

= Bratislava =

Bratislava (/ ˈbrætʃslʌv / or / ˈbrʃ- / ; Slovak pronunciation : [ˈbracislaʋa] ; also known by other names) is the capital of Slovakia , and with a population of about 450 @, @ 000 , the country 's largest city . The greater metropolitan area is home to more than 650 @, @ 000 people . Bratislava is in southwestern Slovakia , occupying both banks of the River Danube and the left bank of the River Morava . Bordering Austria and Hungary , it is the only national capital that borders two independent countries .

Bratislava is the political , cultural and economic centre of Slovakia . It is the seat of the Slovak president , the parliament and the Slovak Executive . It is home to several universities , museums , theatres , galleries and other important cultural and educational institutions . Many of Slovakia 's large businesses and financial institutions also have headquarters there .

The history of the city has been strongly influenced by people of different nations and religions , namely by Austrians , Croats , Czechs , Germans , Hungarians , Jews , Serbs and Slovaks (in alphabetical order) . The city was the capital of the Kingdom of Hungary , a part of the larger Habsburg Monarchy territories , from 1536 to 1783 and has been home to many Slovak , Hungarian and German historical figures .

= = Etymology = =

The city received its contemporary name in 1919 . Beforehand it was mostly known in English by its German name , Pressburg , as it was long dominated by Austrians and other German @-@ speakers . This is the term which the German , the pre @-@ 1919 Slovak (Pre?porok) and Czech (Pre?purk) names are derived from . The origin of the city 's Hungarian name , Pozsony , is unclear : it might come from the Hungarian Poson (name of the city 's first castellan) , the Czech Pos or the German Poscho , which are personal names . Hungarian speakers still use the Hungarian name , Pozsony .

The medieval settlement Brezalauspurc (literally : Braslav 's castle) is sometimes attributed to Bratislava , however the actual location of Brezalauspurc is under scholarly debate . The city 's modern name is credited to Pavel Jozef ?afárik 's misinterpretation of Braslav as Bratislav when analyzing medieval sources , thus coming up with the term B?etislaw , later Bratislav .

During the revolution of 1918 ? 1919 , the name ' Wilsonov ' or ' Wilsonstadt ' (after President Woodrow Wilson) was proposed by American Slovaks , as he supported national self @-@ determination . The name Bratislava , which was used before only by some Slovak patriots , became official in March 1919 .

Other alternative names of the city in the past include Greek : ????????? Istropolis (meaning " Danube City " , also used in Latin) , Czech : Pre?purk , French : Presbourg , Italian : Presburgo , Latin : Posonium , Romanian : Pojon and Serbo @-@ Croatian : Po?un / ????? . The name Pressburg was also used in English @-@ language publications until 1919 , and it is occasionally used today .

In older documents , confusion can be caused by the Latin forms Bratislavia , Wratislavia etc . , which refer to Wroc?aw , Poland ? not to Bratislava .

= = History = =

The first known permanent settlement of the area began with the Linear Pottery Culture , around 5000 BC in the Neolithic era . About 200 BC , the Celtic Boii tribe founded the first significant settlement , a fortified town known as an oppidum . They also established a mint , producing silver coins known as biatecs .

The area fell under Roman influence from the 1st to the 4th century AD and was made part of the Danubian Limes , a border defence system . The Romans introduced grape growing to the area and began a tradition of winemaking , which survives to the present .

The Slavs arrived from the East between the 5th and 6th centuries during the Migration Period . As

a response to onslaughts by Avars , the local Slavic tribes rebelled and established Samo 's Empire (623 ? 658) , the first known Slavic political entity . In the 9th century , the castles at Bratislava (Brezalauspurc) and Devín (Dowina) were important centres of the Slavic states : the Principality of Nitra and Great Moravia . Scholars have debated the identification as fortresses of the two castles built in Great Moravia , based on linguistic arguments and because of the absence of convincing archaeological evidence .

The first written reference to a settlement named " Brezalauspurc " dates to 907 and is related to the Battle of Pressburg , during which a Bavarian army was defeated by the Hungarians . It is connected to the fall of Great Moravia , already weakened by its own inner decline and under the attacks of the Hungarians . The exact location of the battle remains unknown , and some interpretations place it west of Lake Balaton .

In the 10th century , the territory of Pressburg (what would later become Pozsony county) became part of Hungary (called " the Kingdom of Hungary " from 1000) . It developed as a key economic and administrative centre on the kingdom 's frontier . This strategic position destined the city to be the site of frequent attacks and battles , but also brought it economic development and high political status . It was granted its first known " town privileges " in 1291 by the Hungarian King Andrew III , and was declared a free royal town in 1405 by King Sigismund . In 1436 he authorized the town to use its own coat of arms .

