

Berlin (/bɜːrˈlɪn/, German: [bɛʁˈliːn] (ⓘ listen)) is the **capital** and the largest city of **Germany**, as well as one of its 16 constituent **states**. With a steadily growing population of approximately 3.7 million,^[4] Berlin is the **second most populous city proper** in the **European Union** behind **London** and the seventh **most populous urban area** in the European Union.^[5] Located in northeastern Germany on the banks of the rivers **Spree** and **Havel**, it is the centre of the **Berlin-Brandenburg Metropolitan Region**, which has roughly 6 million residents.^[6]^[7]^[8]^[9] Due to its location in the **European Plain**, Berlin is influenced by a **temperate** seasonal climate. Around one-third of the city's area is composed of forests, parks, gardens, rivers, canals and lakes.^[10]

Berlin is a world city of culture, politics, media and science.^{[15][16][17][18]} Its economy is based on high-tech firms and the service sector, encompassing a diverse range of creative industries, research facilities, media corporations and convention venues.^{[19][20]} Berlin serves as a continental hub for air and rail traffic and has a highly complex public transportation network. The metropolis is a popular tourist destination.^[21] Significant industries also include IT, pharmaceuticals, biomedical engineering, clean tech, biotechnology, construction and electronics.

Berlin is home to world-renowned universities, orchestras, museums, and entertainment venues, and is host to many sporting events.^[22] Its Zoological Garden is the most visited zoo in Europe and one of the most popular worldwide. With the world's oldest large-scale movie studio complex, Berlin is an increasingly popular location for international film productions.^[23] The city is well known for its festivals, diverse architecture, nightlife, contemporary arts and a very high quality of living.^[24] Since the 2000s Berlin has seen the emergence of a cosmopolitan entrepreneurial scene.^[25]

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State of Germany



From top: Skyline including the TV Tower,
City West skyline with Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial
Church, Brandenburg Gate,
East Side Gallery (Berlin Wall),
Oberbaum Bridge over the Spree,
Reichstag building (Bundestag)



Flag



Coat of arms



Coordinates: 52°31'00"N 13°23'20"E

Country	Germany
Government	
• Body	Abgeordnetenhaus of Berlin
• Governing Mayor	Michael Müller (SPD)
• Governing parties	SPD / Left / Greens
• Bundesrat	4 (of 69)

- Health

Telecommunication
- Education

Higher education

Research
- Culture

Galleries and museums

Nightlife and festivals

Performing arts

Cuisine

Recreation

Sports
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votes	
Area	
 • City	891.7 km ² (344.3 sq mi)
Elevation	34 m (112 ft)
Population (2017) ^[1]	
 • City	3,711,930
 • Density	4,200/km ² (11,000/sq mi)
 • Metro	6,004,857
Demonym(s)	Berliner (m), Berliner in (f)
Time zone	CET (UTC+1)
 • Summer (DST)	CEST (UTC+2)
Area code(s)	030
ISO 3166 code	DE-BE
Vehicle registration	B ^[2]
GDP (nominal)	€130/ \$152 billion (2016) ^[3]
GDP per capita	€35,600/ \$41,900 (2015)
NUTS Region	DE3
Website	berlin.de

History

Etymology

Berlin lies in northeastern Germany, east of the River (Saxon or Thuringian) Saale, that once constituted, together with the River Elbe (from their confluence onwards), the eastern border of the Frankish Realm. While the Frankish Realm was primarily inhabited by Germanic tribes like the Franks and the Saxons, the regions east of the border rivers were inhabited by Slavic tribes. This is why most of the cities and villages in northeastern Germany bear Slavic-derived names (Germania Slavica). Typical Germanised place name suffixes of Slavic origin are -*ow*, -*itz*, -*vitz*, -*witz*, -*itzsch* and -*in*, prefixes are *Windisch* and *Wendisch*. The name *Berlin* has its roots in the language of West Slavic inhabitants of the area of today's Berlin, and may be related to the Old Polabian stem *berl-/birl-* ("swamp").^[26] Since the *Ber-* at the beginning sounds like the German word *Bär* (bear), a bear appears in the coat of arms of the city. It is therefore a canting arm.

Of Berlin's twelve boroughs, five bear a (partly) Slavic-derived name: Pankow (the most populous), Steglitz-Zehlendorf, Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Treptow-Köpenick and Spandau (named Spandow until 1878). Of its ninety-six neighborhoods, twenty-two bear a (partly) Slavic-derived name: Altglienicke, Alt-Treptow, Britz, Buch, Buckow, Gatow, Karow, Kladow, Köpenick, Lankwitz, Lübars, Malchow, Marzahn, Pankow, Prenzlauer Berg, Rudow, Schmöckwitz, Spandau, Stadtrandsiedlung Malchow, Steglitz, Tegel and Zehlendorf. The neighborhood of Moabit bears a French-derived name, and Französisch Buchholz is named after the Huguenots.

12th to 16th centuries

The earliest evidence of settlements in the area of today's Berlin are a wooden beam dated from approximately 1192,^[27] and remnants of a house foundation dated to 1174, found in excavations in Berlin Mitte.^[28] The first written records of towns in the area of present-day Berlin date from the late 12th century. Spandau is first mentioned in 1197 and Köpenick in 1209, although these areas did not join Berlin until 1920.^[29] The central part of Berlin can be traced back to two towns. Cölln on the Fischerinsel is first mentioned in a 1237 document, and Berlin, across the Spree in what is now called the Nikolaiviertel, is referenced in a document from 1244.^[27] 1237 is considered the founding date of the city.^[30] The two towns over time formed close economic and social ties, and profited from the staple right on the two important trade routes *Via Imperii* and from Bruges to Novgorod.^[11] In 1307, they formed an alliance with a common external policy, their internal administrations still being separated.^{[31][32]}



Map of Berlin in 1688

In 1415, Frederick I became the elector of the Margraviate of Brandenburg, which he ruled until 1440.^[33] During the 15th century, his successors established Berlin-Cölln as capital of the margraviate, and subsequent members of the Hohenzollern family ruled in Berlin until 1918, first as electors of Brandenburg, then as kings of Prussia, and eventually as German emperors. In 1443, Frederick II Irontooth started the construction of a new royal palace in the twin city Berlin-Cölln. The protests of the town citizens against the building culminated in 1448, in the "Berlin Indignation" ("Berliner Unwille").^{[34][35]} This protest was not successful and the citizenry lost many of its political and economic privileges. After the royal palace was finished in 1451, it gradually came into use. From 1470, with the new elector Albrecht III Achilles, Berlin-Cölln became the new royal residence.^[32] Officially, the Berlin-Cölln palace became permanent residence of the Brandenburg electors of the Hohenzollerns from 1486, when John Cicero came to power.^[36] Berlin-Cölln, however, had to give up its status as a free Hanseatic city. In 1539, the electors and the city officially became Lutheran.^[37]

17th to 19th centuries

The Thirty Years' War between 1618 and 1648 devastated Berlin. One third of its houses were damaged or destroyed, and the city lost half of its population.^[38] Frederick William, known as the "Great Elector", who had succeeded his father George William as ruler in 1640, initiated a policy of promoting immigration and religious tolerance.^[39] With the Edict of Potsdam in 1685, Frederick William offered asylum to the French Huguenots.^[40] By 1700, approximately 30 percent of Berlin's residents were French, because of the Huguenot immigration.^[41] Many other immigrants came from Bohemia, Poland, and Salzburg.^[42]



Berlin became the capital of the German Empire in 1871 and expanded rapidly in the following years. (Unter den Linden in 1900)

Since 1618, the Margraviate of Brandenburg had been in personal union with the Duchy of Prussia. In 1701, the dual state formed the Kingdom of Prussia, as Frederick III, Elector of Brandenburg, crowned himself as king Frederick I in Prussia. Berlin became the capital of the new Kingdom,^[43] replacing Königsberg. This was a successful attempt to centralise the capital in the very far-flung state, and it was the first time the city began to grow. In 1709, Berlin merged with the four cities of Cölln, Friedrichswerder, Friedrichstadt and Dorotheenstadt under the name Berlin, "Haupt- und Residenzstadt Berlin".^[31]

In 1740, Frederick II, known as Frederick the Great (1740–1786), came to power.^[44] Under the rule of Frederick II, Berlin became a center of the Enlightenment, but also, was briefly occupied during the Seven Years' War by the Russian army.^[45] Following France's victory in the War of the Fourth Coalition, Napoleon Bonaparte marched into Berlin in 1806, but granted self-government to the city.^[46] In 1815, the

city became part of the new Province of Brandenburg.^[47]

The Industrial Revolution transformed Berlin during the 19th century; the city's economy and population expanded dramatically, and it became the main railway hub and economic centre of Germany. Additional suburbs soon developed and increased the area and population of Berlin. In 1861, neighbouring suburbs including Wedding, Moabit and several others were incorporated into Berlin.^[48] In 1871, Berlin became capital of the newly founded German Empire.^[49] In 1881, it became a city district separate from Brandenburg.^[50]

20th to 21st centuries

In the early 20th century, Berlin had become a fertile ground for the German Expressionist movement.^[51] In fields such as architecture, painting and cinema new forms of artistic styles were invented. At the end of the First World War in 1918, a republic was proclaimed by Philipp Scheidemann at the Reichstag building. In 1920, the Greater Berlin Act incorporated dozens of suburban cities, villages and estates around Berlin into an expanded city. The act increased the area of Berlin from 66 to 883 km² (25 to 341 sq mi). The population almost doubled and Berlin had a population of around four million. During the Weimar era, Berlin underwent political unrest due to economic uncertainties, but also became a renowned centre of the Roaring Twenties. The metropolis experienced its heyday as a major world capital and was known for its leadership roles in science, technology, arts, the humanities, city planning, film, higher education, government and industries. Albert Einstein rose to public prominence during his years in Berlin, being awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1921.



