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VOTING IN BERLIN

The State Election Director
explains how elections
are organized in Berlin

Der Landeswahlleiter

BERLIN





Photo: Sven Darmer

Dear fellow citizens,

The right to vote is the most important right of political participation in our parliamentary democracy.

As State Election Director, I ensure that all eligible Berliners can exercise their right to vote and that all political elections and referendums in Berlin are properly prepared for and conducted. To ensure that elections and referendums are universal, direct, free, equal, secret, and public, state authorities and the twelve boroughs partner closely within the organizing framework for Berlin's elections in the service of Berlin's citizens.

I would like to make a personal request of you. Alongside the dedicated staff in the State Election Office and the borough election offices, Berlin relies on thousands of volunteer poll workers. Without their commitment, democratic elections would not be possible here in Berlin.

Please get involved as well, and above all: use your right to vote and help shape our democracy. Every vote counts!

Please read on for a quick overview of what my duties entail and how elections in Berlin are organized.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sven Darmer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Election organization in Berlin

Organizing Berlin's elections is a logistical challenge:

- Election documents must be prepared and notifications sent out in time for approximately 2.5 million eligible voters in Berlin.
- Around 2,200 suitable polling stations must be found for in-person voting.
- Approximately 36,000 volunteer poll workers must be recruited and trained.

Every five years, we organize elections for the European Parliament, the Berlin House of Representatives (Abgeordnetenhaus), and the twelve borough assemblies (Bezirksverordnetenversammlungen).

Elections for Germany's federal parliament (Bundestag) take place every four years.

Furthermore, we organize referendums (Volksentscheide) as direct democratic voting procedures at the state level.

The State Election Director

The State Election Director for Berlin is an independent electoral officer. Election Directors are not part of the government, the administration, or the House of Representatives. They are appointed by the Berlin Senate for an indefinite term and perform their duties on an honorary basis.

The State Election Director chairs the State Election Commission. The commission's duties include determining whether parties' state lists of candidates are admissible and certifying official election results.

The State Election Director is responsible for ensuring that all political elections in Berlin are properly prepared for and conducted and that official election results are determined and certified. The Election Director also fulfils a similar role for votes on popular initiatives and referendums.

The State Election Director is responsible for the city-wide management of elections.

Supported by the State Election Office, the State Election Director oversees election organization throughout Berlin, working closely with the election directors for the boroughs and election districts.

The State Election Director informs the public about all election-related matters and promotes voter turnout through both press and public relations work and multimedia information services.

Furthermore, the State Election Director initiates and supports projects that promote democracy.

Dr. Stephan Bröchler has been the State Election Director for Berlin since 1 October 2022. He is a professor of political science and public administration at the Berlin School of Economics and Law (HWR Berlin).

The Deputy State Election Director is Roland Brumberg. He is the head of the Division for Constitutional and Administrative Law at the Senate Department for the Interior and Sport.

The State Election Office

The State Election Office supports the State Election Director in the city-wide coordination and management of election activities.

The State Election Office manages election organization at the state level. It collaborates as an equal partner with the twelve borough election offices.



Important regular tasks of the State Election Office include:

- Procuring ballot papers
- Preparing state-wide training materials for polling station staff
- Providing information on the State Election Director's website

The State Election Office is the point of contact for questions on electoral law and for candidate applications, election results, and the establishment of new political parties.

Borough election offices

In keeping with Berlin's two-tier administrative structure, the twelve Berlin boroughs are entrusted with organizing elections locally.

Among other things, these offices are responsible for:

- Finding and preparing suitable polling stations and equipping them on election day
- Maintaining official election registers
- Appointing the polling station teams
- Dividing electoral districts into polling precincts
- Conducting postal voting

The borough election offices support the respective election directors for boroughs or election districts in conducting elections properly and are bound by their instructions.

Further information about the State Election Director's activities and on elections and referendums:

-  State Election Director's website:
berlin.de/wahlen
(in German only)
- State Election Director's YouTube channel: 
youtube.com/@derlandeswahlleiterberlin/
(in German only)
-  State Election Director's Instagram channel:
instagram.com/lwlberlin/
(in German only)

Please accept our invitation

Elections and referendums are a celebration of democracy! Like any celebration, they need many helping hands to make them a success. Lend a hand!

You can register as a volunteer poll worker for one of the twelve Berlin boroughs on the State Election Director's homepage. Because nothing happens unless you make it happen!



berlin.de/wahlen/wahlhelfende

Der Landeswahlleiter

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