Stadt Heidelberg
Marktplatz 10
69117 Heidelberg
Telephone 06221 58-10580
Telefax 06221 58-10900
stadt@heidelberg.de
www.heidelberg.de

Welcome Home!
This is your Heidelberg Handbook

www.heidelberg.de
Dear new citizens,
I’m glad you’ve chosen our city.

Your new home is a city well known for its natural beauty, its quality of life and its many opportunities. Heidelberg is rich – in knowledge, tolerance and openness; and rich in educational and cultural institutions.

We want you to feel comfortable as a new resident. You probably have lots of questions, especially in the beginning: Where can I register? Where will my kids go to school? What can I do in my free time? Maybe even: Where can I get involved in something interesting?

We’ve compiled the most important questions and answers for you in this brochure. I hope it offers you a good overview to Heidelberg and where to go for more information.

Our citizen’s service is available for you at either 06221 58-10580 or 115, the central number for public authorities.

I wish you a good start in Heidelberg.
Kind regards from your Mayor
Dr. Eckart Würzner
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Overview

Life in Heidelberg

Heidelberg is considered one of the most beautiful cities in Germany. Millions of people visit our world-famous city on the Neckar each year to enjoy the castle, the Old Town and the river amid the hills and forest of Odes.

The 150,000 citizens in Heidelberg particularly like the high quality of life. A recent study showed that 98% feel very comfortable in their city. This is no surprise because Heidelberg has many strengths:

- **Family-friendly**: Heidelberg’s support for families is among the best in the country: exemplary day care, a choice of outstanding schools and holiday programs, attractive playgrounds, child-friendly transport and much more.

- **City of Science**: Heidelberg University ranks among the top universities in the world. Alongside the University Hospital, many renowned research institutes like the German Cancer Research Center, knowledge-based companies and other universities also make Heidelberg a leading global center of science.

- **International**: About 45,000 people in Heidelberg have an immigrant background. They’ve enriched our city by bringing with them the culture of 160 different countries.

- **High recreational value**: Heidelberg’s natural beauty, its pleasant climate and urban flair make for some of the best recreation in Germany.

- **Strong business**: The city offers more than 110,000 jobs. Nearly half of these are in knowledge-intensive services.

- **Bastion of culture**: Heidelberg offers a wide-ranging array of culture from music, theater, dance, fine arts and film to literature and much more.

- **Vibrant city development**: Housing development is a top priority. Heidelberg’s newest district Bahnstadt is a pioneering project. It offers housing for 12,000 people. The city is also converting former US-military areas into attractive quarters.

- **Civic participation**: The citizens of Heidelberg are methodically involved in municipal planning. They give the City Council and the administration important input. Heidelberg’s “project list” informs about public projects at least 6 months before a decision is made. This is a unique process of civic participation.

- **Civic commitment**: Heidelberg has a diverse and well-organized range of volunteer work. The engagement of citizens is invaluable for our city and greatly boosts communal solidarity.

- **High level of security**: Heidelberg is a city with an exceptionally low crime rate. The public sense of security is very high.

- **Ecofriendly**: The city on the Neckar has received many awards in the field of climate and environmental protection. Heidelberg is one of 19 model cities in the “master plan 100 % climate protection”.

Heidelberg in Numbers

- Round about 109 km² total area
- 70 percent green spaces
- 30 percent settled

- 1196, first historic mention
- 1386, university founded

- 150,000 inhabitants
- About 35 percent are younger than 30 years
- 16 percent are older than 65 years
- 35 percent of the working population are academics;
  German average is 12 percent

- More than 110,000 jobs
- 87 percent in service sector
- Over 60 percent of the workforce is employed in the
  knowledge-intensive service sector
- 38,000 students
- 30,000 of them at Heidelberg University
- 3.5 million visitors a year
Unique in 15 Ways

The City of Heidelberg is organized into 15 districts. Each has its own distinct identity:

- Old Town
- Bahnstadt
- Bergheim
- Boxberg
- Emmertsgrund
- Handschuhsheim
- Kirchheim
- Neuenheim
- Pfaffengrund
- Rohrbach
- Schlierbach
- Südstadt
- Weststadt
- Wieblingen
- Ziegelhausen

Its diverse districts make Heidelberg an attractive and lively city. If you’re interested in reshaping the city environment, you can play an active role in one of the many district associations or clubs. For more information on districts and a short portrait of life there, see www.heidelberg.de
**First Steps**

**Arriving in Heidelberg**
The City of Heidelberg offers you help and information for a fast orientation and life in your new environment.