Berlin in ruins after the Second World War (Potsdamer Platz, 1945)

In 1933, Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power. NSDAP rule diminished Berlin's Jewish community from 160,000 (one-third of all Jews in the country) to about 80,000 as a result of emigration between 1933 and 1939. After Kristallnacht in 1938, thousands of the city's Jews were imprisoned in the nearby Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Starting in early 1943, many were shipped to death camps such as Auschwitz.^[52] Berlin is the most heavily bombed city in history. The Allies dropped 67,607.3 tons of bombs on the city during World War II, destroyed 6,427 acres of the built up area of the city. During World War II, large parts of Berlin were destroyed in the 1943–45 air raids and during the Battle of Berlin. Around 125,000 civilians were killed.^[53] After the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, Berlin received large numbers of refugees from the Eastern provinces. The victorious powers divided the city into four sectors, analogous to the occupation zones into which Germany was divided. The sectors of the Western Allies (the United States, the United Kingdom and France) formed West Berlin, while the Soviet sector formed East Berlin.^[54]

All four Allies shared administrative responsibilities for Berlin. However, in 1948, when the Western Allies extended the currency reform in the Western zones of Germany to the three western sectors of Berlin, the Soviet Union imposed a blockade on the access routes to and from West Berlin, which lay entirely inside Soviet-controlled territory. The Berlin airlift, conducted by the three western Allies, overcame this blockade by supplying food and other supplies to the city from June 1948 to May 1949.^[55] In 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany was founded in West Germany and eventually included all of the American, British and French zones, excluding those three countries' zones in Berlin, while the Marxist-Leninist German Democratic Republic was proclaimed in East Germany. West Berlin officially remained an occupied city, but it politically was aligned with the Federal Republic of Germany despite West Berlin's geographic isolation. Airline service to West Berlin was granted only to American, British and French airlines.

The founding of the two German states increased Cold War tensions. West Berlin was surrounded by East German territory, and East Germany proclaimed the Eastern part as its capital, a move that was not recognised by the western powers. East Berlin included most of the historic centre of the city. The West German government established itself in Bonn.^[56] In 1961, East Germany began the building of the Berlin Wall between East and West Berlin, and events escalated to a tank standoff at Checkpoint Charlie. West Berlin was now de facto a part of West Germany with a unique legal status, while East Berlin was de facto a part of East Germany. John F. Kennedy gave his "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech in 1963, underlining the US support for the Western part of the city. Berlin was completely divided. Although it was possible for Westerners to pass to the other side through strictly controlled checkpoints, for most Easterners travel to West Berlin or West Germany was prohibited by the government of East Germany. In 1971, a Four-Power agreement guaranteed access to and from West Berlin by car or train through East Germany.^[57]



Frederick the Great (1712–1786) was one of Europe's enlightened monarchs



Street, Berlin (1913) by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner



The Berlin Wall (painted on the western side) was a barrier that divided the city from 1961 to 1989.



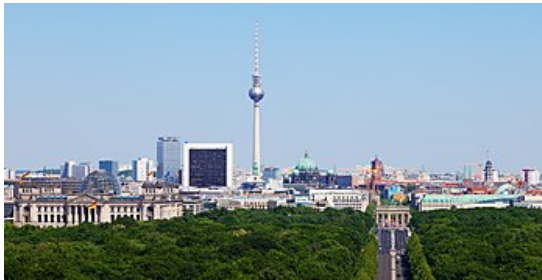
The fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989. On 3 October 1990, the German reunification process was formally finished.

In 1989, with the end of the Cold War and pressure from the East German population, the Berlin Wall fell on 9 November and was subsequently mostly demolished. Today, the East Side Gallery preserves a large portion of the wall. On 3 October 1990, the two parts of Germany were reunified as the Federal Republic of Germany and Berlin again became the official German capital. In 1991, the German Parliament, the Bundestag, voted to move the seat of the German capital from Bonn to Berlin, which was completed in 1999. On 18 June 1994, soldiers from the United States, France and Britain marched in a parade which was part of the ceremonies to mark the final withdrawal of foreign troops allowing a reunified Berlin.^[58] Berlin's 2001 administrative reform merged several districts. The number of boroughs was reduced from 23 to 12.

In 2002, the German parliament voted to allow the reconstruction of the Berlin Palace, which started in 2013 and will be finished in 2019. In 2006, the FIFA World Cup Final was held in Berlin.

In a 2016 terrorist attack linked to ISIL, a truck was deliberately driven into the Christmas market next to the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church leaving 12 people dead and 56 others injured.

Geography



Berlin Mitte landmarks from left to right (seen from Victory Column): Reichstag building, Fernsehturm, Cathedral, City Hall, Brandenburg Gate, Gendarmenmarkt



Mitte, the historical center: Unter den Linden boulevard in the foreground, high-rise buildings of Potsdamer Platz to the right

Topography

Berlin is situated in northeastern Germany, in an area of low-lying marshy woodlands with a mainly flat topography, part of the vast Northern European Plain which stretches all the way from northern France to western Russia. The *Berliner Urstromtal* (an ice age glacial valley), between the low Barnim Plateau to the north and the Teltow Plateau to the south, was formed by meltwater flowing from ice sheets at the end of the last Weichselian glaciation. The Spree follows this valley now. In Spandau, a borough in the west of Berlin, the Spree empties into the river Havel, which flows from north to south through western Berlin. The course of the Havel is more like a chain of lakes, the largest being the Tegeler See and the Großer Wannsee. A series of lakes also feeds into the upper Spree, which flows through the Großer Müggelsee in eastern Berlin.^[59]

Substantial parts of present-day Berlin extend onto the low plateaus on both sides of the Spree Valley. Large parts of the boroughs Reinickendorf and Pankow lie on the Barnim Plateau, while most of the boroughs of Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, Steglitz-Zehlendorf, Tempelhof-Schöneberg, and Neukölln lie on the Teltow Plateau.

The borough of Spandau lies partly within the Berlin Glacial Valley and partly on the Nauen Plain, which stretches to the west of Berlin. Since 2015, the highest elevation in Berlin is found on the Arkenberge hills in Pankow, at 122 metres (400 feet). Through the dumping of construction debris, they surpassed Teufelsberg (120.1 m or 394 ft), a hill made of rubble from the ruins of the Second World War.^[60] The highest natural elevation is found on the Müggelberge at 114.7 metres (376 feet), and the lowest at the Spektensee in Spandau, at 28.1 metres (92 feet).^[61]

Climate

Berlin has a maritime temperate climate (*Cfb*) according to the Köppen climate classification system.^[62] There are significant influences of mild continental climate due to its inland position, with frosts being common in winter and there being larger temperature differences between seasons than typical for many oceanic climates. Furthermore, Berlin is classified as a temperate continental climate (*Dc*) under the Trewartha climate scheme.^[63]

Summers are warm and sometimes humid with average high temperatures of 22–25 °C (72–77 °F) and lows of 12–14 °C (54–57 °F). Winters are cool with average high temperatures of 3 °C (37 °F) and lows of −2 to 0 °C (28 to 32 °F). Spring and autumn are generally chilly to mild. Berlin's built-up area creates a microclimate, with heat stored by the city's buildings and pavement. Temperatures can be 4 °C (7 °F) higher in the city than in the surrounding areas.^[64]

Annual precipitation is 570 millimeters (22 in) with moderate rainfall throughout the year. Snowfall mainly occurs from December through March.^[65]



Aerial photography over central Berlin with Tiergarten



The outskirts of Berlin are covered with woodlands and numerous lakes.

