Hannover on the river Leine, is the capital of the federal state of Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen), Germany and was once by personal union the family seat of the Hanoverian Kings of Great Britain, under their title as the dukes of Brunswick-Lüneburg (later described as the Elector of Hanover). At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the Electorate was enlarged to become the capital of the Kingdom of Hanover.

With a population of 522,944 the city is a major centre of northern Germany, known for hosting annual commercial trade fairs such as the Hannover Fair and the CeBIT. Every year Hannover hosts the Schützenfest Hannover, the world’s largest marksmen’s festival, and the Oktoberfest Hannover, the second largest Oktoberfest in the world. In 2000, Hannover hosted the world fair Expo 2000.

Hannover is also of national importance because of its universities and medical school, its international airport, and its large zoo. The city is also a major crossing point of railway lines and highways, connecting European main lines in east-west-direction (Berlin - Ruhr area) and north-south-direction (Hamburg - Munich et al.).