

# Konstanz

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**Konstanz** (pronounced ['kɔnstans], locally ['kɔŋtants]; English: **Constance**, Latin: *Constantia*) is a university city with approximately 80,000 inhabitants located at the western end of Lake Constance in the south-west corner of Germany, bordering Switzerland. The city houses the University of Konstanz and was for more than 1200 years residence of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Konstanz.

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## Location

Konstanz is situated on Lake Constance (*Bodensee* in German). The Rhine river, which starts in the Swiss Alps, passes through Lake Constance and leaves it, considerably larger, by flowing under a bridge connecting the two parts of the city. North of the river lies the larger part of the city with residential areas, industrial estates, and the University of Konstanz; while south of the river is the old town, which houses the administrative centre and shopping facilities in addition to the *Hochschule* or the *University of Applied Sciences*. Car ferries provide access across Lake Constance to Meersburg, and the *Katamaran* provides a shuttle service for pedestrians to Friedrichshafen. At the old town's southern border lies the Swiss town of Kreuzlingen.

## Subdivisions

Konstanz is subdivided into 15 wards or districts (*Stadtteile*). The island of Mainau belonged to the ward of Litzelstetten, a separate municipality until its incorporation into Konstanz on December 1, 1971.

## History

The first traces of civilization in Konstanz date back to the late Stone Age. During the reign of Augustus, the Celts living south of the Danube were conquered by the Romans. Around 40 AD, the first Romans settled on the site. This small town on the left bank of the Rhine was probably first called *Drusomagus* and belonged to the Roman province of *Raetia*. Its later name, originally *Constantia*, comes either from the Roman emperor Constantius Chlorus, who fought the Alemanni in the region and built a strong fortress around 300 AD, or from his grandson Constantius II, who visited the region in 354. The remains of the late Roman fortress

## Konstanz



*Rheintorturm*, a section of the former city wall of Konstanz at Lake Constance



### Coat of arms



### Location of Konstanz within Konstanz district



Coordinates: 47°40'N 9°11'E

<b>Country</b>	Germany
<b>State</b>	Baden-Württemberg
<b>Admin. region</b>	Freiburg
<b>District</b>	Konstanz
<b>Government</b>	
<span> </span> <span>•</span> <b>Lord Mayor</b>	Ulrich Burchardt (CDU)
<b>Area</b>	
<span> </span> <span>•</span> <b>Total</b>	55.65 km2 (21.49 sq mi)
<b>Population</b> (2013-12-31) <sup>[1]</sup>	
<span> </span> <span>•</span> <b>Total</b>	81,141
<span> </span> <span>•</span> <b>Density</b>	1,500/km2 (3,800/sq mi)
<b>Time zone</b>	CET/CEST (UTC+1/+2)
<b>Postal codes</b>	78462-78467
<b>Dialling codes</b>	07531, 07533
<b>Vehicle registration</b>	KN
<b>Website</b>	<span>www.konstanz.de</span> ( <span>http://ww</span>



Around 585 the first bishop took up residence in Konstanz and this marked the beginning of the city's importance as a spiritual centre. By the late Middle Ages, about one quarter of Konstanz's 6,000 inhabitants were exempt from taxation on account of clerical rights.

Trade thrived during the Middle Ages; Konstanz owned the only bridge in the region, which crossed the Rhine, making it a strategic location. Its linen production had made an international name for the city and it was prosperous. In 1192, Konstanz gained the status of Imperial City so it was henceforth subject only to the Holy Roman Emperor.

In 1414 to 1418, the Council of Constance took place, during which, on 6 July 1415, John Hus (Czech

religious thinker, philosopher and reformer), who was seen as a threat to Christianity by the Roman Catholic Church, was burned at the stake. It was here that the Papal Schism was ended and Pope Martin V was elected during the only conclave ever held north of the Alps. Ulrich von Richental's illustrated chronicle of the Council of Constance testifies to all the major happenings during the Council as well as showing the everyday life of medieval Konstanz. The *Konzilgebäude* where the conclave was held can still be seen standing by the harbour. Close by stands the *Imperia*, a statue that was erected in 1993 to commemorate the Council.

