



European  
Commission



Country Profile  
Highlights  
Strategy  
Legal Framework  
Actors  
Infrastructure  
Services for Citizens  
Services for Businesses

What's inside

eGovernment in



Germany

ISA<sup>2</sup>

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This document is meant to present an overview of the eGovernment status in this country and not to be exhaustive in its references and analysis. Even though every possible care has been taken by the authors to refer to and use valid data from authentic sources, the European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the included information, nor does it accept any responsibility for any use thereof.

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# Country Profile

## Basic data and indicators

### Basic Data

**Population (1 000):** 82,800,000 inhabitants (2017)

**GDP at market prices:** 3,263,350 million Euros (2017)

**GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standard EU 28 = 100):** 123 (2016)

**GDP growth rate:** 2.2% (2017)

**Inflation rate:** 1.7% (2017)

**Unemployment rate:** 3.8% (2017)

**General government gross debt (Percentage of GDP):** 64.1% (2017)

**General government deficit/surplus (Percentage of GDP):** 1.3% (2017)

**Area:** 357,134 km<sup>2</sup>

**Capital city:** Berlin

**Official EU language:** German

**Currency:** EUR

Source: [Eurostat](#) (last update: 18 January 2018)

## Political Structure

Since its reunification in 1990, Germany has been a **federal republic** consisting of 16 states – or ‘Länder’ – one of which is the capital city, Berlin. These Länder have their own legislative and executive bodies.

At the federal level, legislative power is exercised by a Parliament made up of two chambers with different powers. Members of the Lower House (Federal Diet or [Bundestag](#)) are elected every four years by direct suffrage, based on a combination of majority voting and proportional representation. Their number, which varies with each legislature since parties may obtain supplementary seats in electoral districts, currently stands at 620. Parties must win at least 5% of the national vote, or three constituency seats to gain representation. The Upper House (Federal Council or [Bundesrat](#)) consists of 69 members, designated by the governments of the *Länder*, in proportion to their population.

The Head of State is the [Federal President](#), elected for a five-year period by the Federal Convention (a body made up of representatives of the *Bundestag* and of the parliaments of the *Länder*). Executive power is in the hands of the [Federal Government](#), nominated by the lower house (*Bundestag*) and headed by the [Chancellor](#).

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany (Basic Law or [Grundgesetz](#)) was enacted on 23 May 1949. It was amended by the Unification Treaty of 31 August 1990 and the Federal Statute of 23 September 1990.

Germany was a founding member of the European Community in 1957.

**Head of State:** President [Frank-Walter Steinmeier](#) (since 19 March 2017).

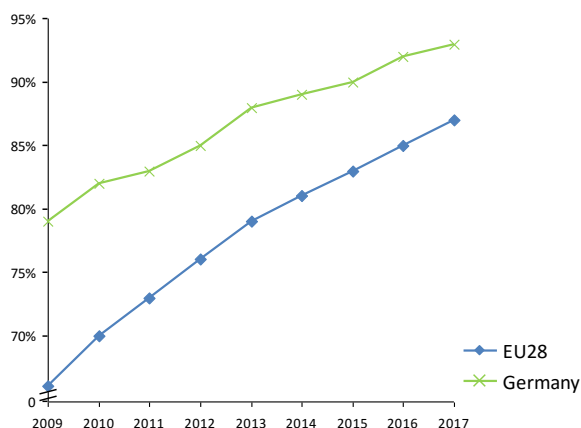
**Head of Government:** Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#) (since November 2005).

## Information Society Indicators

### Generic Indicators

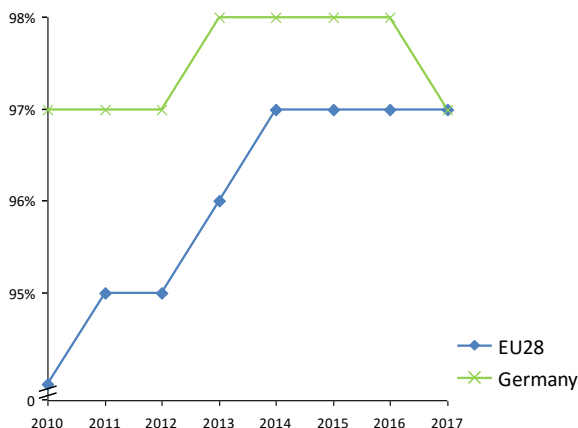
The following graphs present data for the latest Generic Information Society Indicators for Germany compared to the EU average. Statistical indicators in this section reflect those of [Eurostat](#) at the time the Edition is being prepared.

**Percentage of households with Internet access in Germany**



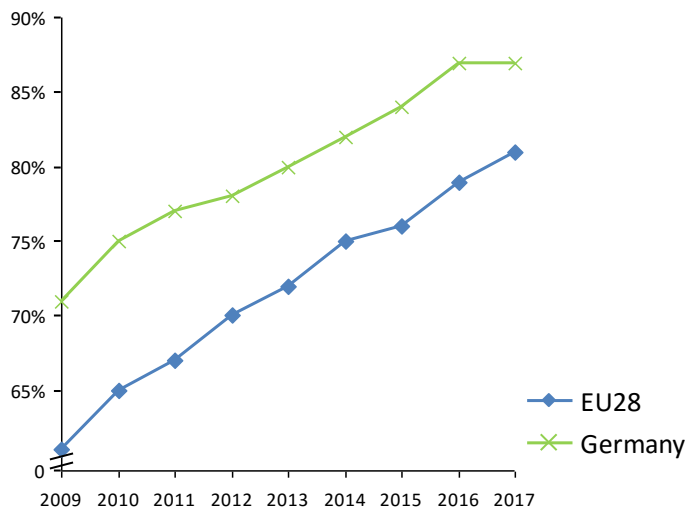
Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of enterprises with Internet access in Germany**



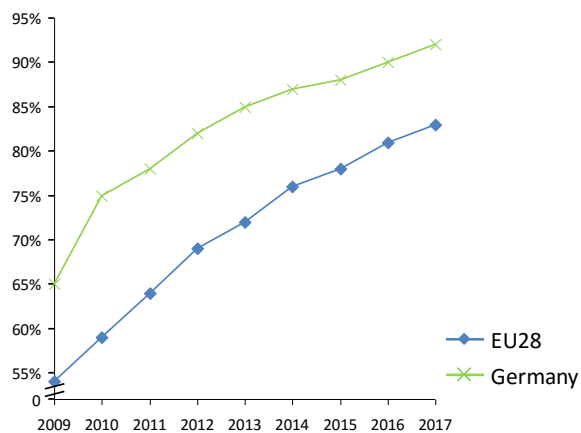
Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of individuals using the internet at least once a week in Germany**



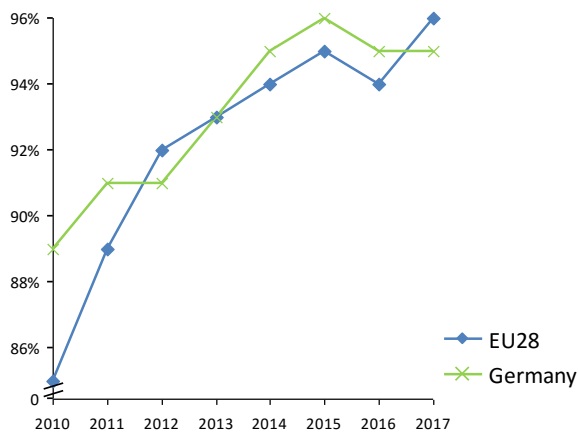
Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of households with a broadband connection in Germany**



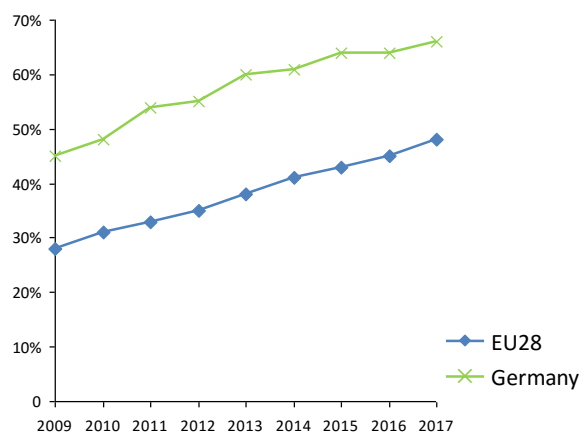
Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of enterprises with a broadband connection in Germany**



