



Country Information

GERMANY

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About the country

General

Name of the country: Germany

Area: 357,045 sq km

Population: 82.6 million

Capital: Berlin (3.5 million inhabitants)

Government: Federal Republic. The country is divided into 16 Bundesländer, including the formerly divided city of Berlin.

Geography: The Federal Republic of Germany shares frontiers with Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland and Switzerland. The NW of the country has a coastline on the North Sea while the Baltic coastline in the NE stretches from the Danish to the Polish border. The Federal Republic of Germany is divided into 16 states.

Language: German. Some English is spoken and French is also spoken, particularly in the Saarland. In the north of Schleswig-Holstein, Danish is spoken by the Danish minority. In eastern Brandenburg and Saxony, Sorbic is spoken by the Slavic minority. Regional dialects often differ markedly from standard German.

Time: GMT +1 (GMT +2 between the last Sunday in March and the last Sunday in October).

Religion: Approximately 34% Protestant, 34% Roman Catholic, 4% Muslim, with Jewish and other non-Christian minorities.

Electricity: 220 volts, 50Hz. European-style two-pin plugs are standard.

Money

Currency: Euro (EUR; symbol €) = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Exchange Rates:

Currency Exchange Rates*			
€1.00 =	US\$ 0.739	£ 0.923	CHF 1.526

* Date's rate: 24 March 09

Credit cards: All major credit cards are accepted, but it is advisable to carry cash as well.

Banking hours: Mon-Fri 0830-1300 and 1400-1600, Thurs 0830-1300 and 1430-1730 in main cities. Main branches do not close for lunch.

Tipping: It is customary to tip taxi drivers, hairdressers, cloakroom attendant and in bars, and a 10% tip in restaurants.

International travel

Main Airports

- [Berlin-Tegel Airport](#) (TXL). The airport is situated 8km north west of the centre of Berlin.
Transfer to the city: The most convenient and cost effective way to get to and from the airport is by bus. They connect with the subway and over ground train stations. Taxis are readily available outside the airport terminal; they take around 20 minutes to the city centre.
Taxis: Taxis are readily available outside the Berlin-Tegel Airport's Terminal A1. A taxi to the centre of Berlin takes approximately 20 minutes and costs between €35 and €40.
- [Frankfurt Airport](#) (FRA). The airport is situated 13km south west of the centre of Frankfurt.
Transfer between terminals: The two terminals are connected by the Sky Line people mover.
Transfer to the city: Buses leave regularly for Frankfurt and other destinations from outside Terminals 1 and 2, tickets can be bought from the bus driver. Many hotels provide a free shuttle service to and from the airport. Rail connections are excellent; the airport has a station beneath Terminal 1, from which trains depart regularly to central Frankfurt, 24 hours a day. There is also a long-distance train station open between 5am and midnight, accessible from Terminal 1, from which Intercity and Eurocity trains depart. Taxis are available outside both terminals; the journey to central Frankfurt takes 20-30 minutes.
Taxis: From Frankfurt Airport taxis can be found at either terminal and will take 20-30 minutes for the eight miles (13km) drive to the city centre. Taxis are metered and prices are around US\$31. Be careful of taxi drivers taking longer routes to increase the fare.
- [Hamburg Airport](#) (HAM). The airport is situated 8km from Hamburg.
Transfer to the city: The Airport Express runs frequent buses to the Central Station (Hauptbahnhof). The TRAVELPorter Airport transfer service provides a door-to-door service within the local area. Hamburg Bus Lines service the city centre and other suburban areas. Taxis are readily available outside all terminals; they take around 30 minutes to the city centre.
- [Munich International Airport](#) (MUC). The airport is situated 29km north east of the centre of Munich.
Transfer to the city: Frequent commuter trains run by day and most of the night to various Munich stations, including the main stations for connections to major European cities. Taxis are available, as are buses to many regional destinations and the main train station. It takes about 20 minutes by train and about 45 minutes by road to reach the city centre.
- [Dusseldorf International Airport](#) (DUS). The airport is situated 10km north of Dusseldorf.
Transfer to the city: There are plenty of transport options available at the airport, including taxis (which will cost around €20 to the city centre), limousines, local buses, a Skytrain Shuttle Bus, and the fast and efficient S-Bahn.

- [Cologne-Bonn Airport](#) (CGN). The airport is located 12km southeast of Cologne and 16km north of Bonn.

Transfer between terminals: The two terminals are linked by a walkway.

Transfer to the city: There are several transport options available, including taxis (which cost around €30 to Cologne and around €40 to Bonn), the local bus service, and the S-bahn.

- [Stuttgart International Airport](#) (STR). The airport is located 13 km south of Stuttgart city centre. Transfer to the city: The airport is connected to central Stuttgart by commuter trains, both serving Stuttgart central station. There are several direct bus links to destinations in and around Stuttgart, as well as a 24-hour taxi service, both departing from outside Terminal 1.

Passport/Visas

Entry requirements for Americans: US nationals require a passport for travel to Germany. A visa is not required for a stay of up to 90 days (per half year). If the stay exceeds 90 days, a visa can be obtained after arrival.

Entry requirements for UK nationals: UK nationals require a passport. No visa is required for a stay of up to 90 days in six months if the passport is endorsed British Citizen, British National (Overseas), British Overseas Territories Citizen with the right of abode in the UK, or British Subject with the right of abode in the UK. If the intended stay exceeds 90 days, British Citizens can obtain a visa after arrival. In all other cases a visa is required.

Entry requirements for Canadians: Canadians require a passport for travel to Germany. A visa is not required for a stay of up to 90 days (per half year). If the stay exceeds 90 days, a visa can be obtained after arrival.

Passport/Visa Note: The borderless region known as the Schengen area includes the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. All these countries issue a standard Schengen visa that has a multiple entry option that allows the holder to travel freely within the borders of all. Also required for non-EEA members are onward or return tickets, sufficient funds to provide financial support, and documents for further travel. Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, USA and New Zealand do not need to hold onward or return tickets.

Venue

Please check the [Estrel Convention Center's](#) website.

Hotel Booking Form

For information or queries on booking accommodation please contact:

Estrel Hotel Berlin

Sonnenallee 225

D-12057 Berlin

Tel: +49 (0) 30 6831-22522

Fax: +49 (0)30 6831-2345

Email: reservierung@estrel.com

Participants are responsible for their own travel to and from the event (please refer to [IB cancellation and safety policy](#)).

Health & Safety

Health Care: There are no serious health risks in Germany. The German health service is excellent. There is a reciprocal health agreement with the UK and most EU countries, whose citizens are entitled to free medical and dental treatment on presentation of a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Nationals of other countries should take out medical insurance.

Climate

The weather in Germany varies according to region. The coast to the northwest is influenced by the Atlantic, making for mild but often stormy winters and cool summers. Inland the climate is continental, and winter temperatures tend to be lower. The Alpine regions are colder and wetter, and snow lies in the mountains well into spring. Rain is likely in all regions of Germany throughout the year.

Communication and Internet access

Telephone:

The international country dialing code for Germany is +49; +49 30 for Berlin. The outgoing code is 00, followed by the relevant country code.

Emergency Calls:

110 Police

112 Ambulances

Useful links

- Federal Foreign Office
- [http://www.auswaertiges-
amt.de/diplo/en/WillkommeninD/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/uebersicht.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/en/WillkommeninD/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/uebersicht.html)
- German National Tourist Board, Frankfurt:
<http://www.germany-tourism.de>
- World Travel Guide
http://www.worldtravelguide.net/country/99/country_guide/Europe/Germany.html