**Citizen’s service**
Our citizen’s service team is available on week days from 8 am to 6 pm for questions about any public service in Heidelberg, the province of Baden-Württemberg or the federal level. Just call the **main number 06221 58-10580 or 115, the central number for public authorities.** They will connect you with the relevant contact person. In urgent matters you can also call 06221 58-10580 after 6 pm or on weekends and holidays. Administrative offices are available for citizens as a **local point of contact:**

- Administrative Office Old Town
- Administrative Office Boxberg / Emmertsgrund
- Administrative Office Handschuhsheim
- Administrative Office Kirchheim
- Administrative Office Central (for the districts Bergheim, Südstadt, Weststadt and Bahnstadt’
- Administrative Office Neuenheim
- Administrative Office Pfaffengrund
- Administrative Office Rohrbach
- Administrative Office Wieblingen
- Administrative Office Ziegelhausen/Schlierbach

There, you can find most administrative services, for example: Reporting your residence, registering a motor vehicle, getting a parking permit or yellow garbage bags, the garbage calendar or an international driver’s license, applying for a Heidelberg-Pass / Heidelberg-Pass+, a housing eligibility voucher or even a night-taxi voucher for women.

In addition to the consultation hours, you can find lots of important information in the **Online Citizen’s Service:** From A for “Abfallkalender” to Z for “Zulassungsformular”. Please check **www.heidelberg.de/buergerservice**

**Online City Map**
An overview of Heidelberg at **www.heidelberg.de/stadtplan**

**Heidelberg-App**
The official Heidelberg-App offers comprehensive services. For example, it shows where the next playground or glass container is or when the garbage will be emptied. The information is automatically adapted to your location. For more information, see **www.meinheidelberg.de**

**In case of emergency:**
Medical stand-by services and the University Hospital
Alte Eppelheimer Straße 35
Telephone: 06221 19292

Call center of the University Clinic
Telephone: 06221 560

All addresses and opening hours are available at: **www.heidelberg.de/buergeramt**
Relax and enjoy
If you’ve been here for a while you’ll know that Heidelberg fulfills your expectations. Its setting on the Neckar amidst the Forest of Odes is synonymous with a wide selection and many choices in the field of culture and free time.

Culture and free time
Music, film, theater and the arts of all epochs and styles, entertainment and celebrations, sports and relaxation – Heidelberg offers many kinds of activities.

The City of Heidelberg refurbished its theater and reopened in 2012 – a landmark in Germany’s theater scene. In times, when theaters are being closed elsewhere, Heidelberg has modernized and expanded its own. This was only made possible by the exceptional commitment of private donors. Citizens and businesses donated around 20 million EUR to this cause. For more information and the theater program, see www.theaterheidelberg.de

The Electoral Palatinate Museum was founded in 1879. Its exhibitions and collections offer unique insights into the region and its capital Heidelberg. Check out: www.museum-heidelberg.de

Friends of contemporary art can find many current works in the galleries of the art club located beside the Electoral Palatinate Museum. More information under www.hdkv.de

Finally, there are many independently operated cultural institutions in Heidelberg: Halle02, the Kulturfenster, the German-American Institute (DAI) or the Karlstorbahnhof. There is a list of all cultural institutions, sports facilities and free time activities under “Go Out“ at www.heidelberg.de
Essential **top festivals** in the metropolitan region such as Heidelberger Frühling, the Heidelberg Castle Festival or Enjoy Jazz are held in Heidelberg each year. For an overview of up to 200 events a day, see [www.heidelberg.de/veranstaltungen](http://www.heidelberg.de/veranstaltungen)

Want to enjoy the outdoors in your free time? To do sports, to relax or to learn something new? There are lots of options for any such wish. Among the highlights are the **world-famous Heidelberg Castle** and the mountain railway up to the Königstuhl.