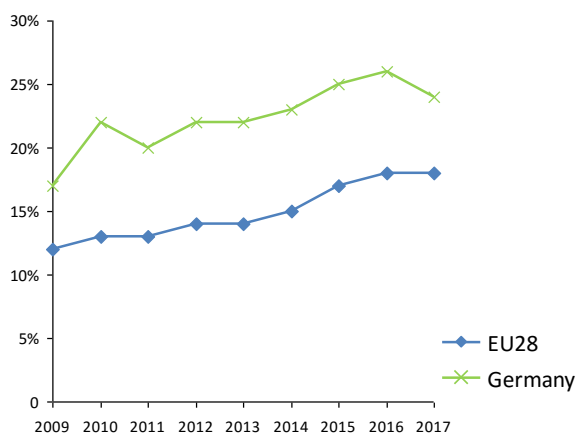
Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of individuals having purchased/ordered online in the last three months in Germany**



Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of enterprises having received orders online within the previous year in Germany**

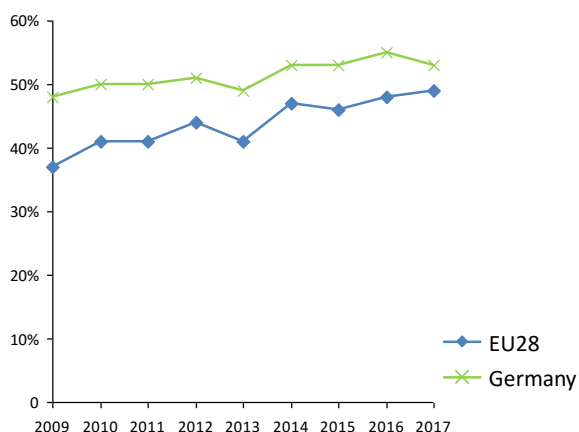


Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

eGovernment Indicators

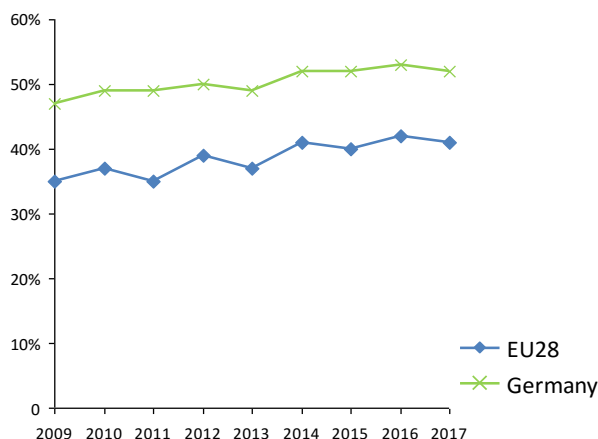
The following graphs present data for the latest eGovernment Indicators for Germany compared to the EU average. Statistical indicators in this section reflect those of [Eurostat](#) at the time the Edition is being prepared.

**Percentage of individuals using the internet for interacting with public authorities in Germany**



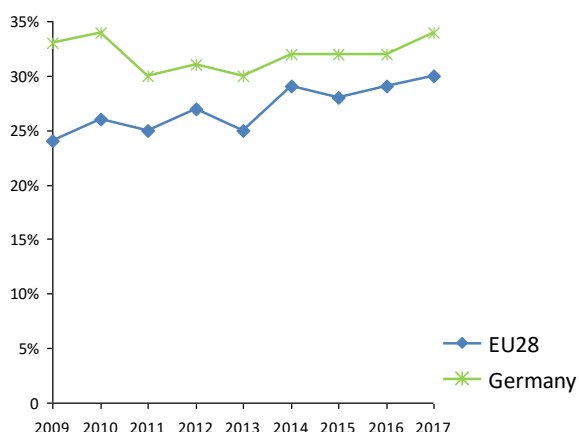
Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of individuals using the internet for obtaining information from public authorities in Germany**



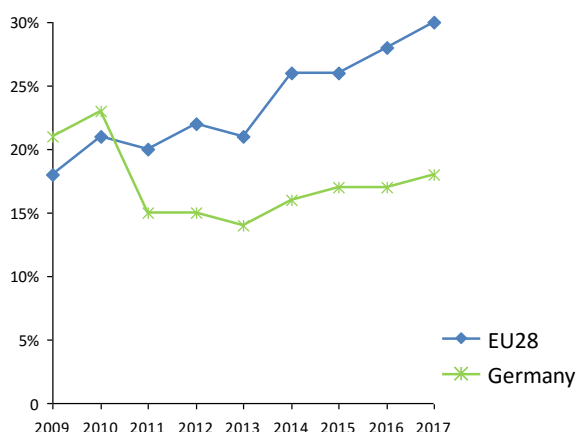
Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of individuals using the internet for downloading official forms from public authorities in Germany**



Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

**Percentage of individuals using the internet for sending filled forms to public authorities in Germany**



Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)

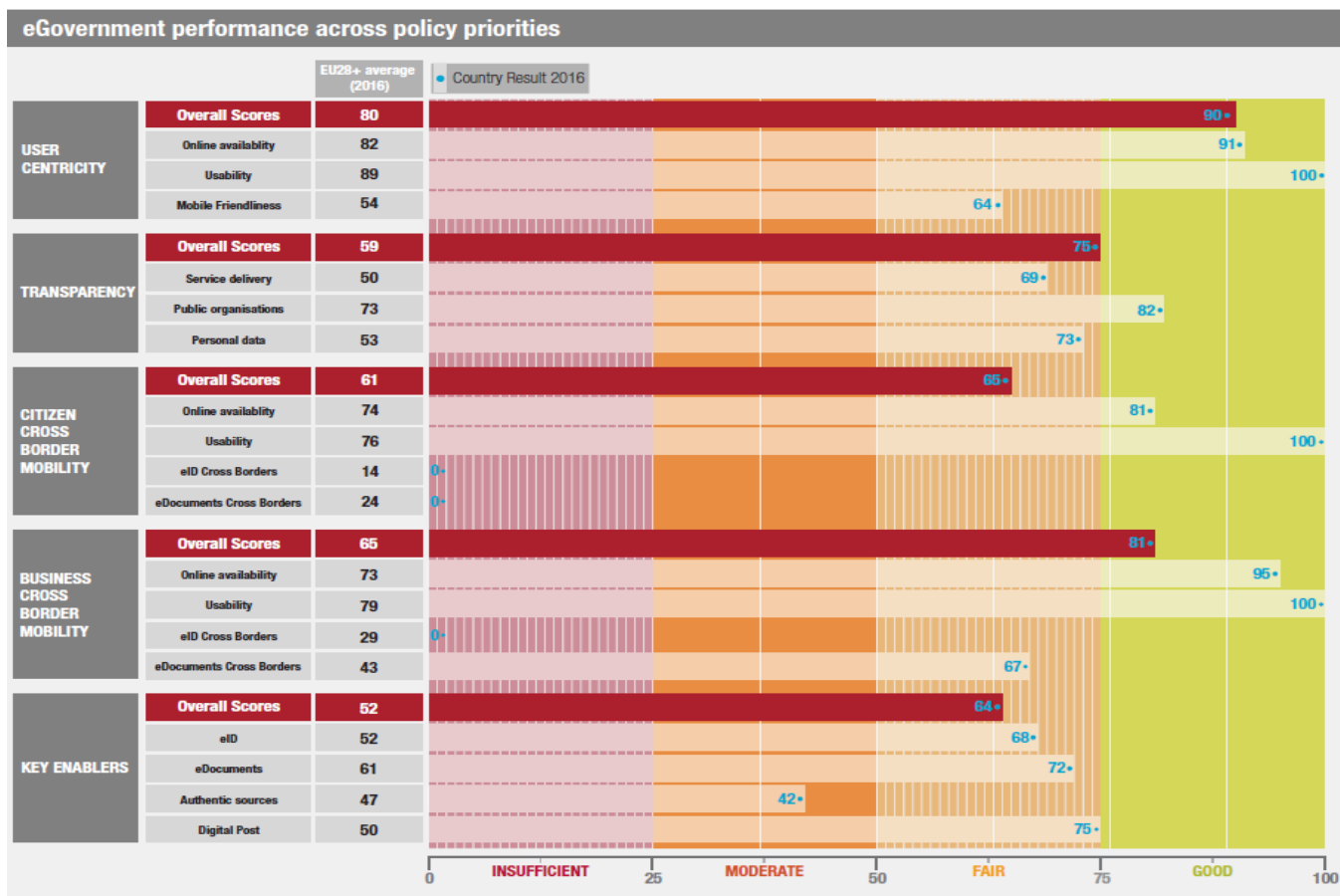


### eGovernment State of Play

The graph below is the result of the latest [eGovernment Benchmark](#) report, which monitors the development of eGovernment in Europe, based on specific indicators. These indicators are clustered within four main top-level benchmarks:

- **User Centricity** – indicates to what extent (information about) a service is provided online and how this is perceived.
- **Transparent Government** – indicates to what extent governments are transparent regarding: i) their own responsibilities and performance, ii) the process of service delivery and iii) personal data involved.
- **Cross Border Mobility** – indicates to what extent EU citizens and businesses can use online services in another country.
- **Key Enablers** – indicates the extent to which five technical pre-conditions are available online. There are: Electronic Identification (eID), Electronic documents (eDocuments), Authoritative Sources, and Digital Post. Digital Post refers to the possibility that government communicate electronically-only with citizens or entrepreneurs through e.g. personal mailboxes or other digital mail solutions.

