

Helpful Institutions

Besides the Points of Single Contact, there is a broad variety of institutions and websites offering support and useful information on the provision of services in Germany. You may browse through the following entities to find further assistance.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Federal Government

<http://www.bundesregierung.de>

Federal Foreign Office

<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>

Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy

<http://www.bmwi.de>

Federal Ministry of Finance

<http://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de>

Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection

<http://www.bmjv.bund.de>

Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community

<http://www.bmi.bund.de>

Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

<http://www.bmas.de>

Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure

<http://www.bmvi.de>

Federal Ministry of Education and Research

<http://www.bmbf.de>

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

<http://www.bmu.bund.de>

Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture

<http://www.bmel.de>

Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

<http://www.bmfsfj.de>

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The professional organizations are public corporations that implement the occupational self-government and supervision and represent their members' interests in public. Therefore they are source of a variety of branch related information and support.

Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK)

The DIHK is the central organization for 80 Chambers of Industry and Commerce in Germany. All German companies registered in Germany, with the exception of handicraft businesses, the liberal professions and farms, are required by law to join a chamber.

<http://www.dihk.de>

German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (ZDH)

The German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks - ZDH) represents the interests of all occupations of the skilled crafts sector.

<http://www.zdh.de>

handwerkskammer.de (German only)

On this website 50 local Chambers of Skilled Trades and Crafts provide a map of all chamber districts in Germany.

<http://www.handwerkskammer.de/>

Federal Chamber of Engineers of Germany

The Federal Chamber of Engineers of Germany (Bundesingenieurkammer) represents the interests of its 16 member organizations on the federal and European level as an overall representative of all engineers.

<http://www.bundesingenieurkammer.de>

Federal Chamber of German Civil Law Notaries (BNotK)

The Federal Chamber of German Civil Law Notaries (Bundesnotarkammer - BNotK) is a body established and governed by federal law representing the German civil law notaries as a whole in the process of political decision-making at the national level.

<http://www.bnotk.de>

The German Federal Bar Council (German only)

The German Federal Bar Council (Bundesrechtsanwaltskammer) is the national umbrella organization of the 27 regional bar councils, that represent the occupational interests of lawyers and implements their professional self-government.

<http://www.brak.de>

Bundessteuerberaterkammer (German only)

The Bundessteuerberaterkammer embodies the professional self-government of the German tax consultants and their 21 local chambers.

<http://www.bstbk.de>

Federal Chamber of German Architects (BAK)

The Federal Chamber of German Architects (Bundesarchitektenkammer - BAK) in Berlin is the umbrella organisation of the Architects Chambers of the 16 German Länder. It represents nationally and internationally the interests of more than 121,000 working architects (as of January 1st 2006).

<http://www.bak.de>

Wirtschaftsprüferkammer

The Wirtschaftsprüferkammer (WPK) is the state supervised organization of all Public Accountants and firms of Public Accountants in Germany.

<http://www.wpk.de>

German Patent Attorney Bar Association (German Only)

The German Patent Attorney Bar Association (Patentanwaltskammer) is the professional chamber of patent attorneys in Germany.

<http://www.patentanwalt.de>

FREE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

The free professional associations represent the branch related interests of their members in public and offer individual support to their members.

Federation of German Industries (BDI)

The Federation of German Industries (Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie e.V. - BDI) is the umbrella organization for industrial sector associations including industry-related service businesses.

<http://www.bdi.eu>

Bundesverband der Dienstleistungswirtschaft (BWDi - German only)

The Federation of German Service Industries (Bundesverband der Dienstleistungswirtschaft - BWDi) is the umbrella organization for the professional associations of 26 service industries, which represent 100.000 middle sized service businesses.

<http://www.bundesverband-dienstleistungswirtschaft.de>

Bundesverband der Freien Berufe (BFB - German only)

The BFB is the umbrella organization for the professional associations of the liberal occupations in Germany.

<http://www.freie-berufe.de>

Federation of German Wholesale and Foreign Trade (BGA)

The Federation of German Wholesale and Foreign Trade (Bundesverband Großhandel, Aussenhandel, Dienstleistung e.V. - BGA) is the leading organization for the wholesale, foreign trade and service sector in the Federal Republic of Germany.

<http://www.bga.de>

German Retail Federation (HDE - German only)

The German Retail Federation (Hauptverband des deutschen Einzelhandels - HDE) is the overarching organization of the German retail sector. HDE is the legitimate voice of the sector vis-à-vis national and EU-level politics, as well as vis-à-vis other business sectors, the media and the public.

