

= Belgrade =

Belgrade ( / ˈbɛlˌɡreɪd / ; Serbian : Beograd / ??????? ; Serbian pronunciation : [ beˈɡrad ] ; names in other languages ) is the capital and largest city of Serbia . It is located at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers , where the Pannonian Plain meets the Balkans . Its name translates to " White city " . The city proper has a population of 1 @. @ 23 million , while over 1 @. @ 65 million people live within the administrative limits .

One of the most important prehistoric cultures of Europe , the Vinča culture , evolved within the Belgrade area in the 6th millennium BC . In antiquity , Thracian Dacians inhabited the region , and after 279 BC Celts conquered the city , naming it Singidun . It was conquered by the Romans during the reign of Augustus , and awarded city rights in the mid @- @ 2nd century . It was settled by the Slavs in the 520s , and changed hands several times between the Byzantine Empire , Frankish Empire , Bulgarian Empire and Kingdom of Hungary before it became the capital of Serbian king Stephen Dragutin ( 1282 ? 1316 ) . In 1521 , Belgrade was conquered by the Ottoman Empire and became the seat of the Sanjak of Smederevo . It frequently passed from Ottoman to Habsburg rule , which saw the destruction of most of the city during the Austro @- @ Ottoman wars . Belgrade was again named the capital of Serbia in 1841 . Northern Belgrade remained the southernmost Habsburg post until 1918 , when the city was reunited . As a strategic location , the city was battled over in 115 wars and razed to the ground 44 times . Belgrade was the capital of Yugoslavia ( in various forms of governments ) from its creation in 1918 , to its final dissolution in 2006 .

Belgrade has a special administrative status within Serbia and it is one of five statistical regions of Serbia . Its metropolitan territory is divided into 17 municipalities , each with its own local council . It covers 3 @. @ 6 % of Serbia 's territory , and 22 @. @ 5 % of the country 's population lives in the city . Belgrade has been awarded many titles , and is classified as a Beta- global city .

= = Geography = =

Belgrade lies 116 @. @ 75 metres ( 383 @. @ 0 ft ) above sea level and is located at the confluence of the Danube and Sava rivers . The historical core of Belgrade , Kalemegdan , lies on the right banks of both rivers . Since the 19th century , the city has been expanding to the south and east ; after World War II , Novi Beograd ( New Belgrade ) was built on the left bank of the Sava river , connecting Belgrade with Zemun . Smaller , chiefly residential communities across the Danube , like Krnjača , Kotež and Borča , also merged with the city , while Pančevo , a heavily industrialized satellite city , remains a separate town . The city has an urban area of 360 square kilometres ( 140 sq mi ) , while together with its metropolitan area it covers 3 @, @ 223 km<sup>2</sup> ( 1 @, @ 244 sq mi ) . Throughout history , Belgrade has been a crossroads between the West and the Orient .

On the right bank of the Sava , central Belgrade has a hilly terrain , while the highest point of Belgrade proper is Torlak hill at 303 m ( 994 ft ) . The mountains of Avala ( 511 m ( 1 @, @ 677 ft ) ) and Kosmaj ( 628 m ( 2 @, @ 060 ft ) ) lie south of the city . Across the Sava and Danube , the land is mostly flat , consisting of alluvial plains and loessial plateaus .

= = = Climate = = =

Belgrade lies in the humid subtropical ( Cfa ) climate zone , with four seasons and uniformly spread precipitation . Monthly averages range from 1 @. @ 4 ° C ( 34 @. @ 5 ° F ) in January to 23 @. @ 0 ° C ( 73 @. @ 4 ° F ) in July , with an annual mean of 12 @. @ 5 ° C ( 54 @. @ 5 ° F ) . There are , on average , 31 days a year when the temperature is above 30 ° C , and 95 days when the temperature is above 25 ° C . Belgrade receives about 690 millimetres ( 27 in ) of precipitation a year , with late spring being wettest . The average annual number of sunny hours is 2 @, @ 112 .

The highest officially recorded temperature in Belgrade was + 43 @. @ 6 ° C ( 110 @. @ 5 ° F ) on 24 July 2007 , while on the other end , the lowest temperature was ? 26 @. @ 2 ° C ( ? 15 ° F ) on 10 January 1893 .

= = History = =

= = = Prehistory = = =

Chipped stone tools found at Zemun show that the area around Belgrade was inhabited by nomadic foragers in the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic eras . Some of these tools belong to the Mousterian industry , which are associated with Neanderthals rather than modern humans . Aurignacian and Gravettian tools have also been discovered there , indicating occupation between 50 000 and 20 000 years ago .

The first farming people to settle in the region are associated with the Neolithic Starčevo culture , which flourished between 6200 and 5200 BC . There are several Starčevo sites in and around Belgrade , including the eponymous site of Starčevo . The Starčevo culture was succeeded by the Vinča culture ( 5500 - 4500 BC ) , a more sophisticated farming culture that grew out of the earlier Starčevo settlements which is also named for a site in the Belgrade region ( Vinča @-@ Belo Brdo ) . The Vinča culture is known for its very large settlements , one of the earliest settlements by continuous habitation and some of the largest in prehistoric Europe ; anthropomorphic figurines such as the Lady of Vinča ; the earliest known copper metallurgy in Europe ; a proto @-@ writing form developed prior to the Sumerians and Minoans , known as the Old European script , dating back to around 5300 BC .

