



Visit to the Red Town Hall

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During a visit to the Red Town Hall on 18 September, WiB was welcomed by Georg Klußmann, Chief of Protocol for the State of Berlin, and Thomas Honeck from the International Affairs Department. Discussions in the Louise Schröder Hall, which is usually used for coalition negotiations or conferences, focused on Berlin's city partnerships and the role of the districts, but also on the challenges that large cities such as Berlin face in particular: urban development, urban planning, climate protection, housing construction, migration, sustainable development, water and wastewater management.

Architecturally, the staircase of the Red Town Hall is impressive with its main staircase and allegorical figures. The 9-metre-high columned hall with its red ribbed vault and vaulted ceilings supported by columns is reminiscent of a Gothic cathedral. The coat of arms hall features windows with the coats of arms of Berlin's former 23 districts.

A subsequent guided tour of the listed building, which dates back to 1861, recounted the history of the town hall as a scene of Berlin's eventful past. Since 1991, the Red Town Hall has been the official residence of the Governing Mayor of Berlin.

OPENING OF THE WiB CLUB YEAR 2025/26

In the Europasaal of the Foreign Office, WiB President Karla Steinert-Thys welcomed members and guests to the opening of the new club year. In his speech, the new State Secretary at the Federal Foreign Office, Dr Bernhard Kotsch, praised WiB as a valuable point of contact for diplomats in Berlin and as a forum for understanding and tolerance, even in geopolitically difficult times.

The club president described the club as a forum that builds bridges and opens special doors for its members with an interesting programme. The wife of the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina and representative of the WiB Advisory Board, Sanja Bagarić-Arnaut, emphasised the importance of the club for foreign diplomats in Berlin and reported on her personal experiences. She said that the friendship she had experienced at WiB would be her most valuable souvenir when she returned to her home country.



WiB President Karla Steinert-Thys opened the new club year



Sanja Bagarić-Arnaut, wife of the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina and representative of the WiB Advisory Board

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The WiB Executive Committee. f.l.: Katharina von Aretin, Secretary; Christine Hatakka, Event Coordinator; Olivia Nike, Vice President; Karla Steinert-Thys, President; Gladys Abankwa-Meier-Klodt, Treasurer; Ursula Braumann, Press Officer; Tina Nunn, Group Coordinator; unable to attend: Nita Isnaeni-Waeber, Web Presence

Svetlana Lundgren and Peter Lange accompanied the opening with piano and cello music by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and a tango by Carlos Gardel.

Afterwards, there was time to learn about the numerous activities offered by WiB: discovering Berlin together on walks and visits to galleries, castles, parks and villas; experiencing culture through visits to the opera, ballet, theatre, cinema and restaurants; enjoying sports activities and cultural exchange in multilingual conversation groups; getting involved in the book club or Japanese ink painting; learning German, learning about history and politics in Germany, discussing topics such as sustainability, taking part in trips to other federal states or abroad – a fascinating array of activities that offer wonderful opportunities to get to know the host country.