



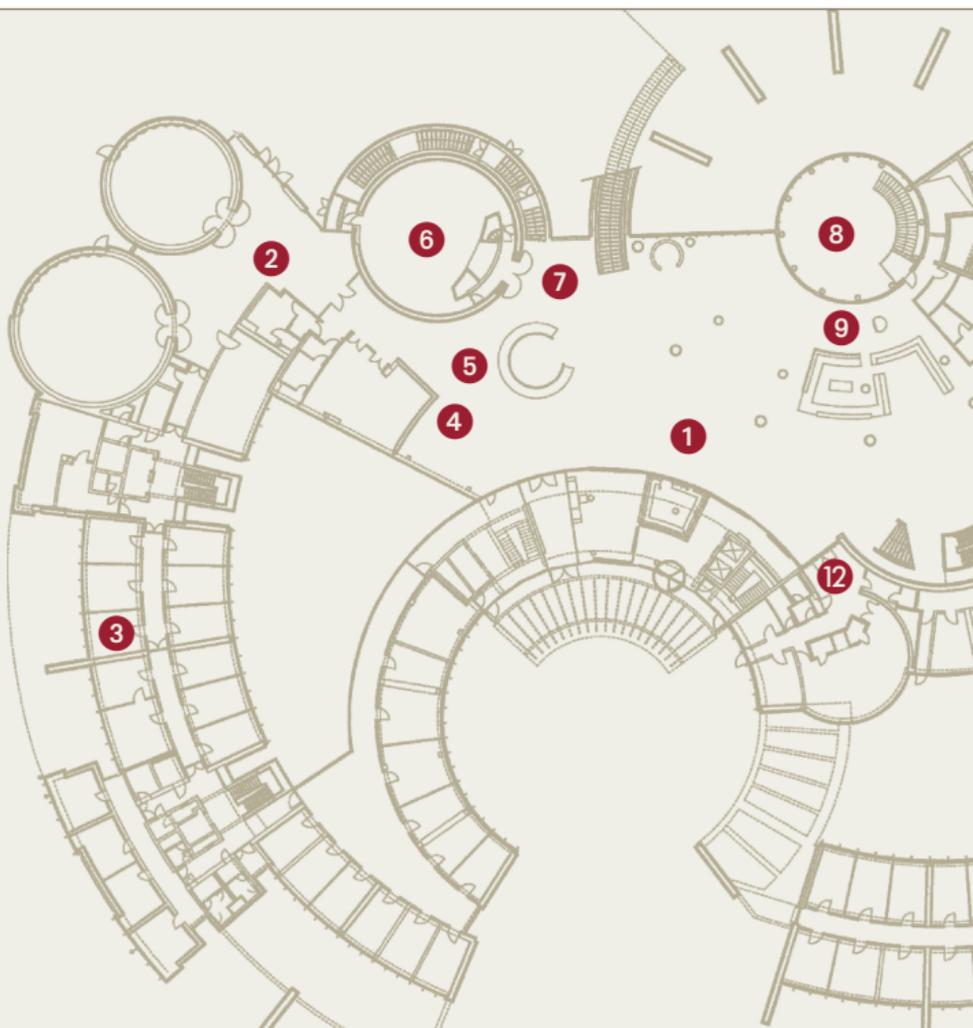
DER LANDTAG



NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN

Tour through the NRW parliament



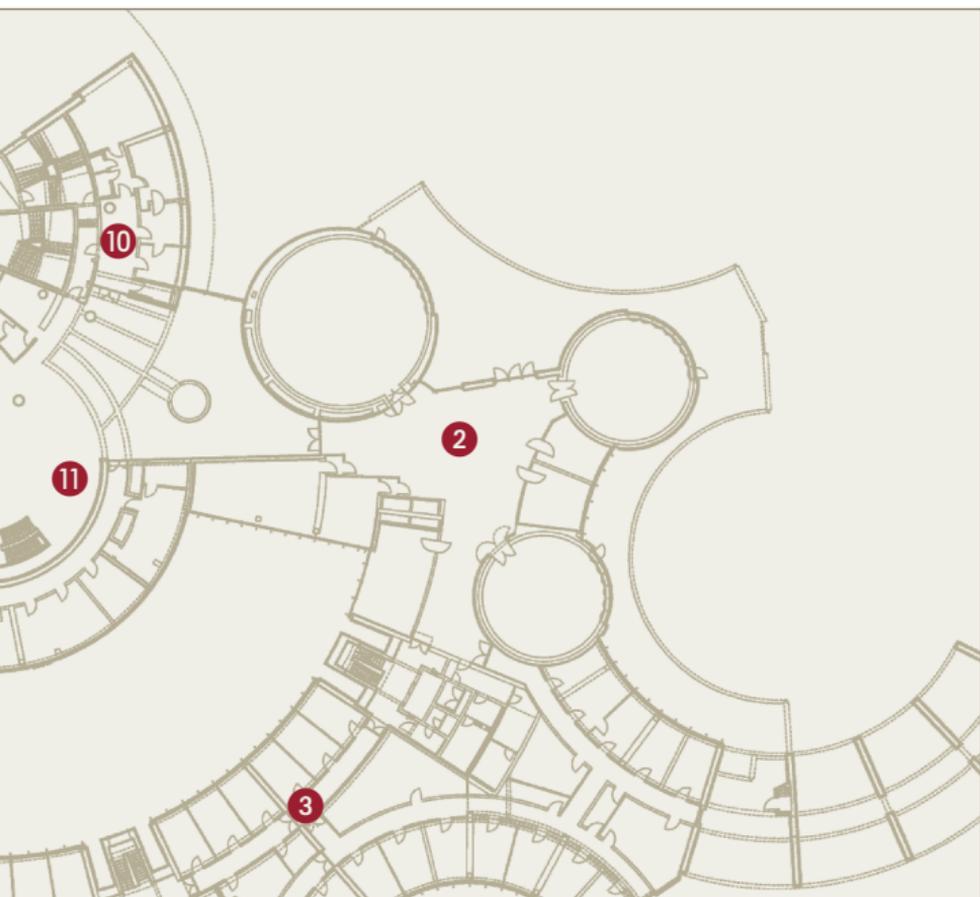


Foyer

You are located here in the Citizens Hall (1) of the North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) state parliament. The parliament building was completed in 1988, and is made centrally accessible through this light-flooded foyer. On the ground floor there are conference rooms of various sizes, each grouped around a separate small vestibule (2), which are used for special committees, working groups and

parliamentary group meetings. Offices (3) for parliamentary groups and parliamentary administration are adjacent. "Aurora" and "Ave", the two Rauchbilder ('smoke pictures') by Otto Piene (4), are hung over the corner to the left of the entrance and thematically suit the hall's transparent design in an outstanding manner. The parliament's visitor centre (6) was opened in 2016 and is located right next to the glass visitors' lift (5). Guests,