The Kingdom of Hungary was defeated by the Ottoman Empire in the Battle of Mohács in 1526 . The Turks besieged and damaged Pressburg , but failed to conquer it . Owing to Ottoman advances into Hungarian territory , the city was designated the new capital of Hungary in 1536 , becoming part of the Austrian Habsburg monarchy and marking the beginning of a new era . The city became a coronation town and the seat of kings , archbishops (1543) , the nobility and all major organisations and offices . Between 1536 and 1830 , eleven Hungarian kings and queens were crowned at St. Martin 's Cathedral . The 17th century was marked by anti @-@ Habsburg uprisings , fighting with the Turks , floods , plagues and other disasters , which diminished the population .

Pressburg flourished during the 18th @-@ century reign of Queen Maria Theresa , becoming the largest and most important town in Hungary . The population tripled ; many new palaces , monasteries , mansions , and streets were built , and the city was the centre of social and cultural life of the region . Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart gave a concert in 1762 in the Pálffy Palace . Joseph Haydn performed in 1784 in the Grassalkovich Palace . Ludwig van Beethoven was a guest in 1796 in the Keglevi? Palace .

The city started to lose its importance under the reign of Maria Theresa 's son Joseph II , especially after the crown jewels were taken to Vienna in 1783 in an attempt to strengthen the union between Austria and Hungary . Many central offices subsequently moved to Buda , followed by a large segment of the nobility . The first newspapers in Hungarian and Slovak were published here : Magyar hírmondó in 1780 , and Presspurske Nowiny in 1783 . In the course of the 18th century , the city became a centre for the Slovak national movement .

The city 's 19th @-@ century history was closely tied to the major events in Europe . The Peace of Pressburg between Austria and France was signed here in 1805 . Theben Castle was ruined by Napoleon 's French troops during an invasion of 1809 . In 1825 the Hungarian National Learned Society (the present Hungarian Academy of Sciences) was founded in Pressburg using a donation from István Széchenyi . In 1843 Hungarian was proclaimed the official language in legislation , public administration and education by the Diet in the city .

As a reaction to the Revolutions of 1848 , Ferdinand V signed the so @-@ called April laws , which included the abolition of serfdom , at the Primate 's Palace . The city chose the revolutionary Hungarian side , but was captured by the Austrians in December 1848 .

Industry developed rapidly in the 19th century . The first horse @-@ drawn railway in the Kingdom of Hungary , from Pressburg to Szentgyörgy Svätý Jur , was built in 1840 . A new line to Vienna using steam locomotives was opened in 1848 , and a line to Pest in 1850 . Many new industrial , financial and other institutions were founded ; for example , the first bank in present @-@ day Slovakia was founded in 1842 . The city 's first permanent bridge over the Danube , Starý most , was built in 1891 .

Before World War I , the city had a population that was 42 % ethnic German , 41 % Hungarian and 15 % Slovak (1910 census) . After World War I and the formation of Czechoslovakia on October 28 , 1918 , the city was incorporated into the new state despite its representatives ' reluctance . The dominant Hungarian and German population tried to prevent annexation of the city to Czechoslovakia and declared it a free city . However , the Czechoslovak Legions occupied the city on January 1 , 1919 , and made it part of Czechoslovakia . The city became the seat of Slovakia 's political organs and organizations and became Slovakia 's capital on 4 February . On February 12 , 1919 the German and Hungarian population started a protest against the Czechoslovak occupation , but the Czechoslovak Legions opened fire on the unarmed demonstrators .

On March 27 , 1919 , the name Bratislava was officially adopted for the first time . Left without any protection after the retreat of the Hungarian army , many Hungarians were expelled or fled . Czechs and Slovaks moved their households to Bratislava . Education in Hungarian and German was radically reduced in the city . By the 1930 Czechoslovakian census , the Hungarian population of Bratislava had decreased to 15 @. @ 8 % (see the Demographics of Bratislava article for more details) .

In 1938 , Nazi Germany annexed neighbouring Austria in the Anschluss ; later that year it also annexed the still @-@ separate from Bratislava Petr?alka and Devín boroughs on ethnic grounds , as these had many ethnic Germans . Bratislava was declared the capital of the first independent Slovak Republic on March 14 , 1939 , but the new state quickly fell under Nazi influence . In 1941 ? 1942 and 1944 ? 1945 , the new Slovak government cooperated in deporting most of Bratislava 's approximately 15 @, @ 000 Jews ; they were transported to concentration camps , where most were killed or died before the end of the war .

Bratislava was bombarded by the Allies , occupied by German troops in 1944 , and eventually taken by troops of the Soviet 2nd Ukrainian Front on 4 April 1945 . At the end of World War II , most of Bratislava 's ethnic Germans were helped to evacuate by the German authorities . A few returned after the war , but were soon expelled without their properties under the Bene? decrees , part of a widespread expulsion of ethnic Germans from eastern Europe .

