

North Rhine-Westphalia



North Rhine-Westphalia, usually shortened to *NRW* is one of the 16 Federal States in Germany (in terms of population and economic output it is the largest). Nordrhein-Westfalen has over 18 million inhabitants and comprises a land area of 34,083 km² (13,158 square miles). North Rhine-Westphalia is situated in the Western part of Germany and shares borders with Belgium and the Netherlands. It has borders with the German states of Lower Saxony to the North and Northeast, Rhineland-Palatinate to the Southwest and Hessen to the Southeast.

The capital city is Düsseldorf, and other major cities are Cologne (Köln in German), Bonn, Dortmund, Duisburg, Essen, Oberhausen, Aachen, Bielefeld, Bochum, Münster and Wuppertal.

Düsseldorf

- Düsseldorf's internationally best known trademark is the Königsallee, called also Kö, is said to be one of the most beautiful boulevards in the world. It is partitioned by the long city moat. The more than 200 trees that form the picture of the exclusive shopping mile are a characteristic feature of the magnificent boulevard. Sculptures, fountains and

decorative bridges join the two sides of the Kö: on the western side, there are mainly banks; on the eastern side are the elegant boutiques, galleries and shopping passages that make the hearts of shopping enthusiasts skip a beat. If you don't want to stroll along the Kö on your own, you can also take part in a guided tour.



Königsallee

- Impressive sightseeing is the Rhine Tower, built between 1979 and 1982. The tower is 234,20 m height and with diameter -17,40 m. The tower has Panorama restaurant at 172 m, which affords an ideal view of the city and the state parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia at its foot as well as viewing platform at 164 m.
- If you want to really know Düsseldorf, Altstadt (the old city) is the place. The spectrum goes from old churches and monuments to ancient pubs, hip bars and clubs, good old French fries and exquisite food.
- The slanting towers and modern structures fascinate international connoisseurs of architecture. If you go from the city towards the Stadttor, you are on the right track. The imposing steel and glass structure is a landmark and an integral part of the modern skyline in the Media Harbour. Sitting by the water, slurping a "milk coffee" or well chilled cocktails and letting watching the world go by - if this sort of holiday atmosphere you are

looking for, simply go to the Düsseldorf Media Harbour or the lawns next to the Rheinturm.

- There are seven bridges that characterise the cityscape of Düsseldorf. Within the city area, the Rhine is spanned by three bridges - the Oberkasseler, the Rheinknie and the Theodor Heuss bridges. The Oberkasseler Bridge hit the headlines in 1976: the entire structure, weighing 12,500 tonnes, was moved downstream about 50 m.
- The Nordpark is one of the most splendid parks in the State capital: extensive flower beds, monuments, fountains, a playground and various works of art attract lots of visitors in good weather. If you are looking for peace and quiet, head for the Japanese garden or relax in one of the many play areas or on the sunbathing lawns. The Aquazoo is also located in the Nordpark.
- The most famous of Düsseldorf's palaces is in the borough of Benrath and was built in the 18th century as a palace for the Elector Carl Theodor von der Pfalz. Today, Schloss Benrath, as it is called, is one of Düsseldorf's most popular excursion spots and houses various museums, such as the European Horticultural Art Museum. The court architect Nicolas de Pigage (1723-1798) designed the magnificent building and the rolling parklands in which you can promenade even today.

Köln

- The city's famous Cologne Cathedral (*Kölner Dom*) is the seat of the Roman Catholic Archbishopric of Cologne. It took 632 years until construction of the largest German cathedral was completed. With its two spires 157 metres in height, it has been the city's most famous landmark for centuries and the most well-known architectural monument in Germany.
- Cologne is a city of churches. As in no other German city, twelve large Roman collegiate and monastery and convent churches are located in the confined area within the boundaries of the mediaeval city wall, churches which rank among the most important in Western Europe.
- The University of Cologne (*Universität zu Köln*) is one of Europe's oldest universities and internationally renowned for its department of economics.
- Phantasialand, situated in Brühl city, 20 km south of Köln, proudly calls itself 'Europe's most unique theme park'. The wild water rapids, mystery castle, Hollywood tour, space centre and Colorado adventure are just some of the attractions. Everything is located in a large, leafy park which is almost worthy of a visit in itself. Restaurants such as Alt Berlin, Don Pedro and Chinatown offer a variety of food and drink. Picnic areas are provided if you wish to bring your own, more affordable snacks. Admission: 22 EUR for a day ticket; groups (pre-booked) over 20 people 19 EUR per person; children under 1m free.

