eGovernment in Germany
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Country Profile

Basic data and indicators

**Basic Data**

- **Population (1 000):** 82,162,000 inhabitants (2016)
- **GDP at market prices:** 3,132,670 million Euros (2016)
- **GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards EU 28 = 100):** 124 (2015)
- **GDP growth rate:** 1.9% (2016)
- **Inflation rate:** 0.4% (2016)
- **Unemployment rate:** 4.1% (2016)
- **General government gross debt (Percentage of GDP):** 71.2% (2015)
- **General government deficit/surplus (Percentage of GDP):** 0.7% (2015)
- **Area:** 357,134 km²
- **Capital city:** Berlin
- **Official EU language:** German
- **Currency:** EUR

Source: [Eurostat](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat) (last update: 13 March 2017)
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 Joachim Gauck (since 18 March 2012).
**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**

![Graph showing percentage of households with Internet access in Germany]

Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

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

![Graph showing 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**

![Graph showing 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**

![Graph showing percentage of individuals using the internet for interacting with public authorities in Germany from 2009 to 2016.](source)

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

![Graph showing percentage of individuals using the internet for obtaining information from public authorities in Germany from 2009 to 2016.](source)

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

![Graph showing percentage of individuals using the internet for downloading official forms from public authorities in Germany from 2009 to 2016.](source)

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

![Graph showing percentage of individuals using the internet for sending filled forms to public authorities in Germany from 2009 to 2016.](source)

Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](source)

Source: [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](source)
eGovernment State of Play

The graph below is the result of the latest eGovernment Benchmark study, 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 can use online services in another country.

- **Key Enablers** – indicates the extent to which 5 technical pre-conditions are available online. There are: Electronic Identification (eID), Electronic documents (eDocuments), Authentic Sources, Electronic Safe (eSafe), and Single Sign On (SSO).

These top-level benchmarks are measured using a life-events (e.g. mystery shopping) approach. The following life-events were used for measuring the eGovernment Benchmark top-level indicators: Business Start-up and Early Trading Operations, Losing and Finding a Job, Studying, Regular Business Operations, Moving, Owning and Driving a Car, and Starting a Small Claims Procedure. The figure below presents the development of eGovernment in Germany compared to the EU average score.

Source: eGovernment Benchmark Report 2016 Country Factsheet Germany

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1 eGovernment Benchmark Insight Report

2 The latest version of country’s benchmark report was published in October 2016, however it shall be noted that it summarises the country’s biennial score of the preceding year (2015).
eGovernment Recent Developments

Main developments and key milestones (in reverse chronological order)

For the latest developments, see: Joinup news.

Recent News

December 2016

- During the Paris Open Government Partnership Summit 2017, which took place between 7 and 9 December, Germany and Luxembourg were among the European countries that announced their intent to join the Open Government Partnership. "With our commitment to open government we make an important contribution to more transparency, more participation and more innovation, be it in order to strengthen civic engagement, promote the use of new technologies or meet security needs." states Thomas de Maizière, the German Federal Minister of the Interior, during the summit.

- On 14 December 2016, the Cabinet adopted the decision to launch a virtual platform for all eGovernment services. Every administrative platform, be it at local, state or federal level, will provide full access to all administrative services offered online. The plan is to provide, within five years, as many federal, state and local administrative services as possible online, and to make sure that citizens and businesses can access such services directly, easily and securely with only a few clicks. It will no longer be necessary for citizens or businesses to extensively search for the right authority. The administrative platforms of all federal, state and local authorities will be linked in a network or a virtual platform. To achieve this goal, the Basic Law was amended (Art. 91C (5)) within the context of reorganising the financial relations between the Federal Government and the federal states.

November 2016

- On 9 November 2016 the Federal Government adopted a new Cyber Security Strategy (Cyber-Sicherheitsstrategie für Deutschland 2016). The strategy forms the cross-departmental strategic framework for the activities of the federal government with references to cyber security and is a continuation of the previous strategy launched in 2011.

