

Foreword by Steen Krach

Berlin has the courage. Because this is where people live who can overcome walls – both the physical ones and those in people's minds. People who cherish freedom and those who are building a new life here. People who keep our city moving every day and those who provide stability for our society. People who have to find a new path for themselves, and those who create something new – in culture and science, in businesses and clubs. People who work to ensure our children have a better future.

These people and our city deserve, once again, bold policies that do not settle for mediocrity. A social democratic policy that consistently ensures affordability – with a strong economy and fair wages as the foundation for a good life that people can afford. And with a housing policy that creates new homes and puts a stop to rent gouging. A social democratic policy that opens up equal opportunities for all children through good, free education. A social democratic policy for which solidarity and diversity are non-negotiable commitments, and which restores a sense of security to the people of Berlin – whether they're out and about in their daily lives or on the playground, at work or after work, looking for a doctor's appointment or a new flat. A sense of security that protects our city from crises and defends democracy against its internal and external enemies.

We are pursuing social democratic policies that overcome division and bring Berlin back together. Because our city needs greater cohesion and, through a sense of community in action, can achieve everything it sets out to do for the future.

Together with the international community, we can develop bold visions for

sustainable cities and celebrate major sporting events in equal measure. We can tackle homelessness and, with a determined transport policy, achieve the vision of zero road deaths. We can restore Berlin's legendary coolness and, with more green spaces instead of grey, create liveable neighbourhoods and provide relief from the heat. We can become the number one hub for innovation and be the city of inclusion. We can ensure that the best medical care is right here at home. We can make Berlin the most family-friendly metropolis in Europe, one that embraces all forms of family.

We want a Berlin that sees itself as one big family. A Berlin that takes responsibility – for one another and for those who need help. The foundation for this is a policy that ensures Berlin functions smoothly, on both a small and a large scale. A policy that clearly defines responsibilities and, where necessary, dares to make a genuine fresh start, from the boroughs right up to the Senate. To achieve this, Berlin finally needs a Governing Mayor once again who does not endlessly debate responsibility, but takes responsible decisions.

Through bold social democratic policies, we want to restore people's confidence and trust in our city.

A Berlin where we can get about reliably day and night, come rain or shine, whether on foot, on a bike, by bus or train, or behind the wheel. A Berlin that is a good home for us, no matter where we come from, who we love, where we work or what we believe in.

A Berlin of which we can once again be proud together.

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Taking action so that everyone benefits

Berlin is an economic powerhouse. It stands on many pillars: the diversity of our industries is our greatest strength. Anyone works in Berlin should benefit tangibly from this – with good wages and reliable prospects for an affordable everyday life. We promote growth for the benefit of all and lay the foundations for a life that people can afford. We invest in business development and infrastructure and aim for attractive

working conditions based on collective agreements rather than wage dumping. We are strengthening our small and medium-sized enterprises, which are firmly rooted in the region, boosting industrial growth in the capital region, and making Berlin the number one innovation hub in Europe. To achieve this, we are rely on both existing strengths and the vast potential of future technologies – together, we'll make it happen for a successful and affordable Berlin!

Investments in a well-functioning city

A decade of investment

investments become visible, we will strengthen Berliners' confidence in

Our city has a massive need for investment. On the one hand, we must modernise the existing infrastructure – be it bridges and roads, hospitals, fire stations, police stations or schools. Much of it is showing its age and is in urgent need of refurbishment.

On the other hand, the changes of our time are forcing us to make new, major investments. The Influx of hundreds of thousands of people makes a historic expansion of new housing construction necessary. Climate change demands decisive investment in the energy and heating transition, as well as in climate adaptation. And technological change requires investment in digitalisation.

For years now, the SPD Berlin has been ensuring that the state significantly increases investment from the budget and from the specially established 'Infrastructure and Growing City' (SIWA) special fund. The 'Infrastructure' special fund, which the SPD secured at federal level in 2025, now enables a further increase so that we can meet these investment challenges.

In the next legislative period, therefore, the focus must be on implementation: these investments must be put into practice. To achieve this, we need effective administrative action – and, above all, political consistency. We want to accelerate the renewal and needs-based expansion of infrastructure in the utility networks and transport routes. That is why we are consolidating the planning departments and construction operations of the state-owned enterprises under one roof. After all, constant changes to objectives and plans are detrimental to the success of investment. In doing so, all investments will be consistently aligned with gender equality policy. After all, good infrastructure strengthens gender equality and takes the strain off people with a high burden of care work in particular – often women. Through gender mainstreaming, we promote participation, reduce inequalities and strengthen women's economic independence.

Our goal is clear: in the next government, we will shape a decade of investment. As these

a government capable of taking effective action and, ultimately, in democracy.

just as significant as the health sector.

Our investment priorities

We consider investment to be necessary, above all, in seven key areas. This is also reflected in the allocation of the federal government's special fund:

Firstly, the construction of new housing (→ see chapter **MORE HOUSING FOR BERLIN**).

Secondly, the refurbishment of our roads and bridges, as well as the transition to sustainable transport with a focus on public transport (→ see the chapter **'SAFE MOBILITY FOR ALL BERLINERS'**).

Thirdly, investment in the energy and heating transition, climate protection and climate adaptation (→ see the chapter on **CLIMATE PROTECTION**).

Fourthly, the refurbishment and construction of schools, nurseries and social infrastructure in local neighbourhoods (→ see the chapter **'CONTINUING THE SCHOOL-BUILDING INITIATIVE'**).

Fifthly, the refurbishment of our hospitals (→ see the chapter 'Securing Hospital Care'), universities and research infrastructure (→ see the chapter **'Securing Funding for Higher Education and Science'**).

Sixthly, the refurbishment of our administrative buildings, fire stations and police stations (→ see chapter **'A COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICE FORCE AND FIRE SERVICE'**).

And seventhly, investment in digitalisation.

Transition to a digital society

Responsibility for the expansion of digital infrastructure, particularly networks, lies largely with the federal government. However, Berlin also bears responsibility: we coordinate the many construction sites and develop applications designed to make the administration more accessible, faster, more productive and more responsive (→ see chapter **'A STRONG ADMINISTRATION'**).

By the end of the next legislative term, Berlin is to have a high-performance infrastructure in which start-ups, technology-based companies, artificial intelligence and open data form a cluster

As a state, we are accelerating the roll-out of fibre-optic networks across the board. That is why we are stepping up funding incentives in areas where

telecommunications companies are currently unable to roll out networks on a commercially viable basis.

Decent work and securing a skilled and ‘ ‘ workforce

Decent work means being able to live a self-determined life with dignity and participate in society. It means a safe, healthy and discrimination-free environment. Democracy can only function where this is the case. This is the only way to foster social cohesion, even across differences. That is why we are developing Berlin into a fair, diverse and sustainable business hub where social justice and economic progress go hand in hand.

Equal pay for equal work

This includes ensuring that men and women in our city are finally paid equally. We are closing the gender pay gap. European law already provides the basis for this. We are campaigning for the EU Pay Transparency Directive to become law in Germany as well. Our aim is to create gender-equitable corporate cultures, which guarantee equal opportunities for all genders.

Unlocking potential through skills development

The economic situation in Germany is tense – many companies are cutting jobs, and unemployment has also risen in Berlin. That is why we need a major push for skills development. After all, digitalisation, demographic change and the climate-friendly transition are transforming the world of work.

Through its skilled labour strategy, the state is helping companies to unlock untapped potential – for example, amongst women, people with a migrant background, older workers and people with disabilities or chronic illnesses.

We want to strengthen adult education (→ see the chapter **on ADULT EDUCATION**) and make academic continuing education a statutory responsibility of

universities (→ see chapter **CREATING MODERN STUDY CONDITIONS**).

We are also expanding continuing education and training networks and promoting projects based on social partnership. The Berlin Social Partner Dialogue is creating a permanent

forum in which trade unions, employers and politicians can jointly shape the future of work. We will introduce and provide financial support for ‘Good Work and Training’ officers in all of Berlin’s boroughs. We want to support the DGB Good Work Index and continue its evaluation for Berlin.

At the same time, we are promoting employees’ AI skills across sectors and occupations and strengthening their rights regarding the use of AI in companies.

Active labour market policy and participation

Over 200,000 people are registered as unemployed in Berlin. For us, this is not a situation to be tolerated, but a challenge to be tackled. We are combating long-term unemployment and youth unemployment through active labour market policies, whilst at the same time promoting social inclusion. Proven programmes such as JOB POINTS, Bildungsberatung Berlin, JobCoaching Berlin and the Berlin Unemployment Centre (BALZ) will be continued. In doing so, we are specifically addressing gender-specific barriers to the labour market. We are strengthening support for returning to work after periods spent raising a family or providing care, expand counselling and training services – particularly for women – and support the transition to employment that provides a living wage.

To strengthen publicly funded employment, we aim to create 500 new jobs annually through the “Social Enterprises” support programme: these enterprises employ the long-term unemployed in market-oriented sectors, with contributions to social security. The new project ‘Families in Work’ creates new opportunities, particularly for single parents.

Collectively agreed wages instead of wage dumping

We promote collective bargaining coverage and co-determination. These are the guarantees of good working conditions. 80 per cent of Berlin's workers should be covered by collective agreements. To this end, we are expanding the collective agreement register and digitising it. We are drawing up a regional action plan for greater coverage by collective agreements to meet the 80 per cent target set by the EU.

Berlin is already setting standards for fair pay in public procurement through the public procurement minimum wage and the state minimum wage. We are tightening enforcement of compliance with collective agreements and the public procurement minimum wage to prevent wage dumping and ensure that public funds are consistently tied to social standards.

We will also link funding from the State of Berlin to collective agreement coverage and co-determination. In addition, we want to strengthen our industry by prioritising regional value creation through 'local content' rules in public procurement and funding schemes.

Taking decisive action against the obstruction of works councils

We are establishing a works and staff councils' conference to facilitate direct dialogue between politicians, trade unions and businesses. We will strengthen the specialist unit within the Public Prosecutor's Office that consistently pursues attacks on co-determination (union busting). Obstructing works council activities is to be made a social offence under federal law.

Furthermore, we will strengthen the 'Gute Arbeit' network (Joboption Berlin) to promote independent employee representation. Through a feasibility study, we intend to work with the trade unions to examine the possibility of establishing a Berlin Chamber of Labour. Where legally possible, we intend to extend the State Staff Representation Act to religious organisations in order to ensure decent work in this sector too.

strong capital region

Together with Brandenburg, we will create a joint economic and labour market region characterised by fair wages, collective bargaining coverage and good

Berlin and Brandenburg: Creating a

working and training conditions. To this end, we are initiating a binding dialogue with Brandenburg on taxation and business location to ensure fair business conditions in the metropolitan region and industrial development across the capital region as a whole. We want a joint approach to the trade tax assessment rate, uniform regulations on compliance with collective agreements and local content rules, as well as a joint location policy with Brandenburg. And we will improve Berlin's connections to Brandenburg (→ see chapter on **AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT**). We want to plan the development of new commercial and industrial sites in the capital region together.

Strengthening dual vocational training and creating accommodation for apprentices

We promote dual vocational training. Because good work begins with good training. That is why we are establishing an 'Azubi-Werk' modelled on those in other major cities. Its aim is to advise, connect and support apprentices in Berlin and, above all, to provide them with affordable accommodation. After all, hardly any apprentice can afford accommodation in Berlin on their own. We are involving the social partners in the 'Azubi-Werk' to ensure that employers contribute.

We are also continuing to fund the Apprentice Ticket and implementing the apprenticeship levy. In this way, we are promoting solidarity amongst businesses: those who do not provide apprenticeships help fund the training costs for businesses that do.

We are improving career guidance, training advice and the transition from school to work.

The Advisory Centre for Good Work and Training (BEMA) is being expanded and networked. To put a stop to the exploitation of apprentices from third countries, we are establishing a new point of contact that brings together advice, monitoring and law enforcement.

Good work requires good role models. The State of Berlin is therefore leading the way as an employer. All state-owned enterprises are bound by collective agreements and

State-owned enterprises are leading by example

there will be no spin-offs from public enterprises for the purpose of circumventing collective agreements. We will reverse any spin-offs that have already taken place to reduce staff costs or restrict co-determination.

Furthermore, we want to support the Berlin administration in making working hours more flexible in the interests of employees. To this end, we intend to discuss these issues with our partners in co-determination and the trade unions, and to develop them further in pilot projects (→ see chapter **ATTRACTIVE WORK IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**). The supervisory authority responsible for health and safety at work will

strengthen the supervisory authority responsible for health and safety at work. In companies that do not comply with the applicable rules, it should enforce the recording of working hours by issuing orders.

Berlin as the European capital of Decent Work

Last but not least, as a European metropolis and a role model for Decent Work in Europe, Berlin should support European policy initiatives, such as the EU Roadmap for Decent Work, regulations on the employment of third-country nationals and on platform work.

Berlin: A Centre for Industry and Innovation

Europe's No. 1 hub for innovation

Innovation is the key to future growth and to good, secure jobs in our region. Berlin already boasts a unique ecosystem comprising academia, research, technology companies, start-ups, the skilled trades and the manufacturing sector. In many sectors, the city stands out for its new, globally recognised innovations and creativity. We are continuing along this path – and making Berlin the number one innovation hub in Europe.

Sectors of the future in Berlin

Berlin's future is shaped where innovation meets a sense of community. That is why we are placing particular emphasis on strengthening future-oriented sectors and cutting-edge technologies in the fields of life sciences and health, artificial intelligence and DeepTech, rail technology and autonomous forms of mobility, environmental and climate protection, gaming, financial services, defence and resilience, drones, aerospace, and the field of governance technology for the digitalisation of services and processes in the public sector. We are continuing to develop our successful joint innovation strategy with Brandenburg.

Our guiding principle remains: new technologies should not only create new value, but also unlock existing potential. That is why we are continuing the success story of Berlin's innovation hubs and developing new centres for innovation and collaboration.

Berlin is already a leading international centre for gene and cell therapies. Together with the State of Brandenburg, we aim to develop a strategy for the region that advances humane and green biotechnologies. We are expanding the Urban Tech Republic in Tegel, repurposing the former Tempelhof Airport (→ see chapter **'A VISION FOR TEGEL AND TEMPELHOF'**), realise Siemensstadt Square in Spandau and CleanTech Marzahn, and revitalise the International Congress Centre – ICC (→ see chapter **'BRINGING THE ICC BACK TO LIFE'**). In this way, we are establishing these locations as drivers of new economic vitality, innovation and participation.

Science meets business

Following the successful establishment of new hubs – such as the House of Finance and Tech, the House of Games and the AI Berlin Hub – we remain committed to fostering collaboration between science and business. We are placing a much stronger focus on spin-offs from Berlin's universities (→ see chapter **IMPROVING RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER**). To better integrate the business sector into technology transfer, we are building on the Berlin Real-World Lab Strategy, providing it with financial backing and placing a clear emphasis on products 'Made in Berlin'.

Innovation through diversity

Berlin's economy has been growing faster than the national average for years. We want to continue to promote this growth and

propel Berlin even further ahead in a comparison of German states. We are raising the profile of migrant entrepreneurship and supporting it. We are expanding start-up advisory services to make them multilingual and equipped with digital tools.

Furthermore, we are paying closer attention to the situation of the self-employed working alone and improving the framework conditions, for example by expanding more affordable, public co-working spaces in the boroughs. For us, a strong economy and good, co-determined work are inextricably linked.

Berlin – Germany's No. 1 start-up hub

Berlin is already Germany's number one start-up hub and ranks highly in Europe. For us, starting a business is also a form of social advancement – through start-ups. These start-ups are intended to create jobs covered by collective agreements with good working conditions. We are aligning our funding and support structures even more closely with start-ups founded by women and in future-oriented sectors. We are making it easier for women to access funding and venture capital so that the proportion of female-led start-ups continues to rise: we are promoting women in leadership roles.

We are continuing to develop the Berlin Start-up Agenda. In doing so, we are placing greater emphasis on the pre-launch phase, the growth phase and collaborations with businesses, universities and research and scientific institutions (→ see chapter 'EXCELLENCE THROUGH GREATER COOPERATION') in the metropolitan region.

Berlin's creative industries – the capital's driving force and hallmark

Berlin is Germany's hotspot for the creative industries – from publishing, music and games to fashion and design. We are strengthening Berlin Fashion Week as an international flagship event with a focus on sustainability.

We are also supporting the establishment of a 'House of Fashion' as a new anchor for the sector. Berlin is recognised worldwide as a UNESCO City of Design. To raise the profile of Berlin's design sector, we are establishing an annual design conference.

Berlin's clubs are a unique magnet for talent from all over the world. For the club scene, we are launching a venue support scheme for the first time and implementing recommendations from the Berlin Strategy

for Berlin's night-time economy. In this way, we are securing the long-term future of clubs.

We are continuing Berlin's games funding programme and supplementing it with a new e-sports funding scheme. In doing so, we are placing particular emphasis on health and prevention in gaming and e-sports. We are providing long-term support for the Berlin E-Sports Team and Berlin's grassroots e-sports clubs. In doing so, we are also opening up municipal spaces for gaming events.

Digitalisation in and for Berlin-based businesses

With the reoriented Berlin Digital Agency, we are expanding free advisory services – particularly on cyber security and resilience. In addition, we are establishing permanent digitalisation advisors within the district business development agencies. This will make it easier to access initial advice locally and ensure that digitalisation projects are implemented more quickly.

We are rolling out DIWI – the Berlin administration's digital business service – and offering even more services digitally. We are also implementing modern public procurement law using digital tools.

We stand by Berlin as an industrial city

We are committed to Berlin as an industrial city and to the more than 100,000 workers associated with it. We are actively shaping the transformation of Berlin's industry in a changing environment . Rising energy prices and global crises are increasing the pressure to move more quickly towards reliable, affordable and carbon-neutral production. Berlin offers the ideal conditions for this: a strong research landscape and close cooperation with Brandenburg. We are making targeted use of this potential – for strong industrial development and decent work. Berlin's Social Democrats remain and is strengthening collective bargaining coverage and co-determination (→ see chapter **'COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT WAGES INSTEAD OF WAGE DUMPING'**)

Increasing industrial scale

Berlin's industrial policy is based on three key sectors: mobility, energy technology and

pharmaceuticals/medical technology. Added to these are future-oriented industries such as aerospace,

semiconductors, artificial intelligence and robotics. Here, we are creating significantly greater interconnection between the innovation and digital sectors, the skilled trades, industry and research along value chains. In this way, we are enabling industrial scaling in the capital region.

To facilitate this networking, we are making greater use of the Steering Group for the Transformation of Berlin's Industry (SKIP). We are committed to equal partnership between politics, business and trade unions. Regular dialogue with major industrial companies and social partners is intended to enable swift, direct decision-making.

Increasing industrial scale-up

Berlin's industrial policy is based on three key industrial sectors: mobility, energy technology and pharmaceuticals/medical technology. These are complemented by future-oriented industries such as aerospace, semiconductors, artificial intelligence and robotics.

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Securing industrial estates and facilitating social infrastructure

The safeguarding and development of industrial sites is guided by the 'Economy 2040' urban development plan. At the same time, the housing crisis is making it difficult to attract skilled workers. Therefore, on selected commercial sites – with the involvement of the social partners – specifically designated housing and social infrastructure for skilled workers and apprentices should also be able to be developed.

economic development at Ort

A sound and sustainable economic policy requires local roots. It should encourage participation and be shaped in collaboration with the boroughs.

