



2007-03-29 Thursday

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**EUSONEWS**

## Sightseeing yesterday: Bundestag

Together with the “Bundesrat”, the “Bundestag” forms the legislative branch of the German political system.

Fig. Meeting of the Bundestag



Although most legislation is initiated by the executive branch, the Bundestag considers the legislative function its most important responsibility, concentrating much of its energy on assessing and amending the government's legislative program. Plenary sessions provide a forum for members to engage in public debate on legislative issues before them, but they tend to be well attended only when significant legislation is being considered.

The “Reichstag” building in Berlin was constructed to house the “Reichstag”, the original parliament of the German Empire.

In 1884 Paul Wallot from Frankfurt started the construction and it took the team ten years to complete the building. It was opened in 1894 and housed the Reichstag until 1933.

Fig. The Reichstag in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century



After Adolf Hitler had been appointed “Reichkanzler” in 1933, the building was set on fire in the same year, under circumstances still not entirely clear.



## Sightseeing yesterday: Bundestag

In the 1990s the internationally renowned architect Norman Foster began the reconstruction of the building. His original design did not include a cupola. Before reconstruction began, the Reichstag was wrapped by the Bulgarian artist Christo and his wife Jeanne-Claude in 1995, attracting millions of visitors.

Fig. The wrapped Reichstag in 1995



Although not undisputed for its lack of respect for the building's original design and furniture, the reconstruction is widely regarded as a success. The “Reichstag” is one of the most visited attractions in Berlin, not least because of the huge glass cupola that was erected on the roof as a gesture to the original 1894 cupola, giving an impressive view

over the city, especially at night. The main hall of the parliament below can also be seen from the cupola, and natural light from above radiates down to the parliament floor.

Fig. The Reichstag nowadays



Construction work was finished in 1999 and the seat of parliament was transferred to the Reichstag again. The dome is open to anyone without prior registration, although the waiting queues can be very long.

Due to the fact that our group was registered, we were allowed to use a special entrance and did not have to line up. After the groups passed the security control, where some of the students had to leave their extremely dangerous Swiss knife and a ball, they were led upstairs to see the attraction from inside. Before entering the “Plenarsaal” the



students and mentors had to leave their bags at the checkroom. In the “Plenarsaal” a German tourist guide told other visitors about the history of the Reichstag. Unfortunately, he couldn’t speak any English and kicked us out of the room... Afterwards we were led upstairs into the glassy cupola from where one had a wonderful view on the town while the sun was shining.

## **Lost & Found**

The tourist guides took the students through Berlin City. A Highlight of this tour was the picnic on the stairs at “Gendarmenmarkt” because it was a very sunny day and there was a slight touch of alpenhorn music in the air. The students were also happy that they had a break from history lessons told by the tourist guides. After this lunchtime the Belgian guide discovered that one of her students from the team was missing.



This missing student was lonely wandering along the streets of Berlin. She was incidentally spotted by the mentors from their sightseeing bus that was passing by.

Luckily, she was wearing her bright blue backpack as her guide had suggested. The mentors’ bus picked up the Belgian student and she had once again the opportunity to enjoy the rest of the wonderful tour with Mr Kennedy.

The other students were divided into two groups. One was led by Mr Adam, the other by Mrs Regina. Mr Adam shortened his tour because his students got tired. Mrs Regina showed no mercy and completed the whole program.



## Info

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### Bus Departure:

- Students Group B: 7:45  
University Potsdam
- Students Group B: 8:15  
Start test day 2

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- Students Group A: 8:15  
University Potsdam
- Students Group A: 9:00  
Insect microcosm







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- Mentors 9:30  
Moderation results test day 1

Please inform us about any changes regarding your departure times on Sunday.

## off the mark



	morning	lunchtime	evening
thursday 2007-03-29			
	partly cloudy	cloudy	Few showers
temperature	6°C	13°C	10°C
friday 2007-03-30			
	cloudy	cloudy	cloudy
temperature	5°C	12°C	14°C