



**Welcome to Berlin**

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Welcome to Berlin

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# I. Welcome to Berlin

## Greetings from the Governing Mayor of Berlin

Dear new Berliner,  
First of all: Welcome to Berlin!

You have moved to an exciting city that offers you a wide variety of opportunities. The city is growing. The number of jobs is increasing. And culturally, Berlin also has a lot to offer.

Nevertheless, beginnings can be difficult. For this reason, I hope that you will find your feet in Berlin quickly. This welcome package is intended to make your arrival easier. You will find a lot of information that will provide you with advice and help you get orientated. We also assist you and your family with practical help and support as you integrate, whether it be with language courses, children's day-care centres, special support in schools, or through the large number of other counselling and help services on offer.

My appeal to you: Take advantage of the wide variety of services available. The faster you are able to learn the German language, the easier it will be for you and your children to come into contact with others and thus become integrated in our society, experience success in our society, and make your own contribution to your new home. After all, that's what it's all about. We're all Berlin.

In this context, I hope that you will quickly be able to find a new home here with us, that you will quickly come to know the many advantages of our city, and above all that you will quickly be able to put down roots, make friends, and find happiness as part of the social fabric of our city.

Once again: Welcome to Berlin!

Sincerely,



**Klaus Wowereit**  
Governing Mayor of Berlin

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Klaus Wowereit'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Klaus Wowereit  
The Governing Mayor of Berlin



**Dilek Kolat**

Senator for Labour,  
Integration, and Women's Affairs

## Greetings from the Senator for Labour, Integration, and Women's Affairs

Dear new Berliner,

Welcome to Berlin, Germany's largest city. The city is delighted to be able to welcome you, your ideas, impulses, and experiences. You enrich the city.

Berlin is a large, cosmopolitan and tolerant city, where the inhabitants love life, no matter what lifestyle they have chosen, no matter where they come from, and no matter what religion they believe in.

Democracy and equality for all is the foundation on which our community is built, and these basic values, such as mutual respect for others and the protection of personal freedoms, are what make our city so attractive and so special.

Many Berliners were not born here; many moved here at later times in their lives. Regardless of whether they were looking for work, social mobility and success, personal happiness, or a safe haven from persecution, war or poverty, Berlin has become home for many people, especially because of the city offering such great opportunities for individual creativity and personal development.

I hope that you are also able to appreciate the international character of the city and that you will help to enhance the relaxed and respectful sense of community here.

As a new Berliner, the first thing you will need of course is advice and a place to find help when you need it. To help you to get started with orientating yourself in the city, my office has developed this welcome package for you. I hope that it contributes to you quickly finding your bearings in this new, unfamiliar environment, and help your start feeling at home as quickly as possible in Berlin.

Berlin wants to form the future of the city together with people of other cultures who live here. We warmly welcome you to take part in this.

I wish you all the very best!

Dilek Kolat

Senator for Labour, Integration, and Women's Affairs

## Introduction from the Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration

Dear readers of this immigration information package,

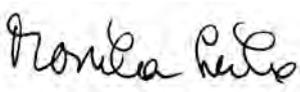
Welcome to Berlin! Berlin needs immigration and is delighted with the ideas, experiences, and potential that new inhabitants bring with them here to their new home. I sincerely hope that the city becomes your new home, that you will feel at home here, and that you will be able to integrate well. Every new beginning in a new place comes with problems and uncertainties. This brochure and the information it includes is intended to make your start easier and help you get orientated. For someone who is new in the city, Berlin is often confusing and overwhelming, and the administrative structure seems unclear. Help and support is available to you from a variety of sources. There is no general, central office for every personal situation. It is for this reason that it is important that you start to get an impression of how Berlin “works”, and that’s why this welcome package has been developed for you: to help you with this task.

How and where do I register? Where can my children go to school? Are there suitable language courses available for me? In **section I**, you will find service centres and contact partners for initial immigration counselling and information on where you could participate in an integration course. With its 12 city districts, Berlin has a much decentralised administrative structure. Service centres which are important for you are mostly located in your own city district. **Chapter II** describes help and counselling services useful to you once you have already taken the first steps: living, working, and studying are the central topics here. What services are available for children and young people, what help is available for families? Who can I approach in case of discrimination? Where is help available to people with disabilities?

A short overview of transportation, culture, and recreation services is provided in **Section III**. We can of course not take the place of a tour guide or the extensive events calendar that describes Berlin’s cultural and tourist institutions. Long-term integration is described in **section IV**. This section features information regarding residency rights and naturalisation, including when and where you may apply for a German passport. An overview of **crisis services and help available** in case of an emergency completes this information package.

Of course, my office is happy to provide you with advice in case you run into problems. The address is provided on the following page.

Berlin is exciting. Berlin is cosmopolitan. Berlin is diverse. I hope that you will also come to appreciate the international character of the city and that you will help to enhance the relaxed and respectful sense of community here.



Dr. Monika Lücke  
Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration



Dr. Monika Lücke

Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration

## 2. New in Berlin

A new beginning in a foreign city is not always easy. You need to find your feet, you need an apartment, and you might be looking for a job. During your first weeks, there is a lot that you should try to take care of as soon as possible.

### 2.1 First steps

#### **Register Berlin as your new residence**

In Berlin, just as everywhere in Germany, registration is obligatory. This means that everyone who inhabits an apartment in Berlin must register at the local registry office. According to § 11 of the law concerning registration in Berlin (Meldegesetz), this must be completed within two weeks. Registration is completed at the citizen registration office (Bürgeramt) in each city district. The addresses of these citizen centres are provided in chapter 3, “The State of Berlin and its city districts”.

#### **Register your children at a school**

Germany has ten-year compulsory school attendance. The school year begins on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, and all children who have had their sixth birthday or will have it by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December are obligated to attend school. Children who will have their sixth birthday between the 1<sup>st</sup> of January and the 31<sup>st</sup> of March of the following year may also begin school attendance if their legal guardians submit the corresponding application.

#### **Get support where you need it**

The office of the Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration is also a direct service centre for those seeking advice on integration and international affairs and legal and social questions. Contact us if you are in doubt. We will explain the situation and advise you in the case of problems or in emergencies.



#### **Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration**

Dr Monika Lücke  
Potsdamer Straße 65, 10785 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90 17-23 51  
Fax: (030) 90 17-23 20  
e-mail: [Integrationsbeauftragte@intmig.berlin.de](mailto:Integrationsbeauftragte@intmig.berlin.de)  
[www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de)

#### **Apply for children’s allowance**

Parents normally receive children’s allowance for their children, which is staggered according to the number of children. Children’s allowance is also paid to those who are unemployed. Children’s allowance may be applied for at the family benefits office of the employment office (Familienkasse der Arbeitsagentur) or through an employer.

The addresses of employment agencies are provided in chapter 7.1.

#### **Get to know the city**

Get yourself a city map to get a better overview of the city and this will help you to get your bearings within the city quicker. Take advantage of public transportation. Berlin has a very well-developed local transit network, including the S-Bahn (Berlin rail system), U-Bahn (Berlin underground rail system) buses, and trams. You should be able to reach most destinations inside the city without a lot of difficulty. More information is provided in chapter 17.

## 2.2 Counselling services for new immigrants

Once you have completed the most important steps, you will be able to attain additional information and support. For example, you can get help at the city hall in your own city district. This is of course available to you in the same way as it is to all Berliners. The citizen's centres offer various services such as certification of copies and the transcription of foreign driver's licenses, etc. The employees at the citizen's centres will also support you with the filling out forms and applications. More information about these citizen's centres is provided in chapter 3.

There are also special counselling services available to immigrants: This entails immigrant counselling for adults as well as the youth immigration services for young immigrants up to 27 years old. The counselling is provided by welfare and displaced persons associations.

For questions that involve the asylum-seeking process, the services within the asylum-seeking process and the possible return to your homeland, the social services of the central office for asylum seekers (ZLA) and the central approval agency for asylum seekers (ZAA) can also be consulted.

### **Initial immigration counselling services**

Initial immigration counselling services (MEB) provide you with very personal advice and support to all questions involving integration. The counsellors will develop a support plan together with you and provide you with instructions regarding other financial support options offered by other institutions. The MEB is also responsible for counselling and support during the integration course. It will also help you with the search for child-care services during integration courses.

Initial counselling services are directed at new adult immigrants who are older than 27 years old. For example:

- Ethnic German Immigrants with spouses and children up to three years of age after entering Germany
- Foreign nationals who have been living in Germany for up to three years after them entering Germany or those hoping to achieve permanent residence status
- Immigrants who have lived for longer periods of time in Germany and Ethnic German Immigrants in specific crisis situations depending on the scope of counselling services available

### **Youth immigration services**

Youth immigration services (JMD) provide advice to immigrant teenagers and young adults who are no longer of compulsory school age and up to 27 years old (see chapter 10.2 for more about compulsory school attendance). These counselling services are intended for young people who would like to stay in Germany permanently; this counselling should take place soon after entering Germany. Children, teenagers, young adults with an immigrant background between 12 and maximum 27 years old who have already lived for longer periods in Germany will also receive support, provided special integration services are required.

The youth immigration services provide new young immigrants with:

- Individual counselling and support along all the steps of your integration process. Your personal integration plan will be created together with you.
- Provision of other services and institutions as required such as private child and youth services agencies and youth services as well as youth employment services, youth and drug abuse counselling agencies, and health and pregnancy counselling agencies.
- Suitable services for your individual integration process such as language courses, preparatory procedures for employment, vocational training, recreational and preventative procedures, internships, and counselling and support during language courses.

- Group services such as orientation help with the education and vocational training system, career planning, introduction to information technologies, as well as therapeutic recreation services.
- Help in special crisis situations.

**You can contact these services with all of your questions and any problems involving your integration! Use these services to feel at home in Berlin faster!**

An overview of immigration services offices and youth immigration services are provided in the brochure of Berlin's welfare associations (Berliner Wohlfahrtsverbände), which is available, for example, from the clearing office at the immigration office (Ausländerbehörde).



**The clearing office of the LIGA of the central association of free welfare associations in Berlin (LIGA der Spitzenverbände der Freien Wohlfahrtsverbände in Berlin) is located at the Berlin immigration office (Ausländerbehörde):**

Haus A, Raum 176  
 Friedrich-Krause-Ufer 24  
 13353 Berlin  
 Opening hours:  
 Monday and Tuesday 7:00 am – 2:00 pm  
 Thursday 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

**Brochure “Get help!– Counselling Services for Immigrants” (Lassen Sie sich beraten!– Beratungsangebote für Zuwanderinnen und Zuwanderer)**

Welcome!

Do you need help finding a suitable German course?

Do you have questions about dealing with public authorities or do you need support with questions involving education or career? Do you need support with problems facing you in daily life?



Immigration counselling services for adults and youth immigration services (up to 27 years old) inform, provide advice, and support you free of charge and confidentially.

The brochure “Get help!–Counselling Services for Immigrants” (Lassen Sie sich beraten!– Beratungsangebote für Zuwanderinnen und Zuwanderer) is available together with the welcome package at the immigration office (Ausländerbehörde) or as a download from the integration commissioner’s website: [www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de)

**How can you contact the social services of the ZAA and ZLA?**

The social services of the central approval agency for asylum seekers (Zentrale Aufnahmeeinrichtung für Asylbewerber) and the central service centre for asylum seekers (Zentrale Leistungsstelle für Asylbewerber) are available to you at all times for the duration of the legal validity of these services for all questions involving the asylum-seeking process, services within the scope of the asylum process, and counselling with regard to your possible return to your homeland.

For any current problems, you can always contact social services in the **4th floor**. You may have to wait in the event that you require a meeting but have not made an appointment beforehand.

Nevertheless, you may also make an appointment outside of the regular hours with your case worker on the 3rd floor of the (ZLA) or directly with the social services office personally or by telephone in order to arrange an appointment for a more detailed meeting.

In order to be able to answer your questions properly, it is normally necessary that you bring your identification papers with you to indicate your current residency status. It is also helpful if you are able to bring along any documents relating to your problem that may be available. These could be individual letters from other civic offices or medical documents, for example.

Of course, translators and interpreters are also available to help you in your dealings with the counselling services.

**Contact partner:**

Tel.: (030) 90229-3180, (030) 90229-3181, (030) 90229-3182, (030) 90229-3183

Fax: (030) 90229-3094

e-mail: [poststelle@lageso.berlin.de](mailto:poststelle@lageso.berlin.de)

Location: Turmstraße 21, Haus A (GSZM Moabit), 10559 Berlin

## 2.3 The integration course

If you speak German, this will make life much easier for you as a new Berliner. The language will open up a wide number of opportunities to you: You will be able to speak with your neighbours and people on the street, and you will be able to make friends and get to know new people far more easily. You will be able to follow the news on the radio and on TV, read books and newspapers, and understand films and theatre productions.

Integration courses are directed at all immigrants who are living permanently in Germany and who only speak a little or no German at all and no longer attend school. The objective is to develop language skills, since good German skills are the key to successful integration. At the same time, knowledge of social, cultural, and economic aspects of life in your new home are critical to your success in your new surroundings.

The integration course consists of a language course featuring 600 teaching hours as well as an orientation course including 60 hours. Besides the general integration course, special integration courses for women, parents, and young people as well as immigrants who cannot read and write sufficiently are also offered.

During your language course, you will acquire the vocabulary required for the most important aspects of daily life and work. You will also learn how to write letters in German, fill out forms, talk on the telephone, and apply for employment.

The orientation course will provide you with knowledge of life in Germany and the standards and values that apply within our society. You will get to know Germany and learn the most important aspects of law and politics, the culture, and the most recent history of your new homeland. You will receive information about your rights and obligations, but also about everyday life in Germany, its traditions, regulations, and liberties.

The immigration office (Ausländerbehörde) will explain to you when you can participate in an integration course or if you are required to.

If you are entitled to take part in an integration course or if you are obligated to do so, then the immigration office will provide you with a written document confirming your right to take part.

If you are a citizen of the European Union, then you may also participate in an integration course, depending on the number of places available. You will have to submit a written ap-

plication for admission to an integration course in this case. This is possible at the regional integration office of the federal office for immigration and refugees (Regionalstelle Integration des Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge).

A list featuring the current course offices was provided to you together with this welcome package. You can select one of these course offices yourself. More information is available in the information sheet provided by the federal office for immigrants and refugees (Merkblatt des Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge), which was also provided to you together with this welcome package.

Do you need more information? Please contact the

**Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge – Regionalstelle Integration Berlin**

Askaniering 106, 13587 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 35582-0

www.bamf.de

**Legal requirements**

**Who may participate in an integration course?**

The following groups of people are entitled to participate in one integration course:

**Foreign nationals** who are living permanently within Germany, if they have received permanent residency status for the first time

- for business purposes
- for purposes of family reunion
- following acceptance as a recognised refugee or on humanitarian grounds
- as a legal permanent resident

Long-term residency status is normally assumed if the foreign national in question receives the right of residence for longer than one year.

The right to participate in an integration course does not exist

- for children, teenagers, and young adults who will enter into education or who will continue their education in Germany
- who apparently possess little need for integration (e.g. professional athletes, scientists, management employees)
- if you already possess sufficient knowledge of German

Participation in an integration course will require a fee to be charged which proportionately corresponds to the scope of the existing skill level.

**Ethnic German Immigrants** and their spouses and children are entitled to take part in an integration course free of charge.

This does not include children, teenagers, and young adults who will enter into education or who will continue their education in Germany. As required, the integration course should be complemented by social services as well as child day-care services.

**Foreign nationals** may be **obligated** to participate in an integration course if they

- have the right to participate in an integration course and are not able to
- make themselves understood in a simple and rudimentary fashion in the German language
- have the right to participate in an integration course if they have received residency status allowing them to join a spouse or have received residency status on humanitarian grounds and are not able to make themselves understood in a simple and rudimentary fashion in the German language

- receive social welfare benefits and the office approving these benefits have planned this as part of an integration agreement
- require integration due to particular circumstances.

Foreign nationals excluded from the obligation to participate include

- those who live in Germany for employment or other educational reasons
- those who are able to prove participation in comparable educational courses, or
- those whose long-term participation is impossible or unreasonable.

**Foreign nationals who are not entitled to or are no longer entitled to participate** may submit an application with the federal ministry for immigration and refugees (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge) and may be allowed to participate depending on the number of places available. The same applies to new European Union citizens and their family members.

Successful completion of the integration course also offers benefits in terms of acquiring residency status. Providing proof of the development of sufficient German skills and the acquisition of basic knowledge about the legal and social order as well as about the standards and ways of living in Germany fulfils two important preconditions at once for the award of permanent residency status. This also reduces the citizenship application process by at least one year.

If an integration course is not regularly attended in spite of the obligation to do so, then the extension of the residency status may be turned down. Furthermore, a fine may be charged and social welfare benefits may be cut. If an integration course has been attended but has not been completed successfully, then the extension of the residency status can be limited to one year as a result.

### 3. The State of Berlin and its city districts (administrative structure)

Berlin is the nation's capital, and with a population of around 3.5 million, it is the largest city in Germany. At the same time, Berlin is also one of Germany's 16 federal states.

The **State of Berlin** is governed by a senate, which is made up of the governing mayor and a maximum of eight senators. The Senate is elected by Berlin's House of Representatives, which is the state's parliament. The House of Representatives includes at least 130 members from various political parties. The inhabitants of Berlin elect the members of the House of Representatives for a legislative period of five years at each election.

From 1948 to 1990, Berlin was divided into West Berlin, 488 km<sup>2</sup>, and East Berlin, 403 km<sup>2</sup>.

**Berlin is made up of twelve city districts.** Each city district has a city district office (Bezirksamt), including a mayor and city counsellors who are responsible for the individual departments. The city district offices are also elected democratically. Immigrants may also vote in the election of the council of representatives (BVV) for their city district if they are citizens of a European Union member country.

For most of the affairs that you will need to clarify with your local administration, the citizen's centre (Bürgeramt) in your city district will be the most important address. This office will provide you with information and advice on matters to do with public authorities as well as the corresponding information material. In the citizen's centre you can register or de-register your address, take care of passport and identity card matters, obtain official certifications, apply for a certificate of good conduct, or receive specialist advice.

Visit Berlin's online administrative service at [service.berlin.de](http://service.berlin.de) to access services, addresses, public authorities, opening hours, and much more!

The governing mayor's office also encompasses a citizen's department, but most matters can be taken care of at the citizen's centre in your own city district.