After the Communist Party seized power in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 , the city became part of the Eastern Bloc . The city annexed new land , and the population rose significantly , becoming 90 % Slovak . Large residential areas consisting of high @-@ rise prefabricated panel buildings , such as those in the Petr?alka borough , were built . The Communist government also built several new grandiose buildings , such as the Most Slovenského národného povstania bridge and the Slovak Radio headquarters .

In 1968 , after the unsuccessful Czechoslovak attempt to liberalise the Communist regime , the city was occupied by Warsaw Pact troops . Shortly thereafter , it became capital of the Slovak Socialist Republic , one of the two states of the federalized Czechoslovakia .

Bratislava 's dissidents anticipated the fall of Communism with the Bratislava candle demonstration in 1988 , and the city became one of the foremost centres of the anti @-@ Communist Velvet Revolution in 1989 .

In 1993 , the city became the capital of the newly formed Slovak Republic following the Velvet Divorce . In the 1990s and the early 21st century , its economy boomed due to foreign investment . The city has also hosted several important cultural and political events .

= = Geography = =

Bratislava is situated in south @-@ western Slovakia , within the Bratislava Region . Its location on the borders with Austria and Hungary makes it the only national capital that borders two countries . It is only 62 kilometres (38 @. @ 5 mi) from the border with the Czech Republic and only 60 kilometres (37 @. @ 3 mi) from the Austrian capital Vienna .

The city has a total area of 367 @. @ 58 square kilometres (141 @. @ 9 sq mi) , making it the second @-@ largest city in Slovakia by area (after the township of Vysoké Tatry) . Bratislava straddles the Danube River , which it had developed around and for centuries was the chief transportation route to other areas . The river passes through the city from the west to the south

@-@ east . The Middle Danube basin begins at Devín Gate in western Bratislava . Other rivers are the Morava River , which forms the north @-@ western border of the city and enters the Danube at Devín , the Little Danube , and the Vydrica , which enters the Danube in the borough of Karlova Ves .

The Carpathian mountain range begins in city territory with the Little Carpathians (Malé Karpaty) . The Záhorie and Danubian lowlands stretch into Bratislava . The city 's lowest point is at the Danube 's surface at 126 metres (413 ft) above mean sea level , and the highest point is Devínska Kobyla at 514 metres (1 @,@ 686 ft) . The average altitude is 140 metres (460 ft) .

= = = Climate = = =

Bratislava lies in the north temperate zone and has a moderately continental climate (original / US Köppen ? Geiger climate classification Cfb / Dfb , Trewartha climate classification DCbo , USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 7b) with mean annual temperature (1990 ? 2009) of around 10 @.@ 5 ° C (50 @.@ 9 ° F) , average temperature of 21 ° C (70 ° F) in the warmest month and ? 1 ° C (30 ° F) in the coldest month , four distinct seasons and precipitation spread rather evenly throughout the year . It is often windy with a marked variation between hot summers and cold , humid winters . The city is in one of the warmest and driest parts of Slovakia . Recently , the transitions from winter to summer and summer to winter have been rapid , with short autumn and spring periods . Snow occurs less frequently than previously . Extreme temperatures (1981 ? 2013) ? record high : 39 @.@ 4 ° C (102 @.@ 9 ° F) , record low : ? 24 @.@ 6 ° C (? 12 @.@ 3 ° F) . Some areas , particularly Devín and Devínska Nová Ves , are vulnerable to floods from the Danube and Morava rivers . New flood protection has been built on both banks .

= = = Location = = =

= = Cityscape and architecture = =

The cityscape of Bratislava is characterised by medieval towers and grandiose 20th @-@ century buildings , but it has undergone profound changes in a construction boom at the start of the 21st century .

Most historical buildings are concentrated in the Old Town . Bratislava 's Town Hall is a complex of three buildings erected in the 14th ? 15th centuries and now hosts the Bratislava City Museum . Michael 's Gate is the only gate that has been preserved from the medieval fortifications , and it ranks among the oldest of the town 's buildings ; the narrowest house in Europe is nearby . The University Library building , erected in 1756 , was used by the Diet of the Kingdom of Hungary from 1802 to 1848 . Much of the significant legislation of the Hungarian Reform Era (such as the abolition of serfdom and the foundation of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) was enacted there .

The historic centre is characterised by many baroque palaces . The Grassalkovich Palace , built around 1760 , is now the residence of the Slovak president , and the Slovak government now has its seat in the former Archiepiscopal Palace . In 1805 , diplomats of emperors Napoleon and Francis II signed the fourth Peace of Pressburg in the Primate 's Palace , after Napoleon 's victory in the Battle of Austerlitz . Some smaller houses are historically significant ; composer Johann Nepomuk Hummel was born in an 18th @-@ century house in the Old Town .

