

"I live here, I vote here !" - Symbolic election in Berlin Mitte 2021

What it's about: Voting rights for all

On September 26, 2021, three elections will take place in Berlin-Mitte: The national government (Bundestag) , state (Berlin city) government and the local council elections. In a democracy, elections are the most important element of co-determination and participation. Citizens can make their opinion visible through their vote and influence the composition of the parliaments. However, many Berliners are not allowed to vote because they do not have German citizenship. In the district of Mitte, this affects more than a third of the eligible population for the Bundestag and state elections. Many residents are also still excluded from elections to the local council in Mitte. Although the right to vote in municipal elections was introduced for EU citizens in 1992, more than a quarter of the district's residents are not allowed to vote because they are third-country nationals or stateless. For many of those affected, this means being excluded from political processes that directly affect their lives. We would like to get into a conversation about this.

What are symbolic elections?

In the course of a symbolic election, the district Mitte would like to call on Berliners without the right to vote to cast their vote. The symbolic election will take place from September 13 to 18. During this period, symbolic polling stations will be set up in various institutions and associations throughout the district. There, voters will be able to cast their ballots in a voting booth - almost like in a "real" election. The results will be published and presented at a press conference.

In the run-up to the election, various associations and institutions will be organizing a supporting program on the subject of voting rights with exciting political talks and information events.

" I live here, I vote here!" is the message to draw attention to the issue of voting rights for all and to activate those who have so far been excluded to participate in politics. In this way, we are joining the nationwide network Wir wählen! (<https://wir-waehlen.org/>) for more participation and democracy in Germany.

Who can vote ?

Everyone who is over 18 years old and does not have German citizenship can vote. No identification or residence papers are required or even checked at the polling station.

How can my association/ institution become a polling station?

People without the right to vote in Mitte can symbolically cast their vote at your polling station! You take part in preparation meetings and we provide you with ballot box, ballots and include them in our public relations as polling station. The collected votes are published centrally through the district office. Interested? Great, then write to sybille.biermann@ba-mitte.berlin.de