- Another world cultural-heritage waiting to be discovered by culturally interested visitors is the Baroque Castle Augustusburg of Brühl, situated between Köln and Bonn.



Brühl Castle

Bonn

- Bonn is the 19th largest city in Germany, located about 20 kilometres south of Cologne on the river Rhine in the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia. It was the capital of West Germany from 1949 to 1990 and the official seat of government until 1999.
- The Beethoven-Haus, a landmark of Bonn, is supported by the Beethoven House Trust (founded in 1889) and encompasses a Museum, the Beethoven Archives and the Chamber Music Hall. The Museum displays a representative selection from the trust's collections, the largest privately-owned Beethoven collection in the world. Portraits, original manuscripts, instruments and everyday objects convey a lively and authentic glimpse into the life and work of the composer. The Beethoven Archives founded on the 100th anniversary of Beethoven's death in 1927 as a scientific research institute, are the central

repository of documents relating to Beethoven's life, work and intellectual circle and own also a special library.

- An impressive cultural centre has sprung up at the heart of the city, with institutions such as the Bonn Art Museum, the Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Deutsches Museum Bonn (technology), the «Haus der Geschichte» (history of the Federal Republic of Germany) and the Alexander König Zoological Research Institute and Museum.
- Today, the University of Bonn has about 30,000 students, making it one of the largest German universities. Each year, it has about 5,500 international students from 130 nations. The University of Bonn does not have a centralized campus. The main building, housed in the "Kurfürstlichen Schloss" in the city center, only accommodates the Theological and Philosophical faculties as well as the administration; the other faculties are situated in various parts of the city of Bonn, often in other historic buildings.
- Another interesting not to miss thing: The Botanic Garden. Its history, one of the oldest and most traditional gardens north of the Alps, goes back more than 400 years. The arboretum contains about 700 conifers and broadleaved trees, including some exotic species not seen elsewhere in Germany because of the very mild winters in Bonn. About 3000 species are grown to illustrate and demonstrate scientific topics.

Essen

- With a height of 106 m and 330.000 qm interior space, the Essen Town Hall is the largest in Germany. From the 22nd panorama floor at a height of 100 m, you can look down on the entire city area, as well as the Ruhr region. Guided tours are organized every Tuesday from 11.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.
- Villa Hügel is a classical chateau-type residence built from 1868 to 1872 according to plans by Alfred Krupp, comprising the former main residence, a guest house, and a 75 ha forest and park landscape. Until 1945 representative domicile of the Krupp family. The main residence contains valuable gobelin collections, costly Italian cassette ceilings as well as the Krupp collection of paintings. First class international art exhibitions and concerts have turned Villa Hügel into a world class cultural centre. In the guest house, visitors can view the Krupp historical collection as well as a permanent exhibition on "Krupp today".
 - Opening hours of the main building and the permanent exhibitions in the annexe: Tuesday to Sunday between 10.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. Closed on Monday.
 - Hügelpark: daily from 8.00 a.m. to 08.00 p.m.



Villa Hügel

- The Münster is the former collegiate church of the canonesses. It consists of different parts : the 15th-century Gothic church of St. John, the 11th-century atrium and the main church which in turn has a Romanesque 11th-century frontage and a Gothic 14th century main part. One of the real treasures of the church is the Golden Madonna, a statue of the virgin Mary with the infant made from sheet gold, probably around the year 980.
- The collection of the Folkwang Museum enjoys worldwide renown. From Caspar David Friedrich to Claude Monet, Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh and Paul Cézanne, from Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Max Beckmann to Salvadore Dali and Andy Warhol, no significant name from the art history of the 19th and 20th century is missing.