Notable cathedrals and churches include the Gothic St. Martin 's Cathedral built in the 13th ? 16th centuries , which served as the coronation church of the Kingdom of Hungary between 1563 and 1830 . The Franciscan Church , dating to the 13th century , has been a place of knighting ceremonies and is the oldest preserved sacral building in the city . The Church of St. Elizabeth , better known as the Blue Church due to its colour , is built entirely in the Hungarian Secessionist style .

A curiosity is the underground (formerly ground @-@ level) restored portion of the Jewish

cemetery where 19th @-@ century Rabbi Moses Sofer is buried , located at the base of the castle hill near the entrance to a tram tunnel . The only military cemetery in Bratislava is Slavín , unveiled in 1960 in honour of Soviet Army soldiers who fell during the liberation of Bratislava in April 1945 . It offers an excellent view of the city and the Little Carpathians .

Other prominent 20th @-@ century structures include the Most Slovenského národného povstania (Bridge of the Slovak national uprising) across the Danube featuring a UFO @-@ like tower restaurant , Slovak Radio 's inverted @-@ pyramid @-@ shaped headquarters , and the uniquely designed Kamzík TV Tower with an observation deck and rotating restaurant . In the early 21st century , new edifices have transformed the traditional cityscape . The construction boom has spawned new public buildings , such as the Most Apollo and a new building of the Slovak National Theatre , as well as private real @-@ estate development .

= = = Bratislava Castle = = =

One of the most prominent structures in the city is Bratislava Castle , situated on a plateau 85 metres (279 ft) above the Danube . The castle hill site has been inhabited since the transitional period between the Stone and Bronze ages and has been the acropolis of a Celtic town , part of the Roman Limes Romanus , a huge Slavic fortified settlement , and a political , military and religious centre for Great Moravia . A stone castle was not constructed until the 10th century , when the area was part of the Kingdom of Hungary . The castle was converted into a Gothic anti @-@ Hussite fortress under Sigismund of Luxemburg in 1430 , became a Renaissance castle in 1562 , and was rebuilt in 1649 in the baroque style . Under Queen Maria Theresa , the castle became a prestigious royal seat . In 1811 , the castle was inadvertently destroyed by fire and lay in ruins until the 1950s , when it was rebuilt mostly in its former Theresian style .

= = = Devín Castle = = =

The ruined and recently renovated Devín Castle is in the borough of Devín , on top of a rock where the Morava River , which forms the border between Austria and Slovakia , enters the Danube . It is one of the most important Slovak archaeological sites and contains a museum dedicated to its history . Due to its strategic location , Devín Castle was a very important frontier castle of Great Moravia and the early Hungarian state . It was destroyed by Napoleon 's troops in 1809 . It is an important symbol of Slovak and Slavic history .

= = = Rusovce = = =

Rusovce mansion , with its English park , is in the Rusovce borough . The house was originally built in the 17th century and was turned into an English neo @-@ Gothic @-@ style mansion in 1841 ? 1844 . The borough is also known for the ruins of the Roman military camp Gerulata , part of Limes Romanus , a border defence system . Gerulata was built and used between the 1st and 4th centuries AD .

= = = Parks and lakes = = =

Due to its location in the foothills of the Little Carpathians and its riparian vegetation on the Danubian floodplains , Bratislava has forests close to the city centre . The total amount of public green space is 46 @.@ 8 square kilometres (18 @.@ 1 sq mi) , or 110 square metres (1 @,@ 200 sq ft) per inhabitant . The largest city park is Horský park (literally , Mountainous Park) , in the Old Town . Bratislavský lesný park (Bratislava Forest Park) is located in the Little Carpathians and includes many locales popular among visitors , such as ?elezná studienka and Koliba . The Forest Park covers an area of 27 @.@ 3 square kilometres (10 @.@ 5 sq mi) , of which 96 % is forested mostly with oak and mixed oak / hornbeam forest , and contains original flora and fauna such as European badgers , red foxes , wild boar and red and roe deer . On the right bank of the Danube , in

the borough of Petržalka, is Janko Kráľ Park founded in 1774 ? 76 . A new city park is planned for Petržalka between the Malý Draždiak and Veľký Draždiak lakes .

Bratislava 's zoological park is located in Mlynská dolina , near the headquarters of Slovak Television . The zoo , founded in 1960 , currently houses 152 species of animals , including the rare white lion and white tiger . The Botanical Gardens , which belong to Comenius University , can be found on the Danube riverfront and house more than 120 species of domestic and foreign origin .