Climate data for Berlin- Tempelhof (1971–2000), extremes (1876– 2015) (Source: DWD)													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °C (°F)	15.5 (59.9)	18.7 (65.7)	24.8 (76.6)	31.3 (88.3)	35.5 (95.9)	35.9 (96.6)	38.1 (100.6)	38.0 (100.4)	34.2 (93.6)	28.1 (82.6)	20.5 (68.9)	16.0 (60.8)	38.1 (100.6)
Average high °C (°F)	3.3 (37.9)	5.0 (41)	9.0 (48.2)	15.0 (59)	19.6 (67.3)	22.3 (72.1)	25.0 (77)	24.5 (76.1)	19.3 (66.7)	13.9 (57)	7.7 (45.9)	3.7 (38.7)	14 (57.2)
Daily mean °C (°F)	0.6 (33.1)	1.4 (34.5)	4.8 (40.6)	8.9 (48)	14.3 (57.7)	17.1 (62.8)	19.2 (66.6)	18.9 (66)	14.5 (58.1)	9.7 (49.5)	4.7 (40.5)	2.0 (35.6)	9.7 (49.4)
Average low °C (°F)	−1.9 (28.6)	−1.5 (29.3)	1.3 (34.3)	4.2 (39.6)	9.0 (48.2)	12.3 (54.1)	14.3 (57.7)	14.1 (57.4)	10.6 (51.1)	6.4 (43.5)	2.2 (36)	−0.4 (31.3)	5.9 (42.6)
Record low °C (°F)	−23.1 (−9.6)	−26.0 (−14.8)	−16.5 (2.3)	−8.1 (17.4)	−4.0 (24.8)	1.5 (34.7)	5.4 (41.7)	3.5 (38.3)	−1.5 (29.3)	−9.6 (14.7)	−16.0 (3.2)	−20.5 (−4.9)	−26.0 (−14.8)
Average rainfall mm (inches)	42.3 (1.665)	33.3 (1.311)	40.5 (1.594)	37.1 (1.461)	53.8 (2.118)	68.7 (2.705)	55.5 (2.185)	58.2 (2.291)	45.1 (1.776)	37.3 (1.469)	43.6 (1.717)	55.3 (2.177)	570.7 (22.469)
Average rainy days (≥ 1.0 mm)	10.0	8.0	9.1	7.8	8.9	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.8	7.6	9.6	11.4	101.2
Mean monthly sunshine hours	46.5	73.5	120.9	159.0	220.1	222.0	217.0	210.8	156.0	111.6	51.0	37.2	1,625.6
Source: World Meteorological Organization (UN), ^[66] HKO ^{[67][68]}													

Cityscape

Berlin's history has left the city with apolycentric organization and a highly eclectic array of architecture and buildings. The city's appearance today is predominantly shaped by the key role it played in Germany's history in the 20th century. Each of the national governments based in Berlin – the Kingdom of Prussia, the 1871 German Empire, the Weimar Republic, Nazi Germany, East Germany, and now the reunified Germany – initiated ambitious reconstruction programs, with each adding its own distinctive style to the city's architecture.



Berlin skyline in 2014

Berlin was devastated by bombing raids, fires and street battles during World War II, and many of the buildings that had remained after the war were demolished in the post-war period in both West and East Berlin. Much of this demolition was initiated by municipal architecture programs to build new residential or business quarters and main roads. Many ornaments of pre-war buildings were destroyed following modernist dogmas. While in both systems and in reunified Berlin, various important heritage monuments were also (partly) reconstructed, including the *Forum Fridericianum* with e.g., the *State Opera* (1955), *Charlottenburg Palace* (1957), the main monuments of the *Gendarmenmarkt* (1980s), *Kommandantur* (2003) and the project to reconstruct the baroque façades of the *City Palace*. A number of new buildings are inspired by historical predecessors or the general classical style of Berlin, such *Hotel Adlon*.

Clusters of high-rise buildings emerge at disperse locations, e.g. *Potsdamer Platz*, *City West*, and *Alexanderplatz*, the latter two representing the previous centers of West and East Berlin, respectively, and the former representing the new Berlin of the 21st century built upon the previous no-man's land of the Berlin Wall. Berlin has three of the top 40 tallest buildings in Germany.

Architecture

The *Fernsehturm* (TV tower) at *Alexanderplatz* in *Mitte* is among the tallest structures in the European Union at 368 m (1,207 ft). Built in 1969, it is visible throughout most of the central districts of Berlin. The city can be viewed from its 204 m (669 ft) high observation floor. Starting here the *Karl-Marx-Allee* heads east, an avenue lined by monumental residential buildings, designed in the *Socialist Classicism* style. Adjacent to this area is the *Rotes Rathaus* (City Hall), with its distinctive red-brick architecture. In front of it is the *Neptunbrunnen*, a fountain featuring a mythological group of *tritons*, personifications of the four main Prussian rivers and *Neptune* on top of it.

The *Brandenburg Gate* is an iconic landmark of Berlin and Germany; it stands as a symbol of eventful European history and of unity and peace. The *Reichstag building* is the traditional seat of the German Parliament. It was remodelled by British architect *Norman Foster* in the 1990s and features a glass dome over the session area, which allows free public access to the parliamentary proceedings and magnificent views of the city



Typically dense cityscape of core Berlin: Mitte area



The Brandenburg Gate, icon of Berlin and Germany

The East Side Gallery is an open-air exhibition of art painted directly on the last existing portions of the Berlin Wall. It is the largest remaining evidence of the city's historical division.

The Gendarmenmarkt is a neoclassical square in Berlin, the name of which derives from the headquarters of the famous Gens d'armes regiment located here in the 18th century. It is bordered by two similarly designed cathedrals, the Französischer Dom with its observation platform and the Deutscher Dom. The Konzerthaus (Concert Hall), home of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra, stands between the two cathedrals.

The Museum Island in the River Spree houses five museums built from 1830 to 1930 and is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Restoration and construction of a main entrance to all museums, as well as reconstruction of the Stadtschloss continues.^{[69][70]} Also located on the island and adjacent to the Lustgarten and palace is Berlin Cathedral, emperor William II's ambitious attempt to create a Protestant counterpart to St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. A large crypt houses the remains of some of the earlier Prussian royal family. St. Hedwig's Cathedral is Berlin's Roman Catholic cathedral.



Potsdamer Platz, Kollhoff Tower at the center and headquarters of Deutsche Bahn to the right.

Unter den Linden is a tree-lined east–west avenue from the Brandenburg Gate to the site of the former Berliner Stadtschloss, and was once Berlin's premier promenade. Many Classical buildings line the street and part of Humboldt University is located there. Friedrichstraße was Berlin's legendary street during the Golden Twenties. It combines 20th-century traditions with the modern architecture of today's Berlin.

Potsdamer Platz is an entire quarter built from scratch after 1995 after the Wall came down.^[71] To the west of Potsdamer Platz is the Kulturforum, which houses the Gemäldegalerie, and is flanked by the Neue Nationalgalerie and the Berliner Philharmonie. The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe a Holocaust memorial, is situated to the north!^[72]

The area around Hackescher Markt is home to fashionable culture, with countless clothing outlets, clubs, bars, and galleries. This includes the Hackesche Höfe, a conglomeration of buildings around several courtyards, reconstructed around 1996. The nearby New Synagogue is the center of Jewish culture.

The Straße des 17. Juni, connecting the Brandenburg Gate and Ernst-Reuter-Platz, serves as the central east-west axis. Its name commemorates the uprisings in East Berlin of 17 June 1953. Approximately halfway from the Brandenburg Gate is the Großer Stern, a circular traffic island on which the Siegestsäule (Victory Column) is situated. This monument, built to commemorate Prussia's victories, was relocated in 1938–39 from its previous position in front of the Reichstag.

The Kurfürstendamm is home to some of Berlin's luxurious stores with the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church at its eastern end on Breitscheidplatz. The church was destroyed in the Second World War and left in ruins. Nearby on Tauentzienstraße is KaDeWe, claimed to be continental Europe's largest department store. The Rathaus Schöneberg, where John F. Kennedy made his famous "Ich bin ein Berliner!" speech, is situated in Tempelhof-Schöneberg.

West of the center, Bellevue Palace is the residence of the German President. Charlottenburg Palace, which was burnt out in the Second World War, is the largest historical palace in Berlin.

The Funkturm Berlin is a 150 m (490 ft) tall lattice radio tower in the fairground area, built between 1924 and 1926. It is the only observation tower which stands on insulators and has a restaurant 55 m (180 ft) and an observation deck 126 m (413 ft) above ground, which is reachable by a windowed elevator

The Oberbaumbrücke is Berlin's most iconic bridge, crossing the River Spree. It was a former East–West border crossing and connects the boroughs of Friedrichshain and Kreuzberg. It was completed in a brick gothic style in 1896. The center portion has been reconstructed with a steel frame after having been destroyed in 1945. The bridge has an upper deck for the Berlin U-Bahn line **U1**.

Demographics

On 30 June 2017 the city-state of Berlin had a population of 3.69 million registered inhabitants^[4] in an area of 891.85 km² (344.35 sq mi).^[73] The city's population density was 4,048 inhabitants per km². Berlin is the second most populous city proper in the EU. The urban area of Berlin comprised about 4.1 million people in 2014 in an area of 1,347 km² (520 sq mi), making it the seventh most populous urban area in the European Union.^{[5][74]} The urban agglomeration of the metropolis was home to about 4.5 million in an area of 5,370 km² (2,070 sq mi). As of 2014 the functional urban area was home to about 5 million people in an area of approximately 15,000 km² (5,792 sq mi).^[75] The entire Berlin-Brandenburg capital region has a population of more than 6 million in an area of 30,370 km² (11,726 sq mi).^[76]



A mixed-use building in Kreuzberg. The 'blockrand' structure of the 1862 Hobrecht-Plan is typical for Berlin.



