

Main (river)

The **Main** (German pronunciation: [ˈman] (listen (ⓘ))) is the longest tributary of the Rhine. It rises as the White Main in the Fichtel Mountains of northeastern Bavaria^[a] and flows west through central Germany for 525 kilometres (326 mi) to meet the Rhine below Rüsselsheim, Hesse. The cities of Mainz and Wiesbaden are close to the confluence.

The largest cities on the Main are Frankfurt am Main, Offenbach am Main and Würzburg.^[2] It is the longest river lying entirely in Germany (if the Weser-Werra are considered separate).

Contents

Geography

Navigation

Weirs and locks

Hydroelectric power generation

Tributaries

Ports and municipalities

Main line

Recreation

Sights

Notes and references

Bibliography

External links

Geography

The Main flows through the north and north-west of the state of Bavaria then across southern Hesse; against the latter it demarcates a third state, Baden-Württemberg, east and west of Wertheim am Main, the northernmost town of that state.

The upper end of its basin opposes that of the Danube where the watershed is recognised by natural biologists, sea salinity studies (and hydrology science more broadly) as the European Watershed.

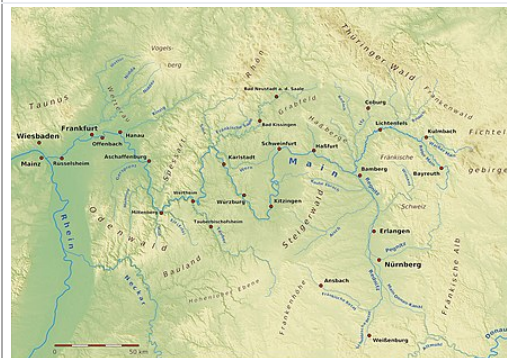
The Main begins near Kulmbach in Franconia at the joining of its two headstreams, the Red Main (*Roter Main*) and the White Main (*Weißer Main*). The Red Main originates in the Franconian Jura mountain range, 50 km (31 mi) in length, and runs through Creussen and Bayreuth. The White Main originates in the mountains of the Fichtelgebirge; it is 41 km (25 mi) long. In its upper and middle section, the Main runs through the valleys of the German Highlands. Its lower section crosses the Lower Main Lowlands (Hanau-Seligenstadt Basin and northern Upper Rhine Plain) to Wiesbaden, where it discharges into the Rhine. Major tributaries of the Main are the Regnitz, the Franconian Saale, the Tauber, and the Nidda.^[3]

The name *Main* originates from Latin *Moenis*, *Moenus* or *Menus*. It is not related to the name of the city Mainz (Latin: *Mogontiacum* or *Moguntiacum*).

Main



The Main River in Würzburg



Position of the Main in Germany

Location

Country Germany

Physical characteristics

Source

- location Upper Franconia
- coordinates 50°5′11″N 11°23′54″E﻿ / ﻿50.08639°N 11.39833°E﻿ / 50.08639; 11.39833
- elevation 895 metres (at Weissmainquelle)

Mouth

- location Rhine
- coordinates 49°59′40″N 8°17′36″E﻿ / ﻿49.99444°N 8.29333°E﻿ / 49.99444; 8.29333

Length 524.9 km (326.2 mi) ^[1]

Basin size 27,208 km² (10,505 sq mi) ^[1]

Discharge

- average 200 m³/s (7,100 cu ft/s)