More than 500,000 visitors come to the **Heidelberg Zoo** every year - not just to see elephants, monkeys and owls, but also to learn about the conservation of such species and their habitats. Rest and relaxation is available at any time of year at one of Heidelberg’s **five swimming pools**, its **130 sports clubs**, its 22 public sports facilities and 40 gymnasiums. The environmental program “Naturally Heidelberg” lets you experience nature and the forests around the city in a new way. The “Explo Heidelberg” in the technology park offers fascinating hands-on experiments in the field of natural sciences.

The **Intercultural Center** is a truly international venue, offering a starting point for people both with and without an immigrant background. Here, different cultures, clubs and institutions can network and get together. For more information, see [www.izig-heidelberg.de](http://www.izig-heidelberg.de)

The City of Heidelberg is upgrading its “Culture of Welcome” with a new **International Welcome Center** in the Landfried-komplex. This project called “Welcome to Heidelberg” seeks to offer special administrative services to new residents.

The Heidelberg shopping guide is a great overview of more than 500 stores and businesses in the city. The guide is available in stores, at city hall or at the Office for Economic Development and Employment. You can also download it at [www.heidelberg.de/wirtschaft](http://www.heidelberg.de/wirtschaft)

If you wish to stay indoors, our public library has a wide range of literature, films and international press on hand for you at [www.heidelberg.de/stadtbuecherei](http://www.heidelberg.de/stadtbuecherei)
An overture for all ages
Heidelberg is one of the most family-friendly cities in Germany. It has the highest quota of day care and child care centers and also offers a broad selection of high standard schools.

Education
Education has a long tradition in Heidelberg. It’s both deeply rooted and continuously developed here. And it extends far beyond our excellent university and college programs to include services for all ages. The city ranks at the top in Baden-Württemberg in the early advancement of children – it is also national leader in school learning. For more information, see [www.heidelberg.de/bildung](http://www.heidelberg.de/bildung)

Heidelberg wants to help school children to reach the best possible graduation result. To do this all the elementary and special-needs schools in Heidelberg offer extra language courses. Beginning in 2013, this program was extended to grades five, six and seven at middle and common schools.

While the Heidelberg School Support System (HÜS) helps academically weak students, the Hector-Kinderakademie and the Hector-Seminar fosters the academically talented.

Naturally, this includes students with special needs. Heidelberg has also developed workable support systems to deal with issues of social inclusion.

Adults also have many options to pursue further education and training. Older citizens can choose between several offers, like the courses at the “Akademie für Ältere” ranging from Astronomy or Chinese to Creative Writing. For more information, see [www.akademie-fuer-aeltere.de](http://www.akademie-fuer-aeltere.de)
Family
Achieving a life-work balance is not a dream, but already a reality in many parts of Heidelberg.

- Day care centers for one year-olds, including full day supervision by qualified personnel with flexible working hours.

- Elementary schools offer lunch, homework supervision and after school care.

- Secondary schools are close-by with the best individual profile for your children.

Heidelberg leads the Province of Baden-Württemberg in day care and quality assurance. The city has enough care centers to absorb children from neighboring towns. 80 percent of elementary students use our program for after-school care.

The German Learning Atlas published by the Bertelsmann Foundation gave Heidelberg highest marks: Heidelberg is the German winner in the category for “school learning”. For more information for families, see www.heidelberg.de/familie or the parent portal www.meinkind.de (helpful for anyone seeking a nanny, day care center of holiday care program).

Senior Citizens
Heidelberg is also a wonderful city to grow old with. The pages at www.heidelberg.de/senioren give an overview of the wide range of information and services, as well as many events to become and stay active. The brochure “Guidebook for Senior Citizens” is available at the Citizens Service in City Hall.
There are centers for senior citizens in eleven of Heidelberg districts. They offer great programs for free time, ranging from memory training to hiking trips. The City of Heidelberg strongly emphasizes health promotion among its senior citizens and we have many partners that offer customized movement training.

