

25 SUCCESSES AND IMPACTS OF CHEMNITZ, EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2025

25 IMPACTS
OF THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE
CHEMNITZ 2025



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Photo: Johannes Richter

Opening celebration on Brückenstraße



Photo: Natalie Bleyl

Apple tree planting in Hilbersdorf



Photo: Ernesto Uhlmann

Dancing Neighbours



Photo: Ernesto Uhlmann

Volunteers' group photo

Snapshots from the European Capital of Culture year:
the opening celebration on Brückenstraße, civic engagement in the
Hilbersdorf Apple Park, Dancing Neighbours at the Hartmann Factory, and
the volunteers' final gathering at the Garagen-Campus.

CHEMNITZ 2025: A REVIEW

The European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 has reinvented itself. The motto “C the Unseen” now has a new meaning. Chemnitz is visible today and is a recognised point on the map of Germany and Europe. Visitors to Chemnitz will discover a city that surprises with its unique perspectives, places and stories.

Chemnitz 2025 reached more people than anyone had expected. Around 3.5 million people took part in this year – whether as visitors, participants or active contributors – which is significantly more than was originally anticipated.

They attended over 2,000 events, discovered the PURPLE PATH art and sculpture trail, explored the new Makerhubs and experienced a city that presented itself as welcoming and open. The media response was correspondingly extensive. With almost 24,000 media mentions reaching a potential audience of 36 billion users, Chemnitz's international visibility was significantly increased.

The European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 is not the achievement of a few individuals – it is the result of a collective effort. It was shaped by people from the city and the region, as well as by visitors, partners, service providers, creatives, and dedicated volunteers. This year belongs to all of us. And that is precisely what makes it so special.

The events that took place across the city and the 38 municipalities of the Capital of Culture Region in 2025 can be measured in numbers and remembered in moments: open-air dance classes, garage courtyards filled with people, tens of thousands of visitors drawn to Edvard Munch's The Scream, and apple trees planted for future generations. The 1,300 volunteers' extraordinary dedication and 45,000 hours of service made the year possible. It lives on, too, in the growing sense of pride among local people. Throughout the year, a new feeling took shape: a sense of community and identity; a shared feeling of “This is who we are”.

The European Capital of Culture year emerged from the local community itself. Over 700 partner organisations, along with numerous initiatives from the arts, culture, science, sports and civil society sectors, collaborated to create a programme that no single organisation could have developed alone. Of the total budget of 115 million euros, more than two thirds were secured from external funding sources, including the German federal government, the Free State of Saxony, and the European Union. Half of the overall budget was reinvested directly in the city, in infrastructure, urban development and lasting structures whose impact extends far beyond 2025.

The European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 has demonstrated that investment in arts and culture can strengthen communities, transform cities and empower regions. This brochure showcases 25 of the year’s impacts, each of which is documented in a dedicated chapter containing data, analysis and photographic insights.

10,000

OVER 10,000 ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS



1,300

1,300 VOLUNTEERS

1.

PARTICIPATION HAS BECOME A STRENGTH OF THE CITY.

The European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 is a collective success built by many. It was by no means guaranteed that individual citizens, municipalities, businesses, cultural institutions, and civil society organisations would collaborate towards a shared goal over several years. This required trust, mutual ambitions, and a willingness to share responsibility.

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731 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS OF WHICH 233 ARE INTERNATIONAL

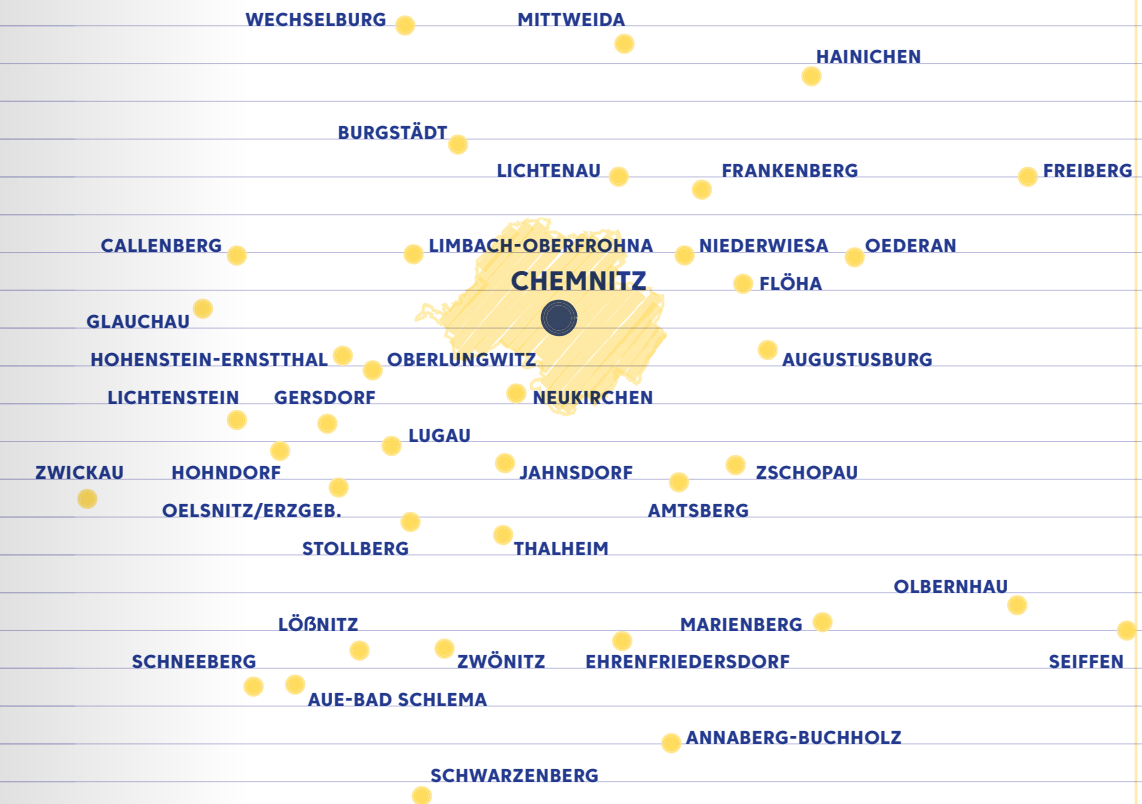
FIFTY

50+ SPONSORS

This is precisely what has been achieved. The collaborative structure established for 2025 is a lasting legacy of the European Capital of Culture year. It has created a proven network of regional, national, and European partners. These networks and partnerships provide a solid basis for future cultural, economic and urban development projects.

38

CHEMNITZ + 38 PARTNER MUNICIPALITIES



“Dear people of Chemnitz, Coming from Oldenburg, we never expected to find such an open city with such a rich cultural scene and beautiful architecture. It is wonderful to see how the city presents itself. It truly deserves the title of European Capital of Culture 2025!”

Guestbook, Hartmann Factory

2. THE PROGRAMME ADDRESSES ISSUES THAT CONCERN SOCIETY AS A WHOLE.

The Chemnitz 2025 European programme was open to everyone and easy to access. It was shaped collaboratively by people from the city, the region, and visitors alike. Large-scale events and numerous smaller formats complemented each other, reaching a wide range of audiences. These events engaged people from their own individual starting points and perspectives with topics and questions that affect us all as members of the European community.

The programme strands connected local issues with broader European questions. Consequently, the programme evolved into more than just a collection of individual projects, forming a coherent and thematically connected whole.

MAKERS²

Flagship Project:
Makers, Business & Arts

GENEROUS NEIGHBOURS!

Flagship Project:
Living Neighbourhood

EUROPEAN MAKERS OF DEMOCRACY

Flagship Project:
European Workshop for
Culture and Democracy

EASTERN STATE OF MIND

Flagship Project:
#3000Garages

IT'S MOVING!

Flagship Project:
PURPLE PATH art
and sculpture trail

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The programme included the three-day KOSMOS Festival and the highly acclaimed Edvard Munch exhibition as well as activities woven into

Programme at a glance

367 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROJECTS

Throughout the development years, the programme was opened up to new participants in several rounds. It enabled as many people as possible to contribute through open calls and collaborative projects. Complementary initiatives were added by institutions such as Chemnitz University of Technology, Kulturkirche and the

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everyday life in the city, such as garage concerts, community planting initiatives, and dance classes in public spaces.

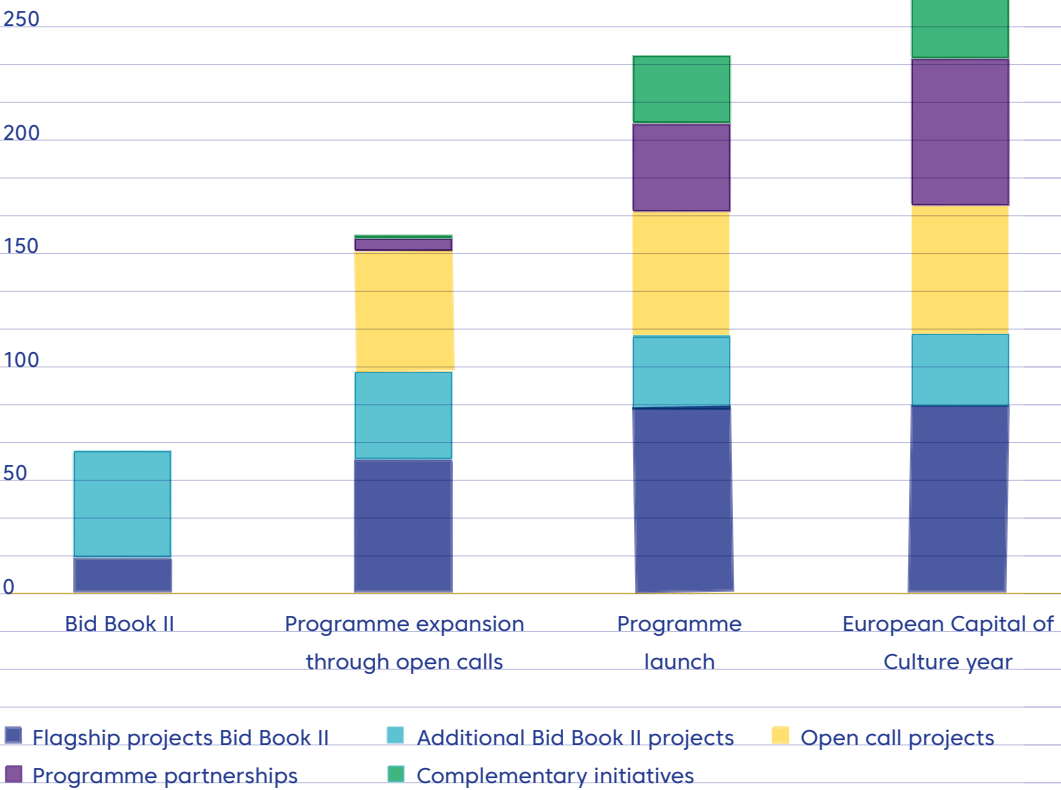
260 PROJECTS IN THE MAIN PROGRAMME

MORE THAN 2,000 EVENTS

German-Czech Future Fund. Additionally, the Microprojects programme supported a wide variety of ideas developed by local communities and civil society groups. The European Capital of Culture year was not a top-down project; it was shaped collectively from the ground up.



Shaping the main programme



Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH programme evaluation, 2018–2025

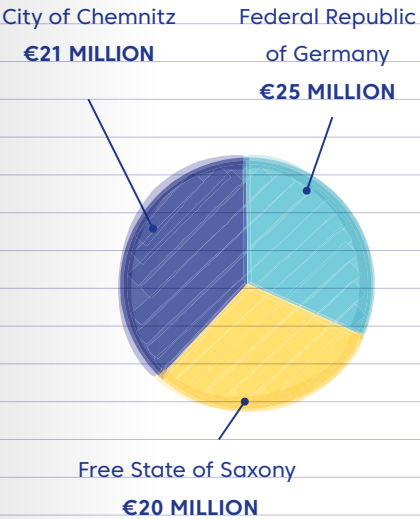
3. CHEMNITZ 2025 SECURES ADDITIONAL FUNDING.

The European Capital of Culture year acted as a powerful financial catalyst. Over the years, the original funding framework has increased by more than 40 per cent.

Since the bidding process began in 2017, Chemnitz 2025 organisers secured over 115 million euros. This was made possible by a funding agreement worth around 66 million euros, which was signed in 2021 by the City of Chemnitz, the Free State of Saxony, and the Federal Republic of Germany, following the successful bid for the title.

As project development progressed, financial support gained significant momentum. The City of Chemnitz increased its own contribution to 35 million euros. This commitment encouraged further public investment: the Free State of Saxony provided an additional 5 million euros and secured 30 million euros in sector-specific funding from European, federal and state programmes. Overall, the European Capital of Culture team succeeded in expanding the original budget by more than 47 million euros in public funding. This also includes the 1.5 million euros Melina Mercouri Prize awarded by the European Commission.

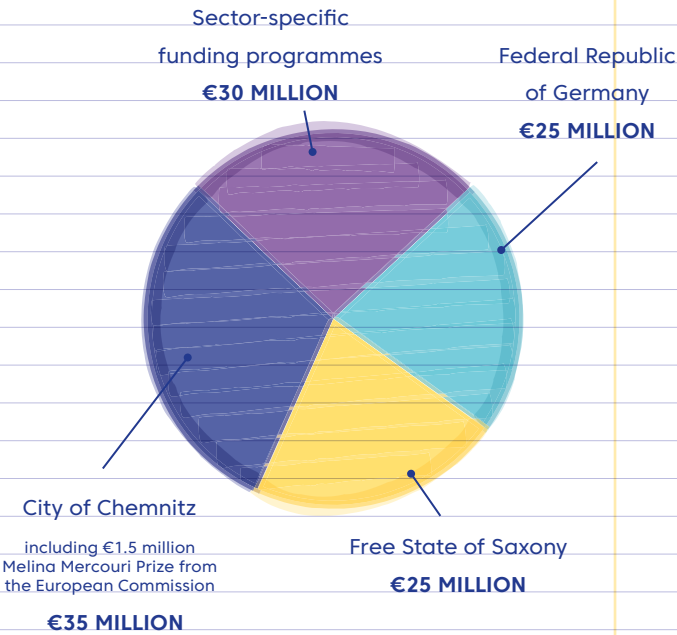
2021 funding agreement



Source: City of Chemnitz

In addition, the organisers mobilised substantial extra resources for individual projects. The German Federal Cultural Foundation supports the legacy project “Enter – Young Cultural Region” with approximately 7 million euros. The partner municipalities of the European Capital of Culture also contributed millions of euros, as well as extensive in-kind support, towards the development of the PURPLE PATH art and sculpture trail, the Makerhubs, and various local projects.

Actual budget of Chemnitz 2025



Private sponsorships, foundation funding from Germany and abroad, and income from ticketing and merchandise further complemented the resources available to Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH and its partners. Chemnitz 2025 thus sets an exemplary standard for how public investment can unlock additional funding from a wide range of sources, and this experience will continue to inform the legacy phase.

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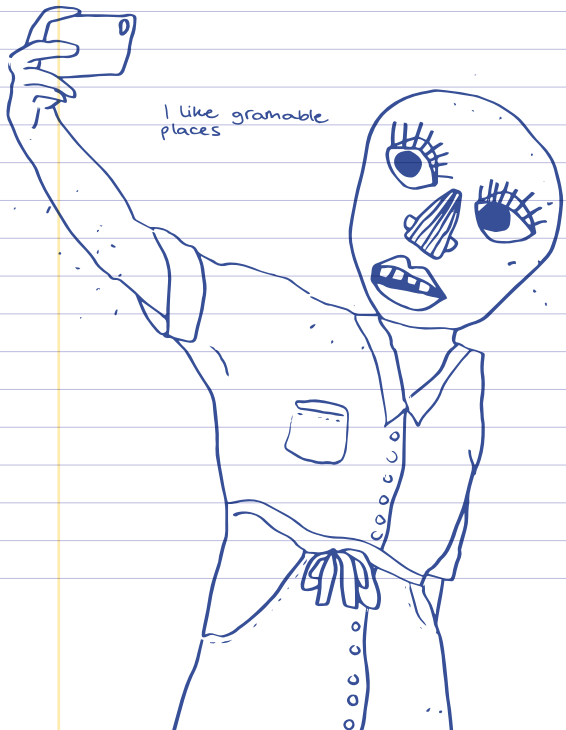
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4. 30 INTERVENTION AREAS ARE RESHAPING CHEMNITZ'S TOWNSCAPE.

The Intervention Areas are sites where Chemnitz has undergone a tangible transformation as part of its designation as the European Capital of Culture 2025. In line with the motto “C the Unseen”, the city has reactivated locations with untapped potential through architectural and cultural interventions, integrating them into everyday urban life. The 30 projects vary in scope. They range from the revitalisation of historic buildings and the construction of new bridges to the creation of new public spaces.

Between 2022 and 2025, the City of Chemnitz developed these sites, investing a total of approximately 60 million euros. Some of the measures and expenditure will extend beyond 2025. From the outset, the needs of future users were at the heart of the process. Engagement with local people shaped the entire Intervention Areas programme, an initiative that is unique in the city’s urban development history. The project was made possible through various regional, national and European funding programmes.

CHEMNITZ



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Photo: City of Chemnitz
Karl Schmidt-Rottluff Haus 2022



Photo: David Nuglisch
Karl Schmidt-Rottluff Haus 2025



Photo: Grit Winkel
District Park at the Pleißenbach 2023



Photo: Franziska Wöllner
District Park at the Pleißenbach 2025



Photo: Susan Einhorn
Hartmann Factory 2021



Photo: Franziska Wöllner
Hartmann Factory 2025

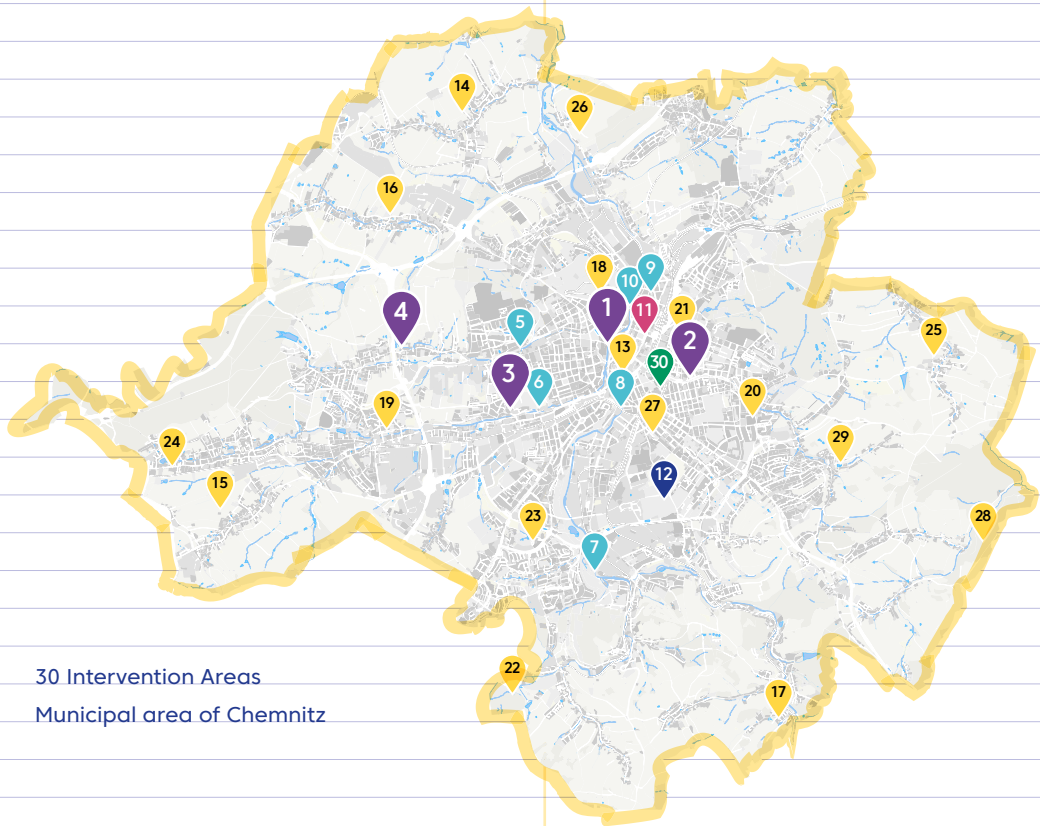


Photo: City of Chemnitz
Einsiedel Youth Club "Club E" 2024



Photo: Igor Pastierovic
Einsiedel Youth Club "Club E" 2025

The 30 projects include



30 Intervention Areas
Municipal area of Chemnitz

The projects are deliberately located throughout the city, strengthening not only the city centre, but also neighbourhoods and rural districts. The new and revitalised sites provide spaces for culture, social interaction, education, sports and civil society initiatives. They make public spaces

more liveable, encourage local activity and improve the quality of life in many neighbourhoods. What began as a cultural programme has thus evolved into a lasting contribution to urban development, raising the profile of places and people across the entire city.