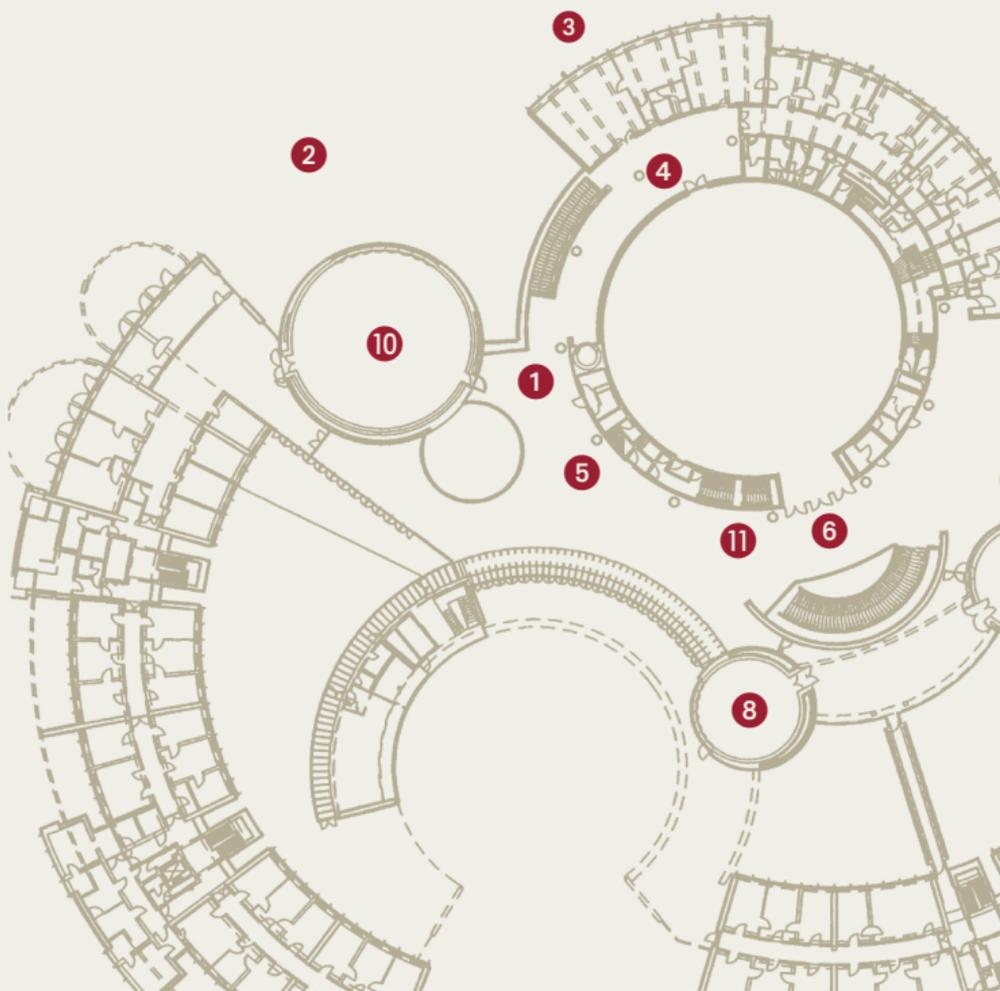




members of parliament and staff can reach a restaurant and club-rooms via a stone staircase (7). The library's reading room (8) is also situated on the Rhine River side and is visible from the foyer. Books and periodicals on politics, law and contemporary history are available for all interested parties to read on site. In the espresso bar (9) above this there is an opportunity to observe the comings and goings of politicians. Directly behind the cloakroom, a small corridor leads to offices (10) which the parliament provides

for the Minister-President's cabinet. Below the flight of stairs on the right, the "Phoenix" (11) by Ewald Mataré (created in 1949) commemorates the new beginning of democracy after Nazi dictatorship. The "Room of Silence" (12), a work created by Prof. Gotthard Graubner, is diagonally opposite. Two "colour space bodies" of different sizes captivate eyes and thoughts. Here one should settle down and meditate. This special room is open to everyone – believers and non-believers.



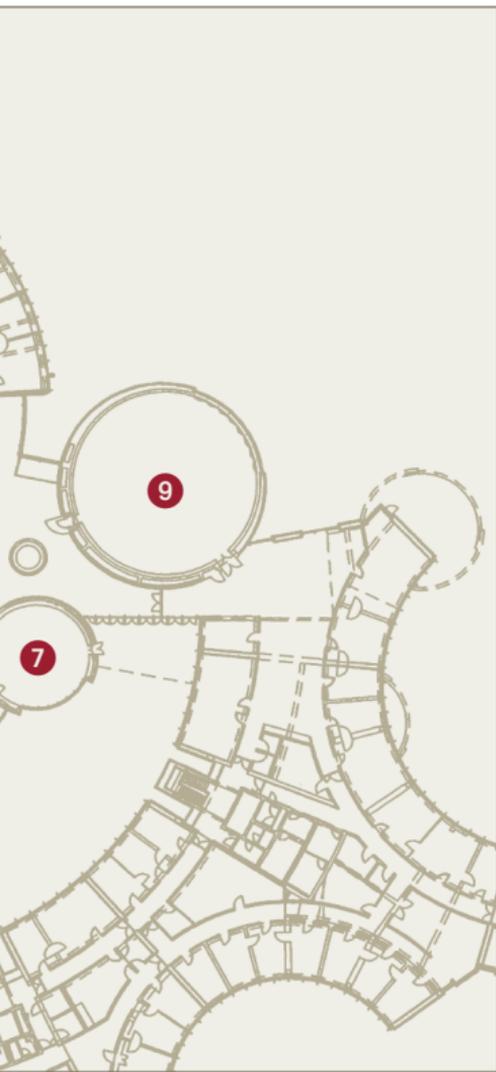


Flight of stairs (on the left)

You can reach the lobby via the flight of stairs (1) on the left. To your right around the library's reading room you will see a fountain designed by Heinz Mack, a member of the "Zero" group of artists just like Otto Piene. The gently levelling, water-filled steps arrayed at an angle of 150° embrace the building's construction principles in terms of form and material properties.