Bode Museum, part of Museum Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site



Unter den Linden boulevard with Zeughaus, Berlin Cathedral and Fernsehturm Berlin at night.

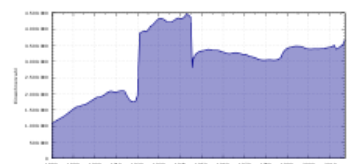


Charlottenburg Palace is the largest existing palace in Berlin.



Konzerthaus Berlin

In 2014, the city state Berlin had 37,368 live births (+6,6%), a record number since 1991. The number of deaths was 32,314. Almost 2.0 million households were counted in the city. 54 percent of them were single-person households. More than 337,000 families with children under the age of 18 lived in Berlin. In 2014 the German capital registered a migration surplus of approximately 40,000 people.^[77]



Berlin's population 1880–2012

increased the population from 1.9 million to 4 million.

Active immigration and asylum politics in West Berlin triggered waves of immigration in the 1960s and 1970s. Currently, Berlin is home to at least 178,000 Turkish and Turkish German residents,^[78] making it the largest Turkish community outside of Turkey. In the 1990s the *Aussiedlergesetze* enabled immigration to Germany of some residents from the former Soviet Union. Today ethnic Germans from countries of the former Soviet Union make up the largest portion of the Russian-speaking community.^[79] The last decade experienced an influx from various Western countries and some African regions.^[80] A portion of the African immigrants have settled in the Afrikanisches Viertel.^[81] Young Germans, EU-Europeans and Israelis have also settled in the city.^[82]

In December 2016, there were 676,741 registered residents of foreign nationality and another 474,991 German citizens with a "migration background" (*Migrationshintergrund, MH*),^[4] meaning they or one of their parents immigrated to Germany after 1955. Foreign residents of Berlin originate from approximately 190 different countries.^[83] 48 percent of the residents under the age of 15 have migration background.^[84] Berlin in 2009 was estimated to have 100,000 to 250,000 non-registered inhabitants.^[85] Boroughs of Berlin with a significant number of migrants or foreign born population are Mitte, Neukölln and Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg.^[86]

There are more than 20 non-indigenous communities with a population of at least 10,000 people, including Turkish, Polish, Russian, Lebanese, Palestinian, Serbian, Italian, Bosnian, Vietnamese, American, Romanian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Chinese, Austrian, Ukrainian, French, British, Spanish, Israeli, Thai, Iranian, Egyptian and Syrian communities.

Languages

German is the official and predominant spoken language in Berlin. It is a West Germanic language that derives most of its vocabulary from the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family. German is one of 24 languages of the European Union,^[87] and one of the threeworking languages of the European Commission

Berlinerisch or Berlinisch is not a dialect linguistically, but has features of Lausitzisch-neumärkisch dialects. It is spoken in Berlin and the surrounding metropolitan area. It originates from a Mark Brandenburgish variant. The dialect is now seen more as a sociolect, largely through increased immigration and trends among the educated population to speak standard German in everyday life.

The most-commonly-spoken foreign languages in Berlin are Turkish, English, Russian, Arabic, Polish, Kurdish, Serbo-Croatian, Italian, Vietnamese, and French. Turkish, Arabic, Kurdish, Serbo-Croatian are heard more often in the western part, due to the large Middle Eastern and former-Yugoslavian communities. English, Vietnamese, Russian, and Polish have more native speakers in East Berlin.^[88]

Religion

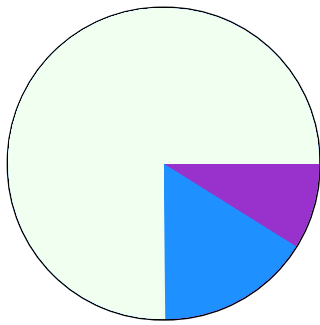
More than 60% of Berlin residents have no registered religious affiliation.^[90] Non-religious groups that seek to represent the non-religious majority include the Humanist Association of Germany, which has its headquarters and its largest group in Berlin. The largest religious denomination recorded in 2010 was the Protestant regional church body – the Evangelical Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lusatia (EKBO)– a United church. EKBO is a member of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and Union Evangelischer Kirchen (UEK), and accounts for 18.7% of the local population.^[91] The Roman Catholic Church has 9.1% of residents registered as its members.^[91] About 2.7% of the population identify with other Christian denominations (mostly Eastern Orthodox, but also various Protestants).^[92]

In 2009, approximately 249.000 Muslims were reported to be members of Islamic religious organizations in Berlin.^[93] In 2017, more than 400,000 registered residents, about 10.8% of the total, reported having a migration background from Islamic countries.^{[78][94]} Between 1992 and 2011 the Muslim population almost doubled.^[95]

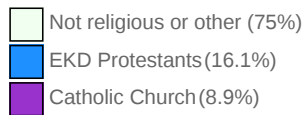
About 0.9% of Berliners belong to other religions. Of the estimated population of 30,000–45,000 Jewish residents,^[96] approximately 12,000 are registered members of religious organizations.^[92]

Berlin is the seat of the Roman Catholic archbishop of Berlin and EKBO's elected chairperson is titled the bishop of EKBO. Furthermore, Berlin is the seat of many Orthodox cathedrals, such as the Cathedral of St. Boris the Baptist, one of the two seats of the Bulgarian Orthodox Diocese of Western and Central Europe, and the Resurrection of Christ Cathedral of the Diocese of Berlin (Patriarchate of Moscow).

Residents by Citizenship (Dec. 2017) ^[78]		
Country	Population	
 Germany	3,000,648	
 Turkey	98,121	
 Poland	56,856	
 Syria	32,704	
 Italy	29,405	
 Bulgaria	28,593	
 Russia	23,568	
 Romania	21,235	
 United States	19,990	
 Serbia	19,378	
 France	19,240	
 Vietnam	17,123	
 United Kingdom	15,602	
 Spain	14,525	
 Greece	14,195	
 Croatia	13,282	
 Ukraine	11,898	
 Afghanistan	11,806	
 Austria	11,600	
 Bosnia and Herzegovina	11,583	
 China	11,229	
Other Middle East and Asia	74,684	
Other Europe	74,319	
Africa	30,950	
Other Americas	21,807	
Oceania and Antarctica	4,943	
Stateless or Unclear	22,646	



Religion in Berlin (2016)^[89]



The faithful of the different religions and denominations maintain many places of worship in Berlin. The Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church has eight parishes of different sizes in Berlin.^[97] There are 36 Baptist congregations (within Union of Evangelical Free Church Congregations in Germany), 29 New Apostolic Churches, 15 United Methodist churches, eight Free Evangelical Congregations, four Churches of Christ, Scientist (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 11th), six congregations of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an Old Catholic church, and an Anglican church in Berlin.

Berlin has more than 80 mosques,^[98] 11 synagogues, and two Buddhist temples.

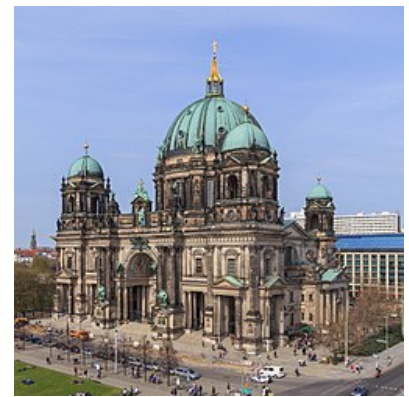
Government

City state

Since the reunification on 3 October 1990, Berlin has been one of the three city states in Germany among the present 16 states of Germany. The House of Representatives (*Abgeordnetenhaus*) functions as the city and state parliament, which currently has 141 seats. Berlin's executive body is the Senate of Berlin (*Senat von Berlin*). The Senate consists of the Governing Mayor (*Regierender Bürgermeister*) and up to eight senators holding ministerial positions, one of them holding the title of "Mayor" (*Bürgermeister*) as deputy to the Governing Mayor. The total annual state budget of Berlin in 2015 exceeded €24.5 (\$30.0) billion including a budget surplus of €205 (\$240) million.^[99]

The Social Democratic Party (SPD) and The Left (*Die Linke*) took control of the city government after the 2001 state election and won another term in the 2006 state election.^[100] Since the 2016 state election, there has been a coalition between the Social Democratic Party the Greens and the Left Party

The Governing Mayor is simultaneously Lord Mayor of the City of Berlin (*Oberbürgermeister der Stadt*) and Minister President of the Federal State of Berlin (*Ministerpräsident des Bundeslandes*). The office of the Governing Mayor is located in the Rotes Rathaus (Red City Hall). Since 2014 this office has been held by Michael Müller of the Social Democrats.^[101]



The Berlin Cathedral, a United Protestant church held by the Evangelical Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lusatia



Rotes Rathaus (Red City Hall), seat of the Senate and Mayor of Berlin

Boroughs

Berlin is subdivided into 12 boroughs or districts (*Bezirke*). Each borough is made up by a number of subdistricts or neighborhoods (*Ortsteile*), which have historic roots in much older municipalities that predate the formation of Greater Berlin on 1 October 1920. These subdistricts became urbanized and incorporated into the city later on. Many residents strongly identify with their neighbourhoods, colloquially called *Kiez*. At present, Berlin consists of 96 subdistricts, which are commonly made up of several smaller residential areas or quarters.