Oberhausen

- The "Altmarkt", the market square in the centre of Alt - Oberhausen, is surrounded by a neo-gothic church and secular buildings erected at the turn of the twentieth century. The market square is the focal point of the hustle and bustle of market trading. Here, around the victory column, a daily market takes place from Mondays to Saturdays between 8am and 2pm. It is a guaranteed pleasure to shop for fresh local and Southern European produce to whet any appetite.
- The Friedensplatz, a town square, was laid out on an industrial site at the turn of the twentieth century. It is an important link between the market square (Altmarkt), the main railway station and the town hall - a building with elements of the Bauhaus architectural style.

- The Centr0 is the largest shopping and leisure paradise in Europe and is unique. At the same time it is the biggest example of structural change in the Ruhr Region. It consists of various areas such as a shopping mall, a gigantic fast food area known as the Coca Cola Oasis and the Promenade. Here over twenty different types of international eateries are situated. The shopping mall has two levels with 70, 000 sqm of floor space containing approximately 200 national and international retail outlets.
- The Centr0 Promenade in the "Neue Mitte" Complex has long since become a culinary mecca and meeting-point for "clubbers" and night owls. Oberhausen's "Golden Mile", situated between the Multiplex-Cinema and the Arena, on an area of 18, 000 sqm, has over 20 different types of restaurant: theme pubs, traditional ice-cream parlours or exclusive restaurants together with Greek, Spanish, Italian, Mexican or Chinese eating places - in fact, there is something for everyone. In addition, in the summer, there are outside seating areas for many thousands of visitors.
- The Koenig-Pilsener-ARENA with a seating capacity of just under 13, 000 is one of the most modern and most popular halls for large events in Germany. Since its opening in 1996 it has been setting new standards in live entertainment. Within a short space of time it became a top address for international music stars, show acts large sporting events.



The Centr0 Promenade Complex

Dortmund

- Downtown Dortmund has a lot to offer. Department stores and small specialty shops – from well-priced to exquisite - cafés, restaurants, pubs and play areas. Stroll down the High Street, sit down for a coffee, or go to the beach and have a Margarita: both the “Sky Beach” high above the city on the roof of the Galeria Kaufhof and the “Solendo” at the harbour are the perfect place for a nice drink and for sunbathing in the sand.
- Just to the southeast of the city centre a couple of stops on the U-bahn is the wonderful Westfalen Park. Covering 70 hectares the park is the home of the German Rose Society as well as hosting the 212m Florian Radio & Television Tower, the quirky Cookbook Museum, a cable car and an outdoor theatre. A superb place to relax and take in a bit of culture at the same time.
- Just when you thought they’d run out of ideas for museums along comes one dedicated to the long and fascinating history of the cookbook. With examples of early 17th-century cookbooks and a small exhibition of reconstructed kitchens through the ages this place is really only for people with a serious interest in the subject.
- Built between May 1958 and April 1959 the 211.36m Florianturm (Florian Tower, or Florian for short - Florian being the patron saint of gardeners) is the fourth tallest structure in Germany. A positively divine piece of concrete that has rather importunately become a top spot for advertisers, of interest to visitors are the three floors open to the public. Viewing galleries offering superb views of the city can be found at both 141.88m and 144.7m, and there's an expensive revolving restaurant underneath at 137.54. The large rectangle sticking out was used for bungee jumping from 2000 until 2003 when tragedy struck and somebody died when the bungee came undone during a jump.
- Dortmund Christmas market (Weihnachtsmarkt) is the largest in Europe, and is host to the largest "Christmas tree" in the world, formed by stacking hundreds of trees into the shape of a pyramid.
- And last but not least, Dortmund is home of the sport club Borussia Dortmund which won the UEFA Champions League and the Intercontinental Cup in 1997. They play at Signal Iduna Park, formerly known as the Westfalenstadion. It was built for the 1974 FIFA World Cup and also hosted some matches of 2006 FIFA World Cup, including Italy's 2-0 defeat of Germany in the semi-finals. It is Germany's largest football stadium with a capacity of 82,932 spectators.