The city has a number of natural and man @-@ made lakes , most of which are used for recreation . Examples include Ťtrkovec lake in Ružinov , Kuchajda in Nové Mesto , Zlaté Piesky and the Vajnory lakes in the north @-@ east , and Rusovce lake in the south , which is popular with nudists .

= = Demographics = =

From the city 's origin until the 19th century , Germans were the dominant ethnic group . However , after the Austro @-@ Hungarian Compromise of 1867 , active Magyarisation took place , and by the end of World War I 40 % of the population of Pressburg spoke Hungarian as their native language , 42 % German , and 15 % Slovak . After the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 , Bratislava remained a multi @-@ ethnic city , but with a different demographic trend . Due to Slovakization , the proportion of Slovaks and Czechs increased in the city , while the proportion of Germans and Hungarians fell . In 1938 , 59 % of population were Slovaks or Czechs , while Germans represented 22 % and Hungarians 13 % of the city 's population . The creation of the first Slovak Republic in 1939 brought other changes , most notably the expulsion of many Czechs and the deportation or flight of the Jews during the Holocaust . In 1945 , most of the Germans were evacuated . After the restoration of Czechoslovakia , the Beneš decrees (partly revoked in 1948) collectively punished ethnic German and Hungarian minorities by expropriation and deportation to Germany , Austria , and Hungary for their alleged collaborationism with Nazi Germany and Hungary against Czechoslovakia . The city thereby obtained its clearly Slovak character . Hundreds of citizens were expelled during the communist oppression of the 1950s , with the aim of replacing " reactionary " people with the proletarian class . Since the 1950s , the Slovaks have been the dominant ethnicity in the town , making up around 90 % of the city 's population .

= = Politics = =

Bratislava is the seat of the Slovak parliament , presidency , ministries , supreme court (Slovak : Najvyšší súd) , and central bank . It is the seat of the Bratislava Region and , since 2002 , also of the Bratislava Self @-@ Governing Region . The city also has many foreign embassies and consulates .

The current local government (Mestská samospráva) structure has been in place since 1990 . It is composed of a mayor (primátor) , a city board (Mestská rada) , a city council (Mestské zastupiteľstvo) , city commissions (Komisie mestského zastupiteľstva) , and a city magistrate 's office (Magistrát) .

The mayor , based at the Primate 's Palace , is the city 's top executive officer and is elected to a four @-@ year term of office . The current mayor of Bratislava is Ivo Nesrovnal , who won the election held on November 15 , 2014 as an independent candidate . The city council is the city 's legislative body , responsible for issues such as budget , local ordinances , city planning , road maintenance , education , and culture . The Council usually convenes once a month and consists of 45 members elected to four @-@ year terms concurrent with the mayor 's . Many of the council 's executive functions are carried out by the city commission at the council 's direction . The city board is a 28 @-@ member body composed of the mayor and his deputies , the borough mayors , and up to ten city council members . The board is an executive and supervisory arm of the city council and also serves in an advisory role to the mayor .

Administratively , Bratislava is divided into five districts : Bratislava I (the city centre) , Bratislava II (eastern parts) , Bratislava III (north @-@ eastern parts) , Bratislava IV (western and northern

parts) and Bratislava V (southern parts on the right bank of the Danube , including Petržalka , the most densely populated residential area in Central Europe) .

For self @-@ governance purposes , the city is divided into 17 boroughs , each of which has its own mayor (starosta) and council . The number of councillors in each depends on the size and population of the borough . Each of the boroughs coincides with the city 's 20 cadastral areas , except for two cases : Nové Mesto is further divided into the Nové Mesto and Vinohrady cadastral areas and Ružinov is divided into Ružinov , Nivy and Trnávka . Further unofficial division recognizes additional quarters and localities .

= = Economy = =

The Bratislava Region is the wealthiest and most economically prosperous region in Slovakia , despite being the smallest by area and having the second smallest population of the eight Slovak regions . It accounts for about 26 % of the Slovak GDP . The GDP per capita (PPP) , valued at ? 41 @, @ 800 (2009) , is 178 % of the EU average and is the fifth @-@ highest of all regions in the EU member states .

The average gross monthly salary in the Bratislava region in 2011 was ? 1220 .

The unemployment rate in Bratislava was 1 @. @ 83 % in December 2007 . Many governmental institutions and private companies have their headquarters in Bratislava . More than 75 % of Bratislava 's population works in the service sector , mainly composed of trade , banking , IT , telecommunications , and tourism . The Bratislava Stock Exchange (BSSE) , the organiser of the public securities market , was founded on March 15 , 1991 .

Companies with the highest value added according to TREND TOP 200 ranking (2011) , operating predominantly in Bratislava , include the Volkswagen Bratislava Plant , Slovnaft refinery (MOL) , Eset (software developer) , Asseco (software company) , PPC Power (producer of heat and steam) and Trenkwalder personnel agency .