This year’s measurement has selected a set of four life events that cover the most common domains of public services, representative for both businesses and citizens: Starting a business and early trading operations; Losing and finding a Job; Studying; Family Life (new life event, measured for the first time). The figure below presents the development of eGovernment in Germany compared to the EU average score.



Source: [eGovernment Benchmark Report 2017 Country Factsheets](#)

# eGovernment Highlights

## Main eGovernment changes and key milestones in 2017

### eGovernment Strategy

Within the realm of the existing strategy, a number of initiatives to improve access to eGovernment procedures and services were successfully launched this year.

### eGovernment Legal Framework

There have been two main developments in the legal framework of Germany over the course of the last year:

- ▶ In order to make better use of the opportunities offered by digitisation without endangering personal rights, Germany is amending the [Federal Data Protection Act](#) in line with the basic data protection ordinance and implementing an [EU Data Protection Directive](#). The amendments will come into force in May 2018.
- ▶ The Federal Republic of Germany has notified the German eID scheme in accordance with the eIDAS regulation to the European Commission. The notification procedure was completed in August 2017 and was published by the Commission at the end of September 2017. Germany completed the notification procedure as the first EU-MS.
- ▶ By the Act for the Improvement of Online Access to Administration Services of August 2017 the federal, *Länder* and local governments are now required to provide all administrative services online within five years, make them available through mutually linked online portals and allow access via a single-user account.

### eGovernment Actors

The [Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology](#) and the [Federal Commissioner for Data Protection](#) have changed their website addresses.

### eGovernment Infrastructure

A new nationwide German digitisation platform for the public administration has been launched.

In May 2017 Germany has triggered, as first Member State, the [pre-notification procedure](#) to make sure that EU people and businesses will be able to use their trusted electronic identification means (eID) - as provided under eIDAS - to digitally authenticate themselves in order to use online services across the European Union in a secure and protected way. As said, the notification procedure for the German eID was finalised in 2017.

### eGovernment Services

A digitisation programme has been launched to increase the number of administrative procedures that can be accessed and completed online.

## Other highlights

There has been no major other highlight in the field of eGovernment in Germany in the course of the last year.

## 2001 – 2017

For previous eGovernment highlights, please consult the factsheets for past years, accessible through this [link](#).

# eGovernment Strategy

## Main strategic objectives and principles



### High-Tech Strategy 2020 for Germany: Ideas, Innovation, Prosperity

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research has developed a [high-tech oriented strategy](#) that aims to stimulate Germany's scientific and economic potential in a targeted way and to find solutions to global and national challenges. Germany would like to continue its efforts of becoming a worldwide innovation leader through a set of formulated innovative goals, defined priorities, and introduced new instruments within a wide range of different fields of innovation.

The [High-Tech Strategy](#) is the first broad national concept in which the key stakeholders involved in innovation share a joint vision. It is based on five pillars:

- ▶ Prioritising future challenges related to prosperity and quality of life;
- ▶ Consolidating resources;
- ▶ Strengthening the dynamism of innovation in industry;
- ▶ Creating favourable conditions for innovation;
- ▶ Strengthening dialogue and participation.

### Cyber Security Strategy

- ▶ On November 9 2016, the new [Cyber Security Strategy for Germany](#) was adopted by the Federal Government. This builds upon the lessons learnt and continues the initiatives outlined in the 2011 Cyber Security Strategy. The new strategy forms a cross-departmental strategic framework for the activities of the federal government with regard to cyber security.
- ▶ The overall aim of the new strategy is to ensure cybersecurity on a level appropriate to the importance and protection of networked information infrastructures without affecting the opportunities and benefits offered by the cyberspace.

### National eGovernment Strategy

The [National eGovernment Strategy \(NEGS\)](#), adopted by the IT Planning Council on 24 September 2010, is regularly evaluated and updated. The next evaluation phase is scheduled for 2018. Upcoming updates of the NEGS will consider the principles of the Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment signed in October 2017. The goal of the Strategy is to guide the country's eGovernment progress in the upcoming years. The Strategy has been developed in cooperation with a broad spectrum of stakeholders from the fields of administration, politics, science and business.

The National eGovernment Strategy aims at ensuring a common orientation for eGovernment activities and efforts at federal, state and local levels in order to establish an attractive eGovernment and information technology for citizens and businesses. Thereby,

according to the new Strategy's vision, eGovernment should be characterised by five principles:

- ▶ **Orientation on usefulness for citizens, businesses and public administration:** Potential users of eGovernment offerings/services like citizens and businesses should be fully aware of the services offered to them and be able to access them. In particular, broadband access in rural areas should be improved as well as citizens' digital/media literacy.
- ▶ **Cost-effectiveness and efficiency:** For enabling the public administration to provide rapid, cost-efficient and high-quality services, it should design process chains within the public administration, which should be supported by electronic means, following a customer-centric approach. The various processes will be digitised to the most possible extent, while the Federal Government and the States will put the appropriate legal, organisational and technical instruments in place for ensuring the mandatory use of digital technologies.
- ▶ **Data protection, cyber security and transparency:** Data protection, security and transparency constitute important preconditions for the citizens to accept, trust and intensively use eGovernment. Therefore, the National eGovernment Strategy aims at ensuring data transparency and security by paying particular attention to only collect and process the data that is absolutely necessary for providing a particular administrative service. The protection of the providing systems is vital for the acceptance of eGovernment services as well.
- ▶ **Social participation and transparency:** Active participation of citizens and businesses in policy as well as in planning and decision-making processes will be fostered, as far as it is reasonable and allowed by law. Impact and results of participation will be made transparent to citizens and businesses. **Innovation and sustainability:** Federal, State and Local Public Administrations will support the capacity for innovation and openness to change through their own high-performance and client-oriented eGovernment offerings.

The National eGovernment Strategy also contains six key principles that new legislations and initiatives should take into account:

1. Citizens and businesses can complete as many of their errands as possible from the same point of access, regardless of time and location.
2. Authorities should be able to cooperate quickly across different levels to minimize the administrative burden for citizens, businesses and public administration, e.g. by providing spatial data via the Spatial Data Infrastructure Germany initiative (GDI-DE).
3. Citizens and businesses should know which public authorities process their personal data. They should be confident that eGovernment is secure.
4. Citizens use electronic media to participate actively in the policy process and in organising the provision of public services.
5. Public administration should use cooperation models with the business and research community when developing and operating eGovernment solutions. It will enable innovative business models, in particular through online services and information.
6. Information security management leads to a high level of IT security for eGovernment procedures and guarantees confidentiality, integrity and availability of data.

## The IT Consolidation Programme of the German Federal Government

The German Cabinet decided in summer 2015 to substantially modernise the IT of the German Federal Government. One pillar of this modernisation programme is to consolidate

the IT of the Federal Government in a small number of data centres. The programme contains:

- ▶ The consolidation of the already existing data centres of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure including their subordinate agencies.
- ▶ The consolidation of the remaining IT of the federal government.
- ▶ Establishing an IT controlling.
- ▶ Consolidation IT procurement.
- ▶ Development of innovative IT services for the federal government including trusted federal cloud services.