Would you like to learn more about Berlin? Just visit the official City of Berlin website on the Internet:

In German: [www.berlin.de](http://www.berlin.de)

In English: [www.berlin.de/english/index.html](http://www.berlin.de/english/index.html)

**The opening hours of the citizen's centres (Bürgeramt) in the city district centres (Bezirksamt) are normally:**

Monday	8:00 am – 3:00 pm
Tuesday	11:00 am – 6:00 pm
Wednesday	8:00 am – 1:00 pm
Thursday	11:00 am – 6:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am – 1:00 pm and by appointment

**List of city district offices in Berlin**

**Bezirksamt Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf von Berlin**

Otto-Suhr-Allee 100, 10585 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9029-10

e-mail: [Buergeramt@Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf.de](mailto:Buergeramt@Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf.de)

Internet: [www.charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de](http://www.charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de)

**Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin**

Frankfurter Allee 35/37, 10247 Berlin and

Yorckstraße 4-11, 10965 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90298-0

e-mail: [buergeramt@ba-fk.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:buergeramt@ba-fk.verwalt-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.friedrichshain-kreuzberg.de](http://www.friedrichshain-kreuzberg.de)

**Bezirksamt Lichtenberg von Berlin**

Möllendorffstraße 6, 10367 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90296-0 Fax: (030) 90296-3509

e-mail: [Poststelle@lichtenberg.berlin.de](mailto:Poststelle@lichtenberg.berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-lichtenberg](http://www.berlin.de/ba-lichtenberg)

**Bezirksamt Marzahn-Hellersdorf von Berlin**

Alice-Salomon-Platz 3, 12591 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90293-0

e-mail: [poststelle@ba-mh.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:poststelle@ba-mh.verwalt-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/marzahn-hellersdorf](http://www.berlin.de/marzahn-hellersdorf)

**Bezirksamt Mitte von Berlin**

Karl-Marx-Allee 31, 10178 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9018-20 Fax: (030) 9018 488 3 1111

e-mail: [burgeramt@ba-mitte.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:burgeramt@ba-mitte.verwalt-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/mitte](http://www.berlin.de/mitte)

**Bezirksamt Neukölln von Berlin**

Karl-Marx-Str. 83, 12043 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90239-0

e-mail: [bamtrathaus@bezirksamt-neukoelln.de](mailto:bamtrathaus@bezirksamt-neukoelln.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/neukoelln](http://www.berlin.de/neukoelln)

**Bezirksamt Pankow von Berlin**

Breite Str. 24A-26, 13187 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90295-0 Fax: (030) 90295-2244

e-mail: [poststelle@ba-pankow.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:poststelle@ba-pankow.verwalt-berlin.de)Internet: [www.berlin.de/pankow](http://www.berlin.de/pankow)**Bezirksamt Reinickendorf von Berlin**

Eichborndamm 215-239, 13437 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90294-0 Fax: (030) 90294-2215

e-mail: [buergeraemter@reinickendorf.berlin.de](mailto:buergeraemter@reinickendorf.berlin.de)Internet: [www.berlin.de/reinickendorf](http://www.berlin.de/reinickendorf)**Bezirksamt Spandau von Berlin**

Carl-Schurz-Str. 2-6, 13597 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90279-0 Fax: (030) 90279-2828

e-mail: [buergeramt-rathaus@ba-spandau.berlin.de](mailto:buergeramt-rathaus@ba-spandau.berlin.de)Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-spandau/](http://www.berlin.de/ba-spandau/)**Bezirksamt Steglitz-Zehlendorf von Berlin**

Kirchstr. 1/3, 14163 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90299-0

e-mail: [buergeramt@stegl-zehl.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:buergeramt@stegl-zehl.verwalt-berlin.de)Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-steglitz-zehlendorf/](http://www.berlin.de/ba-steglitz-zehlendorf/)**Bezirksamt Tempelhof-Schöneberg  
von Berlin**

John-F.-Kennedy-Platz 1, 10825 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90277-0

e-mail: [kontakt@ba-ts.berlin.de](mailto:kontakt@ba-ts.berlin.de)Internet: [www.berlin.de/tempelhof-schoeneberg/](http://www.berlin.de/tempelhof-schoeneberg/)**Bezirksamt Treptow-Köpenick von Berlin**

Alt-Köpenick 21, 12555 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90297-0 Fax: 90297-2845

e-mail: [buergeramt1@ba-tk.berlin.de](mailto:buergeramt1@ba-tk.berlin.de)Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-treptow-koepenick/](http://www.berlin.de/ba-treptow-koepenick/)**Bürgerreferat beim Regierenden Bürgermeister**

Berliner Rathaus, Rathausstraße 15, 10178 Berlin

Postal address: Berliner Rathaus, Jüdenstraße 1, 10178 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9026-2020 Fax: (030) 9026-2370

**Berlin's House of Representatives**

Since 1993, the House of Representatives, the State Parliament of Berlin, has met in the same building as the former Prussian Parliament.

The Germans entitled to vote are registered residents of Berlin who elect their democratic representatives, Berlin's House of Representatives (Abgeordnetenhaus). Candidates from Germany's political parties put themselves forward for election. A five per cent rule applies to them. One legislative period lasts five years, but it may be ended prematurely by a two-thirds majority of representatives or by a referendum.

The House of Representatives (Abgeordnetenhaus) is the legislative branch. According to the fundamental principle of the division of powers, the executive power lies in the hands of the government, the senate, and the administration under it (the executive). The judicial power (jurisdiction or judiciary), on the other hand, lies in the hands of independent courts.

According to the constitution, the House of Representatives is composed of 130 members, of which 60 per cent are elected directly by the electoral city districts and 40 are elected indirectly via city district and state candidate lists. Representatives who belong to the same party combine within parliament to form a single political faction.

**These political factions may be reached by email via these addresses:**

**SPD:** pressestelle@spd.parlament-berlin.de

**CDU:** mail@cdu-fraktion.berlin.de

**Die Linke:** kontakt@linksfraktion-berlin.de

**Die Piraten:** post@piratenfraktion-berlin.de

**Die Grünen:** gruene@gruene-fraktion-berlin.de

The House of Representatives (Abgeordnetenhaus) elects the governing mayor (the head of the state government of Berlin. Internet address of the Senate: [www.berlin.de](http://www.berlin.de)). Besides developing and introducing legislation, another important duty of the parliament is to supervise the state government and its subordinate administrative bodies. The most important and ultimate right in this case is the approval and supervising of the state finances.

The traditional day on which Berlin's parliament sits is Thursday. This tradition began as far back as 1809 by the old counsel of city representatives. Since that time, the plenary, the full session of all parliamentarians, takes place every second Thursday of the month. Plenary holidays are not included. These sessions are public. Tickets can be ordered via the visitor service.

Berlin's parliament maintains a "complaint box" for Berlin's citizens. Everyone, irrespective of their nationality, may approach the parliament with their questions and complaints submitted in writing, if they feel the need to complain about policies being pursued by the state of Berlin or if they feel like their rights have been impaired by the administration. In any case, the applicant must include their personal contact details with their petition. The Petition Committee, which consists of members of the House of Representatives, decides regarding the petitions. The affairs handled by this committee must be treated confidentially in accordance with the law.

The Berlin parliament is located in the immediate vicinity of Potsdamer Platz. Free information is available in the entrance hall of the House of Representatives. You can also pick up a pocket book featuring the biographies of the representatives.

**House of Representatives (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin)**

**Niederkirchnerstraße 5, 10111 Berlin**

Tel.: (030) 2325-1064

U-Bahn: Potsdamer Platz, Kochstraße,

S-Bahn: Anhalter Bahnhof, Potsdamer Platz

Bus: M 41, M 29, 123, 148, 200

## **4. Commissioner for Integration and Migration**

### **4.1 The Berlin Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration**

Berlin's Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration is involved with the integration of immigrants across various departments. This office was created in 1981 in Berlin and was the first of its kind in Germany. Since 2011, this office has been a department of the senate administration for labour, integration, and women's affairs.

Dr Monika Lüke assumed the office of the commissioner on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 2012.

### **Cross-departmental duties**

The main task of the Berlin Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration is to formulate the basic questions of the Berlin's senate policy in relation to foreign nationals and integration and to coordinate these with the various administrative bodies of the state of Berlin. Another important duty is the analysis and the development of procedures designed to remove obstacles to integration in legal, social, and administrative areas that permanently endanger the peaceful coexistence of people of diverse heritages, nationalities, and religions. Included among the main points are intercultural acceptance and orientation of administrative offices and the eradication of discrimination. The Commissioner for Integration and Migration works closely with the state office for equality – against discrimination (Antidiskriminierungsstelle). More information is provided in chapter 8.2.

The office of the Commissioner for Integration and Migration is the headquarters of the state advisory board for integration and migration affairs (Landesbeirat für Integrations- und Migrationsfragen), which was founded in 2003, where representatives of immigrant associations critically monitor the immigration policy of the senate together with representatives from the senate departments, business, and charity organisations. The state advisory board annually awards the “Integration Prize”.

Additional important cross-departmental duties include reports detailing the situation of the population with an immigrant background that are completed by the Commissioner for Integration and Migration and approved by the senate.

In all of these activities, the Commissioner for Integration and Migration works closely together with community immigrant representatives and immigrant associations, organisations, initiatives, and diplomatic representatives.

### **Social infrastructure for immigrants**

The senate of Berlin promotes the legal and social equality of immigrant groups through a number of specific integration measures, these measures are supported and monitored by various senate departments. The Commissioner for Integration and Migration promotes immigrant organisations especially those whose activities take place all across Berlin, with the goal of enhancing the participation of immigrants in society. This includes support for state-wide cooperation in the context of immigrant initiatives and associations, including the provision of financial support.

### **Help and advice**

The office of the Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration is also a direct service centre for those seeking help and advice regarding matters to do with integration and policies affecting foreign nationals as well as legal and social questions. On the one hand, the help and advice provided offer immediate clarification in cases of doubt and help in problem and emergency situations.

Especially difficult individual cases may be presented to Berlin's hardship commission (Berliner Härtefallkommission), of which the commissioner is a member.

### **Ethnic German Immigrants**

In July 2002, the range of tasks of the office was expanded to include responsibility for fundamental questions involving social and community integration of ethnic German immigrants. Their problems with integration are comparable to those faced by other immigrant groups.

### **Public relations work**

The Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration publically promotes integration, openness, and understanding and provides German and non-German Berliners with important information. A goal of this public relations work is to illustrate the fundamental principles and decisions which constitute immigration policy and to inform about fundamental legal conditions.

Events and public campaigns are intended to communicate the clear “togetherness” of German and non-German Berliners, tackle current topics and conflicts, and offer a forum where questions involving integration can be discussed.

At this office, visitor groups have the opportunity to find information on current integration policy and the situation within Berlin’s immigrant community.

A current overview of the activities of the Commissioner for Integration and Migration is provided on the website: [www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de)

The free monthly newsletter “Berlin International” is sent to subscribers via e-mail. Register via: [newsletter@intmig.berlin.de](mailto:newsletter@intmig.berlin.de)

### **Senate Commissioner for Integration and Migration**

Dr Monika Lücke

Potsdamer Straße 65, 10785 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9017-23 51

Fax: (030) 9017 2320

e-mail: [Integrationsbeauftragte@intmig.berlin.de](mailto:Integrationsbeauftragte@intmig.berlin.de)

Internet: [www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de)

### **Service hours:**

Mon, Tues, Thurs 9:00 am–1:00 pm

Thurs 3:00 pm–6:00 pm

Counselling hotline: (030) 9017-23 72

### **Public relations work:**

Tel.: (030) 9017-23 57 or (030) 9017-2322

Newsletter: Tel.: (030) 9017-2374

e-mail: [newsletter@intmig.berlin.de](mailto:newsletter@intmig.berlin.de)

The employees here speak Arabic, English, French, Greek, Italian, Croatian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

## **4.2 City District Commissioner for Integration and Migration**

In every city district office (Bezirksamt – BA) of Berlin has an integration commissioner. The City District Commissioner for Integration and Migration will be pleased to give you helpful advice and support.

### **BA Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf**

Mr Mustafa T. Cakmakoglu, Otto-Suhr-Allee 100, Zimmer 235 b, 10585 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 902913329 Fax: (030) 902912647

e-mail: [integrationsbeauftragte@charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de](mailto:integrationsbeauftragte@charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de)

### **BA Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg**

Miss Regina Reinke, Yorckstr. 4–11, 10965 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 902983133 Fax: (030) 902982515

e-mail: [Regina.Reinke@ba-fk.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:Regina.Reinke@ba-fk.verwalt-berlin.de)

### **BA Lichtenberg-Hohenschönhausen**

N.N., Möllendorffstraße 6, 10360 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90296-3907 Fax: (030) 90296-3309

**BA Marzahn-Hellersdorf**

Miss Elena Marburg, Alice-Salomon-Platz 3, 12627 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 902932060/61 Fax: (030) 902932055  
 e-mail: Elena.Marburg@ba-mh.verwalt-berlin.de

**BA Mitte**

N. N., Mathilde-Jacob-Platz 1, 10551 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 9018-33035 Fax: (030) 9018-32101  
 e-mail: integrationsbuero@ba-mitte.berlin.de

**BA Neukölln**

Mr Arnold Mengelkoch, Karl-Marx-Straße 83, 12043 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 90239-2951 Fax: (030) 90239-3742  
 e-mail: Arnold.Mengelkoch@bezirksamt-neukoelln.berlin.de

**BA Pankow**

Miss Karin Wüsten, Breite Straße 24A-26, 13187 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 90295-2524 Fax: (030) 90295-2230  
 e-mail: karin.wuesten@ba-pankow.verwalt-berlin.de

**BA Reinickendorf**

Mr Oliver Rabitsch, Eichborndamm 215-239, 13437 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 90294-4125 Fax: (030) 90294-6326  
 e-mail: oliver.rabitsch@reinickendorf.berlin.de

**BA Spandau**

Miss Doris Ducke, Carl-Schurz-Str. 8, Zimmer 1201, 13597 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 90279-3940 Fax: (030) 90279-7614  
 e-mail: integration@ba-spandau.berlin.de

**BA Steglitz-Zehlendorf**

Miss Marina Roncoroni, Kirchstraße 1/3, 14163 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 90299-3476 Fax: (030) 90299-3382  
 e-mail: marina.roncoroni@ba-sz.berlin.de

**BA Tempelhof-Schöneberg**

Miss Gabriele Gün Tank, John-F.-Kennedy-Platz, 10820 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 90277-6263 Fax: (030) 90277-6344  
 e-mail: tank@ba-ts.verwalt-berlin.de

**BA Treptow-Köpenick**

Mr Sven Schmohl, Alt-Köpenick 21, 12555 Berlin  
 Tel.: (030) 90297-2307 Fax: (030) 90297-2360  
 e-mail: sven.schmohl@ba-tk.verwalt-berlin.de

**5. The Immigration Office (Ausländerbehörde)**

The immigration office is the service office for immigrants in Berlin. It decides regarding residency status, but also regarding its termination. The immigration office advises and supports its clients actively with the goal of clarifying their legal status as quickly as possible and to instigate the resulting procedures.



Service is normally provided in the department responsible for the respective country of origin. In certain particular cases where the persons are in the country for a specific reason (e.g. studying) and for tolerated persons, asylum seekers, and those who have entered the country without permission, service is provided in the central departments, independent of nationality.

**Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungsangelegenheiten**

**Ausländerbehörde (Abteilung IV)**

Friedrich-Krause-Ufer 24

13353 Berlin

[www.berlin.de/lab0/abh](http://www.berlin.de/lab0/abh)

Opening hours:

Monday, Tuesday 7:00 am – 2:00 pm

Thursday 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Closed Wednesday, Friday

We recommend making an appointment in advance.

The websites of the immigration office will provide you with current information regarding your right to residency status, forms, and instruction sheets as downloads, a telephone directory, and the opportunity to make appointments.

In many cases, appointments may be booked directly online to receive or extend the residency status. This service is not yet available to all foreign nationals and for all reasons of residency, but it is being expanded gradually. To make an appointment online in German or in English, access the website of the immigration office or directly via this QR code:



Certain services involving residency can also be taken care of at any citizen's centre (Bürgeramt) in Berlin:

- Transfer of a residence permit into a new passport
- Issuance of a residence permit for a child born in Berlin
- Issuance of a certificate testifying to the permanent residency status

### 5.1 Support with residency issues in special life situations

If you possess temporary residency status to join your spouse in Germany and find yourself in an emergency situation, we will also provide you with support. For example, if you have been the victim of domestic violence. "Domestic violence" refers to physical and mental violence within a marriage or life partnership situation. If your spouse is violent against you or threatens you or exploits you emotionally, sexually, or financially, then you have the right to claim

special support. Please contact the responsible department, i.e. Sachgebiet IV Z BO (Besondere Ordnungsaufgaben). The employees here will check whether a new residency status may be awarded for reasons of hardship.

You don't have to accept domestic violence! It isn't your fault, but rather the perpetrators. In an emergency, call the police (emergency 110). Get professional help, for example by contacting one of the employees of the BIG Hotline, Tel.: (030) 611 03 00. More information about this topic is available in chapter 20, "Crisis Services".

If you are a victim of human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation or are employed under such conditions or you are illegally employed under immoral conditions, these are also criminally punishable offences. In this case, contact the responsible department at the immigration office (Sachgebiet IV Z 2). If criminal proceedings are required and an eyewitness account is expected, then temporary residency status can be awarded to cover the duration of the proceedings.

## II. Living in Berlin: Living, working, raising children, education, and education services

### 6. Living in Berlin

If you are new to the city, then your first decision will involve whether you want to rent an apartment or purchase one. Different than in other European cities, in Berlin it is customary to rent an apartment. There are housing associations as well as private landlords.

#### Rental apartments in Berlin

Berlin features a broad range of apartments in all city districts and in all price classes. Compared with many large cities in Germany and especially with other European cities, the rent prices here are very reasonable.

### 6.1 Finding an apartment

The search in the real estate sections of Berlin's daily newspapers offers a comfortable way to find a suitable property to rent or buy. Most of these offers are available in weekend editions. There are also publications available that exclusively contain real estate offers and notices from those looking to either buy or rent.

You can also get an overview of the apartment market and view possible offers via the internet. Most daily newspapers offer the opportunity online via their websites to search for apartments or to submit a notice that you are currently looking for an apartment.

Furthermore, available apartments are also offered by real estate agents. Real estate agents represent private companies who offer apartments. The addresses are available in the "Gelbe Seiten" telephone book (search term: Makler or Immobilienmakler). Most of these companies charge commission for their work.

While searching for an apartment, the local housing authorities in the city districts can also provide help. Information regarding the housing associations in the city is available here. They offer apartments to rent. These housing authorities are located in the respective city district offices; the addresses are provided in chapter 3.

### 6.2 Calculating rent

Rent is the sum of money that tenants are obligated to pay to their landlords each month. In addition to this, charges for additional services such as garbage collection, street and building cleaning, heating, and water supply are also required.

Several additional costs such as heating costs depend on individual consumption, while others are calculated according to apartment size and charged to the tenant in this way. Power, telephone, and gas are not normally provided by the landlord, but are instead sourced directly from the utilities companies themselves. Contracts must be signed with the corresponding providers in this case. Additional rental costs and costs for electricity and gas are calculated every month with a flat rate sum. Once per year, the tenant will receive an exact calculation of how much was consumed within the twelve-month period.

#### Here's how to save energy

In the case of additional costs which depend on consumption such as heating, power, and gas, economical consumption can save you money. Tips for economic consumption of power and

gas are available from utilities providers such as Vattenfall ([www.vattenfall.de](http://www.vattenfall.de)) and GASAG ([www.gasag.de](http://www.gasag.de)). Neutral and free information regarding heating, warm water, heating insulation, solar technology, and energy savings are available from the professional engineers of the “Gesellschaft für Rationelle Energieverwendung e.V.” ([www.gre-online.de](http://www.gre-online.de)).

### **Berlin rent index (Berliner Mietspiegel)**

The rent index provides orientation regarding the level of local rent prices for similar apartments. A comparison is made between building type, size, furnishings, and character. The rent index only applies directly to apartments in multi-family buildings that do not have binding prices and which were available up to 30 September 1999.

The rent index indicates regular local comparative rents based on net prices (not including utilities) in Euros per square metre. Net rent prices less utilities do **not** include:

- costs from collective heating and warm water supply
- the “cold” utility costs
- furniture and subletting fees
- fees for the use of living space for purposes other than habitation

The rent index is available from the

### **Senate Administration for Urban Development and the Environment (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umwelt)**

Miss Christina Rienäcker, Württembergische Straße 6, 10707 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90139-4777 Fax: (030) 90139-4732

e-mail: [christina.rienaecker@senstadtum.berlin.de](mailto:christina.rienaecker@senstadtum.berlin.de),

The internet also features information about the rent index, and you may submit an inquiry about your own particular city district. The rent index is provided on the webpage of the senate administration for urban development: [www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/wohnen/mietspiegel/](http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/wohnen/mietspiegel/)

## 6.3 Tenant associations

If you have questions about topics involving living and renting in Berlin, you can avail of the services provided Berlin’s tenant associations. Here you will also learn more about your rights as a tenant, for example in case of problems with the apartment or if you move out.