Pin Project

PLACES OF NEW BEGINNING

- 1 Hartmann Factory
- 2 Stadtwirtschaft
- 3 Garagen-Campus
- 4 Karl Schmidt-Rottluff Ensemble

CITY BY THE RIVER

- 5 District Park at the Pleißenbach
- 6 Play and Rest Area “Am Feldschlößchen” (Kappelbach)
- 7 River Bath Altchemnitz (River Chemnitz)
- 8 Railway Viaduct (River Chemnitz)
- 9 Nordpark (River Chemnitz)
- 10 Helgoland (River Chemnitz)

SCHILLERPLATZ

- 12 SPORTFORUM
(Marathon Tower and Arcades)

PUBLIC SQUARES

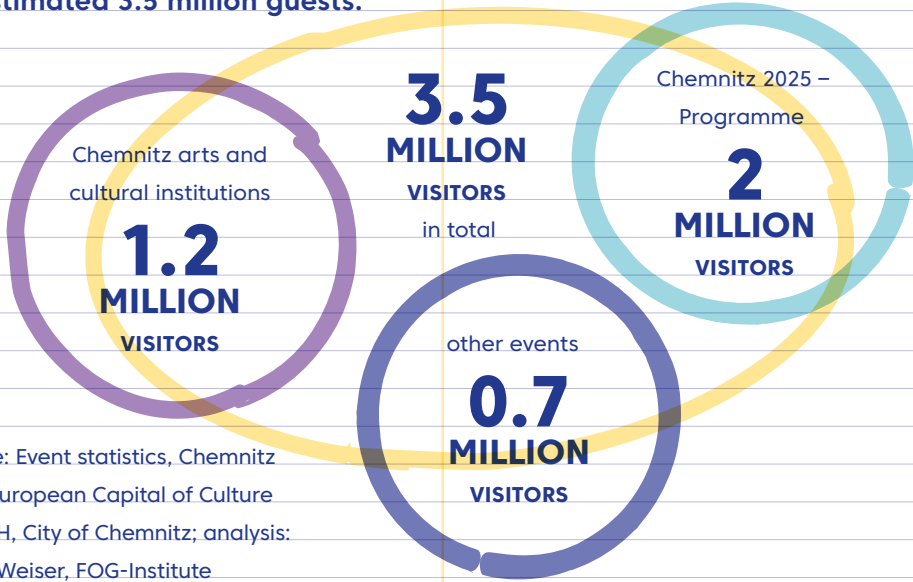
- 13 Market Fountain
- 14 Wittgensdorf Primary School
- 15 Mittelbach Primary School | Mittelpunkt
- 16 Arthur Lange Community Centre, Röhrsdorf
- 17 Einsiedel Youth Club “Club E”
- 18 Reception Pavilion in the Küchwald Area | Citizens’ Platform Centre-West
- 19 Frei Otto Park | Citizens’ Platform West
- 20 Gablenz Civic Park | Citizens’ Platform Centre-East
- 21 Lessing Square | Citizens’ Platform North-East
- 22 Cultural Park at Klaffenbach Water Castle
- 23 Park Morgenleite | Citizens’ Platform South
- 24 Recreational Area Bergstraße Grüna
- 25 Euba Festival Ground
- 26 Rest Area Chemnitz Valley Cycle Route (Fischweg Bridge) | Citizens’ Platform North
- 27 Event Area Vetttersstraße | Citizens’ Platform Centre
- 28 Lohse-Uhlig Trail Kleinolbersdorf-Altenhain
- 29 Cultural Trail Höhenweg 2025 | Citizens’ Platform South-East

SCHAUSPIELHAUS (THEATRE)

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5. CHEMNITZ IS PUT ON THE MAP AS A CULTURAL DESTINATION BY 3.5 MILLION VISITORS DURING THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR.

The year 2025 has demonstrated the full extent of the European Capital of Culture effect. The original target of two million visitors was significantly exceeded. Taking all visits into account, Chemnitz 2025 welcomed an estimated 3.5 million guests.



Source: Event statistics, Chemnitz 2025 European Capital of Culture gGmbH, City of Chemnitz; analysis: Ulrich Weiser, FOG-Institute

Not only is the scale of this growth striking, but its breadth is too: a wide range of institutions, from major museums to specialist exhibitions, benefited. The Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz quadrupled its visitor numbers, while the Industriemuseum Chemnitz doubled theirs.

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The Capital of Culture year has established the city and the wider region as cultural destinations. Museums, theatres and exhibitions were able to reach new audiences and significantly increase their reach.

Even institutions that typically attract six-figure visitor numbers, such as the Stadthalle and municipal theatres, recorded significant increases. Smaller venues, such as the Museum für sächsische Fahrzeuge and Villa Esche, also reported record growth.

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Visitor development of selected institutions in Chemnitz	2024	2025	growth (%)
Stadthalle	236,073	313,980	+33 %
Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz (Kunstsammlungen am Theaterplatz, Museum Gunzenhauser, Schloßbergmuseum, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff Haus, Henry van de Velde Museum, Rabenstein Castle)	60,460	259,002	+328 %
Villa Esche (Events and guided tours – C³ Chemnitzer Veranstaltungszentren)	6,359	13,948	+119 %
Chemnitz Municipal Theatres	170,351	211,537	+24 %
Venue: Opera House	79,886	89,517	+12 %
Venue: Theatre	49,760	52,097	+5 %
Venue: Stadthalle	23,712	24,625	+4 %
Off-site venues	16,993	45,298	+167 %
Industriemuseum Chemnitz	61,879	131,320	+112 %
smac – Staatliches Museum für Archäologie Chemnitz	72,000	105,000	+45 %
Klaffenbach Water Castle	96,116	94,400	-2 %
Carlowitz Congresscenter	36,651	40,776	+11 %
Museum für Naturkunde Chemnitz	16,965	25,003	+47 %
Museum für sächsische Fahrzeuge	12,553	24,036	+91 %
Schauplatz Eisenbahn	10,787	17,729	+64 %
Deutsches SPIELEmuseum	13,694	17,095	+25 %
total	793,888	1.25 Million	+58 %

Source: City of Chemnitz; analysis: Ulrich Weiser, FOG-Institute

Even beyond the official programme, it was clear that demand had increased: major events such as the Christmas Market and the Wine Festival, as well as concerts and special exhibitions, attracted hundreds of thousands of additional visitors, thereby further strengthening the year's overall cultural impact.

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Other events reach a wide audience



Source: City of Chemnitz; analysis: Ulrich Weiser, FOG-Institute

The events of 2025 resonate far beyond the year itself. Chemnitz and its surrounding region have firmly established themselves as a cultural destination in Europe.

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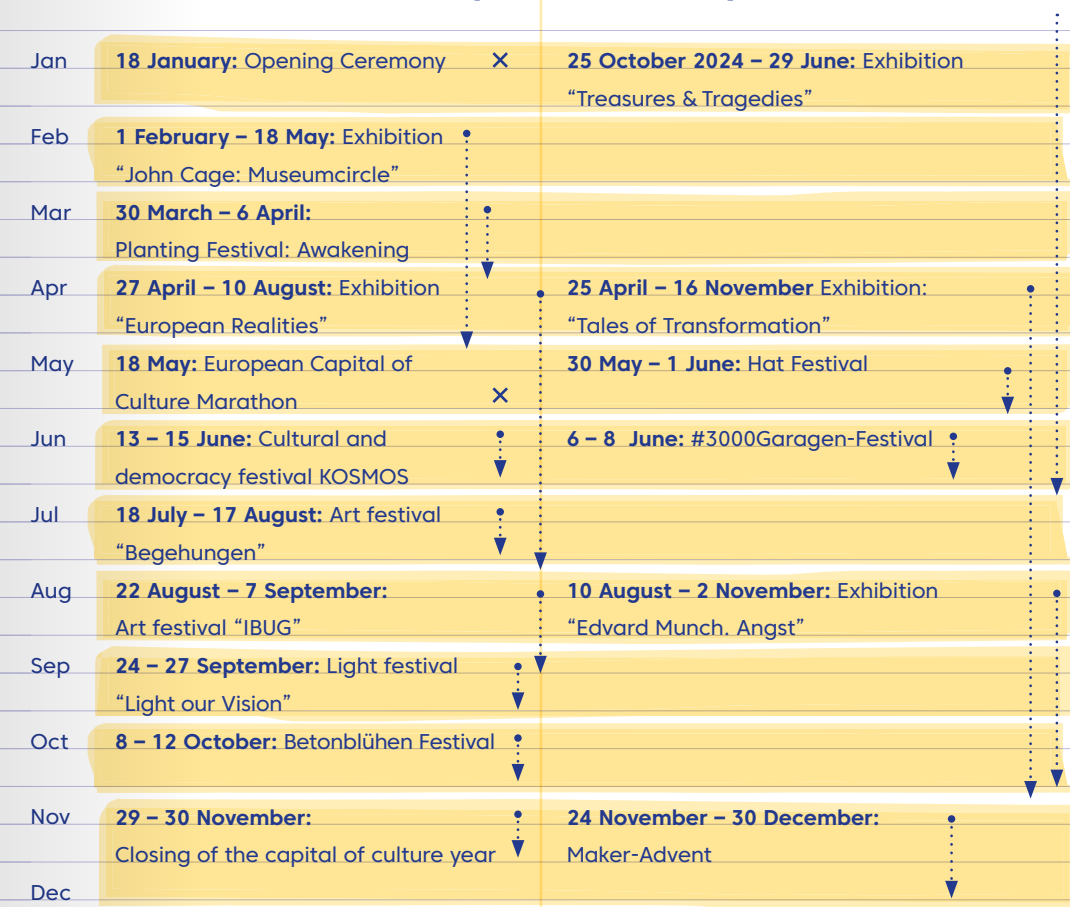
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6. FROM WORKSHOPS TO LARGE-SCALE EVENTS, CHEMNITZ 2025 REACHES A WIDE AUDIENCE.

With around 2 million visits to events, artworks and exhibitions of Chemnitz 2025, the main programme of the European Capital of Culture year received an exceptionally strong response. The programme featured a variety of offerings. It ranged from high-profile, large-scale

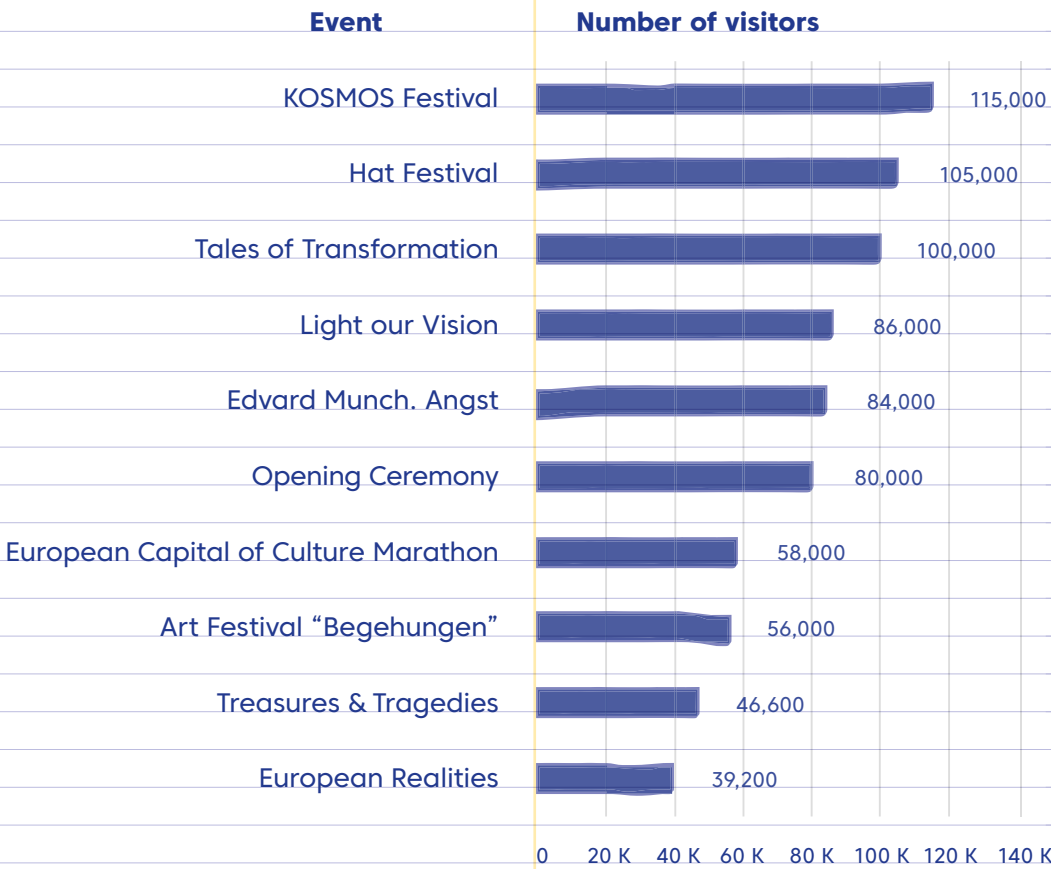
events to well-established formats that attracted four- to five-digit visitor numbers, as well as numerous smaller events. This diversity demonstrates that Chemnitz 2025 appealed to a wide range of audiences and enabled participation at different levels across society.

Visitor attractions in the Capital of Culture year



Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH event statistics, January–December 2025

Top 10 most visited programme highlights of the Capital of Culture year 2025



Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH event statistics, January–December 2025

Alongside this, a wide range of mid-scale events continued to attract audiences. Events such as “makers united”, the opening of the Garagen-Campus and the European Toymakers’ Festival attracted visitor numbers in the four- to low five-digit range. This wide variety within a single calendar year was unprecedented for Chemnitz and the region.

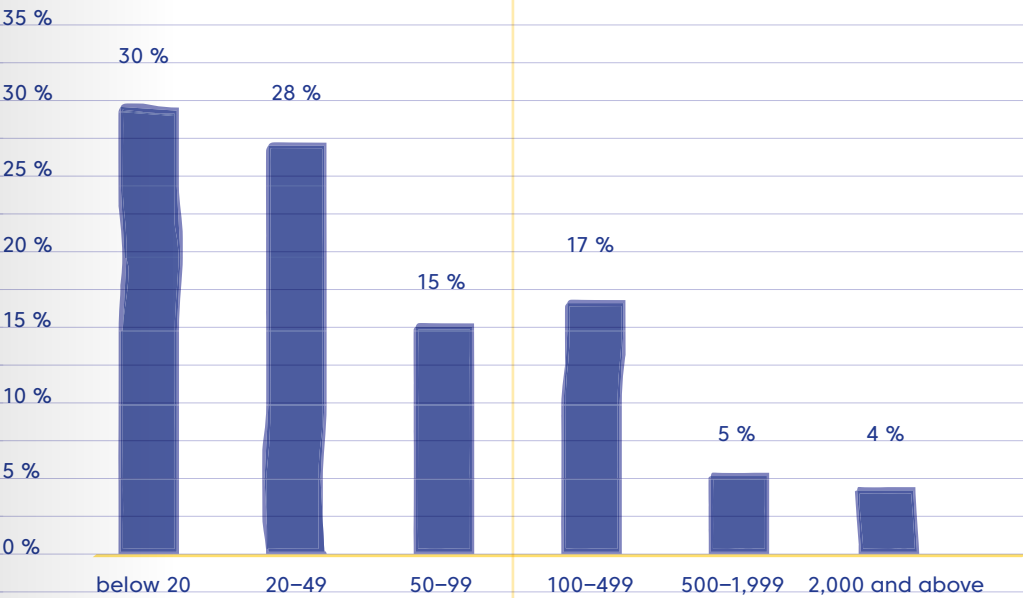
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However, the core was formed by the many smaller-scale events. Almost six out of ten Chemnitz 2025 events had fewer than 50 participants. These offerings, which included workshops, guided tours, cycling routes, discussions, cooking classes, performances and garage talks, created spaces for encounters and exchanges that large-scale events cannot provide.

1 The broad impact of the European Capital of Culture year was therefore based not only on volume, but

also on the density of impactful, accessible formats.

Scale of the European Capital of Culture events 2025
Structure of the European Capital of Culture events 2025 (in %) by number of visitors; only events with verified visitor numbers



Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH event statistics, January–December 2025

33 Chemnitz has demonstrated that diverse event formats can be successfully brought together under a common framework and presented with a powerful impact. Close cooperation between the City of Chemnitz, cultural stakeholders, associations, businesses, private initiatives and security and public order authorities proved to be a robust foundation throughout the

process. Chemnitz has thereby demonstrated its organisational capacity and ability to swiftly and efficiently establish targeted networks. This experience provides a solid foundation for future large-scale events, such as the planned biennial from 2027 onwards, and establishes Chemnitz as a long-term location for complex event structures.

7. THE EUROPEAN PROGRAMME ACTIVATES EXISTING AUDIENCES AND REACHES NEW VISITOR GROUPS.

The Chemnitz 2025 programme attracted local residents as well as visitors from the wider region and beyond. The data shows that its broad and accessible approach succeeded in engaging new audiences differentiated by age group, geographical origin

and characteristics of diversity and inclusion. The programme therefore provides a strong link between local roots and growing supra-regional appeal. The composition of audiences broadened measurably.

Events combine learning, creativity and experience

More than half of all events included educational or creative elements. At the same time, many events combined multiple genres,

demonstrating that Chemnitz 2025 was not organised along traditional sectoral lines but around creating meaningful experiences.

Programme structure & participation

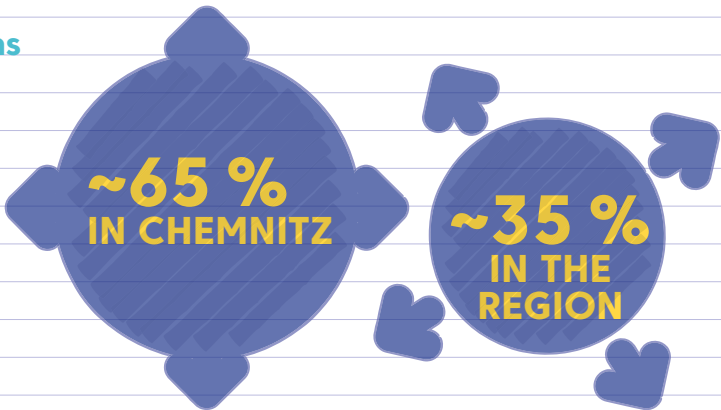
1. Programme diversity



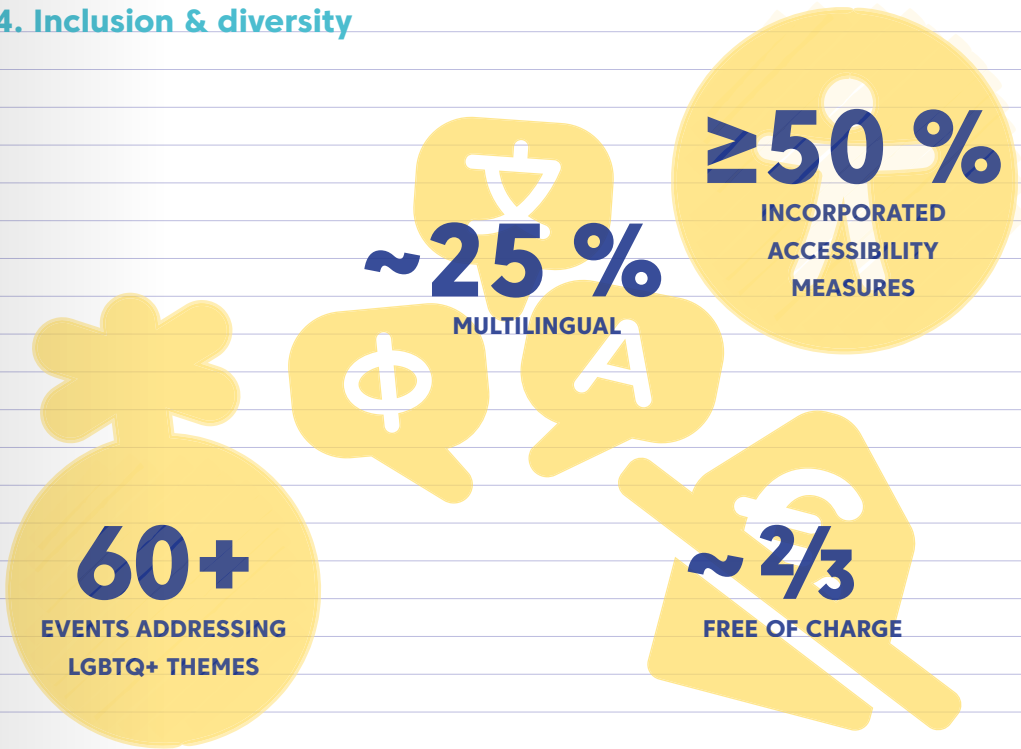
2. Genre mix



3. Event locations



4. Inclusion & diversity



Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH event statistics, January–December 2025



Photo: Kristin Schmidt



Photo: Christoph Meyer

KOSMOS attracts a particularly high number of young visitors.

