



Deutscher Bundestag

Milestones – Setbacks – Sidetracks

The Path to Parliamentary Democracy in Germany –
The Bundestag's exhibition on parliamentary
history in the Deutscher Dom in Berlin





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On Level 1, "Early German parliamentarianism and the revolution of 1848/49", an original black-red-gold "Hambach flag" from the time of the Hambach Festival (1832) is on display. It was restored from October 2014 to January 2015.

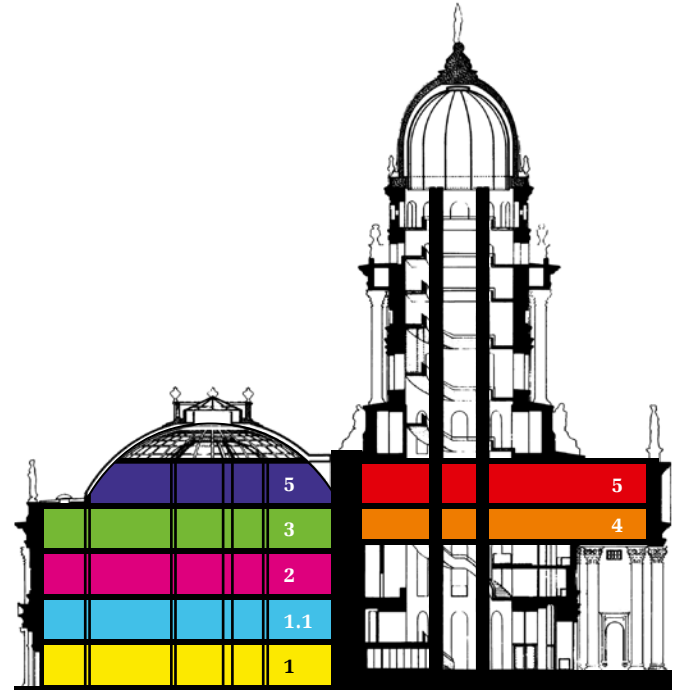
Since 2002, the German Bundestag has presented an exhibition tracing the development of parliamentary democracy in Germany. Spanning five levels of the Deutscher Dom, the exhibition “Milestones – Setbacks – Sidetracks. The Path to Parliamentary Democracy in Germany” focuses chiefly on the periods of German history in which the

foundations were laid for the political order of the Federal Republic of Germany. Parliamentary decision-making processes and conflicts are presented along with the functions and working methods of representative assemblies since 1848. Closely linked to this, the exhibition outlines the emergence, development and work of the political parties and parliamentary groups in Germany.

Looking to the future, this exhibition is designed to invite and encourage visitors to engage with the German Bundestag and the history of parliamentary democracy in Germany, and to actively participate in the further development of German democracy.

The German Bundestag’s exhibition on parliamentary history

- 5 Level 5 (tower)**
 Special exhibition: “The Deutscher Dom – A building in constant change”
- 5 Level 5**
 “Parliamentary architecture in Germany”
- 4 Level 4 (tower)**
 “Women and politics”,
 “European integration”,
 cinema, pupils’ project room
- Level 3**
 “The National Socialist state and sham parliamentarism in the GDR”
- 2 Level 2**
 “Parliamentarism in imperial Germany and in the Weimar Republic”
- 1.1 Level 1.1**
 “Parliamentary democracy in Germany”
- 1 Level 1**
 “Early German parliamentarism and the revolution of 1848/49”



Cross section of the Deutscher Dom.

Finding your way around the Deutscher Dom



Level 1

The exhibition begins with the effects of the French Revolution of 1789 on the German territories. It goes on to describe the liberal and nationalist movement's struggle for political freedom and national unity, and the efforts of the first freely elected German National Assembly of 1848/49 to establish a unified German state, headed by an emperor, but with a parliamentary basis. This section also covers the birth of the political parties and the emergence of parliamentary groups.



Above:
View of Level 1, with
a model of St Paul's
Church in Frankfurt.

Left:
Constitutional articles
on basic rights, from
the Constitution of
the German Empire of
1849 and the Basic Law
of 1949.



Level 1.1

This interactive level of the exhibition, which is state of the art in technical, substantive and conceptual terms, enables visitors to gain a more in-depth understanding of parliamentary democracy in Germany. Modern exhibition technology is used to communicate important facts about the German Parliament to visitors in an entertaining manner. Display screens, multimedia tables and installations, short films and an interactive map of the Bundestag's constituencies are used to explain the electoral system, the passage of legislation and Members' day-to-day work. The exhibition also features original exhibits such as uniforms worn by plenary attendants, flags and the bell from the old plenary chamber in Bonn.



Above:
View of the redesigned level.

Left:
An interactive timeline shows the history of Parliament since 1949, broken down by electoral term.



Left:
The exhibition also offers an overview of the Bundestag's buildings and artworks.