### **Berliner Mieter Gemeinschaft e.V.**

Möckernstraße 92, 10963 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 216 80 01 Fax: (030) 216 85 15

e-mail: [bmg@ipn.de](mailto:bmg@ipn.de)

[www.bmgev.de](http://www.bmgev.de)

### **Berliner Mieterverein e.V.**

Landesverband Berlin im Deutschen Mieterbund e.V., Main Headquarters: Behrenstraße 1c (close to Brandenburger Tor), 10117 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 22 62 6-0 Fax: (030) 22 62 61 61

e-mail: [bmv@berliner-mieterverein.de](mailto:bmv@berliner-mieterverein.de)

[www.berliner-mieterverein.de](http://www.berliner-mieterverein.de)

### **Mieterschutzbund Berlin e.V.**

Konstanzer Straße 61, 10707 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 882 30 85 Fax: (030) 882 77 00

e-mail: [zentrale@mieterschutzbund-berlin.de](mailto:zentrale@mieterschutzbund-berlin.de)

**Filiale Müllerstraße 53**, 13349 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 452 909 31 Fax: (030) 452 909 35

e-mail: [filiale-wedding@mieterschutzbund-berlin.de](mailto:filiale-wedding@mieterschutzbund-berlin.de)

**Filiale Torstraße 25**, 10119 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 2 01 15 27 Fax: (030) 2 01 15 96

e-mail: [Filiale-torstrasse@mieterschutzbund-berlin.de](mailto:Filiale-torstrasse@mieterschutzbund-berlin.de)

**Filiale Sonnenallee 95**, 12045 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 6 87 01 21 Fax: (030) 6 82 11 47

e-mail: [filiale-neukoelln@mieterschutzbund-berlin.de](mailto:filiale-neukoelln@mieterschutzbund-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.mieterschutzbund-berlin.de](http://www.mieterschutzbund-berlin.de)

## 6.4 Obligation to register

In Berlin, just as everywhere in Germany, registration is obligatory. This means that everyone who inhabits an apartment in Berlin must register at the local registry office. According to § 11 of the law concerning registration in Berlin (Meldegesetz), this must be completed within two weeks. Registration is completed at the citizen centre in each city district. The addresses of the city district offices are provided in chapter 3.

## 7. Working in Berlin

Are you looking for employment or would you like to change careers? Both can take up a lot of time. However, don't lose heart in case things don't take off right from the start. Help is also available to you in this case, for example from the local employment agencies. They will be happy to help you!

### 7.1 Employment services: employment agencies

The employment agencies will help you find work and internships and provide advice to employers and those looking for work. They also provide you with support finding employment by providing you with vocational training and retraining options. The employment agencies will also explain vocational training and further education opportunities to you. Available employment positions and inquiries are networked across Germany. Those seeking employment who would also move to take up employment will receive an overview of the job market across Germany.

You haven't decided which career you would like to train for or what you would like to begin studying? Help is also available in this case from the career information centres. Career guidance counselling and employment services are available to everyone, no matter whether they have paid contributions before or not. The agencies are also able to provide vocational training grants (Berufsausbildungsbeihilfe).

The employment agencies will provide you with detailed answers to your questions.

#### **Internet portal of the German Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit)**

The job board (JOBBÖRSE) allows you to look for jobs and internships in Germany, create and maintain your application profile, create your complete application package, and apply for positions online.

<http://jobboerse.arbeitsagentur.de/>

BERUFENET is a network for professions. This online service provided by the German Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) offers information on approximately 3,200 current and another 4,800 archived career descriptions. These professions are structured according to a consistent scheme that features up to 60 information fields per profession.

<http://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/index.jsp>

KURSNET is the portal for professional training and advanced training of the Federal Employment Agency (BA). With nearly 1.2 million educational conferences, KURSNET is Germany's largest database for training and further training events.

<http://kursnet-finden.arbeitsagentur.de/kurs/> There are also employment agencies or social support available here, for example if you have lost your job, your employer applies for bankruptcy or if you can no longer be employed full-time. In this case, you will receive unemployment, bankruptcy, or temporary work benefit (Arbeitslosengeld, Insolvenzausfall, Kurzarbeitergeld). Special rules apply to the construction industry (winter construction funding).

The employment agencies are also responsible for supporting employment and career development of people with disabilities and providing services to create and maintain jobs. You may also apply for children's allowance at the family benefits office of the employment office.

We have compiled the addresses and opening hours of the regional employment agencies in Berlin for you:

**Agentur für Arbeit Berlin Mitte**, Geschäftsstelle Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, Charlottenstraße 87-90, 10969 Berlin

Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)

Fax: (030) 5555 994 060

e-mail: [Berlin-Mitte@arbeitsagentur.de](mailto:Berlin-Mitte@arbeitsagentur.de)

**Geschäftsstelle Müllerstraße**, Müllerstraße 16, 13353 Berlin

Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)

Fax: (030) 5555 844040

e-mail: [Muellerstra%C3%9Fe@arbeitsagentur.de](mailto:Muellerstra%C3%9Fe@arbeitsagentur.de)

**Geschäftsstelle Lichtenberg**, Gotlindestraße 93, Haus 2, 10365 Berlin

Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)

Fax: (030) 5555 88 4999

e-mail: [Lichtenberg@arbeitsagentur.de](mailto:Lichtenberg@arbeitsagentur.de)

**Geschäftsstelle Marzahn-Hellersdorf**, Janusz-Korcak-Straße 32, 12627 Berlin

Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)

Fax: (030) 5555 89 1599

e-mail: [Marzahn-Hellersdorf@arbeitsagentur.de](mailto:Marzahn-Hellersdorf@arbeitsagentur.de)

Opening hours:

Mon, Tues 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Thurs 8:00 am-6:00 pm

Wed, Fri 8:00 am-12:00 noon

**Agentur für Arbeit Berlin Nord**, Geschäftsstelle Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf

Königin-Elisabeth-Str. 49, 14059 Berlin

Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)

Fax: (030) 5555 704,444

e-mail: [Berlin-Nord@arbeitsagentur.de](mailto:Berlin-Nord@arbeitsagentur.de)

**Geschäftsstelle Pankow**, Storkower Str. 120, 10407 Berlin  
Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)  
Fax: (030) 5555 851,596  
e-mail: Pankow@arbeitsagentur.de

**Geschäftsstelle Reinickendorf**, Innungsstraße 40, 13509 Berlin  
Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)  
Fax: (030) 5555 86399  
e-mail: Reinickendorf@arbeitsagentur.de

**Geschäftsstelle Spandau**, Streitstraße 6-7, 13587 Berlin  
Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)  
Fax: (030) 5555 712,444  
e-mail: Spandau@arbeitsagentur.de

Opening hours:  
Mon, Tues 8:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Wed, Fri 8:00 am – 12:00 noon  
Thurs 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

**Agentur für Arbeit Berlin Süd**

**Geschäftsstelle Neukölln**, Sonnenallee 282, 12057 Berlin  
Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)  
Fax: (030) 5555 774,444  
e-mail: berlin-sued@arbeitsagentur.de

**Geschäftsstelle Treptow-Köpenick**, Pfarrer-Goosmann-Straße 19, 12489 Berlin  
Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)  
Fax: (030) 5555 781 505  
e-mail: Treptow-Koepenick@arbeitsagentur.de

**Geschäftsstelle Tempelhof-Schöneberg**, Alarichstraße 12-17, 12105 Berlin  
Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)  
Fax: (030) 5555 833,333  
e-mail: Tempelhof-Schoeneberg@arbeitsagentur.de

**Geschäftsstelle Steglitz-Zehlendorf**, Händelplatz 1, 12203 Berlin  
Tel.: 01801-555111 (for employees), 01801-664466 (for employers)  
Fax: (030) 5555 814,999  
e-mail: Steglitz-Zehlendorf@arbeitsagentur.de

Opening hours:  
Mon, Tues 8:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Wed, Fri 8:00 am – 12:00 noon  
Thurs 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

**Job centres (Jobcenter)**

The job centres represent a working group of the city district offices and the employment agency (Agentur für Arbeit).

These services are provided mutually according to the German social security code (SGB II).

The purpose of the job centre is to support those seeking employment and further education and services for ensuring the preservation of a source of subsistence (Arbeitslosengeld II).

The extensive counselling, assignment, and financial support services of the German social services act (Sozialgesetzbuch II) are intended to support all those capable of employment such that they are able to maintain their own livelihood and those of their dependents as independently as possible from basic social welfare using their own means and powers. The employees of the job centres will support you and monitor your progress with regard to these services. Specially trained case managers will also support you with your individual situation.

### **Unemployment benefit (Arbeitslosengeld II)**

Unemployment benefit may be received by all employable people entitled to the social welfare between the age of 15 and the legally specified limit of between 65 and 67 years old.

Every person is employable who is capable of working at least three hours per day.

Those eligible include anyone who cannot or cannot sufficiently maintain a means of subsistence on their own or together with the people they live with by way of their own means, especially prior to accepting suitable employment, from which they shall be capable of securing an income or wealth.

#### **Jobcenter Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf**, Bundesallee 206, 10717 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 32 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 32 6993

e-mail: [jobcenter-charlottenburg-wilmersdorf@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-charlottenburg-wilmersdorf@jobcenter-ge.de)

#### **Jobcenter Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg**, Rudi-Dutschke-Straße 3, 10969 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 44 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 44 1003

e-mail: [jobcenter-friedrichshain-kreuzberg@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-friedrichshain-kreuzberg@jobcenter-ge.de)

#### **Jobcenter Lichtenberg**, Gotlindestraße 93, 10365 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 88 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 88 3999

e-mail: [jobcenter-berlin-lichtenberg@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-berlin-lichtenberg@jobcenter-ge.de)

#### **Jobcenter Marzahn-Hellersdorf**, Allee der Kosmonauten 29, 12681 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 48 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 48 6666

e-mail: [jobcenter-marzahn-hellersdorf@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-marzahn-hellersdorf@jobcenter-ge.de)

#### **Jobcenter Berlin Mitte**, Sickingenstraße 70, 10553 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 45 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 45 6602

e-mail: [jobcenter-berlin-mitte@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-berlin-mitte@jobcenter-ge.de)

#### **Jobcenter Neukölln**, Mainzer Str. 27, 12053 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 79 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 74 7777

e-mail: [jobcenter-neukoelln@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-neukoelln@jobcenter-ge.de)

#### **Jobcenter Pankow**, Storkower Straße 133, 10407 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 34 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 34 6899

e-mail: [jobcenter-berlin-pankow@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-berlin-pankow@jobcenter-ge.de)

#### **Jobcenter Reinickendorf**, Miraustraße 54, 13509 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 36 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 36 6978

e-mail: [jobcenter-berlin-reinickendorf@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-berlin-reinickendorf@jobcenter-ge.de)

#### **Jobcenter Spandau**, Altonaer Straße 70/72, 13581 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 5555 71 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 71 6009

e-mail: [jobcenter-spandau@jobcenter-ge.de](mailto:jobcenter-spandau@jobcenter-ge.de)

**Jobcenter Steglitz-Zehlendorf**, Birkbuschstraße 10, 12167 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 5555 76 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 76 7777  
e-mail: jobcenter-steglitz-zehlendorf@jobcenter-ge.de

**Jobcenter Tempelhof-Schöneberg**, Wolframstraße 89-92, 12105 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 5555 80 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 80 7777  
e-mail: jobcenter-tempelhof-schoeneberg@jobcenter-ge.de

**Jobcenter Treptow-Köpenick**, Groß-Berliner-Damm 73a-e, 12487 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 5555 75 2222 Fax: (030) 5555 75 6669  
e-mail: jobcenter-treptow-koepenick@jobcenter-ge.de

## 7.2 Who is allowed to work?

In order to accept employment, you will normally require a residence permit that explicitly allows you to do this. This applies both to independent, self-employment as well as the regularly employment.

In many cases, this permission is awarded immediately along with the respective residency status. In the cases of certain residence permits, employment may only be awarded in case the ministry of labour awards permission for employment or in case the senate department responsible for economic affairs has issued a positive statement in this regard.

Citizens of the European Union and citizens of Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland do not require special permission or a certificate to accept employment. Temporary conditions shall apply until 31 December 2013 for citizens of Bulgaria and Romania.

Current information for foreign workers and self-employed workers is available from the websites of Berlin's immigration office at [www.berlin.de/lab0/abh](http://www.berlin.de/lab0/abh) and the federal ministry of labour, centre for international and professional workers at [www.zav.de](http://www.zav.de).

## 7.3 Social insurance and taxes

Every employee requires a tax card (Steuerkarte) and a social insurance identification card (Sozialversicherungsausweis). A tax card will be provided to you by the citizen's centre of the city district in which you have registered your primary place of residence. The social insurance identification card is available from the retirement insurance agency (Rentenversicherungsträger). When employment is accepted for the first time, the employer normally registers the employee, who will then receive a social insurance number and a social insurance identification certificate.

In the employment contract a gross income is normally agreed upon. Taxes and social contributions are subtracted from the gross income and paid directly by the employer. The net income that remains is paid out. Gross and net incomes are indicated on the pay slip provided by the employer.

Entitlement to insurance protection in case of illness or an accident, unemployment, old age, the need for care, or inability to work is provided by social insurance via the payment of social insurance contributions by the employee.

The contributions that you make each month for health insurance, unemployment insurance, retirement insurance, and nursing care insurance are referred to as social contributions. The amount of social contributions depends on your income, and they are always paid half and half by you and your employer. Your share will automatically be withheld from your salary, and the employer must transfer these contributions to the insurers.

The gross income is taxed. The tax rate depends on the amount of the salary. Furthermore, a classification will be made depending on your family status into one of the six so-called “tax classes” (Steuerklassen 1–6). Among other things, these tax classes are arranged according to whether you are married or single, whether you have children, or whether you are the “second earner”. If both marriage partners in one household earn an income subject to taxation, then a certain combination of tax classes may be reasonable. Information involving the tax class and children are indicated on the tax card that you will receive from the citizen’s centre.

The tax card is retained by the employer, who will indicate your salary and other information on it. The taxes are automatically withheld from the gross salary every month.

Tax rebates may be applied for after they have been paid. Inform yourself regarding this via a tax association or a tax consultant’s office. The local tax offices are also obligated to provide information. More information is available directly from your local tax office or from a tax consultant, and of course, online at [www.finanzamt.de](http://www.finanzamt.de). The federal ministry of finance provides the brochure “Steuern von A bis Z” online at [www.bundesfinanzministerium.de](http://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de).

## 7.4 Employee interest groups

All legally organised private companies (e.g. GmbH, Aktiengesellschaft) that constantly employ at least five workers may vote a **works council (Betriebsrat)**. This council represents the interests of the employees versus those of the employer. The works council and the employer normally work together with the employee unions and employer’s representatives within the company.

The works council is voted by all employees of the company, independent of their nationality and other characteristics. The works council monitors whether applicable laws, accident prevention regulations, wage contracts, and company agreements are being maintained and whether all employees are treated equally. Differential treatment of employees on the basis of heritage, religion, nationality, origin, political, and union activities or attitudes or on the basis of gender or sexual identity is not permitted.

Another important legal task of the works council consists of promoting the integration of foreign national employees and the understanding between each other and German employees. The works council may also initiate procedures to combat racism and negativity towards foreign nationals in the company. The works council has the right to request the removal of an employee in the event of racist or discriminatory activity and to hinder the hiring of such an employee for the same reasons.

The works council has the right to participate in social, staff, and commercial affairs. For example, the council has the right to have a say in the coordination of overtime or short-time work. It also has the right to speak on matters involving the hiring and dismissal of employees and the development of social programs, for examples in the event that the company closes down or in case other changes to operations are planned. In some companies, employers and the works council make agreements that promote equality in treatment and protect against discrimination.

## 7.5 Self-employment

If you would like to pursue self-employment as a foreign national, then this is possible if your residency permit indicates this (“Erwerbstätigkeit gestattet” or “Selbständige Tätigkeit gestattet”) or in case a specific activity is mentioned explicitly in the residence permit.

A specification that excludes independent self-employment may only be changed by the immigration office if applied for, provided there is a special public interest in this respect.

A residence permit for the purpose of pursuing this self-employment may be issued if positive effects for the economy of Berlin can be expected to result from this. This will be evaluated in consideration of the senate department responsible for economic affairs according to different criteria such as the business idea in question, the amount of capital involved, business experience, and the contribution to innovation and research.

If you are a citizen of the European Union or a citizen of Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland, then you do not require special permission or a certificate to accept employment.

**Service offices for foreign investors:**

**Wirtschaftsförderung Berlin International GmbH**

Fasanenstr. 85, 10623 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 39 98 00

**Central office and coordination centre for businesses**

**(Zentrale Anlauf- und Koordinationsstelle für Unternehmen ZAK)**

Martin-Luther-Str. 105, 10825 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9013-0

**Service centres of the respective chambers of commerce:**

**Chamber of industry and commerce (Industrie- und Handelskammer – IHK)**

Fasanenstraße 85, 10623 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 315 10-0

Fax: (030) 315 10-278

**Tradesman's chamber of Berlin**

**(Handwerkskammer zu Berlin – HWK)**

Blücherstraße 68, 10961 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 259 03-01

Fax: (030) 259 03-235

**Information is also available from:**

**Federal Agency for Women Entrepreneurs (Bundesweite Agentur für Gründerinnen)**

Call the hotline 030-340 60 65 60 (Mon–Thurs, 8:00 am–8:00 pm, Fri 8:00 am–12:00 noon) to receive information from experts about regional services. This national agency may also be reached

via e-mail: [bga@gruenderinnenagentur.de](mailto:bga@gruenderinnenagentur.de)

Internet: [www.existenzgruenderinnen.de](http://www.existenzgruenderinnen.de)

## 7.6 Acknowledgement of professional qualifications acquired abroad

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, 2012, the federal act for improving the recognition of professional qualifications gained abroad comes into effect. People with professional qualifications gained abroad may submit an application for formal acknowledgement of their professional diplomas independent of their country of origin and residence status.

This act applies to all professions for which the federation is responsible (for example for all 350 trained professions, doctors, physiotherapists, geriatric nurses).

For professions such as child care worker, teacher, or engineer, this act is not valid; these professions are regulated by federal state laws. Such an act under federal state law should be passed soon.

There is no central recognition office for the acknowledgement of diplomas gained abroad.

However, you can receive information via the IQ Netzwerk Berlin regarding the possibilities available in order to have your diploma approved. The IQ Netzwerk Berlin provides support from an initial consultation to submitting an application and more.

The counsellors at the network will help you during your search for a suitable qualification, explain options for financing qualifications, and provide support and language assistance parallel to professional activities.

The following services are available from the IQ NW Berlin:

**Central approval office (Zentrale Erstanlaufstelle Anerkennung)**

- Initial consulting regarding the recognition process, fundamental legal principles, examination of entitlement to a process for establishing equivalence, preliminary examination for determining a possible reference profession, reference consulting regarding responsible offices,

**Trärgemeinschaft GFBM gGmbH und Otto-Benecke-Stiftung e.V.**

(counselling languages available: German, English, Spanish, French, Russian)

Central contact:

Tel.: (030) 617764-770

e-mail: [zea-berlin@gfbm.de](mailto:zea-berlin@gfbm.de)

Coaching/process support

- Language support services during the application process,
- Collection of necessary documents and recommendations for the reference profession,
- Possible support with the recognising office,
- Help explaining declarations following certificate award and explanation of further steps in the process,

**Türkischer Bund Berlin-Brandenburg e.V.**

(counselling languages available: German, Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic, and English as required)

Contact: Miss Lâle Yıldırım

Tel.: (030) 61403320

e-mail: [diploma@tbb-berlin.de](mailto:diploma@tbb-berlin.de)

**Club Dialog e.V.**

(counselling languages available: German, Russian, Polish)

Contact: Miss Julia Merian

Tel.: (030) 2044859

e-mail: [j.merian.faba@club-dialog.de](mailto:j.merian.faba@club-dialog.de)

**LIFE e.V**

(languages available: German, Spanish, Italian, English)

Services for women with academic diplomas

Contact: Miss Dagmar Laube

Tel.: (030) 30879819

e-mail: [anerkennung@life-online.de](mailto:anerkennung@life-online.de)

Information regarding IQ Netzwerk Berlin is available at: [www.berlin.netzwerk-iq.de](http://www.berlin.netzwerk-iq.de)

Here you'll find information about how and where you may submit an application for recognition of foreign professional diplomas: [www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de](http://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de)



The logo for IQ Netzwerk Berlin is a rectangular box with a speech bubble tail pointing downwards and to the right. Inside the box, the text "IQ Netzwerk Berlin" is written in a sans-serif font.