One notable finding was the differentiated audience reach: different formats attracted various age groups and audience segments. While large-scale, low-threshold events attracted younger audiences, exhibitions and curated formats were more popular with older target groups.



The opening ceremony engages the whole community.



Photo: Erik-Reiss Sonderling Design

Light our Vision was especially popular with older audiences.

These insights are based on anonymised mobile phone data provided by Deutsche Telekom and analysed for selected outdoor events. This analysis enabled conclusions to be drawn regarding visitors' place of origin, age and gender.

Visitor profile of selected Chemnitz 2025 events

	Opening Ceremony (January 2025)	KOSMOS (June 2025)	Light our Vision (September 2025)
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Total Visitors	80,000	115,000	86,000
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Gender

Male	51 %	54 %	46 %
Female	49 %	46 %	54 %

Age

20–29 years	19 %	30 %	13 %
30–39 years	14 %	18 %	13 %
40–49 years	15 %	14 %	13 %
50–59 years	22 %	21 %	19 %
60–69 years	18 %	12 %	23 %
70 years and older	12 %	5 %	18 %

Origin/Place of residence

City of Chemnitz	67 %	67 %	62 %
Saxony	30 %	28 %	31 %
of which:			
Central Saxony District	9 %	7 %	10 %
Erzgebirge District	8 %	6 %	8 %
Zwickau District	5 %	5 %	6 %
City of Leipzig	3 %	5 %	3 %
City of Dresden	3 %	4 %	3 %
Outside of Saxony	3 %	5 %	6 %
of which: abroad	1.5 %	2 %	1 %

Source: Visitor statistics based on anonymised signal data from the Deutsche Telekom AG Mobile Phone Network, January–December 2025

The city and the wider region's continued cultural development is strongly supported by the breadth and diversity of audience groups.

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IMPACT ON CITY, SOCIETY AND EUROPE

The effects of Chemnitz 2025 extend far beyond the year itself. New networks formed between civil society, culture, science and international partners establish resilient structures that facilitate collaboration. The more the city's population gets involved in urban development processes, the more they identify with and trust in them.

At the same time, Chemnitz and its surrounding region are becoming better known across Europe as an open, cooperative location. These connections and experiences lay a foundation for local population engagement and deeper integration into European exchange and development processes.



Photo: Peter Rossner

Volunteers on the PURPLE PATH art and sculpture trail in Flöha



Photo: Bryan Nicola Maxwell

Presentation at the European Parliament in Brussels



Photo: Johannes Richter

PURPLE PATH artwork "Coin Stack 2" by Sean Scully in Schneeberg



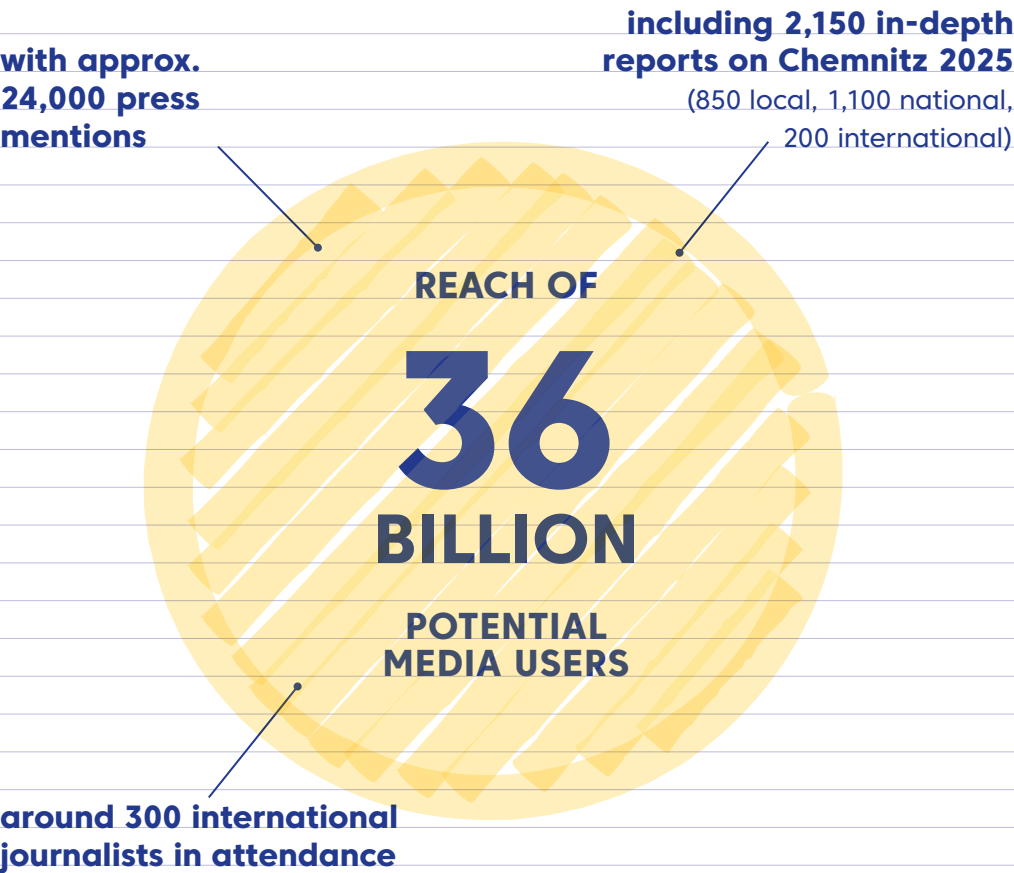
Photo: Mark Frost

Makerhub Neukirchen

8. CHEMNITZ REACHES
A NEW LEVEL OF MEDIA
PRESENCE IN EUROPE.

Chemnitz’s media presence expanded significantly during its year as the European Capital of Culture, both nationally and internationally. What was previously unseen has become visible, showcasing the qualities that make Chemnitz and the surrounding region distinctive and unique. Notably, the breadth of coverage is striking. Chemnitz is perceived not only as a venue for events, but also as a city in transformation.

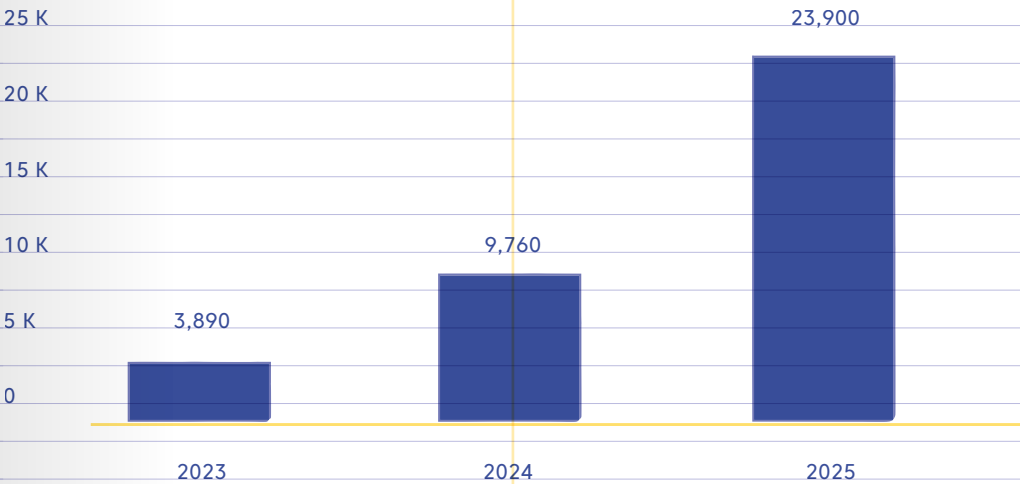
Global media response during the title year



Source: Media statistics, Chemnitz 2025 European Capital of Culture gGmbH and the City of Chemnitz; analysis: Ulrich Weiser, FOG-Institute

Development of press mentions of “Chemnitz” 2023–2025

Online, print, TV, radio



Source: Media statistics, Chemnitz 2025 European Capital of Culture gGmbH and the City of Chemnitz

Media coverage has significantly reshaped perceptions of Chemnitz. The city has replaced its former image with a more nuanced European cultural identity. It is increasingly being seen as a place of cultural innovation, social engagement, and European cooperation.

The increased media presence provides a foundation for the continued strategic positioning of Chemnitz and the Capital of Culture region within national and European contexts. By hosting “Theater der Welt”, Germany’s largest international theatre festival; the PURPLE PATH art and sculpture trail; the Makerhubs; and the Europe Direct Centre, Chemnitz will remain visible and present, even after its year as European Capital of Culture.

The Independent (UK):
Why you should visit this German city packed with Cold War curiosities and oddball festivals

Der Standard:
Chemnitz wird 2025 zum Zentrum für Kunst und Demokratie | Chemnitz becomes a centre for art and democracy in 2025.

THE TIMES (UK):
Europe's most offbeat break right now.

Tagesspiegel:
Garagen-Parcours, Skulpturen, Künstlerhaus: Chemnitz strahlt als Kulturhauptstadt | Garage parcours, sculptures, artists' house: Chemnitz shines as Capital of Culture.

Kronen Zeitung (AT):
Chemnitz erfindet sich neu | Chemnitz is reinventing itself.

3sat:
Kulturhauptstadt Chemnitz – Raus aus der rechten Ecke
Capital of Culture Chemnitz – moving out of the right corner

FAZ:
Chemnitz ist Kulturhauptstadt Europas 2025: Seine heißbegehrten Garagen | Chemnitz is the European Capital of Culture 2025: its highly sought-after garages.

POLITIKEN (DK):
C the Unseen åbner vores øjne for hvad en by kan tilbyde, hvis man ser bag facaden. | C the Unseen opens our eyes to what a city can offer if you look behind the façade.

The Independent (UK):
Chemnitz – an unorthodox yet charming destination

EL PAÍS (ES):
Chemnitz, sorpresas arquitectónicas, culturales y paisajísticas en la Capital Europea de la Cultura | Chemnitz: architectural, cultural and landscape surprises in the European Capital of Culture.

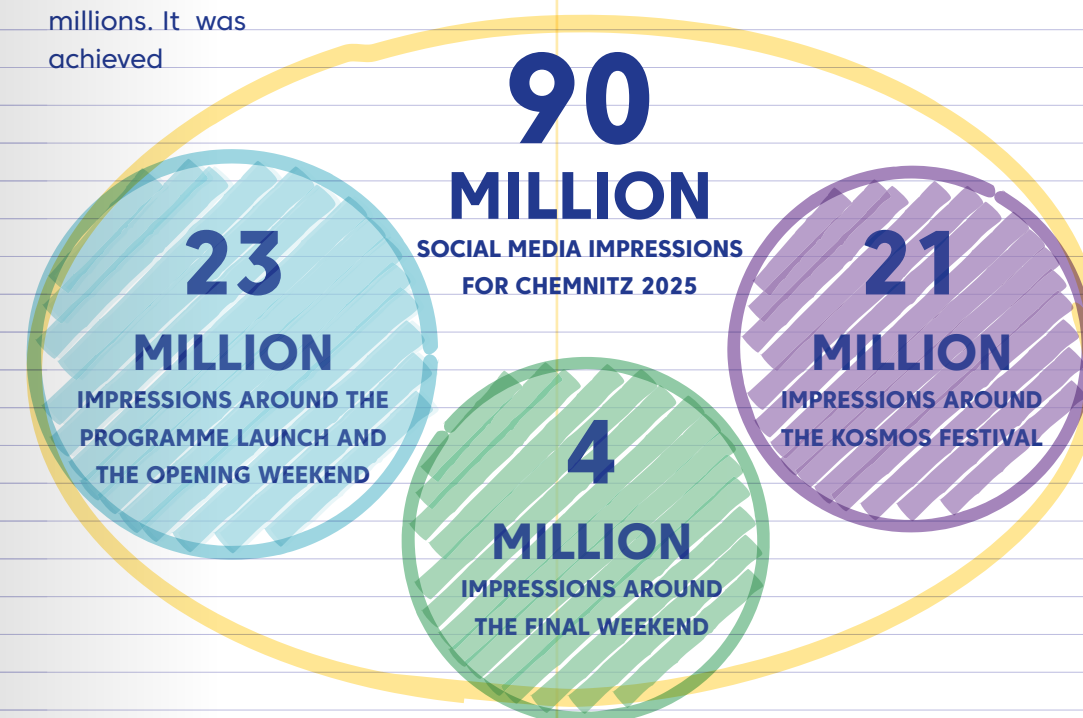
9. 90 MILLION SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS CONNECT CHEMNITZ WITH THE WORLD.

Chemnitz has also gained significant digital visibility in its role as the European Capital of Culture, with its Chemnitz 2025 social media channels receiving over 90 million views. This shows that Chemnitz is increasingly seen as a modern, creative and open city, both nationally and internationally.

Attention peaked in the millions, particularly around key moments such as the programme launch, the opening and the KOSMOS festival. This level of reach corresponds to a media value in the single-digit millions. It was achieved

without comparable levels of traditional advertising expenditure, representing a significant increase in visibility.

The high level of participation, with tens of thousands of contributions under hashtags such as #chemnitz2025, also demonstrates active public engagement. Chemnitz 2025 thus became a cultural programme and a digital space of resonance, particularly reaching the generation of digital natives and contributing to a shift in this target group's perceptions of Chemnitz.



Source: Social media analysis, Chemnitz 2025 European Capital of Culture gGmbH; analysis: Ulrich Weiser, FOG-Institute

10. CHEMNITZ 2025 IS CHANGING PERCEPTIONS.

The European Capital of Culture year has opened a new chapter in Chemnitz's history. The city's evolving image has been the subject of extensive discussion and has been shaped by new narratives that have replaced earlier clichés. Chemnitz has evolved from a frequently overlooked industrial city, marked by social challenges, into a vibrant, multifaceted and adaptable "city of makers and creators". According to an MDR survey, two thirds of residents in Saxony, Thuringia and Saxony-Anhalt now recognise this improvement in the city's reputation.

This image shift is also reflected in media coverage, which highlights three central narratives:

The European region of makers and creators

Chemnitz is pragmatic, creative and hands-on. It no longer draws its identity solely from its past, but instead builds on Saxony's spirit of innovation to shape its future. Projects such as #3000Garages symbolise how culture in Chemnitz emerges from the heart of society, with the creative industries and craftspeople working closely together.

The hidden treasure in Europe

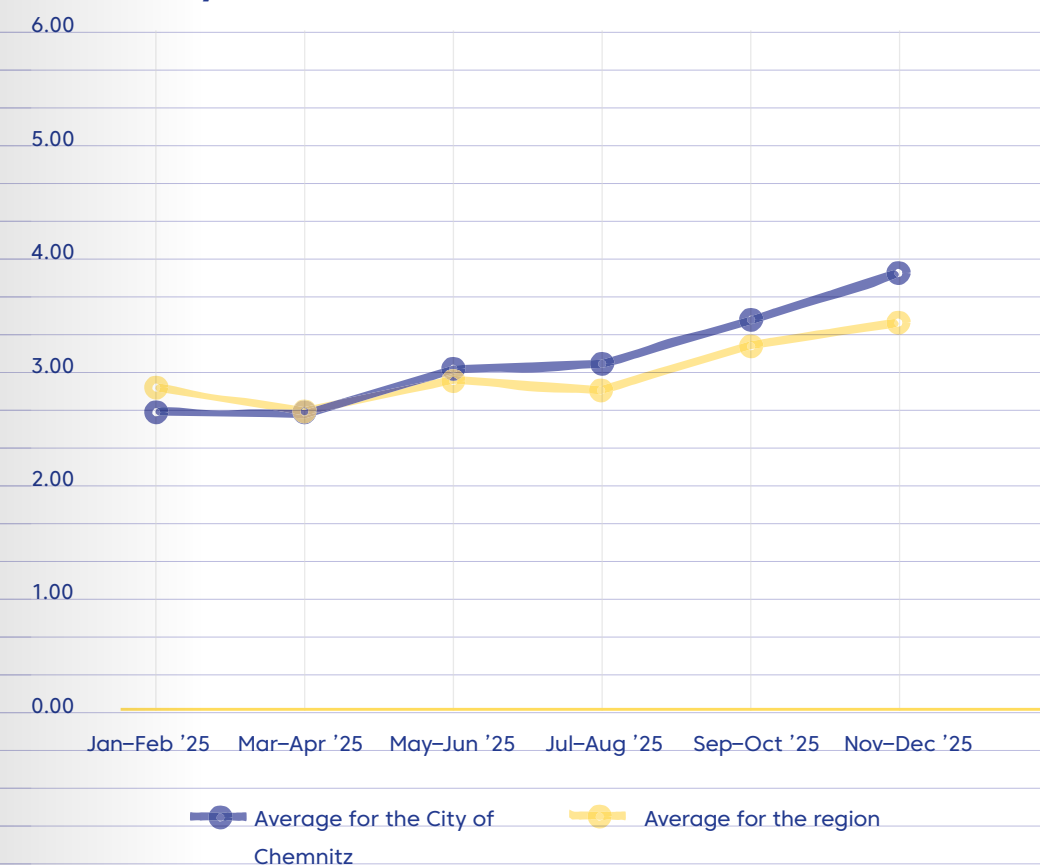
Chemnitz has positioned itself under the motto "C the Unseen" as a compelling, unspoilt alternative to traditional metropolitan centres – an independent, mid-sized city with unseen dimensions found nowhere else. Media coverage focuses on the aesthetics of imperfection, the revitalisation of former industrial sites, regional networking through the PURPLE PATH art and sculpture trail, and the development of Makerhubs. Chemnitz is a place that fosters curiosity and transformation, rather than merely serving as a transit stop.

A laboratory for resilience and democratic dialogue

Chemnitz is an urban society that boldly engages with the major questions of our time. With events such as the KOSMOS Festival, the city has shown how cultural activities can strengthen democratic discourse and social cohesion.

Throughout the entire European Capital of Culture year, Chemnitz University of Technology surveyed visitors. The results show that the perception of Chemnitz and the surrounding districts improved steadily from the summer onwards, reaching its highest value by the end of the year. At the beginning of the year, the perception was still below average and in negative territory.