Basin features

Progression Rhine→ North Sea

No.	Name	Location	Year built	Main-km	Distance between locks (km)	Altitude (m)	Height (m)	Lock length (m)	Lock width (m)
1	Viereth	<u>Viereth-Trunstadt</u>	1925	380.699		230.86	6.00	289.80	12.00
2	Limbach	<u>Eltmann</u>	1951	367.176	13.523	224.86	5.36	299.10	12.00
3	Knetzgau	<u>Knetzgau (Haßfurt)</u>	1958	359.781	7.395	219.50	4.24	298.85	12.00
4	Ottendorf	<u>Gädheim</u>	1962	345.263	14.518	215.26	7.59	301.60	12.00
5	Schweinfurt	<u>Schweinfurt</u>	1963	332.037	13.226	207.67	4.67	300.60	12.00
6	Garstadt	<u>Bergtheim</u>	1956	323.503	8.534	203.00	4.69	299.75	12.00
7	Wipfeld	<u>Wipfeld</u>	1950	316.289	7.214	198.31	4.31	300.15	12.00
8	Gerlachshausen mit Volkach	<u>Volkach (Schwarzach am Main)</u>	1957	300.506	15.783	194.00	6.30	300.00	12.00
9	Dettelbach	<u>Dettelbach</u>	1959	295.398	5.108	187.70	5.50	299.35	12.00
10	Kitzingen	<u>Kitzingen</u>	1956	283.979	11.419	182.20	3.66	299.80	12.00
11	Marktbreit	<u>Marktbreit (Frickenhäuser am Main)</u>	1955	275.681	8.298	178.54	3.31	296.40	12.00
12	Goßmannsdorf	<u>Ochsenfurt</u>	1952	269.028	6.653	175.23	3.40	296.90	12.00
13	Randersacker	<u>Würzburg (Randersacker)</u>	1950	258.885	10.143	171.83	3.30	299.60	12.00
14	Würzburg	<u>Würzburg</u>	1954	252.512	6.373	168.53	2.75	293.10	12.00
15	Erlabrunn	<u>Erlabrunn (Thüngersheim)</u>	1935	241.204	11.308	165.78	4.15	299.20	12.00
16	Himmelstadt	<u>Himmelstadt</u>	1939	232.290	8.914	161.63	4.30	299.50	12.00
17	Harrbach	<u>Karlstadt (Gemünden am Main)</u>	1939	219.466	12.824	157.33	4.90	299.45	12.00
18	Steinbach	<u>Lohr am Main</u>	1939	200.673	18.793	152.43	5.14	299.10	12.00
19	Rothenfels	<u>Rothenfels (Marktheidenfeld)</u>	1937	185.887	14.786	147.29	5.26	298.45	12.00
20	Lengfurt	<u>Triefenstein</u>	1937	174.508	11.379	142.03	3.99	300.08	11.98
21	Eichel	<u>Wertheim</u>	1937	160.467	14.041	138.04	4.50	299.92	12.00
22	Faulbach	<u>Wertheim (Faulbach)</u>	1935	147.065	13.402	133.54	4.51	299.80	12.10
23	Freudenberg	<u>Collenberg (Freudenberg)</u>	1934	133.948	13.117	129.03	4.51	300.00	12.00
24	Heubach	<u>Großheubach (Milttenberg)</u>	1932	122.360	11.588	124.52	4.00	300.00	12.00
25	Klingenberg	<u>Klingenberg am Main</u>	1930	113.050	9.310	120.52	4.00	300.71	12.05
26	Wallstadt	<u>Kleinwallstadt (Großwallstadt)</u>	1930	101.203	11.847	116.52	4.00	299.93	12.00
27	Obernau	<u>Niedernberg (Aschaffenburg)</u>	1930	92.909	8.294	112.52	4.01	299.18	12.00
28	Kleinostheim	<u>Kleinostheim (Stockstadt am Main)</u>	1920 1972	77.905	15.004	108.51	6.80	298.36 298.22	12.04 12.02
29	Krotzenburg	<u>Hainburg (Großkrotzenburg)</u>	1920 1983	63.850	14.055	101.71	2.74	302.30 300.01	12.00 12.00

No.	Name	Location	Year built	Main-km	Distance between locks (km)	Altitude (m)	Height (m)	Lock length (m)	Lock width (m)
30	Mühlheim (formerly Kesselstadt)	Maintal (Mühlheim am Main)	1920 1980	53.185	10.385	98.97	3.77	299.90	12.04
31	Offenbach	Frankfurt am Main (Offenbach am Main)	1901 1957	38.514	14.671	95.20	3.18	344.03 230.07	12.09 13.05
32	Griesheim	Frankfurt am Main	1934	28.687	9.827	92.02	4.49	344.05 344.38	12.00 15.00
33	Eddersheim	Hattersheim am Main (Kelsterbach)	1934	15.551	13.136	87.53	3.61	345.46 344.26	12.05 15.05
34	Kostheim	Hochheim am Main (Ginsheim-Gustavsburg)	1886 1934	3.209	12.342	83.92	2.36 (MW Rhine)	341.90 339.02	15.00 Door: 12.00 Chamber: 20.00

Hydroelectric power generation

Most of the weirs or dams along the Main also have turbines for power generation.

- **No.:** Number of the dam/weir (from upstream to downstream).
- **Name:** Name of the dam/weir.
- **Height:** Height of the dam/weir in meters (the height of the Kostheim dam depends on the water level of the Rhine).
- **Power:** Maximum power generation capacity in megawatts.
- **Turbines:** Type and number of turbines.
- **Operator:** Operator of the hydroelectric plant.

