

[ eGovernment in ]

# Germany

Deutschland



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eGovernment

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### **Disclaimer:**

This document is not intended to be exhaustive. Its purpose is to give an overview of the general e-government situation in Germany. Although every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the information herein should be treated as indicative and no responsibility for errors can be taken. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on its behalf is responsible for the use that could be made of the information provided.

## Country Profile

### Basic Data and Indicators

#### Basic data.....

**Population (1.000):** 82.438,0 inhabitants (2006)

**GDP at market prices:** 2.241.000,0 million Euros (2005)

**GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards, EU-25=100):** 109,3 (2005)

**GDP growth rate:** 0,9% (2005)

**Inflation rate:** 1,9% (2005)

**Unemployment rate:** 9,5% (2005)

**Government debt/GDP:** 67,7% (2005)

**Public balance (government deficit or surplus/GDP):** -3,3% (2005)

*Source:* [Numerical data provided by Eurostat](#)

**Area:** 356.854 km<sup>2</sup>

**Capital city:** Berlin

**EU Official Languages:** German

**Currency:** Euro

*Source:* [Europa website](#)

#### Political Structure.....

Germany is a **Federal Republic** made up, subsequent to its reunification in 1990, of 16 states – or "Länder" – one of which is the capital city, Berlin. These Länder have their legislative and executive bodies.

At 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 662 (328 directly elected from individual constituencies; 334 elected through party lists in each state so as to obtain proportional representation). Parties must win at least 5% of the national vote, or three constituency seats, to gain representation. The Upper House (Federal Council or [Bundesrat](#)) has 69 members, designated by the governments of the Lands, 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 Lands). 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.

**Current Head of State:** President Horst Köhler (since 1 July 2004)

**Current Head of Government:** Chancellor Angela Merkel (since November 2005).

## Information Society indicators.....

**Percentage of households with Internet access:** 67% (2006)

**Percentage of enterprises with Internet access:** 94% (2004)

**Percentage of individuals using the Internet at least once a week:** 59% (2006)

**Percentage of households with a broadband connection:** 34% (2006)

**Percentage of enterprises with a broadband connection:** 73% (2006)

**Percentage of individuals having purchased/ordered online in the last three months:** 38% (2006)

**Percentage of enterprises having received orders online within the previous year:** 18% (2006)

**Percentage of individuals using the Internet for interacting with public authorities:**

obtaining information 27,8%, downloading forms 17,5%, returning filled forms 9,4% (2004)

**Percentage of enterprises using the Internet for interacting with public authorities:**

obtaining information 36%, downloading forms 42%, returning filled forms 37% (2005)

*Source:* [Eurostat](#)

# eGovernment History

## Main developments and key milestones (in reverse chronological order)

For the latest developments, see: [eGovernment News - Germany](#)

### December 2006.....

In the city of Flensburg starts the first major test phase for the introduction of the new [Electronic Health Insurance Card](#). Approximately 10000 insurants obtained the new card which is intended to substitute the traditional health card in the near future. The electronic Health Insurance Card accompanied by the pertinent information and communication infrastructure contributes to a faster and more reliable collaboration between medical institutions enhancing the availability of patient's data, improving the quality of medical care and reducing the risk of improper medicament prescription. The card features a microchip containing patient's data, such as name, birth date and health insurance company. Medical receipts in digital form can also be stored on the card.

### October 2006.....

- ▶ The Federal Ministry of Interior (BMI) publishes the [version 3.0 of SAGA \(Standards and Architecture for e-Government Applications\)](#), Germany's eGovernment interoperability framework. SAGA sets out the technical standards for the appliance of information technology in the public administration and contains recommendations regarding the design and implementation of public online services.
- ▶ The [Federal Coordination and Advisory Agency \(KBSt\)](#) sets up the [IT Infrastructure Library \(ITIL\)](#) on its official website. The library has been originally developed by the British Office of Government Commerce and contains a collection of Best Practices in the area of IT Service Management.

### September 2006.....

The German Federal Government adopts the strategy "[Future-oriented Public Administration through Innovations](#)" ("Zukunftsorientierte Verwaltung durch Innovationen"), aiming at the modernization of the Federal State Administration, at downsizing of bureaucracy and at improving the quality and efficiency of public sector services. Integral part of the strategy is the [E-Government 2.0 programme](#), defining key eGovernment priorities and objectives in view of 2010.

### July 2006.....

- ▶ Scientists, business representatives and consumers met with Germany's Federal Interior Ministry to discuss aims and guidelines for a new federal eGovernment programme.

Citizens and enterprises expect more efficiency, better service and less bureaucracy. Therefore, public administration should be better oriented towards these needs. eGovernment provided the opportunity to live up to the expectations placed in public administration.

Published this February, the [final report on BundOnline 2005](#) set four main parameters for Germany's future federal eGovernment strategy:

- ▶ Maintaining and improving quality
- ▶ Promoting synergies in the development of eGovernment services and using standards
- ▶ Using eGovernment's innovative potential for citizens and enterprises
- ▶ Optimising information management within the federal administration

- ▶ Thousands of people in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia are **using the internet to report crimes** to the police. In the two years since it was set up, the on-line facility has registered some 46000 crime reports, the state's Interior Minister Ingo Wolf announced. The [police eGovernment portal](#) also provides space for comments about the police (1400 in two years) and applications to join the force (10200 in the same period).

"On the internet, people are more spontaneous about reporting crimes," Wolf says. "Inhibitions about crossing the threshold of a police station disappear."

But in fact, the person lodging the report does not escape all direct contact with the police. This is not about anonymous tip offs. Once the completed report form has been sent in, the person filing the report is sent confirmation of receipt, plus details of the appropriate contact point within the police service. E-mail is seen simply as another means of sending in the form, which includes the reporter's full name and address.

- ▶ Four local authorities in the German state of Brandenburg are piloting a system that enables citizens to lodge and track applications for planning permission online. **Fully electronic building permits** should be common practice within two years in the German city of Potsdam. A new link on the local administration's home page lets people check the progress of planning permission for their construction projects. Among other things, they can see whether any documents still need to be submitted and what the deadlines are.

## June 2006.....

- ▶ Chancellor Angela Merkel and the First Ministers of the 16 German *Länder* have recently signed a new eGovernment action plan, '[Deutschland-Online](#)', aimed at giving new impetus to their existing co-operation on eGovernment and to the adoption of electronic procedures in public administration.
- ▶ For its "high-quality information services for citizens", the 'Bürger-CERT' project – 'Computer

Emergency Response Team for Citizens' – was awarded first prize in the EU's 'Klicksafe' initiative for information safety on the web in Germany. [Bürger-CERT](#) is a national security project which provides fast and efficient warnings to citizens and small businesses about viruses, worms and security holes in computer applications. Information is provided from a neutral perspective and is totally free of charge. The Bürger-CERT IT experts analyse the security situation on the internet round the clock and send out e-mail alerts or warnings when action is considered necessary.

