



Deutscher Bundestag

The Committee on Transport

Verkehrsausschuss

Informationen in englischer Sprache



New
2023
version
20th electoral term



“The Committee on Transport helps to shape the future of mobility. Transport ensures that everyone can participate in the life of the community, and access work, school and their daily needs. Yet transport must become more sustainable and climate-neutral. Our mobility patterns are crucial to meeting our climate targets. No one must be left behind, and we need to guarantee equivalent living conditions and economic competitiveness. Maintaining, modernising and upgrading infrastructure is vital to achieving this. We are now establishing guidelines for the transition in the transport sector. The Committee is taking an engaged and constructive approach in the necessary discussions.”



Udo Schiefner, SPD
Chairman of the Committee
on Transport

The German Bundestag's decisions are prepared by its committees, which are established at the start of each electoral term. Four of them are stipulated by the Basic Law, the German constitution: the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Defence Committee, the Committee on European Union Affairs and the Petitions Committee.

The Budget Committee and the Committee for the Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure are also required by law. The spheres of responsibility of the committees essentially reflect the Federal Government's distribution of ministerial portfolios. This enables Parliament to scrutinise the government's work effectively.

The committees of the German Bundestag

The German Bundestag sets political priorities of its own by establishing additional committees for specific subjects, such as sport, cultural affairs, human rights or tourism. In addition, special bodies such as parliamentary advisory councils, committees of inquiry or study commissions can also be established. The committees are composed of members of all the parliamentary groups, reflecting the balance of these groups in the German Bundestag. The distribution of the chairs and deputy chairs among the parliamentary groups also reflects their relative strengths in the plenary. In the current electoral term, the committees have between 19 and 49 members.

The committees discuss and deliberate on items referred to them by the plenary. They also have the right to take up issues on their own initiative, allowing them to set priorities in the parliamentary debate. When necessary, they draw on external expertise – usually by holding public hearings. At the end of a committee’s deliberations – especially on bills and motions for which it is the lead committee – it adopts a recommendation for a decision and a report, which serve as the basis for the plenary’s decision.

The 34 members of the Committee on Transport, led by Chairman Udo Schiefner (SPD) and his deputy, Nyke Slawik (Alliance 90/The Greens), discuss issues which affect everyone in Germany. All members of the public either travel themselves on a daily basis, or benefit from good infrastructure which enables them to go to work, engage in leisure activities, or reach public institutions. The Committee influences transport and infrastructure planning to promote quality of life, business, regional competitiveness, and climate action and environmental protection. It participates in the legislative process, submits recommendations to the plenary and scrutinises the government's work. It grapples with current problems and questions for the future.

The Committee on Transport

For example, how can we square the circle of mobility, transport and climate protection? How can we transport goods in a smart, efficient and environmentally friendly manner? How can we optimise our transport system for our economy and society? How can we ensure good infrastructure and transport links are in place to promote equivalent living conditions throughout the country? How can we efficiently plan infrastructure maintenance and modernisation, and involve local residents? How can we integrate European transport systems with intermodal solutions? How can we improve transport safety for all?

The Committee on Transport is thus responsible for the policy field with the largest investment budget, as the planning, construction, maintenance and renewal of transport infrastructure requires a great deal of money. The Committee deliberates on items referred to it by the plenary or the President of the Bundestag, takes up issues on its own initiative, and provides input for debates. In this context, it gathers information, holds public hearings, and submits recommendations for decisions to the plenary. Transport policy is influenced by a wide range of European and international factors, which are discussed by the Committee.

- 10  SPD
- 9  CDU/CSU
- 5  Alliance 90/The Greens
- 4  FDP
- 4  AfD
- 2  The Left Party

