



Bärbel Bas
President of the German Bundestag

Foreword

Dear readers,

Proximity to the public is a matter of central importance to the German Bundestag – its Members and its administration are there for citizens. I, too, wish to show the people of this country that the German Bundestag is committed to addressing their concerns. That is why I am delighted to present a publication to you that shines a light on Members' day-to-day working lives and brings politics to life.

The illustrated book “The German Bundestag in the Reichstag Building” takes you on an exciting stroll through the interior of our Parliament. Be our guest as you take a look over Members' shoulders and learn more about how the Bundestag operates. You can find out about the course of the legislative process, for example, or how committees and specialist bodies are formed, and what the term “working parliament” really means. Through various looks back at history, you can gain an insight into how parliamentarianism in Germany has developed and how adaptable and open to the future the German Bundestag is.

The artworks in the German Bundestag's collection, the quality, number and variety of which often takes visitors by surprise, are also described in detail. This also applies to the Art-in-Architecture installations, the most prominent example of which is the dome of the Reichstag Building, designed by Sir Norman Foster, which has become a real magnet for visitors. You can read here the impressive story of how the dome was designed at the express wish of the German Bundestag and is a physical representation of a piece of parliamentary reform. The dome stands for transparency and openness – conveying our idea of proximity to the public in architectural terms, too. The dome makes it clear from the outside that the German Bundestag is no longer only a “High House”, but also an open one. Visitors from near and far are most welcome here, for our Parliament is a hospitable and approachable place. This is one of the special values of our parliamentary system, which has now been going strong for more than 70 years.

In this spirit, I hope you enjoy perusing “The German Bundestag in the Reichstag Building”, and invite you to gain an impression of the people's Parliament for yourself in Berlin.

Bärbel Bas, President of the German Bundestag