

Press Release

Berlin retains strong appeal for visitors and congresses participants

- **13.5 million visitors (+4.1%) and 32.9 million overnight stays (+5.5%)**
- **Congress sector: 12 million participants (+2%) and around 143,390 events (+2.3%)**
- **Hotel Charter Berlin: Initiative by visitBerlin Convention Office and Berlin to attract more congresses to the city**

Berlin, 22 February 2019 Berlin has strengthened its position as one Europe's top three travel destinations. In 2018, approx. 13.5 million people visited the city – an increase of 4.1% over 2017. The number of overnight stays rose by 5.5% to 32.9 million.

Berlin is especially popular with international tourists with 5.4 million visitors from abroad (+5.9%) spending 15.1 million nights in the city (+7.9%). Overnight stays by visitors from within Europe are the main driver of growth. After showing signs of slowing in 2017, this figure rose by 9.3% in 2018.

Despite the impending Brexit, most international visitors came from the UK, which accounted for 1.7 million overnight stays (+1.6%). This was followed by the USA at 1.3 million nights (+5%) and Spain at 1.03 million (+18.3%).

On average, international guests spend 2.8 days in the city, a slight increase over the previous year (2.7 days). Visitors from within Germany continue to account for the largest share of the total overnight stays. In 2018, this figure rose to 54.1%, an increase of 3.6%.

"In 2018, as a top tourist destination, Berlin has again generated figures showing solid growth, securing the livelihoods of 235,000 people in the city," says **Ramona Pop, Senator for Economics, Energy and Public Enterprises**. "Our fascinating, vibrant metropolis is an attractive destination not just for people from Germany and Europe, but also internationally. To ensure this travel experience remains viable in future and compatible with a liveable city for Berliners, our Tourism Plan 2018 + has introduced a number of measures important for visitors and local residents. The spectrum here ranges from working with the boroughs on local tourism to liveable designs for neighbourhoods through clean parks and noise-protection in clubs."

"After slower growth in 2017, last year's increase in overnight stays shows Berlin has lost none of its attraction," notes **Burkhard Kieker, CEO of visitBerlin**. "In 2019, with the 30th anniversary of the Fall of the Wall, Berlin will be organising a global event expected to attract over one million visitors to the city."

€2.63 billion in sales: Berlin's economy profits from the congress sector

In 2018, Berlin's meetings and conventions industry also further consolidated its leading position in this sector. The city hosted around 143,390 events attended by approx. 12 million participants. For the first time, the meetings and conventions sector generated over eight million nights in

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Berlin hotels. Events in this sector showed an increase of 2.3% over 2017, with a 2% rise both in the numbers of participants and overnight stays. In 2018, the Berlin meetings and conventions sector generated total sales of €2.63 billion (2017: €2.51 billion). With Berlin's event industry providing a total of 44,100 full time jobs in statistical terms (2017: 43,200), this sector is an important economic factor for Berlin. For the last five years, in a comparison of international congress cities Berlin has been ranked among the top 5 destinations behind Barcelona, Paris and Vienna.

Hotel Charter Berlin: New congresses for Berlin

The new Hotel Charter is designed to further strengthen Berlin's position in the international meetings and conventions sector. The Hotel Charter is an initiative to attract new large international congresses to the city. It provides exclusive services for organisers of congresses with over 1500 participants and lasting at least two days. At present, the Hotel Charter has attracted 96 participating hotels with a total of over 51,000 beds – around 40% of Berlin's total volume. The Hotel Charter represents a commitment to the entire city. It has been launched by the *visitBerlin* Berlin Convention Office together with the *visitBerlin* Partner Hotels Association and the Senate Department for Economics, Energy and Public Enterprises.

visitBerlin Berlin Tourist Infos attract 1.8 million visitors

In 2018, *visitBerlin* was active at 230 events in 40 countries promoting Berlin as an attractive tourism and congress destination. Over the past year, the six Berlin Tourist Info Centres advised around 1.8 million visitors. *visitBerlin* manages the Facebook channel "Berlin – the place to be" with 1.69 million followers, one of the largest city accounts worldwide.

Berlin Tourism in Figures January–December 2018 Berlin*				
Country	Visitors	Change over previous year in %	Overnight stays	Change over previous year in %
Germany (54.1%)	8,097,899	+3.0	17,783,929	+3.6
Abroad (45.9 %)	5,404,653	+5.9	15,087,705	+7.9
Overall total	13,502,552	+4.1	32,871,634	+5.5

Congress Statistics**	2017	2018
Participants	11.70 million	11.90 million (+2 %)
Events	140,200	143,390 (2.3%)
Overnight stays	7.9 million	8.06 million (+2%)

*Source: Berlin-Brandenburg Statistical Office

** Source Congress Statistics 2018 from the independent market research company ghh consult GmbH on behalf of *visitBerlin*

[5,207 Zeichen]

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visitBerlin

"Inspiring the world for Berlin." With this mission, Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH, operating under the *visitBerlin* brand, has been promoting Berlin globally since 1993 as a tourism and congress metropolis. Berlin now has more visitors than ever before. In 2018, the city welcomed around 13.5 million visitors, accounting for over 33 million overnight stays. Berlin is also extremely popular for meetings and congresses – and for over ten years, it has been ranked among the top 5 cities for international association conventions. As a tour operator, Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH, a private sector company, also offers hotel accommodation and issues the *Berlin WelcomeCard*, the city's official tourist ticket. *visitBerlin* operates the Berlin Tourist Info Centres and the Berlin Service Center advice line on +49 (0)30-25 00 25. On visitBerlin.de, Berlin's official tourism website, Berlin visitors can find all the information they need about every aspect of their trip to the city. Find out more about *visitBerlin* on about.visitBerlin.de

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