The Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs
“Our cultural scene is unique, and our media report freely and independently. That is of fundamental importance for our democracy. As Chairwoman of the Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs, I am an advocate for variety in culture and the media, above all, and I wish to see as many people as possible enjoy the wide range of options available. Within the German Bundestag, the Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs is the central forum for debate on this field of policy. I am keen to ensure that this debate is conducted in a critical and constructive manner.”

Katrin Budde, SPD
Chairwoman of the Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs
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 the Affairs of the European Union and the Petitions Committee. The Budget Committee and the Committee for 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 Bundestag committees
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, a majority of its members adopt a recommendation for a decision and a report, which serve as the basis for the plenary’s decision.

The German Bundestag sets political priorities of its own by establishing additional committees for specific subjects, such as sport, cultural affairs 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 nine and 49 members.
The German Bundestag has had a Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs since 1998, when the Federal Government of the day, a coalition between the SPD and Alliance 90/The Greens, first appointed a Commissioner for Culture and the Media. Parliament reacted immediately and decided that a permanent committee was needed to support and scrutinise the Commissioner’s work. Although the Basic Law, Germany’s constitution, stipulates that responsibility for theatres, museums and libraries rests primarily with Germany’s towns and cities, municipalities and Länder (federal states), some subjects and projects are of national importance. That is where

**The Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs**
The Committee discusses issues such as whether the right framework is in place for artists, what should be done with the files of the GDR’s State Security Service, or what Deutsche Welle, Germany’s state-funded international broadcaster, needs to be successful in the face of international media competition. The parliamentarians look into what action is needed to ensure that journalists can report in an independent, critical and informed manner, or they discuss what conditions are needed for Germany to remain internationally competitive as a location for film productions.

the federal level comes in, and thus also the Bundestag’s Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs. In other words, when it is necessary to decide, for example, how the federal level should support the arts in Berlin, the German capital, or what should be done to keep alive the memory of prominent events in German history, then Chairwoman Katrin Budde (SPD) and the other 17 members of the Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs have a key role to play.

6 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ CDU/CSU
4 ■ ■ ■ ■ SPD
2 ■ ■ AfD
2 ■ FDP
2 ■ ■ The Left Party
2 ■ ■ Alliance 90/The Greens

Number of members: 18
Chairwoman: Katrin Budde, SPD
Deputy Chairman: Johannes Selle, CDU/CSU
Bills or motions tabled by the parliamentary groups frequently form the basis for the Committee’s discussions. When it is designated the lead committee for an item, it draws up a proposal for the decision that will ultimately be adopted by the German Bundestag in plenary session. In many cases, however, the Committee chooses topics on its own initiative. Scrutiny of the government’s work is very important to the Members of the German Bundestag: this is why members of the Federal Government appear regularly before the Committee to answer questions and explain how decisions taken by the Bundestag are being implemented and projects driven ahead.

The agendas for the Committee’s meetings reflect the diversity of topics with which it deals. One meeting might focus on how remembrance of and knowledge about the crimes perpetrated by the Nazi regime, more than seven decades after the end of its reign of terror, can be passed on to future generations. The next meeting might include a debate on the concept for the Humboldt Forum, which is to move into the rebuilt Berlin Palace in the centre of the city. On another occasion, the Committee might discuss the future of the press and debate what the digital era means for cultural and media affairs.
European cultural and media policy is becoming ever more important for the Committee. Many legal acts from Brussels affect the scope policy-makers have for action in Germany. Hence the attention the Committee devotes to what is happening at EU level, without which it could not make its influence felt.

The Committee’s members draw on external advice from time to time to ensure they do not overlook any crucial aspects in important debates. To this end, the Committee invites experts to attend hearings or consultations. In addition, the Committee often takes time for guests from institutions that receive federal funding. At such meetings, its members may hold talks with the presidents of the history museums financed by the federal level, or discuss the evolution of the Berlinale with the director of the Berlin International Film Festival.
rates are set at and how distribution chains function:
all of these factors are crucial to the success of the arts and
the media. The cultural and creative economy, with bil-
lions in turnover and more than 1.6 million workers,
is an important sector with a great deal of potential for
development. The Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs
examines what action is needed, across ministerial
boundaries, to allow creative potential to flourish in this
area. For example, it is working towards a copyright
regime centred around the work of creative professionals,
and supporting the Artists’ Social Fund, which provides
a safety net for artists when they fall ill and in old age.