Volkswagen Group took over and expanded the BAZ communist @-@ built factory in 1991 , and has since considerably expanded production beyond original Skoda Auto models . Currently , 68 % of production is focused on SUVs : Audi Q7 ; VW Touareg ; as well as the body and under @-@ chassis of the Porsche Cayenne . Since 2012 , production has also included Volkswagen up ! and badge @-@ engineered SEAT Mii and Skoda Citigo .

In recent years , service and high @-@ tech @-@ oriented businesses have prospered in Bratislava . Many global companies , including IBM , Dell , Lenovo , AT & T , SAP , and Accenture , have built outsourcing and service centres here or plan to do so soon . Reasons for the influx of multi @-@ national corporations include proximity to Western Europe , skilled labour force and the high density of universities and research facilities .

Other large companies and employers with headquarters in Bratislava include Slovak Telekom , Orange Slovensko , Slovenská sporiteľňa , Tatra banka , Doprastav , Hewlett @-@ Packard Slovakia , Slovnaft , Henkel Slovensko , Slovenský plynárenský priemysel , Kraft Foods Slovakia , Whirlpool Slovakia , Železnice Slovenskej republiky , and Tesco Stores Slovak Republic .

The Slovak economy 's strong growth in the 2000s has led to a boom in the construction industry , and several major projects have been completed or are planned in Bratislava . Areas attracting developers include the Danube riverfront , where two major projects are already finished : River Park in the Old Town , and Eurovea near the Apollo Bridge . Other locations under development include the areas around the main railway and bus stations , around the former industrial zone near the Old Town and in the boroughs of Petržalka , Nové Mesto and Ružinov . It is expected that investors will spend ? 1 @. @ 2 billion on new projects by 2010 . The city has a balanced budget of 277 million Euros (as of 2010) , with one fifth used for investment . Bratislava holds shares in 17 companies directly , for example , in the public transport company (Dopravný podnik Bratislava) , the waste collection and disposal company , and the water utility . The city also manages municipal organisations such as the City Police (Mestská polícia) , Bratislava City Museum and ZOO Bratislava .

== Tourism ==

For the list of sights in the city , see cityscape and architecture above .

In 2006 , Bratislava had 77 commercial accommodation facilities (of which 45 were hotels) with a total capacity of 9 @, @ 940 beds . A total of 986 @, @ 201 visitors , 754 @, @ 870 of whom were foreigners , stayed overnight . Altogether , visitors made 1 @, @ 338 @, @ 497 overnight stays . However , a considerable share of visits is made by those who visit Bratislava for a single day , and their exact number is not known . The largest numbers of foreign visitors come from the Czech Republic , Germany , the United Kingdom , Italy , Poland and Austria .

Among other factors , the growth of low @-@ cost airline flights to Bratislava , led by Ryanair , has led to conspicuous stag parties , primarily from the UK . While these are a boon to the city 's tourism industry , cultural differences and vandalism have led to concern by local officials . Reflecting the popularity of rowdy parties in Bratislava in the early to mid @-@ 2000s , the city was a setting in the 2004 comedy film Eurotrip , which was actually filmed in the city and suburbs of Prague , the Czech Republic .

== Culture ==

Bratislava is the cultural heart of Slovakia . Owing to its historical multi @-@ cultural character , local culture is influenced by various ethnic and religious groups , including Germans , Slovaks , Hungarians , and Jews . Bratislava enjoys numerous theatres , museums , galleries , concert halls , cinemas , film clubs , and foreign cultural institutions .

== Performing arts ==

Bratislava is the seat of the Slovak National Theatre , housed in two buildings . The first is a Neo @-@ Renaissance theatre building situated in the Old Town at the end of Hviezdoslav Square . The new building , opened to the public in 2007 , is on the riverfront . The theatre has three ensembles : opera , ballet and drama . Smaller theatres include the Bratislava Puppet Theatre , the Astorka Korzo ' 90 theatre , the Arena Theatre , L + S Studio , and the Naive Theatre of Rado?ina .

Music in Bratislava flourished in the 18th century and was closely linked to Viennese musical life . Mozart visited the town at the age of six . Among other notable composers who visited or lived in the town were Haydn , Liszt , Bartók and Beethoven . It is also the birthplace of the composers Johann Nepomuk Hummel Dohnanyi Erno , and Franz Schmidt . Bratislava is home to both the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra and the chamber orchestra , Capella Istropolitana . The city hosts several annual festivals , such as the Bratislava Music Festival and Bratislava Jazz Days . The Wilsonic Festival , held annually since 2000 , brings dozens of international musical acts to the city each year . During the summer , various musical events take place as part of the Bratislava Cultural Summer at Bratislava Castle . Apart from musical festivals , it is possible to hear music ranging from underground to well known pop stars .