- During the ‘Drupal In Public Administration’ conference that took place in Dusseldorf on 17 November, German ICT service providers pooled their work and unveiled DeGov, a portal solution built on Drupal 8. The DeGov portal solutions is tailored to Germany public administration. One of the ICT firms behind the launch, PublicPlan, hopes to use DeGov to replace existing portal of 15 public administrations in North Rhine-Westphalia. The first DeGov-based portal, which was revealed after the conference was designed for

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4 http://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2016/12/buergerportal.html?nn=3315468
a North Rhine-Westphalia project to support senior citizens, by the state’s Ministry of Health. Another DeGov portal is being developed for the state’s Ministry of Education.

August 2016

In August, German government study allowance system for students, BAFöG, was fully launched online. Students can apply for long-term and low-interest loans and grants, depending on their eligibility online, check the status of their applications and download supporting documents. The portal is available at www.BAföG.de

February 2016

Germany’s Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (BMVI) is making available funds to bring fast internet to underserved areas. Municipalities and rural districts (Landkreise) can initially apply for up to EUR 50,000 to plan expansion projects and to complete applications for federal funding of these projects. Approved projects will be funded up to a maximum of EUR 15 million. The Federal Government has reserved a total of EUR 2 billion, to which the local municipalities will add another EUR 600 million. The aim of the initiative is to offer broadband connections of at least 50Mbps.

October 2015

In its 18th session, the IT Planning Council adopted an updated National eGovernment Strategy. The latest version of the Strategy takes IT developments, political developments and the lessons learnt from the ongoing work into account. The new Strategy consists of five principles with numerous goals within each, and has a total of six overarching objectives.

August 2015

Since 31 August 2015, the Ministry of the Interior is accessible via De-Mail. When using De-Mail both communication partners can be verified by each other, and also encryption mechanisms are used. De-Mail allows for secure and legally binding communication in a manner much more user friendly than many of previously released solutions.

Most German federal public administrations are obliged to open an access via De-mail as of March 2016 and many federal organisations are being gradually added to a central De-Mail gateway service since February 2015. The ministry will evaluate its service after which a further expansion shall be considered also taking into account the European eIDAS Regulation concerning qualified eDelivery services.

June 2015

German IT Security experts from the German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) validated ownCloud as a modern, internet-based successor to the proprietary server

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8 http://www.it-planungsrat.de/EN/home/Function/buehne2_text.html
software in the report on the operation and security of ownCloud. The software traditionally provided file and messaging functionality to organisations and workgroups.

The report specifies the requirements, measures and considerations, plus the security assessment including the risks involved with a high-protection deployment of ownCloud in the organisations of IT managers and other decision makers. The software is available as a free community-supported version and as an Enterprise edition that comes with additional features and support.

March 2015

In March 2015, ResearchKit was made available by Apple as an open source published under a BSD-type software licence. ResearchKit is a toolbox for development of medical research software applications. Later in the year, the open sourcing of the licence was important for the pilot of the University Hospital of the German city of Freiburg that aimed to involve users of smartphones and tablet PCs to share data that will help to improve treatments. As of August 2015, the software is only available for users of Apple’s iOS operating system. The app language is German, however the version in other languages are expected to be developed at a later stage.

January 2015

- The German Ministry of the Interior presented ‘The Federal Government’s National Action Plan to implement the G8 Open Data Charter’ that has been adopted at the G8 Summit of June 2013 in Ireland. As a consequence, the German government has committed itself to the facilitation of the publication of government data, the publishing of governmental datasets when possible, the meta data portal GovData to act as a central open data portal for federal, state and local government, and regular dialogue with civil society, business, the media and the research community. The action plan process was concluded at the end of 2015, an upcoming open data law and the OGP process are meant to cover open commitments.

- Furthermore, in January 2015, Munich became the second public administration to join the advisory board at a non-profit organisation promoting the development of LibreOffice - the Document Foundation. The advisory board serves to those organisation that contribute significantly to the development of LibreOffice – for example by submissions of codes or financial help. LibreOffice is used on approximately 16 000 PC workstations in Munich.

2001-2014

For previous news items, 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, adopted by the IT Planning Council on 24 September 2010, was updated late in 2015. The goal of the Strategy is to guide 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 eGovernment user’s 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: In order for the public administration to be able 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: 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. E-Mobility is therefore taken into consideration in new and established eGovernment services.