= = = Ancient city = = =

Evidence of early knowledge about Belgrade 's geographical location comes from ancient myths and legends . The rock overlooking the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers has been identified as one of the place in the story of Jason and the Argonauts . The Paleo @-@ Balkan tribes of Thracians and Dacians ruled this area prior to the Roman conquest . Belgrade was inhabited by a Thraco @-@ Dacian tribe Singi ; after the Celtic invasion in 279 BC , the Scordisci took the city , naming it " Singidŭn " ( dŭn , fortress ) . In 34 - 33 BC the Roman army led by Silanus reached Belgrade . It became the romanized Singidunum in the 1st century AD , and by the mid @-@ 2nd century , the city was proclaimed a municipium by the Roman authorities , evolving into a full @-@ fledged colonia ( highest city class ) by the end of the century . Apart from the first Christian Emperor of Rome who was born in the territory of modern Serbia in Naissus - Constantine I known as Constantine the Great - another early Roman Emperor was born in Singidunum : Flavius Iovianus ( Jovian ) , the restorer of Christianity . Jovian reestablished Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire , ending the brief revival of traditional Roman religions under his predecessor Julian the Apostate . In 395 AD , the site passed to the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire . Across the Sava from Singidunum was the Celtic city of Taurunum ( Zemun ) ; the two were connected with a bridge throughout Roman and Byzantine times .

= = = Middle Ages = = =

In 442 , the area was ravaged by Attila the Hun . In 471 , it was taken by Theodoric the Great , who continued into Greece . As the Ostrogoths left for Italy , the Gepids took over the city . In 539 it was retaken by the Byzantines . In 577 , some 100 000 Slavs poured into Thrace and Illyricum , pillaging cities and settling down . The Avars under Bayan I conquered the whole region by 582 . According to Byzantine chronicle *De Administrando Imperio* , the White Serbs had stopped in Belgrade on their way back home , asking the strategos for lands ; they received provinces in the west , towards the Adriatic , which they would rule as subjects to Heraclius ( 610 - 641 ) . In 829 Khan Omurtag was able to add Singidunum and its environs to the First Bulgarian Empire .

The first record of the name Belograd appeared on April , 16th , 878 , in a Papal letter to Bulgarian ruler Boris I. Later , this name appeared in several variants : Alba Graeca ( Greek city ) , Griechisch Wiessenburg ( Greek white castle ) , Nandor Alba ( City of the Bulgarians ) , Nandor Fejervar ( The

white castle of the Bulgarians ) - still named like this in the Hungarian translation of the city , Castelbianco ( White Castle ) , Alba Bulgarica ( Bulgarian City ) . For about four centuries , the city remained a battleground between the Byzantine Empire , the Kingdom of Hungary and the Bulgarian Empire . Basil II ( 976 ? 1025 ) installed a garrison in Belgrade . The city hosted the armies of the First and the Second Crusade ; while passing through during the Third Crusade , Frederick Barbarossa and his 190 @, @ 000 crusaders saw Belgrade in ruins .

Stefan Dragutin ( r . 1276 ? 1282 ) received Belgrade from his father @-@ in @-@ law , Stephen V of Hungary in 1284 ; it served as the capital of the Kingdom of Syrmia , and Dragutin is regarded as the first Serbian king to rule over Belgrade as a vassal to the Kingdom of Hungary .

Following the battles at Maritsa ( 1371 ) and Kosovo field ( 1389 ) , Serbia began to crumble as the Ottoman Empire conquered its southern territory . The north resisted through the Serbian Despotate , which had Belgrade as its capital . The city flourished under Stefan Lazarevi? , son of Serbian prince Lazar Hrebeljanovi? . Lazarevi? built a castle with a citadel and towers , of which only the Despot 's tower and west wall remain . He also re fortified the city 's ancient walls , allowing the Despotate to resist the Ottomans for almost 70 years . During this time , Belgrade was a haven for many Balkan peoples fleeing Ottoman rule , and is thought to have had a population of 40 @, @ 000 to 50 @, @ 000 people .

In 1427 , Stefan 's successor ?ura? Brankovi? had to return Belgrade to the Hungarian king , and Smederevo became the new capital . Although the Ottomans captured most of the Serbian Despotate , Belgrade , known as Nándorfehérvár in Hungarian , was unsuccessfully besieged in 1440 and 1456 . As the city presented an obstacle to the Ottoman advance into Hungary and further , over 100 @, @ 000 Ottoman soldiers besieged it in 1456 , in which the Christian army successfully defended it . The noon bell ordered by Pope Callixtus III commemorates the victory throughout the Christian world to this day .

= = = Ottoman conquest and Austrian invasions = = =

Seven decades after the initial siege , on 28 August 1521 , the fort was finally captured by Ottoman Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent and his 250 @, @ 000 soldiers ; subsequently , most of the city was razed to the ground and its entire Orthodox Christian population was deported to Istanbul , to an area that has since become known as the Belgrade forest . Belgrade was made the seat of the district ( Sanjak ) , becoming the second largest Ottoman town in Europe at over 100 @, @ 000 people , surpassed only by Constantinople . Ottoman rule also introduced Ottoman architecture , including numerous mosques , increasing the city 's Oriental influences . In 1594 , a major Serb rebellion was crushed by the Ottomans . Later , Grand vizier Sinan Pasha ordered the relics of Saint Sava to be publicly torched on the Vra?ar plateau ; in the 20th century , the Temple of Saint Sava was built to commemorate this event .