Regional economic development and small and medium-sized enterprises

We will reduce red tape and simplify the awarding of public contracts, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. At the federal level, we will continue to advocate for an expansion of GRW funding to strengthen the regional economic structure. At the same time, we need a reliable commitment to continuity in the coming years. Our aim is to drive forward investment in the infrastructure of the metropolitan region.

We are paying particular attention to Berlin's small and medium-sized enterprises, which are firmly rooted in our city. SMEs need planning certainty, a clear legal framework, access to skilled workers and funding, a fair competitive environment and

a reliable infrastructure. To this end, we are strengthening networks and campaigning for competitive energy prices.

Economic development at all levels

District-level business support agencies are often the first point of contact for Berlin-based businesses. That is why we are improving their staffing and funding across all districts and providing targeted support.

The commitment of many entrepreneurs to district-level networks shapes Berlin as a business location in an outstanding way. Retailers' associations facilitate exchange and collaboration – and they are a guarantee of sustainable growth. We are stabilising existing networks in the long term and facilitating new start-ups through simpler support for networking.

Berlin: A Partner for Economic and Technological Development

For many international companies, Berlin serves as a platform for European and

to tap into international markets. Our business development agency, Berlin Partner, plays a key role in attracting new businesses and represents the city as a business location worldwide. We are strengthening Berlin Partner's role as the central point of contact for existing companies, as a partner for European and international start-ups, and as a supporter of the city's boroughs. In doing so, we are particularly expanding the Business Immigration Service and reducing bureaucratic hurdles to make it easier to recruit international skilled workers and labour. We are making targeted use of Berlin's international character and

the many migrant communities in our city are being specifically harnessed to recruit skilled workers. We are developing targeted programmes for women in business and entrepreneurship to increase their opportunities and visibility.

Berlin's retail sector – a distinctive feature of Berlin

We are preserving and strengthening economic diversity across all of Berlin's neighbourhoods. High-street retail, a diverse range of dining and cultural offerings bring neighbourhoods to life and foster encounters – between Berliners and visitors from all over the world. To make shopping streets more attractive, we are consistently implementing the recommendations of the Berlin City Centre Summit and strengthening local self-organisation. We aim to mitigate the loss of turnover suffered by business owners as a result of construction sites. We therefore intend to secure the necessary funding for bridging aid.

In all 12 boroughs, we are facilitating the establishment of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and vibrant alliances comprising the hospitality sector, businesses, cultural organisations, residents and property owners.

To this end, we are supporting the boroughs in setting up management teams for locations of supra-regional significance. In order to further develop these centres, these teams are to structure the development and implementation of integrated action plans with local stakeholders, as well as tap into existing and future funding streams from the borough, state, federal and the EU. We are implementing Berlin's new State Licensing Act to ease the burden on businesses and the administration.

Vibrant neighbourhoods with affordable commercial premises

To provide close support to boroughs and local authorities, we are establishing the 'Centre Summit' as a permanent platform for dialogue between local stakeholders, boroughs and state politicians. We are maintaining the mix of retail, services and culture in our neighbourhoods and protect businesses from being forced out. To this end, we are campaigning at federal level for legal provisions enable us to ensure affordable commercial rents.

At the same time, we are continuing our efforts to create affordable options

. Through an active land-use policy, we are driving forward the development of municipal commercial complexes – with clear timelines and adequate funding. By the end of the next legislative term, we will build three further municipal business parks, thereby making a tangible contribution to easing the burden on Berlin's businesses.

A global metropolis needs craft trades within the city. Craft trades, urban production and start-ups can inspire one another. In this way, we retain businesses in the city and attract new ones. We are also making targeted investments to strengthen the service sectors, which have made a significant contribution to Berlin's above-average growth in recent years, through targeted additional investment.

Fair Trade and Retail

With the Fair Trade Action Plan, we are strengthening Berlin's position as a Fair Trade capital. We are establishing structures for fair public procurement, promote economic models based on solidarity and the common good, and strengthen the sustainable circular economy. We support the business community in implementing circular economic practices. Used products and materials should be kept in the cycle for as long as possible, for example through repair and recycling. We align our economic development support with the framework set out in Berlin's development policy guidelines.

Berlin thrives on art, craftsmanship and hospitality

Berlin is Europe's largest centre for art production. That is why we facilitate closer cooperation between the production and presentation of art and craft.

This requires new funding approaches and shared infrastructure, such as studios and rehearsal spaces.

The catering, hospitality and tourism sectors are more than just an economic factor: they are the living rooms of Berliners and hosts to the world (→ see chapter **PROMOTING TOURISM**). We support the

It aims to tap into global market potential

internationalisation

Berlin is Germany's largest international economic centre

A quarter of Berliners hold foreign nationality, and skilled workers come from over 170 nations. The international cultural and creative industries, start-ups, and the tech, healthcare and life sciences sectors shape Berlin's global strength.

Our foreign trade policy is based on fair, sustainable trade. It deepens relationships with partners worldwide – including the USA, China, India, Mexico, Brazil, the countries of North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the EU, particularly Poland and Ukraine – and promotes cooperation with civil society actors in the Global South. At the same time, it enhances Berlin's appeal to investors, skilled workers and new businesses by offering good jobs.

Through targeted measures, we demonstrate that Berlin is the capital of international innovation. An open-minded attitude, creativity and courage are what make the city strong. Internationalism remains at the heart of social democratic economic policy – for greater growth, decent work and a modern Berlin.

Expanding Berlin's internationalisation concept into a strategy

We are developing a comprehensive strategy for economic internationalisation based on our internationalisation concept for Berlin's economy.

Supporting DEHOGA in creating a modern training centre for the hotel and catering industry with the HOGA Campus.

Family businesses – the backbone of Berlin's economy

Family businesses help shape social and environmental progress. We are securing the Berlin Succession Centre, thereby strengthening support for business succession. In doing so, we are building bridges to aspiring Berlin entrepreneurs and simplifying access to innovation and investment funding.

whilst simultaneously strengthening Berlin-based businesses. Above all, we support small and medium-sized enterprises in expanding their international activities. We achieve this through more overseas representative offices, the expansion of existing overseas offices and the extension of the programme for international economic cooperation.

Intensifying our foreign trade with emerging markets

Our foreign trade policy is based on active, fair and forward-looking trade.

We are expanding economic ties with our key partners and intensifying economic relations with emerging markets in India, Mexico, Brazil and the countries of North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa.

We are deepening our ties with Ukraine and within the EU, particularly with Poland. We are making Berlin more attractive to international businesses and skilled workers.

To this end, we are creating framework conditions that enable companies to create good jobs and promote the exchange of knowledge.

Promoting Berlin as a leading trade fair and conference destination

We are bringing more major events to the capital. These generate revenue for the city and create jobs. To this end, we are modernising the exhibition centre and adapting it to the needs of international events. In addition, we are

the conference sector more strongly – through strategic investments and the further development of the conference fund.

indigenous and civil society partners and

Bringing the ICC back to life

We are bringing more major events to the capital. They generate revenue. Together with private partners selected through an international design competition, we are developing our ICC into a centre for the cultural and creative industries and major events, and are making it a magnet once again for Berliners and visitors alike. We are also creating innovative jobs at the site – particularly in the digital economy. To this end, we are modernising the exhibition grounds and adapting them to the needs of international events. Furthermore, we are providing greater support for the conference sector – through strategic investments and the further development of the conference fund.

Promoting tourism

Tourism is an indispensable economic pillar of Berlin. National and international visitors should be offered even more attractive experiences and be able to reach Berlin more easily (→ see the **AIRPORT** chapter). We are placing greater emphasis on sustainable and decentralised tourism, from which the whole city benefits. We are increasingly using CityTax revenue to support city-friendly and sustainable tourism in Berlin (Tourism Concept 2018+). In this way, we are strengthening the tourism sector as an employer and boosting public acceptance. We are implementing the water tourism concept and promoting to promote our waterways. We are continuing to decarbonise passenger shipping – with improved charging infrastructure.

Town twinning

Berlin is strengthening its town twinning partnerships as networks of democracy, freedom and international cooperation. We are deepening our relations with Kyiv and Tel Aviv and further expanding existing partnerships in the Global South – for example, with Windhoek, Mexico City and Jakarta. At the same time, we are intensifying cooperation with cities that, like Berlin, stand for openness, cultural diversity and democratic resilience. In doing so, we are also involving

jointly take responsibility for the climate, biodiversity and human rights. Berlin is continuing its involvement in city networks such as Solidarity Cities, the Rainbow Cities Network, Mayors for Peace and Cities Against the Death Penalty.

EXPO and the Olympic and Paralympic Games as an opportunity for Berlin

In recent years, Berlin has demonstrated that the city can successfully host major events and inspire both Berliners and international audiences. We now want to launch visionary projects and prepare for major anniversaries: EXPO 2035, the International Building Exhibition (IBA) 2034–2036, Berlin's 800th anniversary in 2037, the 50th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 2039, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2040/44 offer enormous opportunities to demonstrate Berlin's innovative spirit and appeal.

We will actively pursue a bid for the 2040/44 Olympic and Paralympic Games and for EXPO 2035 in collaboration with Brandenburg, and prepare for the IBA in order to create added value for sustainable urban development, modernised infrastructure and a boost to digitalisation. Furthermore, this will underpin Berlin's claim to be a cosmopolitan city that connects people and ideas from all over the world and stands for dialogue, freedom and diversity.

All major events are to be organised in a socially, environmentally and democratically responsible manner. We will involve Berliners transparently from the very beginning and deliver tangible benefits to them. In this way, we will use these opportunities to make Berlin stronger, more innovative and better equipped for the future.

A home – today and tomorrow

Berlin is home. Berlin is growing. Because people believe in this city and want to live here. We want Berlin to remain open to everyone. Growth is a challenge – and we are rising to it. We are building new homes and preserving what already exists. Preservation also means further development, both in terms of condition and use. After all, affordable housing does not just happen; it has to be created. We are capping rents and curbing the pursuit of profit. So that housing, meeting places and small businesses can serve the common good as social spaces and remain a firm anchor for a secure life in Berlin. We are creating liveable neighbourhoods for a future population of four million people. To this end, we are reclaiming land and turning grey spaces green more often. Places that were once just thoroughfares are becoming places to linger. We support neighbourhoods that

foster a sense of community and belonging. We'll connect the city by bus, train and tram – with frequent, reliable services at short intervals. We're working towards a Berlin that ensures everyone's safety wherever they go – whether on foot, by bike or behind the wheel. A Berlin with a fair distribution of space and no road deaths. We won't achieve this overnight, but with a sound plan and plenty of foresight. Through binding measures, we are adapting our city to climate change. For us, social democratic urban policy is urban planning that prioritises sustainability, social justice and environmental justice. Integrated planning must take into account the needs of all sections of the population – young, old; those who are mobile and those with limited mobility – in order to make our city more inclusive and fairer. All of this is social democratic urban policy.

More homes for ‘ ’ Berlin

Our housing construction target

Since 2011, 180,000 new homes have been built in Berlin – providing accommodation for 350,000 people.

However, it is already clear today that at least 230,000 more homes must be built by 2040 – to achieve this, we need state-owned, co-operative and private developers in equal measure. During the 2026–2031 legislative period, 100,000 new homes are to be built. This includes accessible and wheelchair-friendly homes. In this way, we are effectively tackling the housing shortage for everyone. After all, a home is essential for a dignified life.

To achieve this, we are working with state-owned, co-operative and private developers. We are cooperating with all public and private stakeholders who are reliably contributing to speeding up construction, providing social housing and ensuring affordable rents. We are

We are making the most of opportunities to reduce construction costs. In this way, Berlin is overcoming the planning, construction and financial challenges.

Our Public Housing Programme as a driving force for affordable new-build housing

We have already created thousands of new flats under state ownership. By 2026, there will be 6,500. In future, we will shape the framework conditions so that more than half of new flats will be built by state-owned housing associations, co-operatives and other organisations working in the public interest.

To this end, we are launching a public housing programme to complement existing housing subsidies. In this way, we are creating reliable conditions for more completions. We aim to reach an annual average of 10,000 flats. To this end, we are enabling capacity expansion within the state-owned enterprises, whose equity base we are gradually strengthening to the extent required. Furthermore, we are examining synergies between state-owned enterprises and are also considering possible structural changes in this regard. In this way, we ensure the

 spatial

Together with state-owned housing associations and co-operatives, we are specifically creating accessible, affordable housing options for single parents, people with disabilities and also for shared accommodation, such as flats for young people that bring together, for example, apprentices and students, shared accommodation for the elderly, and inclusive and intergenerational living groups for people with and without disabilities.

More funding and building land for co-operatives

We are further developing funding for co-operatives. This will become the second pillar of the public housing programme.

We are identifying suitable land owned by the state and making it available for co-operative housing development. This also applies to other organisations working in the public interest. We are facilitating access primarily through hereditary building rights, which we generally recognise as equivalent to freehold in our funding and assessment practices. The prerequisite remains long-term and sustainable property management as well as social management.

New flats in new urban neighbourhoods

Many new homes are being built in the 24 new urban neighbourhoods. Some are being built on the outskirts of the city. Others are being built in large development areas in central locations.

Many of these sites are owned by the state. We will make them available more quickly in future. To this end, we will ensure that transport links, including the necessary social infrastructure, are in place in good time.

The state's targeted acquisition policy

When making purchases, we prioritise climate-friendly new-build flats that meet current energy standards. These purchases support new-build activity. They immediately expand the housing supply, as the flats are fully let.

We will now only make targeted purchases of older, larger housing estates. This applies to neighbourhoods where the local authority's share of housing is low. In this way, we reduce

imbalances and safeguard mixed urban and demographic structures.

social standards.

We continue to exercise the local authority's right of pre-emption to the extent necessary.

More social housing, including in private development projects

The cooperative building land model is a successful example of consensus between the city and private developers. For new-build projects with a development plan, it guarantees 30 per cent social housing. We are increasing this quota to 50 per cent and strengthening the model as a key instrument for affordable housing.

In future, the cooperative building land model is also to apply without a development plan (the so-called Neukölln model): wherever developers require exemptions from building regulations (dispensation agreements), we will make affordable and accessible housing a binding requirement.

At the same time, we are improving monitoring and, in collaboration with the boroughs, ensuring that promised social housing units are let.

Faster building and approval processes

The cooperative building land model is a successful example of consensus between We want to reduce the shortage of affordable housing through innovative, rapid and more cost-effective construction. To this end, we are consistently implementing the 'Simple Building Act' and further developing it in line with needs. In addition, we will increasingly promote projects using modular construction and in accordance with the new 'Building Type E' standard. At the same time, we place great importance on durable, renewable and regionally available materials, as well as energy-efficient building types that improve the carbon footprint.

We are boosting housing construction as a whole with the 'Construction Turbo' initiative. We are setting a two-year target for development plans. Planning approvals should be granted swiftly. To this end, we are driving forward AI-supported digitalisation in planning authorities. We are utilising all the tools of urban development and building policy that provide planning certainty. Our goal remains clear: greater speed without compromising on

New-build projects with a development plan currently ensure 30 per cent social housing. We are increasing this quota to 50 per cent and strengthening the model as a key instrument for affordable housing.

Making better use of existing spaces and plots

For housing construction, we are focusing more closely on under-utilised areas. This applies to vacant lots, brownfield sites and plots with low-density development. In this regard, we intend to prioritise areas that are already sealed

. This also supports our goal of net-zero new land sealing.

Together with the IBB, we are launching a funding programme that, amongst other things, also draws on federal funding. It supports the conversion of vacant office buildings and spaces and helps owners to convert them swiftly into housing. We are linking this funding to rent control.

The gradual dismantling of the car-centric city also creates new opportunities. For example, , as part of a pilot project, are redeveloping the site of the former A 104 motorway on both sides of the Schlangenhader Straße tunnel and, at the same time, revitalising Breitenbachplatz through a redesign. This will create an urban space with affordable housing, as well as social and green infrastructure.

We are making better use of land, particularly in well-connected locations, and see potential in repurposing and adding storeys to existing buildings. We promote the preservation of municipal buildings for social infrastructure through the exemplary development of repurposed and mixed-use schemes. Likewise, we are exploring the possibility of building upwards on single-storey structures, such as supermarkets. To this end, we are actively approaching property owners, highlighting specific opportunities and encouraging them to make use of them.

We use every means available to activate undeveloped and unused plots of land. This applies particularly to well-served locations. To this end, we increase

the pressure on owners who are stalling or speculating.

We are introducing a 'Property Tax C' for undeveloped plots that are ready for building, to create incentives to develop or sell these sites more quickly. We are also implementing building orders: these oblige owners of buildable

to build and complete development within reasonable timeframes.

Owners who have so far been unwilling to build must be persuaded to act. Either they build themselves promptly or, on a case-by-case basis, sell at a reasonable price. Local housing associations should then be able to purchase them.

We are revitalising vacant shopping centres and high streets, facilitating youth, cultural, recreational, sporting and social activities there. We will specifically promote temporary uses and streamline the planning permission process. In this way, vacant properties will become new spaces for the city's community.

Developing the cradle of Berlin

Berlin is a city of neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, the historic centre plays a special role. We will continue to develop this heart of the city. We are further developing the Nikolaiviertel with the help of urban development funding. We are transforming the area between the TV Tower and the banks of the Spree into a green open space. We are rapidly building the new urban quarter at Molkenmarkt, featuring affordable, state-owned flats, commercial premises and cultural facilities at a rapid pace. In doing so, we will ensure architectural quality. From the Alte Münze, via the Molkenmarkt and the Graues Kloster, to the Haus der Statistik, a cohesive thread of culture and urban history is taking shape

A vision for Tegel and Tempelhof

The former Tegel and Tempelhof airports occupy a prominent place in Berlin's history and urban development.

Alongside the development of the area as a centre for business and science, we are rapidly advancing housing construction in Tegel in collaboration with state-owned housing associations and co-operatives dedicated to the public good. In a second phase, we aim to create further socially-owned flats in the areas currently planned, as well as in neighbouring sites. In this way, we will create a total of up to 12,000 new flats there. We are also considering the Zentraler Festplatz as a potential site for a new urban quarter – and intend to offer the fairground operators currently based there an alternative site.

Tempelhofer Feld is a special place for the climate, exercise and social interaction. We will preserve its current function and develop it carefully. To improve the quality of the space, we are initiating the necessary legislative changes. Building flats on the edge of the field is out of the question as long as the existing sites in Berlin remain unused – priority is given to existing development potential. In the vicinity of the airport building, we are focusing on state-owned and co-operative housing development, without encroaching on the field itself. We are revitalising the building itself and opening it up to a variety of uses.

Regulations on housing and tenancy agreements

Rising rents and precarious tenancies are a burden on many Berliners. We are committed to ensuring that everyone – regardless of income, housing situation or life circumstances – can find an affordable and secure home. Because for us, one thing is clear: housing must not be a risk factor for poverty.

A new rent control authority for Berlin

At the rent review office we have set up – which is operating successfully – Berliners can easily have their rent checked to see if it is too high – for example, because the rent cap has been breached or there is rent gouging. Tenants can receive advice there on the next steps to take to assert their rights.