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 key six 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 modernization 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.

**ICT Strategy of the German Federal Government: Digital Strategy 2015**

The Federal Government has developed a new ICT strategy for the digital future of Germany. It sets the government ICT policy framework for ministries to plan and implement the necessary measures. The ICT strategy, Digital Germany 2015, sets out the priorities, tasks and projects for the period up to 2015. It aims to do the following:

- Strengthen competitiveness through the use of ICT in all segments of the economic process.
- Expand digital infrastructure and networks to meet future challenges.
- Safeguard the protected and personal rights of users in the future Internet and in the use of new media.
- Step up research and development in the ICT sector and speed up the translation of R&D findings into marketable products and services.
- Strengthen basic, further and continuing education and training and competencies in handling new media.
- Make consistent use of ICT to cope with social problems, including sustainability and climate protection, health, mobility, administration and the improvement of the quality of life of citizens.

**Memorandum for the National eGovernment Strategy**

At its 5th Meeting of the 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.
- 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.

**Previous eGovernment Strategies**


On 5 December 2007, the German Cabinet agreed on a Federal IT-Management strategy aiming to improve IT management within the federal government. The main goal is to optimise Public Administration services and promote IT innovation. The strategy focuses on IT consolidation and harmonisation of the entire German federal government and strives to improve the governance of its IT.

In June 2011, the IT-council's working programme 2011/2012 was declared. Its main topics cover among others IT security, IT consolidation and Enterprise Architecture Management.

**Deutschland Online Action Plan**

Chancellor Angela Merkel and the First Ministers of the 16 German Federal States signed in June 2006 the 'Deutschland-Online Action Plan', aimed at giving new impetus to their existing co-operation on eGovernment, and to the adoption of electronic procedures in Public Administration. The last version of the Deutschland Online Action Plan, as of 24 September 2010, included the following projects:

- **Infrastructure** *(project led by the Federal Government and Hessen)*

  Within the Deutschland-Online Infrastructure (DOI) project, the DOI Net has been setup, featuring accessibility, security and quality aligned to the specific requirements of a capable Public Administration. Gross planning was finalised in 2006. Two important milestones to this direction were the establishment of the incorporate society 'Deutschland-Online Infrastruktur e.V.' and the migration to the new network. According to the provisions of the new Law on Linking up Federal and Land IT Networks (IT-NetzG), responsibility for the new network was transferred to Federal authorities on 1 January 2011.

- **Vehicle Registration** *(project led by Hamburg)*

  The aim of this project is to overhaul and optimise the vehicle registration processes, to fully realise the potential of the central online vehicle register kept by the Federal Motor Transport Authority. Thereby, the target is to enable private customers and businesses to conduct the registration processes (registration, deregistration and re-registration) online, wherever possible.

- **Civil Status Registration** *(project led by Bavaria)*

  The project's primary goal is to create the basis for the decision on the future structure of the registry office, by piloting the introduction of a nationwide civil register. The second objective is to develop exchange of data in the XPersonenstand format. The third objective is to provide online registry information of birth certificates for citizens.
Registration system (project led by the Federal Government)

The exclusive legislative power in this field has been transferred to the federal level. Against this backdrop a new federal law shall pass parliament soon. The project's objective is to harmonise and to advance the law on registration of residents to streamline registration procedures, to offer online access to residents for various administrational procedures, to strengthen the level of data protection and to grant 24/7 online-access to registration data for selected public authorities within Germany.

National Weapons Registration (project jointly led by the Ministry of Interior of Baden-Württemberg and the Federal Ministry of Interior)

This project aims at developing a National Weapons Registry to gather related information on a central location. Thereby, of particular importance is information concerning firearms (including ownership certificates, owner details, etc.) that shall be electronically collected and kept up-to-date.

eGovernment 2.0 (2006 - 2010)

On 13 September 2006, the federal cabinet adopted the strategy 'Focused on the Future: Innovations for Administration' ('Zukunftsorientierte Verwaltung durch Innovationen') aiming at the modernisation of the Federal State Administration, the downsizing of bureaucracy and the improvement of the quality and efficiency of public sector services. An integral part of the strategy consisted of the eGovernment 2.0 programme, which was developed in compliance with the European action plan i2010. It focused on four fields of action: enhancement of the federal eGovernment services in terms of quantity and quality; establishment of electronic collaboration between the Public Administration and the business community; introduction of an electronic Identity Card (eID Card); and development of secure communication infrastructure for citizens, businesses and public administrations. The 'eGovernment 2.0 Final Report', on 20 May 2010, marked the programme's successful completion.

