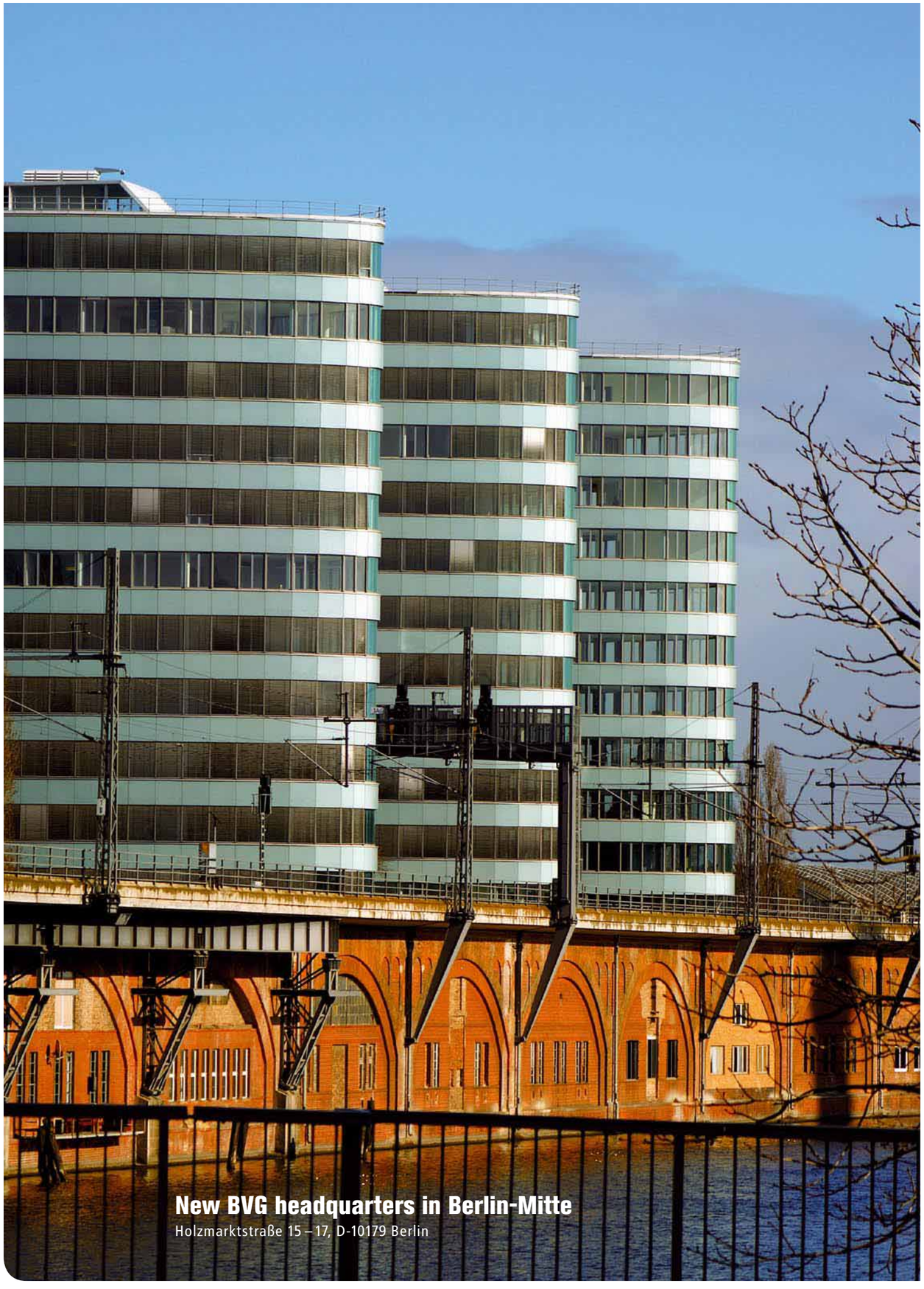
Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG)
Holzmarktstraße 15 – 17, D-10179 Berlin
www.BVG.de · info@bvg.de

