



The 8th Saxon State Parliament

Everything you need to know



Sächsischer Landtag

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“ALL STATE AUTHORITY IS DERIVED FROM THE PEOPLE.”

Saxon Constitution, Article 3(1)



Dear readers and visitors,
I am delighted that you are interested in our Parliament. The information booklet you are holding will tell you all you need to know about the Saxon State Parliament and its composition in its 8th legislative term.

Our parliament comprises a total of 120 members – people from all over the Free State of Saxony, with different backgrounds and political convictions. It is a central platform where they can voice their political views and help shape democratic discourse.

Majority voting is a key principle of parliamentary democracy: laws and resolutions are adopted by a parliamentary majority.

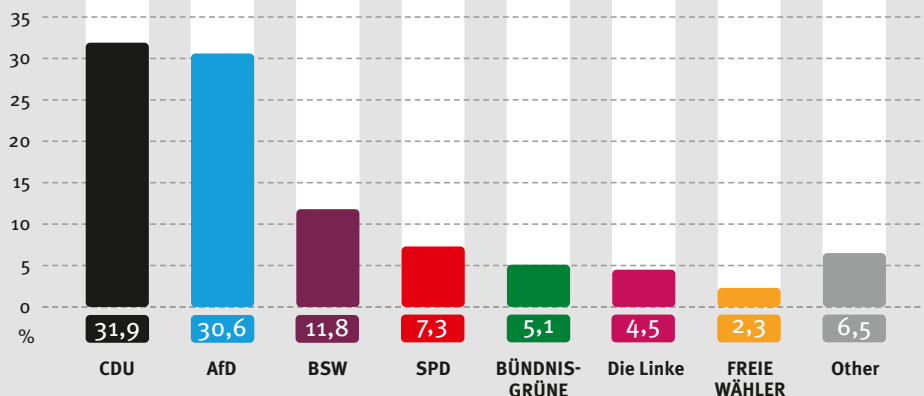
Responsibility for ensuring that this works and that Saxony remains capable of political action rests with all parliamentary groups in the 8th Saxon State Parliament. For the first time since 1990, the governing coalition does not have a majority. This calls for a culture of constructive solutions that focuses on what is feasible and values political compromise.

This short guide provides a wealth of useful information to help you understand how the Saxon State Parliament is functioning in this new context. It includes all kinds of fascinating facts about the structure and duties of our state parliament. I hope it helps you feel even more familiar with our parliamentary system.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alexander Dierks". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing 'A' and a distinct 'D'.

Alexander Dierks
President of the Saxon State Parliament

Who sits in the State Parliament?



The election of the 8th Saxon State Parliament

The Saxon State Parliament is the only constitutional body in the Free State of Saxony that is directly elected by the people. Members of the State Parliament are elected by secret ballot in direct, free elections on the basis of universal and equal suffrage. Elections to the Saxon State Parliament are held every five years. Since the restoration of the Free State, there have been eight elections to the State Parliament.

On 1 September 2024, almost 3.18 million Saxons were asked to elect a new State Parliament. Three quarters of those eligible to vote (74.4%) took the opportunity to have their say about the composition of the 8th Saxon State Parliament. This was the highest voter turnout since the re-establishment of the Free State of Saxony.

Seven parties were elected to the State Parliament: the CDU, AfD, BSW, SPD, the BÜNDNISGRÜNE, Die Linke and the Freien Wähler.

Who is allowed to vote?

All German citizens whose main residence is in Saxony and who are aged 18 or over on polling day are entitled (with a few exceptions) to vote in elections to the Saxon State Parliament.

Why vote?

Parliamentary elections are a key aspect of political participation in every democracy. By casting their vote, citizens play an active role in the political decision-making process and determine the political composition of the Parliament. Take advantage of the opportunity to shape the political development of the Free State of Saxony.

Chart: Official result according to the State Returning Officer, with parties listed in order of their 2024 election results



How does the election work?



Voters have two votes:

✗ A **direct vote** for a constituency representative: half of the members are directly elected by the 60 constituencies. The candidate receiving the most direct votes in a constituency is elected to the Saxon State Parliament.

