



Deutscher Bundestag

**The Information and  
Documentation Services  
of the German Bundestag**



The German Bundestag is the place where legislation and policies are made. Parliamentary deliberations are complex communication processes, with Members striving to reach majority decisions that are politically balanced. Those involved in reaching these decisions need to be able to access specialist information in print and electronically, in the form of text, audio and images. Parliament's work also constantly generates new information, which has to be examined, put in order, evaluated and stored to allow it to be accessed and to preserve it for the future.

In carrying out its work, Parliament can draw upon a wide range of services offered by the Administration of the German Bundestag. One central element is the work of the German Bundestag's information services in the Library and Documentation Directorate (ID).

## **The Library and Documentation Directorate**

## The Library of the German Bundestag: Parliament's knowledge repository

The modern rotunda of the Marie-Elisabeth Lüders Building houses the Library of the German Bundestag. With more than 1.4 million books, an impressive and constantly growing collection of electronic publications, and around 8000 specialist journals, the Library is one of the largest and most modern parliamentary libraries in the world. In thematic terms, the Library collects specialist publications primarily in the fields of politics, law, economics, social sciences and modern history, as well as publications on all other areas relevant for the Bundestag's day-to-day parliamentary business.

The Library of the German Bundestag is not a public library; rather, it primarily serves the Members of the Bundestag, the parliamentary groups and the Bundestag Administration.

Directorate ID is composed of the Library, Parliamentary Archives, Parliamentary Documentation and Press Documentation divisions. This Directorate brings together all of the information services for the Members of the Bundestag, the parliamentary groups and the Administration. A great deal of this information is also available to the public, many of whom show a keen interest in parliamentary processes, particularly via the Internet. The ID divisions' web pages receive about 80 million page views per year.

View of the Library's reading room

But former Members of the Bundestag, the German Members of the European Parliament, supreme *Land* and federal authorities, diplomatic missions and accredited journalists also make use of its vast holdings, which include official publications. The Library's collection can also be consulted by academics, upon request and for a limited period of time; it functions for them as a reference library.

The Library offers information services tailored to the needs of the Members of the Bundestag. It documents articles from specialist journals on a wide range

of topics, provides a wealth of information in response to questions on every subject imaginable, compiles lists of suggested reading and Internet links on topical issues, and advises its users on what are in some cases complex literature searches.

The Library's entire holdings can be searched and material ordered direct from every office via the Intranet catalogue. The requested material is available for collection 30 minutes after ordering. The catalogue can also be accessed by the public on the Internet.

The architecturally impressive reading room contains a large stock of reference materials and modern and well-equipped spaces for reading and working.



### **The Parliamentary Archives: The memory of the German Bundestag**

The Parliamentary Archives are open to everyone, subject to the conditions of use. The steadily increasing number of enquiries received by the Archives show how highly they are valued, particularly by journalists, academics and teachers. On long rows of shelves filled with folders and neatly stacked boxes of documents, the official records produced by the Bundestag and its Administration are preserved, catalogued, indexed and made available. The archives also hold 11,000 audio and video recordings and 90,000 images of parliamentary life. Digital

images are available online free of charge. Since 2005, a specially developed process has been used to archive the German Bundestag's website; this archive is also available online.

The Legal Documentation Section compiles all documents created during the process of deliberation on and adoption of a federal bill in the Bundestag and the Bundesrat; these documents can be viewed in the reading room upon request.

Archive materials stored  
in cartons

Nowhere else is the process leading to the adoption of every federal law – from the Basic Law (the German constitution) in 1949 right up to the present day – documented so comprehensively.

The 1500-page Official Handbook is an indispensable reference work on the foundations of the Bundestag's work and its current composition; a new edition is published at the beginning of each electoral term, and is continuously updated. Since 1949, the Parliamentary Archives have also been gathering, indexing and documenting the most important information on all Members of the German Bundestag; it also maintains a "Public List of Associations Registered with the Bundestag

and their Representatives", which is available on the Internet as a PDF file. The Data Handbook on the History of the German Bundestag is a treasure trove for political scientists, journalists, and anyone seeking information about the work of the Members of the Bundestag. This multi-volume reference work contains statistics, overviews, timelines and notes on how Parliament is organised and its working methods, and documents all relevant events and facts relating to the history of the German Bundestag since 1949. It is available both as a book and as a CD-ROM, and can also be downloaded as a PDF file.



### **Parliamentary Documentation: What happens to the printed papers?**

The major share of parliamentary work is recorded in the printed papers and minutes of plenary proceedings of the German Bundestag. Since 1949, in order to document this work, the task of the Parliamentary Documentation Division (previously the Subject and Speakers' Indexes) has been to catalogue, index, and summarise the German Bundestag and Bundesrat materials which are available to the public (plenary debates, bills, motions, interpellations, reports) according to formal and thematic criteria.

“Files” are compiled, setting out the stages in the deliberation process of each parliamentary item. This not only makes it possible to search for parliamentary items by topic (e.g. to determine the stage reached in the legislative process), but also to follow the parliamentary activities of each individual Member of the Bundestag (e.g. speeches in plenary on specific agenda items).