Occupied by the Habsburgs three times ( 1688 ? 1690 , 1717 ? 1739 , 1789 ? 1791 ) , headed by the Holy Roman Princes Maximilian of Bavaria and Eugene of Savoy , and field marshal Baron Ernst Gideon von Laudon respectively , Belgrade was quickly recaptured by the Ottomans and substantially razed each time . During this period , the city was affected by the two Great Serbian Migrations , in which hundreds of thousands of Serbs , led by two Serbian Patriarchs , retreated together with the Austrians into the Habsburg Empire , settling in today 's Vojvodina and Slavonia .

= = = Capital of independent Serbia = = =

During the First Serbian Uprising , the Serbian revolutionaries held the city from 8 January 1807 until 1813 , when it was retaken by the Ottomans . After the Second Serbian Uprising in 1815 , Serbia reached semi @-@ independence , which was formally recognized by the Porte in 1830 . In 1841 , Prince Mihailo Obrenovi? moved the capital from Kragujevac to Belgrade .

In May 1868 , Prince Mihailo was assassinated with his cousin Anka Konstantinovi? while riding in a carriage through the park of his country residence

With the Principality 's full independence in 1878 , and its transformation into the Kingdom of Serbia

in 1882 , Belgrade once again became a key city in the Balkans , and developed rapidly . Nevertheless , conditions in Serbia as a whole remained those of an overwhelmingly agrarian country , even with the opening of a railway to Niš , Serbia 's second city , and in 1900 the capital had only 70 000 inhabitants ( at the time Serbia numbered 1 .5 million ) . Yet by 1905 the population had grown to more than 80 000 , and by the outbreak of World War I in 1914 , it had surpassed the 100 000 citizens , not counting Zemun which then belonged to Austria - Hungary .

The first ever projection of motion pictures in the Balkans and Central Europe was held in Belgrade , in June 1896 by Andre Carr , a representative of the Lumière brothers . He shot the first motion pictures of Belgrade in the next year ; however , they have not been preserved .

= = = World War I and the Interbellum = = =

The First World War began on 28 July 1914 when Austria - Hungary declared war on Serbia . Most of the subsequent Balkan offensives occurred near Belgrade . Austro - Hungarian monitors shelled Belgrade on 29 July 1914 , and it was taken by the Austro - Hungarian Army under General Oskar Potiorek on 30 November . On 15 December , it was re - taken by Serbian troops under Marshal Radomir Putnik . After a prolonged battle which destroyed much of the city , between 6 and 9 October 1915 , Belgrade fell to German and Austro - Hungarian troops commanded by Field Marshal August von Mackensen on 9 October 1915 . The city was liberated by Serbian and French troops on 1 November 1918 , under the command of Marshal Louis Franchet d 'Espérey of France and Crown Prince Alexander of Serbia . Since Belgrade was decimated as the front - line city , Subotica overtook the title of the largest city in the Kingdom for a short while .

After the war , Belgrade became the capital of the new Kingdom of Serbs , Croats and Slovenes , renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929 . The Kingdom was split into banovinas , and Belgrade , together with Zemun and Pančevo , formed a separate administrative unit .

During this period , the city experienced fast growth and significant modernisation . Belgrade 's population grew to 239 000 by 1931 ( incorporating the town of Zemun , formerly in Austria - Hungary ) , and 320 000 by 1940 . The population growth rate between 1921 and 1948 averaged 4 .08 % a year . In 1927 , Belgrade 's first airport opened , and in 1929 , its first radio station began broadcasting . The Pančevo Bridge , which crosses the Danube , was opened in 1935 , while " King Alexander Bridge " over the Sava was opened in 1934 . On 3 September 1939 the first Belgrade Grand Prix , the last Grand Prix motor racing race before the outbreak of World War II , was held around the Belgrade Fortress and was followed by 80 000 spectators . The winner was Tazio Nuvolari .

= = = World War II = = =

On 25 March 1941 , the government of regent Crown Prince Paul signed the Tripartite Pact , joining the Axis powers in an effort to stay out of the Second World War and keep Yugoslavia neutral during the conflict . This was immediately followed by mass protests in Belgrade and a military coup d'état led by Air Force commander General Dušan Simović , who proclaimed King Peter II to be of age to rule the realm . Consequently , the city was heavily bombed by the Luftwaffe on 6 April 1941 , killing up to 24 000 people . Yugoslavia was then invaded by German , Italian , Hungarian , and Bulgarian forces . Belgrade was occupied by the German Army later the same month and Belgrade became the seat of the puppet Nedić regime , headed by General Milan Nedić .

During the summer and fall of 1941 , in reprisal for guerrilla attacks , the Germans carried out several massacres of Belgrade citizens ; in particular , members of the Jewish community were subject to mass shootings at the order of General Franz Böhme , the German Military Governor of Serbia . Böhme rigorously enforced the rule that for every German killed , 100 Serbs or Jews would be shot . The resistance movement in Belgrade was led by Major Žarko Todorović from 1941 until his arrest in 1943 .

Just like Rotterdam , which was devastated twice , by both German and Allied bombing , Belgrade

was bombed once more during World War II , this time by the Allies on 16 April 1944 , killing at least 1 @, @ 100 people . This bombing fell on the Orthodox Christian Easter . Most of the city remained under German occupation until 20 October 1944 , when it was liberated by the Red Army and the Communist Yugoslav Partisans . On 29 November 1945 , Marshal Josip Broz Tito proclaimed the Federal People 's Republic of Yugoslavia in Belgrade ( later to be renamed to Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 7 April 1963 ) . Higher estimates from the former secret police place the victim count of political persecutions in Belgrade at 10 @, @ 000 .