Each borough is governed by a borough council (*Bezirksamt*) consisting of five councilors (*Bezirksstadträte*) including the borough's mayor (*Bezirksbürgermeister*). The council is elected by the borough assembly (*Bezirksverordnetenversammlung*). However, the individual boroughs are not independent municipalities, but subordinate to the Senate of Berlin. The borough's mayors make up the council of mayors (*Rat der Bürgermeister*), which is led by the city's Governing Mayor and advises the Senate. The neighborhoods have no local government bodies.




Berlin's twelve boroughs and their 96 neighborhoods



Twin towns – sister cities

Berlin maintains official partnerships with 17 cities.^[102] Town twinning between Berlin and other cities began with its sister city Los Angeles in 1967. Partnerships were canceled at the time of German reunification but later partially reestablished. West Berlin's partnerships had previously been restricted to the borough level. During the Cold War era, the partnerships had reflected the different power blocs, with West Berlin partnering with capitals in the Western World, and East Berlin mostly partnering with cities from the Warsaw Pact and its allies.

There are several joint projects with many other cities, such as Beirut, Belgrade, São Paulo, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Johannesburg, Mumbai, Oslo, Shanghai, Seoul, Sofia, Sydney, New York City and Vienna. Berlin participates in international city associations such as the Union of the Capitals of the European Union, Eurocities, Network of European Cities of Culture, Metropolis, Summit Conference of the World's Major Cities, and Conference of the World's Capital Cities. Berlin's official sister cities are:^[102]

- 1967  Los Angeles, United States
- 1987  Paris, France
- 1988  Madrid, Spain
- 1989  Istanbul, Turkey
- 1991  Warsaw, Poland^[103]
- 1991  Moscow, Russia
- 1992  Brussels, Belgium
- 1992  Budapest, Hungary^[104]
- 1993  Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- 1993  Mexico City, Mexico
- 1993  Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1994  Beijing, China
- 1994  Tokyo, Japan
- 1994  Buenos Aires, Argentina

- 1995  Prague, Czech Republic^[105]

- 2000  Windhoek, Namibia
- 2000  London, United Kingdom

Capital city

Berlin is the capital of the Federal Republic of Germany. The President of Germany, whose functions are mainly ceremonial under the German constitution, has their official residence in Bellevue Palace.^[106] Berlin is the seat of the German Chancellor (Prime Minister), housed in the Chancellery building, the Bundeskanzleramt. Facing the Chancellery is the Bundestag, the German Parliament, housed in the renovated Reichstag building since the government's relocation to Berlin in 1998. The Bundesrat ("federal council", performing the function of an upper house) is the representation of the Federal States (Bundesländer) of Germany and has its seat at the former Prussian House of Lords. The total annual federal budget managed by the German government exceeded €310 (\$375) billion in 2013.^[107]



Reichstag, seat of the Bundestag



Federal Chancellery building,
seat of the Chancellor of Germany



The Italian embassy



The Federal Ministry of Finance

The relocation of the federal government and Bundestag to Berlin was mostly completed in 1999, however some ministries as well as some minor departments stayed in the federal city Bonn, the former capital of West Germany. Discussions about moving the remaining ministries and departments to Berlin continue.^[108] The ministries and departments of Defence, Justice and Consumer Protection, Finance, Interior, Foreign, Economic Affairs and Energy, Labour and Social Affairs, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Food and Agriculture, Economic Cooperation and Development, Health, Transport and Digital Infrastructure and Education and Research are based in the capital.

Berlin hosts in total 158 foreign embassies^[109] as well as the headquarters of many think tanks, trade unions, non-profit organizations, lobbying groups, and professional associations. Due to the influence and international partnerships of the Federal Republic of Germany, the capital city has become a significant centre of German and European affairs. Frequent official visits, and diplomatic consultations among governmental representatives and national leaders are common in contemporary Berlin.

Economy

In 2015 the nominal GDP of the citystate Berlin totaled €124.16 (~\$142) billion compared to €117.75 in 2014,^[111] an increase of about 5.4%. Berlin's economy is dominated by the service sector, with around 84% of all companies doing business in services. In 2015, the total labour force in Berlin was 1.85 million. The unemployment rate reached a 24-year low in November 2015 and stood at 10.0%.^[112] From 2012–2015 Berlin, as a German state, had the highest annual employment growth rate. Around 130,000 jobs were added in this period.^[113]

Important economic sectors in Berlin include life sciences, transportation, information and communication technologies, media and music, advertising and design, biotechnology, environmental services, construction, e-commerce, retail, hotel business, and medical engineering.^[114]

Research and development have economic significance for the city.^[115] Several major corporations like Volkswagen, Pfizer and SAP operate innovation laboratories in the city.^[116] The Science and Business Park in Adlershof is the largest technology park in Germany measured by revenue.^[117] Within the Eurozone, Berlin has become a center for business relocation and international investments.^[118]



Berlin is a UNESCO "City of Design" and recognized for its creative industries and startup ecosystem.^[110]

Companies

Many German and international companies have business or service centers in the city. For several years Berlin has been recognized as a major center of business founders.^[119] In 2015 Berlin generated the most venture capital for young startup companies in Europe.^[120]

Among the 10 largest employers in Berlin are the City-State of Berlin, Deutsche Bahn, the hospital provider Charité and Vivantes, the Federal Government of Germany, the local public transport provider BVG, Siemens and Deutsche Telekom. The two largest banks headquartered in the capital are Investitionsbank Berlin and Landesbank Berlin.

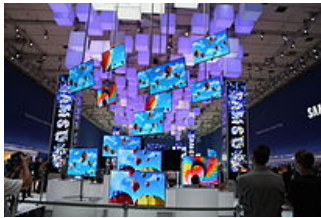
Daimler manufactures cars, and BMW builds motorcycles in Berlin. Bayer Health Care and Berlin Chemie are major pharmaceutical companies in the city.

Siemens, a Global 500 and DAX-listed company is partly headquartered in Berlin. The national railway operator Deutsche Bahn, the MDAX-listed firms Axel Springer SE and Zalando, and the SDAX listed company Rocket Internet have their main headquarters in the central districts.^[121] Among the largest international corporations who operate a German or European headquarter in Berlin are Bombardier Transportation, Gazprom Germania, Coca-Cola, Pfizer and Total S.A..

Tourism and conventions



The Berlin Fashion Week.



IFA is the world's leading trade show for consumer electronics.

Berlin had 788 hotels with 134,399 beds in 2014.^[122] The city recorded 28.7 million overnight hotel stays and 11.9 million hotel guests in 2014.^[122] Tourism figures have more than doubled within the last ten years and Berlin has become the third most-visited city destination in Europe. Some of the most visited places in Berlin include: Potsdamer Platz, Brandenburger Tor, the Berlin wall, Alexanderplatz, Museumsinsel, Fernsehturm, the East-Side Gallery, Schloss-Charlottenburg,



Deutsche Bahn, the second-largest transport company in the world, is headquartered in Berlin.

Zoologischer Garten, Siegestsäule, Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer, Mauerpark, Botanical Garden, Französischer Dom, Deutscher Dom and Holocaust-Mahnmal. The largest visitor groups are from Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain and the United States.

According to figures from the International Congress and Convention Association in 2015 Berlin became the leading organizer of conferences in the world hosting 195 international meetings.^[123] Some of these congress events take place on venues such as CityCube Berlin or the Berlin Congress Center (bcc).

The Messe Berlin (also known as Berlin ExpoCenter City) is the main convention organizing company in the city. Its main exhibition area covers more than 160,000 square metres (1,722,226 square feet). Several large-scale trade fairs like the consumer electronics trade fair IFA, the ILA Berlin Air Show, the Berlin Fashion Week (including the *Premium Berlin* and the *Panorama Berlin*),^[124] the *Green Week*, the *Fruit Logistica*, the transport fair InnoTrans, the tourism fair ITB and the adult entertainment and erotic fair Venus are held annually in the city attracting a significant number of business visitors.



Memorial for the murdered Jews in Europe (from above) .

Creative industries

The creative arts and entertainment business is an important and sizable sector of the economy of Berlin. The sector comprises music, film, advertising, architecture, art, design, fashion, performing arts, publishing, R&D, software,^[125] TV, radio, and video games.

In 2014, around 30,500 creative companies were operating in the Berlin-Brandenburg metropolitan region, predominantly SMEs. Generating a revenue of 15.6 billion Euro and 6% of all private economic sales, the culture industry grew from 2009 to 2014 at an average rate of 5.5% per year^[126]

Berlin is an important centre in the European and German film industry.^[127] It is home to more than 1,000 film and television production companies, 270 movie theaters, and around 300 national and international co-productions are filmed in the region every year.^[115] The historic Babelsberg Studios and the production company UFA are located adjacent to Berlin in Potsdam. The city is also home of the German Film Academy(Deutsche Filmakademie), founded in 2003, and the European Film Academy founded in 1988.