### Memorandum for the National eGovernment Strategy

At its 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of 30 June 2011, the IT Planning Council took the first concrete steps towards the implementation of the National eGovernment Strategy, by publishing a [memorandum](#), which outlines the agreed strategic goals. Their main focus is placed on building a federal infrastructure and aligning individual measurements. According to the memorandum, IT planning envisages the following **priorities** to be addressed:

- ▶ Transparent government and regulatory actions should be promoted by appropriate measures of information technology and eGovernment.
- ▶ Federal and state governments need to adapt to the IT processes and current threats from the Internet constantly. Therefore, minimum uniform standards for communication between government departments should be developed.
- ▶ Develop a common eID strategy to enable citizens and businesses to securely transact with the administration over the Internet. In this regard, the notification procedure to the European Commission for the [German eID](#) was fully finalised in 2017. As reported by the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI), “the German eID fulfills all requirement of eIDAS Level of Assurance *high*”.
- ▶ A federal information management will bring together faster and more efficiently knowledge management to improve public services.
- ▶ Sharing initiatives to federal, state and local governments for cost saving in IT infrastructures are in the making.
- ▶ The definition of IT security and IT interoperability standards is one of the main tasks of the IT Planning Board.
- ▶ The framework for the levels of cross eGovernment should be further developed. The IT planning supports the coordinated activities of the federal and state laws to further adjust the regulatory framework.

# eGovernment Legal Framework

## Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment

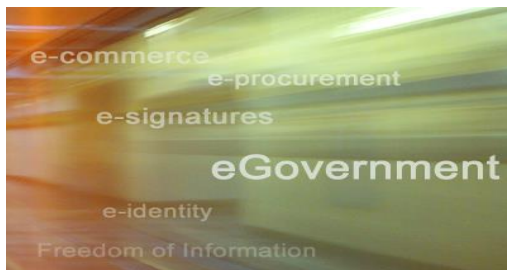
### eGovernment Legislation

[Onlinezugangsgesetz \(OZG\)](#): A legal milestone for better online access to administration services

On 18 August 2017 the Act for the Improvement of Online Access to Administration Services (Onlinezugangsgesetz - OZG) entered into force. Federal, *Länder* and local governments are now required to take comprehensive measures in order to promote electronic government services. Core regulations include:

- ▶ All (suitable) administrative services must be available online within five years after the law's entry into force.
- ▶ Federal, *Länder* and municipal eGovernment services must be available both through a newly created federal online portal and the online portals of the *Länder*. All portals will be connected to a network of portals, the *Portalverbund*. Thus, access to electronic government services becomes easier and more user-friendly.
- ▶ Access to all administrative services in the portal network must be allowed via a secure single-user account. In the user account, personal data (e.g. date of birth, residence) can be stored permanently for the users' convenience, provided they have given their consent.

### German Act to promote electronic government



On 17 June 2013, the Bundestag, with the approval of the Bundesrat, adopted the Act to promote electronic government ([eGovernment Act - EGovG](#)). The German law for the promotion of eGovernment came into effect on 1 August 2013. Its aim is to facilitate electronic communication with the administration and to enable federal, state and local authorities to provide simpler, more user-friendly and efficient eGovernment services. The main

provisions are:

- ▶ Obligation for federal, state and local authorities to open a point of access for the transfer of electronic documents.
- ▶ Obligation for federal authorities to open a De-Mail access and to offer an electronic proof of identity via electronic identity (eID) card and electronic residence permit.
- ▶ Electronic record keeping.
- ▶ Enabling electronic evidence and electronic payment in administrative procedures.
- ▶ Obligation to document and analyse processes before implementing information technology systems.
- ▶ Provision of machine-readable data (open data).
- ▶ Georeferencing of electronic registers.
- ▶ The eGovernment Act triggered legislative activities in most of the German federal states. By now seven *Länder* have already adopted their own eGovernment Acts, several others have initiated legislative procedures

### [German Basic Law, Articles 91c and 91d \(2009\)](#)

On 1 August 2009, within the framework of the second round of reforms of Germany's federal structure, important changes in the [German Basic Law](#) (*Grundgesetz*) came into force with articles 91c and 91d. Article 91c ensures the simplification of IT bodies and decision-making processes, thus increasing their effectiveness and enabling their adaptation to the needs of the fast-evolving technical progress. Besides, the German federation (*Bund*) has now the exclusive legislative competence for the development of a secure linking-up network to inter-connect Federal and Land IT-networks, which will be free of underlying media issues. Furthermore, Article 91d constitutes a vital component for the modernisation of the administration as it provides the legal basis for facilitating the federation and the *Länder* to directly and effectively benchmark their administrations in order to increase their effectiveness, transparency and provision of better public services.

### [Law on the combination of information technology networks of federal and state governments \(2009\)](#)

The envisaged objectives of the German Basic Law are implemented through the [Law on Linking up Federal and Land IT Networks](#) (IT-NetzG), adopted on 10 August 2009, as well as through an **Inter-Länder Agreement** which came into force on 1 April 2010. According to this agreement, the IT Planning Council was established and tasked with developing the technical requirements for the core network infrastructure to be used. Moreover, the **IT Planning Council** bears the responsibility to steer cross-disciplined eGovernment, projects involving both federation and the *Länder*. Finally, the council will also adopt decisions on IT interoperability and security standards.

## Freedom of Information Legislation

### [Freedom of Information Act \(2005\)](#)

After being narrowly approved by the Lower Chamber of Bundestag in early June 2005, Germany's [Freedom of information \(FOI\) Act](#) was voted on 8 July 2005 by the *Bundesrat*, published in the Federal Gazette on 13 September 2005 and came into force on 1 January 2006. The law provides the public with a general right to access **Federal Government information**. However, this general right is limited by a number of broadly defined exemptions, covering, for instance, security-sensitive issues, potential threats to public safety and even the 'fiscal interests of the Federal Government'. The legislation also contains an 'Internet clause' that will force federal administration bodies to make a number of items publicly available online. In extend to the legislation on federal level, certain Federal States also have their own Freedom of Information Legislation.

## Data Protection/Privacy Legislation

### [Federal Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)

Germany has one of the strictest data protection laws in the European Union. The world's first data protection law was passed in the German Land of Hessen in 1970. In 1977, a Federal Data Protection Law followed, which was replaced in 1990, amended in 1994 and 1997. An additional revision took place in August 2002 to align German legislation with the EU Data Protection Directive ([95/46/EC](#)).

On 6 April 2016, the EU agreed to a major reform of its data protection framework, by adopting the data protection reform package, comprising the General Data Protection Regulation ([Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679](#) - GDPR) replacing the Directive 95/46/EC and the Police Directive (Directive (EU) 2016/680). The GDPR applies from 25 May 2018 and will



become directly applicable. The GDPR was designed to harmonise data privacy laws across Europe, to strengthen the protection of the individual's right to personal data protection and will guarantee the free flow of personal data between EU Member States. However, the GDPR permits Member States to modify several provisions under certain conditions via local legislation (opening clauses). In order to keep the quality of German data protection standards and in using several opening clauses Germany adopted the [Act to Adapt Data Protection Law](#) to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and to Implement Directive (EU) 2016/680 including a [Federal Data Protection Act](#). The amendments will also come into force in May 2018.

## eID Legislation

### [Electronic Identification Promotion Act](#)

The law on the promotion of electronic proof of identity came into force on 15 July 2017.

The law aims to promote the use and dissemination of online identification through the German eID card, making it easier and more secure. The identity card with eID function, i.e. an electronic proof of identity function, was introduced in 2010. This feature enables citizens, government agencies and businesses to reliably identify themselves on the Internet. However, the use of the eID function has so far lagged behind the expectations. In order to address this situation, now each new identity card will be issued with a ready-to-use electronic identification function and it will now be easier for businesses and national and local authorities to provide the eID cards with the features of online passports. The responsible data protection authorities monitor compliance with data protection.

## eSignatures Legislation

### [Digital Signature Act \(2001\)](#)

The German Electronic Signature Act came into force on 22 May 2001, implementing [EU Directive 1999/93/EC](#) on a Community framework for electronic signatures and replacing the previous [Digital Signature Act](#) that had been adopted as part of the Information and Communication Services Act of 1 August 1997. It regulates the necessary secure infrastructure for the use of electronic signatures, which receive the same legal status as hand-written signatures. It is complemented by an [Ordinance on Electronic Signatures](#) of 16 November 2001 setting out standard requirements and responsibilities for certification authorities, as well as minimum requirements for technical components used to create digital signatures. The Digital Signature Act has been amended by the First law amending the Signature Act (1. SigÄndG) of 04/01/2005.

## eCommerce Legislation

### [Electronic Commerce Act \(2001\)](#)

The Act on framework conditions for electronic commerce of 14 December 2001 implements the EU eCommerce Directive ([2000/31/EC](#)) into German law. The Act amends the [Tele Services Act](#) and the [Tele Services Data Protection Act](#) of 1997 (both of them adopted as part of the Information and Communication Services Act of 1 August 1997), as well as some provisions of the German Civil Code.