- ▶ In a recent survey, the European Research Centre for Information Systems of the University of Münster, Germany, evaluated and compared the on-line web services of all 427 cities, communes and regions in North Rhine-Westphalia. Entitled 'Virtual City Hall NRW 2006', the survey reveals that the **current state of development of 'virtual city halls'** is still quite heterogeneous, "reaching from pioneers with elaborate concepts and well-engineered electronic citizen services to latecomers with a high potential for development". The backlog is most apparent in the implementation of customer services and in the navigation structure that leads users there, according to the study. In general, the 'communes' received much better marks in their general evaluation and for the quality of their information services, irrespective of their size.
- ▶ Experts from 38 countries attended on 30 May – 30 June in Berlin an **electronic passports interoperability test**. The test has been evaluated as successful.

## May 2006.....

- ▶ The city of Essen, in the German state of North-Rhine Westphalia, will soon be the first in the region to launch a comprehensive, **voice-operated information and communication portal** to communicate with businesses and citizens.
- ▶ New technologies offer many possibilities for improving the provision of healthcare, but their exploitation for the **provision of innovative 'telemedicine' services** is still far from optimal. A

recently launched pilot scheme is breaking new ground in Germany by using mobile phone technology to improve the surveillance of chronically ill patients.

- ▶ Citizens of the German town of Frankfurt am Main are, since the end of April 2006, able to use their mobile phones to travel on the city's public transport services. The new system works with all modern mobile phones, allowing passengers to buy and display **eTickets** using just their phone.

#### April 2006.....

- ▶ The German region (*Land*) of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania has taken the bold step of switching from traditional analogue telephone communication to **Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)** technology.
- ▶ Germany's Federal Network Agency has made the services of its arbitration board for telecommunications accessible on-line. The board tries to find amicable solutions between quarrelling parties in order to avoid cases being taken to court.
- ▶ Switching over to a modern eGovernment is not as easy as turning a tap on or off. It has to be done through well-defined and well-planned steps. **Germany's 'eGovernment roadmap'**, developed by Europe's biggest Public-Private Partnership (PPP), [Initiative D21](#), is designed to measure out these consecutive steps with due care and diligence. Governments have a vast array of alternate paths to take in order to reach their goal of a fully functioning, fully transparent eAdministration. Having a modern administration is more than changing systems and services; it also implies changing attitudes and the behaviour of both the administration and the potential users of such services. Fast, accurate and reliable information is the key to informed decision-making on sometimes life and death situations. Now, the German government is responding by publishing new regulations on-line which then take "immediate legal effect". A recent study by Deutsche Post AG reveals that German local authorities are well on the road to modernisation. However, although they have clear targets and

eGovernment strategies, they often neglect the evaluation issues.

- ▶ The latest edition of **Germany's annual national eGovernment contest** was officially opened by Minister of the Interior, Wolfgang Schäuble, at the IT fair CEBIT in Hanover on 13 March 2006. Federal, state and local authorities have until 30 June 2006 to submit their entries.
- ▶ The German eGovernment contest rewards outstanding projects in the field of eGovernment. Its aim is to promote the wider use of new information and communications technologies (ICTs) for the modernisation of public services and more effective management of public sector administrations.

#### March 2006.....

- ▶ The German Ministry for Internal Affairs has launched a new and **updated version of the on-line information site of the [Federal Coordination and Advisory Agency](#)** (KBSt) containing comprehensive information on the IT strategies and coordination activities of the government.
- ▶ Germany's largest federal state, [North Rhine-Westphalia](#) (NRW), has launched a new on-line service which will provide electronic access to information on public tenders and the award of public procurement contracts.
- ▶ The trust-center operators' consortium "T7 e.v." sets up the public online service "[Information on eSignatures](#)" ("Signaturauskunft") providing a list of institutions, governmental agencies and companies accepting qualified electronic signatures in their transactions.

#### November 2005.....

Germany starts issuing **biometric passports**. Called '[ePass](#)', the new German travel document includes embedded radio frequency identification (RFID) chip storing personal information such as name and date of birth, as well as a digital facial image of the holder. In a second phase – starting in March 2007 – the chip

will also store a scan of the holder's left and right index fingerprints.

### September 2005.....

- ▶ The Federal Ministry of the Interior publishes [version 2.1 of the Standards and Architectures for E-Government Applications \(SAGA\)](#), the German eGovernment interoperability framework.
- ▶ The Federal Ministry of the Interior publishes [version 2.0 of its software Migration Guide](#), providing strategic insight and decision-making tools relating to software migration projects in public sector bodies.

### August 2005.....

- ▶ Federal Minister of the interior Otto Schily presents the results of the **BundOnline 2005** initiative, launched in September 2000 by Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and aimed at putting all federal administration services capable of e-delivery online by end 2005. With 379 services e-enabled in August 2005 – more than the originally planned 376 services – the BundOnline 2005 target was reached before the final deadline.
- ▶ The Federal Government presents its **National Plan for the Protection of Information Infrastructures**, aimed at preventing cyber attacks, enabling swift responses to those that occur, and facilitating the widespread adoption of common IT security measures.

### July 2005.....

After being narrowly approved by the German Parliament's Lower Chamber (Bundestag) in early June, Germany's **Freedom of information (FOI)** law is voted by the Bundesrat – the Parliament's upper chamber made up of representatives of the federated states. The new FOI regime will start in January 2006. Germany was so far one of the few EU Member States lacking a freedom of information legislation.

### March 2005.....

- ▶ The German Federal Government adopts the [BundOnline 2005 Annual Report and fourth Implementation Plan](#). According to the Report, the number of services available online by the end of 2005 will surpass the 376 originally planned.
- ▶ The federal government launches an [open source software \(OSS\) competence centre](#), aimed at facilitating the spread of best practices regarding the use of OSS in the German public sector.
- ▶ The Cabinet of Ministers decides to guarantee the **funding of key e-government infrastructure services** and components developed under the BundOnline 2005 initiative, which is coming to an end in December 2005. Key components include a virtual post office, a transactional platform, a content management system and a form management.
- ▶ The German government presents a **common 'eCard' strategy**, aimed at providing a common strategic framework for a number of e-government smart card initiatives in the areas of citizen identification, social security information and health insurance services. The common strategy coordinates the different federal e-card initiatives (such as the e-health insurance card, the e-ID card, and the job card) as well as the access to important databases and services in the areas of social security and tax procedures. Among other things, it defines common standards designed to foster the development and take-up of transactional e-government services and maximise efficiency gains and cost savings. The strategy also foresees that the future electronic health insurance card and electronic ID card could be combined into a single, universal document allowing citizens to easily access e-services.

### February 2005.....

- ▶ The Federal Parliament adopts the **Electronic File Management Act**, designed to allow the German judiciary to process legal files and documents electronically and to pave the way for a paperless judiciary system in the country.