The European Film Academy (logo pictured) was founded in Berlin.

Media

Berlin is home to numerous magazine, newspaper, book and scientific/academic publishers, as well as their associated service industries. In addition around 20 news agencies, more than 90 regional daily newspapers and their websites, as well as the Berlin offices of more than 22 national publications such as Der Spiegel, and Die Zeit re-enforce the capital's position as Germany's epicenter for influential debate. Therefore, many international journalists, bloggers and writers live and work in the city

Berlin is the central location to several international and regional television and radio stations.^[128] The public broadcaster RBB has its headquarters in Berlin as well as the commercial broadcasters MTV Europe, VIVA, and N24. German international public broadcaster Deutsche Welle has its TV production unit in Berlin, and most national German broadcasters have a studio in the city including ZDF and RTL.

Berlin has Germany's largest number of daily newspapers, with numerous local broadsheets (*Berliner Morgenpost*, *Berliner Zeitung*, *Der Tagesspiegel*), and three major tabloids, as well as national dailies of varying sizes, each with a different political affiliation, such as *Die Welt*, *Neues Deutschland* and *Die Tageszeitung*. The *Exberliner*, a monthly magazine, is Berlin's English-language periodical and *La Gazette de Berlina* French-language newspaper



Headquarter of the Axel Springer SE

Berlin is also the headquarter of major German-language publishing houses like Walter de Gruyter, Springer, the Ullstein Verlagsgruppe (publishing group), Suhrkamp and Cornelsen are all based in Berlin. Each of which publish books, periodicals, and multimedia products.

Infrastructure

Transport

Road

Berlin's transport infrastructure is highly complex, providing a diverse range of urban mobility.^[129] A total of 979 bridges cross 197 km (122 mi) of inner-city waterways. 5,422 km (3,369 mi) of roads run through Berlin, of which 77 km (48 mi) are motorways ("Autobahn").^[130] In 2013, 1.344 million motor vehicles were registered in the city.^[130] With 377 cars per 1000 residents in 2013 (570/1000 in Germany), Berlin as a Western global city has one of the lowest numbers of cars per capita. In 2012 around 7600 mostly beige colored taxicabs were in service. Since 2011 a number of app based e-car and e-scooter sharing services have evolved.

Rail

Long-distance rail lines connect Berlin with all of the major cities of Germany and with many cities in neighboring European countries. Regional rail lines of the Verkehrsverbund Berlin-Brandenburg provide access to the surrounding regions of Brandenburg and to the Baltic Sea. The Berlin Hauptbahnhof is the largest grade-separated railway station in Europe.^[131] Deutsche Bahn runs high speed ICE trains to domestic destinations like Hamburg, Munich, Cologne, Stuttgart, Frankfurt am Main and others. It also runs an SXF airport express rail service, as well as trains to several international destinations like Vienna, Prague, Zürich, Warsaw, Budapest and Amsterdam.

Intercity buses

Similarly to other German cities, there is an increasing quantity of intercity bus services. The city has more than 10 stations^[132] that run buses to destinations throughout Germany and Europe, being Zentraler Omnibusbahnhof Berlin the biggest station.

Public transport

The Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe and the Deutsche Bahn manage several extensive urban public transport systems.^[133]

System	Stations / Lines / Net length	Annual Ridership	Operator / Notes
<u>S-Bahn</u>	166 / 16 / 331 km (206 mi)	431,000,000 (2016)	DB / Mainly overground <u>rapid transit</u> rail system with suburban stops
<u>U-Bahn</u>	173 / 10 / 146 km (91 mi)	563,000,000 (2017)	BVG / Mainly underground rail system / 24h-service on weekends
<u>Tram</u>	404 / 22 / 194 km (121 mi)	197,000,000 (2017)	BVG / Operates predominantly in eastern boroughs
<u>Bus</u>	3227 / 198 / 1,675 km (1,041 mi)	440,000,000 (2017)	BVG / Extensive services in all boroughs / 62 Night Lines
<u>Ferry</u>	6 lines		BVG / Transportation as well as recreational <u>ferries</u>

All modes of transport can be accessed with a single ticket

Airports

Berlin has two commercial international airports. Tegel Airport (TXL) is situated within the city limits. Schönefeld Airport (SXF) is located just outside Berlin's south-eastern border in the state of Brandenburg. Both airports together handled 29.5 million passengers in 2015. In 2014, 67 airlines served 163 destinations in 50 countries from Berlin.^[134] Tegel Airport is a focus city for Lufthansa and Eurowings. Schönefeld serves as an important destination for airlines like Germania, easyJet and Ryanair.

The new Berlin Brandenburg Airport (BER), currently under construction, will replace Tegel as single commercial airport of Berlin.^[135] The airport is going to integrate Schönefeld (SXF) facilities and is estimated to open in October 2019. The BER will have an initial capacity of around 35 million passengers per year. As of 2016, plans for further expansion bringing the terminal capacity to approximately 50 million per year are in development.

Cycling

Berlin is well known for its highly developed bicycle lane system.^[136] It is estimated that Berlin has 710 bicycles per 1000 residents. Around 500,000 daily bike riders accounted for 13% of total traffic in 2010.^[137] Cyclists have access to 620 km (385 mi) of bicycle paths including approximately 150 km (93 mi) of mandatory bicycle paths, 190 km (118 mi) of off-road bicycle routes, 60 km (37 mi) of bicycle lanes on roads, 70 km (43 mi) of shared bus lanes which are also open to cyclists, 100 km (62 mi) of combined pedestrian/bike paths and 50 km (31 mi) of marked bicycle lanes on roadside pavements (or sidewalks).^[138] Riders are allowed to carry their bicycles on Regionalbahn, S-Bahn and U-Bahn trains, on trams, and on night buses if a bike ticket is purchased.^[139]

Energy

Berlin's two largest energy provider for private households are the Swedish firm Vattenfall and the Berlin-based company GASAG. Both offer electric power and natural gas supply. Some of the city's electric energy is imported from nearby power plants in southern Brandenburg.^[140]

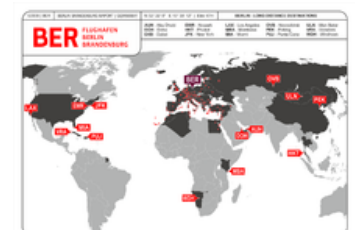
As of 2015 the five largest power plants measured by capacity are the Heizkraftwerk Reuter West, the Heizkraftwerk Lichterfelde, the Heizkraftwerk Mitte, the Heizkraftwerk Wilmersdorf, and the Heizkraftwerk Charlottenburg. All of these power stations generate electricity and useful heat at the same time to facilitate buffering during load peaks.



Berlin Hauptbahnhof is the largest grade-separated railway station in Europe.



Berlin U-Bahn (Metro) at Heidelberg Platz station



Flights departing from Berlin serve 163 destinations around the globe.

In 1993 the power grid connections in the Berlin-Brandenburg capital region were renewed. In most of the inner districts of Berlin power lines are underground cables; only a 380 kV and a 110 kV line, which run from Reuter substation to the urban Autobahn, use overhead lines. The Berlin 380-kV electric lines is the backbone of the city's energy grid.



Power plant Heizkraftwerk Mitte

Health



The Charité university hospital

Berlin has a long history of discoveries in medicine and innovations in medical technology.^[141] The modern history of medicine has been significantly influenced by scientists from Berlin. Rudolf Virchow was the founder of cellular pathology, while Robert Koch developed vaccines for anthrax, cholera, and tuberculosis.^[142]

The Charité complex (Universitätsklinik Charité) is the largest university hospital in Europe, tracing back its origins to the year 1710. The Charité is spread over four sites and comprises 3,300 beds, around 14,000 staff, 7,000 students, and more than 60 operating theaters, and it has a turnover of over one billion euros annually. The Charité is a joint institution of the Freie Universität Berlin and the Humboldt University of Berlin including a wide range of institutes and specialized medical

centers.

Among them are the German Heart Center, one of the most renowned transplantation centers, the Max-Delbrück-Center for Molecular Medicine and the Max-Planck-Institute for Molecular Genetics. The scientific research at these institutions is complemented by many research departments of companies such as Siemens and Bayer. The World Health Summit and several international health related conventions are held annually in Berlin.

Telecommunication

Since 2017, the digital television standard in Berlin and Germany is DVB-T2. This system transmits compressed digital audio, digital video and other data in an MPEG transport stream

Berlin has installed several hundred free public Wireless LAN sites across the capital since 2016. The wireless networks are concentrated mostly in central districts; 650 hotspots (325 indoor and 325 outdoor access points) are installed.^[143] Deutsche Bahn is planning to introduce Wi-Fi services in long distance and regional trains in 2017

The UMTS (3G) and LTE (4G) networks of the three major cellular operators Vodafone, T-Mobile and O2 enable the use of mobile broadband applications citywide.