In 1460, the Swiss Confederacy conquered Thurgau, Konstanz's natural hinterland. Konstanz then made an attempt to get admitted to the Swiss Confederacy, but the forest cantons voted against its entry, fearing over-bearing city states; Konstanz then joined the Swabian League instead. In the Swabian War of 1499, Konstanz lost its last privileges over Thurgau to the Confederation.

The Protestant Reformation took hold in Konstanz in the 1520s, headed by Ambrosius Blarer. Soon the city declared itself officially Protestant, pictures were removed from the churches, and the bishop temporarily moved to Meersburg, a small town across the lake. The city first followed the Tetrapolitan Confession, and then the Augsburg Confession. However, in 1548 Emperor Charles V imposed the Imperial Ban on Konstanz and it had to surrender to Habsburg Austria which had suddenly attacked. Thus Konstanz lost its status as an imperial city. The new Habsburg rulers were eager to re-Catholicise the town and in 1604 a Jesuit College was opened. Its accompanying theatre, built in 1610, is the oldest theatre in Germany still performing regularly.

The city became part of the Grand Duchy of Baden in 1806. In 1821, the Bishopric of Constance was dissolved and became part of the Archdiocese of Freiburg. Konstanz became part of the German Empire in 1871 during the unification of Germany. After World War I it was included within the Republic of Baden.

Because it almost lies within Switzerland, directly adjacent to the Swiss border, Konstanz was not bombed by the Allied Forces during World War II. The city left all its lights on at night, and thus fooled the bombers into thinking it was actually part of Switzerland. After the war, Konstanz was included first in South Baden and then in the new state of Baden-Württemberg.

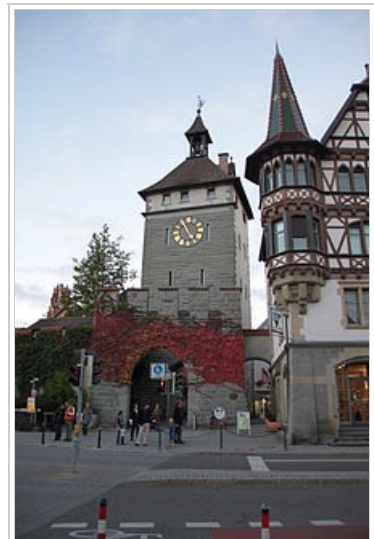
The *Altstadt* (Old Town), which is large considering the small size of modern Konstanz, has many old buildings and twisting alleys. The city skyline is dominated by the majestic "*Münster*" Cathedral ("*Münster Unserer Lieben Frau*"), several other churches and three towers left over from the city wall, one of which marks the place of the former medieval bridge over the Rhine.

The University of Konstanz was established close to the town in 1966. It houses an excellent library with approximately two million books, all freely accessible 24 hours a day, as well as a botanical garden (the Botanischer Garten der Universität Konstanz). Especially since 2007, the university, being one of the nine German universities most successful in the German Universities Excellence Initiative, has gained considerable reputation as a so-called "elite university".

Konstanz was the birthplace of Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin, constructor of the famous Zeppelin airships.



The Imperia at the Lake Constance harbour of Konstanz is the city's famous landmark



*Schnetztor*, a section of the former city wall.



Konstanz *Marktplatz*, the main square in the old town.



The late Roman fortress *Constantia* at the *Münsterplatz*.

The *Konzilgebäude* in Konstanz.

The plaque on the house where Jan Hus stayed in 1414.

Konstanz Cathedral

## Climate

Its location by a lake in south-west Germany gives Konstanz an oceanic climate (Cfb) with warm, humid summers and cold winters.

### Largest groups of foreign residents

Nationality	Population (2014)
Italy	1,627
Turkey	1,132
Croatia	568
Romania	565
Serbia & Montenegro	500
Austria	381