- ▶ The German Government adopts [V-Modell XT](#) as its new procedural model for IT project management. The new model regulates in detail the activities that must be carried out at specific stages of project development, as well as the associated results that must be obtained. The model, which also clearly records the responsibilities of each project participant, is intended to help project managers and other staff to successfully deliver IT systems.

### January 2005.....

Germany's high-tech **road toll system for heavy commercial vehicles** [Toll Collect](#) is successfully launched throughout the country's highways. Toll Collect is a 'free-flow system', that calculates the toll without stopping or reducing the speed of vehicles. Its automatic toll accounting system uses a combination of mobile telecommunications and satellite positioning (GPS) technologies.

### November 2004.....

The German [Electronic Health Insurance Card](#) enters test phase with a first pilot launched in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate. Further tests are due to be carried out in 2005, ahead of the nationwide launch of the card on 1 January 2006. Producing and distributing cards to about 80 million people will represent a major logistics operation, thus the migration to the new system will be made in several steps.

### March 2004.....

- ▶ The German Federal Government adopts the [BundOnline 2005 Annual Report and third Implementation Plan](#), which shows steady progress across the federal administration. More than half of the services identified as having to be capable of electronic delivery by 2005 are already available online (248 out of 449, 100 more than a year earlier). During the same meeting, the Government also adopts a **programme for the optimisation of public procurement**, which

provides that all federal authorities will switch to e-procurement by the end of 2005.

- ▶ Launch of the [MEDIA@Komm-Transfer](#) project, aimed at identifying and developing transferable e-government solutions for German local and regional authorities. The project promotes the development of integrated e-government services at regional and local level, to be developed and tested in twenty 'transfer-municipalities'. MEDIA@Komm-Transfer succeeds the previous MEDIA@Komm initiative, launched in 1998 and under which more than 300 e-solutions for local authorities were developed and tested in three model regions. MEDIA@Komm also helped develop the standard for e-government data exchange [OSCI](#) (Online Services Computer Interface).

### February 2004.....

Launch of a **pilot biometric border control system** based on iris scanning at the Frankfurt airport.

### January 2004.....

The German Federal Administrative Court becomes the first federal institution to use the [BundOnline 2005 e-payment platform](#). The central e-payment platform is one of the key basic infrastructure components for the implementation of BundOnline 2005. Interfacing with payment procedures of the federal administration and external transaction processors (credit card companies, etc.), the platform can be integrated into most of the country's e-government transactional services, thereby saving time and development costs to government agencies.

### December 2003.....

- ▶ The German Federal Information Security Agency (BSI) publishes '[Barrier-free eGovernment](#)', a guide for making e-government websites and applications accessible to all users, including those with disabilities.
- ▶ The German Government re-launches its [e-government knowledge management](#)

[website](#), designed to provide information to help federal, state and local project teams with the planning and implementation of e-government projects.

- ▶ Launch of '[Information Society Germany 2006](#)', a **new Information Society Action Plan** intended to further develop the country's capabilities in the information and communication technology field. In the field of e-government, key priorities include building a secure infrastructure for delivering transactional public services online, based on the use of electronic signatures, enabling citizens to fill their tax returns online in 2005, conducting all government procurement online by the end of 2005, and introducing a smart 'JobCard' for employment services in 2006.
- ▶ The German Federal Labour Office launches the '**super employment portal**' [Arbeitsagentur.de](#). The portal will support the fulfilment of the government's employment-related missions, which include connecting supply and demand on the training and job markets and promoting their transparency. It provides access to databases of job offers and of job seekers and also features an innovative matching application to help job seekers identify opportunities more easily. Another sophisticated functionality, accessible to Labour Office employees only, is a 'job robot' that crawls the Internet to collect job advertisements.

### November 2003.....

The first website based on the '[Government Site Builder](#)' is launched. Government Site Builder is a **new Content Management System (CMS)** meant to become a government-wide standard. It is one of the 'base components' of the national e-government infrastructure being implemented as part of the BundOnline 2005 initiative. The standard solution is available free of charge to all federal government bodies, while customised upgrades may be obtained for a fee.

### September 2003.....

The German government adopts the [Governikus system](#) to secure electronic communications across the federal administration. Governikus is a secure middleware platform developed within the framework of the e-government programme of the city of Bremen ('Bremen online services' project). The federal government will adopt Governikus as the core component of the "**virtual post offices**" to be deployed in all federal administrations and that will ensure secure, traceable and confidential communication amongst public bodies and between them and external organisations involved in the delivery of e-government services.

### July 2003.....

The German government publishes a [guide for software migration projects](#), which is meant to pave the way towards the use of a wider variety of software in public administrations.

### June 2003.....

German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, the heads of government of the federated states (Länder) and the representative associations of German local authorities agree on a common **country-wide e-government strategy** entitled [Deutschland-Online](#) (Germany Online). Involving all layers of government (federal state, federated states, and municipalities) in a joint undertaking, Deutschland Online is meant to overcome the lack of coordination between the different layers that has been identified as a major obstacle to e-government in Germany.

### May 2003.....

The City Council of [Munich](#) votes to migrate its 14,000 workstations to the open source operating system Linux and an open source office suite. The migration is the biggest ever in the European public sector.

April 2003.....

- ▶ The Interior Ministry signs a **licensing agreement with Microsoft**, enabling the whole public sector to receive favourable conditions for both buying and leasing the company's software products. The agreement is expected to save significant money for federal, state and local governments.
- ▶ A **public-private eSignature alliance** is formed between the Government and a number of private sector companies (banks, IT services companies, etc.) to establish e-signature standards based on current use of e-signatures in government and in the economy.

February 2003.....

- ▶ The German Federal Government launches an **'Initiative to Reduce Bureaucracy'** (*Initiative Bürokratieabbau*), which specifically aim at increasing Germany's attractiveness for businesses by reducing red tape in five key areas: the labour market and self-employment, small businesses and the private sector, research and technology, civil society and volunteerism, and government services for businesses and individuals.
- ▶ The third **law on the modification of the provisions of Administrative Procedural Law** comes into force. It removes all legal barriers to the widespread use of electronic signatures and gives electronic signatures the same legal status as hand-written signatures for all dealings with public authorities.

December 2002.....

The [BundOnline 2005 Progress Report](#), comprising an **update of the implementation plan** for the e-government initiative, is approved by the Federal Cabinet. According to the report, the targets set in the implementation plan for 2002 have been met, more than 160 services of the Federal Administration now provided over the Internet.

August 2002.....

The **Federal e-government portal [Bund.de](#)** is enriched with links to information and services from German cities and municipalities. The portal thus covers all of Germany's administration on one joint Internet platform.

July 2002.....

**New legal regulations** designed to enable full access to public information available on the Internet for disabled people come into force. The new regulations will lead the Federation's public institutions to redesign their Internet presence. Federal Administration Websites aimed specifically at disabled people should be redesigned by the end of 2003. The remaining, already existing Websites have until the end of 2005 to conform to the new standards.