The large window façade to your left opens the parliament to the harbour and the Rhine. Built in a former harbour basin (Berger Harbour), the parliament building is part of the public park known as Rheinpark Bilk. Only protest marches must keep their distance – participants must comply with the moderately measured no-protest zone. The kinetic object "one up, one down – excentric"





(2) by American artist George Rickey, which you can see in the external installation, forms part of the parliament complex. Motion and dynamism can be experienced even more clearly through this object than through the fountain. The president of parliament's reception room and study (3) are located in an exposed position, protruding 13 metres above the Rhine. The portraits (4) of former presidents of par-

liament hang on the outer wall of the plenary chamber. They were generally elected to office in the first constituting session of the legislative period on a proposal by the majority party. In this legislative period it is André Kuper (CDU), elected by 185 of the 199 members of parliament, who now acts above party lines to safeguard the dignity and rights of parliament. He manages the state parliament's administration, alternately chairs the plenary sessions with the vice-presidents, exercises the authority of the house and is on record as the highest representative of parliament in the state.

Lobby

Passing the pictures (5) of well-known artists from NRW, your path leads you up to the entrance doors of the plenary chamber (6). As the site of political debates and political decisions, this is the heart of the parliamentary building. Parliamentary group meetings and committee meetings are held in the rooms located around it (7, 8, 9 10). As a space of informal political discussions by members of parliament among each other or with representatives of special interest groups, the lobby is a place of bustling comings and goings, particularly on days when plen-



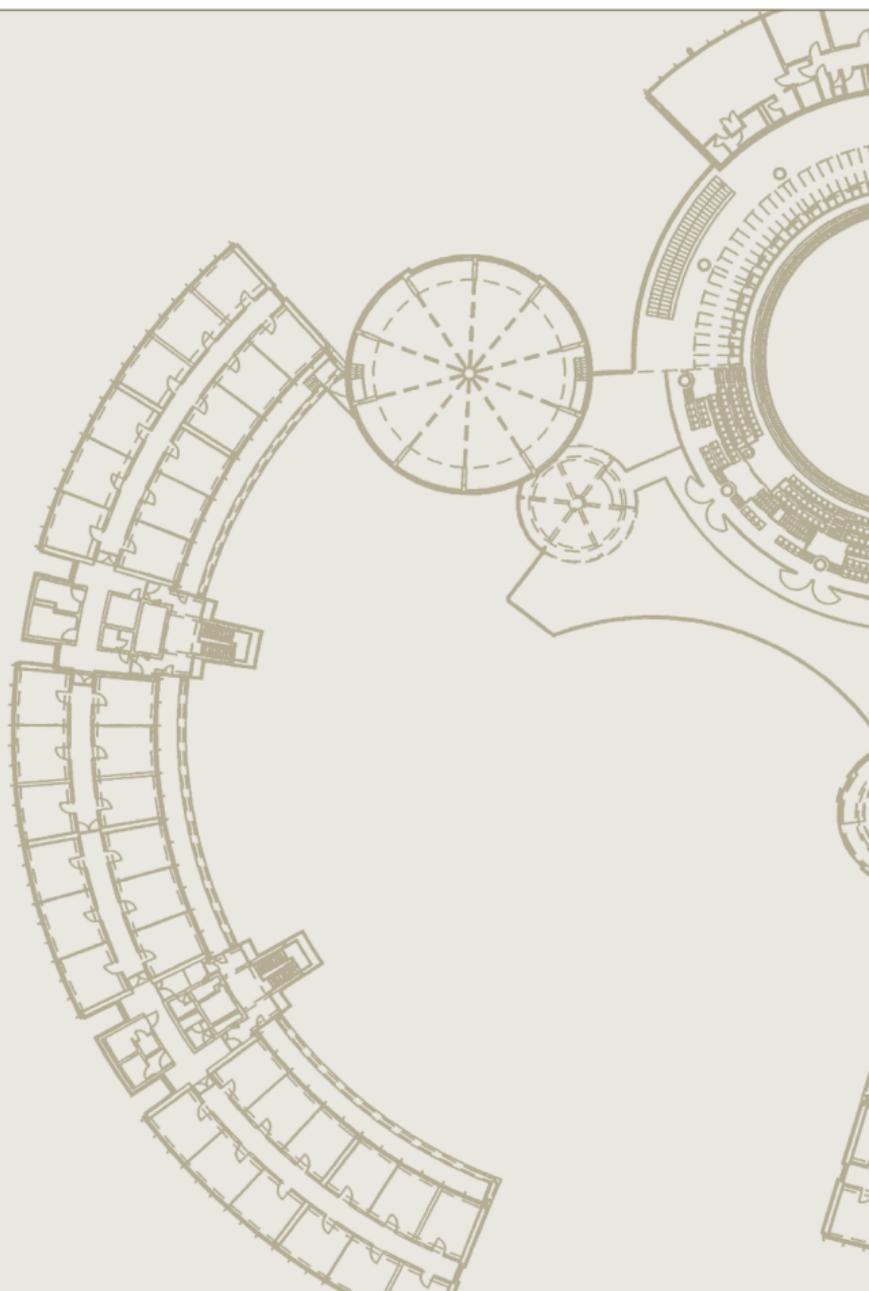
ary sessions are being held. To the left of the plenary chamber doors you will see a special work of art. "Interferences" is the title of Günther Uecker's work (11), which consists of overlapping circles of paint and nails. The plenary chamber's entrance doors are inscribed for the Hammelsprungverfahren – a type of voting procedure by foot, in which members of parliament indicate their vote by deliberately selecting the door with the inscription "Yes", "No" or "Abstain" when entering the room.