== Museums and galleries ==

The Slovak National Museum (Slovenské národné múzeum) , founded in 1961 , has its headquarters in Bratislava on the riverfront in the Old Town , along with the Natural History Museum , which is one of its subdivisions . It is the largest cultural institution in Slovakia , and manages 16 specialised museums in Bratislava and beyond . The Bratislava City Museum (Múzeum mesta Bratislavy) , established in 1868 , is the oldest museum in continuous operation in Slovakia . Its primary goal is to chronicle Bratislava 's history in various forms from the earliest periods using historical and archaeological collections . It offers permanent displays in eight specialised museums .

The Slovak National Gallery , founded in 1948 , offers the most extensive network of galleries in Slovakia . Two displays in Bratislava are next to one another at Esterházy Palace (Esterházyho

palác , Eszterházy palota) and the Water Barracks (Vodné kasárne , Vizikaszárnya) on the Danube riverfront in the Old Town . The Bratislava City Gallery , founded in 1961 , is the second @-@ largest Slovak gallery of its kind . The gallery offers permanent displays at Pálffy Palace (Pálffyho palác , Pálffy palota) and Mirbach Palace (Mirbachov palác , Mirbach palota) , in the Old Town . Danubiana Art Museum , one of the youngest art museums in Europe , is near ?unovo waterworks .

= = = Media = = =

As the national capital , Bratislava is home to national and many local media outlets . Notable TV stations based in the city include Slovak Television (Slovenská televízia) , Markíza , JOJ and TA3 . Slovak Radio (Slovenský rozhlas) has its seat in the centre , and many Slovak commercial radio stations are based in the city . National newspapers based in Bratislava include SME , Pravda , Nový ?as , Hospodárske noviny and the English @-@ language The Slovak Spectator . Two news agencies are headquartered there : the News Agency of the Slovak Republic (TASR) and the Slovak News Agency (SITA) .

= = Sport = =

Various sports and sports teams have a long tradition in Bratislava , with many teams and individuals competing in Slovak and international leagues and competitions .

Football is currently represented by the only club playing in the top Slovak football league , the Fortuna Liga . ?K Slovan Bratislava , founded in 1919 , has its home ground at the Pasienky stadium . ?K Slovan is the most successful football club in Slovak history , being the only club from the former Czechoslovakia to win the European football competition the Cup Winners ' Cup , in 1969 . FC Petr?alka akadémia is the oldest of Bratislava 's football clubs , founded in 1898 , and is based at Stadium FC Petr?alka 1898 in Petr?alka (formerly at Pasienky in Nové Mesto and ?tadión Petr?alka in Petr?alka) . They are currently the only Slovak team to win at least one match in the UEFA Champions League group stage , with a 5 ? 0 win over Celtic FC in the qualifying round being the most well @-@ known , alongside a 3 ? 2 win over FC Porto . Before then FC Ko?ice in the 1997 ? 98 season lost all six matches , despite being the first Slovak side since independence to play in the competition . In 2010 Artmedia were relegated from the Corgon Liga under their new name of MFK Petr?alka , finishing 12th and bottom . FC Petr?alka akadémia currently competes in 5 @.@ liga after bankruptcy in summer 2014 . Another known club from the city is FK Inter Bratislava . Founded in 1945 , they have their home ground at Stadium ?KP Inter Dúbravka in Dúbravka , (formerly at ?tadión Pasienky) and currently plays in the 3 @.@ liga . There are many more clubs with long tradition and successful history despite the lack of success in last years , e.g. LP Domino Bratislava currently playing in 4 @.@ liga ; FK Ra?a Bratislava competing in the 3 @.@ liga as well as Inter ; FK ?KP Inter Dúbravka Bratislava , following ?KP Devín (successful team from 1990s) and partially following the original Inter (original Inter bankrupted in 2009 , sold the Corgo? Liga license to FK Senica and legally merged with FC ?KP Dúbravka ; current Inter has taken over the tradition , name , colours , fans etc . , but legally is no successor of the original Inter) ; FC Tatran Devín , the club that was successful mostly at youth level and merged with ?KP Bratislava in 1995 ; M?K Iskra Petr?alka , playing under the name ?K Iskra Matadorfix Bratislava in the former 1st League (today 2nd) in 1997 / 98 .

Bratislava is home to three winter sports arenas : Ondrej Nepela Winter Sports Stadium , V. Dzurilla Winter Sports Stadium , and Dúbravka Winter Sports Stadium . The HC Slovan Bratislava ice hockey team represents Bratislava from 2012 / 2013 season in Kontinental Hockey League . Slovnaft Arena , a part of Ondrej Nepela Winter Sports Stadium , is home to HC Slovan . The Ice Hockey World Championships in 1959 and 1992 were played in Bratislava , and the 2011 Men 's Ice Hockey World Championships were held in Bratislava and Ko?ice , for which a new arena was built .