June 2002.....

- ▶ Adoption of **[SAGA \(Standards and Architecture for e-Government Applications\)](#)**, Germany's e-government interoperability framework. SAGA sets out the technical standards for the implementation of the e-government initiative BundOnline2005.
- ▶ The Federal Minister of the Interior Otto Schily signs a **cooperation agreement with IBM** for the promotion of open source operating systems and software in Germany's public administration. This agreement enables the German government, federated states and communes to acquire software based on the Linux operating system at reduced rates.

May 2002.....

Launch of the **Federal Government's [eProcurement Platform](#)**, a virtual marketplace allowing authorities to procure goods and services electronically from a series of pre-concluded concluded framework contracts and without the need for expensive calls for tender. This system also allows bidders to submit offers completely and bindingly

directly over the Internet. This system is the result of the programme 'Public Procurement Online' (*Öffentlicher Einkauf Online*) managed by the Office of Procurement of the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

### March 2002.....

Launch of an **Online Form Centre** on the e-government portal [Bund.de](http://Bund.de). The Form Centre provides comprehensive access to some 1,000 official forms sorted by topic and authority. The system is designed to enable users to find the appropriate form without knowing which entity is responsible for it.

### January 2002.....

- ▶ The Government adopts a "[decision on security in electronic legal and business transactions with the Federal Administration](#)", establishing the strategy, standards and framework conditions for introducing the electronic signature as well as for authenticating and encoding online communications. The resolution notably plans to introduce the digital signature to the entire Federal Administration (more than 200,000 members of staff).
- ▶ The Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) establishes an **Office of the Chief Information Officer**. The new Office pools the tasks of the Federal Ministry of the Interior relating to IT policy and strategy, IT Management and IT security. It brings together the BundOnline 2005 Project Group, the [Coordination and Advisory Agency for IT in the Federal Administration \(KBSt\)](#) and the [Federal Information Security Agency \(BSI\)](#).

### December 2001.....

Presentation of a [BundOnline 2005 Implementation Plan](#); the plan identifies a portfolio of 376 federal administration services suitable for Internet delivery and sets a schedule for each of these services to be brought online up to the year 2005. The plan foresees a sum of EUR 1.65 billion as necessary to move the 376 services online by the end

of 2005, requiring a significant reallocation of the annual EUR 1.2 billion federal budget for information technology.

### May 2001.....

The [Federal Information Security Agency \(BSI\)](#) publishes an [eGovernment Manual](#), designed to provide a reference book and central stock of information on all aspects of e-government development. Besides organisational and technical issues, special emphasis is laid on IT security. The contents of the BSI's E-government Manual, continuously extended and updated, are not compulsory but only recommendations. The same day, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder unveils a vision of e-government in Germany, designed to enable the transition from a 'father state' to a 'partner state' and making government more responsive and efficient while preserving the federal constitution's safeguards against centralisation.

### March 2001.....

Launch of the government information and **services portal [Bund.de](http://Bund.de)**, providing central access to online services of the Federal administration.

### 2000 and before.....

- ▶ In **2000**, the German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder launches [BundOnline2005](#), the e-government programme of the Federal government. The objective is to e-enable all federal public services capable of electronic delivery by the end of 2005. The initiative forms part of the programme "[Internet for All - Ten Steps on the Path to the Information Society](#)".
- ▶ In **1999**, a new **Forum for the Information Society** was created, in the continuity of the Forum Info 2000 established in 1996. The Forum is composed of experts from different sectors of industry and society.

The Government adopts the [Modern State-Modern Administration Programme](#), a wide-ranging programme for Government modernisation.

Launch of the federal **Information Society Action Programme** '[Innovation and jobs in the information society of the 21st century](#)'; the Promotion of State modernisation through the use of ICT is one of the four strategic axes of the plan.

Launch of the [D21 initiative \(Germany in the 21st Century\)](#), a private initiative designed to foster the change from industrial to informational society. All sectors of industry are represented. An advisory council is set up, consisting of 49 important public figures from the sectors of politics, the economy and public life, including several Ministers and placed under the leadership of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder.

- ▶ In **1998**, the [MEDIA@Komm](#) project for the development of local e-government solutions was launched and was subsidised by the Federal Government. Following a call for proposals, three model regions will be selected to develop innovative and secure e-government applications making use of electronic signatures.
- ▶ In **1997**, the [Information and Communication Services Act](#) (better known as the 'Multimedia Law') was entered into force; a wide-ranging legislation package aiming at creating uniform economic conditions for the various uses of electronic information and communication services (electronic signature, teleservices, etc.).
- ▶ In **1996**, the **Forum Info 2000** was established, gathering around 180 representatives from various industries and organisations, as a discussion and advisory forum on Information Society issues.
- ▶ Presentation of **Info 2000: Germany's way to the Information Society**, the Government's first action plan for the Information Society. ICT-enabled change in public administrations is an essential part of the plan, aimed at creating a lean and citizen-oriented State.

# eGovernment Strategy

## Main strategic objectives and principles



On the 13 September 2006 the federal cabinet adopted the comprehensive strategy [Future-oriented Public Administration through Innovations](#) (Zukunftsorientierte Verwaltung durch Innovationen) aiming at the modernization of the Federal State Administration, at downsizing of bureaucracy and at improving the quality and efficiency of public sector services. An integral part of the strategy consists of the [E-Government Programme 2.0](#). The programme has been developed in compliance with the European action plan i2010 and utilizes already existing know how in the area of eGovernment, originated from the implementation of the BundOnline 2005 and Deutschland-Online initiatives.

The programme aims to define the major strategic objectives in the area of eGovernment for the coming years up 2010. Four major action areas have been identified:

- ▶ **Portfolio**  
Enhancement of the federal eGovernment services in terms of quantity and quality
- ▶ **Process chains**  
Establishing of electronic collaboration between the public administration and the business community utilizing common business process chains.

### ▶ Identification

Introduction of an electronic Identity Card (eID Card) and development of electronic Identification concepts

### ▶ Communication

Development of secure communication infrastructure for citizens, businesses and public administrations

According to the programme, Internet shall become the major communication and distribution channel for public administration services. The collaboration between businesses and the public administration offers a great efficiency potential that should be exploited through electronic integration of their respective business process chains. Secure internet transactions in the area of electronic business and eGovernment will be realized and facilitated through the usage of eIdentification Cards. Certified portals will constitute a secure and anonymous communication platform for citizens.

## Deutschland-Online.....

While the E-Government 2.0 Programme provides the policy framework for the development of eGovernment in the federal administration, eGovernment cannot be pursued only at that federal level. Good eGovernment requires the comprehensive integration and optimisation of administrative processes – on and across all administrative levels. The obstacle here is the heterogeneous IT landscape of the federal government, 16 federated states, over 300 districts and far more than 13,000 municipalities in Germany. Different offices have developed different IT applications for the same purposes; the federal government, federated states and municipalities operate over 7,000 websites that are hardly integrated; consistent electronic processes between the federal government, federated states and municipalities are still the exception rather than the rule; and the fragmented public investment in IT is not

being used optimally. Such fragmentation, if not addressed, could lead to the development and implementation of expensive, isolated and redundant technology solutions and processes.