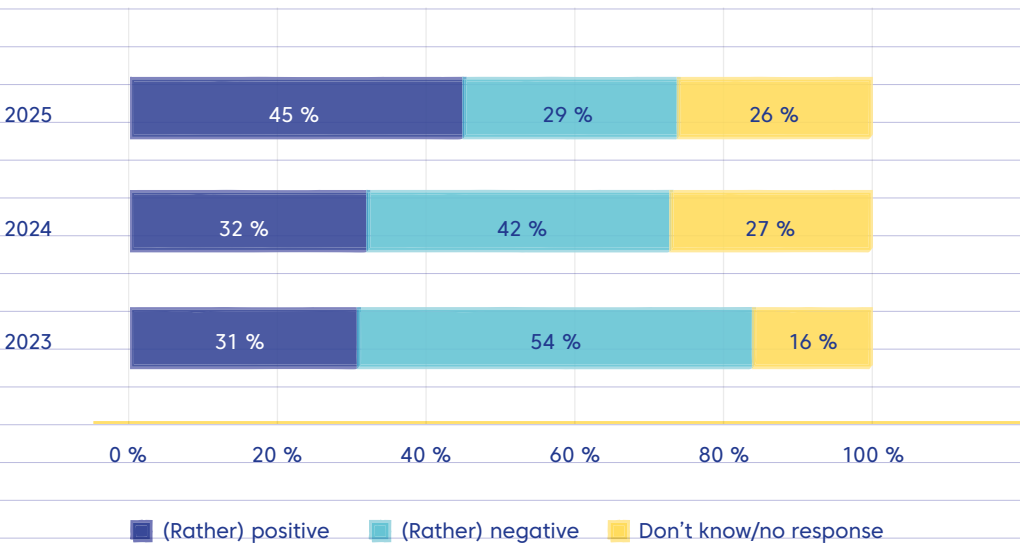
How good is the image of the City of Chemnitz and the surrounding region among visitors during the European Capital of Culture year?



Scale: 0 very poor 4 rather good
1 poor 5 good
2 rather poor 6 very good
3 neutral/neither good nor bad

Source: Visitor survey, Chemnitz University of Technology, January–December 2025

How Chemnitz’s image evolved in Central Germany, 2023–2025



“mdr fragt” survey (November 2025/October 2024/September 2023): “How would you describe Chemnitz’s current public image?”

The change initiated by Chemnitz 2025 is not temporary. The full impact of image effects of this kind typically unfolds in the years that follow. The legacy programme is designed to sustain and build on the new narratives that have been established.

“In early May 2025, I welcomed 22 visitors from western Germany. None of them had ever been to Chemnitz before, yet they all thought they knew exactly what it was like: right-wing extremists everywhere. We were supposedly expected to be grateful for the reconstruction funds that came from the West after 1990. After four days of comprehensive hospitality and professionally guided tours of museums, exhibitions and neighbourhoods, the word I heard most often from my guests was “surprised”. After those four days, I finally asked them what had impressed them so much. They answered, “The people here are so friendly, the city is so spacious and green, and there are so many beautiful buildings ...”

Guestbook, Hartmann Factory

11. 1,300 VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTED CHEMNITZ 2025 AND CONTINUE TO BE INVOLVED.

The Chemnitz 2025 volunteer programme created something that cannot simply be planned. It created a genuine community. People of all ages and from a variety of backgrounds came together, including those from the city, the region, across Germany and beyond. The programme’s greatest success is that many volunteers wish to continue their involvement now that the European Capital of Culture year has ended.

Around 1,300 volunteers supported Chemnitz 2025, contributing approximately 45,000 hours across 10,000 individual shifts. They played a vital role in key areas of the programme, including organisation, logistics, visitor services, and projects focusing on art, music,

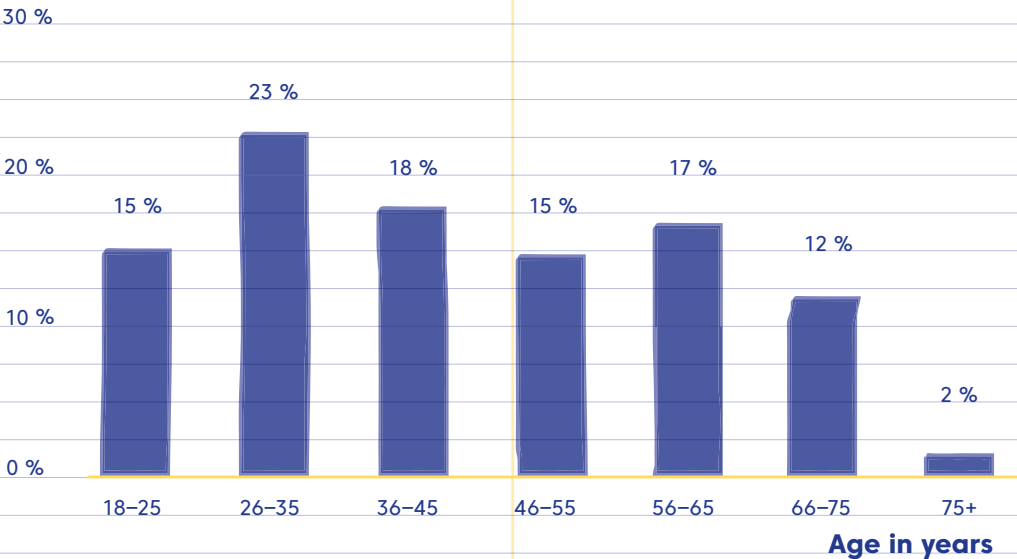
“We started out as strangers, but we became a close-knit community, united by a shared goal and a deep passion for our city. Many of us still meet at various events, and we are delighted that we were able to contribute to the success of Chemnitz 2025”

Guestbook, Hartmann Factory

local history, inclusion, sport, and sustainability. As ambassadors they significantly enhanced the quality and atmosphere of the Capital of Culture year, demonstrating the remarkable impact of collective civic engagement.



Age profile of Chemnitz 2025 Volunteers

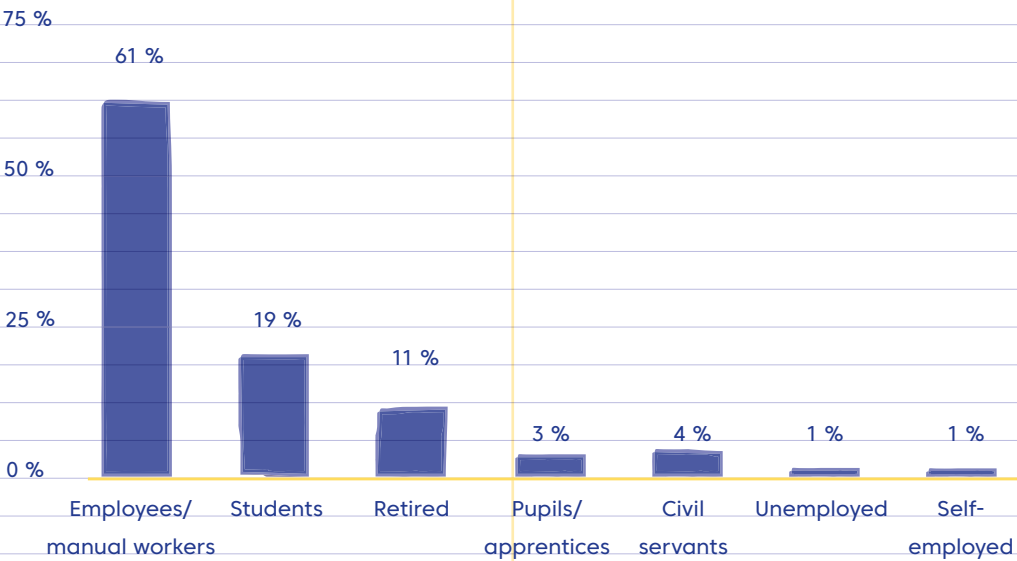


Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH volunteer statistics, December 2025

What makes this group remarkable is its commitment. Two thirds of the volunteers were in employment alongside their voluntary work, while a further fifth of them were in education or training.

They consciously chose to invest their free time. This engagement is valuable social capital that Chemnitz 2025 has helped to mobilise.

Professional backgrounds of Chemnitz 2025 Volunteers

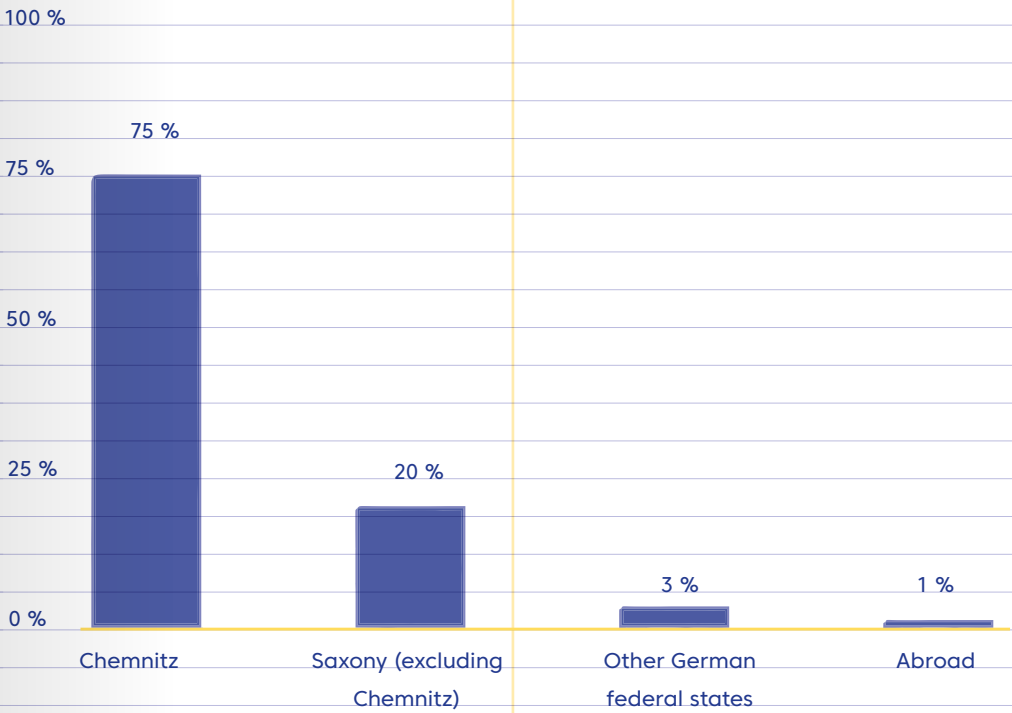


Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH volunteer statistics, December 2025

The volunteer programme had strong local roots in Chemnitz, with three-quarters of volunteers living in the city and the remaining quarter coming from the surrounding region and beyond.

Participants from across Germany and further afield were also attracted to the programme, including volunteers from several German federal states, as well as from Europe, the United States and Japan.

Places of residence of Chemnitz 2025 Volunteers



Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH volunteer statistics, December 2025

The volunteer programme will continue beyond 2025 and undergo development. During the transition year of 2026, the programme will gradually expand to cover the city's arts and culture landscape, as well as legacy projects across the region. The focus will remain on event volunteering in culture and city marketing. A framework agreement, developed jointly

with experienced volunteers and deployment partners, provides a reliable foundation for this. The established network is well-tested, trained and highly motivated, forming a robust basis for future large-scale projects. Recognition of volunteering, volunteer-initiated projects, and a needs-based training programme remains core elements of the scheme.

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12. THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION.

Chemnitz 2025 did not impose the European Capital of Culture from top-down. Instead, it allowed the project to develop organically, supported and encouraged by democratic structures. Around 370 funded projects demonstrate that cultural participation flourishes when people can realise their own ideas. The programme created spaces for this systematically, in neighbourhoods, associations, schools, garages and public spaces.

Chemnitz 2025 deliberately reached beyond the traditional cultural audience. Young people and families were a particular focus, while older people and the LGBTQ+ community were specifically targeted. Data from Chemnitz University of Technology shows that around half of the population in the Capital of Culture region attended Chemnitz 2025 events and around 10 per cent actively participated. This reflects a participation model that understood the Capital of Culture to be a societal project from the outset.



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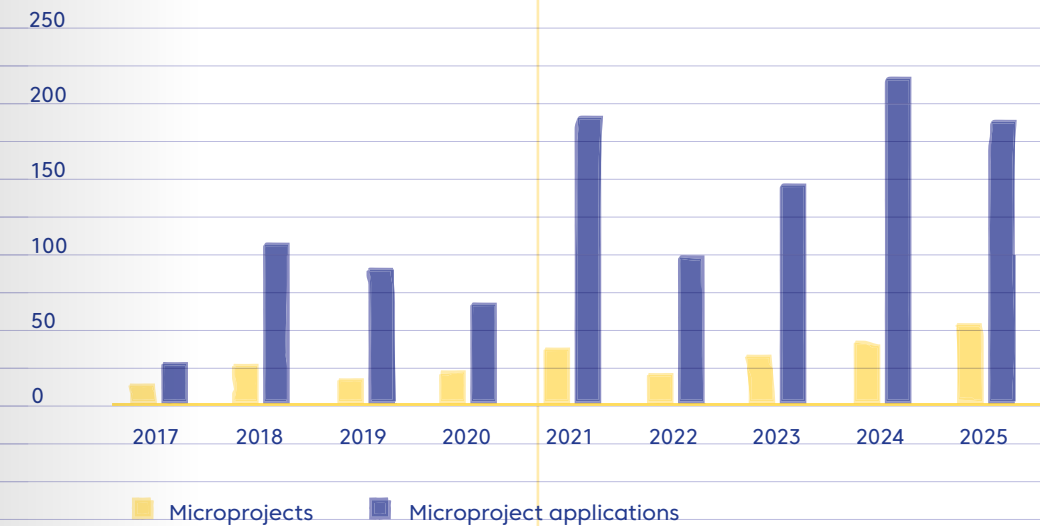
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Microprojects strengthen cultural participation

Since 2017, 248 Microprojects proposed by local stakeholders have received funding as part of the Chemnitz 2025 initiative. This has supported local stakeholders who are rarely visible at an institutional level, including associations, neighbourhood initiatives, and individuals. With funding of up to 2,500 euros, initiatives have included public art interventions, neighbourhood festivals and projects focusing on remembrance culture and democracy.

These projects were small in scale but had a significant impact. This model demonstrates how trust-based, low-threshold funding can create cultural infrastructure that grows from the bottom up. The Microproject funding programme has gained significant popularity among local stakeholders since 2017. The number of applications has increased significantly up to 2025. The model of the Microprojects has already been adopted by other European Capitals of Culture.

Number of Microproject applications and approvals 2017–2025



Source: Statistics Microprojects Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH and City of Chemnitz, 2017–2025

Support will continue in 2026 with 125 approved Microprojects, building on the themes that proved impactful in 2025, such as neighbourhood initiatives, intergenerational dialogue, the creative use of space and

European networking. What began as a programme for the European Capital of Culture is evolving into a permanent approach to coherent urban development in the legacy phase.

EUJA! projects activate public spaces

During the European Capital of Culture year, 119 EUJA! initiative projects expanded the Microproject approach. The EUJA! funding programme is based on a partnership that has model status. The City of Chemnitz, Sparkasse Chemnitz and Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH each took responsibility for a dedicated funding pillar. Meanwhile, the Grundstücks- und Gebäudewirtschafts-Gesellschaft mbH (GGG) handled organisational implementation, making a

contribution equivalent in value to that of the other partners. The Sparkasse increased its originally planned budget. In recognition of its commitment, including to the EUJA! funding programme, it received the Deutscher Kulturförderpreis in 2026. Overall, the partners supported associations, initiatives and individuals in bringing public spaces, including the intervention areas, to life through cultural and social activities.

EUJA! initiative projects – funding structure



CREATE.U brings in young perspectives.

As part of the CREATE.U youth programme, 81 young people aged between 14 and 27 established themselves as independent cultural creators. The highlight was the Betonblühen Festival, which attracted around 5,500 visitors and was planned and organised entirely by young people. This empowers a generation that views urban culture as its own.

Intervention areas link participation with urban development.

With a total budget of around 60 million euros, the intervention areas represent the most tangible legacy of Chemnitz's status as the European Capital of Culture 2025. The defining feature of these areas is the development process: residents in each district decided for themselves what should be built, such as parks, playgrounds, barrier-free access routes and community spaces. These spaces strengthen identification and social cohesion long after the Capital of Culture year.

Open calls enrich the main programme.

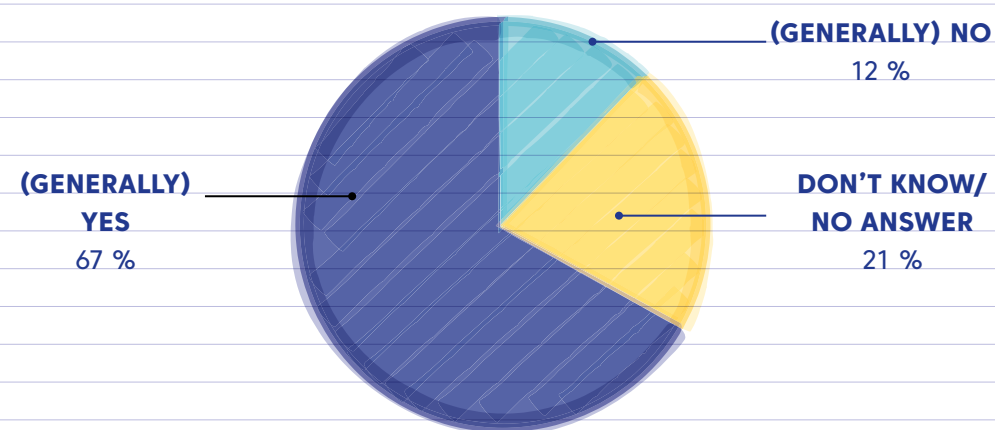
Out of the over 260 submissions received across the four open calls, namely "Change Maker", "Celebrate Generations!", "Urban Popular Culture" and "Czech Republic–Poland–Germany", the programme team selected 56 projects to be included in the main programme. This form of participation was particularly intensive, as the projects received continuous support from 2023 to 2025 and underwent a structured development process in which capacities were built and new formats tested.



13. TWO THIRDS OF PEOPLE IN CENTRAL GERMANY ARE PROUD OF CHEMNITZ AS EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE.

Chemnitz 2025 has significantly strengthened the self-confidence of the city and the region. Two thirds of people in Central Germany are proud that Chemnitz holds the title of European Capital of Culture. Pride cannot be mandated; it is the result of a growing sense of identification with the city and region.

Are you proud that Chemnitz, a city in Central Germany, has been awarded the title of European Capital of Culture?



Source: "mdr fragt", November 2025

Population surveys conducted by Chemnitz University of Technology in 2024 and 2025 indicate a clear improvement in perceptions of Chemnitz 2025. The overall assessment of the project and evaluation of the events both increased significantly. There was a particularly strong increase in agreement that it was a good thing for Chemnitz to become the European Capital of Culture. The assessment of the Capital of Culture year as a success also increased significantly, indicating a steadily more positive public perception of the project over time.

Overall assessment of the European Capital of Culture

How would you rate the following statement?	Mean value	
	2024	2025

It is good that Chemnitz has become European Capital of Culture.	2.57	2.87
I think the European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 is a success.	2.29	2.51

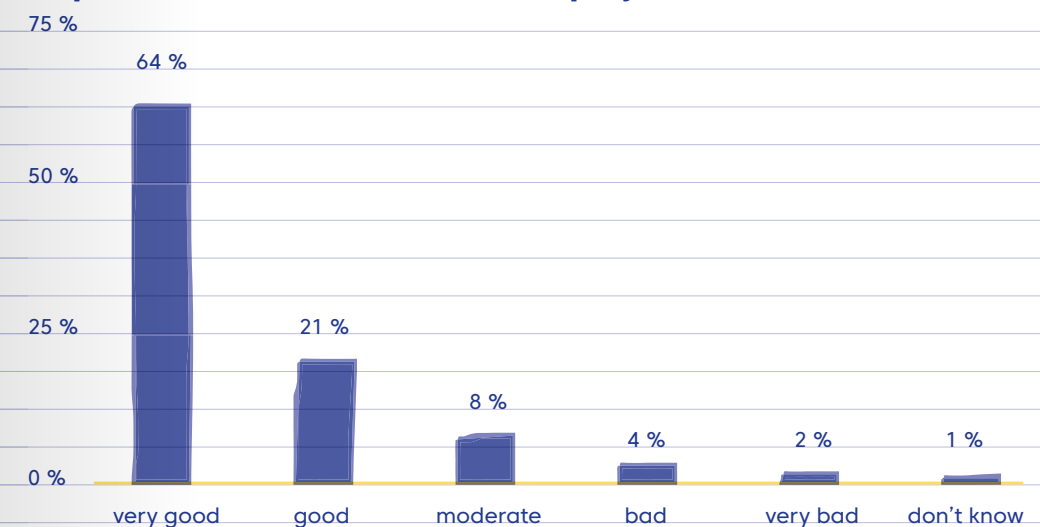
Scale:

0 strongly disagree	1 tend to disagree	3 tend to agree
	2 neither agree nor disagree	4 strongly agree

Source: Population survey, Chemnitz University of Technology, 2024–2025

Visitors to the European Capital of Culture year also gave a clear assessment: the vast majority rated both the overall project and the individual events positively. Considering the scale and complexity of this European undertaking, this is an impressive outcome.