The ?unovo Water Sports Centre is a whitewater slalom and rafting area , close to the Gab?íkovo

dam . It hosts several international and national canoe and kayak competitions annually .

The National Tennis Centre , which includes Aegon Arena , hosts various cultural , sporting and social events . Several Davis Cup matches have been played there , including the 2005 Davis Cup final . The city is represented in the top Slovak leagues in women 's and men 's basketball , women 's handball and volleyball , and men 's water polo . The Devín ? Bratislava National run is the oldest athletic event in Slovakia , and the Bratislava City Marathon has been held annually since 2006 . A race track is located in Petržalka , where horse racing and dog racing events and dog shows are held regularly .

Bratislava is also the centre of rugby union in Slovakia .

= = Education and science = =

The first university in Bratislava , in the Kingdom of Hungary (and also in the territory of present day Slovakia) was Universitas Istropolitana , founded in 1465 by King Matthias Corvinus . It was closed in 1490 after his death .

Bratislava is the seat of the largest university (Comenius University , 27 @, @ 771 students) , the largest technical university (Slovak University of Technology , 18 @, @ 473 students) , and the oldest art schools (the Academy of Performing Arts and the Academy of Fine Arts and Design) in Slovakia . Other institutions of tertiary education are the public University of Economics and the first private college in Slovakia , City University of Seattle . In total , about 56 @, @ 000 students attend university in Bratislava .

There are 65 public primary schools , nine private primary schools and ten religious primary schools . Overall , they enroll 25 @, @ 821 pupils . The city 's system of secondary education (some middle schools and all high schools) consists of 39 gymnasia with 16 @, @ 048 students , 37 specialized high schools with 10 @, @ 373 students , and 27 vocational schools with 8 @, @ 863 students (data as of 2007) .

The Slovak Academy of Sciences is also based in Bratislava . However , the city is one of the few European capitals to have neither an observatory nor a planetarium . The nearest observatory is in Modra , 30 kilometres (19 mi) away , and the nearest planetarium is in Hlohovec , 70 kilometres (43 mi) away . CEPIT , the Central European Park For Innovative Technologies , is slated for development in Vajnory . This science and technology park will combine public and private research and educational institutions . Construction was expected to begin in 2008 , but has since stalled .

= = Transport = =

The geographical position of Bratislava in Central Europe has long made it a natural crossroads for international trade traffic .

Public transport in Bratislava is managed by Dopravný podnik Bratislava , a city @-@ owned company . The transport system is known as Mestská hromadná doprava (MHD , Municipal Mass Transit) and employs buses , trams and trolleybuses . An additional service , Bratislavská integrovaná doprava (Bratislava Integrated Transport) , links train and bus routes in the city with points beyond .

As a rail hub , the city has direct connections to Austria , Hungary , the Czech Republic , Poland , Germany and the rest of Slovakia . Petržalka and Bratislava hlavná stanica are the main railway stations . Main bus station (Autobusová stanica Mlynské Nivy or AS Mlynské Nivy) is located at Mlynské Nivy , east of city centre and offers bus connections to cities in Slovakia and international bus lines .

The motorway system provides direct access to Brno in the Czech Republic , Trnava and other points in Slovakia , and Budapest in Hungary . The A6 motorway between Bratislava and Vienna was opened in November 2007 . The Port of Bratislava provides access to the Black Sea via the Danube and to the North Sea through the Rhine ? Main ? Danube Canal .

M. R. Štefánik Airport is located 9 kilometres (5 @. @ 6 mi) north @-@ east of the city centre . It served 2 @, @ 024 @, @ 000 passengers in 2007 . Bratislava is also served by the Vienna

International Airport located 49 kilometres (30 @.@ 4 mi) west of the city centre .

= = International relations = =

= = = Twin towns and sister cities = = =

Bratislava is twinned with :

* Numbers in parentheses list the year of twinning . The first agreement was signed with the city of Perugia , Umbria , in Italy on July 18 , 1962 .

= = = Partnerships = = =

Tehran in Iran

Kraków in Poland

= = Image gallery = =

= = Genealogical resources = =

The records for genealogical research are available at the state archive " Statny Archiv in Bratislava , Slovakia "

Roman Catholic church records (births / marriages / deaths) : 1601 ? 1897 (parish A)

Lutheran church records (births / marriages / deaths) : 1606 ? 1919 (parish A)

= = = Official sites = = =

Official Tourism and Travel Guide to Bratislava

Official Slovak National Tourism Portal

= = = Tourism and living information = = =

Public urban transport in Bratislava

English @-@ language community events taking place in Bratislava

= = = Images = = =

Virtual Tour of Bratislava