= = = After World War II = = =

During the post @-@ war period , Belgrade grew rapidly as the capital of the renewed Yugoslavia , developing as a major industrial center . In 1948 , construction of New Belgrade started . In 1958 , Belgrade 's first television station began broadcasting . In 1961 , the conference of Non @-@ Aligned Countries was held in Belgrade under Tito 's chairmanship . In 1962 , Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport was built . In 1968 , major student protests led to several street clashes between students and the police . In 1960 , architect Svetislav Tisa Milosavljevi? died there of natural causes .

= = = Breakup of Yugoslavia = = =

On 9 March 1991 , massive demonstrations led by Vuk Dra?kovi? were held in the city against Slobodan Milo?evi? . According to various media outlets , there were between 100 @, @ 000 and 150 @, @ 000 people on the streets . Two people were killed , 203 injured and 108 arrested during the protests , and later that day tanks were deployed onto the streets to restore order . Further protests were held in Belgrade from November 1996 to February 1997 against the same government after alleged electoral fraud at local elections . These protests brought Zoran ?in?i? to power , the first mayor of Belgrade since World War II who did not belong to the League of Communists of Yugoslavia or its later offshoot , the Socialist Party of Serbia .

In 1999 , during the Kosovo War , NATO bombings caused substantial damage to the city . Among the sites bombed were the buildings of several ministries , the RTS building , which killed 16 technicians , several hospitals , the Hotel Jugoslavija , the Central Committee building , the Avala Tower , and the Chinese embassy . Several of these buildings have been left in their bombed states to serve as a memorial for the bombings .

After the 2000 presidential elections , Belgrade was the site of major public protests , with over half a million people on the streets . These demonstrations resulted in the ousting of president Milo?evi? .

= = = In modern Serbia = = =

In 2015 , an agreement was reached with Eagle Hills ( a UAE company ) on the Belgrade Waterfront deal , for the construction of a new part of the city on currently undeveloped wasteland by the riverside . This project , officially started in September 2015 and is the biggest construction project in Europe , will cost at least 3 @. @ 5 billion euros .

= = Administration = =

Belgrade is a separate territorial unit in Serbia , with its own autonomous city authority . The City Assembly of Belgrade has 110 members , elected on four @-@ year terms . A 13 @-@ member City Council , elected by the Assembly and presided over by the mayor and his deputy , has the control and supervision of the City Administration , which manages day @-@ to @-@ day administrative affairs . It is divided into 14 Secretariats , each having a specific portfolio such as traffic or health care , and several professional services , agencies and institutes .

The 2014 Belgrade local elections were won by the Serbian Progressive Party , which formed a wide ruling coalition with the Socialist Party of Serbia and Democratic Party of Serbia . These

elections ended the long @-@ time rule of the Democratic Party , which elected mayors from 2004 to 2013 . The Mayor of Belgrade is Siniša Mali , a political independent affiliated with the Serbian Progressive Party .

The city 's budget for 2013 was 82 @. @ 8 billion dinars ( approximately \$ 1 billion US dollars ) .

As the capital city of Serbia , Belgrade hosts many governmental institutions including the National Assembly and Government of Serbia , as well as 75 diplomatic missions .

### = = = Municipalities = = =

The city is divided into 17 municipalities . Previously , they were classified into 10 " urban " ( lying completely or partially within borders of the city proper ) and 7 " suburban " municipalities , whose centres are smaller towns . With the new 2010 City statute , they were all given equal status , with the proviso that suburban ones ( except Surčin ) have certain autonomous powers , chiefly related with construction , infrastructure and public utilities .

Most of the municipalities are situated on the southern side of the Danube and Sava rivers , in the Vojvodina region . Three municipalities ( Zemun , Novi Beograd , and Surčin ) , are on the northern bank of the Sava , in the Syrmia region , and the municipality of Palilula , spanning the Danube , is in both the Vojvodina and Banat regions .

### = = Demographics = =

According to the 2011 census , the city has a population of 1 @, @ 166 @, @ 763 , while the urban area of Belgrade ( with adjacent urban settlements of Borča , Obrenovac , and Surčin included ) has 1 @, @ 233 @, @ 796 inhabitants , and the population of the metropolitan area ( the administrative area of the City of Belgrade ) stands at 1 @, @ 659 @, @ 440 people . The main population groups according to nationality in the city municipality of Belgrade are : Serbs ( 1 @, @ 505 @, @ 448 ) , Roma ( 27 @, @ 325 ) , Montenegrins ( 9 @, @ 902 ) , Yugoslavs ( 8 @, @ 061 ) , Croats ( 7 @, @ 752 ) , Macedonians ( 6 @, @ 970 ) , and Muslims by nationality ( 3 @, @ 996 ) .

Belgrade is home to many ethnicities from all over the former Yugoslavia . Many people came to the city as economic migrants from smaller towns and the countryside , while hundreds of thousands arrived as refugees from Croatia , Bosnia @-@ Herzegovina and Kosovo , as a result of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s . Between 10 @, @ 000 and 20 @, @ 000 Chinese are estimated to live in Belgrade ; they began immigrating in the mid @-@ 1990s . Block 70 in New Belgrade is known colloquially as the Chinese quarter . Many Middle Easterners , mainly from Syria , Iran , Jordan and Iraq , arrived in order to pursue their studies during the 1970s and 1980s , and have remained in the city . In 2007 , a group of Iraqi Kurdish families stayed in UN Barracks in New Belgrade .