No.	Name	Height (m)	Power (MW)	Turbines	Operator
1	Viereth	6.00	6.20	Francis(3), Kaplan(1)	E.ON Wasserkraft
2	Limbach	5.36	3.70	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
3	Knetzgau	4.24	2.90	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
4	Ottendorf	7.59	6.30	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
5	Schweinfurt	4.67	3.80	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
6	Garstadt	4.69	3.90	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
7	Wipfeld	4.31	2.90	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
8	Gerlachshausen mit Volkach	6.30	3.90	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
9	Dettelbach	5.50	4.20	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
10	Kitzingen	3.66	3.00	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
11	Marktbreit	3.31	2.10	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
12	Goßmannsdorf	3.40	2.00	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
13	Randersacker	3.30	2.00	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
14	Würzburg	2.75	0.90	Kaplan(3)	E.ON Wasserkraft
15	Erlabrunn	4.15	2.70	Kaplan(1)	E.ON Wasserkraft
16	Himmelstadt	4.30	2.50	Kaplan(1)	E.ON Wasserkraft
17	Harrbach	4.90	3.00	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
18	Steinbach	5.14	4.20	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
19	Rothenfels	5.26	4.20	Kaplan(2)	E.ON Wasserkraft
20	Lengfurt	3.99	2.60		E.ON Wasserkraft
21	Eichel	4.50	3.10		E.ON Wasserkraft
22	Faulbach	4.51	4.10		E.ON Wasserkraft
23	Freudenberg	4.51	4.30		E.ON Wasserkraft
24	Heubach	4.00	3.40		E.ON Wasserkraft
25	Klingenberg	4.00	3.00		E.ON Wasserkraft
26	Wallstadt	4.00	3.40		E.ON Wasserkraft
27	Obernau	4.01	3.20		E.ON Wasserkraft
28	Kleinostheim	6.80	9.70		E.ON Wasserkraft
29	Krotzenburg	2.74	—		
30	Mühlheim	3.77	4.80		E.ON Wasserkraft
31	Offenbach	3.18	4.10		E.ON Wasserkraft
32	Griesheim	4.49	4.90	Kaplan(3)	Wasser- und Schifffahrtsamt Aschaffenburg
33	Eddersheim	3.61	3.84	Kaplan(3)	Wasser- und Schifffahrtsamt Aschaffenburg
34	Kostheim	2.36	4.9	Kaplan Pit-Rohrturbinen(2)	WKW Staustufe Kostheim/Main GmbH & Co. KG (Gebaut und betrieben von Stadtwerke Ulm/Neu-Ulm)

Tributaries

Tributaries from source to mouth:

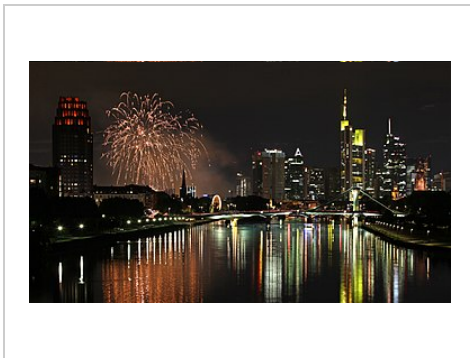
Left

Right

- Regnitz
- Tauber
- Mümling
- Rodach (Main)
- Itz
- Franconian Saale
- Aschaff
- Kahl
- Kinzig
- Nidda



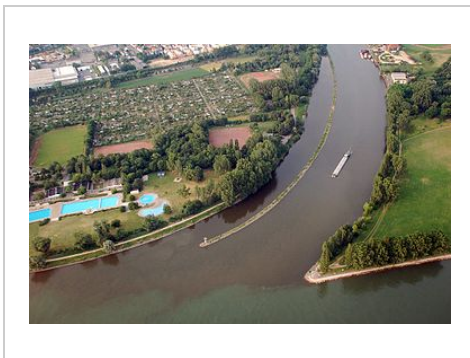
The Main and its main tributaries



The Main in Frankfurt at night



Main in Offenbach am Main



Confluence into the Rhine at Mainz-Kostheim

Ports and municipalities

Around Frankfurt are several large inland ports. Because the river is rather narrow on many of the upper reaches, navigation with larger vessels and push convoys requires great skill.

The largest cities along the Main are Frankfurt am Main, Offenbach am Main and Würzburg. The Main also passes the following towns: Burgkunstadt, Lichtenfels, Bad Staffelstein, Eltmann, Haßfurt, Schweinfurt, Volkach, Kitzingen, Marktbreit, Ochsenfurt, Karlstadt, Gemünden, Lohr, Marktheidenfeld, Wertheim, Miltenberg, Obernburg, Erlenbach/Main, Aschaffenburg, Seligenstadt, Hainburg, Hanau, Hattersheim, Flörsheim, and Rüsselsheim.

