

16. February 2023

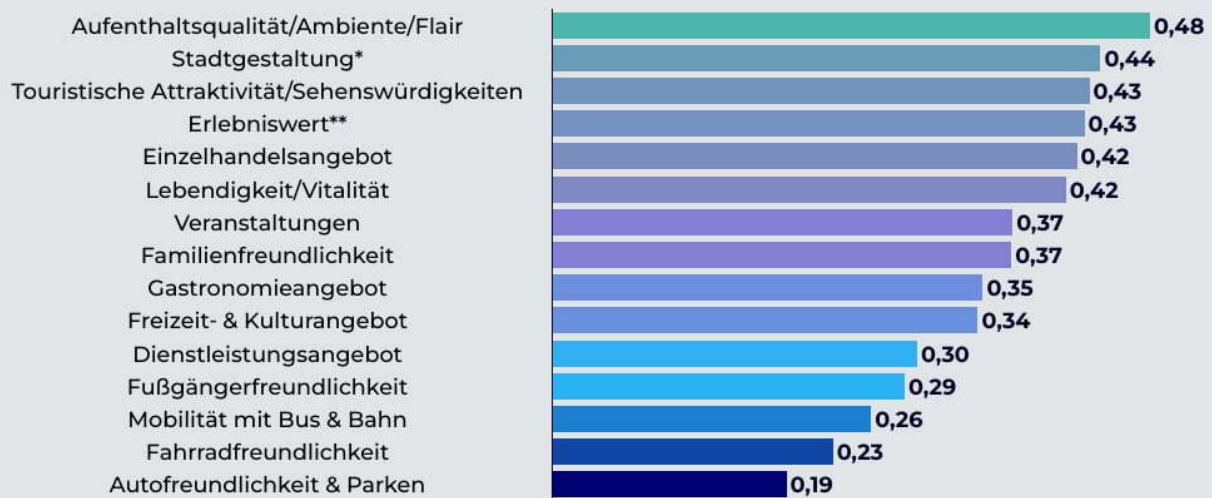
City management

## Vibrant city centres 2022: results for Bocholt



IFH KÖLN

## Einflussfaktoren auf Weiterempfehlung



Korrelationen zwischen der Benotung der Einzelmerkmale (1 = sehr gut bis 6 = ungenügend) und der Weiterempfehlungsbereitschaft (0 = äußerst unwahrscheinlich bis 10 = äußerst wahrscheinlich), höhere Werte entsprechen einem stärkeren Zusammenhang. n = 68.651 in 111 Innenstädten.

Quelle: Vitale Innenstädte 2022, IFH KÖLN 2023.

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**For the fifth time, the survey was carried out in Bocholt on behalf of Stadtmarketing Bocholt - grade 2 achieved for the attractiveness of the city centre, just like all participating cities on average**

What is the state of German city centres? What motivates visitors to visit city centres - especially after the impact of the Corona pandemic that lasted almost three years? These questions are the basis of the nationwide survey "Vitale Innenstädte 2022", which the Cologne Institute for Retail Research (IFH) conducted for the fifth time in autumn 2022 in 111 city centres in Germany. The results are particularly interesting for Bocholt because Stadtmarketing Bocholt has participated since the first year of the survey. This means that some of the results are also available as a time series and provide indications of developments - also for the upcoming further development of the city centre strategy in the coming months. The survey was supported by the Bundesvereinigung City- und Stadtmarketing Deutschland e.V. (bcSD), the Deutscher Industrie- und Handelskammertag (DIHK), the Handelsverband Deutschland (HDE) and the Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund (DStGB).

### Bocholt city centre - overall score

The overall score for Bocholt's city centre has remained similar in a sideways movement since 2018 and this time is 2.5. No significant swing in the score up or down. Here, the city centre visitors rate particularly positively the attractiveness of the retail offer overall, the bicycle and pedestrian friendliness, the range of restaurants and cafés, the range of

services, buildings, paths, seating and places to stay, cleanliness, safety and family friendliness. Particularly exciting from the perspective of Stadtmarketing Bocholt was the question about the development of the attractiveness of Bocholt's city centre in recent years. Almost 60 % of the respondents see neither a clear improvement nor a clear deterioration - stagnation. This figure is also high in comparison to the town size average and in comparison to all the towns that took part in the survey.

### **Additional questions - weekly market / regionality / sustainability**

The three additional questions that were asked individually for Bocholt - related to the weekly market, the purchase of regional products and generally a change in awareness towards a more sustainable lifestyle. One third of the respondents frequently shop at the weekly market, which takes place four times a week, of which about 50 % are female respondents. More than 50 % of the respondents generally attach importance to buying regional products, of which about 70 % are female respondents. 65 % confirm that their awareness of a more sustainable lifestyle has increased in the last three years, of which 76 % are female. Women are obviously more intensively engaged with the topics surveyed here.

### **Reasons for visiting - shopping still in first place**

The question about the reasons for visiting the city centre is interesting: 68 % of the respondents come to shop, 54 % come to visit the restaurants and 21 % come because of the services on offer (e.g. doctor's appointment or hairdresser). Multiple answers were possible here.

### **Choice of transport - Bocholt is a cycling town**

The fact that Bocholt is a cycling town was also confirmed in this survey by the question about the choice of transport to visit the town centre, because 33 % choose the bicycle or the e-bike. This means that Bocholt stands out in comparison to the average size of the town (14.8%) and in comparison to the overall average of all participating towns (15.1%).

### **Time series - results for various aspects**

Looking at the time series (2018 - 2020 - 2022), it is noticeable that cleanliness and safety of Bocholt's city centre are rated better, while there was more of a "sideways movement" for the experience value, tourist attractiveness, events and culture and the value achieved is a school grade of about 3. Why this result for experience and events was achieved in the 800th anniversary year of Bocholt is astonishing given the number of activities and events in 2022 and may be critically questioned.

**The Net Promoter Score (NPS), which has been collected since 2020 and indicates how likely it is that respondents would recommend Bocholt city centre to friends or acquaintances, has changed in the survey year 2022, as the average NPS for both days is -16.1%. This represents a significant change compared to 2020, when + 51.3 % of respondents had a positive attitude towards Bocholt city centre and said they would recommend it to others. Nevertheless, Bocholt's city marketing sees a need for action here with regard to the implementation of a branding process. This means that Bocholt does not stand alone with regard to the result, because in every other city the number of those**

who would not recommend the city centre to others outweighs the number of those who would recommend it to others. The IFH emphasises that older people tend to recommend the cities they visit more than younger people. According to the study, the most important factors influencing the recommendation of city centres are the quality of stay, ambience and flair as well as urban design and tourist appeal. This is followed by the value of the experience and the retail offer.

### Conclusion for Bocholt

The effects of the Corona years and the current economic crisis are clearly noticeable in Bocholt. The general mood with regard to Bocholt's city centre also seems to be less positive in this survey of 610 randomly selected passers-by than would be desirable for a city like Bocholt. But it is not only the influencing factors mentioned at the beginning that lead to this result. Clear possibilities for improvement can be identified from the individual questions. These will be worked on in the upcoming inner city strategy process, which Stadtmarketing Bocholt has commissioned from the consulting firm Stadt + Handel in Hamburg. One of the objectives is to create a transformation with the existing framework conditions and to develop the city centre of Bocholt into a resilient, attractive, future-oriented and diverse city centre. The empirical data presented here is a current basis for the classification of Bocholt and the levers to be worked on.

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