Number of members: 34

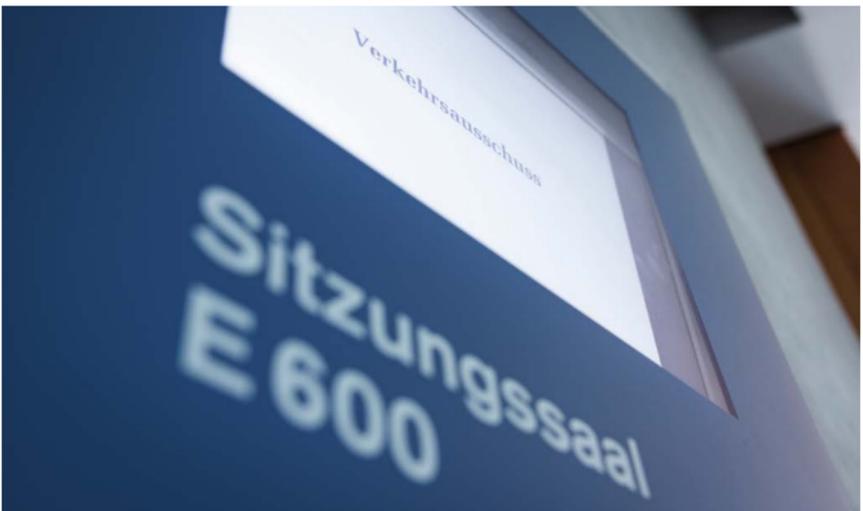
Chairman: Udo Schiefner, SPD

Deputy Chairwoman: Nyke Slawik, Alliance 90/The Greens

Transport infrastructure

One of the most important projects where the Committee plays a key role is federal transport infrastructure planning. Investments worth around 270 billion euros are planned over the period to 2030. It is vital to balance the objectives of transport and climate policy in this context. The condition and modernisation needs of existing transport infrastructure are therefore a constant topic for the Committee, which is currently focusing on bridges in particular. With support from technical and scientific experts, the Committee discusses efforts to speed up

planning for transport projects, and issues relating to public participation and the protection of local residents. The restructuring of the management of trunk roads, with the establishment of the new Federal Autobahn GmbH, is another subject of discussion. The Committee regularly examines the “user pays” principle for transport, and in particular the tolling scheme for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), which is a key element of this approach.



Modes of transport

Rail-related topics are discussed in great depth by the Committee on Transport, and always attract a great deal of public interest. The aim of a modal shift from road to rail requires adequate capacity, rapid and easily reachable connections, and optimal timetables (e.g. the introduction of a nationwide integrated regular interval timetable).

The *Länder* (federal states) and municipalities receive support in improving their transport infrastructure and local public transport, as well as expanding and upgrading their infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians. The Committee on Transport discusses to what extent this is necessary and possible.

European cooperation on aviation, air navigation services, and the structure of charges and taxes are subjects regularly discussed by the Committee. It also looks at how to deal with autonomous aerial systems and drones, as well as at the conditions in waterborne transport. This is another area where there is a particular focus on climate and environmental issues.



The Committee regards improving road safety and implementing “Vision Zero” as another key task. Serious injuries and fatal road accidents must be prevented, including by segregating bicycle and car traffic, and by using modern assistance systems to prevent HGVs that are turning off from colliding with cyclists. The Committee’s deliberations on driving time and rest periods for HGV drivers focus both on road safety and on the employment and social conditions for drivers. The Com-

mittee is engaging with the further expansion and optimisation of motorway rest areas for HGVs, and the reasons for and consequences of the shortage of drivers in the road haulage sector. However, the day-to-day traffic restrictions caused by roadworks on federal trunk roads are also a recurring topic.



Sustainable and climate-friendly transport

The overarching aims of the Committee's work are securing comprehensive, sustainable transport, ensuring it is climate-friendly, environmentally sustainable and socially equitable, and strengthening Germany's position as a good place to do business. To this end, a balance has to be struck between a number of very different requirements. A modal shift from road to rail and waterborne transport is one aspect of this, as is the use of new propulsion technologies. The Committee discusses how to foster electric mobility and create the necessary infrastructure, and what role other alternative fuels can play in meeting climate targets. There is a particular focus on promoting the most climate-friendly forms of mobility: cycling and walking.

Transport and digital systems

Many forms of transport are now unimaginable without the support provided by digital systems. Advances in automated and autonomous driving are further intensifying this trend. The Committee is monitoring this development particularly closely. Rail is also seeing the introduction of digital systems: digital signal boxes and the European Train Control System (ETCS) are just two of the topics examined by the Committee in this context.

All of these examples illustrate the diverse range of subjects which make up the work of the Committee on Transport. The issues it deals with are highly topical, are crucial to our future, have an international dimension and can often be contentious – but above all else, they are issues which affect everyone in Germany.



Udo Schiefner,
SPD
Chairman
Quality assurance
technician,
b. 7 Aug. 1959 in
Kempen.
Bundestag Member
since 2013



Nyke Slawik,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Deputy Chairwoman
Research assistant,
b. 7 Jan. 1994 in
Leverkusen.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Committee members

The 34 members of the Committee on Transport

Dorothee Martin,
SPD
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Political scientist,
b. 21 Jan. 1978 in
Kaiserslautern.
Bundestag Member
since 2020



Thomas Bareiß,
CDU/CSU
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Business administrator,
b. 15 Feb. 1975 in
Albstadt-Ebingen.
Bundestag Member
since 2005