✗ **List vote** to elect party list representatives. The other half are elected on the basis of state lists, which are drawn up by the parties in advance. The list votes have the greatest influence on the distribution of seats, since these are used to calculate the proportional composition of the State Parliament.

Only parties receiving at least 5 per cent of the votes cast ('5 per cent clause') or winning directly elected seats in at least two constituencies ('basic mandate clause') are allocated seats.

Distribution of seats in the 8th Saxon State Parliament

Seats from ...	Total	CDU	AfD	BSW	SPD	BÜNDNISGRÜNE	Die Linke	FW
Direct votes	60	27	28	0	0	2	2	1
List votes	60	14	12	15	10	5	4	0
Total	120	41	40	15	10	7	6	1

Data: Statistical Office of the Free State of Saxony

Who sits in the State Parliament?



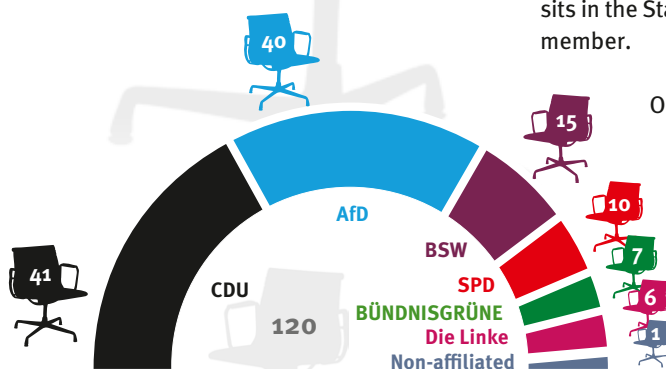
Composition of the Parliament

The Saxon State Parliament is made up of the elected representatives of the people of the Free State of Saxony. The Parliament has 120 members. There are no overhang seats and therefore no compensatory seats.

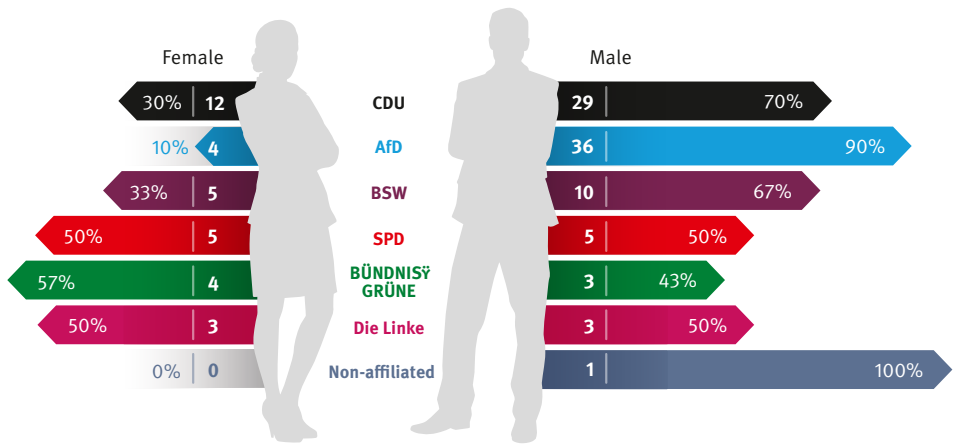
The 120 members of the State Parliament are divided into six parliamentary groupings. Seats are allocated on the basis of the proportion of list votes received by each party.

Allocation of seats

The CDU constitutes the largest parliamentary group, with 31.9% of the party list votes and 41 seats, followed by the AfD with 40 seats (30.6%). The BSW secured 15 seats (11.8%), the SPD 10 seats (7.3%) and the BÜNDNIS-GRÜNE 7 seats (5.1%). Die Linke is the smallest parliamentary group with 6 seats (4.5%, representation determined by the basic mandate clause). The FREIEN WÄHLER won one directly elected seat; their representative sits in the State Parliament as a non-affiliated member.