Although there are several historic religious communities in Belgrade , the religious makeup of the city is relatively homogenous . The Serbian Orthodox community is by far the largest , with 1 @, @ 429 @, @ 170 adherents . There are also 3 @, @ 996 Muslims , 16 @, @ 305 Roman Catholics , and 3 @, @ 796 Protestants . There once was a significant Jewish community in Belgrade , but following the World War II Nazi occupation of the city , and subsequent Jewish emigration , their numbers have fallen to 2 @, @ 200 from over 10 @, @ 000 .

The largest settlements in Belgrade region are :

### = = Economy = =

Belgrade is the financial centre of Serbia and Southeast Europe with total 17 @. @ 000 @. @ 000 m<sup>2</sup> office space , and is home to the country 's central bank . Currently , over 600 @, @ 000 people are employed in 120 @, @ 286 companies , 22 @, @ 600 enterprises and 50 @, @ 000 shops . City of Belgrade owns 267 @. @ 147 m<sup>2</sup> office space available for rent .

With 6 @, @ 924 companies in the IT sector ( 2013 data ) , Belgrade is one of the information technology centers in this part of Europe , with strong growth . Microsoft Development Center located in Belgrade was at the time of its establishment fifth such center in the world . Many world IT

companies choose Belgrade as regional or European center such as Asus , Intel , Dell , Huawei , NCR etc . What brought companies like Microsoft in the first place was a large pool of talented engineers and mathematicians in a lower wage country and these major investments had in 2015 generated over ? 678 @. @ 3 million in Serbia 's exports .

New Belgrade is the main business district in the country . It offers a range of facilities such as hotels , congress halls ( Sava Centar ) , class A and class B office buildings , sporting facilities ( Belgrade Arena ) , shopping malls ( U?e and Delta City ) and business parks ( Airport City Belgrade ) . Currently , over 1 @. @ 2 million square meters of land is under construction in New Belgrade and the estimated value of construction in the next two and half years is over 1 @. @ 5 billion Euros .

The Belgrade Stock Exchange is also located in New Belgrade . Currently , the Belgrade Stock Exchange is a full member of Federation of Euro @-@ Asian Stock Exchanges ( FEAS ) and an associate member of Federation of European Securities Exchanges ( FESE ) . As of December 2014 , it has a market capitalization of ? 6 @. @ 5 billion ( US \$ 9 billion ) .

Serbia overcame the problems of inflation in the mid @-@ 1990s , and Belgrade has been growing strongly ever since . As of 2009 , over 40 % of Serbia 's GDP is generated by the city , which also has 31 @. @ 4 % of Serbia 's employed population . The city of Belgrade 's 2014 nominal GDP is estimated at 16 @. @ 97 USD , which amounts to 859 @, @ 329 RSD ( \$ 10 @, @ 086 ) per capita . GDP at purchasing power parity is estimated at \$ 36 @. @ 1 Billion USD , which is \$ 21 @, @ 461 per capita in terms of purchasing power parity . In September 2013 , the average monthly net salary in Belgrade was 53 @, @ 564 RSD ( \$ 635 ) , while gross salary was 73 @, @ 970 RSD ( \$ 877 ) . In the annual Economist Intelligence Unit survey in 2013 , Belgrade ranked 86th most expensive among 131 world cities .

According to the Eurostat methodology , and contrasting sharply to the Balkan region , 66 @. @ 2 % of the city 's households owned a computer in 2012 . According to the same survey , 60 @. @ 5 % of households have an internet connection ; 90 @. @ 4 % at least one mobile phone , and 71 @. @ 7 % cable television. these figures are above those of the regional capitals such as Sofia , Bucharest and Athens .

= = Culture = =

Belgrade hosts many annual international cultural events , including the Film Festival , Theatre Festival , Summer Festival , Music Festival , Book Fair , Eurovision Song Contest 2008 , and the Beer Fest . The Nobel Prize winning author Ivo Andri? wrote his most famous work , The Bridge on the Drina , in Belgrade . Other prominent Belgrade authors include Branislav Nu?i? , Milo? Crnjanski , Borislav Peki? , Milorad Pavi? and Me?a Selimovi? . Internationally Belgrade prominent artist : Marina Abramovi? and Milovan Destil Markovi? .

Most of Serbia 's film industry is based in Belgrade . FEST is an annual film festival that held since 1971 , and , through 2013 , had been attended by four million people and had presented almost 4 @, @ 000 films .

The city was one of the main centers of the Yugoslav New Wave in the 1980s : VIS Idoli , Ekatarina Velika , ?arlo Akrobata and Elektri?ni Orgazam were all from Belgrade . Other notable Belgrade rock acts include Riblja ?orba , Bajaga i Instruktori and Partibrejkers . Today , it is the center of the Serbian hip hop scene , with acts such as Beogradski Sindikat , ?kabo , Mar?elo , and most of the Bassivity Music stable hailing from or living in the city . There are numerous theatres , the most prominent of which are National Theatre , Theatre on Terazije , Yugoslav Drama Theatre , Zvezdara Theatre , and Atelier 212 . The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts is also based in Belgrade , as well as the National Library of Serbia . Other major libraries include the Belgrade City Library and the Belgrade University Library . Belgrade 's two opera houses are : National Theatre and Madlenianum Opera House .