The Fraunhofer Heinrich Hertz Institute develops mobile and stationary broadband communication networks and multimedia systems. Focal points are photonic components and systems, fiber optic sensor systems, and image signal processing and transmission. Future applications for broadband networks are developed as well.



Customers at the St. Oberholz café in Berlin Mitte using Wi-Fi devices

Education

As of 2014, Berlin had 878 schools, teaching 340,658 children in 13,727 classes and 56,787 trainees in businesses and elsewhere.^[115] The city has a 6-year primary education program. After completing primary school, students continue to the *Sekundarschule* (a comprehensive school) or *Gymnasium* (college preparatory school). Berlin has a special bilingual school program in the *Europaschule*, in which children are taught the curriculum in German and a foreign language, starting in primary school and continuing in high school!^[144]

The Französisches Gymnasium Berlin, which was founded in 1689 to teach the children of Huguenot refugees, offers (German/French) instruction!^[145] The John F. Kennedy School, a bilingual German–American public school located in Zehlendorf, is particularly popular with children of diplomats and the English-speaking expatriate community. 82 *Gymnasien* teach Latin^[146] and 8 teach Classical Greek^[147]



The Humboldt University of Berlin. 40 Nobel Prize winners are affiliated with the Berlin-based colleges.

Higher education



The Free University is one of Germany's eleven "Universities of Excellence".

The Berlin-Brandenburg capital region is one of the most prolific centres of higher education and research in Germany and Europe. Historically, 40 Nobel Prize winners are affiliated with the Berlin-based universities.

The city has four public research universities and more than 30 private, professional, and technical colleges (*Hochschulen*), offering a wide range of disciplines.^[148] A record number of 175,651 students were enrolled in the winter term of 2015/16.^[149] Among them around 18% have an international background.

The three largest universities combined have approximately 100,000 enrolled students. There are the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (*HU Berlin*) with 33,000 students, the Freie Universität Berlin (*Free University of Berlin, FU Berlin*) with about 33,000 students, and the Technische Universität Berlin (*TU Berlin*) with 33,000 students. The FU and the HU are part of the German Universities Excellence Initiative. The Universität der Künste (*UdK*) has about 4,000 students. The Berlin School of Economics and Law has an enrollment of about 10,000 students and the Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft (University of Applied Sciences for Engineering and Economics) of about 13,000 students.

Research

The city has a high density of internationally renowned research institutions, such as the [Fraunhofer Society](#), the [Leibniz Association](#), the [Helmholtz Association](#) and the [Max Planck Society](#), which are independent of, or only loosely connected to its universities.^[150] In 2012, around 65,000 professional scientists were working in [research and development](#) in the city.^[115]

Berlin is one of the knowledge and innovation communities (KIC) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).^[151] The KIC is based at the Centre for Entrepreneurship at TU Berlin and has a focus in the development of IT industries. It partners with major multinational companies such as Siemens, Deutsche Telekom, and SAP.^[152]

One of Europe's successful research, business and technology clusters is based at [WISTA](#) in [Berlin-Adlershof](#), with more than 1,000 affiliated firms, university departments and scientific institutions.^[153]

In addition to the libraries that are affiliated with the various universities, the [Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin](#) is a major research library. Its two main locations are on Potsdamer Straße and on [Unter den Linden](#). There are also 86 public libraries in the city.^[115] [ResearchGate](#), a global social networking site for scientists, is based in Berlin.



The Science and Technology Park in Adlershof is home to several new businesses and research institutes.

Culture

Berlin is known for its numerous cultural institutions, many of which enjoy international reputation.^{[22][154]} The diversity and vivacity of the metropolis led to a trendsetting atmosphere.^[155] An innovative music, dance and art scene has developed in the 21st century.

Young people, international artists and entrepreneurs continued to settle in the city and made Berlin a popular entertainment center in the world.^[156]

The expanding cultural performance of the city was underscored by the relocation of the [Universal Music Group](#) who decided to move their headquarters to the banks of the River Spree.^[157] In 2005, Berlin was named "City of Design" by [UNESCO](#).^[20]



The Alte Nationalgalerie is part of the Museum Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



The Berlinale is the largest international spectator film festival.

Galleries and museums



The Jewish Museum presents two millennia of German–Jewish history.

As of 2011 Berlin is home to 138 museums and more than 400 art galleries.^[115] ^[158] The ensemble on the [Museum Island](#) is a UNESCO [World Heritage Site](#) and is situated in the northern part of the Spree Island between the Spree and the Kupfergraben.^[22] As early as 1841 it was designated a "district dedicated to art and antiquities" by a royal decree. Subsequently, the [Altes Museum](#) was built in the Lustgarten. The [Neues Museum](#), which displays the [bust of Queen Nefertiti](#),^[159] [Alte Nationalgalerie](#), [Pergamon Museum](#), and [Bode Museum](#) were built there.

Apart from the Museum Island, there are many additional museums in the city. The [Gemäldegalerie](#) (Painting Gallery) focuses on the paintings of the "old masters" from the 13th to the 18th centuries, while the [Neue Nationalgalerie](#) (New National Gallery, built by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe) specializes in 20th-century European painting. The [Hamburger Bahnhof](#), located in [Moabit](#), exhibits a major collection of modern and contemporary art. The expanded [Deutsches Historisches Museum](#) re-opened in the Zeughaus with an overview of German history spanning more than a millennium. The [Bauhaus Archive](#) is a museum of 20th century design from the famous [Bauhaus](#) school.

The [Jewish Museum](#) has a standing exhibition on two millennia of German-Jewish history.^[160] The [German Museum of Technology](#) in [Kreuzberg](#) has a large collection of historical technical artifacts. The [Museum für Naturkunde](#) (Berlin's natural history museum) exhibits [natural history](#) near [Berlin Hauptbahnhof](#). It has the largest

mounted [dinosaur](#) in the world (a [Giraffatitan](#) skeleton). A well-preserved specimen of [Tyrannosaurus rex](#) and the early bird [Archaeopteryx](#) are at display as well.^[161]

In [Dahlem](#), there are several museums of world art and culture, such as the [Museum of Asian Art](#), the [Ethnological Museum](#), the [Museum of European Cultures](#) as well as the [Allied Museum](#). The [Brücke Museum](#) features one of the largest collection of works by artist of the early 20th-century expressionist movement. In [Lichtenberg](#), on the grounds of the former East German Ministry for State Security, is the [Stasi Museum](#). The site of [Checkpoint Charlie](#), one of the most renowned crossing points of the Berlin Wall, is still preserved. A private [museum venture](#) exhibits a comprehensive documentation of detailed plans and strategies devised by people who tried to flee from the East. The [Beate Uhse Erotic Museum](#) claims to be the world's largest erotic museum.^[162]

The cityscape of Berlin displays large quantities of urban [street art](#).^[163] It has become a significant part of the city's cultural heritage and has its roots in the graffiti scene of [Kreuzberg](#) of the 1980s.^[164] The [Berlin Wall](#) itself has become one of the largest open-air canvases in the world.^[165] The leftover stretch along the Spree river in [Friedrichshagen](#) remains as the [East Side Gallery](#). Berlin today is consistently rated as an important world city for street art culture.^[166]



The reconstructed Ishtar Gate of Babylon at the Pergamon Museum.

Nightlife and festivals

Berlin's nightlife has been celebrated as one of the most diverse and vibrant of its kind.^[167] In the 1970s and 80s the SO36 in Kreuzberg was a centre for punk music and culture. The *SOUND* and the *Dschungel* gained notoriety. Throughout the 1990s, people in their 20s from all over the world, particularly those in Western and Central Europe, made Berlin's club scene a premier nightlife venue. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, many historic buildings in Mitte, the former city centre of East Berlin, were illegally occupied and re-built by young squatters and became a fertile ground for underground and counterculture gatherings. The central boroughs are home to many nightclubs, including the Watergate, Tresor and Berghain. The KitKatClub and several other locations are known for their sexually uninhibited parties.

Clubs are not required to close at a fixed time during the weekends, and many parties last well into the morning, or even all weekend. The *Berghain* features the well-known *Panorama Bar*, a bar that opens its shades at daybreak, allowing partygoers a panorama view of Berlin after dancing through the night. The *Weekend Club* near Alexanderplatz features a roof terrace that allows partying at night. Several venues have become a popular stage for the Neo-Burlesque scene.



Berghain nightclub

Berlin has a long history of gay culture, and is an important birthplace of the LGBT rights movement. Same-sex bars and dance halls operated freely as early as the 1880s, and the first gay magazine, *Der Eigene*, started in 1896. By the 1920s, gays and lesbians had an unprecedented visibility.^{[168][169]} Today, in addition to a positive atmosphere in the wider club scene, the city again has a huge number of queer clubs and festivals. The most famous and largest are Berlin Pride, the Christopher Street Day,^[170] the Lesbian and Gay City Festival in Berlin-Schöneberg, the Kreuzberg Pride and Hustlaball.