<http://www.einzelhandel.de>

Bundesverband Deutscher Unternehmensberater e.V. (BDU - German only)

The BDU is the trade association of management and personnel consultants in Germany.

<http://www.bdu.de>

Bundesverband Mittelständischer Wirtschaft

The Bundesverband Mittelständischer Wirtschaft (BVMW) represents the interests of nearly 55.000 small and medium-sized businesses in Germany.

<http://www.bvmw.de>

Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA)

The Confederation of German Employers' Associations (Bund Deutscher Arbeitgeberverbände - BDA) represents the employers' interests in social and tariff policy.

<http://www.arbeitgeber.de>

Call Center Forum Deutschland (CCF - German only)

The CCF is the interest group of the German call center industry and represents 400 companies.

<http://www.call-center-forum.de>

Deutscher Dialogmarketing Verband (DDV - German only)

The DDV represents the interests of businesses that engage in direct marketing services. It also represents the interests of their customers.

<http://www.ddv.de>

Institute of Public Auditors in Germany (IDW)

The Institute of Public Auditors in Germany (Institut der Wirtschaftsprüfer in Deutschland e.V. - IDW) is a privately run organization established to serve the interests of its members who comprise individual German Public Auditors and German Public Audit firms.

<http://www.idw.de>

German Bar Association (DAV)

The representation of the economic, political and professional interests of lawyers vis-à-vis society, politics, and the state, is the object and task of the German Bar Association (Deutscher Anwaltverein - DAV), its state associations, and its local associations.

<http://www.anwaltverein.de>

German Association of Tax Advisers (DStV)

The German Association of Tax Advisers (Deutscher Steuerberaterverband) is the umbrella organization of 15 regional tax adviser associations representing more than 32,000 voluntary individual members of the tax advising professions in Germany.

<http://www.dstv.de>

EUROPEAN UNION

European Union

<http://europa.eu>

European Commission

<http://ec.europa.eu>

European Parliament

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu>

Your Europe

Multilingual practical information and online government services for companies looking for business in another EU country. Provided jointly by the European Commission and national authorities.

<http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope>

EU Summaries of Legislation

This site provides user-friendly fact sheets which summarize EU legislation.

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/index_en.htm

SOLVIT

SOLVIT is an online problem solving network where EU Member States work together to solve without legal proceedings problems caused by the misapplication of internal market law by public authorities.

<http://ec.europa.eu/solvit>

eCommerce Contact Point Germany

This contact point informs businesses as well as consumers about their rights and obligations on e-commerce according to the German Law.

<http://www.ecommerce-verbundungsstelle.de/>

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The Association of German Public Sector Banks (VÖB)

The Association of German Public Sector Banks (Bundesverband Öffentlicher Banken Deutschlands - VÖB) is a leading industry association in the German banking industry. It represents 64 member institutions including the regional banks (Landesbanken) as well as the development banks owned by the federal and state governments.

<http://www.voeb.de>

Association of German Banks (BdB)

The Association of German Banks (Bundesverband deutscher Banken - BdB) represents the interests of more than 200 private commercial banks in Germany and 11 banking associations.

<http://www.germanbanks.org>

German Savings Bank Association (DSGV)

The German Savings Bank Association (Deutscher Sparkassen- und Giroverband - DSGV) is the umbrella organisation of the Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe and its 417 savings banks, 7 Landesbanken, 10 Landesbausparkassen, 11 public insurance companies and many more financial service providers.

<http://www.dsgv.de>

Association of Banking Cooperatives (BVS)

The Association of Banking Cooperatives (Bundesverband der Volksbanken and Raiffeisenbanken - BVS) represents over 16 million members and 30 million customers.

<http://www.bvr.coop>

KfW Bankengruppe

KfW Bankengruppe gives impetus to economic, social and ecological development worldwide. As a promotional bank under the ownership of the Federal Republic and the Länder (federal states), it offers support to encourage sustainable improvement in economic, social, ecological living and business conditions, among others in the areas of small and medium-sized enterprise, entrepreneurship, environmental protection, housing, infrastructure, education finance, project and export finance, and development cooperation.

<http://www.kfw.de>

State Development Banks

The development banks of the German Federal States offer additional support for local projects. More information is available on our pages on [Local State Support](#).

Deutsche Bundesbank

The Deutsche Bundesbank is the central bank of the Federal Republic of Germany. Eurosystem monetary policy is the Bundesbank's core business area. Other core business areas include the financial and monetary system, banking supervision, cashless payments and cash operations.