There are many foreign cultural institutions in Belgrade , including the Spanish Instituto Cervantes , the German Goethe @-@ Institut and the French Institut fran?ais , which are all located in the central pedestrian area of Knez Mihailova Street . Other cultural centers in Belgrade are American

Corner , Austrian Cultural Forum , British Council , Chinese Confucius Institute , Canadian Cultural Center , Hellenic Foundation for Culture , Italian Istituto Italiano di Cultura , Iranian Culture Center , Azerbaijani Culture Center and Russian Center for Science and Culture . European Union National Institutes for Culture operates a cluster of cultural centres from the EU .

Following the victory of Serbia 's representative Marija ?erifovi? at the Eurovision Song Contest 2007 , Belgrade hosted the Contest in 2008 .

### = = = Museums = = =

The most prominent museum in Belgrade is the National Museum , founded in 1844 and currently closed for reconstruction . The Museum houses a collection of more than 400 @,@ 000 exhibits , ( over 5600 paintings and 8400 drawings and prints , including many foreign masters like Bosch , Juan de Flandes , Titian , Tintoretto , Rubens , Van Dyck , Cézanne , G.B.Tiepolo , Renoir , Monet , Lautrec , Matisse , Picasso , Gauguin , Chagall , Van Gogh , Mondrian etc . , and also the famous Miroslav 's Gospel . The Ethnographic Museum , established in 1901 , contains more than 150 @,@ 000 items showcasing the rural and urban culture of the Balkans , particularly the countries of former Yugoslavia .

The Museum of Contemporary Art was the first Contemporary art museum in Europe founded in 1958 and has a collection of around 35 @,@ 000 works including Roy Lichtenstein , Andy Warhol , Joan Miró , David Hockney , Ivan Me?trovi? and others since 1900 . The Museum is currently closed due to renovation .

The Military Museum houses a wide range of more than 25 @,@ 000 military exhibits dating as far back as to the Roman period , as well as parts of a F @-@ 117 stealth aircraft shot down by the Serbian army .

The Museum of Aviation in Belgrade has more than 200 aircraft , of which about 50 are on display , and a few of which are the only surviving examples of their type , such as the Fiat G.50. This museum also displays parts of shot down US and NATO aircraft , such as the F @-@ 117 and F @-@ 16

The Nikola Tesla Museum , founded in 1952 , preserves the personal items of Nikola Tesla , the inventor after whom the Tesla unit was named . It holds around 160 @,@ 000 original documents and around 5 @,@ 700 personal other items including his urne . The last of the major Belgrade museums is the Museum of Vuk and Dositej , which showcases the lives , work and legacy of Vuk Stefanovi? Karad?i? and Dositej Obradovi? , the 19th century reformer of the Serbian literary language and the first Serbian Minister of Education , respectively . Belgrade also houses the Museum of African Art , founded in 1977 , which has the large collection of art from West Africa .

With around 95 @,@ 000 copies of national and international films , the Yugoslav Film Archive is the largest in the region and among the 10 largest archives in the world . The institution also operates the Museum of Yugoslav Film Archive , with movie theatre and exhibition hall . The archive 's long @-@ standing storage problems were finally solved in 2007 , when a new modern depository was opened . The Yugoslav Film Archive also exhibits original Charlie Chaplin 's stick and one of the first movies by Auguste and Louis Lumière .

The Belgrade City Museum moved into a new building in downtown in 2006 . The Museum hosts a range of collections covering the history of urban life since prehistory .

The Museum of Yugoslav History has collection from Yugoslav era . Beside paintings , the most valuable are Moon rocks donated by Apollo 11 crew Neil Armstrong , Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins while visiting Belgrade in 1969 and from mission Apollo 17 donated by Richard Nixon in 1971 . Museum also houses Joseph Stalin 's sabre with 260 brilliants and diamonds , donated by Stalin himself .

Museum of Science and Technology moved to the building of the first city 's power plant in Dor?ol in 2005 .

### = = = Architecture = = =



Belgrade has wildly varying architecture , from the center of Zemun , typical of a Central European town , to the more modern architecture and spacious layout of New Belgrade . The oldest architecture is found in Kalemegdan Park . Outside of Kalemegdan , the oldest buildings date only from the 18th century , due to its geographic position and frequent wars and destructions . The oldest public structure in Belgrade is a nondescript Turkish türbe , while the oldest house is a modest clay house on Dorćol , from late 18th century . Western influence began in the 19th century , when the city completely transformed from an oriental town to the contemporary architecture of the time , with influences from neoclassicism , romanticism , and academic art . Serbian architects took over the development from the foreign builders in the late 19th century , producing the National Theatre , Old Palace , Cathedral Church and later , in the early 20th century , the National Assembly and National Museum , influenced by art nouveau . Elements of Neo-Byzantine architecture are present in buildings such as Vuk's Foundation , old Post Office in Kosovska street , and sacral architecture , such as St. Mark's Church ( based on the Gračanica monastery ) , and the Temple of Saint Sava .

Architectural styles in Belgrade :

During the period of Communist rule , much housing was built quickly and cheaply for the huge influx of people fleeing the countryside following World War II , sometimes resulting in the brutalist architecture of the blokovi ( blocks ) of New Belgrade ; a socrealism trend briefly ruled , resulting in buildings like the Trade Union Hall . However , in the mid-1950s , the modernist trends took over , and still dominate the Belgrade architecture .

Belgrade has the second oldest sewer system in Europe .

== Tourism ==

The historic areas and buildings of Belgrade are among the city's premier attractions . They include Skadarlija , the National Museum and adjacent National Theatre , Zemun , Nikola Pašić Square , Terazije , Students' Square , the Kalemegdan Fortress , Knez Mihailova Street , the Parliament , the Church of Saint Sava , and the Old Palace . On top of this , there are many parks , monuments , museums , cafés , restaurants and shops on both sides of the river . The hilltop Avala Monument and Avala Tower offer views over the city .