IQ Netzwerk Berlin

## 8. Anti-discrimination and equality

### 8.1 Equality between men and women

In the Federal Republic of Germany, equality is ensured by Article 3 of the Basic Law of Germany: “Men and women shall have equal rights. No person shall be favoured or disfavoured because of sex (...).” This equality is extensively implemented by the equality act which was enacted on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1958. Many aspects of this basic law were only amended later: For example in 1957 in the equality act (marriage, marital property, and child custody), in 1980 with equal treatment in the workplace, and in 1994 with employee protection and women’s advancement.

In spite of all of these measures, women still do not receive the same wage as men for the same work in many professions, but rather 25 % less on average; family duties are frequently left to women alone. The call for “anti-discrimination” laws and “quota” regulations such as the “women quota” during the awarding of employment positions showed during the 1980s and the 1990s that the conventional role structures in everyday life are changing only very slowly.

Presently, change has started to take place. More and more women are successful in professional life and honorary positions. In order to foster this process, there are many initiatives that are designed to support women. The federal ministry for family, seniors, women, and youth affairs offers an overview of a series of initiatives and projects for the advancement of women via its website at [www.bmfsfj.de](http://www.bmfsfj.de).

For example, the federal government of Germany has founded a national agency for female entrepreneurs (Bundesweite Agentur für Gründerinnen). This sends out a signal for the advancement of the professional independence of women. This community project of the federal ministries for family, seniors, women, and youth (BMFSFJ), for education and research (BMBF), and economic affairs and labour (BMWA) intends to improve the share of companies founded by women and the business climate for women overall (also see chapter 7.5).

The project “Frauen an die Spitze” has the objective of increasing the number of women in management positions in sports associations and state sports associations by utilising the experience and competence of women. More information about the project is available online at [www.femtotop.de](http://www.femtotop.de)

Since March 2005, the website [www.frauenmachenkarriere.de](http://www.frauenmachenkarriere.de) has offered fast and easy access to extensive information regarding women in business. This website offers services and background information prepared on the subjects of starting a career, professions, setting up a business, and returning to the workforce. Current industry information at the federal and state level is offered in a single package.

The state of Berlin considers men and women to be equal partners and supports women to lead independent lives and to take advantage of education and career opportunities. The advancement of women is regarded as very important in Berlin and is therefore accompanied by a number of different counselling services, education opportunities, and support in crisis situations.

Counselling and information regarding existing services to do with women’s advancement in Berlin are available from the women’s commissioners at Berlin’s various city district offices. The addresses are provided on the following pages.

**Women's and equality commissioners in the various city districts****Bezirksamt Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf**

Gleichstellungsbeauftragte Christine Rabe, Otto-Suhr-Allee 100, 10617 Berlin, Zimmer 239

e-mail: [gleichstellungsbeauftragte@charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de](mailto:gleichstellungsbeauftragte@charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de)

Internet: [www.gleichstellungsbeauftragte.charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de](http://www.gleichstellungsbeauftragte.charlottenburg-wilmersdorf.de)

Tel.: (030) 9029-12690/12937

Fax: (030) 9029-12055

We also provide service in English.

**Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg**

Gleichstellungsbeauftragte, Yorckstraße 4-11, 10965 Berlin, Zimmer 0045/0046

e-mail: [petra.koch-knoebel@ba-fk.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:petra.koch-knoebel@ba-fk.verwalt-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-friedrichshain-kreuzberg/verwaltung/org/gleichstellungsbeauftragte/index.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-friedrichshain-kreuzberg/verwaltung/org/gleichstellungsbeauftragte/index.html)

Tel.: (030) 90298-4109, 4111

Fax: (030) 90298-4177

We also provide service in English.

**Bezirksamt Lichtenberg**

Gleichstellungsbeauftragte, Möllendorffstr. 6, 10360 Berlin

10360 Berlin (postal address), Zimmer 219

e-mail: [regina.schmidt@lichtenberg.berlin.de](mailto:regina.schmidt@lichtenberg.berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-lichtenberg/politik/gleichstellung.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-lichtenberg/politik/gleichstellung.html)

Tel.: (030) 90296-3320

Fax: (030) 90296-3309

**Bezirksamt Marzahn-Hellersdorf**

Gleichstellungsbeauftragte, Alice-Salomon-Platz 3, 12527 Berlin, Zimmer 4.55

e-mail: [snezana.sever@ba-mh.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:snezana.sever@ba-mh.verwalt-berlin.de),

Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-marzahn-hellersdorf/verwaltung/haushalt/gleichstellung.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-marzahn-hellersdorf/verwaltung/haushalt/gleichstellung.html)

Tel.: (030) 90293-2050,-2061

Fax: (030) 90293-2055

**Bezirksamt Mitte**

Amt für Gleichstellung, Mathilde-Jacob-Platz 1, 10551 Berlin

e-mail: [kerstin.drobick@ba-mitte.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:kerstin.drobick@ba-mitte.verwalt-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-mitte/org/gleichstellungsbeauftragte/index.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-mitte/org/gleichstellungsbeauftragte/index.html)

Tel.: (030) 9018-32048

Fax: 9018-48832048

Counselling also available in English.

**Bezirksamt Neukölln**

Gleichstellungsbeauftragte, Karl-Marx-Str. 83, 12040 Berlin, Zimmer A51a/52

e-mail: [gleichstellungsbeauftragte@bezirksamt-neukoelln.de](mailto:gleichstellungsbeauftragte@bezirksamt-neukoelln.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-neukoelln/gleichstellungsbeauftragte](http://www.berlin.de/ba-neukoelln/gleichstellungsbeauftragte)

Tel.: (030) 90239-3555, -2595

Fax: (030) 90239-2445

**Bezirksamt Pankow**

Gleichstellungsbeauftragte, Breite Str. 24 A-26, 13187 Berlin, Zimmer 137/139

e-mail: [heike.gerstenberger@ba-pankow.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:heike.gerstenberger@ba-pankow.verwalt-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-pankow/verwaltung/gleichstellung/index.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-pankow/verwaltung/gleichstellung/index.html)

Tel.: (030) 90295-2305

Fax: (030) 90295-2318

### **Bezirksamt Reinickendorf**

Frauenbeauftragte, Eichborndamm 215-239, 13437 Berlin, Zimmer 399a/b  
e-mail: [Brigitte.Kowas@reinickendorf.berlin.de](mailto:Brigitte.Kowas@reinickendorf.berlin.de)  
Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-reinickendorf/abteilung/jugfam/frauenbeauftragte.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-reinickendorf/abteilung/jugfam/frauenbeauftragte.html)  
Tel.: (030) 90294-2309, -2011 Fax: (030) 90294-6325

### **Bezirksamt Spandau**

Frauenbeauftragte, Carl Schurz Straße 2-6, 13597 Berlin,  
Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-spandau/verwaltung/abt/sg/fraub.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-spandau/verwaltung/abt/sg/fraub.html)  
Tel.: (030) 90279-3110 Fax: (030) 90279-2839

### **Bezirksamt Steglitz-Zehlendorf**

Frauenbeauftragte, Kirchstraße 1-3, 14165 Berlin, Zimmer A 38  
e-mail: [hildegard.josten@ba-sz.berlin.de](mailto:hildegard.josten@ba-sz.berlin.de)  
Internet: [www.steglitz-zehlendorf.de/frauenbeauftragte](http://www.steglitz-zehlendorf.de/frauenbeauftragte)  
Tel.: (030) 90299-5354/5206 Fax: (030) 90299-6670  
Counselling also available in English.

### **Bezirksamt Tempelhof- Schöneberg**

Frauenbeauftragte  
Rathaus Schöneberg, John-F.-Kennedy-Platz, 10820 Berlin, Zimmer 2008/2009  
e-mail: [Ursula.Hasecke@ba-ts.berlin.de](mailto:Ursula.Hasecke@ba-ts.berlin.de)  
Internet: [www.berlin.de/ba-tempelhof-schoeneberg/beauftragte/frauen/index.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-tempelhof-schoeneberg/beauftragte/frauen/index.html)  
Tel.: (030) 7560-6031, -3642, -8941  
Fax: (030) 7560-2391 (Frauenbeauftragtenbüro)  
We offer service in a variety of languages. Please let us know what language you require for counselling services.

### **Bezirksamt Treptow-Köpenick**

Gleichstellungsbeauftragte, Rathaus Köpenick, Alt Köpenick 21, 12555 Berlin, Zimmer 167  
e-mail: [anke.armbrust@ba-tk.berlin.de](mailto:anke.armbrust@ba-tk.berlin.de)  
Internet: <http://www.berlin.de/ba-treptow-koepenick/verwaltung/gleichstellungs-beauftragte.html>  
Tel.: (030) 90297-2306 Fax: (030) 90297-2401

State office for equality-  
against discrimination  
(Landesanti-  
diskriminierungsstelle)

## **8.2 State office for equality – against discrimination (Landesantidiskriminierungsstelle)**

Promoting diversity and against discrimination

Berlin is a cosmopolitan city that is constantly changing; it is a city where people from diverse cultures live together. The fundamental principle of senate policy is to maintain the diversity of Berlin and to ensure the tolerance and appreciation of social harmony within the city. This includes actively and consistently combating discrimination. According to this objective and on the basis of the general equality act (AGG), a central anti-discrimination office was established in Berlin.

The tasks of this state office include informing the public more specifically about its rights in the face of discrimination and encouraging people to defend themselves against it. It is also about

- public relations work and increasing and deepening the awareness of the wider community, administration, and politics with regard to anti-discrimination rights.
- further development and direction of a network-oriented and appropriate counselling infrastructure

- supporting Berlin’s administration with the implementation of diversity and cooperation with the AGG
- reduction of structural discrimination via the implementation of action plans and collaboration on legal initiatives
- training courses and further training with regard to diversity, anti-discrimination, and AGG

**Senator for labour, integration, and women’s affairs  
(Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit, Integration und Frauen)**

Landesstelle für Gleichbehandlung – gegen Diskriminierung, Oranienstr. 106, 10969 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9028-1866

e-mail: [antidiskriminierungsstelle@senaif.berlin.de](mailto:antidiskriminierungsstelle@senaif.berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/lads](http://www.berlin.de/lads)

## 9. Counselling and aid for families

A new start in Berlin is a challenge for many families. There is a lot to take care of, to consider, and to sort out. You will need to get used to life in Berlin and the challenges that face you at your new workplace. Your children may need a little time to make new friends at their new school. We provide social and financial support to your family, for example with counselling, children’s allowance, and the Berlin Family Pass (Berliner FamilienPass).

### 9.1 Offices for families and raising children (Erziehungs- und Familienberatungsstellen)

- If you have questions about raising children or partnership
- If there is conflict within your family
- If you or your partner/partners wants to separate
- If you are worried about your children
- If your children are having problems at school

then you will find information and help at the counselling offices for families and raising children.

The counselling offices for families and raising children in Berlin provide un-bureaucratic, confidential help. They will help you anonymously if you so wish and their help is free of charge.

They will support you independent of your nationality and religious views. Foreign-language counselling is also possible, e.g. in Turkish, English, Spanish, French, Russian, and to a limited extent in other languages as well. Please inquire at the offices for families and raising children.

The addresses are provided at [www.efb-berlin.de](http://www.efb-berlin.de).

You can also find more information and the addresses of counselling offices at the citizen’s centres in the respective city districts: [www.berlin.de/verwaltungsfuehrer/buergerberatung/](http://www.berlin.de/verwaltungsfuehrer/buergerberatung/)

### 9.2 Children’s allowance (Kindergeld)

#### What are immigrants entitled to?

Children’s allowance is provided to the parent with whom the child lives. A claim to children’s allowance depends on the residency status of the parent entitled to claim the children’s allowance. The amount of children’s allowance depends on the number of children. Children’s allowance is also available to those who are unemployed. Children’s allowance may be applied for at the family benefits office at the responsible employment agency or with your employer.

The addresses of the employment agencies are provided in chapter 7.1 and online at [www.arbeitsagentur.de](http://www.arbeitsagentur.de).

### 9.3 Berlin Family Pass (Berliner Familienpass)

The Berlin Family Pass gives your family admission discounts and attractive price discounts at various locations in Berlin and wider region, for example at swimming pools, on trains, at theatres, boat tours, concerts, and museums. The youth culture service (JugendKulturService) also coordinates free trips, workshops, and visits for family pass owners. A lottery decides who may participate. Families who can prove low income will receive special support. The family pass entitles these families to receive reduced prices on BVG and S-Bahn train tickets, and they also benefit from additional special offers. The family pass is issued by the youth culture service with the financial support of the senate administration for education, youth, and science. More information is available at [www.berlin.de/sen/bwf/Familie/Politik/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bwf/Familie/Politik/) or at [www.jugendkulturservice.de](http://www.jugendkulturservice.de)

### 9.4 Families in Berlin – the Family Advisor (Der Familienratgeber)

The family advisor provided by the senate administration for education, youth, and science is a helpful guide for families who are looking for special information and offers. It provides information about day-care services, counselling and recreation offers, financial services for families, and tax relief options. The family advisor is available online for you to download at [www.berlin.de/sen/familie/familienpolitik/index.html](http://www.berlin.de/sen/familie/familienpolitik/index.html). This address also features interesting information for families.

## 10. Institutions for children and youths, school, education, and third-level education

### 10.1 Day-care centres (Kitas)

Parents will find a diverse range of day-care centres (Kitas) for their children in all of Berlin's city districts. The task of these Kitas is to provide the best opportunity possible for your child to develop and to enable you to combine family and career.

Child day-cares nurture and care for your children from infancy up until they begin school.

Children who have previously lived in another country and who will live in Germany and attend school here should join a Kita as early as possible. Your children will then have the opportunity to learn German, have plenty of exciting chances to play with other children, and make new friends. Learning German is an important prerequisite for learning successfully in school later on.

#### **What child day-care centres are available?**

Many agencies, especially public welfare associations and owner-operated organisations in the city districts offer places in day-cares. The day-care centres decide upon their own curriculum according to diverse contents and concepts. They focus their work on special subjects such as physical activity or musical development. A series of Kitas also work with bilingual concepts. At these day-cares, your children will learn and play in German as well as in their own native language.

The senate administration for education, youth, and science (SenBJW) maintains a database of all child day-care centres in Berlin. The website of the SenBJW contains the services available: [www.berlin.de/sen/bjw/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bjw/).

Children younger than three years are especially welcome at these day-care centres. One day-care worker is able to care for up to five children, and two day-care workers at one location are able to look after up to ten children. The day-care times at these centres are flexible.

### **Which children are entitled to receive a place at a Kita or day-care support?**

Every child in Berlin should receive support according to their own personal situation to prepare for school later. In this case, support should be provided so that the parents may continue to work, go to school, or look for employment.

After their third birthday, every child is legally entitled to half-day support in a kindergarten, independent of whether the parents are able to look after the child at home or not. Since 2010, Berlin has extended this legal entitlement for children in their final year before starting school to seven hours. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 2011, this offer was extended to all children in the final two years before starting school. Starting in 2013, all children are entitled to a part-time place three years prior to starting regular school attendance. If the parents require longer support time for their child due to their employment, education, or job search activities, then the corresponding day-care place should cover the time required for this.

Children younger than three years old are also entitled to a place during the time required by their parents, provided the corresponding need can be proven, for example during work hours or while looking for work. Children younger than three years old are also entitled to a place if educational, social, or family reasons mean that there is sufficient need. These special conditions will be examined by the responsible youth welfare office.

The following also applies to children with any native language other than German (or for the children of immigrants): Children whose parents are participating in an integration course according to the immigration act or in a corresponding language course are always entitled to a place for this reason. Naturally, this is provided for the amount of time required to participate in the course. Two year-old children in families where German is not spoken (children whose native language is not German) require at least part-time support, provided support is required for language integration. In this case, other reasons do not need to be given, e.g. employment, etc.

Even if the parents are not employed and the child could actually be cared for at home, these children should also have the opportunity to learn German at a young age. This ensures that all of the children of course participants and children who require linguistic integration will receive a place in day-care, provided that the parents want the place or apply for it.

### **How long can you leave your child at the Kita for?**

Berlin's child day-care centres are normally open between 6 am and 9 pm. During this period, the individual institutions offer their own diverse opening hours. The daily care period for children is oriented according to the work or school times of the parents. Kita places are available as half-day places (4 to 5 hours daily), part-time places (7 to 9 hours daily) or full-day places (7 to 9 hours daily and also up to 12 hours daily).

### **How can you find a place for your child?**

To receive a place in a Kita or in a child day-care centre, contact the youth welfare office in the city district where you live. The addresses of the various youth welfare offices are provided in the following overview "contact offices for child day-care support". Submit your application for day-care services for your child in a child day-care centre or day-care centre here.

The youth welfare office will determine how much care your child needs and will provide you with a corresponding Kita voucher. This voucher enables you to select a free place in a Kita of your choice, where you can redeem the voucher. The available place does not need to be in the city district where you live; the voucher is valid for all of Berlin's child day-care centres. If you would like, the youth welfare office will provide you with information on suitable free Kita places.

### **What does a place cost?**

Involvement of parents in the costs for the place is consistently regulated for all child day-cares in Berlin. The costs are a combination of the day-care services and the costs of meals. The cost for warm lunches currently amounts to 23 Euros per month. The costs of day-care services are arranged according to your income, the time of the day-care services, and additional legally regulated reductions. For example, depending on the number of children younger than 18 years who live in your family.

Important: The last three years of Kita before regular school attendance are free of charge with regard to the day-care services; only the costs for meals must be paid.