The river has gained enormous importance as a vital part of European "Corridor VII", the inland waterway link from

the North Sea to the Black Sea.^[5]

Main line

In a historical and political sense, the Main line is referred to as the northern border of Southern Germany, with its predominantly Catholic population. The river roughly marked the southern border of the North German Federation, established in 1867 under Prussian leadership as the predecessor of the German Empire.

The river course also corresponds with the Speyer line isogloss between Central and Upper German dialects, sometimes mocked as Weißwurstäquator.^{[6][7]}

Recreation

The Main-Radweg is a major German bicycle path alongside the river. Approximately 600 kilometres long (370 mi), it is the first long-distance instance awarded 5 stars by the General German Bicycle Club (ADFC) in 2008. It starts from Creußen or Bischofsgrün and ends in Mainz.^[8]

Sights

- Roman camp at Marktbreit

Notes and references

Footnotes

- a. The Bavarian authorities define the source of the White Main as the source of the Main itself, although the sources of the Red Main and the Franconian Rezat are actually further from the Rhine.

Citations

1. Complete table of the Bavarian Waterbody Register (http://www.lfu.bayern.de/wasser/gewaesserverzeichnisse/doc/tab_alle.xls) by the Bavarian State Office for the Environment (xls, 10.3 MB)
2. "Main River | river, Germany" (<https://www.britannica.com/place/Main-River>). *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved 2021-02-04.
3. Uehlinger, Urs; Wantzen, Karl; Leuven, Rob S.E.W.; Arndt, Hartmut (2009). "The Rhine River Basin". In Tockner, Klement; Uehlinger, Urs; Robinson, Christopher T. (eds.). *Rivers of Europe*. Academic Press. pp. 238–239. doi:10.1016/B978-0-12-369449-2.00006-0 (<https://doi.org/10.1016%2FB978-0-12-369449-2.00006-0>). ISBN 9780123694492. S2CID 16401687 (<https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:16401687>).
4. "Daten und Fakten" (https://web.archive.org/web/20130613103235/http://www.wsd-sued.wsv.de/wasserstrassen/bundeswasserstrassen/daten_und_fakten/index.html) [Facts and figures] (in German). Wasser- und Schifffahrtsdirektion Süd. June 2003. Archived from the original (http://www.wsd-sued.wsv.de/wasserstrassen/bundeswasserstrassen/daten_und_fakten/index.html) on 13 June 2013. Retrieved 7 June 2009.
5. "NoorderSoft Waterways Database" (<http://www.noordersoft.com/indexen.html>). Retrieved 2007-10-24.
6. Qvale, Per (12 May 2014). *From St Jerome to Hypertext: Translation in Theory and Practice*. Routledge. p. 117. ISBN 978-1-317-64053-0.
7. Carrington-Windo, Tristram; Kohl, Katrin (11 April 2013). *Dictionary of Contemporary Germany* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=EbeoAgAAQBAJ&pg=PT586>). Routledge. ISBN 978-1-136-59537-0.
8. "Main-Radweg" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191107080430/https://www.mainradweg.com/>). Archived from the original (<http://www.mainradweg.com/>) on 7 November 2019. Retrieved 23 April 2013.

Bibliography

- Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte (ed.), Main und Meer - Porträt eines Flusses. Exhibition Catalogue to the Bayerische Landesausstellung 2013 (German). WBG. ISBN 978-3-534-00010-4.

External links

- *Main River* (<http://www.mainriver.de/>) Website on the River Main by the Tourist Board of Franconia. (in English)
- "Main" ([https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Collier%27s_New_Encyclopedia_\(1921\)/Main](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Collier%27s_New_Encyclopedia_(1921)/Main)). *Collier's New Encyclopedia*. 1921.
- "Main" (https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_New_Student%27s_Reference_Work/Main). *The New Student's Reference Work* (https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_New_Student%27s_Reference_Work). 1914.
- There is literature about Main (river) (<http://cbsopac.rz.uni-frankfurt.de/DB=2.4/REL?PPN=116505982>) in the Hessian Bibliography
- Water levels of Bavarian rivers (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110511132544/http://www.hnd.bayern.de/>)
- Wasser- und Schifffahrtsdirektion Süd (<https://web.archive.org/web/20080329222218/http://www.wsd-sued.wsv.de/wasserstrassen/bundeswasserstrassen/main/index.html>)
- Main Cycleway (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191107080430/https://www.mainradweg.com/>)
- Historical map of the Main confluence at Steinenhausen (<http://geoportal.bayern.de/bayernatlas/default?lon=4457010.0&lat=5550245.0&zoom=12&base=952>) from *BayernAtlas*

Retrieved from "[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Main_\(river\)&oldid=1115780356](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Main_(river)&oldid=1115780356)"

This page was last edited on 13 October 2022, at 05:00 (UTC).

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License 3.0; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.