In order to avoid these risks and foster proper coordination and cooperation between the federal government, federated 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 take part in the agreement through their representative associations. The Deutschland-Online strategy thus provides the framework for cooperation between all administration layers, based on the following five priorities:

- ▶ **Development of integrated eServices for citizens and businesses:** The most important cross-level administrative services will be made available online to citizens and business. The following fields: register queries (commercial registers, Federal Central Criminal Register), citizens' registers and civil status registers, official statistics, vehicle registers, Federal Education Assistance Act, and unemployment and social welfare assistance will be regarded as priority model projects.
- ▶ **Interconnection of Internet portals:** Access to e-government services will be enhanced by implementing the required interoperability of Internet portals.
- ▶ **Development of common infrastructures:** Joint e-government infrastructures will be established and developed in order to facilitate the exchange of data and to avoid parallel developments.
- ▶ **Development of common standards:** The federal government, state governments and municipalities will create joint standards as well as data and process models for e-government.
- ▶ **Experience and knowledge transfer:** The transfer of e-government solutions between the federal government, state governments and

municipalities will be improved, know-how will be multiplied and parallel developments will be avoided.

The Deutschland-Online strategy draws on the strengths of federalism: On the one hand, some partners are taking the lead with model solutions according to **the "some for all" principle**. Other partners should benefit from this in that they will use these developments with a coordinated approach and without central bureaucracy. On the other hand, suitable projects will be carried out in cooperation. The federal government, state governments and municipalities will develop a joint business model. This model will be used to offer e-government applications developed by the federal government, state governments and municipalities to other regional and local authorities for their use.

Political coordination of the implementation of Deutschland-Online is carried out by a Conference of State Secretaries for e-government in federal and Land governments, in which national associations of local authorities also take part, and which reports annually to the heads of government.

Based upon the above mentioned strategy guidelines, concrete resultants are already available:

- ▶ The heads of the Federal Government and Federal States initiated the development of a business-model, which would facilitate the elaboration of eGovernment results by local authorities. The determined business models have been [reviewed](#) on behalf of the pertinent [working group](#) by the White & Case lawyer's office.
- ▶ Chancellor Angela Merkel and the First Ministers of the 16 German *Länder* have recently signed a new eGovernment action plan, '[Deutschland-Online](#)', aimed at giving new impetus to their existing cooperation on eGovernment and to the adoption of electronic procedures in public administration.'
- ▶ The project group "Internet Portals" recommended that the content of [Deutschland-Online](#) portals should be made available in multiple languages. Within the frame of this [recommendation](#), in a first step the common basic information from the areas of economy, higher education, tourism and culture should be made available. Following this example,

in a further step, each local authority should proceed to the publication of its respective specific multilingual content.

- ▶ The frame of the strategy guideline "Interconnection of Internet portals", an essential regional [job search site](#), has been developed in the Federal State of Berlin. This site can be integrated into the various portals of the Federal States and Communes.

## BundOnline 2005.....

The German Federal Government's eGovernment strategy for the years 2000-2005 was defined in the [BundOnline 2005](#) initiative, launched in on 18 September 2000 by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. The central objective of BundOnline 2005 was to **make available online by 2005 all services of the federal administration capable of electronic delivery**.

BundOnline 2005 has been a major element of the Federal Government's policy for the development of the Information Society of Germany in the years past. The initiative considered the federal administration as a modern, service-orientated enterprise. The focus was on providing services that take the external user (citizen, businesses, academia or other administrative

units) through from start to finish. This approach replaced the concept, frequently used in the past, of single steps (for instance online registration, notification by e-mail, etc.) or projects with a primarily technical focus. Efforts focused on customers and their needs, not solely on the application of a specific technology. This emphasised the considerable significance of BundOnline 2005 for modernising the administration.

In December 2001 the Federal Government adopted an [Implementation plan for the BundOnline 2005 eGovernment initiative](#). The report was purposed to inform both Federal Government and public about the overall progress achieved within the frame of the initiative and was updated each year in the shape of an annual report by the Federal Ministry of the Interior to the Federal Cabinet: [report 2002](#), [report 2003](#), [report 2004](#).

The BundOnline 2005 initiative was successfully completed on 31.12.2005. At this point a total of more than 440 [internet services](#) has been made available online. A considerable number of these services constitutes an important contribution against bureaucracy and towards a modern form of administration. The detailed results and achievements of the initiative may be found in the [BundOnline Final Report](#), published on 24.2.2006.

## eGovernment Legal Framework

### Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment

#### eGovernment legislation.....

There is currently no overall eGovernment legislation in Germany.

#### Freedom of Information legislation.....

##### Freedom of information Act (2005)

After being narrowly approved by the Lower Chamber of Parliament (Bundestag) in early June 2005, Germany's Freedom of information (FOI) Act was voted on 8 July 2005 by the Bundesrat – the Parliament's upper chamber made up of representatives of the federated states – and was published in the Federal Gazette on 13 September 2005. The new 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". In order to protect industrial secrets and intellectual property, documents containing information on a private company can only be disclosed with the consent of that company. The legislation also contains an "Internet clause" that will force federal administration bodies to make a number of items publicly available online. The new FOI regime will enter into force on 1 January 2006.

#### Data Protection/Privacy legislation.....

##### Federal Data Protection Act (2003)

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." The law covers collection, processing and use of personal data collected by public federal and state authorities (as long as there is no state regulation), and by non-public offices, if they process and use data for commercial or professional aims.

#### eCommerce legislation.....

##### Electronic Commerce Act (2001)

The Act on framework conditions for electronic commerce of 14 December 2001 implements the EU E-Commerce 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.....

##### 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.

#### eSignatures legislation.....

##### Digital Signature Act (2001)

The German Electronic Signature Act came into force on 22 May 2001. It implements EU Directive [1999/93/EC](#) on a Community framework for electronic signatures and replaces 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.

### eProcurement legislation.....

Germany as 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. Germany still intends to transpose the remaining optional features of the mentioned Directives such as dynamic purchasing systems.

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

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

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 huge public sector information volume accumulated across Europe constitutes an enormous economical potential with an estimated market value of € 68 Billion. The law regulates the information re-usage of this information beyond the public-administrative scope, e.g. for shaping of 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.

## 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. The Ministry has set up in 2002 an [Office of the IT Director](#) which pools the tasks of the Federal Ministry of the Interior relating to IT policy and strategy, IT Management and IT security. It brings together the unit responsible for the coordination of the "Information Society", the main IT Strategy of Ministry and the "Deutschland online team" as well as, the [Coordination and Advisory Agency for IT in the Federal Administration \(KBSt\)](#), the [Federal Information Security Agency \(BSI\)](#), and the team in charge of the biometry projects for identification and travel documents.

