



# The Information and Documentation Services of the German Bundestag





## The Library and Documentation Directorate

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).

Directorate ID is composed of the Library, Parliamentary Archives, Subject and Speakers' Indexes 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 over 20 million page views per year.



## 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 1.3 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. 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 col-

lection 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 Bun-

desrat; these documents can be viewed in the reading room upon request. 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.

## Subject and Speakers' Indexes: What happens to the printed papers?

The traditional term "Subject and Speakers' Indexes" refers not only to a product (printed indexes of parliamentary proceedings for each electoral term), but also to an entire division within Directorate ID. Since the 1<sup>st</sup> electoral term, the task of this division has been to catalogue, index, and summarise German Bundestag and Bundesrat materials, which are readily 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 for each parliamentary item. This not only makes it possible to search for parliamentary items by topic, but also to follow the parliamentary activities of each individual Member of the Bundestag. Since the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> electoral term (14 December 1976), parliamentary materials have been catalogued, indexed and summarised in a database, the Parliamentary



Material Information System (DIP), which has now been replaced by a new DIP system in this 16<sup>th</sup> electoral term. The new web-based system allows users to search for parliamentary processes and materials as well as full versions of printed papers and minutes of plenary proceedings, which can be located by entering keywords without it being necessary to enter the exact document number or title. Parliamentary materials published in earlier electoral terms can still be accessed online from

the PARFORS document server by entering the relevant printed-paper or minutes number.

Those who are particularly interested in the legislative process of the German Bundestag and the Bundesrat and who have found the GESTA Information System on Federal Legislation to be a valuable resource in electronic or printed form will find that this information is still easily accessible in the new database: fully integrated and updated daily.

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.

## 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.

Parliamentary bodies also use the services offered by the Press Documentation Division. They can subscribe to "profile services": daily emails with collections of press articles on a specific topic or person.

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 read-

ing room of the Marie-Elisabeth Lüders Building, those who are interested can access the current editions of 170 daily and weekly periodicals from Germany and abroad; current editions of regional and national periodicals are also available in the Jakob Kaiser Building.





## Contact

German Bundestag  
Directorate ID  
Platz der Republik 1  
D-11011 Berlin  
Tel.: +4930-22731821  
Fax: +4930-22736748  
Email: vorzimmer.id@bundestag.de  
www.bundestag.de

## Division ID 1 – Library

Tel.: +4930-22732626  
Fax: +4930-22736087  
Email: bibliothek@bundestag.de  
www.bundestag.de/htdocs\_e/  
info/library/index.html

## Division ID 2 – Parliamentary Archives

Tel.: +4930-22732319  
Fax: +4930-22736749  
Email: vorzimmer.id2@bundestag.de  
www.bundestag.de/htdocs\_e/  
info/archives/index.html

Division ID 3 –  
Subject and Speakers' Indexes  
Public information service  
Tel.: +4930-22732350  
Fax: +4930-22736998  
Email: infoline.id3@bundestag.de  
www.bundestag.de/htdocs\_e/  
documents/subject.html

## Division ID 4 – Press Documentation

Tel.: +4930-22732513  
Fax: +4930-22736857  
Email: vorzimmer.id4@bundestag.de  
www.bundestag.de/parlament/  
verwalt/pressedok/index.html

## Address

Marie-Elisabeth-Lüders-Haus  
Adele-Schreiber-Krieger-Straße 1  
D-10117 Berlin