Berlin profiles

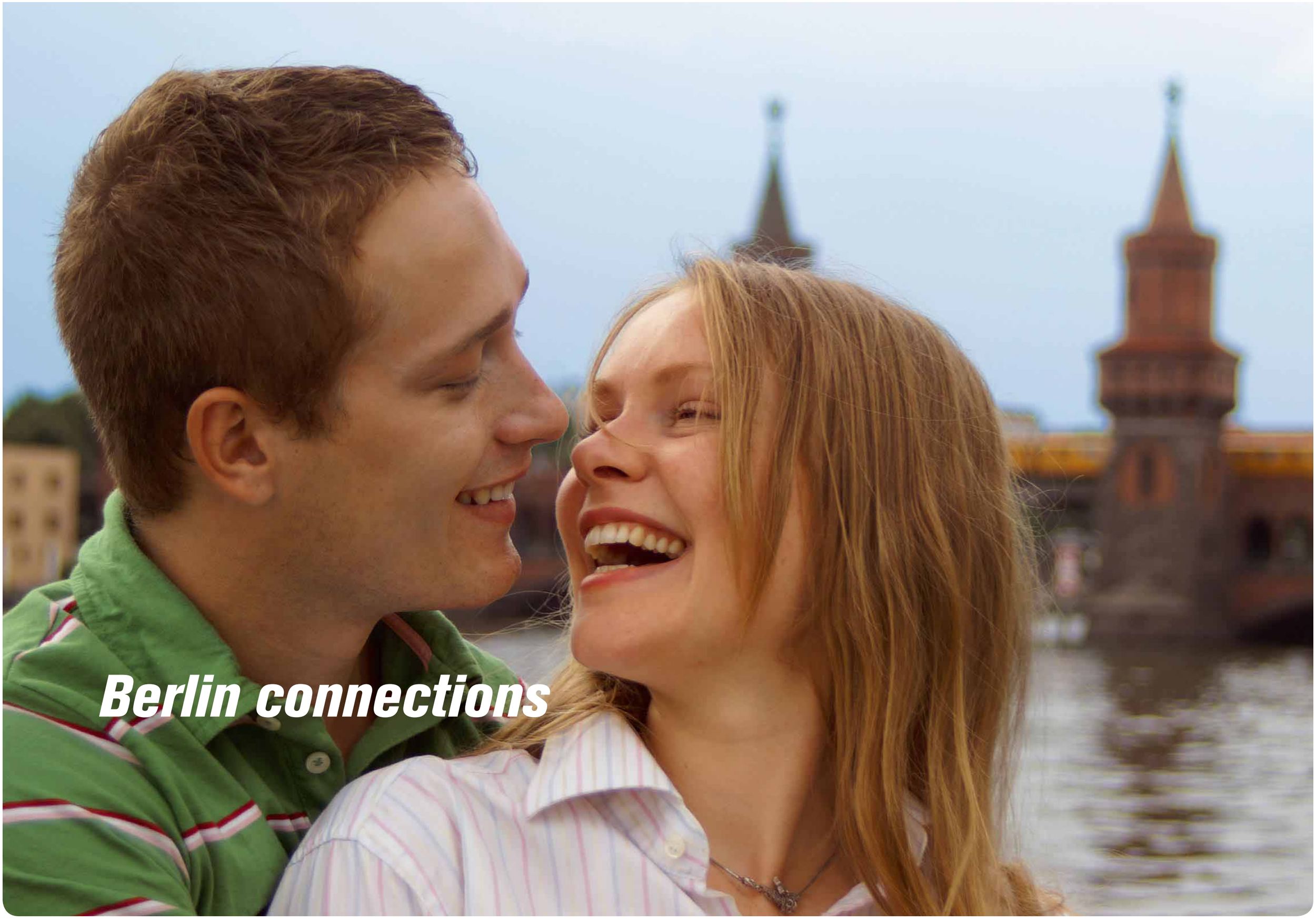
BVG

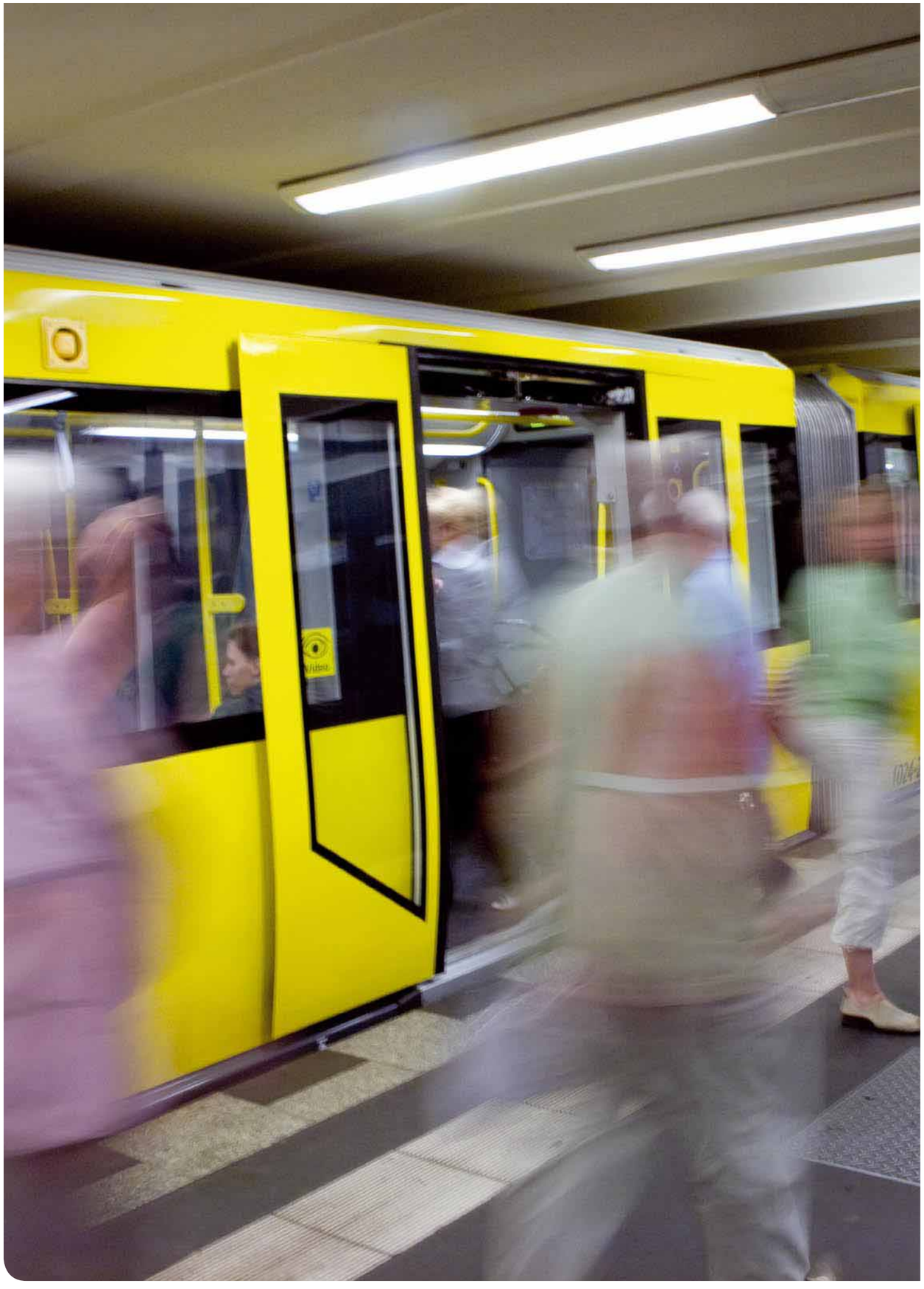
Berlin profiles

A portrait of the
Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG)