We are massively expanding the Rent Review Office and developing it into the

in Berlin. It will advise, investigate and impose sanctions. As a central body covering the whole of Berlin, the Rent Control Authority will in future also combat extortionate rents and penalise breaches. We are developing the district-level tenant advice centres under its umbrella into regional contact points. The Rent Control Authority will have its own investigation unit and will work closely with the Berlin Public Prosecutor's Office.

With a rent-check app, we are making it easier to report excessive rents to the

Rent Control Authority. When people register or change their address, we provide information on the rent cap and rent profiteering, refer them to free advice services in the boroughs and explain the protection rules in neighbourhood preservation zones. We are campaigning for the expansion of neighbourhood preservation zones.

Using the tools of the rule of law to tackle rent sharks

We are expanding the prosecution of rent profiteering through a new specialist department within the Public Prosecutor's Office and are prosecuting rent profiteers with substantial fines and prison sentences. At the federal level, we are campaigning for specialised panels within the courts. Eviction proceedings should be heard orally; we rule out written preliminary proceedings in cases involving claims for payment and eviction.

Exemplary letting practices by state-owned housing associations

State-owned housing companies ensure affordable housing and social cohesion. We are aligning them more closely with exemplary letting practices and combine social justice with sustainable management. We are capping rent increases for state-owned companies; amongst other things, we are adjusting the affordability pledge so that the maximum rent burden of 27 per cent of household income is based on the gross rent excluding charges – not on the net rent excluding charges.

We are introducing transparency rules for rent increases and utility bills. We are developing the ombudsman's office into a genuine arbitration body and ensuring that there are local points of contact with reliable consultation hours.

We are strengthening large housing estates as liveable and safe neighbourhoods. To this end, we are expanding the state programme for large housing estates and specifically integrating it with programmes such as neighbourhood management, in order to bring about lasting improvements to social infrastructure, participation and quality of life. We are ensuring non-discriminatory allocation and letting models, and are incorporating gender-equitable and

inclusive measures into the modernisation and further development of the housing stock.

Using flats more effectively – bringing generations together

For state-owned flats, in addition to flat swaps, we also support the move from a larger to a smaller flat, for example by maintaining the price per square metre. We ensure non-discriminatory allocation and letting models by introducing anonymised application procedures, establishing binding anti-discrimination standards and expanding systematic testing procedures to detect discrimination. When modernising and developing our housing stock, we incorporate gender-equitable and inclusive measures. A flat-swapping scheme is to involve all state-owned and private housing organisations.

With the new 'Wohnen für Hilfe' (Living for Help) scheme, we are creating new avenues for affordable, intergenerational living. We bring older people with unused rooms together with young people who provide support in daily life and, in return, pay a correspondingly reduced rent. This creates mutually beneficial living partnerships that enable affordable housing, prevent loneliness and strengthen social cohesion. We want to extend eligibility for a housing entitlement certificate so that single parents with a child are treated on an equal footing with couples with a child. This will ensure that single parents and their children are each entitled to their own room and a shared space.

A new specialist unit for housing protection

Existing housing is under threat – from demolition, vacancy due to a lack of investment, misuse as holiday lets, or through furnished accommodation. We are centralising the enforcement of housing protection within a new specialist unit within the Senate, which will support the boroughs and speed up proceedings.

Restricting holiday let use

We are tightening the ban on misuse of property and reducing the permitted number of days per year for which secondary or holiday homes may be used as holiday let properties. In this way, we are returning thousands of unauthorised holiday let properties to Berliners as

rental flats.

We will consistently crack down on unregistered listings on platforms. We will also take action against the short-term letting of hotel-style furnished rooms and against overcrowding aimed at maximise profits. The Housing Protection Task Force is helping the boroughs to identify illegal listings and effectively put a stop to them.

Limiting micro-flats

We will exercise greater control over the construction of so-called micro-flats. To this end, we will make particular use of local development plans to restrict micro-flats by setting minimum sizes or limiting the number of flats per building. We are also restricting the conversion of existing flats into micro-flats. Provision of specialised accommodation for students, older people or other specific target groups should remain unaffected by this.

We remain committed to stronger rent control in this sector as well.

Stopping the demolition and neglect of housing

The preservation of existing housing takes precedence over demolition and the construction of new replacement buildings. We are significantly restricting the demolition of buildings.

We will enable local authorities to take swifter action against unacceptable housing conditions, neglect and dilapidated properties. The Special Housing Protection Unit will support them in this. To ensure that breaches are not rewarded, we will increase the maximum fines. If landlords fail to maintain their properties, we will intervene more swiftly.

A state fund for compulsory repairs will enable the boroughs to specifically improve unacceptable housing conditions, charge the costs to the owners and, in the event of non-payment, seize the property.

Under an amendment to the Housing Security Act which we have enacted, we are requiring owners with at least 50 residential units to set up a maintenance reserve fund and to specified proportion of their portfolio to households holding a housing eligibility certificate.

at regional level. This will create transparency regarding

We are introducing a rent and housing register

ownership structures, helps to record vacancies and broadens the basis for determining the local comparative rent. Furthermore, the register will be used for the automated verification of rent levels when new tenancy agreements are concluded and rent increases are implemented. In addition, we are introducing a mandatory vacancy reporting requirement for landlords and a progressive vacancy tax to make long-term and speculative vacancies unattractive.

Capping landlords' rents and profits

We are creating a new social housing framework that strengthens and significantly expands the housing market geared towards the common good. To this end, we are utilising all legal options – including those afforded to us by the Constitution. Our aim is also to introduce a legally secure rent cap via a federal state exemption clause under federal legislation or on the basis of Article 15 of the Basic Law.

The approval of the referendum initiative 'Expropriate Deutsche Wohnen and Co.' clearly demonstrates to us that a majority of Berliners reject the unbridled profiteering of large, particularly listed, housing companies.

Changes to federal tenancy law are urgently needed

We are continuing to campaign at federal level for urgently needed improvements to tenancy law: we are advocating for a permanent rent cap with no exceptions and making it clear that this also applies to furnished short-term lettings.

We also want to make the ban on converting rented flats into owner-occupied flats permanent. We want to ban index-linked rents and lower the cap to a maximum of six per cent over three years.

We are also campaigning for the modernisation levy to be reduced at federal level and made time-limited until the costs are covered.

Terminations on the grounds of owner-occupancy should be restricted to the nuclear family; abuse, such as through 'purchased' owner-occupancy, must be ruled out. Property tax should no longer be passed on to the rent. We are

are campaigning for the federal government to introduce social commercial tenancy law. The right of first refusal in areas subject to environmental protection measures should be reinstated

. Criminal law relating to economic offences should be tightened so that extortionate rents are prohibited even where there is a housing shortage.

Berlin remains a city for tenants.

Nevertheless, we provide targeted support for owner-occupied housing – particularly for families on low and very low incomes in private new-build developments, as well as for tenants who are already living in the property at the time of conversion.

Our Berlin will be clean, green and a great place to live—

Feminist urban planning: Berlin as a fair, inclusive and caring city

In urban development, we take account of different life circumstances and shape Berlin as a city for everyone. Public spaces will be designed to be accessible, safe and tailored to people's needs. In all projects, we will make gender mainstreaming a standard practice in planning and procurement to actively promote gender equality. Following the example of the City of Vienna, we will introduce our own coordination centre for 'everyday and gender-sensitive planning and construction', thereby establishing an institutional framework.

With the Berlin Climate Adaptation Act, we have laid the foundations for making Berlin greener and cooler. By 2040, the number of

Parks and green spaces enhance quality of life

Parks and green urban spaces improve the urban climate, provide cooling in summer and enhance quality of life for people and nature.

We will provide the district offices with the long-term financial and staffing resources they need to maintain these spaces in a nature-friendly way.

In addition, we are working to ensure that the Berlin City Cleaning Service (BSR) takes over the cleaning of all playgrounds and, by 2030, all parks and green spaces. This will allow the districts to focus more on maintenance and development. We are securing the long-term future of park rangers and extending their role to include further parks.

In a growing city, we also need more green spaces. That is why we are creating a new Berlin public park where a particularly large amount of new housing is being built – in the east of the city.

More urban trees for Berlin

city trees is set to rise by 70 per cent. Now it's all about implementation. In doing so, we're prioritising trees over bureaucracy. Instead of setting up a new state agency, we're implementing the law through existing administrative bodies.

We are providing greater protection for mature trees and their shade-providing effect, whilst improving the care of the existing tree population. In building and civil engineering projects, we are planning with trees in mind and linking felling permits to the actual start of construction. In construction projects, we will always prioritise tree-preserving planning. To this end, we are also adapting the rules governing street space to support climate protection and tree conservation.

We are preserving roadside tree sites, planting trees in empty tree pits by 2027 and creating new tree sites – with the aim of having one every 15 metres.

To this end, we are strengthening the urban tree campaign and tree sponsorship schemes, and encouraging civic engagement.

Cooling and green spaces for relaxation in the neighbourhoods

We are designing squares and streets so that people enjoy spending time there and feel safe – whilst at the same time creating habitats for urban wildlife and animals. Mini-parks and green spaces close to home provide a cool respite within walking distance.

We are improving access to water with paddling pools and fountains, which the Berliner Wasserbetriebe are expanding and maintaining centrally.

We prioritise action in areas where heat, noise, air pollution, a lack of green spaces and social pressures converge. We are removing paving or introducing greenery – such as a 'Tiny Forest' – to hotspots like Washingtonplatz and the forecourt at Gesundbrunnen station.

We want to make the city centre's waterways more accessible again. As part of this, we are making it possible to swim in the Spree.

Preserving Berlin's urban nature

Allotment gardens symbolise a vibrant, social urban life. We will strengthen and protect them, encourage their opening up to local communities and support the preservation of biodiversity. We will develop allotment sites as local recreational areas – for allotment holders and for the wider urban community. We support community gardening in public spaces.

Under the EU Recovery Regulation, Berlin is set to renature 20 per cent of its land area. We are using this as an opportunity to communicate the value of urban nature – including through schools and information campaigns. We are implementing the biodiversity strategy, remaining committed to the Berlin Urban Nature Pact, and effectively combating species extinction.

Together with the Berlin Forestry Commission, we are making the forest climate-resilient and reshaping it to be as close to nature as possible. It will remain a recreational forest; commercial use will remain secondary. We are promoting the transition to a mixed forest, primarily through natural regeneration. We are monitoring its condition using satellite-based monitoring.

We recognise voluntary environmental commitment. We will acknowledge initiatives such as litter picking through the Volunteer Card and reward them with vouchers for museums, theatres or swimming pools. We are also continuing and further expanding the BSR's 'Kehrenbürger' campaigns. In this way, we support those who wish to keep their neighbourhood clean and make it more attractive.

Animal welfare as part of our responsibility

We are strengthening the veterinary authorities so that they can consistently . We will secure funding for the animal shelter and promote effective schemes for cat neutering and urban pigeon management. The dog owner's licence replaces the 'dangerous breeds' list and promotes safety through knowledge. We will ban the use of animals on state-owned stages across

the state and continue to prohibit circus performances featuring wild animals on state-owned land. The role of the State Animal Welfare Officer remains a key

voice for animals in Berlin.

Using rainwater, protecting groundwater, saving water

To create a 'sponge city', we are working with Berliner Wasserbetriebe and the Rainwater Agency to divert more rainwater away from the sewerage system.

This will allow it to infiltrate locally, reduce discharges and improve water quality and urban green spaces. We want to further increase the proportion of rainwater that we can technically divert from the sewerage system. To this end, we will also make cross-property rainwater management legally binding.

A secure drinking water supply is vital. We are aware of the looming groundwater issues in Berlin and Brandenburg and are stepping up our work on joint adaptation strategies for both states. We are restoring water bodies and riparian areas in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive to maintain them in good condition and preserve them as habitats and recreational areas – with a particular focus on small bodies of water. We are ensuring emergency water supplies via emergency wells and launching a water-saving campaign, as well as placing greater emphasis on greywater solutions (the treatment of water for secondary use) in the private and public sectors. To protect Berlin's waterworks in the long term, we intend to press ahead with the remediation of soil and groundwater contamination. To this end, we are providing the boroughs with additional staff and financial support.

Preventing and recycling waste

We are committed to the zero-waste concept: prevention takes precedence over recycling and disposal. A packaging tax is to be introduced to reduce waste from food packaging. The NochMall department store and the repair bonus scheme will be continued.

To raise awareness of waste management and the environment once again, we are embedding waste prevention, recycling and proper sorting into the daily routine of nurseries and schools from an early age. Project days with the BSR will become standard practice in Berlin's schools.

We are supporting non-commercial organisations involved in the collection and distribution of used clothing. We are We will significantly increase the waste wood recycling rate to well over 25 per cent, particularly with the new facilities on

Gradestraße. In future, we will process and recycle unavoidable waste more extensively in Berlin. We will facilitate the establishment of further waste sorting facilities at the BSR to improve resource cycles. We aim to equip even more households with organic waste bins and will also ensure that green waste from the boroughs is consistently sent for composting by the BSR.

Finally solving the bulky waste problem

Berlin is too dirty. Illegal fly-tipping is a blight on many neighbourhoods and undermines trust in the state. We are tackling this systematically with effective measures. We are actively involving the city's residents in this process

We are amending the Street Cleaning Act so that the BSR can better manage cleanliness through reports, sensors and user feedback. Together with the business sector and civil society, we are launching projects to keep heavily polluted areas cleaner. The BSR's cleaning cycles are to be flexibly adapted to the varying needs of the boroughs. We are basing the allocation of BSR staff across Berlin on waste volumes, not on borough boundaries.

We are significantly expanding bulky waste collection days in neighbourhoods: in

every neighbourhood, there will be a neighbourhood collection day once a quarter. The BSR will announce the dates at the start of the year; together with local initiatives, we are developing these collection days into neighbourhood days featuring swap events. We will offer every household a bulky waste collection service from their doorstep. These will be organised via a digital platform and funded through household waste charges.

We are extending the opening hours of the BSR recycling centres and collection points and aim to create new ones for districts under heavy pressure. This will make waste disposal easier and better prevent illegal dumping. We will investigate cases of fly-tipping more swiftly and pursue them rigorously. To this end, the Berlin Public Order Office app will be further developed, expanded to include participatory processes, and integrated into an overarching concept for a clean and safe city. At the same time, it will be linked to the district offices via a new transparency, control and management model linking it to the district offices. To ensure better implementation, we are deploying 'rubbish sheriffs' in the public order offices and improving cooperation with the police and the BSR.

Safe mobility for all Berliners

The current mobility and transport policy in Berlin, led by the Conservatives, is patchy and backward-looking. We want to get back on track towards more climate-friendly mobility in the interests of everyone. Instead of pitting road users against one another, we are focusing on alternatives to private cars. After all, the majority of Berliners use public transport, walk or cycle. Our task is to make these modes of transport so attractive that more people can switch from using their cars. In doing so, we expressly commit to the provisions of the Mobility Act, and will build on and safeguard it. We advocate for a fairer distribution of road space and the concept of short journeys.

Public transport – the backbone of our city

In line with the local transport plan, all residential areas and schools should be served by a public transport stop within a maximum distance of 300 or 400 metres respectively. We want to ensure comprehensive coverage with a minimum 10-minute frequency for all users, with or without disabilities – in the city centre as well as in the outlying areas. To achieve this, we must improve our services: we will create more bus lanes and ensure a

'green wave' for buses and trams. Autonomous

minibuses are to supplement public transport in outlying areas and during off-peak hours. Berlin is to become a pioneer in autonomous driving for public transport.

The refurbishment and modernisation of the network, accessible stops with seating, and access points at all stations are our priorities. We are continuing the electrification of bus services, thereby reducing noise levels in the city.

We are driving forward the expansion of the tram network in all boroughs, funding ongoing projects from

and resuming projects that had been put on hold. Priority is being given to the construction of the tram routes Turmstraße – Urban Tech Republic – Schumacherquartier and the extension to Spandau, as well as the Warschauer Straße – Hermannplatz and Alexanderplatz – Kulturforum routes. We are pressing ahead swiftly with underground projects already underway, including the extension of the U3 to Mexikoplatz, the U7 to BER and Heerstraße Nord, and the U8 to the Märkisches Viertel. Where new lines are still lacking, we are temporarily supplementing them with express bus services.

We want to improve the structural links between the growing districts and neighbourhoods in the east of the city, both amongst themselves and with central Berlin. We are therefore also beginning to plan an underground link from Alexanderplatz to Hohenschönhausen.

We will extend the new high-speed Berlin Central Station–BER Airport Express to Gesundbrunnen station. We are fully funding the i2030 rail project to improve connections between Berlin and Brandenburg and are implementing it according to a clear timetable.

Affordable and safe public transport

The Deutschlandticket is one of the most successful transport policy projects. It has brought many people back onto buses and trains and made using public transport easier. That is why we are calling on the federal and state governments to reduce the price back to 49 euros

To improve safety and cleanliness, we are deploying additional staff, including social support teams, and introducing flexible night bus stops. As a public enterprise, the BVG is initially focusing on stabilising operations, for example by increasing maintenance capacity and continuing to procure vehicles. In doing so, we are supporting the BVG so that it can once again invest in expanding its own services as soon as possible. To this end, we are securing the necessary financial resources. The S-Bahn remains a single entity, both legally and operationally. At the same time, we are pressing Deutsche Bahn to ensure that reliability and punctuality improve significantly once again.

We will protect the taxi industry from unfair competition and introduce a

minimum fare for app-booked hire cars. All Berlin taxis should be permitted to pick up passengers at BER.

We are further developing the concept of Accessible Alternative Transport (BAV) so that all people with reduced mobility can within the meaning of the State Equality Act can use public transport.

Walking – safe, accessible, everywhere

Berliners cover a third of all their journeys on foot – free of charge, environmentally friendly and healthy. We are promoting this with wide, well-lit, accessible and safe pavements in every season and in all weather conditions, as well as significantly more safe crossings, including on cycle lanes. Adequate funding is also provided for the maintenance of footpaths, including lighting. We are equipping all traffic lights with tactile and audible signals. We are also creating a 'green wave' for pedestrians.

To put an end to the chaos caused by e-scooters and bike-sharing schemes, we are setting up designated parking areas, known as 'Jelbi stations'. We are ensuring that they can no longer be used on pavements. It should not be possible to end a journey outside these designated areas. We are also ensuring that bike-sharing schemes are available not only in the city centre but also in the outer districts. Furthermore, we are creating a state-run, public-interest car-sharing scheme, which is to be operated throughout Berlin using electric vehicles. We are doubling the special-use fee for the use of public road space by e-scooter operators within the S-Bahn ring and extend the fee requirement to the whole of Berlin.

Cycling – safe, fast, connecting

To ensure a seamless and safe network, we are consistently implementing the Cycling Plan and prioritising the priority cycling network. For cycle express routes, we are returning to the original plans and establishing reliable funding arrangements.

We are installing more cycle racks, building cycle car parks and 'bike-and-ride' facilities with lighting and weather protection at transport hubs, and developing standardised designs and specifications. In Brandenburg too,

we are campaigning for secure parking facilities at S-Bahn stations so that commuters can switch modes more easily. We are once again promoting a bike-sharing scheme, as it brings order and best promotes modern, sustainable and urban mobility even in places where it is not economically viable. Through successful investigations into bicycle theft, we are reducing the number of offences and increasing the clearance rate.