#### Coordination

##### [Federal Ministry of the Interior](#)

The Federal Ministry of the Interior coordinates the combined implementation efforts of all federal ministries and agencies. The [Coordination and Advisory Agency for IT in the Federal](#)

[Administration \(KBSt\)](#) also plays an important coordination role.

#### Implementation

##### 1. [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](#).

On 1.1.2006 the Federal Ministry of the Interior founded the [Federal Agency of Information Technology](#) as department of BVA. The new department is responsible for the operation and development of the federal administration IT-Systems. Further to that, project management and software development constitute important fields of activity.

##### 2. [Federal Coordination and Advisory Agency for IT in the Federal Administration \(KBSt\)](#)

The Federal Government Coordination and Advisory Agency for IT in the Federal Administration (KBSt) was founded in 1968. Located within the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the KBSt is an inter-ministerial agency of the Federal Government intended to ensure that the federal administration optimizes its use of information technology for specific fields and in organisational, economic and technical terms. The KBSt's tasks include designing and implementing and running central pilot projects and infrastructure components, such as the the Berlin-Bonn Information Network (IVBB), which since 1999 has provided secure communication between

the offices of constitutional bodies located in Berlin and Bonn. The IVBB is currently being expanded into the Federal Administration Information Network (IVBV), which will give federal authorities throughout Germany access to this federal network.

### 3. 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

#### 1. [Federal Coordination and Advisory Agency for IT in the Federal Administration \(KBSt\)](#)

The KBSt advises federal authorities on their IT strategies and publishes recommendations on IT strategy and methodological guidelines for implementing such strategy. The KBSt also deals with issues of software architecture and its standardization and with the definition of interfaces. The KBSt also monitors developments in the IT industry. Together with the Federal Office for Information Security, the KBSt puts out an annual analysis of industry trends as well as a best-practice report identifying especially successful IT solutions.

#### 2. [Federal Information Security Agency \(BSI\)](#)

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 Federal Court of Accounts also serves as Federal Commissioner for Efficiency in Public Administration. He puts forward proposals, recommendations, reports and opinions in order to enhance the efficiency of the federal administration.

The Commissioner may also advise Parliament at its request.

#### Data Protection

#### [Federal Data Protection Commissioner](#)

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

### Regional & Local eGovernment.....

#### Strategy

Individual Federated States and Municipalities are responsible for their own eGovernment strategies/policies. However, in 2003 a joint strategy for integrated eGovernment called [Deutschland-Online](#) was agreed between the Federal Government, the Federated states and the municipalities.

#### Coordination

Political coordination of the implementation of Deutschland-Online is carried out by a **Conference of State Secretaries for eGovernment in Federal and State governments**, in which national associations of local authorities also take part and that reports annually to the heads of government. Technical coordination is ensured by the [Co-operation Committee for Automatic Data Processing at the Federal, Land, and Local Level](#) (KoopA ADV). This committee is supported by an e-Government working group and an e-Government project office.

#### Implementation

Individual Federated States and Municipalities are responsible for the implementation of their own e-government projects. Under the Deutschland-Online strategy, some key projects are developed by groups of administrations on the basis of the **"some for all" principle**, whereby all administrations from the development in a coordinated approach.

## Support

1. [Federal Ministry of the Interior](#)
2. [Federal Coordination and Advisory Agency for IT in the Federal Administration \(KBSt\)](#)
3. [Federal Information Security Agency \(BSI\)](#)
4. [MEDIA@Komm-Transfer](#)

Launched in March 2004, the MEDIA@Komm-Transfer project aims at identifying and developing transferable e-government solutions for German local and regional authorities. The project promotes the development of integrated e-government services at regional and local level, to be developed and tested in pilot 'transfer-municipalities'. MEDIA@Komm-Transfer succeeded the previous MEDIA@Komm initiative, launched in 1998 and under which more than 300 e-solutions for local authorities were developed and tested in three model regions. MEDIA@Komm also helped develop the standard for e-government data exchange [OSCI](#) (Online Services Computer Interface).

## 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 between 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 (Länder) Data Protection Commissioners

German States (Länder) have their own Data Protection Commissioner, which are 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

#### Minister responsible for eGovernment.....

**Name:** Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble

**Job title:** Federal Minister of the Interior

**Picture:**



**Contact details:**

Federal Ministry of the Interior

Alt Moabit 101 D

10559 Berlin

Germany

Tel.: +49 (0) 30 18 681-0

E-mail: [poststelle@bmi.bund.de](mailto:poststelle@bmi.bund.de)

Source: [Federal Ministry of the Interior](#)

**Name:** Johann Hahlen

**Job title:** State Secretary in the Federal Ministry of the Interior

**Picture:**



**Contact details:**

Federal Ministry of the Interior

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10559 Berlin

Germany

Tel.: +49 (0) 30 18 681-0

E-mail: [poststelle@bmi.bund.de](mailto:poststelle@bmi.bund.de)

Source: [Federal Ministry of the Interior](#)

Head of eGovernment (i.e. head of eGovernment agency/directorate) .....

**Name:** Martin Schallbruch

**Job title:** IT Director (Chief Information Officer), Federal Ministry of the Interior

**Picture:**



**Contact details:**

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Germany

Tel.: +49 (0) 30 18 681-0

E-mail: [poststelle@bmi.bund.de](mailto:poststelle@bmi.bund.de)

Source: [Federal Ministry of the Interior](#)

Other eGovernment executives.....

**Name:** Peter Schar

**Job title:** Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information

**Picture:**



**Contact details:**

The Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information

Husarenstraße 30

53117 Bonn

Tel.: +49 (0) 228 81995-0

E-mail: [poststelle@bdi.bund.de](mailto:poststelle@bdi.bund.de)

Source: [The Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information](#)

**Name:** Dr. Udo Helmbrecht

**Job title:** President of the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI)

**Picture:**



**Contact details:**

Federal Office for Information Security

Godesberger Allee 185-189

53175 Bonn

Germany

Tel.: +49 (0) 30 18 9582-0

E-mail: [bsi@bsi.bund.de](mailto:bsi@bsi.bund.de)

Source: [Federal Office for Information Security](#)

# eGovernment Infrastructure

## Main eGovernment infrastructure components

### Portal.....

#### [Bund.de](#)

Bund.de is the German e-government services portal, providing central access to the online services provided by the Federal Authorities and the Federal Administration, as well as an entry to German States and Municipalities. Among other things, the portal provides access to an Online Form Centre enabling users to find administrative forms without knowing which entity is 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. Bund.de has recently been redesigned to better suit the needs of citizens and business users.