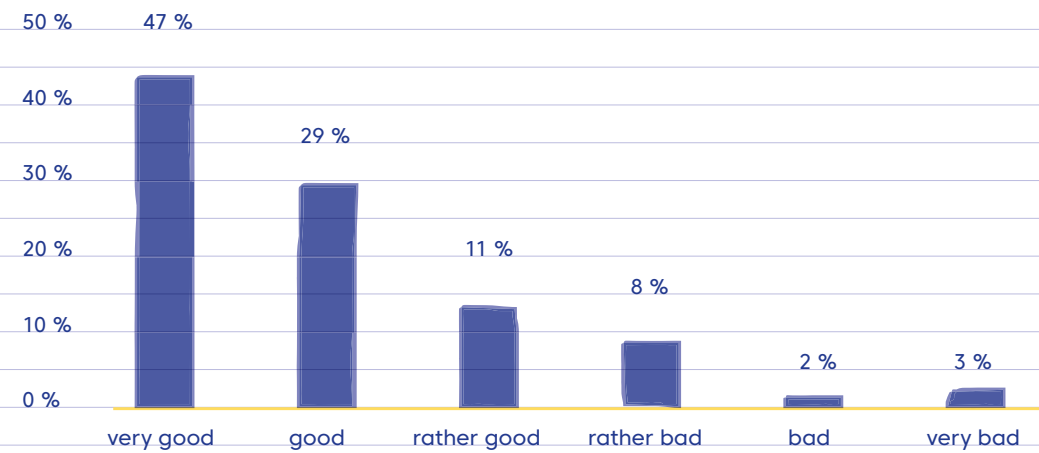
Overall, how good or how bad do you find the European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 project as a whole?



Source: Visitor survey, Chemnitz University of Technology, January–December 2025

The results show that there is a high level of satisfaction with the programme, its implementation and the overall experience. Negative assessments remain clearly in the minority.

How do you like the European Capital of Culture so far?



Source: Visitor survey via smiley scale, Chemnitz University of Technology, May–December 2025

“How cool was that? We were part of the European Capital of Culture and created memories that will last.”

Guestbook, Hartmann Factory

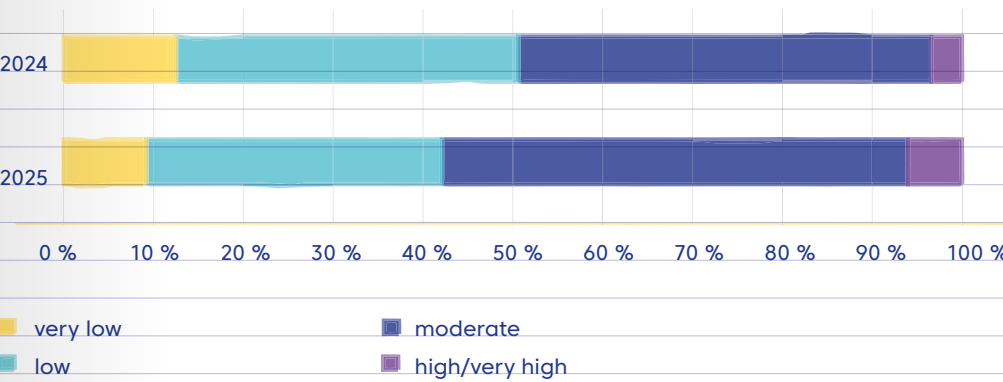


14. PARTICIPATION IN THE CHEMNITZ 2025 CULTURAL PROGRAMME STRENGTHENS SOCIAL COHESION.

Social cohesion is difficult to measure and even harder to influence. This makes the findings of the studies conducted by Chemnitz University of Technology on the European Capital of Culture year 2025 all the more significant.

A population survey showed that, in 2025, people in Chemnitz and the Capital of Culture region rated social cohesion significantly more positively than in 2024. Life satisfaction also increased. The decline in perceived political self-efficacy and participation was markedly less pronounced in this area than across Saxony as a whole.

How would you assess the level of social cohesion in Germany?

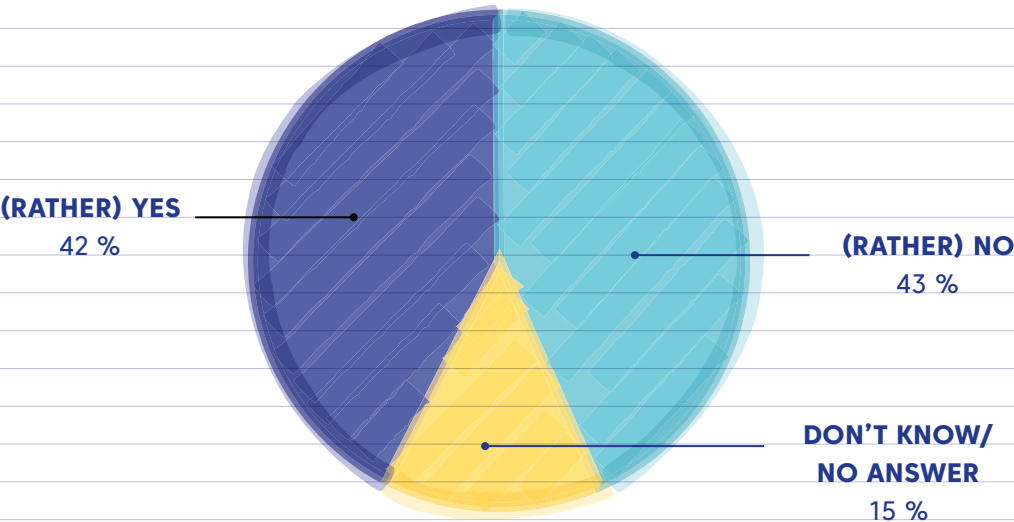


Source: Population survey, Chemnitz University of Technology, 2024–2025

This finding from Chemnitz University of Technology is particularly forward-looking: people who attended European Capital of Culture events in 2025 perceived social cohesion more strongly than those who did not take part in the programme.

Almost half of the respondents to the “mdr fragt” survey in Central Germany expect Chemnitz to benefit in the long term from its year as the European Capital of Culture. Even among those who describe themselves as uninterested in culture, nearly a third share this view. The European Capital of Culture year has therefore had an impact beyond the cultural sector.

Do you think Chemnitz will benefit in the long term from the European Capital of Culture year?



“mdr fragt” survey, November 2025

This social change is no coincidence. Chemnitz 2025 has placed the promotion of democracy and social cohesion at the heart of its programme. This has resulted in the creation of lasting structures, such as a branch office of the State Centre for Civic Education, the Documentation Centre on the NSU and the ZADA Pilot Project (German Centre for a Society without Anti-Semitism, Discrimination and Exclusion). Many smaller initiatives have also deliberately created spaces for exchange, dialogue and shared experiences, thereby counteracting social isolation and social polarisation.

“We really liked the city, the people (who were all very helpful) and the events. Politicians and the media, especially those from the “West”, should take a look at the city! They should also understand people’s problems. The events are not imposed from above, but come from the grassroots – the people.”

H. from Frankenberg, Saxony and Cologne
Guestbook Hartmann Factory

15. THE ART AND SCULPTURE TRAIL PURPLE PATH CONNECTS THE REGION PERMANENTLY.

The European Capital of Culture title was an invitation to an entire region. More than a third of all events took place outside Chemnitz, across 38 partner municipalities that together form a distinctive cultural landscape. What began as 27 partner towns and municipalities during the bid phase has developed into a strong regional network. The benefits extend far beyond the programme year, including new tourism structures, deeper inter-municipal cooperation and strengthened cultural infrastructure in rural areas. The 38 partner municipalities, which are home to around 490,000 people, extend the reach of European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 to a total population of approximately 741,000.

One visible outcome of this collaboration is the PURPLE PATH, an art and sculpture trail connecting Chemnitz and the partner municipalities physically and culturally. Over 60 renowned international and regional artists have created works for the trail, which have been permanently installed in public spaces as part of Chemnitz 2025. Industrial heritage, mining traditions, and contemporary art engage in dialogue with one another. What began as a Capital of Culture project had already established itself as an independent brand and major tourist attraction by early 2026. The Tourism Board Chemnitz Zwickau Region and the Tourism Board Erzgebirge continue to market and promote the art and sculpture trail beyond the Capital of Culture year.



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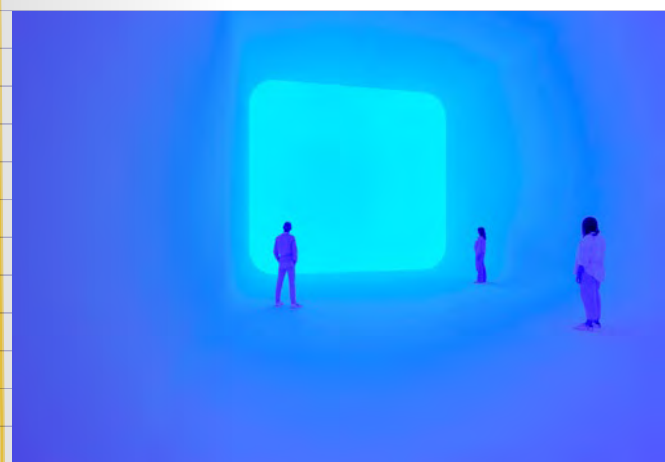
Courtesy: Karolin Schwab; Photo: Johannes Richter

Karolin Schwab: My Floating Home (Niederwiesa)



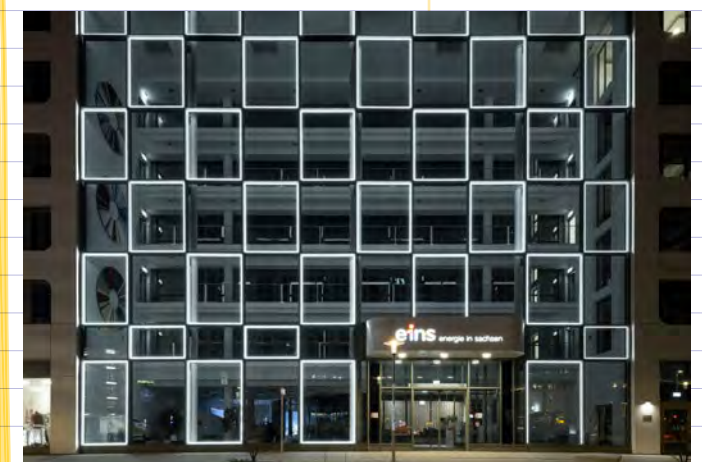
Courtesy: Olaf Holzapfel; Photo: Johannes Richter

Olaf Holzapfel: Zwei in ein ander Gewobene (Amtsberg)



Courtesy: Häusler Contemporary Zürich AG; Photo: Florian Holzherr

James Turrell: Beyond Horizons 2025 (Oelsnitz)



Courtesy: eins energie in sachsen GmbH & Co. KG; Photo: Hans Peter Kuhn

Hans Peter Kuhn: Lights light (Chemnitz)



Courtesy: Christina Doll; Photo: Johannes Richter

Christina Doll: Engel + Bergmann (Hohndorf)



Courtesy: Kris Martin; Photo: Natalie Bleyl

Kris Martin: Good Luck (Wechselburg)

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The PURPLE PATH art and sculpture trail is complemented by eight new Makerhubs, which have been established across the Capital of Culture region. These permanent spaces for creativity and exchange bring together

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business, craftsmanship and culture. Together, both projects demonstrate that Chemnitz 2025 has activated the region culturally and created long-term structures to strengthen it.

16. CHEMNITZ OPENS UP TO EUROPE – AND EUROPE OPENS UP TO CHEMNITZ.

European Capitals of Culture serve as testing grounds for democracy, cultural cooperation, and a sense of belonging. The European dimension is a key part of the programme design for each city holding the title. They are encouraged to celebrate Europe's shared cultural heritage. Chemnitz 2025 passed this commitment on to its partners.

With considerable success: more than 100 projects explicitly addressed European themes ranging from democracy and post-industrial transformation to migration. Analysis by the Chemnitz Monitor, conducted by the Chemnitz University of Technology, shows that people who attended Chemnitz 2025 events subsequently identified more strongly with Europe. This is a measurable outcome of targeted programme work.

Topics with European relevance

Five programme strands formed the thematic backbone of the European dimension. They addressed debates that affect the whole of Europe. These include democratic values, social change and social cohesion. These projects shared stages and spaces for dialogue and shared experience.

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CHEMNITZ UTOPIA

A theatre production exploring utopia and political polarisation

drawing on European myths such as Oedipus and Hamlet to reflect on contemporary post-industrial cities like Chemnitz and Ústí nad Labem

B

INSIDE OUTSIDE EUROPE

A performance project about laughter, fascism and belonging

presenting migrant experiences in the Ore Mountains as part of a broader European narrative

EUROPEAN YOUNG ART LINK

Young people from several countries designed banners together

promoting peace, tolerance and diversity

THE BEAUTIFUL SUSANNE

A theatre production about the flight and displacement of the Danube Swabians

exploring European history through personal family stories

TALES OF TRANSFORMATION

An exhibition on former industrial cities across Europe

focusing on transformation, shared challenges, and ideas for the future

COME AND EAT AT MY TABLE

A community picnic on Schlossteichinsel featuring dishes from around the world

using culinary diversity as an accessible way to bring people together

EUROPEAN PEACE RIDE

A multi-day cycling event crossing several countries and open to everyone

regardless of origin, gender or disability, while reviving the legacy of the historic Peace Race

COLOURFUL ROOFTOPS

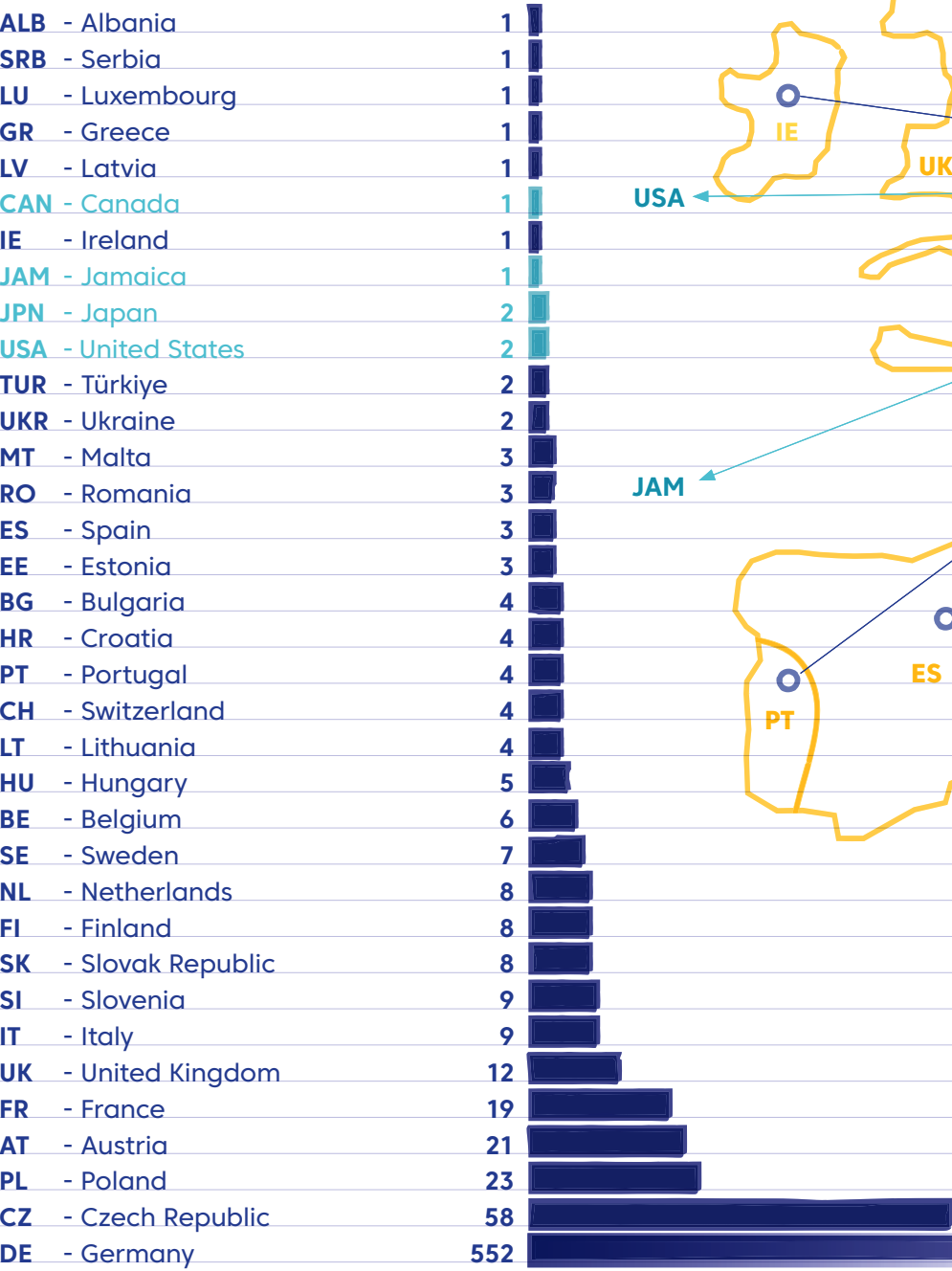
Chemnitz's first rooftop festival with 17 viewpoints offering a new perspective on the city

developed from the European network project "European Creative Rooftop Network"

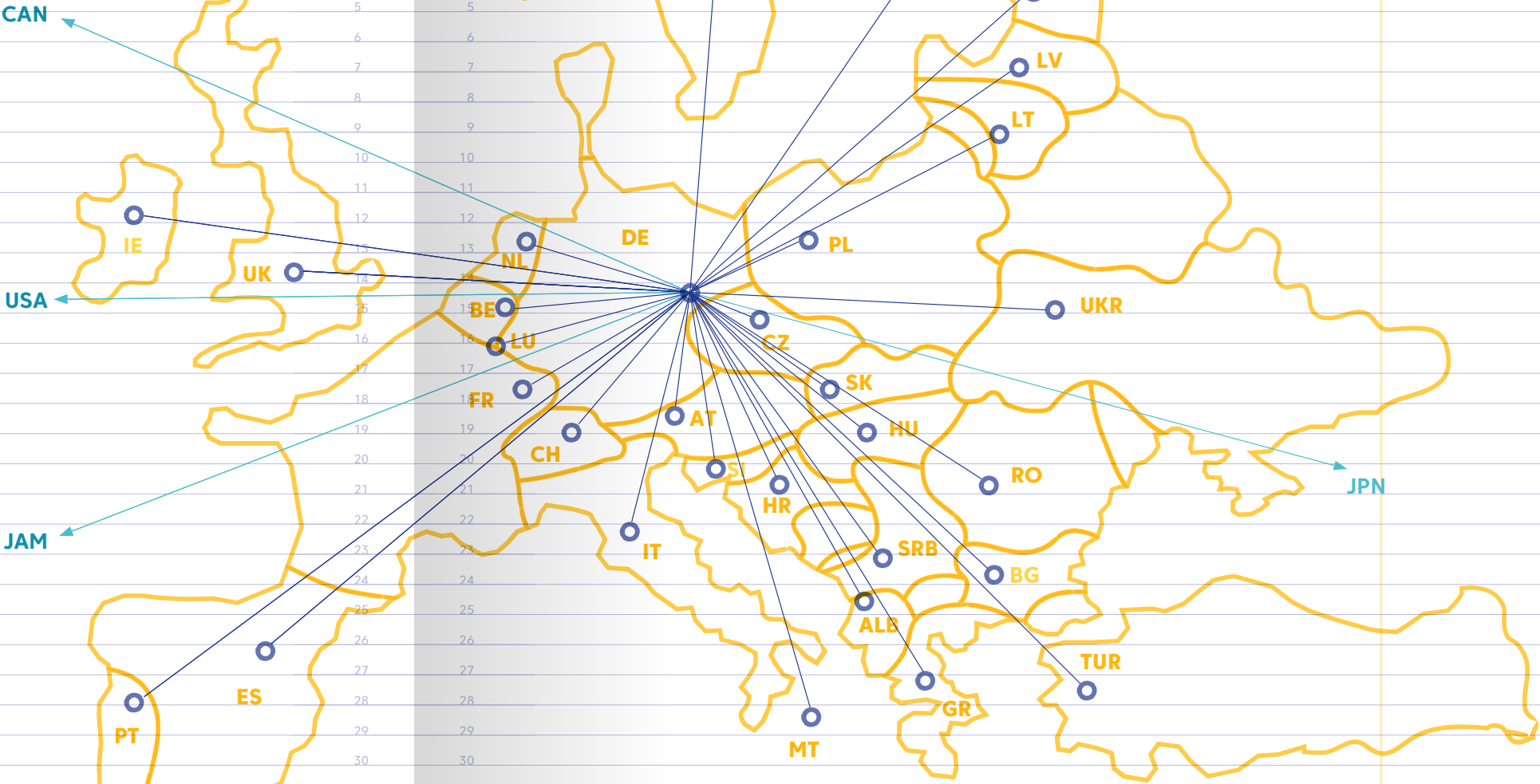


Number of partnerships by country

Country Number of collaborations



Source: Chemnitz 2025 gGmbH programme evaluation, December 2025



European partnerships with a lasting impact

Of the approximately 730 organisations involved in the programme, over 230 were from outside Germany. Of the approximately 40 participating countries, the Czech Republic was the most strongly represented, followed by Poland, Austria, France and the United Kingdom. These partnerships were formed not through formal invitations, but through genuine co-productions. Collaborating with Nova Gorica/Gorizia, the fellow European Capital of Culture — itself a symbol of overcoming European borders – resulted in joint projects such as History of Citizens and collaborative initiatives for Makers United. By doing so, Chemnitz 2025 has established networks and structures that continue to have an impact long after the title year has ended.