Bottom left:
Next to the entrance to the replica plenary chamber are two display cases with historical exhibits relating to "The Bundestag in Bonn" (left) and "The Bundestag's move from Bonn to Berlin" (right).

Bottom right:
This multimedia station consists of a table with an integrated touchscreen and a screen which simulates the view from a Member's office. Using the touchscreen, visitors can launch short films explaining how a parliamentary sitting week is organised.





“Plenary sitting” role-playing game

The heart of the exhibition is the replica plenary chamber, which is inspired by the real plenary chamber in the Reichstag Building. Visitors aged 14 and above can take on the role of a Member of the Bundestag: on Thursdays in weeks when the Bundestag is sitting, visitors can participate in the “plenary sitting” role-playing game and experience first-hand what a Bundestag plenary sitting is like (starting every hour on the hour between 9.00 hrs and noon and between 14.00 and 17.00 hrs). In addition, the Bundestag’s sittings are broadcast live on large screens in the Deutscher Dom’s plenary chamber.

Further information about the “plenary sitting” role-playing game can be found on page 28 of this leaflet. Bookings and enquiries should be directed to the Exhibition Office at the Deutscher Dom.

Exhibition Office:

Tel.: +49 30 227-30432 or -30431

Email: historischeausstellung@bundestag.de

Website: <http://www.bundestag.de/en/visittheBundestag/dome/histaust>



Former Bismarck memorial in Frankfurt am Main: artist Peter Gragert created this sculpture in 2001 based on historical photographs; in the background are exhibition displays relating to the topic: "From the Prussian constitutional conflict to the First World War".

Level 2

Another focal point is the development of parliamentarism in the Empire from its foundation in 1871, with the German Imperial Diet or Reichstag, whose home from 1894 onwards was the Reichstag Building. The parliament was formed on the basis of general, secret, equal and direct elections. However, women did not have the right to vote, and Parliament's influence was essentially limited to legislation. Germany's first parliamentary democracy in the Weimar Republic, in the wake of the First World War and the November Revolution of 1918, is the exhibition's next main topic on this level. The Weimar Republic era was defined by the consequences of defeat in the First

World War, the Treaty of Versailles and inflation, severe internal clashes about the form the state should take, the consequences of the global economic crisis from the autumn of 1929, and the problematic status of the President of the Reich in the Weimar Constitution, which became evident under Reich President Paul von Hindenburg in particular. In the "Golden Twenties", the Republic experienced a phase of apparent internal peace and stability, which gave way to the "German catastrophe" (Friedrich Meinecke) with the establishment of the dictatorial "Führer state" under Adolf Hitler.



Level 3

A detailed account is provided of the National Socialists' elimination of Germany's democratic and parliamentary constitutional order from January 1933 onwards. The Reichstag, which continued to exist until 1945, became a meaningless acclamatory institution of the Nazi dictatorship.

This level of the exhibition also covers the fresh political start that was made after 1945 in the various zones of occupation, and the emergence and development of two different political systems until German reunification in October 1990.



Top left:
Exhibition displays and installation on the topic of the "Nazi dictatorship".

Top right:
"Photographs of the Reichstag Building during the post-war period; in the background is a map of the occupation zones following the Second World War.

Left: Mass demonstration in East Berlin on 4 November 1989.



Above:
The exhibition's cinema
can seat 54 visitors.

Below:
Models relating to par-
liamentary architectural
history.

Cinema, Level 4

Films about various topics relating to parliamentary history and about the German Bundestag's tasks and functions are screened each day at 14.00 hrs in the exhibition's cinema. The current programme can be found on pages 28 and 29 of this leaflet.

Level 5

Directly under the building's dome is an exhibition of models relating to the history of parliamentary architecture in Germany. The top floor of the tower shows the history of the Deutscher Dom, tracing its development from the first small church building (1708) to the German Bundestag's exhibition centre.



The “New Church” or “German Church”, designed by Martin Grünberg, was built from 1700 to 1708 on the south side of the Gendarmenmarkt, opposite the “French Church of Friedrichstadt”, as a place of worship for the adherents of the reformed religion living in the Friedrichstadt district of Berlin. The floor

plan of the church was unusual, forming an equilateral pentagon, with five wings protruding from its sides, each with curved internal walls. From 1780, dome-topped towers were added to both churches, which soon led to the word *Dom*, meaning both a dome and a cathedral, becoming established as their popular name.

After suffering severe damage in the Second World War, the Deutscher Dom remained a ruin for almost 40 years. In the 1980s, the German Democratic Republic began to reconstruct the

building, in which it intended to establish a Berlin Art Gallery. The demise of the GDR, however, put a stop to the reconstruction work until the Deutscher Dom was finally developed into a modern exhibition centre for the German Bundestag from 1993 to 1996. Since 2002, the building has housed the Bundestag’s exhibition “Milestones – Setbacks – Sidetracks. The Path to Parliamentary Democracy in Germany” across five levels.