Elite neighborhood of Dedinje is situated near the Topčider and Košutnjak parks . The beli dvor ( White Palace ) , house of royal family Karađorđević , is open for visitors . The palace has many valuable artworks . Nearby , Josip Broz Tito's mausoleum , called The House of Flowers , documents the life of the former Yugoslav president .

Ada Ciganlija is a former island on the Sava River , and Belgrade's biggest sports and recreational complex . Today it is connected with the right bank of the Sava via two causeways , creating an artificial lake . It is the most popular destination for Belgraders during the city's hot summers . There are 7 kilometres ( 4 miles ) of long beaches and sports facilities for various sports including golf , football , basketball , volleyball , rugby union , baseball , and tennis . During summer there are between 200,000 and 300,000 bathers daily .

Extreme sports are available , such as bungee jumping , water skiing , and paintballing . There are numerous tracks on the island , where it is possible to ride a bike , go for a walk , or go jogging . Apart from Ada , Belgrade has total of 16 islands on the rivers , many still unused . Among them , the Great War Island , at the confluence of Sava , stands out as an oasis of unshattered wildlife ( especially birds ) . These areas , along with nearby Small War Island , are protected by the city's government as a nature preserve .

Tourist income in 2012 amounted to nearly 500 million euros ; in 2013 , Belgrade was visited by 660,000 registered tourists , of which 520,000 were foreign . Of those , more than 70,000 arrived by 550 river cruisers . In 2013 , growth of foreign tourists was recorded 24 % .

== Nightlife ==

Belgrade has a reputation for offering a vibrant nightlife ; many clubs that are open until dawn can

be found throughout the city . The most recognizable nightlife features of Belgrade are the barges ( splav ) , spread along the banks of the Sava and Danube Rivers .

Many weekend visitors ? particularly from Bosnia @-@ Herzegovina , Croatia and Slovenia ? prefer Belgrade nightlife to that of their own capitals , due to a perceived friendly atmosphere , plentiful clubs and bars , cheap drinks , the lack of language difficulties , and the lack of restrictive night life regulation .

Famous alternative clubs include Akademija and the KST ( Klub Studenata Tehnike ) , located in the basement of the University of Belgrade Faculty of Electrical Engineering . One of the most famous sites for alternative cultural happenings in the city is the SKC ( Student Cultural Centre ) , located right across from Belgrade 's highrise landmark , the Beogra?anka . Concerts featuring famous local and foreign bands are often held at the center . SKC is also the site of various art exhibitions , as well as public debates and discussions .

A more traditional Serbian nightlife experience , accompanied by traditional music known as Starogradska ( roughly translated as Old Town Music ) , typical of northern Serbia 's urban environments , is most prominent in Skadarlija , the city 's old bohemian neighborhood where the poets and artists of Belgrade gathered in the 19th and early 20th centuries . Skadar Street ( the centre of Skadarlija ) and the surrounding neighbourhood are lined with some of Belgrade 's best and oldest traditional restaurants ( called kafanas in Serbian ) , which date back to that period . At one end of the neighbourhood stands Belgrade 's oldest beer brewery , founded in the first half of the 19th century . One of the city 's oldest kafanas is the Znak pitanja ( " ? " ) .

The Times reported that Europe 's best nightlife can be found in Belgrade . In the Lonely Planet " 1000 Ultimate Experiences " guide of 2009 , Belgrade was placed at the 1st spot among the top 10 party cities in the world .

#### = = = Sport = = =

There are approximately one @-@ thousand sports facilities in Belgrade , many of which are capable of serving all levels of sporting events . Belgrade has hosted several major sporting events recently , including Eurobasket 2005 , the 2005 European Volleyball Championship , the 2006 European Water Polo Championship , the European Youth Olympic Festival 2007 , and the 2009 Summer Universiade .

The city is home to Serbia 's two biggest and most successful football clubs , Red Star Belgrade and Partizan Belgrade . Red Star won the 1991 UEFA Champions League ( European Cup ) . The two major stadiums in Belgrade are the Marakana ( Red Star Stadium ) and the Partizan Stadium . The rivalry between Red Star and Partizan is one of the fiercest in world football .

According to the European Arenas Association , the Belgrade Arena is the largest European indoor arena with capacity of 25 @, @ 000 . It is used for major sporting events and large concerts . In May 2008 it was the venue for the 53rd Eurovision Song Contest . The Pionir Hall is the main venue of basketball clubs KK Partizan , European champion of 1992 and KK Crvena zvezda .

In recent years , Belgrade has also given rise to several world @-@ class tennis players such as Ana Ivanovi? , Jelena Jankovi? and Novak ?okovi? . Ivanovi? and ?okovi? are the first female and male Serbian players , respectively , to win Grand Slam singles titles . The Serbian national team won the 2010 Davis Cup , beating the French team in the finals played in the Belgrade Arena .

#### = = = Fashion = = =

Since 1996 , biannual ( autumn / winter and spring / summer seasons ) fashion weeks are held citywide . Numerous Serbian and international designers and fashion brands have their shows on the fashion week . Belgrade Fashion Week is on the list of 40 most significant fashion weeks in the world .

