



Deutscher Bundestag

## The Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs

Ausschuss für Kultur und Medien  
Informationen in englischer Sprache



New  
**2023**  
version  
20th electoral term



“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 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 German Bundestag has had a Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs since 1998. When the Federal Government first appointed a Commissioner for Culture and the Media in the late 1990s, Parliament reacted immediately and decided that a permanent committee was needed to support and scrutinise the work of this member of the government. Since then, the significance of federal funding for culture has steadily grown, and the federal level also plays an important role in media policy.

## **The Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs**

The Committee deals with a broad spectrum of issues. For example, the 19 members, chaired by Katrin Budde (SPD), discuss whether the framework in place for artists enables creative professionals to reach their full potential, how to deal with the cultural heritage of different eras, or what resources Deutsche Welle, Germany's international broadcaster, needs so it can succeed as a reliable news source in the face of global competition. The parliamentarians look into what action is needed to ensure that journalists can

report independently, and they discuss what conditions are needed for Germany to remain internationally competitive as a location for film productions. The Committee also debates to what extent the federal level should support the arts in Berlin, the German capital, or what should be done to keep alive the memory of joyous events or dark chapters in Germany's history. Cross-cutting issues, such as digitalisation and climate action, are always taken into consideration.

- 6 ■■■■■ SPD
- 5 ■■■■ CDU/CSU
- 3 ■■■ Alliance 90/The Greens
- 2 ■■ FDP
- 2 ■■ AfD
- 1 ■ The Left Party

Number of members: 19

Chairwoman: Katrin Budde, SPD

Deputy Chairman: Marco Wanderwitz, CDU/CSU

The agendas for the Committee's meetings reflect the diversity of topics with which it deals. Bills and communications from the Federal Government or motions tabled by the parliamentary groups often form the basis for the Committee's discussions. In many cases, however, the Committee chooses topics on its own initiative. Scrutiny of the government's work is a particular priority. This is why the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media and other members of the government appear regularly before the Committee to answer questions. They explain how decisions taken by the Bundestag are being implemented and how projects are being driven ahead.

The Committee's members draw on external advice from time to time to ensure they consider all crucial aspects in important debates. To this end, the Committee holds hearings or consultations, which are frequently attended by representatives of organisations, associations or the academic community. In addition, the Committee often makes time to meet guests from institutions that receive federal funding. At such meetings, its members may hold talks about planned reforms with the president of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, for example, or discuss the evolution of the Berlinale with the director of the Berlin International Film Festival.



The Committee also engages with European cultural and media policy. Many requirements established by Brussels affect the scope that policy-makers have for action in Germany, and so the Committee monitors the EU's work on an ongoing basis.

Anyone who is involved in the formulation of cultural and media policy finds themselves dealing with material and non-material values, with art for art's sake and very real economic interests. Cultural and media policy is therefore closely entwined with other fields, including economic policy and legal policy. Newspapers, books, paintings and compositions 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 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 billions in turnover, 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. 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 during illness and old age.

A rich cultural scene and a varied media landscape are Germany's hallmark. The Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs monitors matters carefully at the national level to ensure that this variety is preserved and that the arts and the media receive political support which reflects their fundamental importance to democracy and society.





Katrin Budde,  
SPD  
Chairwoman  
Workplace ergonomics  
specialist,  
b. 13 Apr. 1965  
in Magdeburg.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Marco Wanderwitz,  
CDU/CSU  
Deputy Chairman  
Lawyer, former  
Parliamentary State  
Secretary,  
b. 10 Oct. 1975  
in Chemnitz.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2002



## Committee members

The 19 members of the Committee on  
Cultural and Media Affairs

Helge Lindh,  
SPD  
Parliamentary-group  
coordinator  
Research assistant,  
b. 6 Dec. 1976  
in Wuppertal.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Maximilian Mörseburg,  
CDU/CSU  
Parliamentary-group  
coordinator  
Lawyer,  
b. 22 Mar. 1992  
in Stuttgart.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Awet Tesfaiesus,  
Alliance 90/The Greens  
Parliamentary-group  
coordinator  
Lawyer,  
b. 5 Oct. 1974  
in Asmara (Eritrea).  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Thomas Hacker,  
FDP  
Parliamentary-group  
coordinator  
Business administrator,  
b. 9 Oct. 1967  
in Bayreuth.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Dr Marc Jongen,  
AfD  
Parliamentary-group  
coordinator  
Philosophy lecturer,  
b. 23 May 1968  
in Merano (Italy).  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Jan Korte,  
The Left Party  
Parliamentary-group  
coordinator  
Political scientist,  
b. 5 Apr. 1977  
in Osnabrück.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2005



Simona Koß,  
SPD  
Teacher,  
b. 9 June 1961  
in Strausberg.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



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



Daniel Dominik  
Schneider,  
SPD  
Manager in the cultural  
sector,  
b. 11 Dec. 1976  
in Cuxhaven.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Dr Joe Weingarten,  
SPD  
Public administration  
specialist, former civil  
servant,  
b. 17 Mar. 1962  
in Bad Kreuznach.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2019



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



Dr Christiane  
Schenderlein,  
CDU/CSU  
Political scientist,  
b. 17 Oct. 1981  
in Weißenfels.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Annette Widmann-  
Mauz,  
CDU/CSU  
Former Minister of State,  
b. 13 June 1966  
in Tübingen.  
Bundestag Member  
since 1998



Luise Amtsberg,  
Alliance 90/The Greens  
Islamic studies  
specialist,  
b. 17 Oct. 1984  
in Greifswald.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2013



Erhard Grundl,  
Alliance 90/The Greens  
Sales manager,  
b. 7 Jan. 1963  
in Mellersdorf.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



Anikó  
Glogowski-Merten,  
FDP  
Art studies scholar,  
b. 25 Mar. 1982  
in Havelberg.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2021



Martin Erwin Renner,  
AfD  
Business administrator,  
b. 5 May 1954  
in Reutlingen.  
Bundestag Member  
since 2017



## Information online

The Committee on Climate Action and Energy  
[www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a22](http://www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a22)



Website for downloading and ordering  
the German Bundestag's information materials  
[www.btg-bestellservice.de](http://www.btg-bestellservice.de)



### **Contact details for the Committee Secretariat**

Deutscher Bundestag  
Ausschuss für Kultur und Medien  
Platz der Republik 1  
11011 Berlin  
Tel.: +49 30 227-34006  
Fax: +49 30 227-36502  
Email: [kulturausschuss@bundestag.de](mailto:kulturausschuss@bundestag.de)

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

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Dr Christiane Schenderlein/Tobias Koch (Schenderlein); p. 15 DBT/  
Inga Haar (Widmann-Mauz); Luise Amtsberg/Marco Fischer (Amtsberg);  
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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](http://www.bundestag.de/en/committees)



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