Public transport – safe infrastructure and climate-friendly

The road network remains central to the city's functionality. Buses, emergency services, the fire brigade, street cleaning services and commercial transport require efficient and safe routes, including bridges in good condition. We take private motorised transport into account without allowing it to become a disproportionate burden on safety and infrastructure.

Instead of continuing to extend the A100, we are focusing on maintaining our roads and bridges and on sustainable mobility. We are the federal government to ensure that investment funds are channelled more heavily than before into the refurbishment of roads and bridges, as well as the expansion of local public transport. For the Treptower Park junction, we are developing a transport plan to ensure that the motorway ends there permanently and that the traffic chaos in the neighbouring neighbourhoods is brought to an end.

We are building the Tangentialverbindung Ost as a road without hindering a future parallel S-Bahn extension. We are planning new neighbourhoods to be low-traffic, prioritising car-sharing parking spaces and constructing neighbourhood car parks – where possible, even in existing neighbourhoods.

For commuters, we are upgrading park-and-ride facilities with lighting, weather protection, charging points, toilets and a connection to the Jelbi service.

Parking spaces – a reliable, long-term reduction

We are expanding parking management zones, easing the burden on residents when it comes to finding a parking space, and enforcing

regulations more efficiently using scan-cars. We will increase the fees for resident parking permits.

We will earmark the revenue for eco-friendly transport (public transport, cycling and walking) and for neighbourhood car parks.

We are also making it possible for residents to use parking spaces at supermarkets, government offices or multi-storey car parks outside opening hours. A digital parking guidance system is intended to significantly reduce traffic caused by people searching for parking spaces.

For commercial traffic, we are massively expanding short-stay commercial parking spaces and loading bays so that delivery services, tradespeople and care workers can find secure parking spaces.

Expansion of the charging infrastructure

To promote greater electric mobility, we are consistently continuing the expansion of public charging points and encouraging the installation of additional charging points in retail car parks. Fast charging whilst shopping is set to become the new standard.

Road safety – implementing Vision Zero

We are committed to Vision Zero: no deaths or serious injuries on the roads. Traffic calming measures in neighbourhoods remain the most effective means of achieving this. We support initiatives by local residents and are lobbying sat-nav providers to prevent through traffic.

We oppose a 50 km/h speed limit on routes previously restricted to 30 km/h. We are introducing a 30 km/h speed limit, particularly around nurseries, schools, playgrounds and care homes and will make full use of the new flexibility offered by the Highway Code.

Based on the Paris model of 'temporary school streets', we will create the legal framework to secure suitable roads in front of schools and nurseries, including through the use of barriers. We protect children with dedicated cycle lanes, separate turning lanes, temporary play streets and other structural measures, as well as specialised traffic management plans, traffic warden services and road safety education. We are committed to rigorous enforcement and the expansion of fixed and mobile monitoring of speeding, noise and red-light offences. We will earmark the revenue

for their intended purpose. We are expanding the police's cycle patrol and providing better equipment for the public order offices.

Air travel and international connections

Berlin needs strong international connections – for the city's residents as well as for business and visitors. We are working to improve connectivity at BER and are driving forward international rail links, particularly to Poland and the Baltic states. The ban on night-time flights at BER remains in place.

Data, transparency and digitalisation in transport

We provide passenger information for public transport digitally and in real time – including at stops. We are bringing together sharing services in a multimodal app and integrating them with buses and trains. We are continuing to digitise traffic management and monitoring. We support the expansion of the night train network.

Commercial transport – clean, efficient, local

We are aligning commercial transport with climate and urban objectives. We are logistics hubs, as well as deliveries using electric vans and cargo bikes. In commercial streets, we are establishing more loading bays and short-stay parking spaces (→ see chapter **PARKING SPACES**). We are improving facilities in industrial estates and ensuring their public transport links.

A priority network for lorries relieves pressure on congested roads. We are shifting more freight to rail and waterways, creating additional transshipment points and strengthening the state-owned BEHALA, as well as its connections to waterways and rail.

Waterways – collaborative and sustainable

We are driving forward the electrification of commercial and private shipping, standardising registration and introducing a 'TÜV' for boats. We are establishing clear rules for the disposal of scrap boats. At national level, we are campaigning to lower the power limit for licence-free operation on waterways from 15 to 5 PS.

Safety for a good life in the ‘ ’

“All free people, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin.”

That is what John F. Kennedy said in his famous speech. For Berlin is the capital of freedom. To ensure it remains so, we need the strength of the law – not the law of the strongest. This means: taking a firm stand against all enemies of democracy, but welcoming with open arms all those who wish to help shape democracy. We are in favour of

a ban on the AfD whilst also focusing on deradicalisation and the promotion of democracy.

Berlin must be prepared – against (cyber) attacks on our democratic and technical infrastructure, against crises and crime. A city is only as safe as its residents feel. That is why we are safeguarding our

Infrastructure and investment in disaster management and civil protection.

We prioritise prevention over harsh measures. We advocate for increased funding for the judiciary and a well-resourced police force – as allies of the people against fear, hatred and violence. We view security as a combination of crime prevention and social security – this is how crime is effectively prevented. As the basis for such a security and crime policy, we want to strengthen criminological and security policy research in Berlin.

We are committed to good hospitals and a strong public health service. Our social safety net includes good healthcare for all Berliners.

Protecting our resilient democracy

We protect our resilient democracy from its enemies and strengthen it with a Democracy Promotion Act. Security agencies, the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and civil society work together to make a vital contribution to resolutely countering extremist forces and parties.

A motion to ban the AfD

We regard the far right and authoritarian tendencies as the greatest threat to our democracy. That is why we want the AfD to be ruled unconstitutional by the Federal Constitutional Court. We support a motion to this effect and are driving it forward through an initiative in the Bundesrat.

Strengthening democracy

We firmly reject any form of extremist or religiously motivated violence. Berlin needs a strategy for vibrant democracy and social cohesion online, complemented by digital prevention measures against hate speech, disinformation and radicalisation. In doing so, we prioritise anti-Semitism, racism, sexism, misogyny, queerphobia and gender-based violence. In this way, a reliable legal framework for civil society's work to promote democracy and for democracy education. In this way, we ensure their long-term funding and strengthen societal resilience in the long term.

In addition, we are establishing a centre of expertise for deradicalisation, disassociation and

exit strategies in the areas of Islamism and right-wing extremism. We are also developing appropriate measures in the field of left-wing extremism. We treat far-right youth culture as a distinct phenomenon and address it with targeted prevention programmes. We are strengthening cooperation between security authorities and civil society actors in the field of countering extremism.

We defend the state's ideological neutrality. Furthermore, we are strengthening our democracy by promoting democratic participation and involvement of all Berliners. We are further developing the 'Mein Berlin' participation platform, prioritising on-the-ground dialogues with members of the Senate and early-stage information sessions regarding upcoming construction and infrastructure projects. We will safeguard the existing offices for public participation. Political education lays the foundation for this – by raising awareness of opportunities for participation and empowering Berliners to make informed decisions. That is why we want to provide adequate funding for organisations delivering political education and safeguard their editorial independence.

Protection and safety for the city and its

Infrastructure, civil protection and disaster management

As the capital, Berlin faces particular internal and external threats. Following the model of the Federal Government's National Security Council, we are establishing a State Security Council in Berlin to coordinate the development and implementation of security strategies. In doing so, we will strengthen inter-departmental cooperation and collaboration between the federal capital and the federal government, as well as with other state governments.

To ensure that Berlin remains capable of acting

even in times of crisis,

we are making our city more resilient and, to this end, are presenting a comprehensive strategy for the protection of critical infrastructure. We are making targeted investments in technology, protective measures and decentralised supply solutions.

At the same time, we are supporting the operators of critical infrastructure with prevention and protection measures. We are further developing the Berlin Situation Report into a real-time system for electricity, water, heating and other sensitive sectors, so that we can identify risks at an early stage.

In addition, we are expanding the Centre of Excellence for Civil Protection and Crisis Management

, improving civil protection structures, legally defining command responsibilities in crisis situations, and introducing a standardised crisis management system across the state that applies to all civil protection authorities. Crisis management teams consist of permanently appointed members, and regular exercises are held. Accessibility is also taken into account in crisis situations – the necessary information is also made available in plain language and German Sign Language. We ensure reliable and adequate funding so that we can also manage multiple and long-term crises. We are strengthening civil defence and making our economy more resilient to cyber-attacks (→ see chapter **TRANSITION TO THE DIGITAL SOCIETY**). To this end, we are stepping up European cooperation on cyber security to effectively protect critical infrastructure and scientific institutions in Berlin from AI-enabled threats. After all, protecting our city, the people of Berlin and our democracy also involves safeguarding digital infrastructure against attacks and targeted disinformation. In this way, we ensure the state's ability to act and a reliable supply for all Berliners.

Making Berlin a pioneer in evidence-based security and crime policy

We want to make Berlin a leading centre for research into security policy and criminology. To this end, we aim to identify challenges and develop solutions for metropolitan regions, in collaboration with existing research institutions. In doing so, we wish to specifically involve other urban centres and their research institutions in Germany and Europe. Within this framework, we also aim in particular to promote regular research into underreported crime relating to the most significant criminal phenomena in Berlin and expand dialogue and cooperation between the research community, security authorities and policymakers.

Safe neighbourhoods – greater victim protection

Our aim is to ensure safe neighbourhoods for everyone. Alongside prevention, we are therefore strengthening law enforcement. From tackling bicycle theft and providing better protection against harassment to combating

protection racketeering, we are working to ensure that all Berliners can feel safe in their local areas.

We are specifically stepping up the work of the police and the Crown Prosecution Service against white-collar crime such as money laundering, tax evasion, undeclared work and corruption. We consistently seize criminally acquired assets. At the same time, we are focusing more closely on organised crime, gang-related crime and cybercrime. Mafia-style organised crime in Berlin also takes the form of systematic exploitation and intimidation, for example through protection rackets, labour exploitation, forced prostitution or criminal networks within specific sectors. We are therefore strengthening specialised investigative units within the police and the public prosecutor's office, whilst also improving protection and support services for those affected.

We are resolutely combating violence against women, anti-LGBTQ+ attacks and other forms of hate crime – regardless of whether they take place online or offline. We are strengthening specialist counselling centres and increasing detection rates.

Protecting civil liberties

In all of this, the following applies: state intervention must always be proportionate and respect civil liberties.

At the federal level, we are therefore committed to strengthening the powers of the independent police and ombudsman in criminal proceedings. Through a Bundesrat initiative, we also aim to extend the right to refuse to give evidence to social workers when they are conducting particularly sensitive counselling sessions.

Likewise, freedom of assembly must remain a cherished right. We therefore stand by the Berlin de-escalation strategy whilst ensuring that the press can work unhindered, even during demonstrations.

We are strengthening the trust of all communities in the security authorities and upholding the clear ban on racial profiling. We want to limit checks carried out without reasonable suspicion to the absolute minimum, both in terms of geographical scope and scope of application. Weapons- and knife-free zones should remain the exception. We are

therefore

we subject the classification of crime-prone areas to regular parliamentary scrutiny.

When using AI, we carefully assess the benefits and risks in each individual case and regularly evaluate the applications. We involve security authorities, civil society and digital civil rights organisations in these processes

. In the context of automated mass data analysis, we are committed to a sovereign European solution. We firmly reject the use in Berlin of software from manufacturers such as Palantir, whose practices lack transparency and raise data protection concerns.

To address criminal allegations against public sector employees, we are seeking to establish an 'Internal Investigations' unit within the Senate Department for the Interior.

We are further developing disciplinary law to make it easier and quicker to remove convicted extremists from the civil service.

Furthermore, we are clarifying disciplinary law to address breaches of duty that fall below the threshold for criminal prosecution, such as passive membership of chat groups containing content that is degrading to human dignity.

A community-focused police force and fire service

We advocate for a police force that acts respectfully and reflects the diversity of this city. We are therefore further expanding their intercultural competence and raising awareness of racism, anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination and gender-based violence in initial and continuing training.

Emergency services personnel deserve trust, recognition and good working conditions. That is why we are supporting the police and fire service politically, with modern infrastructure and up-to-date equipment. In the case of protracted investigations, we are improving the transfer of knowledge during internal staff changes.

In this context, we must always ensure, amongst other things, that contact persons for those affected and their bereaved families are competent and accessible. We are expanding routine supervision, during which officers can reflect on operational events. At the federal level, we are campaigning for legal equality for volunteers in aid organisations with the emergency services of the voluntary fire

brigade and the Federal Agency for Technical Relief.

To better support people experiencing mental health crises

, we are establishing a network linking the police, social work professionals and social psychiatric services.

In addition, we are making the Berlin Fire Brigade's Social Medical Emergency Team and the psychosocial support unit at the Berlin Fire Brigade's control centre permanent features of our emergency response system. For the refurbishment of police stations and fire stations, we are launching a special investment programme modelled on the school-building initiative. This applies to the police and the fire service. In addition, we are launching a pilot project in which the police and fire service can use drones for early learning.

We want every child in Berlin to have at least one experience of police and fire service personnel visiting their school or nursery by the time they leave school.

At the same time, we are strengthening the fire service's neighbourhood officers as a successful prevention initiative.

The police should combine law enforcement and threat prevention with 'community policing' and focus on building alliances with the civilian population. Among other things, cooperation with migrant self-help organisations and groups affected by victims of racist violence. This will foster resilient partnerships with schools, social services and other stakeholders in the neighbourhood.

We are expanding foot and cycle patrols across the city. We are stationing security staff more frequently at Underground and S-Bahn stations. In addition, we are launching a digital 'community policing' programme that specifically reaches young people online.

Expanding violence prevention

Many stakeholders from social work, education, neighbourhood management and the voluntary sector are already doing valuable work to promote peaceful neighbourhoods. We are promoting cross-departmental programmes for non-violent conflict resolution and prevention in local communities.

In doing so, we are prioritising gender-specific projects, such as those tackling domestic violence and violence involving firearms and knives.

We are strengthening the staffing of the district prevention councils. A Violence

Prevention Act is intended to regulate prevention, district structures and inter-departmental cooperation and ensure their long-term funding. Particular attention is paid to violence against people with disabilities.

Protecting women and children from violence

We want to better protect women from gender-based violence and femicide. We are introducing systematic risk assessments within the police force. These serve as an initial, standardised means of early detection of high-risk cases based on the available data and may lead to further measures. We are consistently implementing the Istanbul Convention and establishing women's refuges, safe housing, support services for queer people, psychosocial support programmes for perpetrators, and violence protection clinics across the city. In doing so, we are ensuring comprehensive provision across all neighbourhoods. Minors, too, should have easier access.

In future, we will no longer organise facilities for the protection of women against violence as grant-funded projects, but will secure their long-term funding through operational grants. Furthermore, we remain committed to ensuring that health insurance funds cover the costs of 'confidential evidence collection'

. Where possible, all emergency hospitals with a gynaecology department should be able to carry out this service.

We want to better protect children as (co-)victims of domestic violence. At the federal level, we are therefore campaigning to ensure that protection against violence takes precedence over the violent parent's access rights.

We are strengthening independent agencies combating sexual abuse and sexualised violence against women, and are also establishing an independent body to combat sexual abuse and sexualised violence against children and young people. Through nationwide education, we are children and women better against cyber-grooming and sexualised violence online. We are improving safety in public spaces, for example by providing shelters and lighting at bus stops, safety information on night buses, staffed railway stations, more BVG patrols with mixed-gender teams, the 'Heimwegtelefon' (Safe Home Helpline) via the Berlin Citizens' Helpline at weekends, and a campaign promoting non-violence on public transport.

A modern and efficient justice system

Shortening the duration of proceedings and strengthening institutions

We want an efficient justice system that investigates and reaches decisions swiftly. Lengthy legal proceedings undermine confidence in the rule of law.

That is why we are reducing these delays through improved processes, consistent digitalisation and additional posts. The authorities should respond swiftly to criminal offences, particularly where young people and adolescents are concerned.

We are strengthening the Berlin Public Prosecutor's Office with expanded or new specialist departments to tackle attacks on co-determination (→ see chapter '**GOOD WORK AND SECURING SKILLS AND WORKFORCE**') and against housing and tenancy-related crime (→ see chapter '**USING THE MEANS OF THE RULE OF LAW TO COMBAT RENTAL PREDATORS**'). We will also strengthen the Berlin Public Prosecutor's Office through

training programmes on the organised far right.

We are also enhancing the role of lay judges and placing particular emphasis on a clear commitment to the free and democratic basic order.

Easy access to justice for everyone

For us, the state's monopoly on the administration of justice remains sacrosanct. At the same time, everyone – regardless of income or wealth – have access to legal protection and legal advice.

We are further expanding electronic legal services and creating a citizen-centred, service-oriented justice system with low-threshold access. We are consolidating all key information on a single justice portal.

A modern prison system

We are committed to a prison system that combines security with rehabilitation. Repeat offenders will remain in secure detention, and we will consistently prevent radicalisation whilst in custody.

We are gradually replacing community service orders – which often disproportionately affect the socially disadvantaged – with social work. We are specifically strengthening training, work and victim-offender mediation. At the federal level

we continue to campaign for the decriminalisation of fare evasion.

Good healthcare for everyone

Health is a human right. That is why we want fair and comprehensive healthcare provision. Outpatient, inpatient and psychosocial services must work more closely together.

Safeguarding hospital care

Many Berlin hospitals are facing major challenges. They are burdened by significant deficits and a backlog of investment. Against this backdrop, the SPD Berlin is campaigning for adequate funding. At the same time, we are driving forward hospital reform, which focuses on specialisation, cooperation and quality.

To ensure that Berlin makes full use of the federal funds allocated for hospital reform, we are providing the necessary state funding. We will continue to ensure local healthcare provision and emergency services in the future.

Paediatric and adolescent medicine is our top priority. Together with Charité Berlin, we will build a new, state-of-the-art, accessible and digital paediatric hospital. Our aim: to provide the best paediatric and adolescent medical care in Europe.

At federal level, we are fighting for fair funding.

We want relief pay agreements not only for state-run hospitals but also for other hospital operators. The workload of nursing staff must be significantly reduced. Further training should be made more accessible.

Making Berlin the capital of medicine

Berlin boasts world-class medical care. The Charité is Germany's leading university hospital. Vivantes is the largest municipal hospital group. We are continuing to strengthen both organisations. We are expanding their collaboration, thereby creating new synergies.

We support the Charité in its successful development in its three roles: as an internationally renowned research institution, as a major training centre for medical professions, and as a tertiary care hospital including for crisis situations in the region. To this end, we are increasing the state subsidy to the university hospital and are also helping with our own

funds to finance the necessary investments. We are negotiating with the federal government regarding further support within the framework of the capital city's responsibilities.

Outpatient and local healthcare

Outer districts in particular need better GP, specialist and therapeutic services; we will coordinate the services provided by hospitals in the outer districts with hospitals in the Berlin surrounding area. We are ensuring that healthcare is easily accessible in all districts.

We are also strengthening telemedicine and tele-nursing services across the city. The Berlin Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians (KV) is responsible for healthcare planning. It determines where in Berlin medical practices may open.

We will work with the KV to reform the so-called needs assessment process in order to ensure there are sufficient GP and specialist practices, as well as psychotherapy places, to ensure good care for the public. Our aim is also to expand the number of accessible doctors' surgeries.