A historic building: the Deutscher Dom



The Deutscher Dom on Berlin's Gendarmenmarkt, illuminated as part of the 23rd Classic Open Air Festival, in July 2014.

Information services

(free of charge)

Guided tours

- For individuals and groups of up to 10 people (no booking required): a half-hour tour on a selection of topics covered in the exhibition is offered every 30 minutes between 11.00 and 17.00 hrs; by prior arrangement, tours can also be held in English and French.
- For groups of between 10 and 50 people: bookings and enquiries can be directed to the Exhibition Office at the Deutscher Dom. (Duration: 50 minutes)

The contact details are on the back cover of this leaflet.

Projects for school groups

On request and subject to prior written booking, educational projects (lasting 1 to 3 hours) on the following subjects are available for pupils in the lower and upper years of secondary school:

- Project 1: “Fundamental rights and freedoms in German parliamentary history” (focusing on parliamentary history)
- Project 2: “Parliamentary democracy in Germany – the German Bundestag’s tasks and functions” (focusing on parliamentary practice).

These projects are also available in English by prior arrangement. Projects for school groups can be scheduled for any day when the Deutscher Dom is open (other than Mondays) from 10.00 hrs.

Bookings and enquiries can be directed to the Exhibition Office at the Deutscher Dom. The contact details are on the back cover of this leaflet.

“Plenary sitting” role-playing game (German only)

The “plenary sitting” role-playing game in the Deutscher Dom lasts 45 minutes and is offered on Thursdays in weeks when the Bundestag is sitting, at 9.00 hrs, 10.00 hrs, 11.00 hrs, noon, 14.00 hrs, 15.00 hrs, 16.00 hrs and 17.00 hrs.

Participants learn about the work of Members of the Bundestag, the passage of legislation, how a sitting week is organised, the plenary chamber’s structure and seating arrangements, the functions of Members of Parliament, and how a plenary sitting is organised. Bookings and enquiries can be directed to the Exhibition Office at the Deutscher Dom. The contact details are on the back cover of this leaflet.

Film screenings (German only)

No booking required. From Tuesday to Sunday, various films relating to political history are shown at 14.00 hrs in the Deutscher Dom’s cinema (which seats 54 people).

Tuesday

- “Kaiserreich und Weimarer Republik – 1871 bis 1933”
Duration: 90 minutes

Wednesday

- “Das Dritte Reich – 1933 bis 1945”
Duration: 90 minutes

Thursday

- “Herz der Demokratie. Einblicke in die Arbeit des Deutschen Bundestages”

Duration: 15 minutes

- “Parlamentarier unter dem Hakenkreuz. Die Verfolgung von Reichstagsabgeordneten der Weimarer Republik – 1933 to 1945”

Duration: 50 minutes

Friday

- Documentary about the film and light show in Berlin’s parliamentary district, “Dem deutschen Volke – eine parlamentarische Spurensuche, vom Reichstag zum Bundestag”

Duration: 30 minutes

- “Das Reichstagsgebäude in der deutschen Geschichte”

Duration: 45 minutes

Saturday

- “Applause for Felix - A day at the Bundestag”

Duration: 30 minutes

- “Der Umzug: vom Rhein an die Spree”

Duration: 84 minutes

Sunday

- “Herz der Demokratie. Einblicke in die Arbeit des Deutschen Bundestages”

Duration: 15 minutes

- Documentary about the film and light show in Berlin’s parliamentary district, “Dem deutschen Volke – eine parlamentarische Spurensuche, vom Reichstag zum Bundestag”

Duration: 30 minutes

Services offered by the Visitors’ Service of the German Bundestag

Information about other free services for which advance booking in writing is required (attending a plenary sitting, visiting the dome of the Reichstag Building, attending a lecture or taking part in a guided tour of the parliamentary buildings organised by the Visitors’ Service) is available from the Visitors’ Service of the German Bundestag:

Deutscher Bundestag

Besucherdienst

Platz der Republik 1

11011 Berlin

Fax: + 49 30 227-30027

besucherdienst@bundestag.de

www.bundestag.de

(“Visit the Bundestag” section)

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The German Bundestag’s exhibition on parliamentary history
Deutscher Dom, Gendarmenmarkt 1, 10117 Berlin

Exhibition Office at the Deutscher Dom

Bookings, information and advice:

Tel: + 49 30 227-30431 or + 49 30 227-30432

Fax: + 49 30 227-30435

Email: historischeausstellung@bundestag.de

Detailed information about all services is available online at
www.bundestag.de/deutscherdom

Opening hours

Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10.00 to 18.00 hrs,

last admission: 17.45 hrs (open until 19.00 hrs from May to
September, last admission: 18.45 hrs)

On public holidays, the exhibition is also open on Mondays

Admission: free of charge.

How to get here

U 2, Stadtmitte station;

U 6, Französische Straße station

Audio guides

Audio guides in German, English and French are available
free of charge.