Deutschland-Online (2003 - 2006)

To foster proper coordination and cooperation between the Federal Government, Federal States and local authorities, the 'Deutschland-Online' joint strategy for integrated eGovernment was devised in 2003. First proposed by the Federal Minister of the Interior Otto Schily in March 2003, the partnership was agreed by Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and the heads of state government on 26 June 2003. Local authorities took part in the agreement through their representative associations. The Deutschland-Online strategy, drawing on the strengths of federalism, provided the framework for cooperation between all administration layers, based on the following five priorities: development of integrated eServices for citizens and businesses; interconnection of Internet portals; development of common infrastructures; development of common standards; experience and knowledge transfer.
eGovernment Legal Framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment

eGovernment Legislation

**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 up 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.

**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


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). The general purpose of this law is 'to protect the individual against violations of his personal rights by handling person-related data.'

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 on 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.


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 19/12/2006 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.

**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 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.

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.

**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.

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.
Regional & Local eGovernment

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 Who’s who
Main eGovernment decision-makers and executives

Ministers responsible for eGovernment

Thomas de Maizière
Federal Minister of the Interior

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Source: http://www.bmi.bund.de/

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

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Heads of eGovernment

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Beate Lohmann  
Director General - Administrative Modernization; Administrative Organization

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eGovernment executives

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The Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information

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Fax: +49 228 99 77 99-550  
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Source: https://www.bfdi.bund.de/
eGovernment Infrastructure

Main eGovernment infrastructure components

Portal

Bund.de

'Bund.de' is the German eGovernment services portal, providing central access to the online services by the Federal Authorities and the Federal Administration, also serving as an entry point to German States and Municipalities. Among other services, the portal provides access to an Online Form Centre enabling users to find administrative forms, even if they are not aware of the entity responsible for it. Management of the Form Centre is based on a Form Server, which is one of the infrastructure components developed as part of the 'BundOnline 2005' initiative.

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**

**The new Electronic Identity Card**

Germany's new 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 new eID card includes the optional electronic signature functionality. Cardholders may choose to upload a qualified electronic signature to their ID card, facilitating the card’s owner to perform legally binding actions in eGovernment and eBusiness applications. 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.

**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 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.

**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 Signaturbündnis').

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.
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:** [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/)
- **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/index.php](https://www.elster.de/index.php)
- **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/](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:** [http://www.cgerli.org/](http://www.cgerli.org/)  
**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 our own 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/index.php](https://www.elster.de/index.php)  
**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:** [http://arbeitslosengeld2.arbeitsagentur.de/](http://arbeitslosengeld2.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**

**Responsibility:** Central Government (Federal), Federal Motor Transport Authority (KBA)  
**Website:** [http://www.kba.de/](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/](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: [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/)
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/](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/](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 our 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/](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](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/](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/index.php](https://www.elster.de/index.php)
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/index.php](https://www.elster.de/index.php)
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-d.de/](http://www.zoll-d.de/)
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: [http://www.cgerli.org/](http://www.cgerli.org/)
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 our own 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/](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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>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)).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 6. Public contracts

### Public procurement / eProcurement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>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 Einkaufs 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: <a href="http://www.kdb.bund.de">www.kdb.bund.de</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 7. Environment

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

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

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Case handling, decision and delivery of a standard procedure to obtain an environment-related permit can be treated via eServices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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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ISA² supports a wide range of activities and solutions, among which is the National Interoperability Framework Observatory (NIFO) action. NIFO provides information on interoperability activities in Europe and is in charge of eGovernment factsheets’ annual updates.

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