Additional information for your share of the costs involved is available from the website

[www.berlin.de/sen/familie/kindertagesbetreuung/kostenbeteiligung/index.html](http://www.berlin.de/sen/familie/kindertagesbetreuung/kostenbeteiligung/index.html)

### **City district youth welfare offices – contact offices for child day-care centres (Jugendämter der Bezirke – Kontaktstellen für Kindertagesbetreuung)**

#### **Mitte**

Karl-Marx-Allee 31, 10178 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9018-23233

#### **Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg**

Frankfurter Allee 35–37, 10247 Berlin, Aufgang A oder C, 4. Etage

Tel.: (030) 90298-2092, -2484 Fax: (030) 90298-4545

e-mail: [Kita-Anmeldung@ba-fk.verwalt-berlin.de](mailto:Kita-Anmeldung@ba-fk.verwalt-berlin.de)

#### **Pankow**

Fröbelstraße 17, Haus 4, 10405 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90295-5777, -5863 Fax: (030) 90295-5671

Post address: Postfach 730113; 13062 Berlin

[www.berlin.de/ba-pankow/verwaltung/jugend/fachdienst5.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-pankow/verwaltung/jugend/fachdienst5.html)

#### **Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf**

Fehrbelliner Platz 4, 10707 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 9029-15240

#### **Spandau**

Carl-Schurz-Str. 2/6, 13597 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90279-2432

#### **Steglitz-Zehlendorf**

Kirchstraße 1–3, 14163 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90299 4568

Post address: Bezirksamt Steglitz-Zehlendorf, Abteilung Jugend, Schule und Umwelt, Fachreferat Tagesbetreuung von Kindern, 14160 Berlin

#### **Tempelhof-Schöneberg**

Strelitzstr. 15, 12105 Berlin (Mariendorf)

Tel.: (030) 90277-2308

Post address: Bezirksamt Tempelhof-Schöneberg, Abt. Jugend, Ordnung u. Bürgerdienste, Tagesbetreuung für Kinder, John-F.-Kennedy-Platz, 10820 Berlin

[www.berlin.de/ba-tempelhof-schoeneberg/organisationseinheit/jugend-familie/kindertagesbetreuung.html](http://www.berlin.de/ba-tempelhof-schoeneberg/organisationseinheit/jugend-familie/kindertagesbetreuung.html)

**Neukölln**

Karl-Marx-Straße 83, 12040 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90239-4187 / 2332

**Treptow-Köpenick**

Zum großen Windkanal 4, Haus 9, 12489 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90297-5281, -5314, and -5337 (day-care)

Post address: PF 910240, 12414 Berlin

**Marzahn-Hellerdorf**

Riesaer Straße 94 (A-Teil), 12627 Berlin

Tel.: Kita/Hort (030) 90293-4552 Fax: (030) 90293-4915

Post address: 12591 Berlin

**Lichtenberg**

Große-Leege-Straße 103, 13055 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90296-5317

**Reinickendorf**

Nimrodstraße 4–14, 13469 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90294-6676

## 10.2 School: From start to finish

In Germany, general school attendance is compulsory for a period of ten years and it is also compulsory to attend vocational school for the duration of the training. During primary school and on into secondary school, language development for students with immigration backgrounds is especially important. Development of language skills is based on a personal framework plan, which is implemented by additional tutors and teachers.

Berlin's school system offers a thorough basic education and a variety of transitional and advanced training opportunities. Students also receive support very early on so as to nurture their talents for languages, the natural sciences or music.

Berlin has around 651 public and 108 private schools with a broad range of educational profiles. Special offers such as state-operated European schools (Staatliche Europaschulen) featuring bilingual concepts and primary schools featuring German-Turkish alphabet training are especially popular.

Berlin's schools offer the subject of religion as a voluntary class. To attend religion and ideology classes, written registration is required from the child's guardian or, in the case that the child has reached legal maturity, from the student themselves.

The school system features a variety of educational stages. At first, Berliner students visit a primary school, which is followed by a general education secondary school.

The following brochures provide additional information:

- "Wohin nach der Grundschule–Wegweiser durch die weiterführenden Schulen"
- "Fremdsprachen in der Berliner Schule"
- "Berufliche Bildung für Berlin"
- "Leitfaden zur schulischen Integration von neu zugezogenen Kindern und Jugendlichen"

All of these brochures are available at the Infopunkt of the senate administration (Senatsverwaltung).



### **Infopunkt of the senate administration for education, youth, and science**

The “Infopunkt”, or “info point”, will help you find more information regarding topics involving education, school, family, university, and research. You can pick up the publications of the senate administration for education, youth, and science there and personal advice can also be received either by e-mail or over the telephone. If necessary, you will be directed quickly and directly to the employees responsible for your inquiry.

To reach us:

#### **Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Wissenschaft**

Bernhard-Weiß-Straße 6

10178 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90227 5000

Fax: (030) 90227 5530

e-mail: [infopunkt@senbjw.berlin.de](mailto:infopunkt@senbjw.berlin.de)

[www.berlin.de/sen/bwf/service/infopunkt/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bwf/service/infopunkt/)

Öffnungszeiten:

Monday 10:00– 12:00 am, 1:00– 4:00 pm

Tuesday 10:00– 12:00 am, 1:00– 4:00 pm

Wednesday –

Thursday 10:00– 12:00 am, 1:00– 7:00 pm

Friday 10:00– 12:00 noon

### **Primary schools**

The school year begins on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, and all children who have completed their sixth year or will complete it by the following 31<sup>st</sup> of December are obligated to attend school. If the child’s guardian requests, then children who will complete their sixth year between the 1<sup>st</sup> of January and the 31<sup>st</sup> of March of the following year may be accepted into school at the beginning of that school year.

German language skills are critical to success in school.

When registering children at primary school, their knowledge of German will be examined for this reason. In the case that support is required, then the child must participate in language classes prior to starting regular school; these classes are offered starting in August for a period of up to one year. This is intended to provide every child with good starting chances for success at school. The registration period for school beginners is always in autumn of the preceding year.

Children who have recently immigrated may also be accepted to school during the current school year.

More information is available here:

### **Leitfaden schulische Integration**

The primary schools normally include forms/classes 1 to 6. All of Berlin’s schools are full-day schools. Full-day schools combine class, individual support, and recreational activities. At the same time, complementary support and care makes it easier to combine family and career. All of Berlin’s full-day primary schools also include free half-day operation from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm. In turn, this is complemented at all schools by additional tutoring and support. Teachers and child care workers work closely together. There are two different forms of school in Berlin; optional full-day and obligatory full-day schools (offene und die gebundene Ganztagschule).

The optional full-day primary schools feature additional tutoring and care from 6 am to 6 pm, early care starting at 6 am, afternoon care, and late care until 6 pm. The children at full-day primary schools receive a warm lunch and are also welcome to take part in a recreational activity. The costs are oriented on the income of the parents.

67 of Berlin’s schools are obligatory full-day schools. These schools alternate between learning phases and recreation in a flexible rhythm. Each class receives additional care worker hours for this purpose. The participation of all students is obligatory until 4 pm on at least four days per week, and participation is free of charge for parents. Only the lunchtime meal and care times

before 7:30 pm or after 4 pm must be paid at obligatory full-day primary schools.

Many schools feature special programs, for example sports, music, theatre, art, Montessori, foreign languages, or new media.

### **Special education support – the support for each child that they really need**

Every child requires individual support and encouragement. Berlin's school system is diverse and offers all children and young people the right school, independent of their performance, special interests, or special support requirements. In the area of special education, this support is massively oriented around the exact and very individual needs of each child, as well as being specially tailored to the needs of children and young people with disabilities. Students who require special education will either be taught at a special school or together in a class with children and young people without disabilities at a normal primary school or secondary school. During the flexible phase when school is just starting, all children experience primary school together wherever possible.

Further current and interesting information about special education is available at the following address online: [www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/foerderung/sonderpaedagogische\\_foerderung/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/foerderung/sonderpaedagogische_foerderung/)

And from the Infopunkt of the senate administration for education, youth, and science.

### **Types of secondary schools**

Following the first half-year of the sixth school year, most children and their parents are faced with an important decision – selection of a suitable secondary school. This may be an **integrated secondary school** or a **gymnasium**. Berlin also has a **community school** pilot project. Normally, these students remain here from the start of school until the end of their schooling together in study groups, without being separated into different performance groups. Up to now, there are only a few community schools which include all forms or classes from 1 to 13. Most build on a basic level or secondary level over a long period of time or they cooperate permanently with other schools.

Gymnasiums and integrated secondary schools have a lot in common. But there are also differences: the duration of schooling. At the gymnasium, the curriculum up to the school leaving examination, or "abitur", lasts 12 years, while this normally lasts 13 years at the integrated secondary school. Compared to the gymnasium, the integrated secondary school features smaller classes and fewer hours per week, full-day attendance, and an extensive focus on the future career/profession. The gymnasium is intended for children who have shown that they are able to complete the lessons at primary school independently and without problems.

In Berlin, especially gifted students may already switch to a gymnasium after 4th form/class. Up to 70 classes at basic-level gymnasiums support and foster the talents of highly-gifted students who may already leave primary school two years before their classmates. These highly-gifted classes can be specialised in specific subjects or subject areas. Mathematics and natural sciences, bilingual, ancient language (Latin and Ancient Greek), or musical profiles are possible.

Following the period at secondary level I, the forms/classes 7 to 10, and after having successfully passed the intermediate school leaving examination, changing to the upper level in the gymnasium is possible. The gymnasium upper levels that lead up to the school leaving exam are part of gymnasium as well as integrated secondary school curriculum structures, which cooperate with an upper level centre (OSZ). The school leaving exam is the same at all schools, and the graduation exam at occupational gymnasiums corresponds to the general higher education entrance qualification (Allgemeinen Hochschulreife).

More information is available in our publications.

These are available to you online:

### **“Schulwegweiser 2012/2013 – Wohin nach der Grundschule?”**

[www.berlin.de/imperia/md/content/sen-bildung/bildungswege/schulwegweiser\\_web.pdf?start&ts=1332251963&file=schulwegweiser\\_web.pdf](http://www.berlin.de/imperia/md/content/sen-bildung/bildungswege/schulwegweiser_web.pdf?start&ts=1332251963&file=schulwegweiser_web.pdf)

### **Where to go after primary school?**

#### **The transition to secondary schools**

[www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/bildungswege/uebergang.html](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/bildungswege/uebergang.html)

### **Berlin school directly (Berliner Schulverzeichnis)**

[www.berlin.de/schulvz](http://www.berlin.de/schulvz)

All brochures are available from the Infopunkt of the senate administration for education, youth, and science. The address is available in chapter 10.2 and online:

[www.berlin.de/sen/bwf/service/infopunkt/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bwf/service/infopunkt/)

## 10.3 Youth services in Berlin

Berlin is not only an extremely exciting city for adults, but also for children and young people! No one should be bored here in their free time. The website of the senate administration for education, youth, and science provide a useful overview of what's available in the city to those who are interested. For example, this includes addresses and programs of children's and youth recreation institutions, youth drop-in centres, and youth education centres. Feel free to visit together with your children: [www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/)

The senate administration has published a series of practical guides. Here is a selection of the most important brochures:

### **“Wo ist was los?”**

Children's and youth recreation centres in Berlin

The brochure “*Wo ist was los?*” offers an introduction to more than 650 institutions and projects: Recreation centres for children and young people, music schools, youth art schools, youth education centres, children's museums, youth associations, and youth counselling centres. This brochure is a practical guide not only for children, but also parents, teachers, social therapy educators, and for anyone who has anything to do with children. It features the many different opportunities in your neighbourhood and in all of Berlin that make free time fun and exciting.

The online edition of “*Wo ist was los?*” is available online at [www.jugendnetz-berlin.de](http://www.jugendnetz-berlin.de)

### **Multi-media offers for children and young people in Berlin “Flimmern und Rauschen”**

“*Flimmern und Rauschen*” is a combination of recreational activities revolving around active video and audio work, film, photography, and computer and multimedia. From the camera to studio productions and 3D animation, from the photo laboratory to digital image editing, from digital sampling to CD productions, from audio plays, a mobile phone film festival and animated film projects to comp@ss courses, there's something here for everyone.

The online edition “*Flimmern und Rauschen*” is available at [www.jugendnetz-berlin.de](http://www.jugendnetz-berlin.de)

### **“Applaus, Applaus” – homemade theatre, acting, and circus productions**

“*Applaus, Applaus*” provides an introduction to 500 activities for homemade dance, theatre, acting, and circus productions. This brochure is directed at parents, teachers as well as children and young people. The state association for cultural youth education (LKJ) has published this brochure together with the senate administration for education, youth, and science. You can request it via: [www.lkj-berlin.de/publikationen/](http://www.lkj-berlin.de/publikationen/)

### **“Kinder- und Jugendmuseen in Berlin – Wo Bildung anders tickt” (2010)**

Museums in Berlin which cater to children and young people feature alternating interactive exhibits. These exhibits are directed at Kitas and school-aged classes and independent visitors.

These museums are also open on weekends. The brochure *“Kinder- und Jugendmuseen in Berlin – Wo Bildung anders tickt”* provides an introduction to what is offered by five museums and is published by the state association for cultural youth education (Landesvereinigung kulturelle Jugendbildung – LKJ). You may request it via the following link: [www.lkj-berlin.de/publikationen/](http://www.lkj-berlin.de/publikationen/)

#### **“Dschungel” – info guide for young bands in Berlin**

*“Dschungel”* offers an overview of services that Berlin’s youth recreation centres, music schools, and initiatives of public and free agencies have prepared for young people interested in music and young bands. Arranged according to the city districts, differentiated according to equipment and usage conditions, “Dschungel” lists available practice and event spaces, sound studios, and other services.

You may request it by going to <http://www.lkj-berlin.de/publikationen/>

#### **“Tanz – für Kinder und Jugendliche in Berlin”**

The brochure *“Tanz – für Kinder und Jugendliche in Berlin”* provides information on more than 220 offers available across Berlin. It is arranged into the areas of elementary dance, social dance, classical dance, folk dance, modern/jazz dance, dance theatre, and other dances. The individual offers are arranged according to the city districts.

The brochure is available to download at <http://www.lkj-berlin.de/publikationen/>

#### **Concerts for young people and families 2012/2013**

For many years, the youth culture service (JugendKulturService) has provided tickets for more than 100 concerts with the support of the senate administration for education, youth, and science and event organisers. Good seats for youth and family concerts of very different musical genres may be purchased for very reasonable prices. These tickets usually cost between € 4 and € 12.

The program also includes the “berlinerjugendabo” service, the concert subscription service for youths interested in music.

Additional information is available at [www.jugendkulturservice.de](http://www.jugendkulturservice.de) and [www.berlinerjugendabo.de](http://www.berlinerjugendabo.de) or by calling (030) 23 55 62-0.

#### **Super holiday pass (Super-Ferien-Pass)**

Children especially have a lot of free time during school holidays. This is the opportunity for them to spend time finding out more about the things that interest them or what they would like to discover. The “Super-Ferien-Pass” features more than 200 cultural or sporting events which are either free or reduced in price. All children and teenagers aged up to 18 years old may use it. Participation in 290 lotteries is also possible. Free tickets to cinemas, guided tours, sports and cultural events, events and workshops, and day trips are given away as part of this scheme.

The highlight of the “Super-Ferien-Pass” is the swimming pool ticket, which provides free admission to Berlin’s public pools during the city’s school holiday period. The “Super-Ferien-Pass” is offered by the youth culture service with the financial support of the senate administration for education, youth, and science.

The “Super-Ferien-Pass” is available from the online shop of the youth culture services and at numerous stores and kiosks.

#### **JugendKulturService – gemeinnützige Gesellschaft des Berliner Jugendclub e. V.**

Obentrautstraße 55, 10963 Berlin (Kreuzberg)

Info telephone: (030) 23 55 62 0

Fax: (030) 23 55 62 20

e-mail: [info@jugendkulturservice.de](mailto:info@jugendkulturservice.de)

Internet: [www.jugendkulturservice.de](http://www.jugendkulturservice.de)

The “Super-Ferien-Passes” is also available via the education and participation package.

### **Other possible points of interest**

#### **Trips for children and young people**

Information is available from the youth welfare centres at Berlin's city district offices, the youth associations, and the senate administration for education, youth, and science.

#### **Holiday jobs for children and young people**

Information is available online with links to a number of institutions and projects:

"Jugendnetz" youths server: [www.jugendnetz-berlin.de](http://www.jugendnetz-berlin.de)

"Spinnenwerk" youth's server: [www.spinnenwerk.de](http://www.spinnenwerk.de)

Landesjugendring Berlin e.V.: [www.ljrberlin.de](http://www.ljrberlin.de)

Senate administration for education, youth, and science: [www.berlin.de/sen/bjw/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bjw/)

#### **Virtual city map for children**

A virtual city map (not only) for children provides orientation from the perspective of a pedestrian: [www.kinderstadtplan.de](http://www.kinderstadtplan.de)

#### **Infonet calendar**

Information about recreational events in Berlin: [www.infonetkalender.de](http://www.infonetkalender.de)

#### **Libraries for children and young people**

Children's and youth libraries are present in every city district. A list of all libraries for children's and young people is available from Berlin's public libraries association [www.voebb.de/](http://www.voebb.de/)

Information is also available from the citizen's centres of the city districts:

[www.berlin.de/verwaltungsfuehrer/buergerberatung/](http://www.berlin.de/verwaltungsfuehrer/buergerberatung/)

## 10.4 Help for delinquent children

### **"Caught! Now what?" (Erwischt – was nun?)**

If your children or children in your circle of acquaintances run into trouble with the law, Berlin's youth welfare offices will provide help. The social education specialists of the youth welfare offices (Jugendgerichtshilfe) provide counselling, for example regarding the process and the consequences of a criminal prosecution. They also prepare the young people and parents for what to expect during court proceedings.

The guide "Caught! Now what?" ("Erwischt – was nun?") contains information for young people who have committed a criminal offence and their parents regarding diverse youth welfare support to help young people find a new direction in life.

More information and services as well as addresses for free legal counselling for young people are available from the website of the senate administration for education, youth, and science at [www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/jugendkriminalitaet/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/jugendkriminalitaet/)

## 10.5 Professional training

The selection of careers and educational institutions is immense nowadays. Career profiles are also constantly changing and new study programs are being introduced. At times it is difficult to keep an overview and make the right choice.

### **Guidance counselling by career and study selection**

Are you looking for help and support with your selection of the right career or course of studies?

Berlin's employment agencies provide extensive information to answer many of your questions. The employment agencies maintain career information centres which will help you with the selection of the training program that is right for you. Training positions will also be provided to you here.

The addresses of employment agencies are provided in chapter 7.1. Information about educational and training services is also available from the senate administration for education, youth, and science Bernhard-Weiß-Str. 6, 10178 Berlin.

### **What is a “dual training program”?**

The dual system of occupational training provides students with practical training at a company. You will work with this company from the start. Once or twice during the week, you attend vocational school. The study material will also be dealt with theoretically here. Vocational schools are often specialised in particular occupations, for example commercial occupations, metalworking, electrical occupations, construction occupations, and agricultural occupations.

In the context of occupational training, vocational schools also offer the chance in certain circumstances to catch up on school diplomas, for example basic school leaving certificates or intermediate school leaving certificates.

Young people who will leave school after fulfilling the compulsory 10 years of school attendance and who do not have an occupational training position or regular employment and have achieved only the basic education level are entitled to attend a qualified occupational training course. This course will prepare you for an occupation and provide you with a simple or extended occupational training qualification.

### **Occupational preparation and occupational training at vocational schools**

Young people who would like to attend occupational training but have not found a training position with a company may visit vocational schools for training. Vocational schools are full-time schools that offer full or partial preparation for an occupation as well as occupational training. They provide training in numerous occupations, including the required practical skills and theoretical knowledge. They simultaneously support the development of students' general knowledge. The requirements for acceptance depend on the training course chosen.

The three-year vocational school is completed with an examination of an officially recognised training program.

In two-year vocational schools, an occupation in one of the “assistant” professions is trained (e.g. as a state-approved foreign language assistant).

The one-year vocational school prepares students for vocational training.

School leaving certificates can also be achieved at a second time of asking in vocational schools, for example an intermediate school leaving certificate.

### **Study qualification at technical secondary schools and upper vocational schools**

If you have already completed occupational training and/or have relevant job experience, then you may acquire the right to study at a technical college from an upper vocational school (advanced technical college entrance qualification). If you possess an intermediate school leaving certificate, then you may (upon agreement) acquire the right to study at universities (college entrance qualification) at an upper vocational school.

### **Study qualification at vocational gymnasiums**

Students who have acquired the intermediate school leaving certificate and who are suited to attending a training program qualifying them to further studies may be accepted to a vocational gymnasium. This form of school combines occupational and general education. During the one-year introduction phase, vocational subjects play an important role in the study plan. During the following two-year phase of the program, one of the main subjects must be related to an occupation. The vocational gymnasium is graduated with the general qualification for university entrance (Abitur).