We want doctor's appointments without long waiting times. That is why we are calling for improvements from the federal government and the KV. The right to an appointment with a specialist within 14 days should apply to all referrals to specialists.

Integrated health centres combine medical care, nursing and counselling. We want to expand these – at local authority level where necessary – and make them accessible to all Berliners close to where they live.

In all boroughs, we are deploying community health nurses – specialist nursing staff who provide primary care, prevention and health promotion in local neighbourhoods. We are also promoting partnerships between practices in outpatient healthcare. We are setting up more out-of-hours clinics at additional hospitals and extend their opening hours. This applies

particularly to children and young people. This ensures that help is available round the clock.

The Public Health Service remains a cornerstone of our system. We are strengthening it in terms of both staffing and funding. We are continuing to improve its structure and facilities.

We are continuing the Children's Health Round Table.

Mental health

Many people with mental health conditions face long waits for help. Therapy places are hard to come by.

That is why Berlin is developing a mental health master plan. It reorganises support services. It is intended to reduce waiting times and create integrated services.

We are pressing the Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians (KV) and the federal government to reform needs assessment. More therapy places must be created. Waiting times must be reduced. We are also training more specialist staff.

We are expanding the contact and counselling centres, as well as psychotherapy for children and young people in accordance with SGB

VIII. The aim is to provide low-threshold care close to home. To ensure that there are enough qualified psychotherapists available, we are establishing further training places within the public health service for compulsory further training

. We are also ensuring that hospitals and training institutes offer enough further training places in line with the new further training regulations.

We are also improving the situation in residential care facilities. This includes ensuring that the number of places meets demand. This also applies to forensic psychiatric care.

Care

The number of people in need of care is growing. This presents a challenge for our city. Everyone should be cared for with dignity.

We are therefore strengthening home care and setting up local care and social services centres. Here, people in need of care can receive the support they require without having to travel long

distances. We are expanding advice centres, home visits and neighbourhood services. We are expanding short-term and respite care. We want to raise awareness of care support centres.

With a new Act on the Structure of Care for the Elderly, we are making care for the elderly a statutory duty. By implementing this city-wide, we are safeguarding social infrastructure for older people. Berlin is setting up a Dementia Competence Centre.

We are providing greater support for family carers. A new care helpline offers rapid assistance.

We want to monitor care homes more closely in the interests of those in need of care. In this way, we aim to better ensure the quality of care. At the federal level, we are campaigning for collective bargaining agreements and fair pay in the care sector. Reliable funding is also part of this: co-payments for care should be capped.

Digital technology and accessible housing promote independence. Telecare is designed to make everyday life easier.

Health for all – regardless of status, gender or disability

The Integrated Health Programme is already supporting health projects for people with special needs.

We are further expanding these services and closing gaps in care provision.

We are also advancing gender-sensitive and age-specific medicine. Everyone should receive the best possible treatment. That is why we are strengthening queer-sensitive healthcare, particularly for trans* patients, and expanding training and further education in the health professions. We are promoting gender medicine in research and training.

Endometriosis, which affects millions of women, is receiving greater attention. New research priorities are emerging. We are expanding education and care. The menopause must also be given greater attention in research and healthcare.

When it comes to childbirth, one-to-one care remains our goal. To this end, we are expanding midwifery training.

Together with professional associations, we are assessing the need and establishing a Master's degree programme for midwives. We are strengthening practical training within the

Bachelor's programme.

In the Bundesrat, Berlin should advocate for a

new legal framework for abortion that decriminalises the procedure and is free from discrimination. We are relaunching the Assisted Reproduction funding programme for couples struggling to conceive, taking all family models into account.

We take ME-CFS, Long Covid and Post-VAC seriously. Research and care must be improved. The Berlin Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians (KV Berlin) must ensure outpatient medical care.

Homeless people and refugees also need medical care. For us, this goes without saying. The SPD Berlin will therefore ensure the provision of emergency medical and counselling centres.

No one must fall through the cracks. We will continue Berlin's involvement in the 'Fast Track Cities Initiative to End AIDS'. Berlin will play its part in ending the HIV pandemic by 2030 and will consistently align healthcare structures with the United Nations' '95-95-95-0' targets.

Moving up with equal opportunities

We want Berlin to be a family-friendly metropolis. To this end, we are investing in the education and training of our children. After all, education is the key to participation in society, to a self-determined life and to strengthening democracy.

A good education gives everyone a chance: no matter where they come from, no matter what they believe in, no matter how much their parents earn, and regardless of whether they have a disability.

In Berlin, children already spend more time learning together than in many other federal states; in Berlin, all-day childcare is already better developed than elsewhere. We have achieved a great deal. But it is still far from enough. Every child receives the best language support; we are investing in quality and strengthening teacher training so

that in future we have enough teachers for

our schools. Education is our top priority.

When we put money into nurseries, schools and universities, we are investing in the future. Because we know that only those who can have their say can also play an active part in democracy.

We are also continuing to invest in Berlin's science and research – in high-quality teaching and study conditions, in excellent work at our universities and in our non-university research institutes. Berlin is Germany's largest centre for higher education and research.

The strength that stems from this is an indispensable foundation for the development of our city, its capacity for innovation and its economic strength. We are continuing to expand the sector, strengthening cooperation and are investing in the refurbishment of our buildings through a university building company.

Early childhood education, children and young people, family

Adequate resources for the youngest children

We value the diversity of Berlin's families and give everyone the space they need to flourish. For this to succeed, families need sufficient resources – and youth welfare offices that stand by their side as strong partners.

Parental support services are a key component of child protection. That is why we are committed to providing the boroughs with better financial resources in this area, so that they can fulfil their statutory obligations to provide support. To support families from the very start and reach as many as possible, we are expanding the pilot projects for social counselling in paediatricians' practices . We are reforming the current funding practices and the funding formula for educational support so that no district is disadvantaged despite high needs.

Better care in nurseries

The time spent in nursery is the most formative period of a child's life and cannot be repeated. We want it to be the best possible time, during which children can safely and lovingly expand their horizons and discover the world. Early childhood education is the key to a child's entire educational journey. We are therefore improving the staff-to-child ratio in nurseries – making a tangible difference in everyday life. For staff and for children. To allow more time for individual support, observation, parent-teacher meetings and documenting progress. To this end, we are enhancing indirect educational support through a significant increase in the staff-to-child ratio. We are ensuring that the improved ratio for the under-3s is made permanent. Furthermore, we are continuing to work towards meeting the scientific recommendations for staff-to-child ratios in the under-3 and over-3 age groups during the next legislative period. In doing so, we are also aiming to increase the proportion of qualified staff in childcare centres. In this way, we are securing the qualified staff within the system who are no longer financially supported due to the decline in the birth rate. In future, we will calculate the ratio solely on the basis of the staff who are actually present on site. Holidays, sick leave or further training will not

be taken into account. In this way, we will create more time for early years education and individual support. We will strengthen inclusive childcare centres by increasing the staff allowance. We will deploy childcare social workers specifically where they are most needed.

The nursery voucher is to be issued automatically, without the need for an application, for the statutory entitlement (5–7 hours) that already applies from the child's first birthday; to this end, we are adapting the relevant administrative procedures

. We are making the introduction of the participation allowance, planned for 2027, easier for families. We are automating the verification of Berlinpass BuT eligibility when applying for the nursery voucher. This will ease the burden on families and nursery management alike. Language is the key to the world. That is why we want to strengthen all nursery schools in a targeted manner by providing additional specialist staff, particularly for language learning integrated into everyday life. These specialist staff members are not counted towards the staff-to-child ratio and can also be deployed to deliver further quality improvements, for example in early musical education, motor skills development or maths and science skills. For language support, we are reintroducing the additional staffing allocation

'non-German mother tongue' (ndH).

The SPD is firmly committed to the State of Berlin's municipally run childcare centres. They safeguard essential public services at a fundamental level. We are stabilising their funding through additional investment, taking fluctuating birth rates into account, and ensuring, through these publicly run centres, that childcare is available close to home in all boroughs. We are open to amending the Publicly Run Childcare Centres Act.

Democracy begins in the nursery. We strengthen parents' rights by consistently involving parents' representatives in relevant decision-making processes. We strengthen existing structures through clear communication with the boroughs and the establishment of offices for the borough parents' committees and the State Parents' Committee.

Good preparation for starting school

Because the transition from nursery to school is a challenging phase for many families, we are making improvements through binding cooperation structures, joint assessments and transition plans. We

are doing everything in our power to ensure that the compulsory

final year of nursery is finally implemented across Berlin without any ifs or buts. Every child should have the prerequisites to follow lessons at a suitable pace. To this end, we are consistently implementing improvements to staff-to-child ratios so that children receive the best possible early years education. Assessments and observation tools support this process, which places the child and their interests at the centre. We are evaluating the Berlin Education Programme and the process of its further development.

Where necessary, we support nurseries with language courses for children with language difficulties. Every child receives early language support. We are introducing compulsory language assessments and ensuring that children with special educational needs are starting school. Nurseries in challenging areas will receive an additional language support programme modelled on the 'Sprach-Kitas' programme, which ran until 2025.

Because families are under particular strain at this time, we are expanding family drop-in centres. We are encouraging schools to open their doors to parents' cafés and to view schools more strongly as shared, inclusive spaces for education.

Health begins in nursery and school

Good nutrition starts early. We are embedding nutrition education as early as nursery, promoting healthy and free meals in communal catering, and consistently pursuing Berlin's nutrition strategy with these priorities.

To ensure that nurseries and all-day schools evolve from mere childcare provision into genuine educational provision, we are establishing physical activity as a quality benchmark and embed high-quality physical activity, play and sport programmes into the daily routine. To this end, we are strengthening the physical activity and language teaching skills of the educational staff and expanding partnerships with external organisations such as sports clubs. We are committed to ensuring that dental hygiene programmes are consistently implemented in nurseries and are launching a dental health campaign.

Playgrounds as places for families

Berlin's green spaces and playgrounds, which are intended to be inclusive

are social oases for children and families. We will protect these places and step up playground refurbishment programmes so that good playgrounds become a reliable standard throughout Berlin. Wherever possible, families and children should continue to have a say in their design. We will strengthen the district playground committees.

culture allowance for all Berliners aged between 18 and 23

A city for children and young people

Children and young people need spaces that belong to them.

In children's and young people's leisure centres, they have a say in what happens and experience a place where they are not judged. For us, children's and youth organisations are a top priority when it comes to promoting and supporting their work. We are committed to expanding the range of leisure activities on offer for children and young people. These places also serve as safe spaces, for example for queer young people (→ see the chapter **on QUEER BERLIN**).

In public spaces, too, we are creating more meeting places for young people with and without disabilities, designed in line with their wishes and needs. To this end, we are establishing the necessary financial and staffing provisions in the boroughs on a long-term basis and enshrined in law. At these 'youth centres', they can spend time without having to pay. Furthermore, where suitable space is available, we will allow non-profit organisations from the local neighbourhood to use the facilities free of charge. We are also protecting young people from being pushed out of public spaces by amending the legal provisions on noise protection.

Social crises and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic present young people today with a wide range of challenges, which lead to mental health problems for many. We are expanding low-threshold support centres for young people experiencing mental health crises, which complement the standard support system as long as it does not provide sufficient services to meet actual needs. We are ensuring access to cultural activities for all young people – regardless of their family background. With the 'Youth Culture Card', we are reintroducing the annual €50

. We are strengthening the work of children's and youth organisations in all their diversity. We are consistently safeguarding youth and sports programmes and developing them into inclusive and accessible spaces.

Improving young people's participation

Berlin needs a youth strategy. We will develop this together with young people and consistently implement the results.

All children must experience the promotion of democracy and participation in an inclusive way from an early age. In many nurseries, this is already part of everyday life: children help shape and learn to take responsibility. We are also continuing to expand co-determination in schools (→ see chapter '**BERLIN SCHOOLS ARE DEMOCRATIC**').

Young people take on responsibility – often through voluntary work. This strengthens them and our democracy. In many boroughs, children's and youth parliaments and participatory structures have developed. We welcome this and will the next legislative term, we will establish a Children's and

youth parliament at the state level, which will be provided with adequate human and material resources. We will enshrine binding participation rights for young people at state and district level. We will also strengthen structures for self-organised advocacy by and with children and young people. We will create an independent Children's Commissioner for Berlin, who will represent the interests of children and young people and scrutinise political initiatives for their impact on

young people. In this way, we will strengthen children's rights in a binding manner across all policy areas and ensure genuine participation.

In doing so, we ensure that all children and young people can take part. The provision of funding for sign language interpreters in the Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf Children's and Young People's Parliament serves as a model here. Furthermore, we are establishing a network of political youth organisations to strengthen the democratic political youth associations in our city.

School, vocational training, lifelong learning

Renewing the promise of social mobility in Berlin's schools

Our education system now sends significantly more children to university than in the past. Nevertheless, a child's background still too often determines their educational path. Social circumstances and migration history continue to influence a child's educational journey. That is why we are renewing the promise of social mobility in Berlin. However, the promise of social mobility also means that all pupils in vocational schools and vocational training programmes can gain further qualifications in such a way that they can achieve the relevant qualifications up to the Abitur. However, our promise of social mobility also explicitly means that all pupils at vocationally-oriented upper secondary centres or other vocational training programmes can continue their education at technical colleges, vocational upper secondary schools, vocational grammar schools or specialist colleges, in line

with their interests and abilities, so that they can achieve the Fachhochschulreife, the vocationally-oriented Abitur or the general Abitur.

Whether it is a Gymnasium, an integrated secondary school or a comprehensive school: at every location, it should be possible to obtain all qualifications – right up to the Abitur – without changing schools. To this end, every school should offer an upper secondary Gymnasium stream, either independently or as part of a network.

We are strengthening collaborative learning in the six-year primary school and in the comprehensive school. The comprehensive school is our school model for the future. We are therefore we are doubling the number of comprehensive schools. We oppose the expansion of traditional grammar schools. We will put an end to the 'trial lessons' in their current form and replace them with an admissions-based process for grammar schools, by aligning the admissions procedure with the average mark, the subjects included and the academic rigour of the aptitude test, and apply these rules to 'Grundständiges Gymnasium' schools. Furthermore, we will promptly carry out a critical evaluation of the procedure for progression to secondary schools from Year 7 onwards, with families' interests in mind. We will also

we will provide targeted support to comprehensive grammar schools in their inclusive and integrative work. They should be able to provide both special educational needs support and support for gifted pupils.

We are committed to the State European School Berlin (SESB) and are working to maintain all SESB sites, as well as to open new sites and language combinations.

We also promote social mobility and educational equity in private schools. We will enable independent schools that operate in the same way as state schools to receive full funding. In the next legislative term, we aim to achieve a demonstrable reduction in the link between educational success and social background.

Bringing greater inclusion to mainstream schools

We stand for inclusive education and joint learning from the very beginning. We therefore want to enable mainstream schools to fulfil their educational mandate for joint learning that offers equal opportunities. We will ensure there are sufficient teaching and specialist staff qualified in special educational needs, as well as an even distribution of special educational needs provision across Berlin. This also includes the expansion of inclusive specialist schools.

The number of special educational support centres will not be increased; rather, they will undergo undergoing a systematic transformation in favour of inclusive solutions. To this end, we are drawing up a binding 10-year plan. In this way, we prevent the onset of lifelong chains of exclusion within special education systems. To address the fact that 2,500 pupils in Berlin are currently not attending school, rapidly developing a strategy in collaboration with stakeholder organisations and the Senate.

In other areas, we are advancing inclusion by strengthening multi-professional teams – particularly teaching assistants – and facilitating temporary small classes. These other professionals do not supplement or replace teachers within the system.

We are also pressing ahead with the introduction of the optional subject 'German Sign Language' (DGS).

We are implementing a school development plan for vocational schools. We are strengthening the necessary structures responsible for the quality and development of vocational schools. A

State Institute for Vocational Schools oversees quality and further development.

Independent and data-driven schools

Berlin's schools should be able to act autonomously: in terms of teaching, staff management and the use of their resources. At the same time, we are strengthening their data-driven approach. We are placing greater emphasis on transparently collected educational and developmental data, which enables a holistic view – from basic language and maths skills through social development to graduation rates, opportunities for participation and the democratic culture of the school community. To this end, we are expanding regular learning assessments, school feedback systems and quality monitoring.

We are also further developing school supervision and teaching practice, and equipping headteachers and senior staff with the skills to fulfil their wide-ranging responsibilities in an autonomous and democratic school, particularly with regard to the use of school data. The dual role of Berlin's current school supervision system – as both a supervisory body and operational responsibility must be resolved, and the school supervisory authority must be made independent as a genuine oversight and complaints body.

Holistic and all-day schools

Not everything is going well in Berlin's schools. But as Social Democrats, we have achieved a great deal of which we are proud. Children in Berlin spend more time learning together than in many other federal states. We have expanded all-day care, introduced free school lunches, largely implemented the provision of free teaching and learning materials, and made a free pupil travel pass available throughout Berlin from Year 1 onwards.

School should prepare pupils for life. That is why we are streamlining the framework curricula and making the timetable more flexible. We will not be introducing any further subjects.

We are integrating lessons and extracurricular activities more closely and, to this end, are expanding the 'Flex-Ganztag' scheme in primary schools up to and including Year 6.

We are further strengthening partnerships with sports clubs (→ see the chapter '**SPORT IS IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**'), music schools and out-of-school learning centres, particularly with gardening schools, youth road safety schools and

youth art schools.

Following the Hamburg model, we will provide targeted support for stays abroad based on social criteria. And we are committed to ensuring that every child continues to receive the teaching materials they need free of charge.

Schools free from discrimination and racism

We ensure a school environment in which children can participate and feel safe. We must recognise and combat bullying, discrimination and behaviour that targets specific groups. Every school should have an anti-bullying team in future. We are also committed to expanding multi-professional teams, for example by creating more posts for school social workers, school psychologists, teaching assistants and nursery teachers. We support queer young people (→ see the chapter **on QUEER BERLIN**). For refugee children, we ensure that they attend school at a mainstream school site. The transition to mainstream classes must be guaranteed after one year at the latest. Education must be free from discrimination. That is why we advocate for a queer-, anti-racist and anti-colonial revision of the framework curriculum, school curricula and teaching and learning materials. We are strengthening professional development programmes on discrimination, racism and post-colonialism. We are making modules that critically examine discrimination a compulsory part of the training for educational professionals – at all stages of their development.

We will establish an independent complaints body for schools and childcare centres within the Parliament (→ see chapter **LIVING DIVERSITY – COMBATING DISCRIMINATION**).

Berlin's schools are democratic

Pupils today encounter the enemies of democracy earlier and more directly – often via social media. This makes it all the more important to strengthen their democratic skills. We do this, firstly, by strengthening key school subjects

. Secondly, we are expanding opportunities for student participation. Thirdly, we are deepening our collaboration with partners outside the school system.

The school subjects of politics and ethics are

equally central to democracy education. That is why they remain unchanged. We reject a model of choice between

ethics or religion. We want to specifically promote empathy, compassion and the ability to compromise. To this end, we are introducing the topic of empathy as a compulsory elective subject.

We are strengthening pupil councils and the weekly class council as tools for participation, democratic practice and conflict resolution.