## eCommunications Legislation

### [Act to Regulate De-Mail Services and Amendments to other Legislation \(2011\)](#)

Legal requirement for registration as a De-Mail provider is an 'Act to regulate De-Mail services and amendments to other legislation'. The draft was adopted by the Federal Cabinet on 13 October 2010, and entered into force on 3 May 2011. De-Mail enables the sending of traceable and confidential documents and messages online. Compared to conventional e-mail, the delivery of the De-Mails can be proven. It is not possible to read or manipulate the contents of a De-Mail on its journey across the Internet. De-Mail providers are interoperable and provide the same level of security based on an accreditation process that is specified by the legislator. De-Mail providers have to fulfil high requirements on security, functions, interoperability and data protection. Furthermore, De-Mail legislation foresees that providers must not only furnish the stated certificates for security, functionality and interoperability, but must also demonstrate comprehensive measures to protect personal data within the scope of the accreditation procedure. The basic specifications for security, functionality and interoperability were drawn up by the federal government together with future De-Mail providers and laid down in technical guidelines. To ensure compliance with these guidelines, De-Mail providers are screened in an accreditation process. With a focus on data protection, the De-Mail concept, for instance, requires that De-Mail providers can enable the setting up of pseudonym e-mail addresses as a means of preventing traceability in communication or consumer profiles. Furthermore, when requested, De-Mail providers must store the user's encryption certificates in the directory service to support (additional) end-to-end encryption of De-Mails.

The German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) has published the approval criteria on its website: [www.bsi.bund.de](http://www.bsi.bund.de).

### [Telecommunications Act \(2004\)](#)

Germany has transposed most of the new EU regulatory framework for electronic communications through the Telecommunications Act of 22 June 2004. The transposition is expected to be completed through secondary legislation.

## eProcurement Legislation

### [Official Contracting Terms for Award of Service Performance Contracts \(2006\)](#)

Germany, through its government has notified the transposition of Directive [2004/17/EC](#), Directive [2004/18/EC](#) and Directive [2005/51/EC](#) into national law through the official contracting terms for award of service performance contracts, published on 6/4/2006. The original contracting terms have been further simplified through the '[Contract Awards for Public Supplies and Services- Part A \(VOL/A\)](#)' published on 29 December 2009 in the Federal Gazette (Volume 61, Nr.196a) and a corresponding correction published on 29 February 2010. The amended [procurement ordinance](#) (*Vergabeverordnung; VgV*), which came into force on 11 June 2010, regulates the submission of electronic bids in the area of public procurement.

On 1 December 2016, the Bundestag adopted the Law on the transposition of the Directive of eInvoicing in public procurement (Directive 2014/55/EU).

### eInvoicing

In Germany, the competence in the field of eInvoicing is shared between the [Federal Ministry of the Interior](#) (at the federal level) and the Land (at the 'Länder' level). The legislation in place makes reference to the [eBill Law](#) from 4 April 2017 (E-

Rechnungsgesetz), which mandates the receipt and processing of eInvoicing for all federal contracting authorities. As far as other state and local entities are concerned, they shall rely on supplementary legislation by the Länder. Due to decision by the National IT Planning Council in June 2017 XRechnung is - as a Core Invoice Usage Specification (CIUS) to European Norm 16931- the leading Standard for Central authorities, Regional authorities & Local authorities in Germany. Furthermore, the eInvoicing platform will be activated by the federal government for B2G public procurement by the end of 2018.

## Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI)

### [Law on re-use of Public Sector Information \(2006\)](#)

The law on the re-use of Public Sector Information came into force on 19 December 2006, transposing the pertinent EU Directive [2003/98/EC](#). The law regulates the information re-usage of public sector information beyond the public-administrative scope, namely, for shaping new information-products and related services. The law specifies that re-usage of public sector information has to be non-discriminative, contemporary and not exclusive. In accordance with the revision of the EU Directive, the law was revised in July 2015.

# eGovernment Actors

## Main roles and responsibilities

### National eGovernment

#### Policy/Strategy

##### Federal Ministry of the Interior

The responsibility for Germany's eGovernment strategy/policy lies with the Federal Ministry of the Interior.



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**Source:** <http://www.bmi.bund.de/>

##### Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology

The Office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology (Commissioner) was established on 1 January 2008, in line with the Federal IT-Steering Strategy's guidelines. In accordance with the Cabinet's decision the Commissioner is responsible for the following activities:

- ▶ Elaboration of the eGovernment and IT security strategy for the federal IT.
- ▶ Development of an architecture, standards and methods for the federal IT.
- ▶ Control the provision of central IT infrastructure of the federal government.

The commissioner chairs the IT council and the IT steering group and is the federal representative in the IT planning council. In addition, s/he participates in the decision-making process for all major IT related laws and regulations in the federal public administration IT Council

The IT Council is the central body for inter-departmental control at the federal level. Apart from establishing the Office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology (Commissioner), all government departments have set up a position of a Chief Information Officer (CIO). CIOs of all government departments form the IT Council, which decides on all strategic issues, including Germany's eGovernment strategy and IT security. All its resolutions are made unanimously.



**Klaus Vitt**  
**State Secretary in the Federal Ministry of the Interior**  
**Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology**

**Contact details:**

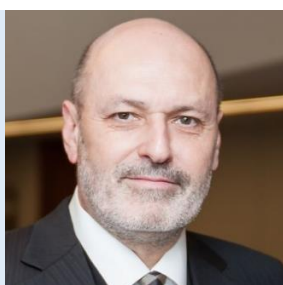
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### IT Steering Group

The federal IT Steering Group is the supreme body of the federal IT management. Members are:

- ▶ The Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology.
- ▶ The State Secretary for budget of the Federal Ministry of Finance.
- ▶ The State Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology.
- ▶ A representative of the Federal Chancellery.

### Coordination

#### Federal Ministry of the Interior

The Federal Ministry of the Interior coordinates the combined implementation efforts of all federal ministries and agencies. Better coordination of implementation is achieved through

the IT Management at federal level. Responsible for the implementation of the IT Management at federal level within the Federal Ministry of the Interior is the IT Director and Chief Information Officer, Mr Peter Batt.

### **Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology**

The Office of the Commissioner brings together the units responsible for the coordination of the 'Information Society', the main IT Strategy of German Federal Administration and the Office of the Task Force 'Deutschland Online' as well as, the unit responsible for the operative trans-departmental IT-Steering including large scale programmes such as the IT consolidation programme. The Commissioner is the key contact person of the Federal Government for cooperating with Federal States, municipalities and all relevant national and international stakeholders on IT-related matters. The Commissioner represents the Federal Government in the IT Planning Council.

### **IT Planning Council**

The [IT Planning Council](#) is responsible for steering and coordinating cross disciplined eGovernment projects involving both the Federation and the States (*Länder*). According to Article 91c of the German Basic Law, the council is tasked with the coordination of the cooperation between Federation (*Bund*) and the States in the field of Information Technology; decisions on interdisciplinary interoperability and security standards; the steering of eGovernment projects; and the planning and implementation of the core network infrastructure according to the [Law on Linking up Federal and Land IT Networks](#).

## Implementation

### **German Federal Office of Administration (BVA)**

The German Federal Office of Administration is Germany's central public service agency. It performs more than 100 different tasks for all federal ministries. Among these is the development of some of the country's eGovernment infrastructure components such as the government portal [Bund.de](#), or the Content Management System [Government Site Builder](#).

### **Individual Government Ministries and Agencies**

Government ministries and agencies are responsible for the implementation of their departmental ICT projects. The Federal Ministry of the Interior coordinates the combined implementation efforts of all federal ministries and agencies.

## Support

### **Federal Office for Information Security (BSI)**

The Federal Office for Information Security is the central IT security service provider for the German Government. One of its key tasks is to provide support to federal authorities on IT security.



**Arne Schönbohm**  
**President of the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI)**

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## Audit/Assurance

**Federal Court of Accounts**

The President of the Court also serves as Federal Commissioner for Efficiency in Public Administration. S/he puts forward proposals, recommendations, reports and opinions in order to enhance the efficiency of the federal administration. The Commissioner may also advise Parliament upon request.

## Data Protection

**Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information**

The Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information is responsible for the audits/controls of all federal agencies, with regard to the observance of data protection legislation.

**Andrea Voßhoff****The Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information****Contact details:**

The Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information

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## Policy/Strategy

**German Federal States**

All of the Federal States (*Länder*) are currently setting their own eGovernment strategies. As a result of these strategies, nearly all local authorities have an Internet presence and over 80% of local authorities are already providing relevant online services. Furthermore, a large number of local authorities in Germany offer central access to their online services via highly efficient portals. The Federal *Länder* and local authorities are working in parallel to further expand their own eGovernment services.