Attendance at a vocational gymnasium at the upper school centre requires selection of one of the following occupations:

- economics and administration – metallurgy
- electrical engineering – wood engineering – textile engineering and clothing
- chemistry, physics, and biology – nutrition and food technology
- social pedagogy/welfare – health – communication, information, and media technology

### **Continuing education at vocational schools**

If you already have job experience, then you may attend further education courses at vocational schools. These study programs usually last two years and are completed with an examination. The vocational school exam is intended to qualify those taking it to accept management duties and prepare them for professional self-employment. Together with the vocational school exam, the right to further educational programs may also be acquired, e.g. advanced technical college entrance qualification (Fachhochschulreife). Some of Berlin's famous vocational schools include the Technikerschule, the Hotelfachschule, the Europäische Wirtschaftsfachschule, and the staatliche Fachschule für Sozialpädagogik.

### **Upper school centres – skill centres for training, further education, and qualification required for certain courses of study**

The upper school centres (Oberstufenzentren – OSZ) summarise the vocational schools described in this chapter (Berufsschule, Berufsfachschule, Fachoberschule, Berufsoberschule, berufliches Gymnasium, Fachschule) according to the various fields of study.

The upper school centres (OSZ) are available to answer your questions regarding preparing for a training course, vocational training, qualifying for studies, and further education as well as completing the forms of vocational education courses described above.

The addresses of the upper school centres and other vocational schools are available online on the homepage of the senate administration for education, science, and research:

[www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/schulverzeichnis\\_und\\_portraits/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/schulverzeichnis_und_portraits/)

## **10.6 Studying in Berlin**

Berlin is very popular with students. It's no wonder, since the university landscape here is immense: There are three universities, the university of the arts, and three additional art colleges, seven applied sciences universities, nearly 30 private state-recognised colleges, and over 70 university-independent publicly-financed research institutes. Overall, 50,000 employees teach, research, and work at these educational institutions. This is simply the superlative: No other European region features such a strong concentration of science and research institutions as Berlin!

Nearly 1.8 billion Euros are invested in Berlin in science and research annually.

The clinic "Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin" is the largest medical faculty in Europe. It is governed by the Free University of Berlin and Humboldt University of Berlin. Research and business work closely together at both technology parks in Adlershof and Berlin-Buch. The national research organisations are represented in Berlin by multiple institutes, and there are 17 research institutes at diverse federal ministries.

Berlin is one of Germany's most attractive university cities. Around 140,000 students are enrolled at Berlin's state and private universities. 14 per cent come from abroad, with Turkey and China being the most important countries of origin. Berlin's universities are among the strongest third-party funded universities in Germany. The Free University of Berlin and Humboldt University of Berlin are among eleven universities in Germany that have received awards in a nation-wide competition as "universities of excellence".

### Art colleges

Berlin is also a city of artists, actors, singers, and musicians. Highly-qualified up-and-comers from the University of the Arts, “Hanns Eisler” College of Music, Berlin College of Art (Weißensee)– College of Design, and the “Ernst Busch” School of Acting.

They offer approximately 5,000 students nearly every arts course. Students may also attend a master’s studies programs and events at the continuing education institute (Institut für Weiterbildung–ZIW). This institute is located at the University of the Arts.

### Technical universities

The spectrum of state and private technical universities in Berlin ranges from technology, economy, and administration to social sciences and the humanities. They combine application-oriented research with the transfer of science and technology. Current problems identified by practical experience, especially by small and medium-sized companies, are the focus of their research and development. This combination is a role model for many countries in Europe. Numerous domestic and international employees utilise the extensive continuing education services of the technical universities. Approximately 34,000 students are enrolled at Berlin’s technical universities.

Would you like to learn more? More information is available at [www.fachhochschulen-in-berlin.de](http://www.fachhochschulen-in-berlin.de)

## 10.7 Acknowledgement of educational diplomas

Have you already acquired a school diploma or completed occupational training in your homeland and would like to have this diploma recognised in Germany?

Then contact the school certificate office of the senate administration for education, youth, and sports.

The tasks of the school certificate approval office include

- The evaluation of domestic and international educational certificates as proof of having completed secondary school and the right to attend university or technical school
- Equivalency of scholastic diplomas (vocational schools, technical schools)

Address:

#### **School certificate approval office of the senate administration for education, youth, and science**

Bernhard-Weiß-Str. 6  
D-10178 Berlin-Mitte  
Waiting room– 1<sup>st</sup> floor

Opening hours:  
Monday and Tuesday: 9:00 am to 12:00 noon  
Thursday: 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Tel.: 90227-5232/-5220/-6987  
Fax: 90227-5001/-6444/-6010

e-mail: [zastbe@senbwf.berlin.de](mailto:zastbe@senbwf.berlin.de)  
Internet: [www.berlin.de/sen/bjw](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bjw)



School certificate  
approval office of the  
senate administration  
for education, youth,  
and science

Germans who have a foreign university qualification and who do not live in Berlin should refer to the responsible evaluating office in their own state. Education certificates possessed by Germans who do not live in Germany will be evaluated centrally by the city district government of Düsseldorf (telephone +49 211 475-0).

## 11. Further education

Today, every occupation requires further training and continued education. The rate at which qualifications are changing is increasing, therefore making further training necessary, which is where the concept of “life-long learning” comes from. The job market has also changed. Fewer employees work in the same job they trained for or even at the same company for their entire life.

Further education programs are now no longer oriented according to employees and companies that wish to have their employees certified, but rather more and more according to the needs of the unemployed and those at risk of unemployment.

### 11.1 How can I find the right program?

#### **Upper school centres – skill centres for training, further education, and qualifying to study**

More information about further education programs is available from the upper school centres (Oberstufenzentren – OSZ) and from state vocational schools. More information about this is available in chapter 10.4. The addresses are available online at the website of the senate administration for education, youth, and science: [www.berlin.de/sen/bwf/bildung/schulverzeichnis](http://www.berlin.de/sen/bwf/bildung/schulverzeichnis)

#### **Continuing education database**

An extensive overview of continuing education programs is provided in the Berlin continuing education database: [www.wdb-berlin.de](http://www.wdb-berlin.de).

#### **Find your continuing education program online!**

The search portal [www.wdb-suchportal.de](http://www.wdb-suchportal.de) enables you to find a continuing education program comfortably and directly. Simply enter your postal code and a search term to get started.

The data is updated each day. There is an average of 33,000 educational programs offered by approximately 1,100 institutions in Berlin and Brandenburg.

This database has been operated by EUROPUBLIC since 1997 on behalf of the senate administration for labour, integration, and women’s affairs. Research and entry of programs offered by education institutes is free of charge!

The information centre also allows you to research independently. If you are having trouble, just ask one of the employees. They will be happy to help you with your search.

Your research inquiry may be submitted to the continuing education program database by e-mail.

**Europublic GmbH** is located here: Neue Schönhauser Str. 10, 10178 Berlin, Tel. (030) 28384230

#### **Education portal**

The portal [www.bildungsberatung-berlin.de](http://www.bildungsberatung-berlin.de) is the central starting point for those seeking advice on the topic of education and further education in Berlin. This will provide you with an overview of the services, focuses, and the addresses of Berlin’s counselling offices. The diverse search functions enable you to find a suitable counselling office and contact it directly. It’s also very easy to submit an e-mail or use the chat service. Literature tips and web links involving “lifelong learning” round off the service.

#### **Further education guide**

The guide provided by the senate administration for education, youth, and science provides information on topics ranging from general further education, political education through to special courses. Subjects like educational leave and catching up on educational diplomas are

also thoroughly discussed. Your personal copy of the guide is available from the Infopunkt of the senate administration for education, science, and research (for the address, see 10.3).

### **Nation-wide seminars**

seminus.de is a nation-wide further education platform. The keyword search provides a quick overview of seminars and courses. Besides seminar dates, seminus.de also publishes current information every day. The goal is to bring those looking for seminars, those offering seminars, and trainers together. With more than 12,000 seminar dates and nearly 4,000 seminar providers, seminus.de presents a central, cross-industry portal for further education programs. [www.seminus.de](http://www.seminus.de)

## 11.2 Adult education centres

Adult education centres (Volkshochschulen–VHS) offer courses for a range of interests. Many Berliners learn another language here. There are also innumerable programs involving art, culture, and creative design, health, continuing education (computers, business administration, etc.), and social and political education.

Adult education centres also offer the opportunity to catch up on graduation certificates or to practice reading, writing, and mathematics (literacy/basic education).

Every city district has an adult education centre as a civic centre for further education. Anyone interested can participate in educational courses there; there are generally no admission requirements or limitations.

Adult education centres are an important starting point for immigrants when it comes to integration. Extensive courses involving German as a second language are available here. All skill levels are catered for, and a preliminary literacy phase is also available as required. All adult education centres are recognised integration course offices according to the German immigration act.

The program “VHS-Mütter-/Elternkurse” is especially important, which enables women with children in particular to take part in language courses. These courses are offered while children are at school or at child day-care centres, even in the same building, as far as possible.

The courses offered at adult education centres are mainly offered at times when most regularly employed people are free: in the afternoon, in the evening, or on weekends. For those who are not employed, there are day courses. Because the adult education centres are financed by the state, participation costs are relatively low, and many participants can also receive a reduction for social reasons.

More information is available at [www.vhs.berlin.de](http://www.vhs.berlin.de)

### **Volkshochschule Mitte**

City VHS, Antonstraße 37, 13347 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 20094 7474

Fax: (030) 20094 7488

and

City VHS, Liniestraße 162, 10115 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 20092 7474

Fax: (030) 20094 7488

### **Volkshochschule Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg**

Frankfurter Allee 37, 10247 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90298 4600/01/02/03

Fax: (030) 90298 4176

and

Wassertorstraße 4, 10969 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 2219-5516, -5517

Fax: (030) 2219 5522

**Volkshochschule Pankow**

Schulstraße 29, 13187 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90295 1700  
Fax: (030) 90295 1701  
and  
Prenzlauer Allee 227/228, 10405 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90295 3924  
Fax: (030) 90295 3939

**Volkshochschule City West**

Pestalozzistraße 40/41, 10627 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90292 8855/69  
Fax: (030) 90292 8831

**Volkshochschule Spandau**

Moritzstraße 17, 13597 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90279-5000  
Fax: (030) 90279-5001

**Volkshochschule Steglitz-Zehlendorf**

Markgrafenstraße 3, 14163 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90299 5020  
Fax: (030) 90299 5040  
and  
Goethestraße 9–11, 12207 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90299 5020  
Fax: (030) 90299 5040

**Volkshochschule Tempelhof-Schöneberg**

Barbarossaplatz 5, 10781 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 7560 3000  
Fax: (030) 7560 8944

**Volkshochschule Neukölln**

Boddinstraße 34, 12053 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 6809 2433  
Fax: (030) 6809 3298

**Volkshochschule Treptow-Köpenick**

Plönzeile 7, 12459 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 6172 5411  
Fax: (030) 6172 5400  
and  
Baumschulenstraße 81, 12437 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 5369 9059  
Fax: (030) 532 8967

**Volkshochschule Marzahn-Hellersdorf**

Mark-Twain-Str. 27, 12627 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 568816 0  
Fax: (030) 5644013

**Volkshochschule Lichtenberg**

Paul-Junius-Straße 71, 10369 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 9798 1970  
Fax: (030) 9798 19730

**Volkshochschule Reinickendorf**

Buddestraße 21, 13507 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90294 4800  
Fax: (030) 90294 4812

General information about the adult education centres in Berlin is available from the

**Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Wissenschaft**

Referat Allgemeine Weiterbildung und lebenslanges Lernen – I D –  
Bernhard-Weiß-Str. 6, 10178 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90227 5249  
Fax: (030) 90227 5443  
e-mail: [weiterbildung@senbwf.berlin.de](mailto:weiterbildung@senbwf.berlin.de)  
[www.senbwf.berlin.de/weiterbildung](http://www.senbwf.berlin.de/weiterbildung)

## Here's how to receive support

### Educational leave

If you are in employment, you have the right to an educational leave. This means that if you will receive a paid vacation if you take part in a recognised education event or an education event that qualifies as recognised which serves the purpose of political education and/or continuing vocational education. This also applies to trainees.

If you are employed full-time, then this educational leave amounts to ten workdays within two consecutive calendar years. This entitlement is reduced in the case of part-time employment. Employed persons are entitled to ten workdays per calendar year up to the completion of their 25th year.

Educational leave is available for one of the educational programs for vocational continuing education and/or political education recognised by the respective senate administration. Trainees may only take vacation for political education programs. Vocational continuing education must have relevance to the actual employment.

Apply for educational leave with your employer. Inform your employer about when you would like to take the educational leave as early possible and at least six weeks prior to the start of the education course. The employer must be provided with registration documents and certification from the respective senate administration (only available from the course provider).

Applications for recognition of education courses for educational leave may only be provided by the course provider. Applications should be submitted ten weeks prior to start of the courses to the responsible senate administration using the official form. Courses cannot be approved afterward.

### Who provides information about educational leave?

Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit, Integration und Frauen	Tel.: (030) 9028-1484, -1485, -1482, -1496
Referat II D – Berufliche Qualifizierung	Fax: (030) 9028-2173
Oranienstraße 106	e-mail: <a href="mailto:Bildungsurlaub@senaif.berlin.de">Bildungsurlaub@senaif.berlin.de</a>
10969 Berlin	

### Education bonus

The federal government supports continuing education for everyone with the education bonus. Financial incentives are intended to motivate more people to take advantage of further education with financial support. This consists of two components:

- A “bonus voucher” (Prämiengutschein) of maximum €500 is available to employees whose taxable annual income does not exceed €20,000 (or €40,000 for married couples). At least the same sum must be paid by the applicant for the course.
- “Further education savings” (Weiterbildungssparen) are a means of financial withdrawal permitted by the German asset regulation act, even if the limitation period has not yet expired.

You can receive more information about the education voucher at the following offices. These offices also issue education vouchers.

- Jobassistenz Friedrichshain- Kreuzberg, [www.jobassistenz-berlin.de](http://www.jobassistenz-berlin.de)
- Jobassistenz Spandau, [www.jobassistenz-berlin.de](http://www.jobassistenz-berlin.de)
- Weiterbildungsdatenbank Berlin, [www.wdb-berlin.de](http://www.wdb-berlin.de)
- Lernladen am Ostkreuz, [www.LNBB.de](http://www.LNBB.de)
- kontinuum e.V., [www.kontinuum-berlin.de](http://www.kontinuum-berlin.de)
- Inpäd – Institut zur beruflichen Bildung e.V., [www.inpaed-berlin.de](http://www.inpaed-berlin.de)
- Frauenzentrum “Marie” e.V., [www.Frauenzentrum-marie.de](http://www.Frauenzentrum-marie.de)

These counselling offices are supported by the senate administration for labour, integration, and women's affairs and the European Union.

One bonus voucher is available per person during the funding period until the 30th of November, 2013.

### 11.3 The Federal Agency for Civic Education (Landeszentrale für politische Bildungsarbeit)

The Federal Republic of Germany is a democratic society. Democracy cannot be taken for granted. Democracy is an achievement that must be confirmed and shaped by each new generation. The state agency for political education initiatives is a cross-party institution that promoted democratic participation, but not for any particular individual political agenda. Its publications and events involve diverse subjects, offering service to broad segments of the population, for young people, and also for adults. Knowledge of German is required for this.

To reach us:

An der Urania 4–10 (corner of Kurfürstenstraße)  
10787 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 901625-51/-52

Fax: (030) 90 16 25 38

Internet: [www.landeszentrale-berlin.de](http://www.landeszentrale-berlin.de)

The state agency for political education initiatives is planning on moving to a new location at Amerika-Haus on Hardenbergstraße 22–24, 10623 Berlin in 2014.

## 12. Health – medical care in Berlin

Berlin has a dense network of hospitals, clinics, doctors' surgeries, emergency services, and a series of special institutions. Here you will find a broad range of outstanding medical care services. The most modern therapeutic methods save people's lives every day, or at least make them easier. People insured via state health insurance companies may choose their own doctor freely in Germany.

### Medical care institutions

Berlin's online health guide will help you to find a suitable medical care institution, for example if you require a specialist. Visit [www.gesundheit-berlin.de](http://www.gesundheit-berlin.de) to browse an extensive collection of addresses relevant to the topic of health: pharmacists, doctors, dentists, hospitals and ambulance services, health services such as opticians, hearing aid specialists, orthopaedic specialists, childbirth clinics, maternity clinics, and midwives.

Information about care and disability services is also available. Besides addresses, [gesundheits-berlin.de](http://gesundheits-berlin.de) makes it easy to find exactly what you need, including news, tips, and dates. The service is free of charge.

Taking a look at the "Gelbe Seiten" telephone book is also worthwhile. The "Gelbe Seiten" telephone book is available online at [www.gelbe-seiten.de](http://www.gelbe-seiten.de).

### Do you need a doctor who speaks your native language?

Addresses for foreign-language doctors are available from Berlin's doctor's association (Ärztekammer Berlin).

**Ärztammer Berlin**

Friedrichstr. 16, 10969 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 40 80 6-0

Fax: (030) 40 80 6-3499

Opening hours: Mon–Thurs 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Fri 8:00 am to 3:00 pm

Please call for consultation appointments at other times.

The online doctor directory also features foreign-language doctors:

[www.aerztekammer-berlin.de](http://www.aerztekammer-berlin.de)

**Hospitals and clinics in Berlin**

The Berlin-Brandenburg region is one Germany's important medical technology centres. Medical treatment at Berlin's hospitals, special and university clinics always have state-of-the-art medical equipment and facilities.

Berlin's 71 hospitals offer 21,000 beds (as of 2004). The in-patient medical care is possible for nearly all Berliners in the area close to where they live.

The addresses of Berlin's hospitals and clinics are also provided in the "Gelben Seiten" or online at [www.gesundheit-berlin.de](http://www.gesundheit-berlin.de).

The doctor treating you will also inform you about which clinic is right for you.

**Public health institutions**

Health care and prevention are among the tasks that the federal ministry of health and the state office for health and social are responsible for. Berlin's civic offices also operate as service providers, and they provide orientation help and provide answers to special questions.

**Federal ministry of health****(Bundesministerium für Gesundheit)**

Berlin office

Friedrichstraße 108

10117 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 340 60 66-01

Fax: (030) 340 60 66-07

Internet: [www.bmg.bund.de](http://www.bmg.bund.de)

Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales

**Abt. I (Gesundheit)****Abt. II (Soziales)**

Turmstraße 21

10559 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90229-0

e-mail: [Poststelle@lageso.berlin.de](mailto:Poststelle@lageso.berlin.de)

Internet: [www.berlin.de/lageso/](http://www.berlin.de/lageso/)

**Abteilung III – Menschen mit Behinderung/****Versorgung**

Sächsische Straße 28

10707 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90229-6464

Fax: (030) 90229-6095

**Emergency call numbers**

Provided in chapter 20.4 "For every emergency"

## 13. People with disabilities

### 13.1 Support for people with disabilities

People with disabilities receive support to participate in daily life with equal rights. If you have disabilities, then you should apply for a severe disability identification card so that you will be able to receive corresponding assistance. Contact the pension office at the state office for health and social affairs, which will also provide you with counselling and help you with your questions. The pension office will determine the degree of disability. Application forms are also available at the info & service centre of Berlin's state office for health and social affairs, at the social services offices in hospitals, at disability counselling centres, and at the city district citizen centres.

The severe disability identification certificate is valid nation-wide. More information is provided online at [www.berlin.de/lageso/](http://www.berlin.de/lageso/) or at the info and service centre at Berlin's pension office.

#### **Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales**

Versorgungsamt, Info & Service Center  
Sächsische Straße 28  
10707 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90229-6464  
Fax: (030) 90229-6095  
[www.berlin.de/lageso/](http://www.berlin.de/lageso/)

#### **Apartments for tenants in wheelchairs**

Wheelchair-compatible apartments have special fittings in the kitchen and bathroom areas and access without steps. The selection of apartments available includes wheelchair-compatible government housing and disability-friendly apartments.