### Climate data for Konstanz, Germany for 1981-2010 (Source: DWD)

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
<b>Average high °C (°F)</b>	3.2 (37.8)	5.1 (41.2)	10.4 (50.7)	17.0 (62.6)	21.9 (71.4)	24.9 (76.8)	26.7 (80.1)	26.6 (79.9)	21.9 (71.4)	17.3 (63.1)	7.6 (45.7)	4.1 (39.4)	14.34 (57.81)
<b>Average low °C (°F)</b>	−2.3 (27.9)	−2.0 (28.4)	1.0 (33.8)	3.8 (38.8)	8.2 (46.8)	11.5 (52.7)	13.5 (56.3)	13.3 (55.9)	10.1 (50.2)	6.4 (43.5)	1.7 (35.1)	−0.9 (30.4)	5.4 (41.7)
<b>Average precipitation mm (inches)</b>	44.0 (1.732)	45.0 (1.772)	54.7 (2.154)	61.5 (2.421)	89.2 (3.512)	98.3 (3.87)	97.4 (3.835)	89.3 (3.516)	76.7 (3.02)	62.7 (2.469)	60.0 (2.362)	66.1 (2.602)	844.78 (33.2591)
<b>Mean monthly sunshine hours</b>	50.2	81.9	135.3	176.9	209.9	225.3	249.2	225.6	160.1	98.8	53.8	40.6	1,707.66

Source: Data derived from Deutscher Wetterdienst<sup>[2]</sup>

## Main sights

- Archaeological Museum
- Imperia*, a 9 m-tall sculpture
- Jan Hus Museum
- Konstanz Cathedral
- Konzil* edifice, dating to the 15th century
- Niederburg (Lower Castle)
- Petershausen Abbey
- Remains of a Roman fortress, near the Cathedral
- Schnetztor*, fortified gate of the former city walls

Konstanz was also home to a large synagogue, destroyed by the Nazi government in 1938.

## International relations

Konstanz is twinned with:

- Fontainebleau, France, since 1960
- Richmond-upon-Thames, United Kingdom, since 1983
- Tábor, Czech Republic, since 1984
- Lodi, Italy, since 1986
- Suzhou, PR China, since 2007
- Wycliffestead Lutterworth, United Kingdom, since 2015

## Transport

Konstanz station is served by the Upper Rhine Railway running west to Singen with connections to all parts of Germany, and the Etzwilen–Konstanz line running south into Switzerland, connecting to major routes at Weinfelden. Services are provided by the Deutsche Bahn AG and also the Swiss Turbo company and its German subsidiary. The nearest airport is at Friedrichshafen, which can be reached by a fast ferry service on the lake, which also connects Konstanz to other lakeside towns. The airport mainly hosts domestic flights, but flights to Austria and Turkey are available. The nearest international airports are in Stuttgart, in Basel, and Zürich, which has a direct train from Konstanz. Bus services within the city are provided by Stadtwerke Konstanz GmbH.

Additionally Konstanz and Friedrichshafen have been connected by the two (since 2008, three) catamarans *Constance* and *Fridolin* since 2005.

## World Heritage Site

It is home to one or more prehistoric pile-dwelling (or stilt house) settlements that are part of the Prehistoric Pile dwellings around the Alps UNESCO World Heritage Site.<sup>[3]</sup>

## See also

- Alexander-von-Humboldt-Gymnasium
- Cathedral of Konstanz
- Hochschule Konstanz (University of Applied Sciences)
- University of Konstanz

## References

- "Gemeinden in Deutschland mit Bevölkerung am 31. Dezember 2013 (Einwohnerzahlen auf Grundlage des Zensus 2011)". *Statistisches Bundesamt* (in German). 2014.
- "Ausgabe der Klimadaten: Monatswerte".
- UNESCO World Heritage Site - Prehistoric Pile dwellings around the Alps (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1363/>)

## External links

- Official website (<http://www.konstanz.de/>)
- (German)** Konstanz: history and images (<http://www.badische-seiten.de/konstanz/>)
- University of Konstanz (<http://www.uni-konstanz.de/>)
- Pictures Konstanz (<http://www.pictures-germany.com/konstanz/>)
- Online journal about Constance (<http://english.konstanz-magazin.de/>)
- University of Applied Sciences (<http://www.fh-konstanz.de/>)
- Photos of the Carnival (~Shrovetide, ~Mardi Grass) in Constance (<http://www.konstanzerfasnacht.de/>)
- Südkurier (<http://www.suedkurier.de/konstanz/>) Local newspaper for Konstanz

 Wikimedia Commons has media related to **Konstanz**.

 Wikivoyage has a travel guide for **Konstanz**.

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Categories: Towns in Baden-Württemberg | Populated places on Lake Constance | Populated places on the Rhine | Konstanz (district) | Imperial free cities | Germany–Switzerland border crossings | University towns in Germany | Former states and territories of Baden-Württemberg

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