New BVG headquarters in Berlin-Mitte
Holzmarktstraße 15 – 17, D-10179 Berlin


Berlin connections



Content

07 **Foreword**

08 **The BVG and Berlin**
10 A long – and successful – story

16 **Main roads and side streets**
18 The BVG network

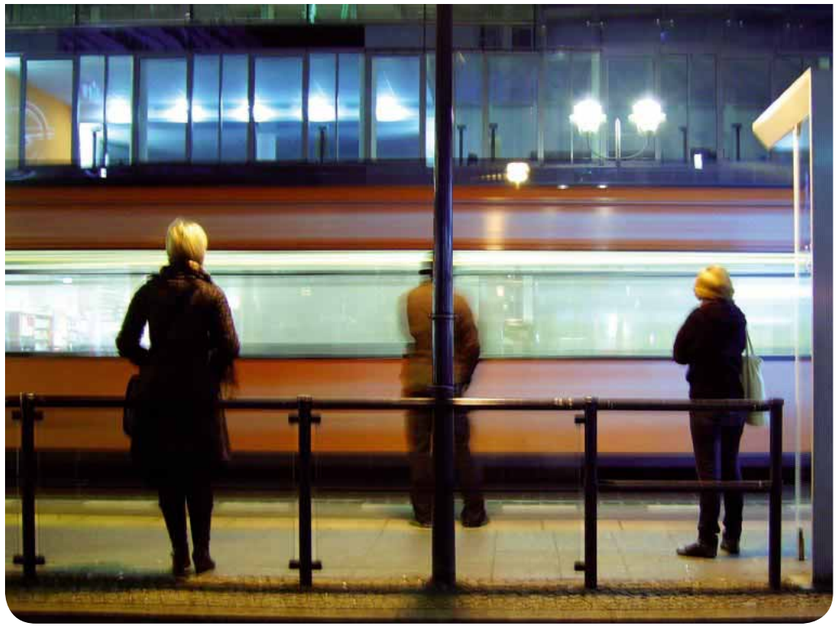
22 **Metro, tram and bus**
24 The BVG at a glance

28 **Mobility for the metropolis**
30 A symphony with four movements

34 **People power**
36 People keep things moving

40 **Living up to Berlin**
42 The BVG as service provider

50 **Whither BVG?**
52 Working toward the future



Foreword

The Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG) is part of the fabric of Berlin. It is inextricably linked with the history and development of the capital of Germany – also in the minds of the city's inhabitants. Its closely woven network of different transport systems forms the basis of the municipal infrastructure. Together with the urban rail system (S-Bahn), the BVG keeps Berlin's residents and visitors on the move, and thus plays a crucial role in the quality of life – as well as in life itself – for the metropolis.

At the start of 2008, the BVG embarked on a new chapter in its eventful history, passing a very promising milestone. A contract between the BVG and the State of Berlin went into effect at the beginning of the year, granting Germany's largest municipal public transportation company a period of security the likes of which it has not seen in its lengthy past. Representing a major responsibility to serve the city of Berlin, this contract provides the BVG with stability in terms of planning but not the slightest opportunity for stagnation.

Following the upheavals of the past two decades due to the political changes affecting the city, the BVG has now largely completed a period of comprehensive restructuring and reforms. With the enormous yet socially responsible reduction in personnel required by these restructuring processes now over, the BVG can concentrate all its energy on developing constructive plans for the future. The track is clear.

Andreas Sturmowski
Chairman of the Management Board

The BVG and Berlin

The historical view

A long-and successful-story

The early days
Of horse and engine power – The rise of the omnibuss

Public transportation in Berlin started with the horse-drawn carriage. Right before the memorable and revolutionary year of 1848, the first omnibus line started up in the capital of Prussia. In October of 1946, the „Concessionierte Berliner Omnibus-Compagnie" received authorization to operate five lines in the center of the city, and on 1 January 1847, the first of these lines started running from Alexanderplatz to Tiergartenstraße.

Inner-city public transportation then developed at the same speed with which Berlin itself blossomed from a quiet residential and university town into an industrial metropolis. The omnibus (from Latin "for all"), which trundled along literally by horsepower, soon faced a competitor on rigid rails. This was the tram, although it too depended on horses to pull it along back then.

Shortly after the turn of the 20th century, motorization in this vibrant metropolis was also extended to the omnibuses, which had fallen behind their competitors on the rails. As of 1905, motorized omnibuses started running on the streets of Berlin.

Step-by-step electrification
Development of the tram

At the turn of the new century, Berlin's tram system could already look back on a forty-year history and a much more rapid developmental trajectory than the plodding omnibus. The first line had started running along Charlottenburger Chaussee from the Brandenburg Gate on 22 June 1865. Just one year later, its horse-drawn carriages had transported a million passengers. Because Berlin had become the heart of the Central European electric industry, it was only a matter of time until innovations in this field were applied to the constantly growing need for public transportation.

In 1881, the world's first electric tram started up at the gates of Berlin. Twenty years later, in 1902, all of the tram lines in Berlin were running on electricity.

Above and below ground
Elevated and underground trains

As in London and a few years earlier in Paris as well, constantly congested roads prompted planners to think about moving the system off the streets. Cost considerations and fears about the stability of Berlin's substratum led the city authorities to favor putting the rails