The annual Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) with around 500,000 admissions is considered to be the largest publicly attended film festival in the world.^{[171][172]} The Karneval der Kulturen (*Carnival of Cultures*), a multi-ethnic street parade, is celebrated every Pentecost weekend.^[173] Berlin is also well known for the cultural festival, Berliner Festspiele, which includes the jazz festival JazzFest Berlin. Several technology and media art festivals and conferences are held in the city, including Transmediale and Chaos Communication Congress. The annual Berlin Festival focuses on indie rock, electronic music and synthpop and is part of the International Berlin Music Week.^{[174][175]} Every year Berlin hosts one of the largest New Year's Eve celebrations in the world, attended by well over a million people. The focal point is the Brandenburg Gate, where midnight fireworks are centred, but various private fireworks displays take place throughout the entire city. Partygoers in Germany often toast the New Year with a glass of sparkling wine.



French Cathedral during the annual Festival of Lights

Performing arts



Sir Simon Rattle conducting the renowned Berlin Philharmonic

Berlin is home to 44 theaters and stages.^[115] The Deutsches Theater in Mitte was built in 1849–50 and has operated almost continuously since then. The Volksbühne at Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz was built in 1913–14, though the company had been founded in 1890. The Berliner Ensemble, famous for performing the works of Bertolt Brecht, was established in 1949. The Schaubühne was founded in 1962 and moved to the building of the former Universum Cinema on Kurfürstendamm in 1981. With a seating capacity of 1,895 and a stage floor of 2,854 square metres (30,720 square feet), the Friedrichstadt-Palast in Berlin Mitte is the largest show palace in Europe.

Berlin has three major opera houses: the Deutsche Oper, the Berlin State Opera, and the Komische Oper. The Berlin State Opera on Unter den Linden opened in 1742 and is the oldest of the three. Its current musical director is Daniel Barenboim. The Komische Oper has traditionally specialized in operettas and is located at Unter den Linden as well. The Deutsche Oper opened in 1912 in Charlottenburg.



Dance show at Friedrichstadt-Palast

The city's main venue for musical theater performances are the Theater am Potsdamer Platz and Theater des Westens (built in 1895). Contemporary dance can be seen at the Radialsystem V. The Tempodrom is host to concerts and circus inspired entertainment. It also houses a multi-sensory spa experience. The Admiralspalast in Mitte has a vibrant program of variety and music events.

There are seven symphony orchestras in Berlin. The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra is one of the preeminent orchestras in the world;^[176] it is housed in the Berliner Philharmonie near Potsdamer Platz on a street named for the orchestra's longest-serving conductor, Herbert von Karajan.^[177] The current principal conductor is Simon Rattle.^[178] The Konzerthausorchester Berlin was founded in 1952 as the orchestra for East Berlin. Its current principal conductor is Ivan Fischer. The Haus der Kulturen der Welt presents various exhibitions dealing with intercultural issues and stages world music and conferences.^[179] The *Kookaburra* and the *Quatsch Comedy Club* are known for satire and stand-up comedy shows.

Cuisine

The cuisine and culinary offerings of Berlin vary greatly. Twelve restaurants in Berlin have been included in the Michelin Guide of 2015, which ranks the city at the top for the number of restaurants having this distinction in Germany.^[180] Berlin is well known for its offerings of vegetarian^[181] and vegan^[182] cuisine and is home to an innovative entrepreneurial food scene promoting cosmopolitan flavors, local and sustainable ingredients, pop-up street food markets, supper clubs, as well as food festivals, such as Berlin Food Week.^{[183][184]}



The Currywurst Museum

Many local foods originated from north German culinary traditions and include rustic and hearty dishes with pork, goose, fish, peas, beans, cucumbers, or potatoes. Typical Berliner fare include popular street food like the Currywurst (which gained popularity with post-war construction workers rebuilding the city), Buletten and the Berliner doughnut, known in Berlin as Pfannkuchen.^[185]^[186] German bakeries offering a variety of breads and pastries are widespread. One of Europe's largest delicatessen markets is found at the KaDeWe, and among the world's largest chocolate stores is Fassbender & Rausch.^[187]

Berlin is also home to a diverse gastronomy scene reflecting the immigrant history of the city. Turkish and Arab immigrants brought their culinary traditions to the city, such as the lahmajoun and falafel, which have become common fast food staples. The modern fast food version of the doner kebab sandwich evolved in Berlin in the 1970s, and became a favorite in Germany and elsewhere in the world.^[188] Asian cuisine like Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Indian, Korean, and Japanese restaurants, as well as Spanish tapas bars, Italian, and Greek cuisine, can be found in many parts of the city

Recreation



Elephant Gate at Berlin Zoo

Zoologischer Garten Berlin the older of two zoos in the city, was founded in 1844. It is the most visited zoo in Europe and presents the most diverse range of species in the world.^[189] It was the home of the captive-born celebrity polar bear Knut.^[190] The city's other zoo, Tierpark Friedrichsfelde was founded in 1955.

Berlin's Botanischer Garten includes the Botanic Museum Berlin. With an area of 43 hectares (110 acres) and around 22,000 different plant species, it is one of the largest and most diverse collections of botanical life in the world. Other gardens in the city include the Britzer Garten, and the Gärten der Welt (Gardens of the World) in Marzahn.^[191]

The Tiergarten park in Mitte, with landscape design by Peter Joseph Lenné, is one of Berlin's largest and most popular parks.^[192] In Kreuzberg, the Viktoriapark provides a viewing point over the southern part of inner-city



Victory Column in Tiergarten

Berlin. Treptower Park, beside the Spree in Treptow, features a large Soviet War Memorial. The Volkspark in Friedrichshain, which opened in 1848, is the oldest park in the city, with monuments, a summer outdoor cinema and several sports areas.^[193] Tempelhofer Feld, the site of the former city airport, is the world's largest inner-city open space.^[194]

Potsdam is situated on the southwestern periphery of Berlin. The city was a residence of the Prussian kings and the German Kaiser, until 1918. The area around Potsdam in particular Sanssouci is known for a series of interconnected lakes and cultural landmarks. The Palaces and Parks of Potsdam and Berlin are the largest World Heritage Site in Germany.^[195]

Berlin is also well known for its numerous cafés, street musicians, beach bars along the Spree River, flea markets, boutique shops and pop up stores, which are a source for recreation and leisure!^[196]

Sports

Berlin has established a high-profile as a host city of major international sporting events.^[197] The city hosted the 1936 Summer Olympics and was the host city for the 2006 FIFA World Cup final.^[198] The IAAF World Championships in Athletics was held in the Olympiastadion in 2009.^[199] The city hosted the Basketball Euroleague Final Four in 2009 and 2016.^[200] and was one of the hosts of the FIBA EuroBasket 2015. In 2015 Berlin became the venue for the UEFA Champions League Final



The Olympiastadion hosted the 1936 Summer Olympics and the 2006 FIFA World Cup Final

The annual Berlin Marathon – a course that holds the most top-10 world record runs – and the ISTAF are well-established athletic events in the city.^[201] The Mellowpark in Köpenick is one of the biggest skate and BMX parks in Europe.^[202] A Fan Fest at Brandenburg Gate, which attracts several hundred-thousands spectators, has become popular during international football competitions, like the UEFA European Championship.^[203]

In 2013 around 600,000 Berliners were registered in one of the more than 2,300 sport and fitness clubs.^[204] The city of Berlin operates more than 60 public indoor and outdoor swimming pools.^[205] Berlin is the largest Olympic training centre in Germany. About 500 top athletes (15% of all German top athletes) are based there. Forty-seven elite athletes participated in the 2012 Summer Olympics. Berliners would achieve seven gold, twelve silver and three bronze medals.^[206]



The Berlin Marathon is the current world record course.

Several professional clubs representing the most important spectator team sports in Germany have their base in Berlin:

Club	Sport	Founded	League	Venue
<u>Hertha BSC</u> ^[207]	<u>Football</u>	1892	<u>Bundesliga</u>	<u>Olympiastadion</u>
<u>1. FC Union Berlin</u> ^[208]	<u>Football</u>	1966	<u>2. Bundesliga</u>	<u>Stadion An der Alten Försterei</u>
<u>ALBA Berlin</u> ^[209]	<u>Basketball</u>	1991	<u>BBL</u>	<u>Mercedes-Benz Arena</u>
<u>Eisbären Berlin</u> ^[210]	<u>Ice hockey</u>	1954	<u>DEL</u>	<u>Mercedes-Benz Arena</u>
<u>Füchse Berlin</u> ^[211]	<u>Handball</u>	1891	<u>HBL</u>	<u>Max-Schmeling-Halle</u>

See also

- [List of fiction set in Berlin](#)
- [List of songs about Berlin](#)
- [List of people from Berlin](#)
- [List of honorary citizens of Berlin](#)
- [List of video games set in Berlin](#)
- [List of films set in Berlin](#)

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- Berlin.de – Official website
- Geographic data related toBerlin at OpenStreetMap

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