

The weather in Germany in 2018

2018 – an exceptional year for weather with many records

Offenbach, 28 December 2018 – "Climate change was the dominant theme in 2018," said DWD press officer Andreas Friedrich. This year has been the warmest and sunniest year since regular measurements were started. It has also been one of the driest years since 1881. Without exception, every month from April to November was too warm, too dry and very sunny. This is what the initial analysis by the Deutscher Wetterdienst (DWD) of data from its around 2,000 weather stations shows.

The start of 2018 was exceptionally mild and with very high levels of precipitation in January; some areas of the south-west saw huge amounts of rain. Winter only made brief appearances in February and March, but brought two spells of exceptionally cold weather. At the start of April, the weather changed from winter to summer within just a few days. April and May were even the warmest since regular measurements were started. May and the first two weeks of June brought numerous violent thunderstorms, particularly in the south and west, and these were often accompanied by hail and torrential rain. However, most regions did not suffer from this and the ensuing period brought one of the greatest droughts in the climate history of Germany. On top of this, in July and August the population experienced one of the longest and most intense periods of heat. Warm, summery days with much sunshine and catastrophic lack of rain continued into November. Productive rain did not arrive until December, bringing the drought to an end.

Warmest year since 1881

At 10.4 degrees Celsius (°C), the average temperature in 2018 was 2.2 degrees higher than for the international reference period 1961–1990. Looking at the comparative period 1981–2010, the deviation was 1.8 degrees above normal. The previous record set in 2014 was beaten by 0.1 degree in 2018, making it the warmest year since measurements first began in 1881. Bernburg an der Saale was the hottest place, with 39.5 °C recorded on 31 July. The coldest night was reported on 28 February in Reit im Winkl, where a temperature of -22.1 °C was recorded.

Extreme drought from February to November

With around 590 litres of precipitation per square metre (l/m²), rainfall in 2018 was just 75 per cent of the normal figure of 789 l/m². This made it one of driest years since regular measurements first began in 1881. Ten months in succession – from February to November – were too dry. Some places in Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia saw least rain and snow overall with only about 250 l/m² whereas most precipitation was recorded in the Upper Allgäu and southern Black Forest, with some places receiving 1800 l/m². The highest daily rainfall figure was on 12 June in Mauth-Finsterau in the Bavarian Forest,





where 166.5 l/m² were recorded. The deepest covering of snow, apart from on mountain summits, was 142 cm recorded on 13 February in Balderschwang in the Upper Allgäu.

Sunniest year since records began in 1951

At around 2020 hours, the DWD registered the sunniest year since records were first started in 1951. Most sunshine was recorded in the Berlin area; at less than 1750 hours, the Sauerland saw least sunshine.

All the monthly values stated in this press release are provisional figures. The data used for the last four days of the month are based on forecasts. Some of the measurements from DWD's network of stations were not yet available at the time of publication.

