for sustainable sport, public space and leisure infrastructure, the FSB brings together exhibitors, local authorities, planning offices, clubs, operators, investors, and experts from the fields of landscape architecture, gardening and landscaping. It shows which products, materials, technologies and design approaches inclusive areas allow and how to ensure long-term participation.

With this, the FSB 2027 addresses an issue that combines social responsibility with real opportunities for the industry. Inclusivity stands for a quality of public spaces that does not reduce people to their restrictions, but rather provides a range of opportunities for exercise, interaction and use. The strategic goal of the FSB thus views inclusivity as a holistic future topic for the development of public spaces and neighbourhoods.

Koelnmesse – Global Inspiration for Living, Contract and Public Spaces
Koelnmesse is the world's top trade fair organiser for the areas of Living, Contract and Public Spaces. Leading international trade fairs such as ORGATEC, interzum, FSB, aquanale and spoga+gafa come together at the Cologne trade fair location to form renowned and established industry meeting points. This strong portfolio is further enhanced by idd cologne, which also held in Cologne. These fairs comprehensively represent the interior and design segment, the furniture and interior construction industries' supplying sections, the kitchen world, all topics for the modern working world, garden lifestyle as well as modern work environments, public spaces, sports and leisure facilities, along with saunas, pools and wellness centres.

Beyond that, Koelnmesse is strategically expanding its portfolio in international growth markets. The imm brand family includes imm india and IFFINA+ powered by imm cologne in Indonesia. The ORGATEC brand has established a global footprint with ORGATEC Tokyo, ORGATEC India, and ORGATEC WORKSPACE Saudi Arabia. The international presence of the interzum brand extends to interzum guangzhou, interzum bogota, interzum jakarta, and the interzum forum italy. The FSB brand is also internationally active, with the FSB Sports Show Riyadh and the FSB Forum Italy in Bergamo. Furthermore, the portfolio features La Feria De Diseño Medellín powered by idd cologne in Colombia.

The next events:
FSB Forum Italy - The Networking Event in Italy for Sports, Leisure Facilities and Public Spaces, Bergamo 11.11. - 12.11.2026
ORGATEC India - India´s International Trade Fair for the Future of Workplaces & Ecosystems for Facilities, Mumbai 19.11. - 21.11.2026
interzum guangzhou - Asia's Most Comprehensive Woodworking and Upholstery Machinery, Furniture Production and Interior Décor Trade Fair, Guangzhou 28.03. - 31.03.2027

#bettertogether: FSB and aquanale – a powerful trade fair duo

FSB – International Trade Fair for Public Space, Sports and Leisure Facilities and **aquanale – International Trade Fair for Sauna.Pool.Ambience.** will once again take place in parallel from **26 to 29 October 2027** at the Cologne exhibition grounds. Together, they form a globally unique trade fair duo that unites public and private spaces for movement, relaxation, leisure and health. While FSB focuses on sports facility construction, urban infrastructure and municipal spaces for physical activity, aquanale presents innovations in swimming pool technology, sauna, wellness and spa. Both events create valuable synergies for planners, architects, operators and decision-makers – **#bettertogether**.

Note for editorial offices:
Image material from FSB and aquanale is available in our online image database at www.fsb-cologne.com/imagedatabase and https://www.aquanale.com/press/multimedia/image-database/

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