Visibility at the political level

In 2025, Chemnitz received international attention that extended far beyond the cultural sector. The visit of Estonian President Alar Karis was the first state visit by a foreign head of state to Chemnitz since German reunification. A total of 55 delegations comprising around 2,000 international experts visited the city, and 170 representatives of former and future European Capitals of Culture attended the opening

ceremony. EU Commissioner Glenn Micallef was joined in signing the city’s Golden Book by Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and former Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel. The number of protocol events doubled compared to previous years. For a city that had long been overlooked by European decision-makers, these developments represent significant signals of renewed visibility.

“The European Capital of Culture Chemnitz is already casting its lasting shadows ahead. The projects will be a great success; you can already feel it. Citizens and city: Glückauf!”

Karl Lauterbach (then Federal Minister of Health),
City of Chemnitz Capital of Culture Book, 7 August 2024

17. CHEMNITZ CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE PROGRAMME.

In the 40th anniversary year of the European initiative “European Capital of Culture”, Chemnitz took on a role that extended far beyond its own programme year, becoming an active contributor at a European level. In view of the forthcoming renewal of the EU initiative, “European

Capitals of Culture”, Chemnitz and its partner Capital of Culture 2025, Nova Gorica/Gorizia, jointly initiated a Europe-wide consultation process. The aim was to gather and debate the experience of the last 40 years of European Capitals of Culture.

Chemnitz and Nova Gorica/Gorizia surveyed 64 out of 88 former Capitals of Culture. The aim was to develop concrete recommendations for redesigning the EU initiative beyond 2034. These findings were presented at an international expert conference held in Chemnitz in April 2025, which was attended by 250 guests from around 60 European Capitals of Culture. The conference resulted in the white paper, “40 Recommendations from 40 Years of ECoC”. In May 2025, Chemnitz and Nova Gorica presented the paper at the European Parliament in Brussels.

The subsequent debate on the future of the EU programme formed the basis for a new proposal by the European Commission regarding the future of the European Capitals of Culture initiative beyond 2034. In July 2025, the white paper was presented and discussed at the Council of the European Union’s Committee on Culture, at the invitation of the Danish Presidency. It received considerable interest and attention.





“Chemnitz, who would have thought it! Heartfelt congratulations on this sustainable European Capital of Culture 2025. We are impressed! In solidarity with Graz 2003 and Salzkammergut–Bad Ischl 2024”

Patrick Schnabl, Evelyn Kometter
City of Chemnitz Capital of Culture Book, 29 July 2025



In autumn 2025, the recommendations from the Chemnitz White Paper were incorporated into the further development of the EU programme. Since then, the proposal has been progressing through the relevant European committees and institutions in Brussels, and the work carried out has received widespread recognition. The subsequent decision-making processes are expected to conclude by the end of 2026. Thus, Chemnitz has not only delivered a successful European Capital of Culture year, but has also actively contributed to shaping the future of the programme. By doing so, Chemnitz is encouraging and inviting other cities within the European Capital of Culture community to help shape the programme’s future development.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

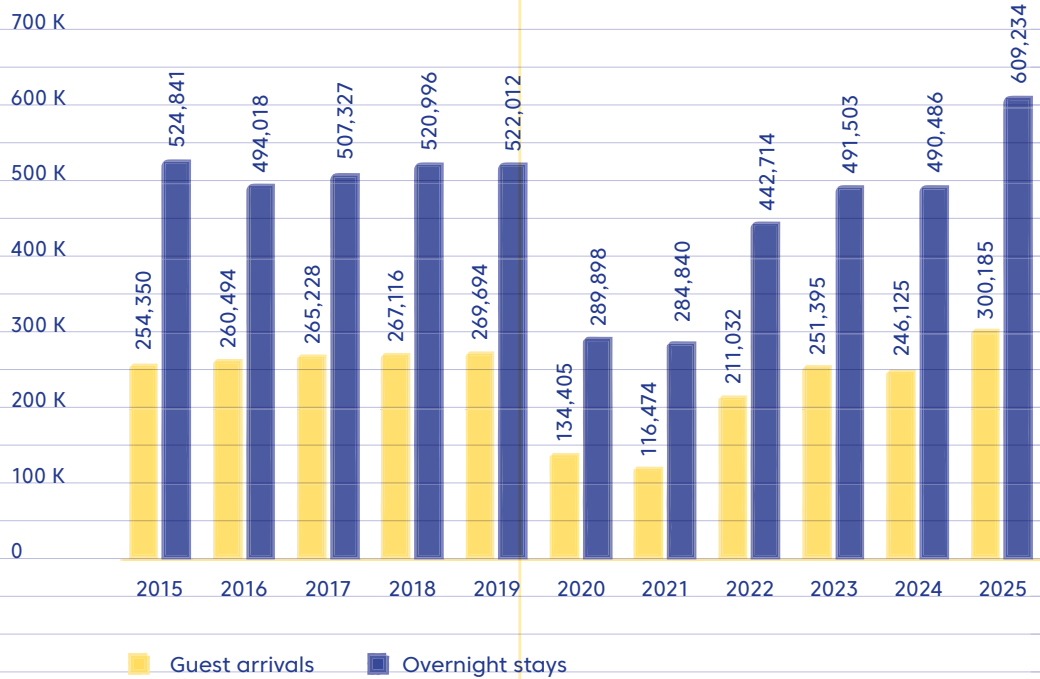
18. CHEMNITZ HAS ARRIVED ON THE TOURISM MAP.

Chemnitz’s designation as the European Capital of Culture has elevated the city to a new level as a tourist destination. In 2025, the city experienced the highest level of tourism activity in its history. Despite a statewide trend in Saxony showing declining visitor and overnight figures in 2025,

arrivals increased by 22 % and overnight stays by 24 % compared to the previous year. Overnight stays also significantly exceeded the pre-pandemic average for the years 2015–2019. This suggests that Chemnitz has permanently improved its position as a tourist destination.

Development of overnight tourism in Chemnitz, 2015–2025

Annual development of guest arrivals and overnight stays in accommodation establishments (10+ beds)



Source: Statistical Office of the Free State of Saxony

The actual volume of overnight stays is higher.

Official tourism statistics only capture accommodation establishments with 10 or more beds. This means that small guesthouses, private rentals and platforms such as Airbnb, which has more than 359 apartments in Chemnitz alone, are not included in these figures. These decentralised accommodation options are highly

relevant to tourism research. This gap in data coverage is particularly significant during a European Capital of Culture year. The city's accommodation tax helps to address this limitation, meaning the actual volume of tourism activity is considerably higher than the official figures suggest.

Official statistics
(10+ beds)

Smaller accommodations
(Accommodation tax data)

Total

Overnight guests

~300,000

~70,000

~370,000

Overnight stays

~609,000

~134,000

~743,000

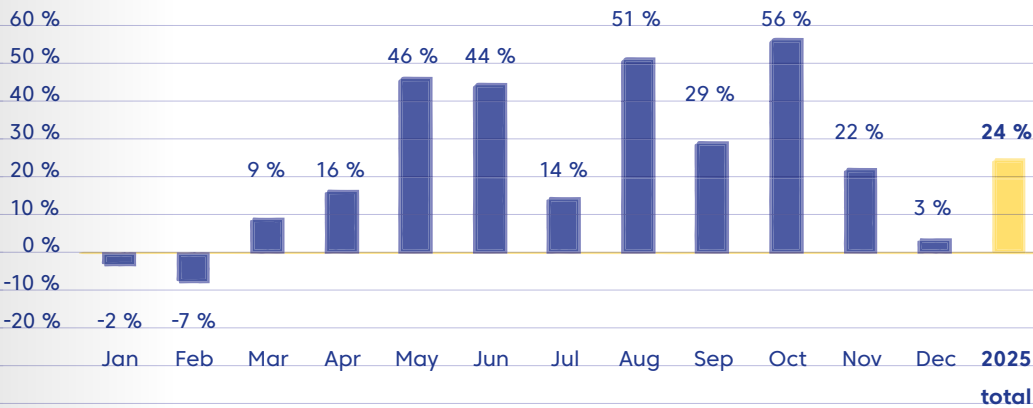
Source: City of Chemnitz

Overnight tourism: Year-round growth

Rather than being concentrated around individual major events, growth in overnight tourism was distributed across the entire year. The summer and autumn months in particular showed strong development, with October recording the highest percentage increase compared to the previous year. This suggests that the programme was effectively structured across multiple months.

Increase in overnight stays during the European Capital of Culture year 2025

Monthly change in overnight stays in Chemnitz vs. previous year (%) (10+ beds)



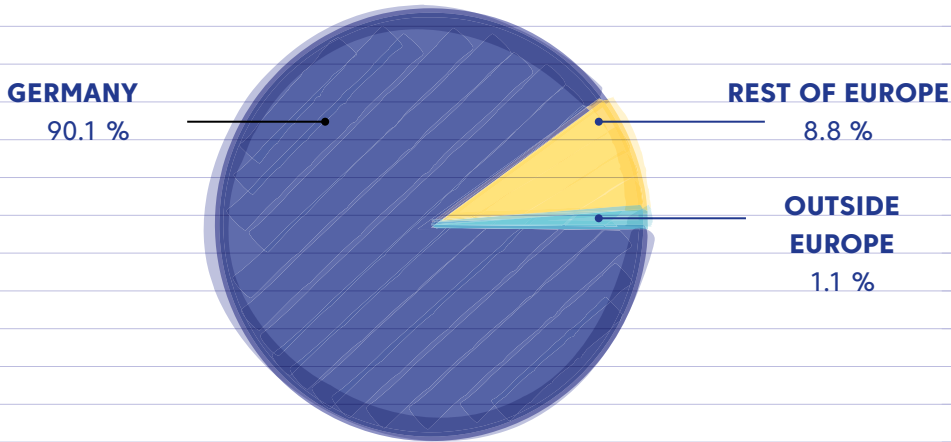
Source: Statistical Office of the Free State of Saxony

In demand throughout Germany, recognised internationally

The vast majority of visitors came from Germany. At the same time, Chemnitz’s international visibility increased significantly in 2025. This is reflected in markedly higher visitor numbers from many European countries. It remains to be seen whether this trend continue over the next three to five years. Interest from Asia, Australia and Africa also grew at an above-average rate, although visitor numbers from these regions are still relatively low.

Country of origin of overnight guests in Chemnitz in 2025

Accommodation establishments with 10 or more beds

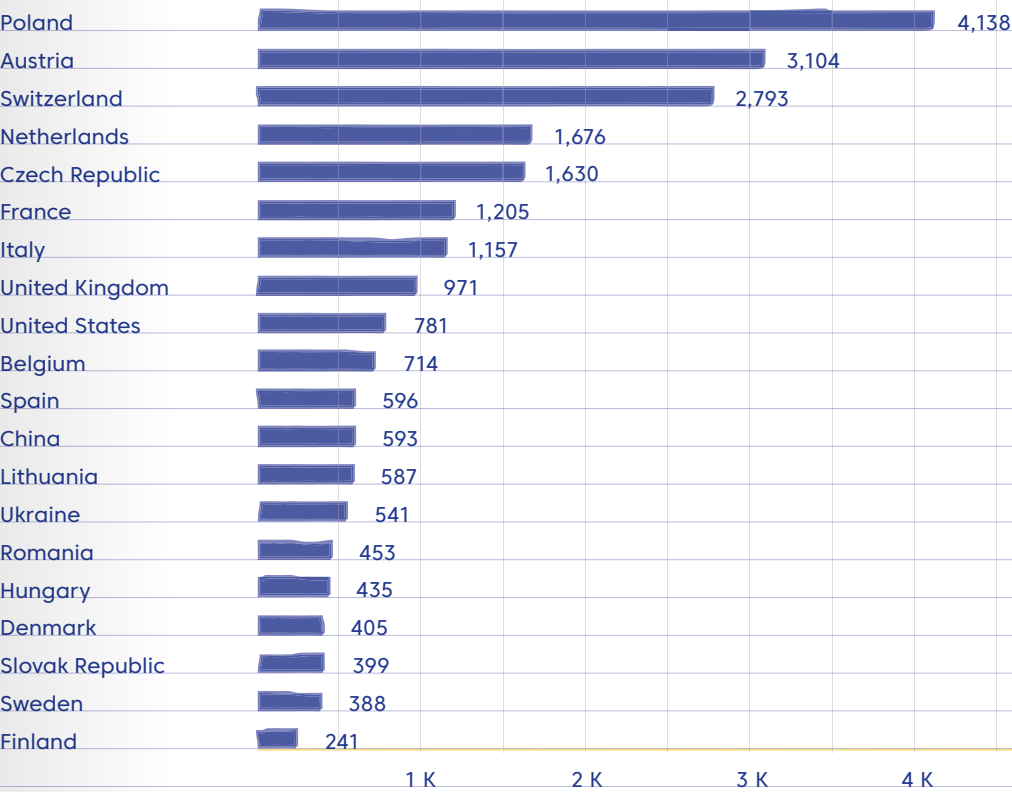


Source: Statistical Office of the Free State of Saxony

The broad distribution of growth across a wide range of source markets is an encouraging sign. This suggests that Chemnitz is not just seen as a short-term cultural event, but as a destination with its own distinct identity.

International overnight guests in Chemnitz in 2025

Top 20 guest arrivals by countries



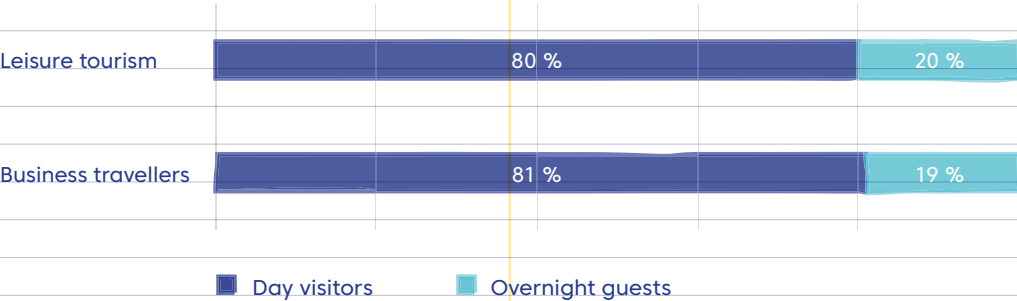
Source: Statistical Office of the Free State of Saxony

Day visitors are a multiple of overnight guests.

Based on payment transaction data, it can be shown that, for every overnight guest, there were approximately four day visitors. The European Capital of Culture year therefore had a positive impact on the wider community, including the food service industry, retail and urban life sectors.

Structure of tourist visits in Chemnitz 2025

January–December 2025 / data basis: Mastercard payment transactions by visitors to the city



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Growing capacity in cultural tourism

The increased demand for guided tours offered by the Tourist Information shows that interest in Chemnitz is driven by its content. Visitors want to experience and understand the city, not just see it. At the same time, capacity has increased accordingly. A distinctive format has emerged in the form of Free Walking Tours, which offer visitors the chance to experience a foreign city through

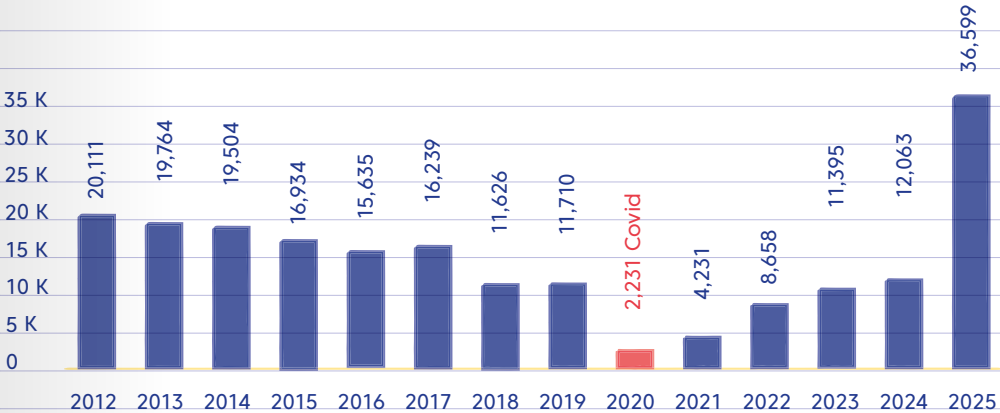
the eyes of a local. Residents take visitors on informal walks through the city. These free, volunteer-organised city tours originated from Chemnitz 2025’s volunteer programme and continue to be offered by volunteers in 2026. They are a prime example of how the European Capital of Culture year can transform civic engagement into lasting tourism infrastructure.

“With great enthusiasm, we – the Free Walking Tour Chemnitz – have already guided 4,000 guests through Chemnitz. We show hidden corners and share anecdotes that make people smile. Our project demonstrates the tremendous volunteer spirit in our city. The feedback from visitors is very valuable to us. If they remember Chemnitz fondly, we have achieved our goal.”

City of Chemnitz Capital of Culture Book, 21 November 2025

Development of guided city tours in Chemnitz

Number of participants in city tours offered by the Tourist Information according to the Tourism Board Chemnitz Zwickau Region



Source: City of Chemnitz

Tourism as a lasting dividend

The figures demonstrate structural change. New offerings, such as the art and sculpture trail PURPLE PATH, the Maker-Advent (which received the German Tourism Award) and the growing international visibility, will continue to have an impact beyond 2025. Chemnitz has successfully repositioned itself as a tourist destination for both the city and the wider region.

“What a wonderful city, with its cultural offerings, museums and galleries. There’s too little time to see everything. We will probably come back. Warm regards from Würzburg.”