If you would like to apply for this type of apartment, then contact the

#### **Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales**

Integrationsamt und Hauptfürsorgestelle  
Turmstraße 21 Haus A  
10559 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90229-3305 / -3304

A portal is available online at HYPERLINK "<http://www.rb-wohnungen.de/>"

In order to sign a rental agreement, a certificate indicating entitlement to an apartment (Wohnberechtigungsschein) and confirming your confinement wheelchair usually needs to be provided. Application forms are available at stationery stores and at the housing office. Please submit this form at the housing office of your city district office.

#### **Mobility aid**

In cases of advanced age, illness, or disability, it may often be difficult to leave your apartment. People who live alone may also start to feel isolated and lonely. There are a variety of support options available to help you if you are in this situation so that you can increase your mobility, so that you don't lose contact with the outside world, and to receive intellectual stimulation.

#### **Berliner Sonderfahrdienst (formerly Telebus)**

The Berlin special driving service (Berliner Sonderfahrdienst) is available as an important mobility service to people who have a severe disability ID featuring a "T" or who are otherwise entitled to the service.



Participation in the special driving service requires a personal magnetic card featuring the name of the user and their personal client number. The magnetic card may be applied for at Berlin's state office for health and social affairs. All of the users of this driving service must also make a personal contribution to the cost. People living in homes who receive an allowance from a social welfare office are exempt from this condition.

**Costs:**

The personal contribution per trip equals

- for trips 1–8, 2.05 Euros (reduced 1.53 Euros),
- for trips 9–16, 5.00 Euros (reduced 3.50 Euros), and
- after the 17th trip, 10.00 Euros (reduced 7.00 Euros).

Anyone who is entitled to the special driving service and is capable of using a “normal” taxi may use the taxi account (Taxikonto). The taxi receipts must be paid in the taxi in advance, and then they may be collected for the month to be submitted to the state office for health and social affairs for reimbursement.

The maximum reimbursement amount for a taxi account equals 110.00 Euros per month. The personal contribution amounts to 40.00 Euros flat rate per month, or 20.00 Euros reduced.

**Berlin mobility aid services (Berliner Mobilitätshilfedienste)**

Berlin mobility aid services accompany people with impaired vision or mobility, who suffer from a chronic illness, or who are confined to a wheelchair. Employees can also be helpful in negotiating steps or other obstacles.

Training courses prepare mobility assistants for their work and for the special problems faced by the elderly and disabled people. The mobility aid services are normally not motorised.

**Costs**

- An annual fee of 80 Euros is required for regular accompaniment.
- For recipients of basic social care services and owners of a social card, this amount is reduced to 40 Euros.
- Residents of homes who receive an allowance from a social welfare office are exempt from paying.
- Users of the Berlin special driving service (formerly Telebus) pay an annual fee of 60 Euros in addition to special driving service fees.
- A semi-annual payment schedule is also possible (half of the annual fee).
- A single fee of 5 Euros must be paid each time in the case of casual use (up to 5 hours).

## 13.2 Work and disabilities

Equality for people with disabilities must be ensured in all areas of public and private life and practiced in everyday situations. This also includes people with disabilities taking up employment. In order to help severely disabled people secure employment, we are able to provide you and your employer with personal assistance and financial support.

The websites dedicated to the area of labour and disabilities can provide you with information about dismissal protection (Kündigungsschutz), special services, concessions, assistance in daily employment, and workshops for disabled people. You will also find a number of brochures on the subject of work and career available for you to download.

### **Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales**

Hauptfürsorgestelle und Integrationsamt

Turmstr. 21

10559 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90229-0

Internet: [www.berlin.de/sengessozv/lageso/arb.html](http://www.berlin.de/sengessozv/lageso/arb.html)

### 13.3 Regional representative for people with disabilities in Berlin

The state commissioner promotes a barrier-free city. This refers not only to structural or transportation barriers, but especially those that exist in the minds of the people who live here. These barriers are reflected in structures and situations that exclude others in all areas of society: At school and on-the-job training, on the job market, in care services, in cultural life, and in recreation.

The **state equality act** (Landesgleichberechtigungsgesetz–LGBG) prohibits discrimination of people with disabilities. This law explicitly ensures that every citizen is able to contact the state commissioner should they become aware of discrimination affecting people with disabilities.

#### **Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales**

##### **Büro des Landesbeauftragten für Behinderte Berlin**

Oranienstraße 106, 10969 Berlin,

Rooms E 007 to E 011

Tel.: (030) 90 28 29 17 / 2918

e-mail of the secretary:

[angelika.hoppe@sengs.berlin.de](mailto:angelika.hoppe@sengs.berlin.de)

There are also disabled persons' commissioners available as contact partners for disabled peoples' affairs in all of Berlin's citizen's offices. The addresses of the city district offices are provided in chapter 3.

## 14. Consumer protection

### **Consumer advice centre**

The consumer advice centre is the most important contact partner for consumer inquiries. Representation of your interests and personal counselling provided directly in-person, by telephone, or by e-mail is the focus of this work. Areas of activity include:

*Consumer protection:* In this case, the consumer advice centre investigates complaints of all kinds, out-of-court legal counselling and legal procurement, legal advice relating to credit, debtor and bankruptcy counselling, patient counselling, savings and investor protection laws, construction financing, measures to combat extortion and fraud, and information regarding laws and decrees.

*Special counselling:* Savings and investor counselling, energy, heating cost calculation, tenant counselling, vacation complaints, patient counselling, credit counselling, debtor and bankruptcy counselling, insurance inquiries, construction financing.

Telephone registration: (030) 214 85-0

More information about these counselling services is available directly from

**Verbraucherzentrale Berlin e.V.**

Hardenbergplatz 2

10623 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 214 85 0

Fax: (030) 211 72 01

e-mail: [mail@verbraucherzentrale-berlin.de](mailto:mail@verbraucherzentrale-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.vz-berlin.de](http://www.vz-berlin.de)

Registration for personalised special counselling: Telephone 030-214 85-0

Service is available for a fee. Credit counselling and bankruptcy counselling is free of charge. Telephone counselling is available for a fee of 1.86 Euros/min.

**Stiftung Warentest**

STIFTUNG WARENTEST was founded in 1964 by the federal government of Germany as an institute for the comparison of goods and services. It is an independent institution. What goods are tested and how is decided by the foundation itself.

It is the task of the foundation to create market transparency. It also informs consumers regarding options for optimised household finances, rational use of available income, and health and environmentally-conscious behaviour. Products and services are examined according to scientific methods. The publications of the foundation inform the public about the results of its tests and comparisons.

More information about the work and tasks of the foundation are available directly via

**Stiftung Warentest**

Stiftung Bürgerlichen Rechts

Lützowplatz 11/13

10785 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 2631-0

Fax: (030) 2631-2727

e-mail: Contact form on the webpage online

Internet: [www.test.de](http://www.test.de)

## 15. Self-help: Voluntary civil involvement

Voluntary civil involvement ranges from neighbourly help and support and social and health tasks to activities in cultural institutions, urban development and environmental protection, sports, youth initiatives, and civil and catastrophe protection.

With thousands of initiatives, Berlin is the capital city of self-help. Self-help groups deal with matters that are not sufficiently addressed by public administration services. Many of these groups possess a high level of professional competence and are therefore an indispensable component of social and health services available. Self-help groups in the healthcare area are dedicated to health services besides management of illness-related and illness-causing life situations. They enhance the ability of citizens to take independent action, which is a prerequisite of prevention.

Voluntary civil involvement means active collective coordination and mutual responsibility for our society. Citizens contribute their ideas concerning harmonious co-existence in this city and they also take responsibility for it themselves. The administration is no longer the only agency who makes decisions for the common good, but rather all of the city's actively engaged citizens.

Voluntary civil involvement is becoming a trend. Nearly every fourth Berliner is involved as a volunteer. Current representative examinations indicate that the readiness to get involved as a volunteer is increasing. A vibrant and united society needs voluntary civil involvement!

The city of Berlin is now able to utilise mature self-help structures, since self-help has been actively supported in Berlin since the 1980s. The self-help contact and information office **SEKIS** was and is a centre and interface for self-help and self-help organisations for citizens and affected people in Berlin. SEKIS features a central database of self-help groups.

More information about the work and counselling provided by self-help groups is available at

**SEKIS**

Bismarckstraße 101

10625 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 892 66 02

e-mail: [sekis@sekis-berlin.de](mailto:sekis@sekis-berlin.de)

Internet: [www.sekis-berlin.de](http://www.sekis-berlin.de)

or at the capital city portal Berlin.de:

<http://www.berlin.de/sen/soziales/engagement/selbsthilfe/index.html>

Extensive information regarding voluntary civil involvement is available online from “Bürger aktiv in Berlin” at [www.berlin.de/buergeraktiv/](http://www.berlin.de/buergeraktiv/)

## **16. Debt counselling services**

If you find yourself in a financial emergency, then support is available to you at the debt counselling office. Approximately 2.8 million households in Germany are heavily in debt. Many slide so deep into the red that it seems nearly impossible for them to imagine a life without debt. Debt counselling offices help and support those affected with their efforts to reduce their debt.

Nationwide, nearly 1,100 debt counselling centres support people and their families experiencing financial and personal emergencies. Private agencies include Deutscher Caritasverband, Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche, das Deutsche Rote Kreuz, die Arbeiterwohlfahrt, der Deutsche Paritätische Wohlfahrtsverband, die Verbraucherberatungsstellen, and social welfare offices.

The debt counselling offices have professionals from different specialty backgrounds (social work, legal sciences, etc.). Experts also work here who have experience of working at banks and who are also able to contribute home economics skills. Overall, they are familiar with the stress involved with heavy debt as well as the problems that result from it. They counsel and help those affected, for example in the case of the threat of eviction. Above all, they place those seeking help in a position where they are able to regain control over their finances. For example, they are able to contact credit institutions and collection agencies.

The state of Berlin has a good network of qualified counselling services. The non-profit, approved debt and bankruptcy counselling offices provide the opportunity to receive free professional support. The senate administration for health and social affairs is also responsible for the maintenance of the legal requirements that approved counselling offices must fulfil.

Nevertheless, there are also dubious service providers across the country who are happy to exploit the situation of people in debt. Often, debtors are contacted personally or false promises are made.

Learn how to protect yourself against these untrustworthy service providers and read more information about the subject of debt at the Berlin.de city portal:

<http://www.berlin.de/sen/soziales/zielgruppen/schuldner/>

The addresses of debt counselling offices are also available there or you may request them by calling the telephone hotline **0180 5 329 329** Monday to Friday from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm:

and online at:

[www.forum-schuldnerberatung.de/](http://www.forum-schuldnerberatung.de/)

# III. Transportation, culture, and recreation in Berlin

## 17. Travelling in Berlin

### 17.1 Public transportation

Take advantage of public transportation services! You should be able to reach most destinations inside the city using public transportation without a lot of difficulty.

While the western part of the capital is mainly connected by **U-Bahn trains and buses**, the eastern part of the city is mainly covered by **S-Bahn trains, trams, and buses**. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, many of the severed connections between the east and the west were restored. Among other lines, the previously closed stations along the U6 and U8 lines as well as the routes taking the S-Bahn into the city's surrounding suburbs were re-opened.

#### **Verkehrsverbund Berlin-Brandenburg (VBB)**

The large transportation companies – BVG, Deutsche Bahn, the S-Bahn, Verkehrsbetriebe Potsdam, and other companies have fused together to create the umbrella company Verkehrsverbund Berlin-Brandenburg (VBB). This will enable you to easily discover Berlin and surrounding region.

#### **Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG)**

Holzmarktstraße 15–17  
10179 Berlin  
[www.bvg.de](http://www.bvg.de)

#### **BVG Call Center**

Tel.: (030) 19 449  
Fax: (030) 256 49 256  
e-mail: [info@bvg.de](mailto:info@bvg.de)

#### **S-Bahn Berlin GmbH**

Elisabeth-Schwarzhaupt-Platz 1  
10115 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 29 74 33 33  
Fax: (030) 29 74 34 44  
[www.s-bahn-berlin.de/](http://www.s-bahn-berlin.de/)

#### **VBB Verkehrsverbund Berlin-Brandenburg GmbH**

Hardenbergplatz 2  
10623 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 25 4141 41  
Fax: (030) 25 41 41 45  
[www.vbbonline.de/](http://www.vbbonline.de/)

### 17.2 Travelling by bicycle, car, taxi

#### **Use your bicycle in Berlin!**

For individual quick trips through the city, a bicycle is a good choice. Most routes are easily mastered with a bike, and it's a good way to see more of the city's surroundings. Bicycles are available from numerous rental companies and bike stores. The city and its surroundings often feature an extensive network of bike paths. Bicycle path maps are available from the German cycling club (Allgemeiner Deutscher Fahrrad-Club – ADFC) and at bookstores. The ADFC represents the interests of cyclists and offers specific service information.

All traffic regulations must be respected and adhered with while riding a bicycle. Just like a car, a bicycle must be technically roadworthy (lighting, brakes, etc.). Children can learn bicycle traffic rules at school or from the police.

More information is available from the website [www.adfc.de](http://www.adfc.de)

The senate administration for urban development has created a map of existing bicycle paths in Berlin. This map is available online at:

<http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/verkehr/mobil/fahrrad/radrouten/>

You can also pick up the printed version of “Fahr Rad – aber sicher, Ausbau des Fahrradrouthenetzes in Berlin” for free from the senate administration.

### **Senate administration for urban development**

#### **Brochure office**

Am Köllnischen Park 3, 10179 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90 25 12 45

Fax: (030) 90 25 15 74

e-mail: [broschuerenstelle@senstadtum.berlin.de](mailto:broschuerenstelle@senstadtum.berlin.de)

Free flyers and brochures are available at the exhibit area in the atrium, Am Köllnischen Park 3, Berlin-Mitte.

Brochures can be purchased at the counter in the atrium with exact change or invoiced for payment later.

### **Travelling by car**

#### **Permission to drive**

Your foreign driver’s license allows you to drive a car during the first six months after moving to the country. After this period, you will require a German driver’s license! For this reason, you should contact the driver’s license office within the first six months. You will receive information there regarding whether your driver’s license may be transcribed or whether a test must be completed, and whether you will have to submit a translation of your foreign driver’s license. Your foreign driver’s license must still be valid at the time the application is submitted for a German driver’s license.

Normally, you will receive a German driver’s license without the need to retake the test if your driver’s license comes from a country in the European economic area (all EU member states and Iceland, Norway, and Lichtenstein). If you would prefer not to drive a car at first: An application to transcribe your driver’s license must be submitted within three years.

If you possess a driver’s license from another country (non-EU country), then you will have to complete the theoretical and practical test at a technical testing office for automobile transportation. This may only be completed by attending driving school. However, driving school lessons required for first time drivers (theoretical and practical lessons) are not required.

An application to transcribe a foreign driver’s license is available at the:

Driver’s license office – Führerscheinbüro (Fahrerlaubnisbehörde/Personenbeförderung)

#### **Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungsangelegenheiten**

Referat Fahrerlaubnisse, Personenbeförderung und Güterbeförderung, III C

Puttkamerstr.16–18, 10958 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90269 0

Public transportation links: U6 (Kochstr.), Bus 129

Acquisition of a German driver’s license may be also applied for at the registration office in your city district. The addresses of the city district offices are provided in chapter 3.

#### **Automobile clubs and associations**

There are multiple associations that offer different services. Some offer help in case a member has car trouble while on the road and special travel insurance. The general German automo-

bile club /Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club–ADAC) and Auto Club Europa are the largest associations. The transportation club of Germany (Verkehrs-Club Deutschland–VCD) also represents the interests of train passengers and cyclists and offers these groups special services.

The online addresses of the individual transportation clubs are:

[www.adac.de](http://www.adac.de)

[www.vcd.org](http://www.vcd.org)

[www.ace-online.de](http://www.ace-online.de)

Automobile issues such as registering and de-registering a car or motorcycle are processed at automobile registration agencies at two locations in Berlin.

### **1. Kraftfahrzeugzulassungsbehörde**

#### **Standort Lichtenberg**

#### **Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungs- angelegenheiten**

Referat Kraftfahrzeugzulassung

Ferdinand-Schultze-Str. 55, 13055 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90269-0

Fax: (030) 90269 3391

Public transportation links: Bus 294,

Tram M6, M 17, 16, 27

Free parking spaces are available.

### **2. Kraftfahrzeugzulassungsbehörde**

#### **Standort Berlin Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg**

#### **Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungs- angelegenheiten**

Referat Kraftfahrzeugzulassung

Jüterboger Str. 3, 10965 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90269 0

Fax: (030) 90269 3091

Public transportation links:

Bus 104, 341, U6, U7

Opening hours of automobile registration agencies

Monday: 7:30 am–2:30 pm

Tuesday: 7:30 am–2:30 pm

Wednesday: 7:30 am–2:30 pm

Thursday: 8:00 am–6:00 pm

Friday: 7:30 am–12:00 noon

#### **The service number is available**

**to receive information by telephone via  
030-90269 3300.**

Monday–Wednesday: 7:00 am–3:00 pm

Thursday: 7:30 am–6:00 pm

Friday: 7:00 am–12:30 pm

e-mail: [kfz-zulassung@labo.berlin.de](mailto:kfz-zulassung@labo.berlin.de)

The approval agencies in Berlin offer an appointment service at both service offices for your inquiries.

Please inform yourself here and book an appointment directly via

<http://www.berlin.de/labokfz/dienstleistungen/index.html>

or call 030/90269-3300 to avoid long waiting times!

## **18. Culture and recreation**

### **18.1 Events: museums, theatre, cinema in Berlin**

#### **Events in Berlin**

Berlin is an experience–every single day of the year.

Concerts, parties, and balls, international film and theatre events are all features on the program, for example the “long nights” of culture and the sciences, which are unique events worldwide.

<http://www.berlin.de/tickets/>

**Museum landscape and galleries in Berlin**

Berlin has 174 museums where humanity's culture has been collected—from the bust of Nefer-titi to the teddy bear, from pre-historic hand axe to the art of our own period. Large exhibits present new facets of this collection each and every time.

<http://www.berlin.de/orte/museum/>

<http://www.berlin.de/ausstellungen/galerie/>

**Berlin's theatre and concert landscape**

The largest theatre and orchestra city in Germany offers an overwhelming range of entertainment and cultural events every day. Berlin's cultural landscape has something suitable for every taste:

The theatre metropolis of Berlin possesses over 300 permanent theatres, from the festive state theatres to the professional, engaging alternative theatres, 12 children's and youth theatres, a new musical theatre at Potsdamer Platz, and amateur ensembles. The most popular destinations for audiences include Friedrichstadtpalast, Theater des Westens, Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Deutsche Oper, Wintergarten Varieté, and Theater am Kurfürstendamm. Stages attract 3.5 million theatre guests each year with their richly faceted programs.

<http://www.berlin.de/tickets/theater/>

<http://www.berlin.de/tickets/konzert-highlights/>

**Musical highlights**

Three opera houses, eight symphony orchestras (including the outstanding Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra), ten chamber orchestras, around 880 choirs, four free opera ensembles, and innumerable music groups of all genres and styles.

<http://www.berlin.de/tickets/klassische-konzerte/>

**A unique cultural landscape**

The Museumsinsel in Mitte, which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Jewish Museum designed by Daniel Libeskind are points of attraction for visitors from around the world.

<http://www.berlin.de/orte/sehenswuerdigkeiten/museumsinsel/>

**Arts scene**

A constantly growing gallery scene completes the offer: 200 private and 260 exhibitions every day offer ample inspiration and leisure.