One member of the State Parliament has been a member “from the very beginning”: Marko Schiemann (CDU) has been in office since 1990. By contrast, 43 newcomers won seats in the State Parliament for the first time in 2024.



Gender distribution

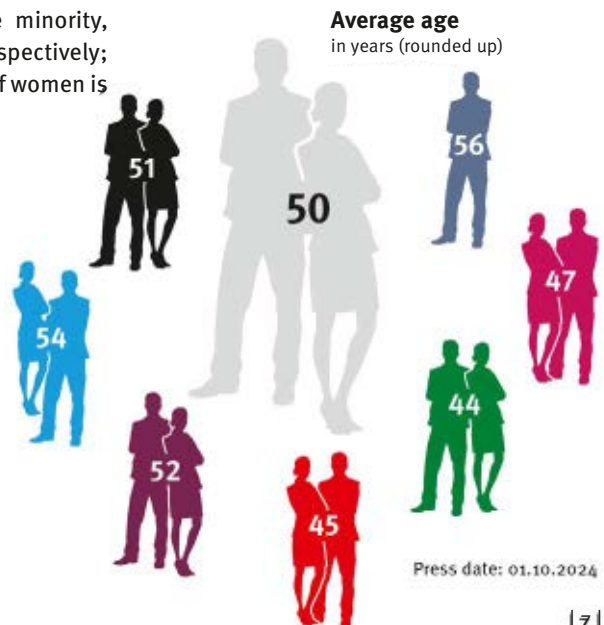
The gender distribution in the State Parliament is 33 women to 87 men. Women thus make up 27.5% of members. There are significant differences between the parliamentary parties. In the BÜNDNISGRÜNE group, women are in the majority, at 57%. The SPD and Die Linke groups each have an equal number of women and men. In the BSW and CDU groups, women are in the minority, accounting for 33% and 29% respectively; in the AfD group, the proportion of women is just 10%.

Members of the State Parliament

61 – 75	23	19%
51 – 60	40	33%
41 – 50	37	31%
31 – 40	16	13%
20 – 30	4	3%
Total	120	100%

Age distribution

The average age of members of the State Parliament is 50, with the greatest number coming from the 51 to 60 age group. At 71, Wolf-Dietrich Rost (CDU) is the oldest member of the State Parliament. 23-year-old Tina Trompter (CDU) is the Parliament's youngest member.



Press date: 01.10.2024





How is the State Parliament organised?



The President and Vice Presidents

The President of the State Parliament is the highest-ranking representative of the State Parliament. The President represents the State Parliament to the outside world, and is therefore the face and voice of the Parliament. He performs his duties in a non-partisan and just manner.

The President and his deputies, the Vice Presidents, are elected by the State Parliament at the beginning of each legislative term. Since 2024, the office of President has been held by Alexander Dierks. He is assisted in his duties by four Vice Presidents.

Duties

THE PRESIDENT

- ▶ convenes and leads sessions of the State Parliament, ensuring that the Rules of Procedure are adhered to. He is assisted during each session by two recording clerks,
- ▶ protects the reputation and laws of the State Parliament,
- ▶ controls who can enter the State Parliament building and exercises police powers there,
- ▶ manages the financial affairs of the State Parliament in accordance with the Budget Act,
- ▶ is responsible for the State Parliament's official communications, e.g. with the State Government.



First Vice President
Ines Saborowski, CDU



Second Vice President
André Wendt, AfD



Third Vice President
Prof. Dr Jörg Scheibe,
BSW



Fourth Vice President
Albrecht Pallas, SPD



The Presidium

The Presidium is the State Parliament's central coordinating and steering body. It assists the President with management of parliamentary business and administration of the State Parliament.

The Presidium usually meets on the Wednesday of the week before plenary week.

The Presidium has 24 members.

Duties

THE PRESIDIUM

- ▶ draws up the schedule for plenary sessions, which sets out the days on which plenary sessions will take place, for example.
- ▶ sets the agenda for plenary sessions and agrees the allocation of speaking time in the plenum,
- ▶ controls the distribution of rooms in the State Parliament building,
- ▶ prepares preliminary estimates for the State Parliament budget,
- ▶ determines the procedures for appointing and removing State Parliament officials.