The City of Heidelberg wants senior citizens to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. There are many local social offices that offer household or nursing services. The “Pflegestützpunkt Heidelberg” is happy to advise and facilitate any needed services (Tel: 06221 58-49000; email: pflegestuetzpunkt@heidelberg.de)

Structural changes to your home can sometime help you to keep living there. You can find information on subsidies for refurbishments or the municipal aid program “barrier-free living” at the “Wohnungsberatung der Stadt Heidelberg”

Social Affairs
We want all people in Heidelberg to be able to live independently and self-directed. To do this, the city offers many programs that give citizens with low income the chance to take part in social life.

Along with the Heidelberg-Pass and the Heidelberg-Pass+ you get free or reduced admission to many cultural, sportive or other events. Carriers of such a Pass are also exempted from payment in the two last years of kindergarten. Applicants can get both types of Heidelberg-Pass at any Citizen’s Service Office.

Carriers of such a Pass can also get a social ticket. This is a subsidized travel ticket that allows you to use trains and busses at a cheaper rate. They are available at the RNV-Customer Center at the Main Station; for more information, see www.rnv-online.de

With its aid programs, the City of Heidelberg supports its citizens directly and contributes to affordable housing. For more information, see www.heidelberg.de/foerderprogramm
Delightfully Eco-friendly

Environmental Protection & Sustainability
Heidelberg has a long-term environmental, climate and conservation policy – locally and internationally. The city has twice received the European Sustainable City Award. Mayor Dr. Eckart Würzner is the President of Energy Cities, a network of about 1,000 like-minded cities in 30 countries. For more information, see www.heidelberg.de/umwelt

Masterplan 100% Climate Protection
Heidelberg is one of 19 model cities in Germany that take part in the program “Masterplan 100% Climate Protection” of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Conservation, Construction and Reactor Security. The goal is to become a climate-neutral municipality: Heidelberg wants to lower its CO₂-emissions by 95 percent and to cut its public energy use in half until the year 2050. The city is working to achieve this target together with citizens, public actors and institutions. The aid program is set up as a four-year program. For more information, see www.heidelberg.de/masterplan100

Passive Housing: Bahnstadt
The City of Heidelberg has set out on an ambitious climate protection project in the Bahnstadt: The entire district is being built in passive housing. This means that heating in the Bahnstadt comes entirely from renewable energies. The only project of its kind in Germany, it’s already being called an international role model. For more information, see www.heidelberg-bahnstadt.de

Heidelberg is consistent and ecological aspects play a major role. There are many examples, like tending to flora and fauna in the context of a species conservation plan or reconnecting their natural habitats. Policies such as insulating buildings or using rainwater are also backed by municipal fund programs. And: Heidelberg teaches future generations. The program
“Education for Sustainable Development” teaches children about the ecological effects of their actions. The popular event “Naturally Heidelberg” brings nature and conservation closer to both kids and adults.

Mobility

Short distances are good transport
Eco-conscious mobility is important to Heidelberg. The city is therefore expanding both its public transport and its bike traffic systems.

Public Transport
A third of all citizens in Heidelberg primarily use public transport. In 2011, the City Council adopted the Heidelberg Mobility Net - an ambitious and encompassing development of our tram system. For timetables, see www.vrn.de

Bike Traffic
Bicycles are the most popular means of transportation in Heidelberg. With 30 percent of citizens on bikes nearly every day and a bike traffic system of 120 km, Heidelberg is a model city for RadKULTUR, an initiative of the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Baden-Württemberg. In 2012, Heidelberg was designated as a “bike-friendly city”.

Well-connected to Autobahn and Airports
You can reach far-away destinations without a fuss: By car, you are on the A5 Autobahn within several minutes, and at Frankfurt Airport or in Stuttgart within an hour. You can reach these destinations even faster by train. Also, intercity bus lines run from the main station to destinations all over Germany.
Vibrant City Development

Dynamic Heidelberg
When planning infrastructure and residential areas Heidelberg looks for sustainable development – ecologically, economically and socially.