### Network.....

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

The infrastructure supporting internal communications between 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 objective was to provide support for the division of operational functions between Berlin and Bonn, where a large portion of federal employees are still located, by means of a modern and secure network supporting electronic information, communication and transactions services. The IVBB provides the main federal authorities with central Internet access and networking services (WWW, FTP, e-mail, etc.). Up to July 2006 IVBB has also provided access to the IVBB Intranet, which forms an intermediate level between departmental Intranets and the Internet and provides access to directories (address, phone, fax, e-mail, etc.), specialised databases, IT-related information, search engine, libraries of the federal authorities, etc. On 24 July 2006 the IVBB intranet was replaced by the



[Federal Intranet](#) (Intranet des Bundes). Besides the services offered by its predecessor, 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.

#### [Federal Administration Information Network \(IVBV\)](#)

The IVBV is a private IP-based communication network, which serves as intranet between the different public administration departments. It is introduced with the ambitious target to become the comprehensive communications platform for the whole Federal Public Administration. The network allows access only to pertinent authorized users. 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 a. o. a firewall system, comprehensive encryption of the data communication and permanent observation of the connected users and the established connections. Two years past, its initial presentation in the CeBit exhibition, the IVBV network connects over 300,000 employees in the Federal Public Administration and is very close to reaching its initial target.

## e-Identification infrastructure.....

There is currently no central e-identification infrastructure in Germany. However, an **electronic ID card project** has been launched and pilots of electronic services cards were carried out in 2002. The German electronic ID card (*Digitale Personalausweis*) will include an electronic signature and biometric identifiers stored on a chip card. In March 2005 the Federal Government presented a [common 'eCard' strategy](#) aimed at providing a common strategic framework for the different electronic cards projects currently being developed in Germany, such as the e-health insurance card, the e-ID card, and the job card. The German electronic ID card is expected to be introduced by the end of 2007.

## eProcurement infrastructure.....

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

The Federal Government's e-procurement platform, launched in May 2002, allows authorities to publish and notify call for tenders electronically, and enables bidders to submit offers completely and bindingly over the Internet. This system is the result of the Public Procurement Online (Öffentlicher Einkauf Online) Programme managed by the Office of Procurement of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, and which also comprises electronic catalogues enabling public bodies to procure goods and services electronically from a series of pre-concluded framework contracts and without the need for expensive calls for tender. In addition to the e-Vergabe platform, all public tenders are published online in the national gazette of public contracts ([Bundesausschreibungsblatt](#)).

## Knowledge Management infrastructure

There is currently no central knowledge management infrastructure in Germany. However, a number of knowledge tools are available through the Federal Government Information Network (IVBB/IVBV), such as tools for closed user groups or a portal of the federal libraries, which makes documents of federal authorities accessible to federal employees over the federal Intranet. In addition, a specific [e-government knowledge management website](#) has been set up to help federal, state and local project teams with the planning and implementation of e-government projects. This website, the BSI-handbook on e-Government, the Deutschland-Online information platform, and the information platform of the Central Coordination Agency for IT in the Federal Government, represent a set of valuable central knowledge management tools for federal administrations.

## Other.....

### [eSignature Alliance](#)

Administration and private partners founded in the year 2003 the "e-signatures alliance" with focus on promoting the usage of electronic signatures in Germany. The main vision is that the broad usage of e-signatures should bring benefits to both public and private partners. All citizens should be able by utilizing a standardized technical infrastructure, to access any available application in the area of e-Business and e-Government, 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"](#)).

## eGovernment Services for Citizens

### Availability and sophistication of eServices for Citizens

The information in this section is based on the common list of 20 basic public services (12 for citizens, 8 for businesses) adopted by the Council of the EU in March 2001, and on the methodology used to assess their level of online availability and sophistication in the eEurope benchmarking exercises (see: [eGovernment indicators for benchmarking eEurope](#)).

#### The 12 services for citizens are as follows:

1. Income Tax Declaration
2. Job Searches by labour Offices
3. Social Security Contributions
4. Personal Documents
5. Car Registration
6. Application for Building Permission
7. Declaration to the Police
8. Public Libraries
9. Certificates (birth, marriage) Request and Delivery
10. Enrolment in Higher Education
11. Announcement of moving (change of address)
12. Health-related services (e.g. appointments for hospitals)

For each service, the sophistication stage reached is indicated, with reference to the maximum stage possible for the service.

- ▶ Stage 1 - Information: online information about public services
- ▶ Stage 2 - Interaction: downloading of forms
- ▶ Stage 3 - Two-way interaction: processing of forms, including authentication
- ▶ Stage 4 - Transaction: full case handling, decision and delivery (payment)

## 1. Income taxes (declaration, notification of assessment)

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

**Website:** <https://www.elster.de/>

**Sophistication stage:** 4/4

**Description:** The ELSTER website enables online transmission of income tax returns and tax notifications. Tax returns filed are automatically compared with the electronic assessment issued by the tax administration to determine immediately whether, and if so where, 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 ELSTER project was developed by one state, Bavaria, on behalf of all others. The programme kernel is also distributed freely to the approximately 250 tax software developers on the German market.

## 2. Job search services by labour offices

**Responsibility:** Central Government (Federal), Federal Labour Agency

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

**Sophistication stage:** 4/4

**Description:** The employment portal aims at connecting supply and demand on the training and job markets and promoting their transparency. It provides access to databases of job offers and of job seekers and also features an innovative matching application to help job seekers identify opportunities more easily. Another sophisticated functionality, accessible to Labour Office employees only, is a 'job robot' that crawls the Internet to collect job advertisements.

### 3. Social security benefits

#### a. Unemployment benefits

**Responsibility:** Central Government (Federal), Federal Labour Agency

**Website:** <http://arbeitslosengeld2.arbeitsagentur.de/>

**Sophistication stage:** 2/4

**Description:** Information and forms to download, which can be filled on screen before being printed and sent or delivered to the Labour Office. On 01 January 2005 the two-tier regime of unemployment benefits and long-term welfare support were replaced by a single flat-rate payout regime introduced as part of the 'Hartz IV' reform of the labour market. The new system, known as 'Unemployment Pay II' (Arbeitslosengeldes II - AIG II), is aimed at bringing back long-term unemployed persons into the labour market by reducing the amount of benefits they receive and inciting them to accept jobs on offer.

#### b. Family allowances

**Responsibility:** Central Government (Federal), Federal Labour Agency

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

**Sophistication stage:** 2/4

**Description:** Information and forms to download. Child allowances (Kindergeld) are granted for children aged up to 18 as a tax refund, in order to meet the constitutional rule that income is not taxable up to a child's subsistence level. Any child benefit awarded over and above this amount is paid to support the family. Claims are handled by the family benefits department (Familienkasse) of local Employment Agencies or by the family benefits departments of administrations for civil servants.

#### c. Medical costs (reimbursement or direct settlement)

**Responsibility:** N/A

**Website:** N/A

**Sophistication stage:** 2/4

**Description:** This service is not relevant for Germany. Medical treatment is free at the point of delivery in the public health service, and costs outside the public health service are not reimbursed. The website of the [Federal Insurance Institution for Employees \(BfA\)](#) provides information about the compulsory health insurance scheme.