#### = = Media = =

Belgrade is the most important media hub in Serbia . The city is home to the main headquarters of the national broadcaster Radio Television Serbia ( RTS ) , which is a public service broadcaster . The most popular commercial broadcaster is RTV Pink , a Serbian media multinational , known for its popular entertainment programs . One of the most popular commercial broadcaster is B92 , another media company , which has its own TV station , radio station , and music and book publishing arms , as well as the most popular website on the Serbian internet . Other TV stations broadcasting from Belgrade include 1Prva ( formerly Fox televizija ) , Nova , N1 and others which only cover the greater Belgrade municipal area , such as Studio B.

High @-@ circulation daily newspapers published in Belgrade include Politika , Blic , Alo ! , Kurir and Danas . There are 2 sporting dailies , Sportski ?urnal and Sport , and one economic daily , Privredni pregled . A new free distribution daily , 24 sata , was founded in the autumn of 2006 . Also , Serbian editions of the world @-@ famous magazines such as Playboy , Cosmopolitan , Elle , National Geographic , Men 's Health , The Best Shop , Grazia and others have their headquarters based in the city .

= = Education = =

Belgrade has two state universities and several private institutions of higher education . The University of Belgrade , founded in 1808 as the " Great School " , is the oldest institution of higher learning in Serbia . Having developed with the city in the 19th century , quite a few University buildings are a constituent part of Belgrade 's architecture and cultural heritage . With enrollment of nearly 90 @, @ 000 students , the University is one of the Europe 's largest .

There are also 195 primary ( elementary ) schools and 85 secondary schools . Of the primary schools , there are 162 regular , 14 special , 15 art , and 4 adult schools . The secondary school system has 51 vocational schools , 21 gymnasiums , 8 art schools and 5 special schools . The 230 @, @ 000 pupils are managed by 22 @, @ 000 employees in over 500 buildings , covering around 1 @, @ 100 @, @ 000 m <sup>2</sup> .

= = Transportation = =

Belgrade has an extensive public transport system based on buses ( 118 urban lines and more than 300 suburban lines ) , trams ( 12 lines ) , and trolleybuses ( 8 lines ) . It is run by GSP Beograd and SP Lasta , in cooperation with private companies on various bus routes . The BusPlus ticketing system based on contactless smart cards began operating in February 2012 . Belgrade also has a commuter rail network , Beovoz , now run by the city government . The main railway station connects Belgrade with other European capitals and many towns in Serbia . Travel by coach is also popular , and the capital is well @-@ served with daily connections to every town in Serbia and to many other European destinations through the central bus station .

The city is placed along the Pan @-@ European corridors X and VII . The motorway system provides for easy access to Novi Sad and Budapest , in the north ; Ni? to the south ; and Zagreb , to the west . Situated at the confluence of two major rivers , the Danube and the Sava , Belgrade has 7 bridges ? the two main ones are Branko 's bridge and the Gazela Bridge , both of which connect the core of the city to New Belgrade . With the city 's expansion and a substantial increase in the number of vehicles , congestion has become a major problem ; this is expected to be alleviated by the construction of a bypass connecting the E70 and E75 motorways . Further , an " inner magistral semi @-@ ring " is planned , including a new Ada Bridge across the Sava river , which is expected to ease commuting within the city and unload the Gazela and Branko 's bridge .

The Port of Belgrade is on the Danube , and allows the city to receive goods by river . The city is also served by Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport , 12 kilometres ( 7 @. @ 5 mi ) west of the city centre , near Sur?in . At its peak in 1986 , almost 3 million passengers travelled through the airport , though that number dwindled to a trickle in the 1990s . Following renewed growth in 2000 , the number of passengers reached approximately 2 million in 2004 and 2005 , over 2 @. @ 6 million passengers in 2008 , reaching over 3 million passengers . All @-@ time peak , with over 4 million passengers ,

was accomplished in 2014 , when Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport became the second fastest growing major airport in Europe .

Beovoz is the suburban / commuter railway network that provides mass @-@ transit services in the city , similar to Paris ' RER and Toronto 's GO Transit . The main usage of today 's system is to connect the suburbs with the city centre . Beovoz is operated by Serbian Railways . Belgrade suburban railway system connects suburbs and nearby cities to the west , north and south of the city . It began operation in 1992 and currently has 5 lines with 41 stations divided in two zones .

Belgrade was one of the last big European capitals and cities with over a million people to have no metro / subway or other rapid transit system . The Belgrade Metro is considered the third most important project in the country , after work on roads and railways . The two projects of highest priority are the Belgrade bypass and the Pan @-@ European Corridor X.

= = International cooperation and honours = =

List of Belgrade 's sister and twin cities :

Ljubljana , Slovenia , since 2010

Chicago , USA , since 2005

Coventry , UK , since 1957

Other friendships and cooperations , protocols , memorandums :

Some of the city 's municipalities are also twinned to small cities or districts of other big cities ; for details see their respective articles .

Belgrade has received various domestic and international honors , including the French Légion d 'honneur ( proclaimed 21 December 1920 ; Belgrade is one of four cities outside France , alongside Liège , Luxembourg and Volgograd , to receive this honour ) , the Czechoslovak War Cross ( awarded 8 October 1925 ) , the Yugoslavian Order of the Kara?or?e 's Star ( awarded 18 May 1939 ) and the Yugoslavian Order of the People 's Hero ( proclaimed on 20 October 1974 , the 30th anniversary of the overthrow of Nazi German occupation during World War II ) . All of these decorations were received for the war efforts during the World War I and World War II . In 2006 , Financial Times ' magazine Foreign Direct Investment awarded Belgrade the title of City of the Future of Southern Europe .