Guestbook, Hartmann Factory

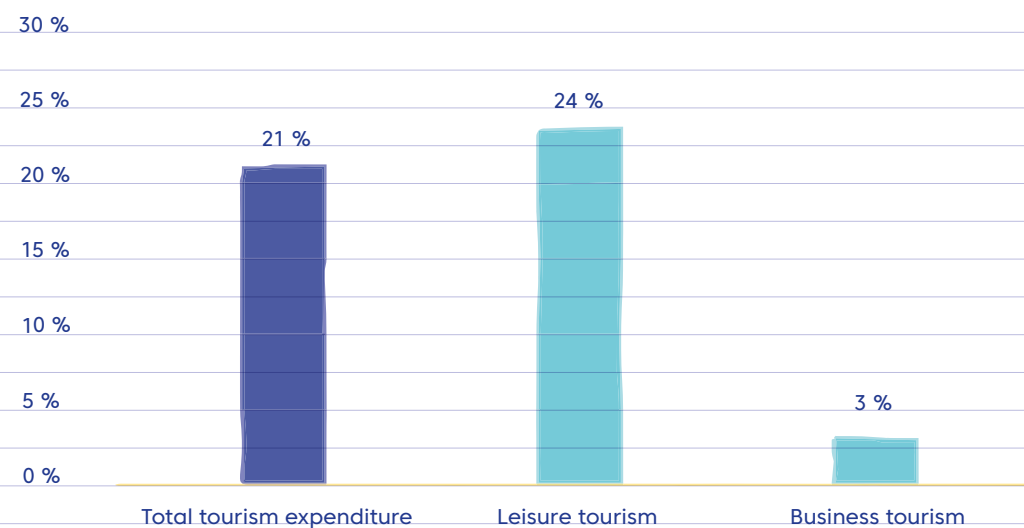


19. THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN TOURIST SPENDING.

The rise in visitor numbers during the European Capital of Culture year directly impacted the local economy. Tourist spending in Chemnitz increased significantly in 2025. According to data from the payment service provider Mastercard, this growth can be attributed to Chemnitz 2025. The data shows that leisure tourists increased their spending far more than business travellers did.

Growth in tourist spending in Chemnitz 2025

Increase from 2024 to 2025 / data basis: Mastercard payment transactions by visitors to the city



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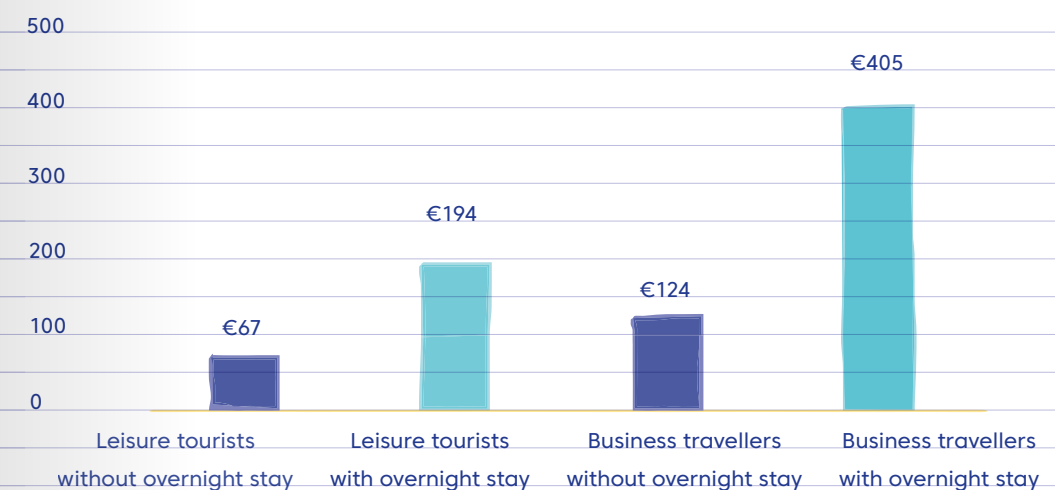
Who spends how much?

Overnight visitors contribute disproportionately to value creation; per trip, they spend around three times as much as day visitors. Business travellers, in turn, spend roughly twice as much as leisure tourists per visit. This highlights why the development of both segments – cultural tourism and business travel – remains of long-term relevance.



Tourism expenditure in Chemnitz 2025

January–December 2025 / data basis: Mastercard payment transactions by visitors to the city



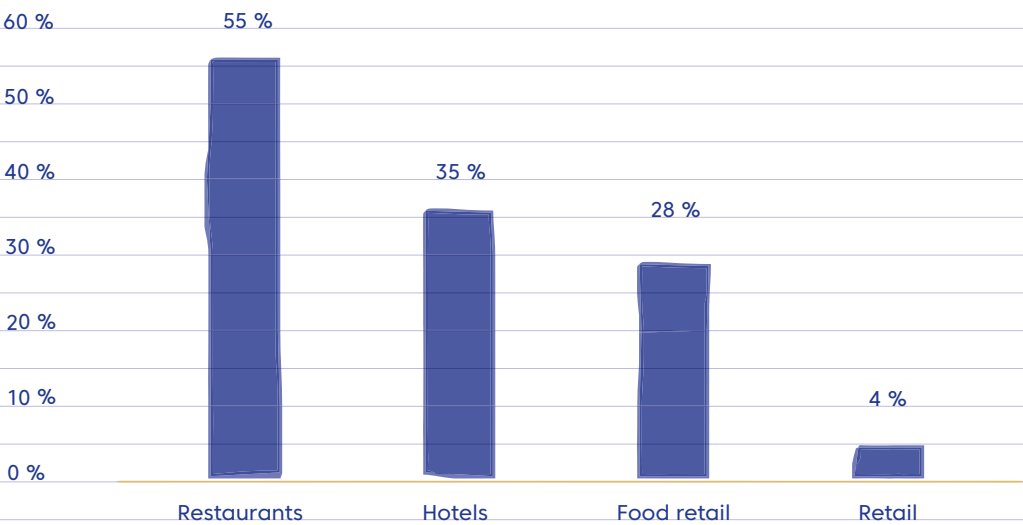
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Where does the money go?

Additional revenues are concentrated in the food service industry, accommodation and food retail – the very sectors that benefit directly from vibrant urban life. There is also a multiplier effect: for every euro spent in hotels, restaurants and grocery stores, another euro is generated in other sectors, such as retail and mobility.

Growth in tourist expenditure in Chemnitz 2025 by sector

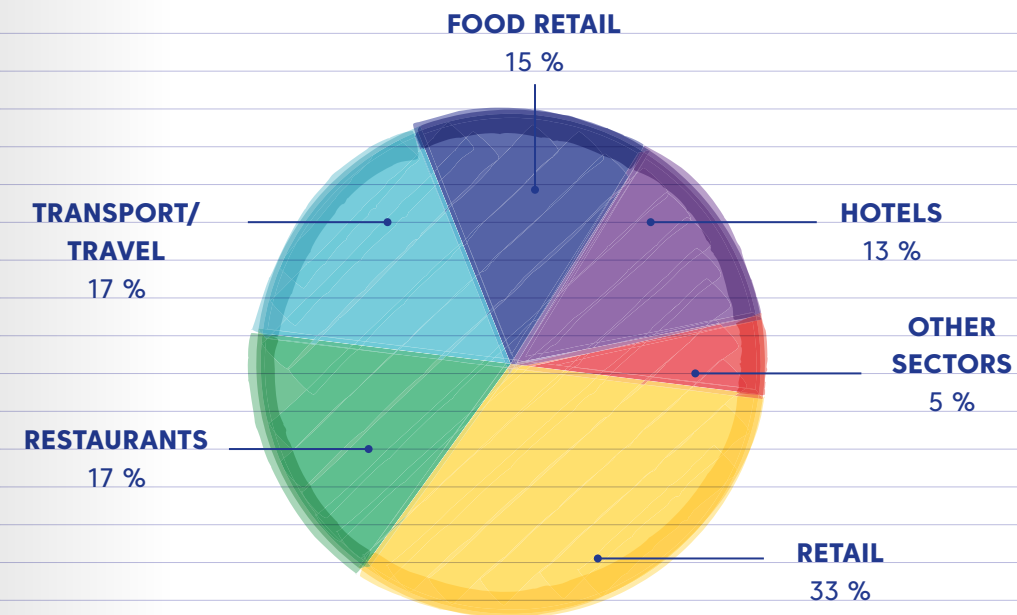
Increase from 2024 to 2025 / data basis: Mastercard payment transactions by visitors to the city in selected sectors



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Structure of tourist expenditure in Chemnitz 2025

January–December 2025 / data basis: Mastercard payment transactions by visitors to the city/day and overnight guests



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Origin and spending behaviour

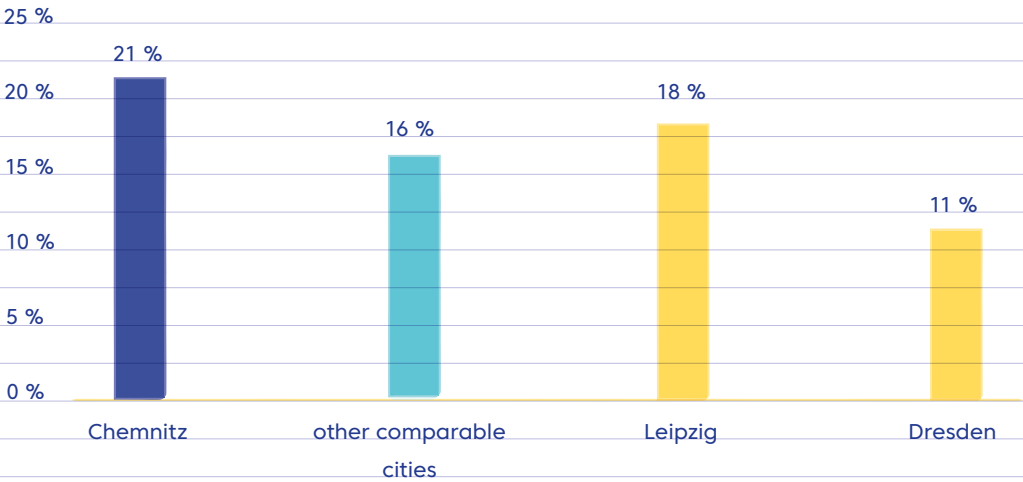
The vast majority of tourism revenue was generated primarily by German tourists, especially by visitors from Saxony itself. There is little difference in the spending behaviour of Saxon and non-Saxon visitors. International visitors account for a smaller, yet growing, share of total revenue. There has been particularly strong growth from South-Eastern Europe, a region from which Chemnitz has so far recorded very little tourism.

Chemnitz in a regional comparison

According to Mastercard data, Chemnitz’s revenue growth is noticeably above average for comparable cities, including Leipzig and Dresden, which typically have a stronger tourism sector. Both of these cities performed less strongly. This suggests that the increase in Chemnitz cannot be attributed solely to general trends, such as rising prices or the growing popularity of cashless payments, but is driven by Chemnitz’s status as the European Capital of Culture in 2025.

Growth in tourist expenditure in comparable cities in 2025

Increase from 2024 to 2025 / data basis: Mastercard payment transactions by visitors in comparable cities



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Overall, it is clear that the increase in visitor numbers is having a direct economic impact. The European Capital of Culture year therefore strengthens Chemnitz’s tourism industry.

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“Who used to travel to Karl-Marx-Stadt? Why would anyone go to Chemnitz? It’s great when prejudices can be broken down! Sometimes simply by enjoying a great weekend in a surprising city full of courage and confidence! Thank you!”

Family B. from Brandenburg and friends from Wuppertal.
Guestbook, Hartmann Factory

20. AN INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT IN TOURISM AND THE FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY STRENGTHENS THE LOCAL ECONOMY.

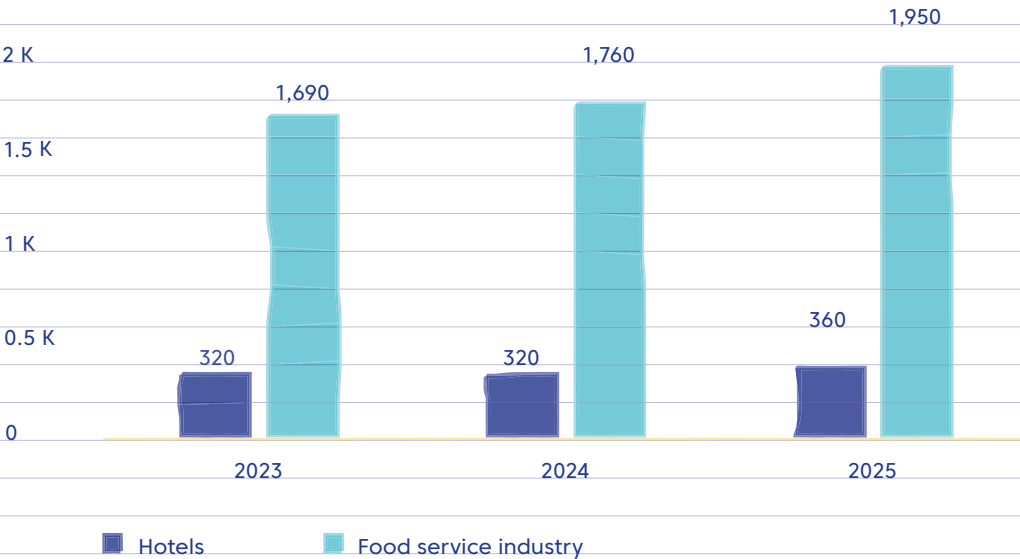
Chemnitz 2025 has generated significant job growth in tourism-related sectors, creating additional employment opportunities in these areas.

A key driver of this development was the programme’s structure: around 2,000 events with relatively small numbers of participants ensured demand was distributed steadily throughout the year. This also created continuous utilisation effects beyond the traditional peak season. It directly impacted employment and value creation in the local economy.

In the context of Chemnitz 2025, employment in the hotel and restaurant sector increased by 230 jobs subject to social insurance contributions, against the backdrop of an overall stable employment situation in the city. Tourism has therefore clearly gained importance as a labour market and economic factor.

Employment development in hotels and the food service industry 2023–2025

Number of employees subject to social insurance contributions as of 30 June each year



Source: Federal Employment Agency

In addition, Chemnitz 2025 generated employment opportunities within a broad network of partner organisations. Project funding secured existing roles and created new, social insurance-contributing jobs.

21. THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ARE ENERGISING THE ENTIRE REGION.

Chemnitz 2025 has given a significant boost to the local creative sector. The flagship project, “Makers, Business & Arts”, connected creatives, businesses and tourism across the entire Capital of Culture region, raising the profile of the area’s creativity. Nine Makerhubs have created new structures for innovation, professional development and exchange, establishing craftsmanship, culture and digital creativity as economic factors.

The nine Makerhubs give local people, especially young people, easy access to creativity, technology and innovation. Each hub has its own area of focus and operates as an open workshop and meeting place.

STADTWIRTSCHAFT CHEMNITZ

Community, FabLab with textiles, wood, metal

LEHNGERICHT AUGUSTUSBURG

Tradition and digital formats, textiles, food, garden lab, co-working

KULTURNETZWERK UW ETZDORF

Urban art, street art, graffiti, festivals, artist exchange

ESCHE LAB LIMBACH-OBERFROHNA

Textile techniques, knitting, embroidery, prototyping, small-series production

LÖBNITZ MAKERS – #DIEMACHEREI E. V.

3D printing, laser cutting, metalworking and woodworking, upcycling

WERKBANK32 MITTWEIDA

Cross-innovation, digital product development, business and university network

NETZ-WERK NEUKIRCHEN/ERZGEBIRGE

Food culture, cooking, food projects, experimentation

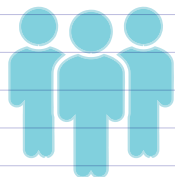
KULTURWERK SCHNEEBERG

Crafts and design, wood, textiles, fashion, social integration

BUNTSPEICHER ZWÖNITZ

Start-up support, co-working, start-ups, high-tech workshop

Impact & reach of “Makers, Business & Arts”

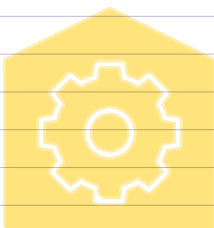


1. Reach & participation

- 48,000 people reached, from specialist workshops to festivals
- 9,200 Instagram accounts reached through the Maker Region and Makerhubs

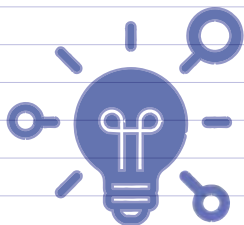
2. Hubs & infrastructure

- 9 Makerhubs with established organisational structures and regular programmes
- More than 2,000 m² of vacant space revitalised
- 3 new associations established, 2 more currently being founded



3. Innovation & European networking

- 14 European tandems (young entrepreneurs + established companies)
- EU-funded projects:
- MADE IN – Future Legacies (Creative Europe)
 - FUNKEN Summer School (Creative Europe)
 - LesnaxSeiffen (Interreg Saxony – Czech Republic)
 - 2 further projects in development



MAKER-ADVENT:
1ST PLACE,
GERMAN TOURISM
AWARD 2025

Award

- received thanks to 90 cultural and creative practitioners
- across 42 locations
- with 330 events
- and 160 hands-on activities
- Foundation for year-round tourism and long-term European networking

Chemnitz 2025 transformed cultural and creative tourism into an experience. Studios, workshops, Makerhubs and museums continue to encourage visitors to explore the area and participate in creative activities. Many Makerhubs have become sustainable organisations through the formation of associations. New projects continue to emerge beyond the title year, European partnerships are being expanded further, and creative tourism is being developed strategically for the future.

“Congratulations on the impressive European Capital of Culture, Chemnitz 2025! I discovered Chemnitz from a completely new perspective. My thanks go to the citizens who helped shape and support this process. I hope that many of these projects and initiatives will have a lasting impact and endure for years to come!”

Timon Gremmels, Hessian Minister for Science and Research, Arts and Culture
City of Chemnitz Capital of Culture Book, 7 November 2025

22. CHEMNITZ IS EXPANDING ITS PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM AND HOSTING MORE CONGRESSES AND EVENTS.

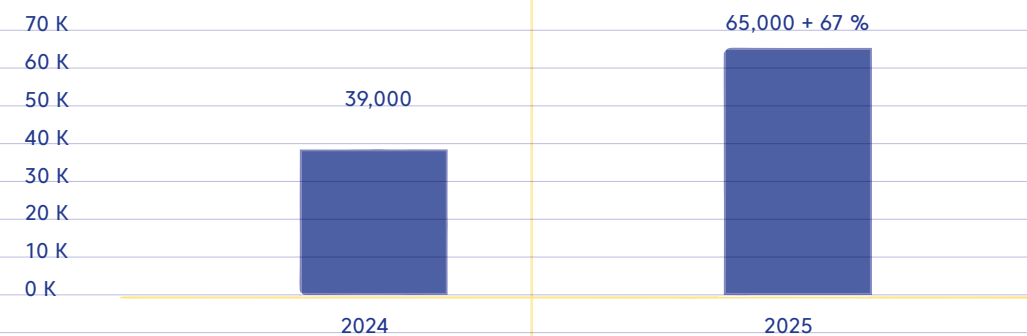
In addition to the traditional effects of tourism, Chemnitz 2025 has generated significant momentum for the city's infrastructure, increased the use of public transport and enhanced Chemnitz's reputation as a destination for congresses and events. These developments strengthen the city's long-term economic capacity and its appeal to investors.

Chemnitz attracts professional events and passengers.

Chemnitz 2025 has established the city as a popular national and international events destination. High-profile conferences such as I²MTC 2025 and the annual conference of the German Museums Association saw C³ Chemnitzer Veranstaltungszentren record a significant increase in visitors: around 65,000 congress and conference guests used the venues, guided tours and cultural offerings in 2025, which is a 67 % increase on 2024.