We are expanding co-determination from Year 1 onwards. We measure the degree of democratisation in schools and are reintroducing discretionary funds for democratisation projects into the bonus programme. We will steer the allocation of funds more closely through school agreements and make progress measurable.

Providers of out-of-school education – ranging from cultural education and anti-discrimination to democracy education and queer education – are indispensable partners. In the Democracy Promotion Act (→ see chapter **STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY**), we will ensure reliable funding and better coordination between projects and schools. We will continue to support existing projects in the field of political and historical education. We will strengthen the independence of the State Centre for Political Education by placing it under the authority of the Parliament.

Digital education and mobile phone use

Digital education is indispensable. We are strengthening media literacy, the critical use of social media, AI skills and digital responsibility as an integral part of school education. To this end, we are developing a new framework curriculum for digital education. It is intended to embed digital education as a cross-curricular skill across all subjects and year groups. Even in primary school, children should be introduced to an understanding of technology, social media, and the issues of cyber security, cyberbullying and disinformation. The risks associated with gaming should also be addressed in the classroom. In doing so, the relevance of digitalisation to accessibility should also be highlighted.

enforcing a ban on mobile phones in all primary schools.

We support schools in taking a critical look at mobile phone and social media use. To improve health and child protection, we are

We are implementing the Digital Pact for Schools in an unbureaucratic manner. We are establishing dedicated IT budgets for schools and developing a socially responsible model 'device-as-a-service' model for pupils. As a prerequisite for robust IT, we are also prioritising a stable internet connection for schools (→ see chapter **INVESTMENTS IN A FUNCTIONING CITY**).

Berlin's schools are places of good work

Teachers should be provided with a transparent and practical system for recording working hours for both teaching and non-teaching activities – from committee work and engagement with parents to administrative tasks.

We will provide targeted support to teachers in challenging situations. We are committed to the allocation of teaching staff based on social indicators. We will facilitate the recognition and equal treatment of the valuable professional experience of teachers with international qualifications by utilising cross-state agreed leeway and advocating for more flexible language requirements. We also we want to ensure trainee teachers have a good start to their careers. To ease their workload, we will therefore reverse the recent increase in teaching hours and ensure a good balance between practical and theoretical training in the second phase.

We are expanding the number of – including administrative managers, IT staff and caretakers. This will allow teaching staff to concentrate on their core duties.

We are strengthening the mental health of everyone involved, amongst other things through more multi-professional staff, particularly school psychologists and health professionals.

We are gradually introducing a state-wide 'school stations' programme and ensuring that every school has at least one school social worker post. Schools should continue to be able to employ early years educators directly through the state service; at the same time, we are ensuring a balanced mix with independent providers.

A scientifically grounded teacher training programme prioritises practice-oriented professional development over purely subject-specific knowledge. With this in mind, we are strengthening the Schools of Education as the central structure for teacher training.

Continuing the school-building programme

Since the start of the school building programme, we have created well over 50,000 school places through extensions and new builds. We are continuing this initiative with the same vigour and shifting the focus more strongly towards the refurbishment of existing buildings.

By raising HOWOGE's borrowing limit, we are securing public funding. Educational quality, climate resilience and accessibility remain our guiding principles. We reject public-private partnerships in school construction – regardless of whether school places are being created for state or independent schools.

Vocational education – strong, sustainable, equitable

We are strengthening and modernising vocational education and training in Berlin. We are further developing the 11th year of compulsory schooling so that it better meets the needs young people and the requirements of vocational education and training. At the same time, we are strengthening the Integrated Vocational Training Preparation (IBA) programme to help young people without qualifications make a successful start to their careers. We are further developing the Youth Vocational Agency and Youth Vocational Support to ensure that all young people progress to further education and achieve qualifications.

Career guidance (BO) begins in primary school. That is why we are expanding our career guidance teams. Particular attention is being paid to schools specialising in special educational needs and to pupils with special educational needs (inclusive career guidance). To this end, we are strengthening the current provision and partnerships within secondary levels I and II and are promoting collaboration between schools and the business sector to raise the profile of dual vocational training.

We call for a school development plan for vocational schools, modern technical and spatial facilities, and a sufficient number of qualified teachers. To ensure the long-term quality and further development of vocational education and training, we need to establish a State Institute for Vocational Schools, which will be anchored within the Senate Department for Education.

Adult education

Education does not end with a qualification. It remains part of one's entire life journey. That is why we are making second-chance education and lifelong learning accessible, affordable and relevant to real life. We are promoting adult education centres, libraries and second-chance education schools more actively, and are campaigning for low-cost or free programmes, funding and better framework conditions (→ see chapter on **DISTRICT CULTURAL WORK AND LIBRARIES**).

Strengthening basic education remains essential. We are reducing barriers to participation and raising public awareness. We are enhancing the diversity of literacy and basic education programmes under the remit of the district-level Alpha alliances. The Basic Education Foundation remains our central pillar, which we fund adequately.

We promote digitalisation in adult education, but are equally committed to

local meeting places. We are trialling new models of outreach education, particularly for people with limited mobility.

We ensure good working conditions in adult education through a three-pillar model comprising permanent staff, employees with status similar to that of workers and freelance staff. We regulate the status of workers with employment-like status in accordance with the model used by public service broadcasters, through a collective agreement with the relevant trade unions.

We promote a needs-based, equality-oriented network of specialist advisers across Berlin on careers, education and employment, to support women* in their individual life trajectories to empower them so that they can live on an equal footing and with autonomy, and can earn their own living and secure a pension that protects them from poverty.

Higher education, science, research

Berlin as a hub of scholarship

Berlin is a vibrant cosmopolitan city that champions freedom and openness. Whilst science comes under pressure elsewhere, researchers and students should find optimal conditions here. Instead of cutting university places, we will maintain the existing places at our universities, attract leading international researchers and create further high-profile national centres of excellence. Science makes Berlin a driving force for innovation and economic success.

how this works. We are strengthening this potential and

Excellence through greater cooperation

Berlin's academic community is already achieving excellence in many disciplines. Our universities and the Charité contribute to this, as do the Einstein Foundation, art colleges, universities of applied sciences and non-university research institutes.

We remain committed to the Berlin model of cross-institutional cooperation. The Berlin University Alliance and Berlin Research demonstrate

on this basis, we are turning Berlin into a real-world laboratory for positive future developments. We are committed to establishing a library that spans universities and universities of applied sciences. All locations and staff will be retained.

Securing funding for higher education and research

We are promoting Berlin as a centre of science through a research policy strategy backed by funding. We are ensuring that higher education funding is stable and reliable, in line with the Pact for Research and Innovation (PFI). We are also strengthening world-class research and appointments through the Einstein Foundation, particularly in the face of international competition.

We will renovate, modernise and construct new science buildings – through a university construction company fully funded by the state. We will ensure that the refinancing of the university construction company does not come at the expense of budgets for student studies, teaching, research and knowledge transfer.

We support Berlin's scientific institutions in participating in national

and European programmes: the national Decade against Post-Infectious Diseases, key technologies of the high-tech agenda, ranging from AI to quantum and biotechnology, as well as in health, sustainability and security research. We are resolutely driving forward research safety.

Improving research and knowledge transfer

Even the best idea won't change the world if it stays in the laboratory. That is why we are strengthening transfer and dialogue between science and society. We promote exchange between scientists and members of the public and are further expanding science communication through events such as the Long Night of Science, Berlin Science Week, the Falling Walls Summit and the World Health Summit – in the city, across Europe and worldwide.

With a standardised Berlin IP framework, we are simplifying spin-offs, strengthening transfer offices and establishing clear rules so that institutions can benefit from successful start-ups. Together with the universities, we are embedding transfer activities as measurable criteria in the assessment of academic careers and enabling start-up and transfer sabbaticals.

We are strengthening JUNI as a start-up factory and implementing further measures to promote international cooperation, funding and collaboration with established companies. We support joint initiatives between the scientific community and industry, such as the Berlin Centre for Gene and Cell Therapies or the Werner von Siemens Centre for Industry and Science.

An affordable standard of living for students

Good study conditions are the foundation of successful research. Berlin should remain an attractive place to study for everyone. We provide particular support to young people without an academic background through advice, guidance and mentoring. To this end, we are establishing central contact points (one-stop agencies) as well as accessible digital services.

Studying at state universities remains tuition-free. We continue to advocate at federal level for a parent-independent BAföG grant as

scholarship and for regular adjustments to the standard rates in line with inflation, taking actual housing costs into account. Nevertheless, financing remains difficult because the BAföG is too low to cover the cost of living in Berlin. We are therefore campaigning for a location-based flat-rate housing allowance

. We are also campaigning for the reintroduction of training grants and the reimbursement of master craftsman's examination fees in the skilled trades.

We are expanding affordable and accessible housing for students and doubling the proportion of student accommodation. And because mobility is just as much a part of everyday student life, we are campaigning for the Germany Semester Ticket to remain affordable and also want to integrate bike-sharing schemes in future.

We will continue to support the Studierendenwerk Berlin: we will utilise the framework agreement and will significantly increase the grant in the next contract. Cost increases must not be passed on to students.

Creating modern study conditions

As many students are in paid employment, study structures must adapt more effectively to this reality. We are expanding part-time, hybrid and dual study programmes to reduce stress and promote academic success.

Degree programmes should be research- and skills-oriented. To this end, we are improving student-tutor ratios, making teaching commitments more flexible and strengthening university teaching methodology. We systematically evaluate the Berlin Centre for University Teaching Methodology, as well as university-owned and inter-institutional bodies to develop them further.

Continuing education is largely defined by state aid legislation as a market-driven function. That is not enough. In view of demographic change and the upheavals caused by AI, universities must become more involved in continuing education. We must not leave people in the middle and lower wage brackets, in particular, solely to private providers. That is why, in future, we will also define academic continuing education as a public responsibility of universities.

Good working conditions at universities

Good work remains a priority. We are continuing the Good Work Forum. We are creating early career prospects and more permanent posts for academic staff.

We are making permanent employment the norm for researchers with a PhD. Through the Bundesrat, we are driving forward the reform of the Academic Fixed-Term Contracts Act – not least in light of the Federal Constitutional Court's ruling. We are expanding the number of tenure-track professorships.

Democratic universities are free, open and diverse

We do not accept that Jewish members of the academic community should experience our universities as unsafe places. We are taking decisive action against anti-Semitism, Islamism, racism, discrimination and any ideology that disregards human dignity, and we are strengthening preventive measures.

We guarantee academic freedom. We do not tolerate political agitation that spreads anti-Semitism or racism. We support universities in taking consistent action against such behaviour within the framework of their autonomy. Uncomfortable democratic protest is possible at universities.

We are expanding anti-discrimination services and protection against abuse of power, and establish adequate complaints mechanisms. We are safeguarding and expanding measures for equality and diversity. We remain committed to the Berlin Equal Opportunities Programme and are supplementing it with an additional funding stream for diversity in professorial posts and leadership roles.

We are also improving the conditions for students with disabilities or impairments and for students without an academic background. For students from families with a history of displacement or migration

, the initial phase of their studies is particularly challenging. We are therefore trialling more flexible entry models, including language and bridging courses as well as preparatory programmes, combined with an extension of eligibility for BAföG funding. We are strengthening mentoring and support programmes to enable more young people from

non-academic families to successfully embark on their studies.

We are supporting Humboldt University in establishing a chair in Alevi theology to train teachers for Alevi religious education and Alevi clergy.

Sticking together – all of Berlin is one family

We are all Berlin; Berlin is there for everyone. No matter how much we earn.

No matter where we come from, what we believe in, what we look like, or who we love. Through this diversity, Berlin brings together realities of life that elsewhere would be irreconcilable contradictions.

Despite its contradictions, Berlin is a great place to live if we stick together. Not just existing side by side, but taking responsibility for one another. No matter how different we are, even if we don't

always agree: Berlin is the family you can choose.

The neighbourhood is the nucleus of this family: responsibility and solidarity begin right next door, with our neighbours.

As a city, we must support this through proper planning: open spaces, swimming pools, libraries and playgrounds. With a vibrant cultural scene and a diverse range of sporting activities, we create places where people can come together – for everyone. We safeguard charitable social engagement even in times of tight budgets.

Berlin is the capital of dignity and self-determination – and by 2030, we will also be a city free from homelessness.

Community life, family and equality

Social cohesion is built in the neighbourhood

Strong and vibrant neighbourhoods hold Berlin together. They transform this cosmopolitan city into a place that feels like home. That is why we are strengthening neighbourhood centres and mobile community work. New meeting places are to be created in every district. By enabling organisations that carry out social work within the framework service contracts and grant-funded projects, we will enable them to pay their staff in line with collective agreements

To this end, vibrant neighbourhoods need good public facilities. These include swimming pools (→ see chapter **INVESTMENTS IN CLUBS AND SPORTS FACILITIES**), libraries (→ see chapter **DISTRICT CULTURAL WORK AND LIBRARIES**) as well as green spaces and playgrounds (→ see chapter **PLAYGROUNDS AS PLACES FOR FAMILIES**).

Through neighbourhood canteens, we are creating local, affordable and high-quality facilities that give all Berliners access to healthy and sustainable food. We are also expanding the neighbourhood's own infrastructure. We are ensuring that there are places in every neighbourhood where people of all ages can spend time without feeling pressured to spend money.

We are opening schools up more to the neighbourhood. In the afternoons, more external activities should take place there. We are linking family centres more closely with schools. We are also opening school playgrounds at weekends (→ see chapter **SCHOOLS, VOCATIONAL TRAINING, LIFELONG LEARNING**).

Through a regular city-wide 'Berlin Day', we are specifically fostering a sense of community in our neighbourhoods and breaking down the anonymity of city life.

Neighbourhoods come together to get involved locally in the concerns of their neighbourhood and its residents.

Better support for single parents and parents

We want flexible working arrangements and childcare tailored to people's needs (→ see the chapter on **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**,

CHILDREN AND YOUTH, FAMILY). So that work and family life become increasingly compatible.

For us, single parents are at the centre of this – not on the sidelines. That is why

we are introducing discounted single-parent tickets for single parents at state-run institutions. We are expanding advice centres and strengthening the support network for single parents. To this end, we are specifically expanding financial assistance and transport schemes – such as a more affordable social travel pass. In addition, we are introducing a state programme to provide partial support through domestic help for single parents, which enables low-threshold access to flexible domestic help and everyday support.

Berlin as a vibrant family city

For us, family comes in many forms. Our policies take this reality into account. Single-parent, patchwork, rainbow and traditional families – they all belong in Berlin.

We want to expand the Family Pass, thereby making it easier for all families in Berlin to access the thousands of services, leisure activities and holiday programmes on offer in Berlin.

To ease the burden on families in Berlin even further, we are looking into extending the free school travel pass to a free Germany-wide travel pass.

We are also driving forward reforms at federal level, because fair family policy does not stop at state borders. We are fighting for modern family law throughout Germany and stand for fair social policy. For example, we are adapting advance maintenance payments to reflect today's realities of life.

A Parity Act for genuine equality

All genders deserve equal opportunities – in politics, business and society. That is what the SPD Berlin stands for. That is why we are introducing a Berlin Parity Act. In future, women and men should be equally represented in the House of Representatives. In doing so, we are also taking into account people with diverse or unspecified gender entries.

We are also exerting pressure at federal level. In the Bundesrat, we are fighting for a reform of electoral law based on parity.

We ourselves ensure parity in the allocation of posts and roles within the Senate, the administration, our parliamentary group, supervisory boards and state-owned enterprises.

Building momentum for the advancement of women and gender equality

We are modernising equality policy. To this end, we are adapting the State Equality Act to new challenges and are extending its scope to include trans*, inter* and non-binary people. We are ensuring effective gender equality policies, in particular by strengthening the rights of the Women's and Gender Equality Officers. We are expanding the framework programme for gender equality policy and the Women's Policy Advisory Board. We support projects across all sectors and fund them according to need.

We are continuing with gender budgeting for the Berlin state budget and embedding intersectional equality policy as a cross-cutting priority in all our legislation. Berlin's women's support infrastructure, in all its diversity, is an essential public service for the people of Berlin. We are strengthening these associations – most of which are non-profit organisations – as part of feminist movements and as a bulwark against anti-feminism. Here too, we adhere to our principle of 'equal pay for equal and equivalent work' when it comes to public grants and contract awards.

Diverse Berlin, anti-discrimination and inclusion

Embracing diversity – combating discrimination

Berlin thrives on its diversity. People from a wide variety of backgrounds, religions and worldviews, of different ages and sexual orientations, shape our city.

This diversity is what makes Berlin strong. And we protect it – through our commitment to equality, democracy and respect. There is no place for discrimination in our city.

The Berlin administration must lead the way here. We are therefore granting the Ombudsman's Office under the State Anti-Discrimination Act (LADG) is therefore being granted more powers. These include the right to initiate proceedings and conduct enquiries, as well as a duty to report. An independent school complaints body complements the protection in the education sector (→ see chapter **SCHOOLS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM**).

In future, we will review new legislation for compliance with the LADG and the LGBG. We will involve the State Office for Equal Treatment – Against Discrimination (LADS) at an early stage. We are expanding advice centres. At the same time, we are strengthening the State Diversity Programme. We are establishing a Diversity Co-ordination Centre. This is intended to promote appreciation of cultural diversity and raise awareness amongst staff. In this way, the administration combats structural discrimination and provides mandatory training for staff. We support gender-inclusive administrative language.

We oppose a ban on the use of special characters. Digital systems, too, must be fair

– for everyone. In particular, AI and algorithmic systems must not disadvantage anyone. We pay particular attention to this.

Berlin also protects people who experience exclusion in other ways. We listen to them. Those who are excluded have our solidarity. We are continuing to develop measures to prevent anti-Semitism, anti-Gypsyism, anti-Muslim racism and anti-Black racism in collaboration with the communities concerned.

We are bringing all these measures together in a comprehensive state-level anti-discrimination strategy. An independent commissioner coordinates this approach. She strengthens the promotion of democracy and equal opportunities. Because democracy needs protection – every day.

We are therefore also further expanding the state programme 'Democracy, Diversity, Respect'. Particularly in the fight against extremism. Furthermore, we are enshrining it in law through a Democracy Promotion Act (→ see chapter **STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY**).

People of no religious affiliation must have equal access to pastoral care services. We are therefore aiming to establish humanist pastoral care in hospitals, the judiciary, the police and the fire service.

Shaping old age in a self-determined, active and engaged way

Berlin is ageing – and that is good news. We promote a modern view of old age that recognises the diversity of ageing. Older people should be able to make their experiences, skills

and interests – and to help shape our city. Furthermore, we are creating the conditions to ensure that older people can lead self-determined lives according to their own wishes and participate on an equal footing in all areas of life – even when faced with illness, disability or a need for care and support.

The life's work of older people deserves respect and recognition. Those who have worked, cared for others or helped others throughout their lives should not, therefore, have to struggle for every euro in their old age. We are placing poverty in old age at the centre of our efforts to combat poverty. To this end, we are further expanding low-threshold social counselling services and ensuring that benefits are accessible in a straightforward manner, without hurdles and without stigmatisation. Culture, sport and education should remain accessible even on a small pension – as a natural part of a good life in old age.

We are highlighting the diverse ways in which older people contribute to social cohesion in our city. To this end, we are strengthening places where people not only receive services but also create them themselves – such as community centres, multi-generational centres and neighbourhood projects.