**Conference of Minister-Presidents and Conferences of Specialised Ministers**

The Conference of Minister-Presidents and the Conferences of Specialised Ministers are bodies in which federal states cooperate in their own spheres of responsibility. The federal states use these conferences in order to agree on proceedings in matters of joint interest, develop their position in relation to the federal government and also seek mutually agreed solutions with the federal government.

## Coordination

### **IT Planning Council**

As of April 2010, the new IT Planning Council replaced, the former Committee for Automatic Data Processing, at the federal, state, and local level (KoopA ADV) with respect to the technical coordination at state and local levels.

## Implementation

### **Individual Federal States and Municipalities**

Individual Federated States and Municipalities are responsible for the implementation of their own eGovernment projects.

## Support

### **Federal Ministry of the Interior**

The ministry is responsible for promoting new structures between the federal, state and local levels in the IT front. The introduction of Article 91c to the [German Basic Law](#) calls for further cooperation in information technology in the administration of federal and state governments.

## Audit/Assurance

### **State (*Länder*) Court of Accounts**

Each German State (*Land*) has its own audit body, which liaises and works on equal terms with the Federal Court of Accounts, in areas where there is dual responsibility for the provision and delivery of public services. In cases where the Federal Court works with one or more of the State Courts, they perform joint audits or agree to divide audit responsibilities among their respective organisations. There are also joint working parties where the Federal Court and the various State Courts discuss matters of common interest, such as budgetary law, taxation, public works, data processing and other matters of general policy and guidance.

## Data Protection

### **State Data Protection Commissioners**

German States have their own Data Protection Commissioner, responsible for controlling the observance of data protection legislation by public bodies located in their jurisdictions.



# eGovernment Infrastructure

## Main eGovernment infrastructure components

### Portal

#### [Bund.de – A new nationwide German digitisation platform for the public administration](#)

Modern administration needs to consistently take advantage of the opportunities offered by digitisation and align its electronic service to citizens' expectations and needs. The number of public administrative procedures in Germany that can be completed online will therefore be significantly increased in the near future. These eGovernment services will be easier and faster to find on the web - as users no longer need to know which federal jurisdiction is responsible for the respective procedure.

To achieve this aim, the German federal, state and local governments are working on a common digitisation platform. This platform will take the shape of a joint network of the administrative portals at federal and state level. The portals are structured according to life and business situations. Municipal portals and services are connected to the **portal network** via state portals. To allow for simple and secure processing of eGovernment offers, users will be provided with **service accounts**, similar to customer accounts in online commerce, which will also feature post office box functions. In order to save time and costs, the portal network builds on existing solutions.

In a first step in 2018, the German federal government will launch a newly revised portal that provides access to eGovernment services of the federal authorities via a **federal service account**. This account complies with the requirements of the Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC - in short, eIDAS Regulation. Federal ministries and government agencies using this account thus automatically comply with the EU-requirements that will come into force in September 2018. As part of the portal network, the new administrative portal will eventually also offer access to procedures and services within the jurisdiction of the federal states and municipalities. The legal basis for the entire project is the so-called "**Online Access Act**" which came into force in August 2017.

The digitisation initiative is flanked by a **digitisation program of the IT-Planning Council**, a central body in which federal and state authorities work together on issues of information technology in the public sector. Within this program, selected administrative procedures with high relevance for citizens and companies are digitised. These procedures will be made available online nationwide in 2018 via the portal network.

The digitisation of the public administration in Germany is further supported by **FIM (Federal Information Management)**. By offering textual information, form fields and processes, FIM lays the foundation for a uniform and unambiguous description and structuring of public tasks and duties both for the enforcement level and for the legislation. FIM furthermore provides the conditions for a simplified electronic mapping of cross-organisational administrative processes in the form of IT-based procedures. The three building blocks (services, forms and processes) as well as the overall coordination are jointly operated by the German federal government and the state governments.

## Networks

### [Berlin-Bonn Information Network \(IVBB\)](#)

The infrastructure supporting internal communications among the federal authorities is the Berlin-Bonn Information Network (IVBB), established in the 1990s, when the German Parliament and the Federal Government moved from Bonn to Berlin. The IVBB provides the main federal authorities with central Internet access and networking services. Up to July 2006, IVBB has also provided access to the IVBB Intranet, which was replaced by the Federal Intranet (*Intranet des Bundes*). The new intranet portal features new content, services and workflows, such as person and federal agencies search engine, a travel management system and access to information and document databases.

The IVBV is a private IP-based communication network, which serves as **intranet** among the different **Public Administration departments**. Its infrastructure facilitates the incorporation of the Berlin-Bonn Information Network (IVBB) as well as of other networks of the Federal Administration into a comprehensive IP-based network, featuring, amongst others, a firewall system, comprehensive encryption of the data communication and permanent observation of the connected users and the established connections.

### [Federal Networks \(NdB\)](#)

The Federal Networks (*Netze des Bundes*) will substitute IVBB and IVBV, and increase the efficiency and security (availability and privacy) of the networks involved. The aim is to create a common infrastructure for the federal government in the long term.

### [Deutschland-Online Infrastructure \(DOI\)](#)

In June 2006, the 'Deutschland-Online' action plan was approved by the Federal Government and the federal states. A core project within the 'Deutschland-Online' action plan was the '**Deutschland-Online**' Infrastructure project, which aimed at establishing the network-infrastructure for widespread and integrated electronic processing between administrative units. The DOI network is being implemented as a connective network structure (coupling network) for the public administration networks in Germany, with junctions to the sTESTA network of the European Union and to the federal networks IVBB and IVBV/BVN, that are to be replaced in the project [Federal Networks](#) (*Netze des Bundes*, NdB).

## eIdentification/eAuthentication

### [Electronic Identity Card](#)

Germany's next generation Identity (eID) Card was launched on 1 November 2010. The new eID card in credit card format replaces the existing national identity card and offers more functions than the current conventional ID. By utilising a microchip, the card provides an online authentication functionality, applicable to both eGovernment and eBusiness transactions. Due to the assignment of authorisation certificates and the mutual authentication, cardholders can be confident that whoever requests their data is also authorised to obtain it. The secure eID card will provide further protection against identity theft and will offer new, user-friendly ways to guarantee valid client-data for service providers and to protect young people by age verification. Furthermore, the eID card can be used as identification and authentication means for remote signatures. To ensure that national ID cards continue to serve as secure travel documents, the eID cards have biometric identifiers stored on a chip which satisfies requirements for official identity checks – and for this purpose only. All eID cards have a digital biometric photo; cardholders may

choose to include two fingerprints on the chip as well. Both identifiers are an efficient way to increase security at border controls.

In February 2017 Germany has triggered, as the first Member State, the [pre-notification procedure](#) to make sure that EU people and businesses will be able to use their trusted electronic identification means (eID) - as provided under eIDAS - to digitally authenticate themselves in order to use online services across the European Union. eID cards shall guarantee an elevated level of security and protection of personal data'. The notification procedure for the German eID was completed in 2017 on level of assurance *high*.

### [Electronic Passport \(ePass\)](#)

Germany was among the first countries to introduce the **electronic Passport (ePass)**, in November 2005. It was developed to comply with the [Council Regulation \(EC\) No 2252/2004](#) and was equipped with a microchip, holding the owner's data, such as name, surname, date of birth and nationality. Beyond traditionally relevant data, a digital facial image of the owner was also stored on the microchip. In June 2007, the revision of the [Passport Act](#), as approved by the Federal Council, laid down the legal foundation for the electronic Passports of the second generation. In addition to the digital facial image, the new passports also feature two fingerprints in digital format. Those fingerprints are to be stored exclusively on the passport's microchip, and they should in no case be stored locally on issuance authorities systems, or in any other central database.

In March 2017, Germany issued a new generation of passports. For the new passport, traditional high-quality security features have been complemented by additional, innovative features combining state-of-the-art materials with cutting-edge technology.

## eProcurement

### [XVergabe \(eTendering platform\)](#)

XVergabe is the official website of Germany's eTendering cross-platform communication standards project, which has been operational since July 2011. The project's aim is to develop platform-independent eTendering standards for the cross-platform exchange of documents and data between the bidders and the eTendering platforms. To date, the [xvergabe.org](#) website contains basic project information, as well as the most important documents that are released as part of the project's work.