Plenary chamber

The 199 members of parliament meet here on about 30 days a year for plenary sessions. They assemble to hold discussions about draft bills and about current state political topics, raise questions and hold debates about governmental statements. Within the framework of the legislative procedure, these plenary sessions primarily serve the purpose of informing the public; the plenary debate on a draft bill documents – in a chronologically condensed form – the often months-long process of opinion-forming in committees and parliamentary groups. As with all larger organisations, the

parliament also delegates work and in-depth tasks to smaller working units, the expert committees who meet around 600 times a year. However, the final decision is fundamentally reserved for the entirety of the members of parliament in the plenary session. Attendance lists are placed on the lecterns (to the left and right of the entrance) on days when plenary sessions are held. The traditional Kirchenbankordnung (church pew arrangement) of German parliaments has been replaced by a circular seating arrangement, and the benches of the state government were lowered to the level of the benches for the members of parliament. This equal status of benches for members of parliament and government illustrates the equality of the constitutional organs parliament and government. However, the presidium of the parliament sits on a raised level. Of the 199 members of parliament, 72 belong to the CDU, 69 to the SPD, 28 to the FDP, 14 to the Alliance '90/The Greens and 13 to the AfD. Three members of parliament are independent. You can see the exact seating arrangement on the large seating plan at the entrance.



