

Consulting German laws and regulations by foreign administrative bodies



General

This leaflet gives an overview of some useful databases/websites that can be used to consult German legislation and case law. First, an overview of the databases for statute law of both the Federal Government and the federal states is given. Then some databases are presented, which also allow searching for decisions of the courts.

Databases for federal law

Gesetze im Internet

[Gesetze im Internet](#) is a database of the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, which provides almost the entire federal law in its current version free of charge. The laws and regulations are displayed in the official German version. Searches can only be entered in German.

However, a non-official English translation is available for a selection of important legal texts. A free search of federal law is also possible through [juris-Verlag](#).

Legislative materials

All officially documented materials of the legislative process such as plenary minutes and draft laws of the German Bundestag can be accessed free of charge via the [Dokumentations- und Informationssystem \(DIP\)](#). The website can also be displayed in English and French, but searches are only possible in German.

Databases for state law

Each of the sixteen German states offers its own database for state legal texts. In some cases, the state ministry of the interior provides the website, as is the case in North Rhine-Westphalia with the database [recht.nrw.de](#). In some federal states the juris-Verlag provides the respective database. In all cases the databases can be accessed free of charge and show the current versions of the legislative text. A historical search is also possible.

The state parliaments also offer free access to the legislative material of the sixteen federal states, but this is also only available in German. Documentation can be found, for example, on the [website of the NRW state parliament](#).

Databases for jurisdiction

A possibility to search for German laws and court decisions in the German language, for the most part free of charge, is offered by commercial offers such as for example [dejure.org](#). If the search is successful, the website displays links to free and paid websites that offer the respective laws and decisions.

Comprehensive research on legal texts, case law decisions and literature are also available in German, for a fee, through the commercial offerings of for example the [juris-Verlag](#), the database [beck-online](#) or the offer of [Haufe](#).

The courts themselves also make decisions available on their own websites. For example, the website of the [Federal Constitutional Court](#) offers a search of its own decisions concerning constitutional law. Many decisions are also available in English. The federal states also offer portals in German for searching for state jurisdiction, such as the website [Justiz-Online](#) for the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

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