### [Federal eProcurement Platform \(e-Vergabe\)](#)

The 'eVergabe' project was considered to be one of the most important projects of the 'BundOnline 2005' initiative. The service features the electronic awarding orders based on communications between the awarding agency and potential bidders that are comprehensive, legally binding and free from media discontinuities. The offering ranges from notification via electronic tender submission to contract award using the contract award platform. The documents containing the contract terms can be downloaded and bids can be submitted with an electronic signature. The eAward project falls within the remit of the [procurement agency of the Federal Ministry of the Interior BMI](#). In technical terms, the service is implemented as a web-based transactional platform using Java clients, combined with a Web interface for searching for tenders. In addition to the 'eVergabe' platform, all public tenders from this platform are automatically published online on [www.bund.de](#).

### [Federal eGovernment Shop \(Kaufhaus des Bundes - KdB\)](#)

Beside the federal eProcurement platform, the Procurement Agency of the Federal Ministry of the Interior has also developed the federal eGovernment shop. With this solution, the

ordering of materials takes place through an electronic catalogue. Supplies of printing paper, for instance, are ordered by few mouse clicks. Even customised PCs and cars can be ordered online directly from the company. Conservative calculations estimate that each electronically executed order via KdB saves at least 377 minutes (equates to EUR 195 of personnel expenses) compared to a simplest form of a single tender action.

## Knowledge Management

### [Library Portal \(Bibliotheksportal\)](#)

This library and information portal on the intranet of the federal is a quick and easy access to a wide range of information. Through this portal twenty-two libraries have enlisted their literature, electronic publications, databases and services across agencies to use. Users are location-independent and can search around the clock in the library catalogues of all participating libraries and the portal for specialised databases, such as 'Beck-Online', 'juris', 'Makrolog' and the 'Munzinger Archive'. In addition, the portal is a comprehensive 'Link List' with relevant Internet sources available.

### [XRepository](#)

XRepository is an online library for **XML based Data Exchange Formats**, launched in January 2009. This website constitutes a central location for the publication of a broad spectrum of data relating to eGovernment projects, including Data-Models, XML schemes and relevant documentation. Once published, the data is consequently available for re-use by other administrations and designers of business processes. The website also facilitates online research on standards and interfaces, which can be subsequently downloaded at no cost. The online library is operated by the Co-ordination Office for IT Standards (KoSIT) in Bremen.

## Other Infrastructure

### [Services Registry - German Administration Services Directory \(DVDV\)](#)

The German Administration Services Directory (DVDV) is a level - and sector-crossing infrastructure component for eGovernment in Germany. In more detail, it is the professional and administrative cross-border infrastructure component, for the safe and reliable addressing of automated services and specialised procedures and for secure and legally binding communication between authorities and with the public administration in Germany. The basis of the DVDV is a directory service which lists agencies and other providers with their respective services.

The DVDV is based exclusively on **open Internet protocols**. Worldwide, it is one of the first and largest standardised Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) implementations in the government area, and was made possible through unique cooperation between various levels of government and sectors in the Federal Republic of Germany.

### [SAGA](#)

In 2002, the co-ordinating and advisory agency of the Federal Government for Information Technology published the document 'Standards and Architectures for eGovernment Applications' (SAGA) as a guideline for eGovernment application development projects. A host of completed projects has been orientated towards the state-of-the-art and investment-safe standards and technologies recommended by SAGA.

On 3 November 2011, the IT Council adopted the version 5 of SAGA. SAGA 5 is a mandatory technology catalogue for all software systems of the German federal administration. Technologies must be chosen according to the classifications in SAGA in all software projects. Goals of SAGA are the reduction of risks and investment-safe developments as well as agility, security, interoperability, reusability and scalability for software systems. Publisher of SAGA is the Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology.

## eCommunication

### De-Mail

De-Mail, which takes conventional e-mail one step further, is an easy-to-use technology that allows citizens, businesses and administrations to exchange electronic messages in a secure manner. Compared to conventional e-mail, the delivery of the De-Mails and the identity of sender and receiver can be proven. It is not possible to read or manipulate the contents of a De-Mail on its journey across the Internet. One important aim of De-Mail is to make these basic security functions, regarding confidentiality, reliability and binding, easy to use, without the need for additional installations for the end-user. The sender and recipient of a De-Mail can be clearly identified. Send and delivery certificates can be easily generated.

De-Mails are encrypted during transport and can neither be intercepted nor manipulated. SPAM and Phishing are effectively prevented because the De-Mail sender can be clearly identified by secure initial identification and users are able to log on with two-factor-authentication using the new German eID card or a mobile phone-based method (mobile TAN).

Furthermore, De-Mail offers huge potential to optimise the electronic communication in the private and public sector. Recently, business and administration processes have been marked by media inconsistencies that produce considerable delays and additional costs. With the additional security functions, that De-Mail provides, a large part of today's paper-based business and administration processes can be handled fully electronically – simply, quickly and from any location. So far inter alia Deutsche Telekom AG, GMX.DE, WEB.DE and Mentana GmbH have become accredited De-Mail providers.

## eSignature

### Signature Alliance

Administration and private partners founded the 'Signatures alliance' in 2003. The cooperation aims at promoting the usage of **electronic signatures** in Germany, and delivering their benefits to both public and private service providers. All citizens should be able to use a standardised technical infrastructure, to access interoperable applications in the area of eBusiness and eGovernment, using their diverse signature cards. More information and details may be found in the document 'Requirements and convergent objectives of the Signature Alliance' (['Vorgaben und Konvergenzziele für das Signaturlbündnis'](#)).

Legal requirement for registration as a De-Mail provider, is an 'Act to regulate De-Mail services and amendments to other legislation' which entered into force on 3 May 2011.

So far inter alia Deutsche Telekom AG, GMX.DE, WEB.DE and Mentana GmbH have become accredited De-Mail providers. Further information can be downloaded at [www.de-mail.de](http://www.de-mail.de).

# eGovernment Services for Citizens

## Availability and sophistication of eServices for Citizens

The information in this section presents an overview of the basic public services, which were identified by the European Commission and Member States under the [Your Europe initiative](#) that is an EU site designed to help citizens do things in other European countries – avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and red tape in regard to moving, living, studying, working, shopping or simply travelling abroad.

The groups of services for citizens are as follows:

1. **Travel**
2. **Work and retirement**
3. **Vehicles**
4. **Residence formalities**
5. **Education and youth**
6. **Family**

### 1. Travel

Passenger rights, documents you need

#### Passport

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Website: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en>

Description: Information and online form that can be filled on screen. Applications must then be submitted to local authorities, or to German consular services for applicants living outside Germany.

Money and charges

#### VAT refunds and excise duties

Responsibility: Central (Federal) / Regional (State) Government

Website: <https://www.elster.de/eportal/start>

Description: ELSTER enables online transmission of VAT returns.

### 2. Work and retirement

Working abroad, finding a job abroad, retiring abroad

#### Job search services by labour offices

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Labour Agency

Website: <http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/>

Description: The employment portal aims at connecting supply and demand on the training and job markets, promoting their transparency. It provides access to databases of job offers and of job seekers, and furthermore features an innovative matching application to help job seekers identify opportunities more easily.

## Professional qualifications

**Legal information system (incl. information on the regulated professions)**

Responsibility: Centre for German Legal Information; Federal Foreign Office

Website: <https://www.lg2g.info/lg2g-business-directory-for-expats/ngos-for-expats?sid=229:Centre-for-German-Legal-Information-CGerLI-EV&pid=169>

Description: This website offers a comprehensive and freely accessible database of electronic materials on German law. It brings together English translations of court decisions, legislation, articles and other law-related documents scattered over the internet and adds them to the collection of German legal information.

## Taxes, unemployment and benefits

**Income taxes: declaration, notification of assessment**

Responsibility: Central (Federal) / Regional (State) Government

Website: <https://www.elster.de/eportal/start>

Description: The ELSTER website enables online transmission of income tax returns and tax notifications. Filed tax returns are automatically compared with the electronic assessment issued by the tax administration to determine immediately whether there are deviations in the tax office figures. In Germany, income tax collection is a federal competence but it is administered individually by each of the 16 German states. The programme Kernel is also distributed freely to the approximately 250 tax software developers in the German market.

**Unemployment benefits**

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Labour Agency

Website: <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/>

Description: Information and forms to download, which can be filled on screen before being printed and sent or delivered to the Labour Office. Since 2005, the two-tier regime of unemployment benefits and long-term welfare support have been replaced by a single flat-rate pay-out, known as 'Unemployment Pay II' (*Arbeitslosengeld II* - AIG II), which eventually reduces the amount of benefits that long-term unemployed receive.