Queer Berlin

Queer rights are human rights. Full stop. Berlin, as the 'Rainbow Capital', must leave no room for doubt on this point. The SPD therefore stands firmly alongside the queer community. LGBTIQ+ rights remain our benchmark for social progress and we are consistently implementing the LGBTIQ+ Action Plan 2023. We are further developing it. We are securing its funding. And we are establishing queer liaison officers in all boroughs. We are also expanding the rainbow network within the administration. We are providing the resources necessary for successful networking. We are also continuing . An online portal makes the services available across the city more accessible. Because: visibility protects. Solidarity strengthens. We are establishing transition guidelines for the Berlin administration to improve the situation for trans*, inter* and non-binary employees of the State of Berlin.

We are placing particular emphasis on protecting

trans, inter, non-

binary and agender people** as well as queer BIPOC. They need targeted support. We are strengthening queer-inclusive prevention, healthcare and care services. In schools, youth work and adult education, we are promoting queer education to prevent hate and violence. Furthermore, queer young people need safe spaces where they are treated with respect. That is why we are maintaining and expanding queer youth centres. We are strengthening rainbow family centres and peer support projects. We are also ensuring the provision of drop-in centres in all boroughs. Furthermore, we are creating more sheltered accommodation and emergency shelters.

Youth welfare services must also take queer realities into account and must not tolerate any form of discrimination. We are enshrining queer perspectives in education, youth work and family policy in law. This includes a queer youth forum and regular training programmes.

Berlin promotes queer art and culture, including remembrance work. A state-level strategy protects queer spaces. We take attacks on these spaces seriously and act decisively. We are setting up a fund that queer spaces under attack can access easily.

We are consistently implementing the state strategy for queer safety, developed in collaboration with the community, and providing it with adequate funding. We are continuing our dialogue with the community. We are campaigning for the extension of Article 3(3) of the Basic Law. Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation must be expressly prohibited there.

At federal level, we are defending the Self-Determination Act. Equality cannot be put on hold. At the same time, we are resolutely driving forward equality for rainbow families.

Inclusion and accessibility

Berlin belongs to everyone – without exception. People with physical, mental or intellectual disabilities must be able to participate fully everywhere. Inclusion is not an extra. It is an obligation.

Administrative services and state-provided advisory services should, as a matter of principle, be accessible and inclusive.

Training programmes for various professional groups in the public sector should also include

inclusion-specific modules, such as

learning German Sign Language (DGS).

With this in mind, we are continuing the action plan 'Berlin Inclusive'. We are strengthening participation within the administration. Through consistent disability mainstreaming, we are embedding inclusion everywhere. The perspectives of people with disabilities are taken into account in all laws and procedures.

We are also using the Accessibility Enhancement Act as an opportunity. Digital and physical barriers must be eliminated from the outset. Instead, we are designing infrastructure according to the principle 'Design for All'. In this way, we are promoting independence at every stage of life.

We are creating and implementing a mobility assurance scheme for people with disabilities. We are providing better protection for women with disabilities against violence. At the same time, we guarantee access to the police and the justice system. We are also driving forward inclusion in schools (→ see chapter **EXPANDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS**).

Through the 'Soziales Berlin' fund, we are strengthening participation. We are introducing provider-based and flexible budgets and reducing red tape for people with disabilities. We are rethinking administrative structures for people with disabilities.

Berlin is creating more pathways into the primary labour market, because people with disabilities deserve fair opportunities in training and employment. Work, training and self-employment must be accessible to everyone. That is why we are establishing a state-owned inclusion company. It works

administration. We are also re-establishing the Poverty and

Social Affairs Berlin

Strategy against poverty, social exclusion and loneliness

Poverty affects many people in Berlin. It affects all generations. But we do not want those affected to be pushed out of society. The SPD Berlin is therefore developing a comprehensive strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion. It covers all stages of life and starts early.

For example, we are establishing a central coordination office to tackle poverty, which will efficiently pool the expertise and resources of the

as an inclusive enterprise and is remunicipalising services. We are paying particular attention to young people with disabilities as they make the transition from school to the training and labour markets.

Further strengthening civil society and civic engagement

Volunteering promotes social cohesion, enables participation and makes our city a better place to live. Promoting engagement and volunteering is both a task for the future and a cross-cutting priority. We are therefore coordinating the state's activities across departments and further developing the federal government's volunteering strategy. We are committed to recognising voluntary work through the further development of the Volunteer Card, discounted BVG tickets and the continued reduction of red tape in voluntary structures. For voluntary work

– we want to attract more people and retain their involvement in the long term – regardless of age, income, background or disability. We want to specifically encourage greater participation from women, young people, people with a migration background and people with disabilities. We also aim to improve the balance between work, education and volunteering, for example through better leave arrangements. We want to ensure that further training programmes for voluntary work are recognised as educational leave in Berlin. At local level, we want to further strengthen volunteer agencies and their services, such as the matching of volunteers with opportunities in the boroughs.

We are continuing to develop social reporting. This creates a reliable basis for political action.

In addition, we are strengthening consumer protection. People should receive reliable advice. They must be aware of their rights and protected from high costs. This is particularly relevant as online fraud is on the rise and is becoming increasingly sophisticated through the use of AI, for example through fake shops, phishing or identity theft. However, AI can also help to better protect consumers. That is why we are explicitly ensuring the use of AI in consumer protection as part of a Berlin AI strategy.

We are expanding independent social, debt and insolvency advice services. We are also strengthening the Integrated Social Programme. Its projects provide guidance and practical help.

We are paying particular attention to poverty amongst the elderly and are massively expanding support services for older people.

Loneliness is a serious social problem. It affects people of all generations. We are raising awareness of support services and developing them further.

Support for homeless and housing-insecure people

The SPD Berlin remains committed to the goal of eradicating homelessness and housing insecurity by 2030. To achieve this, Berlin needs more affordable housing. Targeted social support is equally essential.

We are therefore establishing a SozialWohnWerk to create new housing. Its aim is to provide homes for homeless people. To this end, we are also utilising vacant office buildings. Our target is 2,500 flats in the social housing sector. In doing so, we are following the 'Housing First' approach. Everyone has a right to their own home; this is the starting point, not the end point, of the counselling and support provided to homeless people.

Following the Hamburg model, we are establishing a central, state-owned body. It will coordinate the accommodation of homeless people.

At the same time, we are expanding and consolidating our counselling and support services. These include psychosocial counselling, addiction support and referral centres. We are also

. We are also expanding digital access to support services.

We are paying particular attention to women and people with disabilities. We are strengthening cooperation between youth support services, integration support and emergency housing assistance. We are closing gaps in provision by reliably funding organisations dedicated to the inclusion of people with disabilities. This applies in particular to people with mental health conditions or substance use disorders.

We are specifically expanding support during cold and hot weather. In addition to emergency accommodation, we are setting up day centres for homeless people. In doing so, we ensure that sufficient accessible places are available, as no one in Berlin should be put at risk by extreme weather conditions.

Support for people with addictions

In our approach to addiction, we prioritise support over punishment. Low-threshold counselling remains central. We are expanding drug-checking services and therapy programmes. We support the abolition of 'supervised drinking' for young people under the age of 16.

New drugs require early action. We respond in a socially responsible and preventative manner.

We do not drive people with drug dependencies from place to place. We help them where they are.

At the same time, we are removing drugs from public spaces. Parks and playgrounds must remain safe.

We are expanding drug consumption rooms. We are making it easier to set them up, extending opening hours and making state-owned buildings available.

Social cohesion in the ' ' immigration metropolis

Berlin has always been a city of immigration. This shapes who we are. To ensure that living together in diversity works well, we focus on openness, participation and integration.

The individual right to refugee protection is therefore non-negotiable for us. Berlin stands firmly behind the right to asylum. We are implementing the EU asylum system (GEAS) in accordance with human rights standards. We are pressing the federal government to authorise state-level reception programmes. This will enable Berlin to take in people who are particularly in need of protection. We will then also be able to specifically admit relatives of Berliners.

We also offer solutions and opportunities for integration to asylum seekers who are not entitled to protection, as well as to people whose residence permits are due to expire. To enable them to put down roots in Berlin, we are making use of existing options for changing pathways and calling for an effective

new 'opportunity residence permit'. We are continuing the successful work of the Hardship Cases Commission. For stateless persons, we are establishing a transparent recognition procedure.

People with no prospect of remaining in the country should receive return assistance at an early stage. In doing so, we prioritise voluntary return. We observe humanitarian principles. We prioritise deportations in cases of serious criminal offences where the individual has no right to remain. This also applies to individuals who pose a threat and who oppose our free and democratic basic order.

Participation through work

Migration has strengthened our economy. Now, the shortage of skilled workers is growing once again and our society is ageing. That is why we will continue to need labour migration in the future and will therefore significantly simplify and speed up the recognition of foreign qualifications.

At present, it takes too long for migrants to be allowed to work in their chosen professions.

We are actively recruiting international skilled workers, particularly for the care sector. We are also making it easier for self-employed people to move here and are lifting employment bans on refugees. We welcome the Federal Government's decision to lift employment bans on refugees and are campaigning at federal level for further relaxations. Anyone wishing to make a substantial investment and set up a business that can contribute to economic success should be granted a fast-track 'business start-up visa'. In the case of skilled migrant workers, swift family reunification must also be granted if the to ensure the family's livelihood is secure. Our aim remains clear: refugees should be able to earn their own living as quickly as possible. That is why we are continuing to bolster Berlin's efforts to integrate people into the labour market.

Participation through naturalisation

We want all Berliners to have a say in democratic decision-making. To achieve this, they need genuine participation. Around 40 per cent of our population has a migration background. half of them have now been naturalised and can have a say in elections. The other half do not yet have a German passport, although many of them are eligible to apply. We want to reach out to them and win them over to naturalisation, equal rights and democracy.

We are proud of the modern

naturalisation centre. Berlin is a pioneer in this field. We will continue this work. We will further increase the number of naturalisations.

To this end, we are ensuring the naturalisation centre is intercultural and accessible to the public. We are digitising the application process and advisory services as effectively as possible. We are launching a naturalisation campaign aimed at all citizens who meet the requirements.

Participation through accommodation in local neighbourhoods

Berlin remains a city of solidarity and human rights. Providing accommodation for refugees has presented the state with enormous challenges. This is particularly true during the war in Ukraine. Once the crisis has been managed , the goal remains clear: to move away from emergency accommodation. Thousands of people live there, and genuine integration into urban society cannot succeed under these conditions. We want, instead, decent, decentralised housing. All boroughs must make a fair contribution to this.

We will then phase out shared accommodation gradually. At the same time, we will expand housing for refugees. We reject the establishment of secondary migration centres and the imposition of curfews on refugees, and will not implement them in Berlin.

As accommodation increases, so must infrastructure. That is why we are increasing the community grant per refugee and per borough. This will support the social infrastructure in the areas surrounding refugee accommodation. This benefits both integration and the local community in equal measure.

Our aim is an urban society that excludes no one. This applies to refugees. It also applies to people who have been living here for many years.

Targeted efforts to strengthen participation and a sense of belonging

Participation means that refugees and immigrants can play an active part. They should not have to live alongside us. They should live with us – in schools, clubs and community spaces. Furthermore, they should receive the state support to which they are entitled.

We are expanding the Berlin Welcome Centre. It will become a central, multilingual point of contact offering digital and district-based services. There, people from abroad will receive support upon arrival and with their integration.

We are introducing language mediation across the board for dealings with public authorities. We use interpreting services and AI-powered translation tools. We are also ensuring barrier-free access.

We are professionalising the Integration Guides programme. We are extending it to new language groups and providing long-term funding for it.

We are strengthening German language courses and expanding digital language learning provision. We are also strengthening vocationally-oriented and work-based language support.

Berlin: A Cultural Metropolis

Preserving world-class culture and making it accessible to all

Berlin stands for art, culture, creativity and world-class cultural institutions. They shape our city's identity and have an impact far beyond Berlin's borders. The cultural landscape gives Berlin international appeal – from the independent scene and festivals to museums, theatres and clubs.

The severe cuts are jeopardising this appeal. Uncertainty, planning chaos and demotivation have become widespread. We are restoring clear prospects and security to cultural institutions. For us, culture is an essential part of the capital.

Berlin safeguards the cultural infrastructure in its entirety: from studios, project spaces and workshops, through to clubs, performance venues and production venues to libraries, music schools, municipal galleries, youth art schools and socio-cultural venues in all districts. Furthermore,

We reject a payment card for refugees. It severely restricts participation in public life. Instead, we are campaigning at federal level for the conditions necessary for a Berlin City Card (City-ID). This would give undocumented people access to healthcare, housing, work and education.

We are structurally strengthening migrant civil society. This also applies to the culture of remembrance. We support projects such as a migration museum and a documentation centre. We are promoting a democracy hub for refugee activists.

We are opening up the civil service further. People with a migration background should have better access. To this end, we are using mentoring, recognition and diversity programmes.

A centralised system for monitoring integration and participation ensures transparency. It operates using half-yearly key performance indicators. In this way, we promote participation. This applies to employment, education, health and social services.

This creates a reliable, solidarity-based integration system. It strengthens participation and a sense of belonging.

We are committed to strengthening Berlin's cultural sector as a key economic driver for artistic production, fair working conditions and cultural spaces. In future, we will enshrine and reflect this in the 'Cultural Infrastructure' concept for major events in the capital.

We are further developing the Capital City Financing Agreement and reinforcing the federal government's shared responsibility for Berlin's cultural sector. In doing so, we are safeguarding our city's cultural infrastructure in a reliable, fair and future-proof manner.

We are convinced that cultural diversity – from high culture to the independent scene – is valued by Berliners. To ensure that everyone can participate, culture must be easily accessible. We are therefore reintroducing affordable or free initiatives such as 'Museum Sunday'. We promote accessible cultural offerings.

***Diversity and fair conditions in the
cultural sector***

Cultural diversity arises from the interplay between professional artists, committed amateurs and an active independent scene. We promote active networking between these stakeholders and state-run cultural institutions. We safeguard cultural structures with reliable resources for production and presentation. We advocate for collectively agreed wages, minimum fees and appropriate exhibition remuneration, as well as realistic adjustments for collective agreement increases and cost rises. We strengthen studios, rehearsal spaces, theatres, museums and other cultural venues as key centres of production and presentation. Furthermore, we aim to provide reliable funding for culture. This includes multi-year funding, early approval of grants, transparent procedures and funding structures that enable quality, continuity and cultural diversity, rather than perpetuating precarious conditions. When we talk about a cultural metropolis, we must also mean decent work. That is why we are committed to fair remuneration, binding minimum fee thresholds and the realistic consideration of wage and cost increases and adult education centres

Local cultural work and libraries

Libraries are places for exchange, education and cultural integration – accessible and open to all Berliners. We will strengthen them on a long-term basis through a state-wide library act with secure funding, standards and public ownership. We will also ensure that libraries can fulfil their growing responsibilities on a long-term and decentralised basis, and we will develop them as meeting places in local neighbourhoods. More than 30 years after the reunification of the two halves of the city, we want to end the division of the Central and State Library (ZLB) across two sites, so that the ZLB can finally fulfil its role as a central library. Cultural education opens up opportunities and strengthens Personal development and social integration – regardless of background, gender or religion. We ensure the long-term sustainability of programmes for children and young people.

In doing so, we strengthen local cultural initiatives, libraries, music schools, adult education centres, municipal galleries, youth art schools and accessible cultural provision in all neighbourhoods.

Music schools, youth art schools, local galleries

are indispensable for cultural participation. We are expanding and consolidating them – particularly in outlying districts and socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods. A new Cultural Promotion Act and a Cultural Urban Development Plan are intended to establish art and culture as integral parts of urban planning. We are planning new, vibrant neighbourhoods from the outset with cultural infrastructure – in all boroughs, not just in the city centre. State-owned properties should be made more accessible for cultural uses, and cultural spaces must be mandatorily included in urban development and new-build projects.

As with sport, spaces should be made available free of charge. We will preserve Berlin's industrial heritage as a testament to labour, innovation and social history, and we will continue to develop them as vibrant hubs for education, culture and urban development. We will signpost further cycle routes highlighting industrial heritage as part of the official cycle signposting system.

Art in public spaces

Public art shapes the face of Berlin. In addition to 'art in architecture', we will give greater support to urban art and graffiti culture. To this end, we are introducing graffiti competitions. In this way, we are enhancing the appeal of our cityscape – including for tourism. Professional tendering procedures ensure quality. At the same time, designated areas and a 'Hall of Fame' create new spaces for expression. In this way, art remains visible, accessible and part of everyday urban life.

East German Perspectives

We support projects that preserve East German experiences, art and life stories, make them visible and develop them further. We are expanding the Campus for Democracy on the site of the former Stasi headquarters into an open space for political education, research and culture. A new exhibition on opposition and resistance in the GDR highlights the diversity of democratic movements and incorporates the perspectives of those who stood up for freedom and justice. The critical

and strengthening Berlin's memorial sites financially and in terms of staffing, and further developing their educational work with contemporary formats and a clear connection to the present. For us, this also includes a permanent exhibition on political, and in particular

appraisal of National Socialism and the SED dictatorship is an indispensable part of our democratic culture. That is why we are securing

far-right, racist violence in (East) Berlin and (East) Germany.

Coming to terms with colonialism

We are embedding the city-wide concept for coming to terms with the past and remembrance 'Remembering Colonialism' and are implementing its recommendations step by step. To this end, we are creating a central memorial and learning centre dedicated to the colonial past. At the same time, we are further developing local memorial sites. We are addressing colonial history and its consequences in close collaboration with BIPoC communities, descendants of colonised societies and Berlin's civil society. This also includes renaming streets in Berlin that still commemorate colonial criminals. The aim is a just and globally interconnected policy of remembrance.

Digital cultural infrastructure

Digitalisation is both an opportunity and a key factor for the future of Berlin's cultural scene. The AI Hub (#ai_berlin) will in future to connect AI projects from the fields of culture, science and the creative industries. We promote sustainable IT structures, green IT and open-source solutions. We empower cultural institutions – from large organisations to small project spaces – to successfully implement digitalisation processes and build digital skills.

Film capital

At home in the ' ' – a sporting metropolis

Sport is important for children and young people

Sport and early physical activity programmes strengthen physical and cognitive development. That is why they should be a regular part of everyday life in nurseries and schools. We involve sports clubs and associations in school and nursery programmes so that sport reaches the children. To help parents find these activities more easily, we are creating a central platform for sport and leisure activities.

We remain committed to the goal that all children should be able to swim by the end of primary

school. That is why we are continuing and expanding compulsory swimming lessons and intensive swimming courses.

We are continuing to implement the 'Film-Friendly Metropolis Berlin' initiative. As Germany's film capital, Berlin is home to around 80,000 film professionals. A modern, reliably funded film support scheme secures jobs, strengthens innovation in production and post-production, and retains creativity and investment in the city in the long term. We are also championing this cause at federal level.

We are expanding the Capital City Culture Fund to include new priorities such as democracy education, artistic research and further training within the independent arts scene. A Capital/EU Networking and Transfer Fund strengthens cooperation between the cultural sector, academia and federal institutions.