Conferences & congresses – visitors 2024 vs 2025

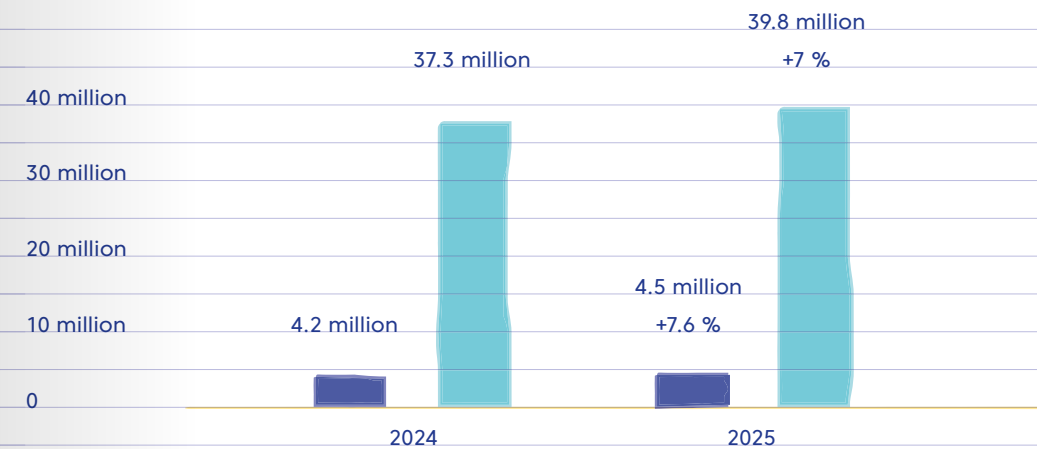
C³ Chemnitzer Veranstaltungszentren



Source: City of Chemnitz

Passenger numbers in public transport

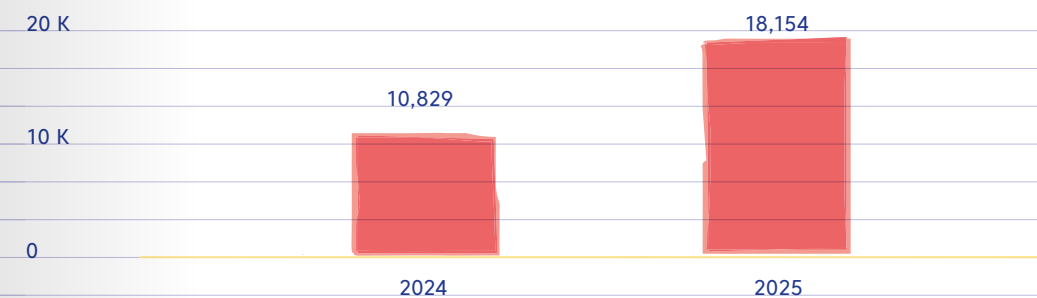
CVAG and City-Bahn Chemnitz (CBC)



Source: City of Chemnitz

Average daily entries and exits at Chemnitz main station

Figures provided by Deutsche Bahn as average daily entries and exits (annual average).



Source: DB InfraGO AG

Chemnitz is making strategic investments in infrastructure and liveability.

Ahead of its year as the European Capital of Culture in 2025, the city made targeted investments to improve its infrastructure for residents and visitors. These include creating barrier-free routes from the main railway station to the Hartmann Factory (the European Capital of Culture 2025 visitor and information centre), expanding the tourist

Additional highlights have been made possible thanks to sponsors.

More than 50 companies from the local and wider economy have supported Chemnitz 2025. Their commitment has made it possible to implement additional cultural and social programmes, strengthening the region’s visibility. Partners and supporters include

“We are convinced that the title of European Capital of Culture represents a unique opportunity for Chemnitz and the entire cultural and economic region. It is therefore close to our hearts to support, contribute financially to, actively participate in, and promote the Capital of Culture movement.”

Gunnar Bertram, Chairman of the Board, Volksbank Chemnitz eG

wayfinding system, providing additional motorhome and park-and-ride spaces, and adding new bus stops. Art installations, such as those at the main railway station and the Hartmann Factory, will also enhance the quality of stay in the city and strengthen the cultural profile along key routes in the long term.

Volkswagen Group, eins energie in sachsen GmbH & Co. KG, Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe, AIDA Cruises, EDEKA, enviaM, Lidl, the NILES-SIMMONS-HEGENSCHEIDT Group, Siemens AG, Deutsche Telekom AG, and Volksbanken Raiffeisenbanken.

Example projects supported and initiated by sponsors:

Yellow Lounge:
classical music meets DJ
culture, Checker Tobi

VOLKSWAGEN GROUP

Factory tours
for families

**MOTORENWERK
CHEMNITZ**

Concerts featuring
DIKKA and
Wincent Weiss

ENVIAM GROUP

Begehungen
art festival

**EINS ENERGIE
IN SACHSEN**

European Capital of
Culture Marathon

SPARKASSE CHEMNITZ

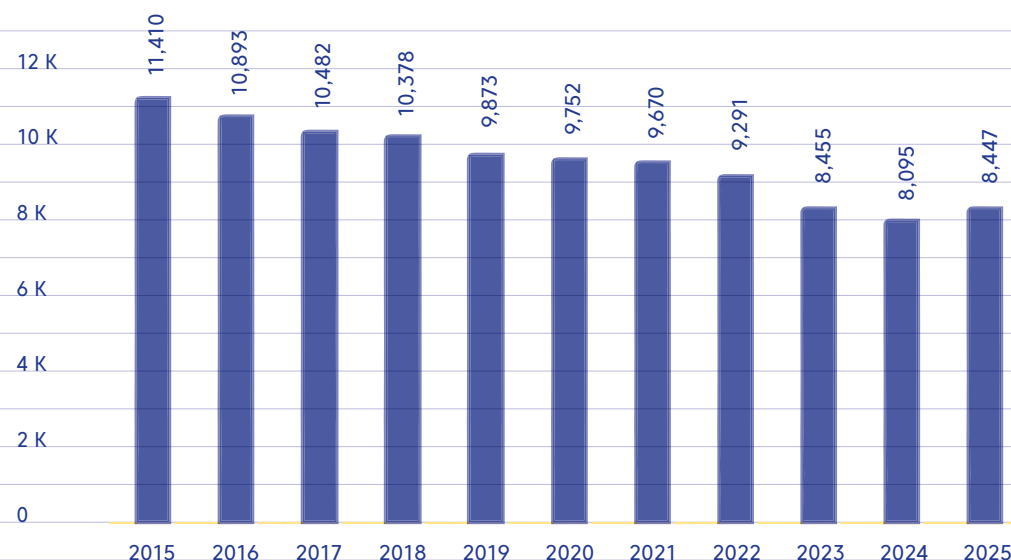
23. CHEMNITZ UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY EMERGES STRENGTHENED FROM THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR.

The European Capital of Culture year has given the university significant momentum as a research partner, a co-creator of urban life and a higher education institution. For the first time in a decade, student numbers are rising again, with around 8,500 students enrolled – a four per cent increase.

This turnaround is the result of a range of strategic measures, including reformed and new study programmes, targeted capacity expansion, and intensified university marketing. The Capital of Culture year has also increased the visibility of Chemnitz University of Technology.

Development of student numbers at Chemnitz University of Technology 2015–2025

Number of enrolled students



Source: Chemnitz University of Technology

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The increasing number of first-year students is driving growth.

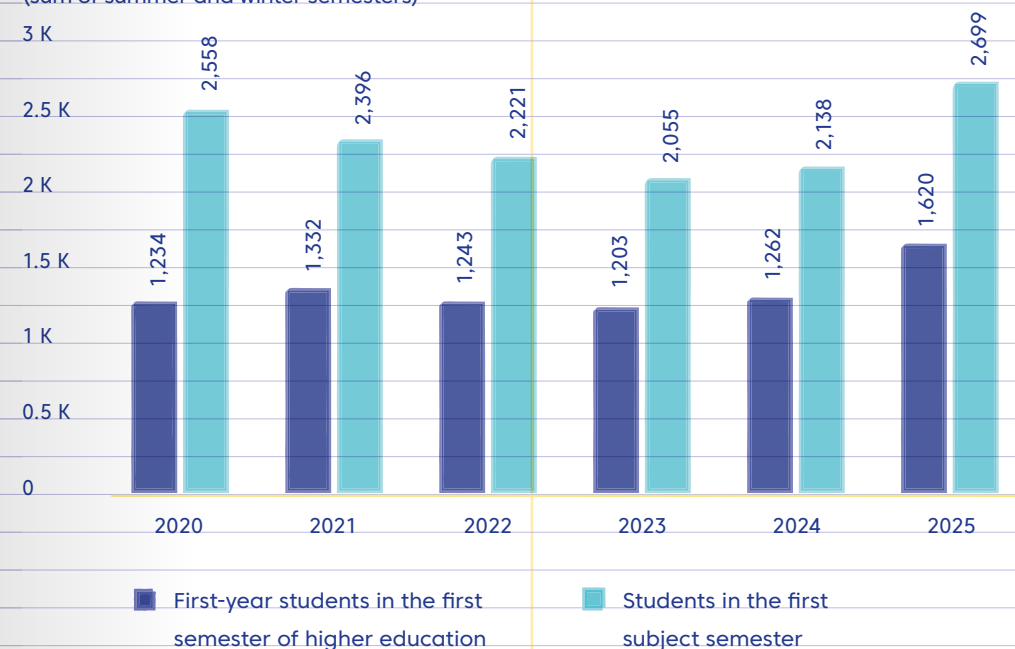
Of particular note is the composition of this growth: the number of traditional first-year students has increased by 28 per cent. This signals a trend that extends beyond a single cohort. For the first time since 2011, the number of German students has also risen slightly, while the number of international students has remained stable for several years. Chemnitz University of Technology has actively encouraged this trend by offering forward-looking degree programmes such as “Human – Environment – Technology”, increasing capacity in popular

B

subjects such as psychology, and consistently improving its public image. The rising figures in the first semester of higher education and the first subject semester highlight the growing popularity of Chemnitz University of Technology. While the first semester of higher education records initial enrolment at a university, making the appeal to first-time students particularly visible, the first subject semester includes all new enrolments in a degree programme at Chemnitz University of Technology, including master’s programmes and changes of subject.

Development of first-year students at Chemnitz University of Technology 2020–2025

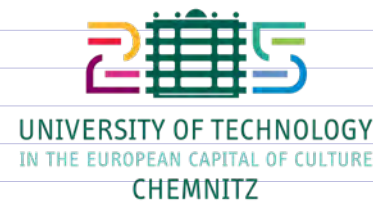
First-year students in the first semester of higher education and in the first subject semester (sum of summer and winter semesters)



Source: Chemnitz University of Technology

Chemnitz University of Technology is actively contributing to the European Capital of Culture year.

Under the leadership of Professor Dr Jochen Mayerl, Chemnitz University of Technology is conducting the evaluation of the Capital of Culture year and is responsible for impact research. The university is providing empirical foundations and delivering in-depth analyses of the programme's societal impact and added value. It is planning the final evaluation for 2027.



At the same time, the university's internal initiative, TUCculture2025, used its own funding programme of 150,000 euros to support over 30 projects from faculties and central departments. These ranged from a digital participation platform and exhibitions on the culture of remembrance to urban social interventions in public spaces.

Since its introduction in 2021, the Chemnitz University of Technology logo has been a visible commitment to Chemnitz's status as the European Capital of Culture in 2025.

Research meets culture

DISCUSSION SPACE ON THE OPERA "RUMMELPLATZ"

Chemnitz University of Technology was a partner in the "Rummelplatz oder Realität?" conference, which was held in conjunction with the world premiere of the opera staged by Theater Chemnitz. In the university library, researchers discussed cultural policy in the GDR, the history of Wismut and social developments in Saxony with a broad audience.

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Chemnitz University of Technology has created a digital notice board for volunteering and civic engagement called "Du für Chemnitz". Initiatives can post their offers directly, and interested individuals can get in touch without registering. In this way, the mobilisation of civil society developed during the Capital of Culture year is being transformed into a lasting structure.

EUROPE'S CULTURAL HISTORY ON THE SHELVES

The special collection "A Quarter Century of European Capitals of Culture" makes European cultural development accessible at the university library. Around 750 books on more than 50 European Capitals of Culture since 2000 offer a literary journey through Europe's cities. The collection is publicly accessible.

The university is using Chemnitz 2025 as a catalyst for networking.

The European Capital of Culture year has also increased Chemnitz University of Technology's international visibility.

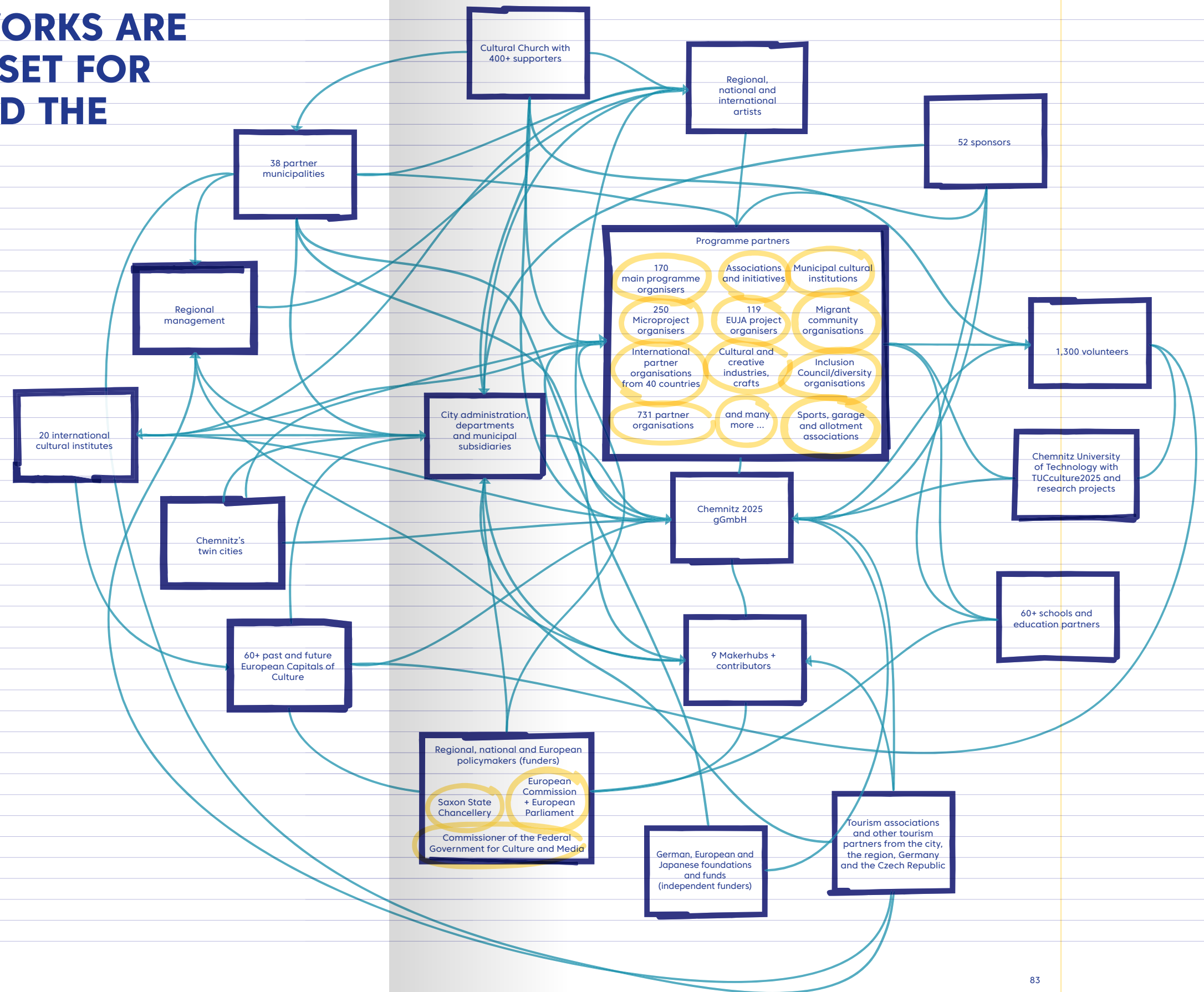
Collaborations within the Across European University Alliance, joint events with partner universities from other European Capitals of Culture and exchanges with Saxony's universities of art and

music have strengthened a network that will endure well beyond 2025. Digital formats, online archives, and publications, such as the interdisciplinary edited volume "European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025: Socio-Spatial Explorations", document the European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 for posterity.

24. NEW NETWORKS ARE A LASTING ASSET FOR CHEMNITZ AND THE REGION.

Chemnitz 2025 has established a network connecting local, regional and international stakeholders from public administration, business, culture and civil society.

The large number of civil society initiatives highlights the growing capacity for shaping change at the local level. This provides a sustainable foundation for the future development of the city and the region beyond 2025.

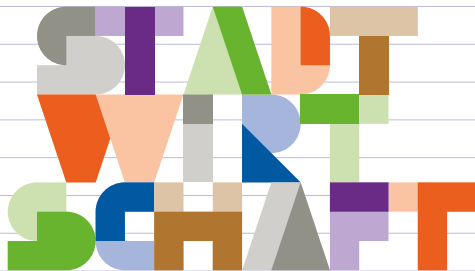


25. CHEMNITZ 2025
ESTABLISHES BRANDS
WITH LASTING IMPACT.

The European Capital of Culture year has increased the visibility of Chemnitz and the region, creating a strategically valuable brand profile. Alongside the established Capital of Culture logo and the slogan “C the Unseen”, the PURPLE PATH art and sculpture



The Capital of Culture year has also provided a new narrative for physical places: Garagen-Campus and Stadtwirtschaft have become

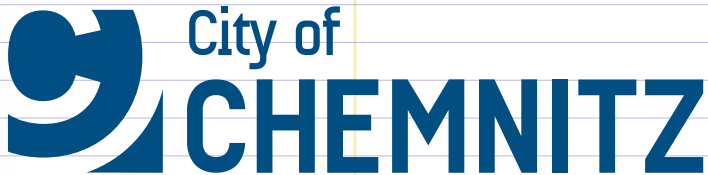


trail has gained recognition as a distinct cultural brand. Existing formats such as KOSMOS, IBUG and Begehungen have benefited from being embedded in a European programme.

well-known destinations and can now be promoted more effectively. This is site development through cultural policy.



During the Capital of Culture year, existing formats were enhanced. In 2025, KOSMOS Chemnitz delighted festival-goers for three days with music, social events, sport and art. The HALLENKUNST project returned after a fourteen-year hiatus and brought the world of street art to life, not only through the exhibition, but also with eight permanent large-scale murals on the façades of buildings in Chemnitz. At the same time, new, scalable brands were established.



HALLENKUNST

With clear guiding principles and recognisable formats, a consistent brand ecosystem has been created which is self-sustaining and will strengthen the positioning of Chemnitz and the region in the competition between cities in the medium term.

In the course of the European Capital of Culture year, the City of Chemnitz also further developed its brand identity. Since 2026, the city has deliberately dispensed with a slogan or tagline, confidently presenting itself under its own name alone.

OUTLOOK

Everyone involved in 2025, whether as organisers, volunteers, artists or visitors, will take away memories and experiences to carry forward. With the Legacy Company and the Regional Management Office, the organisational structures are in place to continue the success of Chemnitz 2025 beyond the title year. European initiatives and institutions will help ensure its long-term legacy.

With the Theater der Welt and KOSMOS festivals in 2026 and the UNSEEN Biennale from 2027 onwards, a continuous programme is taking shape that will further strengthen the national and international profile of Chemnitz and the region. The Biennale will be the cornerstone of this ongoing development, becoming a key meeting point, catalyst and space for reflection that continues to connect the city, the region and Europe.

New infrastructures and spaces have become firmly established on the map, including the large and small Intervention Areas across the city and the art and creative venues throughout the region. These serve

as recognised places for encounter and exchange. Whether it's the Garagen-Campus, Stadtwirtschaft or the riverside Intervention Areas, they actively invite further discovery and use.

During the title year, the 38 partner municipalities presented themselves as welcoming and professional hosts. The PURPLE PATH art and sculpture trail and the Makerhubs provide excellent conditions for the region's sustainable tourism development, for example by offering attractive cultural and creative industry activities all year round. The newly gained international outlook creates significant opportunities for the region.

Chemnitz could only become the European Capital of Culture 2025 through collective effort – as a city community, a cultural region, and part of Europe. This sense of togetherness is its greatest legacy. It has laid a foundation on which Chemnitz and the region can continue to build together in the years ahead.

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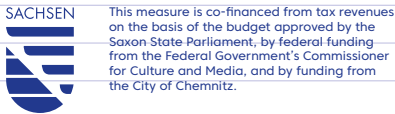
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