Heidelberg is an attractive place: Many people want to live and work here. This is most evident on the housing market. The city has a family-friendly housing policy to keep living in Heidelberg affordable, especially for families. There are public fund programs for rental space and purchased property; family-friendly housing is available in our new district Bahnstadt and low-priced housing is a major priority for the conversion areas. Mayor Dr. Eckart Würzner initiated an alliance for affordable housing in 2013 to implement this.

Bahnstadt: a vibrant mix of living, science and business
Heidelberg is developing new spaces to live and work in the Bahnstadt. Already the largest passive house community in the world, this district also presents a vibrant mix of living, science and business. About 5,000 people will live and 7,000 people will work here, mostly in research and science-based firms. With more than 108 hectares it is nearly the same size as the Old Town.

The Bahnstadt is one of the largest development projects in Germany. It will include green areas and open spaces, streets and watercourses, kindergartens and an elementary school, a citizen’s center, a cinema and a shopping center. Demand is so high that development is already two years ahead of schedule. For more information, see www.heidelberg-bahnstadt.de

Conversion opens unique perspectives for urban planning
The areas recently vacated by the US-Army in Heidelberg offer new and unique perspectives for urban planning. Together, these zones cover almost 200 hectares – twice the size of the Old Town. This presents Heidelberg with the chance of a lifetime. To promote dialogue and bring stakeholders together, the City of Heidelberg put the focus on town hall meetings to shape new “guidelines for conversion”. The overall aim is now to create dynamic and socially balanced districts, each with an own identity. For more information, see www.heidelberg.de/konversion

IBA Heidelberg: “Knowledge based Urbanism”
Heidelberg has launched an International Building Exhibition (IBA) with the motto “Knowledge based Urbanism”. Over the next 10 years, it will explore questions of city development in a knowledge society and how these can be translated into projects. The IBA will deal with the entire municipal area and look at many aspects of life in Heidelberg. To implement this, IBA offers citizens a forum to participate and to shape their city. For more information, see www.iba.heidelberg.de
Civic Participation

Taking part in important decisions
Strengthening civic participation - beyond the legal framework - is an important goal for Heidelberg.

The City of Heidelberg wants citizens to play a direct role in current municipal issues like conversion, the conference center or the “Masterplan 100% Climate Protection”. To achieve this together, our citizens, the City Council and the public administration developed their very own guidelines for civic participation.

All the citizens of Heidelberg can now read up on ongoing and future projects at a very early stage. They are on a list of intended projects that informs about the current phase, the costs and the contact person. This list also governs the dialogue between the city and the citizens, giving them a direct part in important decisions. Our ‘coordinator for civic participation’ is happy to answer your questions about this process. For more information, see www.heidelberg.de/buergerbeteiligung

Civic Commitment

For good cooperation
The City of Heidelberg has been actively supporting civic commitment for over 15 years.

You can find the coordinator for civic commitment in the Mayor’s department at city hall. Once every year, the city pays tribute to citizens with extraordinary public commitment – and bestows them with the citizen’s award.

An important partner for civic commitment is the “market for voluntary service” run by the “PARITÄTISCHER Wohlfahrtverband”. Interested citizens can go there to get involved in much-needed and fulfilling work. The organization has an online database for voluntary and charitable services at www.freiwilligenboerse-heidelberg.de

Our coordinator for civic commitment is happy to answer your questions. For more information, see www.heidelberg.de/buergerengagement
Partner Cities

For international understanding
As an international city with over three million guests a year and about 45,000 citizens with an immigrant background, Heidelberg has six partner cities. They are with the French city Montpellier, with Cambridge in the United Kingdom, with Rehovot in Israel, Bautzen in Eastern Germany, Simferopol on the Crimean Peninsula and with Kumamoto in Japan. The focus of these partnerships is “city of science”.

Online Services

Heidelberg Administration – Official website of the City of Heidelberg
www.heidelberg.de

Online Citizens’ Services
www.heidelberg.de/buergerservice

Event Schedule
www.heidelberg.de/veranstaltungen

Heidelberg-App
www.meinheidelberg.de