**d. Student grants**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government (Federal), Federal Ministry for Education and Research and Federal Office of Administration (BVA)
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.bafoeg.bmbf.de/">http://www.bafoeg.bmbf.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	4/4
<b>Description:</b>	Information and forms to download. In Germany, 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 total amount a student receives declines as his/her parents' income rises. The loan part of the BAföG has to be paid back at a later date – when students have complemented their studies, for instance. The scheme is administered by the <a href="#">Federal Office of Administration (BVA)</a> in cooperation with the Credit Institute for Reconstruction ( <a href="#">Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau - KfW</a> ), a bank owned by the federal government (80%) and the Länder (20%). Since November 2000 an online service is available on the <a href="#">BAföG Online</a> website to manage loan repayments electronically.

**4. Personal documents (passport and driving licence)****a. Passport**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government (Federal), Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/">http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	2/3
<b>Description:</b>	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.

**b. Driving license**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government (Federal), Federal Motor Transport Authority (KBA)
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.kba.de/">http://www.kba.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	2/3
<b>Description:</b>	Information only.

**5. Car registration (new, used and imported cars)**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Local Government
<b>Website:</b>	N/A
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	1-2/4
<b>Description:</b>	Vehicle registration services are handled by local authorities, some of which provide related information on their websites.

**6. Application for building/planning permission**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Regional Government
<b>Website:</b>	N/A
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	2/4
<b>Description:</b>	Planning and building permission services are handled by regional (state) governments, some of which have implemented online requests systems.

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

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central (Federal) / Regional (State) Government
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.polizei.de/">http://www.polizei.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	3/3
<b>Description:</b>	A web-based online declaration service was introduced in 2004, enabling German citizens to report small crimes to the police over the Internet.

**8. Public libraries (availability of catalogues and search tools)**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central (Federal) / Regional (State) / Local Government
<b>Website:</b>	N/A
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	2-3/4
<b>Description:</b>	Most major public libraries (universities, city libraries etc.) provide catalogues and search tools on the Internet.

**9. Certificates (birth, marriage): request and delivery**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Local Government
<b>Website:</b>	N/A
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	1-2/3
<b>Description:</b>	Civil registration services and corresponding certificates are managed by local authorities, most of which provide related information on their websites.

**10. Enrolment in higher education/university**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government (Federal), Central Office for the Allocation of University Places (ZVS)
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.zvs.de/">http://www.zvs.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	3/4
<b>Description:</b>	Information and online application system.

**11. Announcement of moving (change of address)**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Local Government
<b>Website:</b>	N/A
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	1-2/3
<b>Description:</b>	Change of address notifications are handled by local authorities, most of which provide related information on their websites.

**12. Health related services (interactive advice on the availability of services in different hospitals; appointments for hospitals)**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	N/A
<b>Website:</b>	N/A
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	N/A
<b>Description:</b>	This service is not relevant for Germany.

Source: [The online sophistication ratings are in agreement with the report 'Online Availability of Public Services: How is Europe Progressing?' carried out for the European Commission](#)

## eGovernment Services for Businesses

### Availability and sophistication of eServices for Businesses

The information in this section is based on the common list of 20 basic public services (12 for citizens, 8 for businesses) adopted by the Council of the EU in March 2001, and on the methodology used to assess their level of online availability and sophistication in the eEurope benchmarking exercises (see: [eGovernment indicators for benchmarking eEurope](#)).

#### The 8 services for businesses are as follows:

1. Social security contributions for employees
2. Corporation Tax: declaration, notification
3. VAT: declaration, notification
4. Registration of a new company
5. Submission of data to statistical offices
6. Customs declaration
7. Environment-related permits
8. Public procurement

For each service, the sophistication stage reached is indicated, with reference to the maximum stage possible for the service.

- ▶ Stage 1 - Information: online information about public services
- ▶ Stage 2 - Interaction: downloading of forms
- ▶ Stage 3 - Two-way interaction: processing of forms, including authentication
- ▶ Stage 4 - Transaction: full case handling, decision and delivery (payment)

### 1. Social contribution for employees

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government (Federal), Federal Insurance Institution for Employees - BFA
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.bfa.de/">http://www.bfa.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	4/4
<b>Description:</b>	Information, forms to download and e-services using digital certificates.

### 2. Corporation tax: declaration, notification

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central (Federal) / Regional (State) Government
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.elster.de/">https://www.elster.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	4/4
<b>Description:</b>	ELSTER enables online transmission of corporate tax returns and tax notifications.

### 3. VAT: declaration, notification

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central (Federal) / Regional (State) Government
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.elster.de/">https://www.elster.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	4/4
<b>Description:</b>	ELSTER enables online transmission of VAT returns.

### 4. Registration of a new company

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Regional Government
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.handelsregister.de/">http://www.handelsregister.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	1-2/4
<b>Description:</b>	Information only. Company registration services are handled by local courts.

#### 5. Submission of data to statistical offices

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government (Federal), Federal Statistical Office
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://w3stat.destatis.de/">http://w3stat.destatis.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	3/3
<b>Description:</b>	Launched in early 2000, the W3Stat system allows businesses to pass on regular information to the Federal Statistics Office via the Internet.

#### 6. Customs declarations

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government (Federal), Federal Customs Administration
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.zoll-d.de/">http://www.zoll-d.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	4/4
<b>Description:</b>	Information, forms and e-services for customs operations. An <a href="#">Online Customs Declaration (IZA)</a> service was launched in October 2002, based on the <a href="#">ATLAS</a> system for electronic application, processing, settlement and archiving of essential custom processes.

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

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government (Federal), Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety, and Federal Environmental Agency
<b>Websites:</b>	<a href="http://www.bmu.de/">http://www.bmu.de/</a> and <a href="http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/">http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	1-2/4
<b>Description:</b>	Information only.

**8. Public procurement**

<b>Responsibility:</b>	Central Government, Ministry of the Interior, Federal Procurement Office
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.e-vergabe.bund.de/">http://www.e-vergabe.bund.de/</a>
<b>Sophistication stage:</b>	4/4
<b>Description:</b>	The Federal Government's e-procurement 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 managed by the Office of Procurement of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, and which also comprises electronic catalogues enabling public bodies to procure goods and services electronically from a series of pre-concluded framework contracts and without the need for expensive calls for tender.

Source: [The online sophistication ratings are in agreement with the report 'Online Availability of Public Services: How is Europe Progressing?' carried out for the European Commission](#)

## **European Commission - IDABC eGovernment Observatory**

The eGovernment Observatory is an information tool on eGovernment developments across Europe. It provides decision-makers and professionals with information resources and insight into strategies, initiatives and projects in Europe and beyond.

The eGovernment Observatory is an IDABC project. IDABC is the European Commission programme that promotes the delivery of e-government services in the EU

The eGovernment factsheets are one of the observatory services. They present an overview of the eGovernment situation and progress in European countries. The factsheets are updated every six months.

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