<http://www.berlin.de/ausstellungen/galerie/>

<http://www.berlin.de/sen/kultur/foerderung/index.de.html>

**Film and cinema city Berlin**

With 97 cinemas, Berlin possesses the most cinemas nationwide in relation to its inhabitants. 12 million cinema visitors each year are proof of the fascination for this medium in this city.

With a total of 13 multiplex cinemas, Berlin offers a next generation of cinema. A total of 128 screens and 32,231 seats offer modern entertainment for thousands of viewers every day.

[http://www.berlin.de/kino/\\_bin/index.php](http://www.berlin.de/kino/_bin/index.php)

<http://www.berlin.de/berlin-im-ueberblick/kultur/filmstadt.de.html>

### **International film festivals in Berlin**

The Berlinale festival draws filmmakers and film lovers to Berlin from all around the world every year. When the Berlinale moved to Potsdamer Platz, the guests were immediately impressed by this highly modern quarter of the city. With over 1,800 seats in a classic two-tiered style, the musical theatre by Renzo Piano at Potsdamer Platz became the Berlinale Palace while the world looked on.

Everything about the Berlinale and its film program is available from its website [www.berlinale.de/](http://www.berlinale.de/). You can also order tickets here.

### **Trade fairs and conferences**

With its outstanding trade shows, international events, and future forums, the city is a host for global business, consumers, and people from around the world.

The most important trade fairs at Messe Berlin include the Internationale Funkausstellung IFA, the Internationale Tourismus-Börse ITB Berlin, the Internationale Grüne Woche Berlin, the Internationale Baufachmesse Berlin bautec, the Internationale Luft- und Raumfahrt ausstellung Berlin-Brandenburg ILA, and HomeTech Berlin.

Besides this, InnoTrans – the international transportation technology fair and FRUIT LOGISTICA – the international fruit and vegetable marketing fair also represent informative opportunities to develop communication and contacts.

Berlin's International Congress Center Berlin (ICC Berlin) provides a multi-functional conference venue.

More information is available online at:

[www.messe-berlin.de](http://www.messe-berlin.de), [www.berlin.de](http://www.berlin.de), and [www.berlin-partner.de](http://www.berlin-partner.de)

The city magazines and the daily newspapers feature current information regarding events of all kinds.

## **18.2 Sports**

In a multi-cultural city like Berlin, sport has an important function as a means of integration. It's part of everyday life to train together with athletes of different nationalities. Berliners are very enthusiastic players and spectators of sports. There are around 2,000 associations and 550,000 members. Another 500,000 Berliners engage in sports outside of a regular association. The city and the surrounding area feature diverse recreational sports opportunities, for example water sports, riding, skydiving, golf, sailing, and aviation. There are more than 2,000 individual sports facilities.

Over 3,000 sports halls, stadiums, and sports field, including the Olympic Stadium and Max Schmeling Hall, are available. The Velodrom is one of Berlin's largest event venues. Top sporting events, concerts, and shows take place here. The Velodrom Arena also features a permanent 250 meter-long bicycle racetrack. Due to its precisely symmetrical design and the high-quality materials from which it was constructed it's one of the fastest bicycle racetracks in the world. Two golf courses are even located within the Berlin city limits.

Every year, Berlin hosts outstanding sports events such as the cup final of the German football association (Deutscher Fussball-Bund – DFB), the ISTAF international track and field festival, the Berlin Marathon, the FINA Swimming World Cup, and the Berlin six-day race at the Velodrom.

### **Sports and sports venues in Berlin**

Berlin is not only the cultural capital city of Germany, but also its sports capital. Sports events featuring inter-regional and of world-wide importance regularly take place in the capital. This includes events like the German cup final (men's and women's), the ISTAF international track and field festival, the Berlin Marathon, the international riding and jumping tournament, and the international German ladies' tennis championships at Hundekhelesee.

Berliners can also look forward to exciting Hertha BSC football games at Berlin's Olympic Stadium.

### **Berlin's large-scale event venues**

Not only inter-regional sport events count among the highlights in Berlin's arenas and stadiums. International stars fill the stadiums, as do first-class sports galas.

### **The Olympic Stadium**

Berlin's Olympic Stadium was the venue of the 2009 IAAF track and field world championships, the home games of Bundesliga football team Hertha BSC, DFB cup finals, and the ISTAF international track and field sports festival.

Important religious and cultural events also take place here.

<http://www.olympiastadion-berlin.de/>

### **The Velodrom**

The Velodrom is one of Berlin's largest event venues. Top sporting events, concerts, and shows take place here. Whether it's an exhibition hall, the backdrop for a gala, or the location for a conference: The Velodrom not only offers the best conditions around, it's also a very attractive venue for all types of events. The Velodrom features a permanent 250 meter-long bicycle race-track. It currently counts as the fastest bicycle racetrack in the world.

<http://www.velodrom.de/>

### **Max Schmeling Hall**

Max Schmeling Hall is the home venue of the Bundesliga basketball team Alba Berlin, the Bundesliga handball team Reinickendorfer Füchse, state dance association tournaments, boxing matches, and big music events.

<http://www.max-schmeling-halle.de/>

### **Berlin's swimming pools**

Berlin offers ideal conditions for everyone who enjoys swimming and bathing. With 26 outdoor and summer pools and 37 indoor pools, there are plenty of places to go swimming in Berlin.

<http://www.berlin.de/orte/schwimmbad/>

<http://www.berlinerbaederbetriebe.de/>

### **Golf courses and driving ranges in Berlin and surroundings**

In a major city like Berlin, golf lovers are also be sure to find exactly what they want. With numerous courses in the surroundings suburbs and smaller driving ranges in the city, golf has established itself completely in Berlin.

<http://www.berlin.de/special/sport-und-fitness/freizeitsport/golf/>

### **Berlin's ice sports facilities**

During the winter season, the capital also offers numerous opportunities to go skating, independent of the weather. The training sessions of Berlin's ice hockey pros are partially open to the public so that the spectators can experience them live. Around the clock, artificial ice rinks in Berlin are a great place to go for a spin on the ice.

<http://www.berlin.de/orte/eisbahnen/>

### **Horse racing**

#### **Trabrennbahn Mariendorf**

Berliner Trabrenn-Verein e.V.  
Mariendorfer Damm 222–298, 12107 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 7401-212  
Fax.: (030) 7401-211,  
e-mail: [btv@berlintrab.de](mailto:btv@berlintrab.de)  
Internet: [www.berlintrab.de](http://www.berlintrab.de)

#### **Galopprennbahn Hoppegarten**

Union Klub von 1867  
Goetheallee 1, 15366 Dahlwitz-Hoppegarten,  
Tel.: (03342) 38 93-0  
Fax: (03342) 300 691  
e-mail: [mail@hoppegarten.com](mailto:mail@hoppegarten.com)  
Internet: [www.hoppegarten.com](http://www.hoppegarten.com)

### **Walking, jogging, and strolling**

Berlin also offers beautiful routes for strolling, jogging, and walking. The senate administration for urban development offers a free brochure on this topic: “Flanieren entlang der Stadtspreeweg, Einer von 20 grünen Hauptwegen lädt ein”.

This brochure is available from the

#### **Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung**

Broschürenstelle, Am Köllnischen Park 3, 10179 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 90 25 12 45  
Fax: (030) 90 25 15 74  
e-mail: [broschuerenstelle@senstadtum.berlin.de](mailto:broschuerenstelle@senstadtum.berlin.de)  
Opening hours: Monday–Saturday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

More information and brochures about sports facilities, sports associations, and sports events in Berlin are available online from the website of the

#### **Senatsverwaltung für Inneres und Sport**

Klosterstraße 47  
10179 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 9027-2992  
Fax: (030) 30 9027-2934  
e-mail: [briefkasten@seninnsport.berlin.de](mailto:briefkasten@seninnsport.berlin.de)  
<http://www.berlin.de/sen/sport/sportangebote/index.html>  
and  
<http://www.berlin-sport.de/>

#### **Berlin's sports portal**

Here you will find current sports events taking place in the capital, over 7,000 sports services from Berlin's associations, the addresses of 2,000 of Berlin's sports facilities, current Berlin sports news, special offers for sports club members, and numerous other offers involving sports in Berlin.

– provided by TOP Sportmarketing Berlin GmbH –

#### **Landessportbund Berlin und der Sportjugend Berlin**

Jesse-Owens-Allee 2  
14053 Berlin  
Tel.: (030) 300 02-0  
Fax: (030) 30 00 21 07  
e-mail: [info@lsb-berlin.de](mailto:info@lsb-berlin.de)  
Internet: [www.lsb-berlin.net](http://www.lsb-berlin.net)



Landessportbund  
Berlin und der  
Sportjugend Berlin

### 18.3 Recreation areas

You'll be surprised by how many parks, forests, and lakes Berlin has. Hardly any other major city has so much green space. Parks and gardens, city plazas, and green areas from various epochs characterise the city. More than 2,500 public parks, green areas, and city plazas of various sizes and designs are available for you to relax.

The forests, parks, hobby gardens, and over 400,000 trees on its streets make Berlin a very green city. While strolling through Grunewald forest on a mild summer evening, wandering along the gardens of Schloss Charlottenburg, or petting the animals in Domäne Dahlem many forget that they actually live in a major metropolitan city together with nearly 3.5 million other people.

The senate administration for urban development informs you about green spaces and recreation areas via its website. Selected green areas and plazas are introduced with pictures and descriptions, especially with regard to their recreational programs and accessibility. They also provide instructions regarding parks that are protected as monuments (Gartendenkmale) and information about special parks like the botanical gardens (Botanischer Garten), the zoological gardens (Zoologischer Garten), and the zoo at Friedrichsfelde (Tierpark Friedrichsfelde). The senate administration for urban development has published numerous brochures on this topic, some are even free. Several publications are only available from bookstores or publishers.

Information about these publications is available online:

<http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/umwelt/stadtgruen/gruenanlagen/index.shtml>

and from the

**Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung**

Broschürenstelle, Am Köllnischen Park 3, 10179 Berlin

Tel.: (030) 90 25 12 45

Fax: (030) 90 25 15 74

e-mail: [broschuerenstelle@senstadtum.berlin.de](mailto:broschuerenstelle@senstadtum.berlin.de)

Opening hours: Monday – Saturday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

# IV. Long-term integration

## 19. Legal information regarding extended stays in Berlin

### 19.1 Residency rights

Initial information about the residency rights is provided by the commissioner for integration and migration online via [www.integrationsbeauftragte.de](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.de)

The federal ministry of the interior also offers further information about the residency rights online via [www.bmi.bund.de](http://www.bmi.bund.de), especially under the frequently asked questions section “Häufige Fragen” (FAQ)

[http://www.zuwanderung.de/ZUW/DE/Zuwanderung\\_geschieht\\_jetzt/FAQ/faq\\_node.html](http://www.zuwanderung.de/ZUW/DE/Zuwanderung_geschieht_jetzt/FAQ/faq_node.html)

You can also inform yourself via the website of the immigration office:

[www.berlin.de/labo/abh](http://www.berlin.de/labo/abh)

### 19.2 Naturalisation

If you live in Germany permanently, then you can apply for citizenship under certain circumstances. An application is obligatory for this. Foreign nationals may submit this application themselves after their 16th birthday, and parents may submit this application for children and young people under 16 years old.

More information about naturalisation is available from the office of the Commissioner for Integration and Migration from the naturalisation office in your city district.

Information about Berlin’s naturalisation campaign is available online at:

[www.Einbuengerung-jetzt.de](http://www.Einbuengerung-jetzt.de)



### Die Beauftragte des Senats für Integration und Migration

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Internet: [www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de)

Service hours:

Mon, Tues, Thurs 9:00 am–1:00 pm

Thurs 3:00 am–6:00 pm

Counselling hotline: (030) 9017-23 72



# V. Emergency help

## 20. Crisis services

### 20.1 Domestic violence

Violence in families and partnerships is present at all levels of society and in all cultures. It affects women and children, independent of age, education, religion, and nationality. Completely “normal” family fathers, husbands, and life partners threaten, strike, or sexually abuse women, forbid contact to their friends and acquaintances, and keep them financially dependent. Due to feelings of shame and fear, many women find it difficult to look for help and support in this situation. The options for foreign women to free themselves from abusive situations are frequently made more difficult by a residency permit that is dependent on marriage and therefore uncertain, the lack of a work permit, and financial dependency. Concern about women who do not have opportunities to develop their own lives and those of their children is very high. Adequate psycho-social and legal support for female immigrants is therefore especially important. It’s especially important in crisis situations that communication takes place in their native language.

#### **Hotline and shelter institutions**

BIG-Hotline daily around the clock, tel. (030) 611 03 00

The BIG-Hotline (Berliner Interventionsprojekt gegen häusliche Gewalt) offers telephone counselling to women who are subject to physical and mental violence. Counselling is provided anonymously upon request. The employees inform you about shelter institutions and will organise them for you. Upon request, language specialists may also be involved for personal meetings. The services of the hotline are also directed at people within the private and social circle of these women and at the authorities, social institutions, and other facilities.

### 20.2 Women’s shelters and similar institutions

There are six women’s shelters in Berlin that offer protection to women and their children day and night. Visiting a women’s shelter enables the affected women to free themselves from violent situations, to think about their own situation, and to develop new perspectives. The employees provide advice and support to women to clarify their own individual situation.

Women of diverse national backgrounds work in these shelters and speak various foreign languages. These employees also work together with language specialists so that every woman looking for shelter has the option to make themselves understood in their own native language.

Staying at a women’s shelter is anonymous and free of charge.

#### **Frauenhaus Bora**

Tel.: 030-986 43 32  
frauenhaus@frauenprojekte-bora.de  
www.frauenprojekte-bora.de

#### **Frauenhaus des Caritas**

Tel.: 030-851 10 18  
Frauenhaus@caritas-berlin.de

#### **II. autonomes Frauenhaus**

Tel.: 030-37 49 06 22  
Frauenselbsthilfe-berlin@t-online.de

#### **Hestia Frauenhaus**

Tel.: 030-559 35 31  
pub@hestia-fh.de

**Cocon e.V.**

Tel.: 030-916 11 836

team@viertes-frauenhaus-berlin.de

**Interkulturelles Frauenhaus**

Tel.: 030-801 080 50

interkulturelleinitiative@t-online.de

**Guide for immigrant women affected by domestic violence**

The female employees at BIG have created a guide for immigrant women affected by domestic violence in cooperation with Berlin's senate administration for commerce, labour, and women's affairs.

Translations of parts of the guide are available in Arabic, English, French, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, Thai, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

The guide is available online as a download at [www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.berlin.de) and at: [www.big-hotline.de](http://www.big-hotline.de)

## 20.3 Crisis services for children and youths

For children and young people in crisis situations, an emergency service is available to children, young girls, and young people around the clock. Counselling and shelter services are voluntary. The duration of shelter services at a crisis counselling office is limited. Therefore, the perspectives of the affected children and young people need to be clarified as quickly as possible.

**Children's emergency service:**

The children's emergency service provides shelter to children up to 14 years old for the short term. The family will be informed about the child staying there by an employee. The carer will also discuss the crisis situation with parents and give advice. Children can contact the children's emergency service independently.

Address: Gitschiner Str. 48/49, 10969 Berlin, Tel.: (030) 61 00 61

[www.berliner-notdienst-kinderschutz.de/](http://www.berliner-notdienst-kinderschutz.de/)

**Girls' emergency service:**

The girls' emergency service offers girls and young women between the ages of 14 and 21 years old counselling following sexual violence and a temporary shelter option. Girls and young women may contact and confide in the experienced employees here.

Address: Mindener Straße 14, 10589 Berlin, telephone: (030) 61 00 63

[www.berliner-notdienst-kinderschutz.de/](http://www.berliner-notdienst-kinderschutz.de/)

**Youth emergency service:**

The youth emergency service is directed at all 14 to 18 year-old girls and boys in emergency and crisis situations. It offers mobile counselling services and short-term shelter.

Address: Mindener Straße 14, 10589 Berlin, telephone: (030) 61 00 62

[www.berliner-notdienst-kinderschutz.de/](http://www.berliner-notdienst-kinderschutz.de/)

**Child protection hotline**

The child protection hotline available by calling (030) 61 00 66 offers a contact point for citizens who have detected signs of neglect or violence against children. The hotline is available around the clock. The counsellor will evaluate the danger reported with every incoming call and introduce the necessary protective measures as necessary.

## 20.4 Office of medical help for refugees

The office for refugee medical care provides treatment to people without a residency permit or health insurance anonymously and free of charge by qualified medical staff.

Services are normally possible in the following languages: German, English, Spanish, French; and we may have access to an interpreter's support if required.

Contact:

Monday and Thursday from 4:30 am to 6:30 pm  
im Mehringhof  
Gneisenastr. 2a  
Hinterhof, Aufgang 3, 2. Stock  
10961 Berlin-Kreuzberg  
U-Bahnhof Mehringdamm U6/U7

Tel.: 030. 69 46 746  
e-mail: info@medibuero.de  
www.medibuero.de

## 20.5 For every situation – emergency telephone numbers and emergency services

<b>General emergency number</b>	Medical on-call service ..... (030) 31 00 31
Police .....110	Dental emergency service ..(030) 89 00 43 33
Fire brigade .....112	Dental emergency night service.....030 / 45 06 62 613
Central ambulance dispatcher.....via 112	
Criminal investigation department, service.....(030) 4664-4664	<b>Utility provider customer service</b>
	Gas: GASAG disposal services .....(030) 78 72-72
<b>Traffic emergency number</b>	Water: disposal services .....0800 292 7587
ACE road service ..... 0180-234 35 36	Telephone Telekom technical support... 0800-3 30 10 00
ADAC road service .....0180-2 22 22 22	Radio disturbances.....0180 3 302202
Mobile:..... 22 22 22	
ADAC news service ..... 86 86-0	<b>Transportation customer service</b>
ADAC rescue helicopter.....110 or 112	BVG customer service (6 am – 11 pm)..... (030) 19 44 9
<b>Medical emergency</b>	Deutsche Bahn AG automatic trip schedule info .....0800/15 07 09 0
Poisoning hotline	
Poison emergency ..... (030) 192 40	

Funkturm central bus station ..... (030) 30100175	Children's emergency service... (030) 61 0061
Credit card emergency number (lost card) ..... 116 116	Youth emergency service ..... (030) 61 00 62 Girl's emergency service ..... (030) 61 00 63
Cheque card emergency number (lost card) ..... 116 116	Child protection hotline ..... (030) 61 00 66
<b>Social emergencies</b>	Berlin child protection centre ..... 0800 111 0 444
Berlin crisis service (Berliner Krisendienst) ..... (030) 390 63-10	Religious crisis helpline ..... 0800 111 0 222
Women's crisis telephone: Mon + Thurs 10 am – 12 noon, Tues, Wed, Fri 7 pm – 9 pm Sat, Sun 5 pm – 7 pm ..... (030) 615 42 43	Telefondoweria (Russian).. (030) 440308-454
Female immigrant counselling on the women's crisis line foreign language on Mondays 10 am – 12 noon ..... (030) 615 75 96	Muslim crisis helpline ..... (030) 44 35 09 821
LARA crisis and counselling centre for victims of rape ..... (030) 216 88 88	Berlin victims' helpline, counselling office for victims of crime ..... (030) 395 28 67
Hotline (BIG) ..... (030) 6 11 03 00	Weisser Ring, victims telephone ..... 116 006
Berlin gay violence telephone hotline (Mann-O-Meter) ..... (030) 216 33 36	<b>Lost and found</b> BVG lost and found office Potsdamer Str. 182 ..... (030) 19 44 9
	Fundbüro Deutsche Bahn AG ... 0900 1990599
	Zentrales Fundbüro Platz der Luftbrücke 6 ..... (030) 90277 3101

Die Beauftragte  
für Integration  
und Migration

Senatsverwaltung  
für Arbeit, Integration  
und Frauen



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