Media regulation, media diversity and media literacy

Free and diverse media are cornerstones of democracy. The Berlin-Brandenburg State Media Authority ensures independent regulation, media diversity and digital literacy – from social media use (→ see chapter on **DIGITAL EDUCATION AND MOBILE PHONE USE**) to

AI applications. To do this, it requires long-term, secure funding. Equally important is the promotion of local journalism, so that neighbourhoods retain an informed public. Furthermore, we are committed to public service broadcasting and its funding.

areas in parks, for example for boules, calisthenics, disc golf, fitness trails and table tennis. We are

Cohesion through sport

Sport strengthens cohesion, fairness and the rule of law – it promotes integration and counteracts violence. Together with partners such as Sportjugend, we are strengthening sport-related youth work. We are also improving the structural conditions for people with disabilities in sport.

We will continue to make sports facilities available to clubs free of charge. We are introducing unbureaucratic maintenance budgets for clubs. These can be used autonomously and without complicated application procedures. We are promoting individual sports through inclusive exercise programmes and more intergenerational activity

is a programme we are continuing to develop.

We encourage state employees to take part in sporting activities within non-commercial sports clubs. We support district sports associations as the voice of organised sport in local neighbourhoods. We provide further training for coaches and improve their income.

Investments in clubs and sports facilities

We are vigorously continuing with new builds, refurbishments, accessibility improvements and the creation of inclusive sports facilities. We are streamlining the club investment programme and providing it with greater financial support.

For district sports infrastructure, we are aligning our approach with sports development planning and developing a standardised building programme for sports facilities. A central planning and construction unit will ease the burden on boroughs and speed up accessible construction and refurbishment.

We are committed to the construction of the new Jahn Sports Park as an inclusive sports park for everyone. Together with the federal government, we aim to jointly develop the Sportforum into a national elite sports centre. We are continuing to develop the national elite sports centre on Paul-Heyse-Straße. We are implementing further development measures in the Olympic Park. In Tegel, we are combining facilities for organised and individual sport through new halls and sports pitches.

We are developing plans for the Grünau Water Sports Centre and ensuring the continued operation of the Wannsee lido.

We are investing in state-owned swimming pools, building standardised indoor swimming pools and refurbishing existing pools in a climate-friendly manner. Swimming lessons for clubs, nurseries and schools will remain free of charge.

We intend to continue the funding agreement with the State Sports Federation beyond 2029; we will seek to secure more funding from federal and EU programmes for grassroots and elite sport.

Further developing Berlin as a sporting metropolis

With its many Bundesliga teams and internationally renowned events, Berlin has . Sport is an economic driver and a catalyst for

tourism, retail and the hospitality sector. We promote professional sport and support flagship sporting events – increasingly in women's sport as well.

We will continue to bring world-class events to Berlin, such as World and European Championships, as well as NBA and NFL matches. To this end, we are setting up a central point of contact for major sporting events. We will continue to promote fan projects, fan culture and sports tourism.

We want the Olympic Games in Berlin

We want to bring the Olympic and Paralympic Games to Berlin. They should be sustainable and benefit the city in the long term, and they represent an opportunity to invest in infrastructure, sports development, urban planning and accessibility.

With 'Berlin+', we are offering the German Olympic Sports Confederation and the Federal Government a

concept for Games without excessive scale, based on existing sports venues and in a broad alliance with other federal states. In 2040 in particular – 50 years after reunification – this could be an opportunity to welcome the world as guests among friends (→ see chapter **EXPO 2035 AND THE 2040 OLYMPIC GAMES AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BERLIN**).

A responsibility that rests with us all

Berlin faces one of the greatest challenges in its history.

Climate action will determine our future – and we are taking action.

Our goal is clear: Berlin will become climate-neutral by 2045 if possible.

This will only succeed if we are prepared to transform our city. Away from oil and gas. Towards solar, wind and other renewables. For a city that protects its children and takes responsibility for future generations.

To this end, too, we are strengthening our state-owned enterprises and investing more than we have done for a long time – responsibly, in a targeted manner and with clear priorities.

For we stand for sound budgetary and fiscal policy,

which makes full use of all available scope. We stand alongside those who functioning state and public services. To ensure that investments have an impact and that our city works for everyone, we are making our public administration more efficient. Responsibilities are being clarified, procedures are becoming faster, and decisions are binding.

Rules are transparent and apply to everyone. We take responsibility to deliver results. Listening, weighing up options, deciding – and then implementing them together. In this way, we are creating a Berlin that is not only well planned but also well governed.

A city that does not hesitate, but leads the way.

Responsibility through climate protection and the ‘ ‘ energy transition

We stand by our climate protection targets, are fighting for climate neutrality by 2045, and are committed to implementing the Berlin Energy Transition Act. Berlin has three key levers for this: firstly, we are transitioning away from fossil-fuelled transport. Secondly, we are replacing fossil-fuelled heating systems in buildings. Thirdly, we are transforming electricity and thermal power stations.

*We are already pursuing a clear strategy for transport: we are expanding public transport, converting the bus fleet to electric buses and expanding the charging infrastructure for electric mobility (→ see chapter **EXPANSION OF THE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE**). We regard socially just implementation as part of our responsibility. Low-income households should not be placed under additional strain by climate protection measures.*

Securing climate protection funding through the Climate Pact

State-owned companies play a key role on the path to climate neutrality.

They serve as role models and shape the city's economic development. Through the buybacks of water, electricity and district heating networks in recent years Berlin can now directly influence their decarbonisation.

The Climate Pact with the state-owned enterprises and its consistent implementation secure the financial basis for these state-owned enterprises to tackle climate change.

local area-based solutions, which, thanks to economies of scale, are more effective and efficient than individual measures. We support these through outreach advice and active administrative measures. For example, we promote the multi-use of neighbourhood spaces, the targeted integration of heat pumps in

Energy savings and the transition to sustainable heat generation in buildings

Through our heating strategy, we are driving forward the expansion of district heating via the state-owned provider Berliner Energie und Wärme (BEW).

At the same time, we are opening up opportunities for other providers as well as for new decentralised and co-operative heating networks. To this end, we are providing subsidised loans and calling for co-financing through federal programmes.

In addition, we are setting up a central enquiry point for the heating transition and enabling the verification of heating bills.

For buildings without the prospect of district heating, we are focusing on neighbourhood- and

combination with storage technology, and the systematic use of near-surface geothermal energy and heat pumps.

Shaping the district heating transition in a socially just way

BEW is already pursuing a strategy to convert its power stations to renewable energy sources. We will continue this work whilst ensuring a consumer-friendly heat transition with a transparent pricing policy. We will close loopholes that lead to excessive service charges.

Neighbourhood energy and heating advisers are creating new local points of contact. We are bringing their work together under a single Berlin Energy and Heating Advisory Service, which provides free, easily accessible support for questions regarding prices, service charges, changing heating systems and energy-efficient modernisation.

From the gas network to the hydrogen network

The Berlin gas network requires clear regulatory support for the development of a core hydrogen network, with a focus on large-scale consumers, which may also include neighbourhood-based power stations. The use of hydrogen in individual homes will only be technically feasible to a limited extent, as climate-neutral gas will be significantly less available overall.

We therefore support the switch from gas-fired individual heating systems to fossil-free heating through financial incentives and advisory programmes.

Energy-efficient building refurbishment

Since the 1990s, we have been investing in residential buildings at only about half the rate required to meet climate targets. We are therefore using the funds of the

state and its companies specifically in areas where CO₂ emissions cannot be avoided through green heating systems such as district heating.

New EU regulations require a 1.9 per cent annual reduction in the energy consumption of public buildings. With its centralised property management system, BIM, Berlin is well-positioned to meet this target. We are financing the necessary energy efficiency investments through large-scale contracting models, for example with the municipal utilities. We are also involving large-scale consumers such as swimming pool operators, local authorities, universities and hospitals. We aim to equip public buildings in Berlin specifically with technology that saves energy and can be installed quickly. This applies in particular to our housing associations, with a view to reducing heating costs.

Accelerating solar expansion

Berlin leads the way nationwide in solar expansion relative to its land area. By 2035, we aim to generate 25 per cent of Berlin's electricity from sunlight. To achieve this goal, we are relying on the Solarcity Masterplan and promoting the expansion of photovoltaics and grid-connected electricity storage systems, including through the SolarPlus. We see particular potential on the roofs of Berlin-based businesses. Through needs-based financial support and advisory services to help them install large, high-output systems on their roofs.

Integrated network operation for heat, electricity and gas

We are continuing to drive forward the integrated development of the networks. Following the takeover of electricity grid and district heating, our long-term aim is also to repurchase GASAG in its entirety. The focus here is on the transition to climate neutrality and the development of a hydrogen economy.

When expanding the electricity grid, we pay particular attention to the future heating requirements of large consumers.

We are further strengthening decentralised solutions through bidirectional charging as part of an overall strategy. We are pressing ahead with the expansion of the medium-voltage grid.

Administrative reform requires clear lines of responsibility at Senate level. This applies in particular to the energy and heating transition. A central coordination body is to consolidate planning, resolve conflicts, save time and create transparency.

Integration of storage technologies for an affordable and socially inclusive energy transition

Storage technologies make it possible to increase the city of Berlin's security of supply in the long term and to reduce costs for consumers. Berlin should therefore consistently incorporate the use of storage technologies for electricity and heat into the planning and implementation of the energy transition.

We are committed to ensuring that, in the long term, these technologies are taken into account in neighbourhood-based solutions and decentralised heating networks, as well as in the integration of photovoltaic and hydrogen technologies, in order to achieve Berlin's climate targets efficiently, in a socially just manner and in a way that allows for proper planning.

Using energy from waste and wastewater

The BSR should play a greater role in achieving a climate-neutral Berlin. We recycle waste and substitute fuels, or recover them in Berlin with low emissions, and use the waste heat to generate electricity and district heating. We are also involving Berliner Wasserbetriebe more closely so that they can utilise waste heat from wastewater for district heating.

A strong administration – citizen-focused, socially responsible and democratic

An effective administration for an effective state

We want an administration that works. A modern public infrastructure forms the basis for social security and

social cohesion. To achieve this, we need administrations that implement political directives swiftly and

consistently enforce rules. For us, this also includes the supportive use of AI, such as in processing applications. Our aim is a state capable of taking effective action: fair, socially minded, accessible, effective and in step with the times.

Implementing administrative reform

Whether it's an identity card, care allowance, nursery voucher, disability card or planning permission:

Anyone who contacts the administration should receive good, accessible advice as well as swift and transparent decisions. That is why we are consistently driving forward administrative reform – with clear responsibilities, central coordination and strong boroughs. We see administrative reform as an opportunity to transformation. We are implementing it digitally in such a way that administrative processes are citizen-centred and easy to use.

A new law is in place, but its implementation and consideration of other key areas such as the digitalisation of public administration, staffing, finance and administrative culture have so far been lacking. This must now be a priority and be managed professionally and centrally. The Senate departments will fulfil their city-wide responsibilities and steer the respective policy areas. The boroughs will carry out their operational tasks in close contact with the public. Upholding the rule of law and democracy may necessitate further reforms to administrative structures.

Reliable funding for the boroughs

A functioning city needs strong boroughs. Youth and social services, clean streets, schools and social facilities underpin everyday life in the neighbourhoods. We are committed to reliable funding for these tasks.

To this end, we are reforming the districts' funding model, consistently implementing the principle of connectivity, and striving for a budgeting system that meets the needs of a growing city. In this way, we ensure Berlin's ability to act even in difficult times.

Attractive jobs in the public sector

A strong administration needs committed staff. If you want to attract and retain good people, you must offer fair conditions. Equal work must be paid equally – regardless of whether it is carried out at district or state level.

We ensure transparent, non-discriminatory recruitment procedures and modern

working conditions. To encourage career changes, we – like other federal states and the federal government – ensure that, in the event of voluntary resignation from civil service, accrued pension entitlements are retained, such as occupational pensions (so-called 'Altersgeld').

We are implementing work-life balance measures, job-sharing in management positions, flexible working hours and better career progression opportunities. We are further developing the Administrative Academy and expanding the Leadership Academy. New forms of agile, project-based collaboration and leadership are to be established. We are committed to consolidating human resources functions. By establishing uniform standards – for example, in staff development – we are improving quality. To increase the proportion of women in senior administrative roles, we are providing targeted support for female staff.

A shortage of housing makes it difficult to recruit staff. We are therefore pushing ahead with the construction of staff accommodation and also support companies in developing staff and trainee accommodation.

Digital administrative services – accessible to all

We regard digitalisation as a tool for greater participation. Such services must therefore be simple and intuitive to use. A modern Berlin app modelled on Vienna's, as well as digital guides, are designed to support this. In the spirit of good governance, we also ensure citizen participation. Via a new portal called "Making Berlin Better", the public will in future be able to submit suggestions for improvement wherever processes need to be streamlined. The administration will review these and implement them where possible.

Alongside digital services, face-to-face advice and assistance with applications will remain available. We are expanding mobile services in local neighbourhoods to ease the burden on citizens.

Digital inclusion must not be a privilege. We offer support in using digital services through administrative guides, chatbots and other low-threshold services. We support people who find it difficult to use digital services through, amongst

other things,
digital courses in libraries and adult education
centres.

We make digital participation formats centrally available and easily accessible.

Rather than operating 'on application', the administration should become a proactive partner for the citizens of Berlin. Such an administration anticipates needs – for example, when identity documents are due to expire, children are born or entitlement to benefits arises – and takes action of its own accord. Data should be collected only once and shared as required – in accordance with the 'once-only' principle. For important administrative decisions, we organise public participation, public hearings or consultations to strengthen democratic participation. We want to enable citizens to play an active role in planning and decision-making processes.

Central digitalisation expertise

We are making Berlin's administration a digital pioneer. To this end, we are expanding the central digital budget to cover all IT expenditure at both state and district level and strengthening it. We work closely with the specialist departments to implement digital projects and provide them with staff support.

We are expanding data management and establishing impact-oriented governance. A 'digital twin' of Berlin is to support urban development, environmental and transport planning through simulations.

Artificial intelligence offers great potential to and tangibly improve the quality of service for citizens. We want to use this technology responsibly by

opportunities for a modern administration whilst minimising potential risks through clear guidelines.

We are promoting open-source software and open standards, thereby strengthening our digital sovereignty. Where appropriate, we will utilise solutions from other federal states, thereby reinforcing the 'one for all' principle. We are committed to European payment services as the payment option for Berlin's public administration online services. We are open to greater centralisation at federal level in order to improve efficiency.

The Berlin administration needs an efficient, customer-focused public IT service provider that makes state-of-the-art technology available to all public authorities and ensures it can be utilised. It ensures data security and protection against cyber-attacks. At the same time, we combine digitalisation with environmental sustainability, planning sustainable data centres and feeding their waste heat into the district heating network.

For transparency and data protection

Democracy thrives on trust. That is why the 'open by default' principle applies to data. All non-sensitive administrative data should, as a matter of principle, be publicly available. Data relating to critical infrastructure requires special protection. We are striving for a comprehensive transparency act and a central transparency portal. Data should be accessible in real time via a clear dashboard. At the same time, we consistently protect personal information and in accordance with European law. Data protection remains a fundamental right – not a bureaucratic obstacle.

Responsible budgetary policy

Our budgetary and fiscal policy combines social security, public services and investment in the future. We strike a balance between investment in the city's cohesion and responsible prioritisation.

*Through growth-oriented economic and innovation policies, we are strengthening Berlin's economic power, creating jobs and broadening the revenue base. To this end, substantial investments from the special fund over the coming years (→ see chapter **'INVESTMENTS IN A FUNCTIONING CITY'**) will help to support growth.*

Our aim is a funding approach that provides planning certainty, simplifies procedures and allocates resources where they are needed: to the people and the social infrastructure of our city.

Increasing revenue

To ensure a responsible budgetary policy, the state must make use of its options to improve its revenue. We are raising the land transfer tax by 0.5 percentage points. Large companies should pay more in future, whilst there should be exemptions for owner-occupiers. The tax rate on the purchase of owner-occupied property should then be reduced once the 'share deals' previously used by companies to avoid property acquisition tax liability are first prohibited at federal level.

In addition, we are introducing a packaging tax (→ see chapter on **WASTE PREVENTION AND RECYCLING**)

and adjust fines and parking charges in line with current price trends (→ see chapter **PARKING SPACES**).

We will combat undeclared work, tax avoidance and tax evasion by specifically strengthening tax investigation and business audit capabilities. At the same time, we will improve the collection of

maintenance advances, fines and charges. To this end, we will invest in providing the boroughs with adequate staffing and technical resources.

At the federal level, we are campaigning for a fairer distribution of wealth. We therefore support a reform of inheritance and gift tax that places a greater burden on large fortunes, as well as the reintroduction of a wealth tax. Furthermore, we are advocating at federal level for a ban on share deals.

Targeted control of expenditure

The initial steps towards budgetary consolidation over the last three years have, for many people,

in the city with painful cuts and uncertainty. We have advocated for reducing expenditure only cautiously, identifying scope for spending and utilising the existing borrowing facilities of the state budget to a reasonable extent. We will continue to do so in future.

We intend to maintain a high overall level of investment in the city's future whilst significantly reducing the existing structural deficit. We are making full use of the leeway afforded by the debt brake and are calling on the federal government to abolish it.

By cutting red tape, streamlining administration and speeding up procedures, we are making the administration more efficient and more responsive to citizens' needs. Consistent digitalisation and the responsible use of artificial intelligence help to simplify processes, shorten processing times and ease the workload on staff. In this way, we free up time, money and skilled workers for what really matters: good public services and investment in the future. (→ see chapter on **DIGITAL ADMINISTRATION**).

Essential public services provided by public enterprises

Thanks to our efforts, water, the electricity grid and district heating are once again under state control – and that is how it should remain. That is why we are enshrining a 'privatisation brake' in the constitution.

We manage our state-owned enterprises to ensure they are economically strong, align them with the public good and ensure they have sufficient equity capital for major investments (→ see chapter **ON**

THE CLIMATE PACT: SECURING CLIMATE PROTECTION FUNDING

). We link increases in funding to clear, results-oriented and measurable targets. At the same time, we ensure they set an example of good practice (→ see chapter 'STATE-OWNED COMPANIES SET A GOOD EXAMPLE').

The responsibility of the federal government and the EU towards the federal states and local authorities

Much of Berlin's expenditure has risen in recent years, primarily as a result of federal legislation. The federal government obliges the states to provide services but does not pay for them. Together with other states, we are campaigning for the federal government to fulfil its financial responsibilities more comprehensively. The principle of 'Konnexität' must apply: whoever assigns tasks must finance them in full.

We are firmly opposed to the European Commission's plans to centralise the European funding framework, and we are committed to ensuring that the strong regional focus of the Structural Funds is maintained in future. The State of Berlin and Berlin's boroughs know the local challenges and needs best! We also continue to need an independent European Social Fund with funds specifically earmarked for social projects.

Further strengthening Berlin as the capital

As the capital, Berlin fulfils special tasks, bears international responsibility and is also exposed to particular risks. The federal government must continue to provide appropriate co-funding for this role. We are calling on the federal government to revise the Capital City Financing Agreement so that it fully and dynamically offsets the costs incurred by Berlin as a capital city, particularly in the areas of culture, infrastructure and security. We would also welcome it if the federal government to further strengthen its presence in Berlin and, step by step, to relocate further staff posts from the federal ministries' departments to the capital.

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