

The black line indicates the actual course of the Wall and equivalent border barriers (e.g. the mesh fencing on the Marschall Bridge), including sections of the outer wall (in front of the Reichstag Building) and sections of the inner wall (on the eastern bank of the Spree).

The dashed grey line marks the political border, which ran along the western bank of the great bend in the River Spree. This point was therefore particularly dangerous for escapees who swam across the Spree: they were not safe from the GDR border troops until they reached the western bank. Crosses set into the riverside railings next to the Paul Löbe Building commemorate the people who died in these circumstances.

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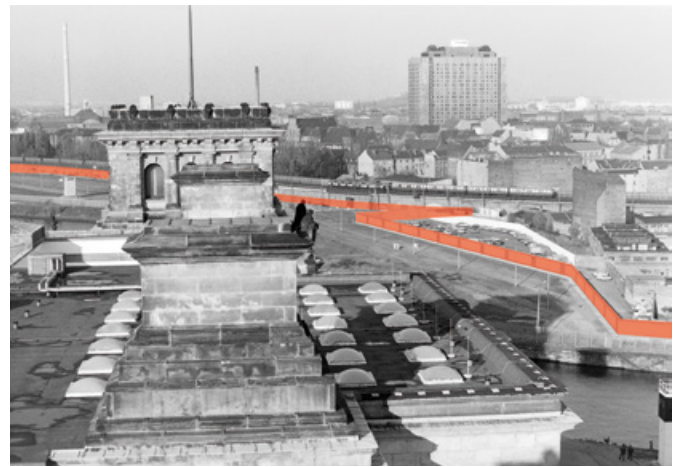


The Berlin Wall Memorial at the German Bundestag

Following the construction of the Berlin Wall on 13 August 1961, hundreds of people were killed while attempting to escape or lost their lives as a result of the GDR border regime. According to the latest research, 136 people died at the Berlin Wall alone. A Book of Commemoration, which can be viewed at the Berlin Wall Memorial, pays tribute to the victims by offering biographical information and photographs of those who died. It was not only in Berlin that people were killed, however. Others lost their lives at the German-German border, while attempting to escape over the Baltic Sea, or at borders outside Germany. Deserting soldiers from the GDR's National People's Army and members of the border troops also died at the Wall and the German-German border. Many GDR citizens were arrested as they were preparing to escape, or survived an escape attempt but suffered severe injuries in the process. No reliable data is yet available concerning the total number of victims.

However, from the time the Berlin Wall was built, individuals, private bodies and public institutions in the West gathered information about the people who died attempting to escape across it. This information and further research carried out since the fall of the Berlin Wall form the basis for the figures quoted at the Berlin Wall Memorial. The number of deaths in each year has been inscribed on the segments of the Wall (reflecting the state of research in December 2003). The segments of the Berlin Wall were preserved and painted by Ben Wagin. Stephan Braunfels, the architect of the Marie-Elisabeth Lüders Building, had the concrete segments arranged so that they follow the original course of the Wall, cutting into the architecture like a painful foreign body.

The Berlin Wall Memorial



The Wall in 1985, view to the north from the Reichstag Building (above)

The Wall in 1989, view to the east from the Reichstag Building (below)

The Berlin Wall Memorial at the German Bundestag
Marie-Elisabeth Lüders Building
Schiffbauerdamm
D – 10117 Berlin

Entrance on the Spree-side promenade, opposite the Reichstag Building

The Berlin Wall Memorial is open to the public.

Opening hours:
Tuesday to Sunday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Free entrance.

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