**3. Vehicles**

## Driving licence

**Driver's licence**

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Motor Transport Authority (KBA)

Website: <http://www.kba.de/>

Description: Information only.

## Registration

**Car registration (new, used, imported cars)**

Responsibility: Local Government

Website: N/A

Description: Vehicle registration services are handled by local authorities, some of which provide related information and forms on their websites.

#### 4. Residence (and other) formalities

Documents and formalities

##### Declaration to the police (e.g. in case of theft)

Responsibility: Central (Federal) / Regional (State) Government

Website: <http://www.polizei.de/>

Description: Web-based online declaration services are introduced in the federal states of [Baden-Württemberg](#), [Berlin](#), [Brandenburg](#), [Hamburg](#), [Hessen](#), [Mecklenburg-Vorpommern](#), [Nordrhein-Westfalen](#), [Sachsen-Anhalt](#) and [Schleswig-Holstein](#) enabling online reporting of crimes and other information.

##### Housing (building and housing, environment)

Responsibility: Regional Government

Website: N/A

Description: Planning and building permission services are handled by regional (state) governments, some of which have implemented online requests systems.

##### Passport

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Website: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en>

Description: Information and online forms that can be filled on screen. Applications must then be submitted to local authorities, or to German consular services for applicants living outside Germany.

#### 5. Education and youth

School, university

##### Enrolment in higher education/university

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Central Office for the Allocation of University Places (ZVS)

Website: <http://www.zvs.de/>

Description: Information and online application system.

##### Public libraries (availability of catalogues, search tools)

Responsibility: Central (Federal) / Regional (State) / Local Government

Website: N/A

Description: Most major public libraries (universities, city libraries, etc.) provide catalogues and search tools on the Internet. In addition, through the new online lending system 'Onleihe' (unload), introduced in May 2007, library members are also able to borrow various digital media online, including eBooks, digital audio books, music and videos.

##### Student grants

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Ministry for Education and Research and Federal Office of Administration (BVA)



Website: <http://www.bafög.de/>

Description: Information and forms to download. Students are entitled to a government study allowance called BAföG, which is equally divided between a scholarship and a long-term, low-interest loan. The allowance declines as student's parents' income rises. The loan part of the BAföG has to be paid back at a later date (through [BAföG Online](#)). The scheme is administered by the [Federal Office of Administration \(BVA\)](#) and the Credit Institute for Reconstruction ([Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau - KfW](#)).

## Researchers

### Information and assistance to researchers

Responsibility: EURAXESS Germany

Website: <http://www.euraxess.de/>

Description: EURAXESS Germany provides information and assistance to mobile researchers – by means of the web portal and with the support of the national EURAXESS Service Centres. The portal contains practical information concerning professional and daily life, as well as information on job and funding opportunities.

### Public libraries (availability of catalogues, search tools)

Responsibility: Central (Federal) / Regional (State) / Local Government

Website: N/A

Description: Most major public libraries (universities, city libraries, etc.) provide catalogues and search tools on the Internet. In addition, through the new online lending system 'Onleihe' (unload), introduced in May 2007, library members are also able to borrow various digital media online, including eBooks, digital audio books, music and videos.

## 6. Family

### Children

#### Child allowances

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Labour Agency

Website: <http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/>

Description: Information and forms to download, which can be filled on screen before being printed and sent or delivered to the Labour Office. Child allowances (Kinder geld) are granted for children as a tax refund, in order to meet the constitutional rule that income is not taxable up to a child's subsistence level.

# eGovernment Services for Businesses

## Availability and sophistication of eServices for Businesses

The information in this section presents an overview of the basic public services, which were identified by the European Commission and Member States under the [Your Europe initiative](#) that is an EU site designed to help citizens do things in other European countries – avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and red tape in regard to doing business abroad.

The groups of services for businesses are as follows:

1. **Start and grow**
2. **VAT and customs**
3. **Selling abroad**
4. **Staff**
5. **Product requirements**
6. **Public contracts**
7. **Environment**

### 1. Start and grow

Start-ups, European Company

#### Registration of a new company

Responsibility: Regional Government

Website: <http://www.handelsregister.de/>

Description: Information only. Company registration services are handled by local courts.

Intellectual property rights

#### Patents

Responsibility: German Patent and Trade Mark Office (DPMA)

Website: <http://dpma.de/english/index.html>

Description: The German Patent and Trade Mark Office issues its official publications, such as Patentblatt (patent gazette), Markenblatt (trade mark journal) and Designblatt (designs gazette) as well as patent documents and utility model documents exclusively in electronic form. You can conduct online searches for patents, utility models, trademarks and designs and have access to the legal/procedural status registers. You can of course file IP applications online at the DPMA.

Annual accounts

#### Submission of data to statistical offices

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Statistical Office

Website: <http://w3stat.destatis.de/>

Description: Launched in early 2000, the W3Stat system allows businesses to pass on regular information to the Federal Statistics Office via the Internet.

## 2. VAT and customs

VAT – Basic rules, Cross-border VAT, Check a VAT number (VIES), VAT refunds

### VAT: declaration, notification

Responsibility: Federal States' Fiscal Authority (Tax Department)

Website: <https://www.elster.de/eportal/start>

Description: The fiscal registration and declaration obligations can largely be fulfilled electronically.

Excise duties

### Corporate tax: declaration, notification

Responsibility: Central (Federal) / Regional (State) Government

Website: <https://www.elster.de/eportal/start>

Description: ELSTER enables online transmission of corporate tax returns and tax notifications.

Reporting imports/exports

### Customs declarations (eCustoms)

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Customs Administration

Website: [http://www.zoll.de/DE/Home/home\\_node.html](http://www.zoll.de/DE/Home/home_node.html)

Description: Information, forms and eServices for customs' operations. An Online Customs Declaration service was launched in 2002, based on the ATLAS system for electronic application, processing, settlement and archiving of essential custom processes.

## 3. Selling abroad

Competition rules, unfair contract terms, consumer guarantees, defective products

### German law

Responsibility: Centre for German Legal Information, Federal Foreign Office

Website: <https://www.lg2g.info/lg2g-business-directory-for-expats/ngos-for-expats?sid=229:Centre-for-German-Legal-Information-CGerLI-EV&pid=169>

Description: This website offers a comprehensive and freely accessible database of electronic materials on German law. It brings together English translations of court decisions, legislation, articles and other law-related documents scattered over the internet and adds them to the collection of German legal information.

## 4. Staff

Terms of employment, social security, equal treatment, redundancies

### Social contributions for employees

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Insurance Institution for Employees - BFA

Website: <http://www.bfa.de/>

Description: Information, forms to download and eServices using digital certificates.

## 5. Product requirements

Chemicals (REACH)

### German REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals, EU Regulation no 1907/2006) Helpdesk

Responsibility: Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA)

Website: <http://www.reach-clp-biozid-helpdesk.de/en/Homepage.html>

Description: The [website](#) (German only) offers ample information and helpdesk contact details to the information centre of the responsible (the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA)).

## 6. Public contracts

Rules and procedures, tools and databases, reporting irregularities

### Public procurement / eProcurement

Responsibility: Central Government, Ministry of the Interior, Federal Procurement Office

Website: <http://www.evergabe-online.de/>; <http://www.kdb.bund.de/>

Description: The Federal Government's eProcurement platform, launched in May 2002, enables authorities to publish and notify call for tenders electronically, and bidders to submit offers completely and bindingly over the Internet. This system is the result of the Public Procurement Online (Öffentlicher Eink@uf Online) Programme. This special part of the programme was realised by implementing a Federal eGovernment Shop (*Kaufhaus des Bundes* – KdB). It is an internal system, but public information is available at: [www.kdb.bund.de](http://www.kdb.bund.de).

## 7. Environment

EMAS certification, energy labels, eco-design, EU eco-label

### Environment-related permits (incl. reporting)

Responsibility: Central Government (Federal), Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety, and Federal Environmental Agency

Website: <http://www.bmu.de/>; <http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/>

Description: Case handling, decision and delivery of a standard procedure to obtain an environment-related permit can be treated via eServices.

### **European Commission**

The factsheets present an overview of the state and progress of eGovernment in European countries.

Joinup is a joint initiative by the Directorate General for Informatics (DG DIGIT) and the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology (DG CONNECT).

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NIFO provides information on interoperability activities in Europe and is in charge of eGovernment factsheets' annual updates.

ISA<sup>2</sup> solutions can be used free of charge and are open source when related to IT.

## More on the programme

[ec.europa.eu/isa2](http://ec.europa.eu/isa2)

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