

PRESS RELEASE**5 February 2026 (updated 19 February 2026)****21 March 2026 – International Nowruz Day
Music, Dance, Food, Workshops and Market
Free entry****Nouruz, Newroz, Nauroz
Spring Festival at the Humboldt Forum****Under the title *Nouruz, Newroz, Nauroz*, seven Berlin associations together with the Humboldt Forum Foundation invite guests to a large cross-cultural New Year and spring festival at Berlin Palace on Saturday, 21 March 2026.****Nowruz – also known as Newroz, Nauroz or Navro'z – symbolises renewal, the beginning of spring, and the return of light.****The programme at the Humboldt Forum brings together music, dance, culinary delights, workshops, and market stalls, and is free of charge.**

For more than 3,000 years, the Nowruz festival has marked the beginning of spring. It is celebrated on the equinox, on 20 or 21 March. The name means “new day” and traditionally stands for renewal, the awakening of nature, and the return of light. Around 300 million people worldwide celebrate Nowruz along the Silk Road, including Afghans, Azerbaijanis, Iranians, Kurds, Tajiks, Turkmen, Uzbeks, and communities in Southeast Europe and the Caucasus. Some groups attribute additional meanings to Nowruz: for Kurds it can symbolise resistance, for Iranians it marks the New Year, and for Turkmen it signals the start of the agricultural year. This family festival represents cultural unity and has been part of UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage since 2009. In 2010, the United Nations declared 21 March International Nowruz Day.

Nowruz connects directly with the collections and presentations on cultural traditions, festivals, and everyday practices at the Humboldt Forum, particularly those of the Museum für Asiatische Kunst (Museum of Asian Art) and the Ethnologisches Museum (Ethnological Museum). Seven Berlin associations, together with dedicated individuals, collaborated for almost a year to develop ideas and co-create the programme for the

festival at the Humboldt Forum. This makes it one of the celebrations and events within the programme focus *Beziehungswise Familie* (Family Matters).

Programme

Music

Featuring singer Cengîz Yazgî, the group Orkèstar with Parham Alizadeh, the transcultural ensemble Tschiltan, and the ensemble Milliy meros of the State Philharmonic of Uzbekistan under the direction of Dilfuza Qobilova. The celebrated Afghan singer Wajiha, together with Farid Rastagar, as well as grandmaster Ramin Saqizada and **Feraydoon Meyazada**, will be also performing.

Dance

Dance groups present both traditional and contemporary forms, including Kurdish dances by GovendaKÎ, choreographies from the Persian region by Rahaavi, and dances from Afghanistan by the Hewad group. You can also take part yourself in a workshop on a Central Asian dance led by choreographer Malika Khaidarova.

Workshops and creative activities for all ages

Young and older visitors alike can enjoy a variety of hands-on activities – from building kites (Afghan and Uzbek) to henna painting, braiding hair, and making flower crowns. Participatory formats bring together art, storytelling, and collective creation. A special highlight is the paper puppet theater *Nowruz on Paper* with Karim Asir, the internationally known Afghan puppeteer and actor – widely recognized as the “Afghan Charlie Chaplin.”

For children aged six and up, author Zilan Sarah Kößler and illustrator Clara Gilod offer a reading and workshop based on their children’s book *JINA*, which tells the story of the courageous young Kurdish-Iranian woman Jina Amini, who stood up against injustice and sparked a global movement for freedom and women’s rights.

Food and Market

Traditional food and drinks are offered at stalls. A bazaar area presents handmade crafts.

The programme has been curated by members of Integrationshelfer Mehr e.V., German Association for Central Asia, Rojavida - Bildung und Kultur für Kinder e.V., Mittani Kunst- und Kulturzentrum e.V., Yekmal- Verein der Eltern aus Kurdistan in Berlin e.V., San'at - Forum für Kunst, Kultur und Wissenschaft e.V., PUL e.V. (i.G.) - Gemeinsam Brücken bauen and the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss.

One building, four partners: This diversity is founded on the collaboration of our partner institutions. The Humboldt Forum is a collaboration between the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss; the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz for collections from the Ethnologisches Museum and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin for the Humboldt Lab; and the Stadtmuseum Berlin for the BERLIN GLOBAL exhibition.

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