As the Division's former name – the Subject and Speakers' Indexes – indicates, from the 1st to the 7th electoral term, the printed papers and minutes of plenary proceedings were documented solely in the form of printed indexes, according to formal and thematic criteria. However, since the beginning

of the 8th electoral term (14 December 1976), parliamentary materials have been catalogued, indexed and summarised in a database, the Documentation and Information System for Parliamentary Materials (DIP), which was replaced by a new DIP system in the 16th electoral term. The new web-based system allows users to search for parliamentary processes and materials and the full texts of printed papers and minutes of plenary proceedings. Parliamentary materials published in the current and previous electoral terms can also be accessed online from the Internet-based document server by entering the reference number of the relevant printed paper or minutes.

The public information service provides answers, either by telephone or in writing, to individual enquiries relating to all parliamentary materials, deliberation processes, and parliamentary activities undertaken by Members of the German Bundestag, Members of the Bundesrat, and by the Federal Government since 1949, and also provides up-to-date statistical data on the work of Parliament (such as information about the number of bills or minor interpellations tabled) on the Internet.

Parliamentary materials  
can be searched using  
the DIP database



## Press Documentation: Media coverage

Politics is covered in the media on a daily basis. The media are a source allowing the Members of the German Bundestag to learn the public's opinion of political decisions and what people's concerns are. The Press Documentation Division is the German Bundestag's central service for information relating to the press, as well as one of the most important press archives in Germany. The most important newspapers are monitored here each day.

From 8.00 a.m. onwards on each working day, Members of the Bundestag, their staff and

employees of the Bundestag Administration can access on the Intranet an electronic press review, which offers a comprehensive overview of the daily press coverage of politics, and which documents topics relating to politics, economics and society that are receiving media coverage in Germany and abroad.

In addition, the Press Documentation Division offers press-monitoring services – daily email delivery of articles on a specific person or subject.

Essential for the work of Parliament: an overview of press coverage

The archive of press cuttings has existed since 1949. It was a conventional paper archive until 1999, when it became an electronic archive that can be accessed from all of the Bundestag's workstations. It has now grown to include 24 million articles. The archive also contains the largest collection of political caricatures in Europe.

A number of other services are available to users in the Press Documentation Division's information offices in the Jakob Kaiser Building and the Marie-Elisabeth Lüders Building; they can request that the Division search

for certain press articles, compile documentation on certain topics and search external press databases. In the reading room of the Marie-Elisabeth Lüders Building, those who are interested can access the current editions of 170 daily and weekly newspapers from Germany and abroad; current editions of regional and national publications are also available in the Jakob Kaiser Building.



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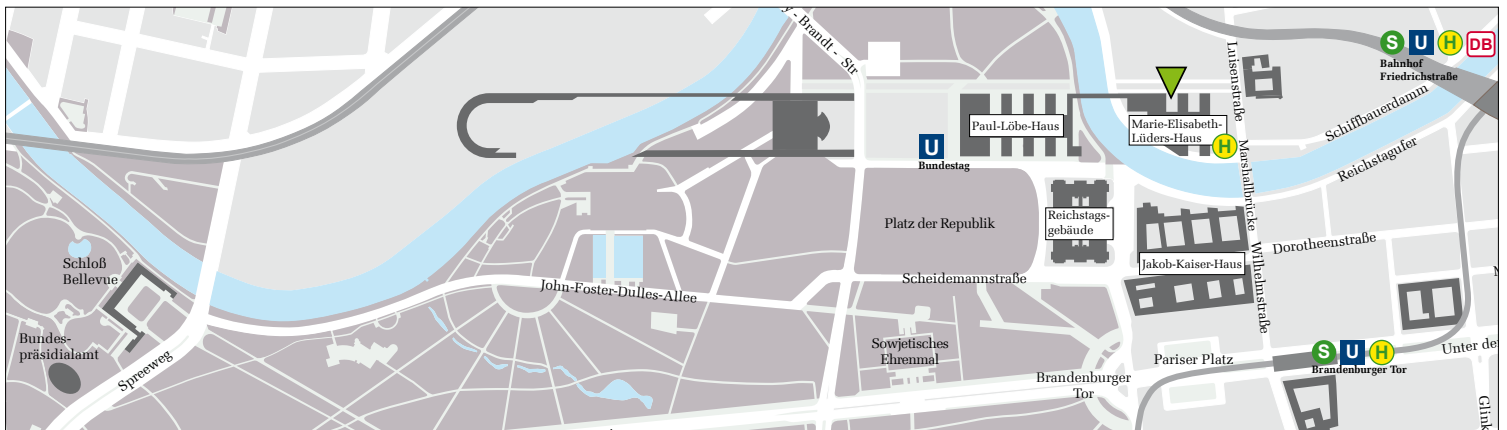
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parlament/verwalt/pressedok

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Adele-Schreiber-Krieger-Str. 1  
10117 Berlin



**Published by**

German Bundestag  
Division IO 2 – Public Relations  
Platz der Republik 1  
11011 Berlin

**Text**

Marianne Wollenweber, Bonn

**Bundestag eagle**

Professor Ludwig Gies/  
revised: 2009, büro uebele

**Translated by**

Division WI 1 – Language Service

**Photos**

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**Layout**

German Bundestag  
Division ZT 2 – Central Procurement

**Printed by**

Das Druckteam Berlin

© German Bundestag, July 2010