Susanne Menge,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Former teacher,
b. 11 Feb. 1960 in
Bad Zwischenahn.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Bernd Reuther,
FDP
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Senior employee, social
scientist,
b. 1 May 1971 in Wesel.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Dr Dirk Spaniel,
AfD
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Engineer,
b. 3 Nov. 1971 in
Marburg.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Thomas Lutze,
The Left Party
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Employee,
b. 23 Aug. 1969 in
Elsterwerda.
Bundestag Member
since 2009



Jürgen Berghahn,
SPD
Adult education officer,
b. 5 July 1960 in
Blomberg.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Isabel Cademartori,
SPD
Business education
specialist,
b. 9 Jan. 1988 in
Bad Saarow.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Martin Kröber,
SPD
Branch manager,
b. 12 Feb. 1992 in
Halberstadt.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Jan Plobner,
SPD
Registrar,
b. 26 Mar. 1992 in
Nuremberg.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Uwe Schmidt,
SPD
Senior port worker,
b. 14 Feb. 1966 in
Bremerhaven.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Christian Schreider,
SPD
Lawyer,
b. 22 Dec. 1971 in
Worms.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Mathias Stein,
SPD
Hydraulic and
construction
technician,
b. 21 Feb. 1970 in Kiel.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Anja Troff-Schaffarzyk,
SPD
Education specialist,
b. 1 Oct. 1969 in
Jemgum.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Michael Donth,
CDU/CSU
Former mayor,
b. 8 June 1967 in
Metzingen.
Bundestag Member
since 2013



Martina Englhardt-Kopf,
CDU/CSU
Senior academic
secondary school
teacher,
b. 8 June 1981 in
Schwandorf.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Dr Jonas Geissler,
CDU/CSU
Senior civil servant,
b. 5 June 1984 in Isny
im Allgäu.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Florian Müller,
CDU/CSU
Strategy officer,
b. 14 Sep. 1986 in
Attendorn.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Dr Christoph Ploß,
CDU/CSU
Historian,
b. 19 July 1985 in
Hamburg.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Henning Rehbaum,
CDU/CSU
Business administrator,
former department
head,
b. 10 Sep. 1973 in
Hiltrup (now Münster).
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Felix Schreiner,
CDU/CSU
Former Member of a
Land Parliament,
executive board
assistant, public-sector
employee,
b. 29 Jan. 1986 in
Waldshut.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Björn Simon,
CDU/CSU
Political scientist,
b. 18 May 1981 in
Offenbach.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Matthias Gastel,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Self-employed
personnel service
provider and business
mediator,
b. 26 Dec. 1970 in
Stuttgart.
Bundestag Member
since 2013



Stefan Gelbhaar,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Lawyer,
b. 9 July 1976 in Berlin.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Swantje Henrike
Michaelsen,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Branch manager,
b. 4 Oct. 1979 in Mainz.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Valentin Abel,
FDP
Sales analyst,
b. 7 Feb. 1991 in
Künzelsau.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Christian Sauter,
FDP
Diploma Industrial
Engineer,
b. 11 Feb. 1980
in Rinteln.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Jürgen Lenders,
FDP
Managing partner,
b. 20 Apr. 1966 in
Krefeld.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



René Bochmann,
AfD
Office management
clerk,
b. 4 Feb. 1969 in
Markranstädt.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Dirk Brandes,
AfD
Public-sector employee,
b. 25 May 1974 in
Langenhagen.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Wolfgang Wiehle,
AfD
IT consultant and
specialist,
b. 20 Oct. 1964 in
Munich.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Bernd Riexinger,
The Left Party
Bank clerk,
b. 30 Oct. 1955 in
Leonberg.
Bundestag Member
since 2017





Information online

The Committee on Transport

www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a15



Website for downloading and ordering the German Bundestag's
information materials

www.btg-bestellservice.de



Contact details for the Committee Secretariat

Deutscher Bundestag

Verkehrsausschuss

Platz der Republik 1

11011 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 227-32426

Fax: +49 30 227-30017

Email: verkehrsausschuss@bundestag.de

Herausgeber: Deutscher Bundestag, Referat Öffentlichkeitsarbeit
Platz der Republik 1, 11011 Berlin
Koordination: Dr. Elisabeth Heegewaldt, Elmar Ostermann

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The German Bundestag takes decisions on what are at times highly complex and controversial bills and parliamentary initiatives relating to the entire spectrum of policy fields. The committees play a central role in parliamentary deliberations. They are the forum where the Members thrash out compromises and draw on expert advice before submitting their reports and recommendations for decisions to be voted on by the Bundestag as a whole.

www.bundestag.de/en/committees



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