<http://www.bundesbank.de>

Association of Foreign Banks (VAB)

The Association of Foreign Banks in Germany (Verband der Auslandsbanken in Deutschland e.V. - VAB) represents the interests of foreign banks, investment management companies, financial services institutions and representative offices in Germany.

<http://www.vab.de>

Association of German Pfandbrief Banks (VDB)

The member institutions of the Associations of German Pfandbrief Banks (Verband Deutscher Pfandbriefbanken - VDB) number among the most important providers of capital for residential and commercial properties as for the public sector and its institutions.

<http://www.pfandbrief.de>

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION

The following institutions are responsible for the protection of intellectual property rights. More information is available on our relevant pages on protecting intellectual property.

German Patent- and Trademark Office (DPMA)

The German Patent and Trade Mark Office (Deutsches Patent- und Markenamt DPMA) is the central authority in the field of industrial property protection in Germany.

<http://www.dpma.de>

European Patent Office

The European Patent Office (EPO) provides a uniform application procedure for individual inventors and companies seeking patent protection in up to 38 European countries. It is the executive arm of the European Patent Organisation and is supervised by the Administrative Council.

<http://www.epo.org>

Federal Patent Court

The Federal Patent Court (Bundespatentgericht) renders decisions on appeals against decisions of the sections and departments for patents, utility models, semiconductor topographies, trademarks and industrial design of the German Patent and Trademark Office.

<http://www.bundespatentgericht.de>

German Patent Attorney Bar Association (German Only)

The German Patent Attorney Bar Association (Patentanwaltskammer) is the professional chamber of patent attorneys in Germany. The site maintains a search function that may help finding patent attorneys with the required technical qualification.

<http://www.patentanwalt.de>

Federal Association of German Patent Attorneys (German only)

The Federal Association of German Patent Attorneys (Bundesverband Deutscher Patentanwälte) is a voluntary association representing the interests of patent attorneys.

<http://www.bundesverband-patentanwaelte.de>

EMPLOYMENT

Federal Employment Office

The Federal Employment Office (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) proceeds the German unemployment insurance and offers nationwide placement services free of charge.

<http://www.arbeitsagentur.de>

International Placement Service of the Federal Employment Office (ZAV)

This division of the Federal Employment Office provides specialized services that meet the needs of foreign entrepreneurs that seek to employ German personnel.

<http://www.arbeitsagentur.de> (ZAV)

German Social Insurance

The Website of the European Representation of the central German social insurance associations (Deutsche Sozialversicherung Europavertretung) provides an overview on the German social and health insurance system.

<http://www.deutsche-sozialversicherung.de>

Deutsche Verbindungsstelle Krankenversicherungen - Ausland (DVKA)

The Deutsche Verbindungsstelle Krankenversicherungen - Ausland (DVKA) provides information on border-crossing health insurance issues.

<http://www.dvka.de>

EURES - The European Job Mobility Portal

The European job mobility portal EURES provides employers, in particular small and medium-sized businesses, with a personalised service to access the potential workers available in the European Economic Area (EEA).

<http://ec.europa.eu>

TAXATION

Tax Information Center

The Tax Information Centre will answer your questions concerning the Federal Central Tax Office fields of work and the responsibilities of the authorities. The areas of information are being constantly expanded.

<http://www.steuerliches-info-center.de>

LOCAL AUTHORITY ASSOCIATIONS

There are three associations that speak for the self-governed municipalities in Germany and might be a source of information on their policy: The Deutscher Landkreistag (German County Association), the Deutscher Städtetag (German Association of Cities) and the Deutscher Städte und Gemeindebund (German association of towns and municipalities).

German County Association (German only)

The German County Association (Deutscher Landkreistag) represents the interests of approx. 300 Landkreise (counties) in Germany.

<http://www.landkreistag.de>

German Association of Cities

The German Association of Cities (Deutscher Städtetag) is Germany's largest national local-authorities organization, it comprises more than 5500 cities and owns with a total of 51 Million inhabitants.

<http://www.staedtetag.de>

German Association of Towns and Municipalities (DStGB - German Only)

The German Association of Towns and Municipalities (Deutscher Städte und Gemeindetag - DStGB) is a local authority association that represents the interest of

local self-government in Germany and Europe. Its member organizations speak for more than 12500 municipalities with more than 47 Mio inhabitants.

<http://www.dstgb.de>

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