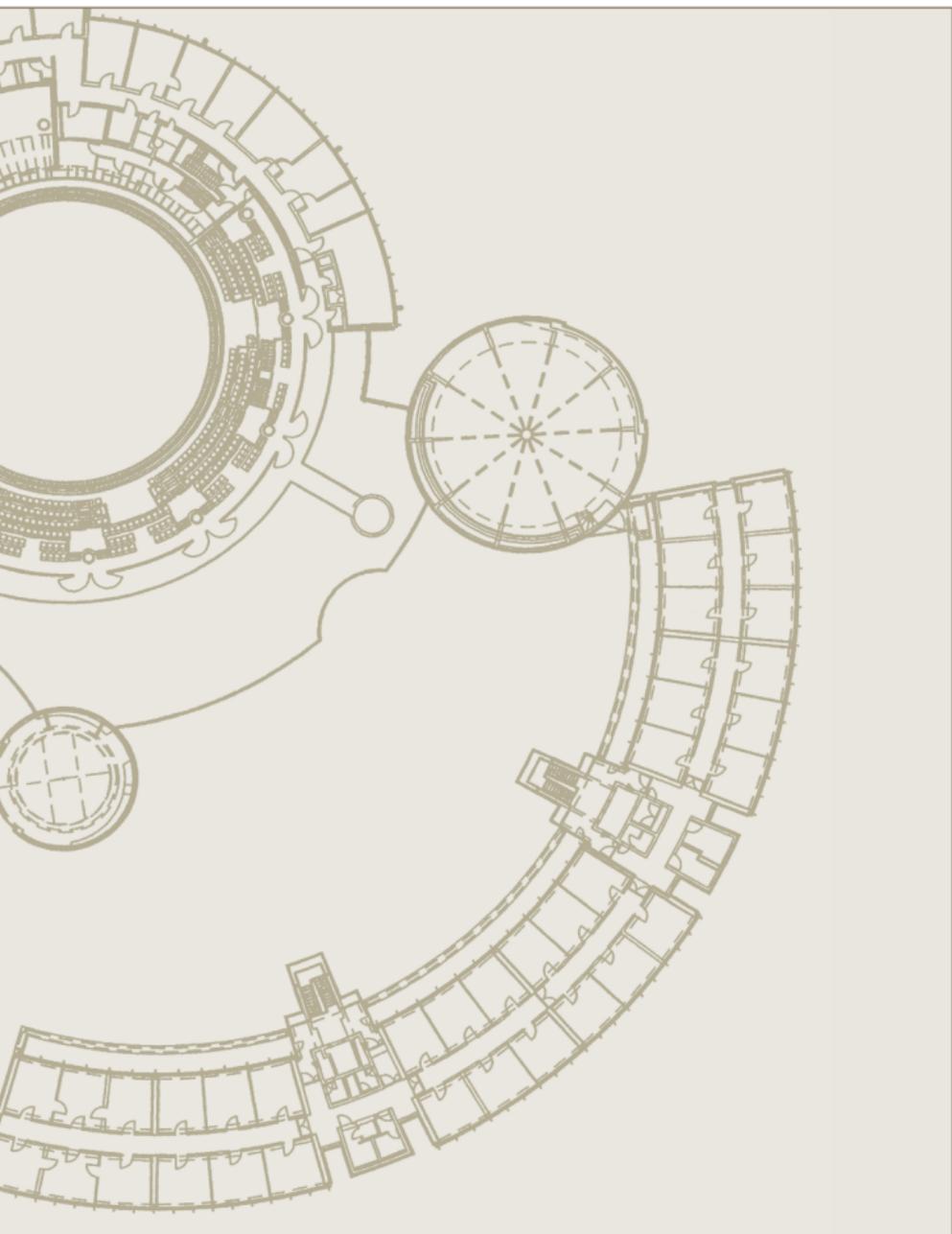


Visitors gallery

The shed-roof construction over the plenary chamber is not only of interest to technical enthusiasts. The main load of the roof is borne by 12 trussed rafters which fan out radially from a node above the centre

of the room to concrete supports on the periphery of the plenary chamber, and project varying distances (3.8 to 20.5 m) beyond the concrete supports, corresponding to the irregular roof layout. The fifth floor is reserved for the public.





Two hundred seats on the visitors' gallery are reserved for interested citizens. The technical centre of the plenary chamber is located behind the glass wall. The gallery block next to it is reserved for journalists. Commentary for live television broadcasts

is provided from semi-open capsules on the gallery for commentators. The adjoining gallery block is reserved for employees of ministries, representatives of churches and important social organisations as well as the diplomatic corps.



The parliament in figures

■ Site		
Site area		30 064 m ²
Building area		10 630 m ²
■ Building		
Maximum width		105 m
Maximum length		195 m
Height (6 levels)		21 m
Main usable area (offices etc.)		20 353 m ²
Auxiliary area (WCs, equipment)		2 239 m ²
Functional areas (shafts etc.)		7 093 m ²
Traffic areas		40 713 m ²
Enclosed space		355 425 m ³
■ Rooms		
Offices		603
Conference rooms		25
■ Plenary chamber		
Size		725 m ²
Diameter		30 m
Space for		299 persons
■ Visitors' gallery		
Size		413 m ²
Space for		336 persons
■ Parking spaces		787 spaces
■ Cost of construction		163.0 million €
Annexe		11.6 million €
■ Construction period		1982 - 1988
Annexe		2009 - 2010
Renovation of plenary chamber		summer 2012
■ Architects:	Eller, Maier, Moser, Walter and Partner	





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