Anyone who is involved in the formulation of cultural
and media policy finds themselves dealing with ideal and
material values, with art for art’s sake and very real eco-
nomic interests. Cultural and media policy is therefore
closely entwined with other fields, including economic
policy and legal policy. Newspapers, books, paintings and
compositions are not purely ends in themselves; they are
intended to find an audience, sell, and secure an income for
their creators. Whether funding programmes have been
put in place for creative professionals, what levels tax
Germany has a rich cultural scene and a varied media landscape which allows the public to exercise real choice. The Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs monitors matters carefully at the national level to ensure that the arts and the media receive the support from the state which reflects their fundamental significance for democracy and society.
Katrin Budde, SPD
Chairwoman
Workplace ergonomics specialist, b. 13 Apr. 1965 in Magdeburg; married; two children. Bundestag Member since 2017

Johannes Selle, CDU/CSU
Deputy Chairman
Mathematician, b. 13 Jan. 1956 in Lobenstein; married; three children. Bundestag Member from 1994 to 1998 and since 2009

Committee members

The 18 members of the Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs
Melanie Bernstein,
CDU/CSU
CDU/CSU spokes­woman on the
Committee
Cultural studies
specialist,
b. 28 Sep. 1976
in Buchholz
in der Nordheide;
widowed;
two children.
Bundestag Member
since 2017

Elisabeth Motschmann,
CDU/CSU
CDU/CSU spokes­woman on cultural and
media affairs
Former State Secretary
at Land level,
b. 13 Oct. 1952
in Lübeck;
married;
three children.
Bundestag Member
since 2013

Michael Frieser,
CDU/CSU
Lawyer,
b. 30 Mar. 1964
in Nuremberg;
made.
Bundestag Member
since 2009

Volker Kauder,
CDU/CSU
Lawyer,
b. 3 Sep. 1949
in Hoffenheim;
made.
Bundestag Member
since 1990

Yvonne Magwas,
CDU/CSU
Sociologist,
b. 28 Nov. 1979
in Rodewisch,
Vogtland.
Bundestag Member
since 2013

Helge Lindh,
SPD
Research assistant,
b. 6 Dec. 1976
in Wuppertal;
unmade.
Bundestag Member
since 2017
Martin Erwin Renner, AfD
Business administrator, b. 5 May 1954 in Reutlingen; married; two children. Bundestag Member since 2017

Hartmut Ebbing, FDP
Auditor, tax adviser, b. 13 May 1956 in Berlin; unmarried; three children. Bundestag Member since 2017

Marianne Schieder, SPD
Lawyer, b. 23 May 1962 in Schwarzberg. Bundestag Member since 2005

Dr Marc Jongen, AfD
AfD spokesman on the Committee Philosophy lecturer, b. 23 May 1968 in Merano, Italy; unmarried. Bundestag Member since 2017

Martin Rabanus, SPD
SPD spokesman on the Committee Civil servant, b. 2 Sep. 1971 in Fulda; married; two children. Bundestag Member since 2013

Marianne Schieder, SPD
Lawyer, b. 23 May 1962 in Schwarzberg. Bundestag Member since 2005

Dr Marc Jongen, AfD
AfD spokesman on the Committee Philosophy lecturer, b. 23 May 1968 in Merano, Italy; unmarried. Bundestag Member since 2017

Thomas Hacker, FDP
FDP spokesman on the Committee Business administrator, b. 9 Oct. 1967 in Bayreuth; unmarried. Bundestag Member since 2017
Brigitte Freihold,  
The Left Party  
Teacher,  
b. 9 Apr. 1955  
in Kaiserslautern;  
divorced;  
two children.  
Bundestag Member since 2017

Erhard Grundl,  
Alliance 90/The Greens  
Alliance 90/The Greens spokesman on the Committee  
Sales manager,  
b. 7 Jan. 1963  
in Mallersdorf;  
madried;  
two children.  
Bundestag Member since 2017

Margit Stumpp,  
Alliance 90/The Greens  
Senior teacher,  
b. 13 Apr. 1963  
in Mengen;  
madried;  
two children.  
Bundestag Member since 2017

Simone Barrientos,  
The Left Party  
The Left Party spokeswoman on the Committee  
Publisher,  
b. 5 Oct. 1963  
in Eisleben;  
one child.  
Bundestag Member since 2017
Information online

The Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs
www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a22
Contact details for the Committee Secretariat

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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