THE PRESIDENT

First Vice President

Second Vice President

Third Vice President

Fourth Vice President

6 parliamentary party group chairs

13 other members of the State Parliament

How is the State Parliament organised?



Parliamentary Party Groups

Parliamentary party groups play a key role in the day-to-day activities of the Parliament. They play a key role in political decision-making and have considerable influence on the work of the Parliament. This is why they are often referred to as the 'parties in parliament'.

At least six MPs who are pursuing common political goals are required to form a parliamentary group. They usually belong to the same political party. In the 8th Saxon State Parliament, there are six parliamentary groups: the CDU (41 seats), AfD (40 seats), BSW (15 seats), SPD (10 seats), BÜNDNISGRÜNE (7 seats), and Die Linke (6 seats).

Each group is led by a parliamentary group chairperson, who sets policy guidelines and represents their group to the public. The activities of parliamentary party groups are regulated by Parliamentary Secretaries. Groups also come to agreements amongst themselves, for example, on approaches to parliamentary debates and ensuring that their own group holds the line prior to critical votes.

Duties

THE PARTY GROUPS

- ▶ participate in the political decision-making process,
- ▶ can introduce bills and motions in the State Parliament,
- ▶ seek to achieve shared political aims and objectives,
- ▶ can form coalitions, i.e. work together in order to form a majority government or to oppose the government,
- ▶ determine the course of plenary debates by deciding who will speak on behalf of the group and how they will respond to initiatives proposed by the other party groups and the State Government,
- ▶ contribute to decisions on appointments to various roles by bringing forward proposals, for example, on who to elect as President and Vice Presidents.

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the Parliamentary
Party Group**



**Christian
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**Parliamentary
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**Sören
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**Chairperson of
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How is the State Parliament organised?



Working groups

Not all members of a parliamentary party group can have detailed knowledge of every political issue. The parliamentary party groups therefore form working groups to deal with different policy areas.

Working groups bring together the expertise of specialist members of parliamentary party groups to address specific issues. This ensures that parliamentary party group experts are well prepared for standing committee meetings and plenary sessions. However, their decisions must always be approved by the entire parliamentary party group.

The number of working groups a parliamentary party group has is closely linked to its size. The greater the number of members within a parliamentary party group, the likelier it is that it will be able to form separate working groups for individual policy areas.

Duties

WORKING GROUPS

- ▶ prepare positions on specific issues for their parliamentary party groups,
- ▶ formulate political positions on their areas of work,
- ▶ evaluate the issues within their specific field,
- ▶ prepare for committee meetings in terms of content and strategy,
- ▶ prepare plenary session agenda items that fall within their area of work,
- ▶ keep in touch with organisations and interest groups within their area of responsibility.

Working groups and their chairpersons

CDU:

Constitution, Law and Europe

Martin Modschiedler

Budget and Finance

Jan Löffler

Schools and Education

Holger Gasse

Economy, Labour, Energy and Climate Protection

Kay Ritter

Environment and Agriculture

Andreas Heinz

Domestic Policy, Local Government and Sport

Ronny Wähner

Social Welfare, Health and Community Cohesion

Tom Unger

Science, Higher Education, Media, Culture and Tourism

Oliver Fritzsche

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Ingo Flemming

Petitions

Peter Wilhelm Patt

Rules of Procedure and Immunity Matters

Sören Voigt

1st COVID-19 Investigation Committee

Susan Leithoff

1st Commission of Enquiry: Pandemic

Martin Modschiedler

AfD:

Constitution, Law and Europe

Dr Volker Dringenberg

Domestic Policy, Local Government and Sport

Sebastian Wippel

Social Welfare, Health and Community Cohesion

Doreen Schwietzer

Schools and Education

Romy Penz

Budget and Finance

André Barth

Environment and Agriculture

Jörg Dornau

Economy, Labour, Energy and Climate Protection

Mario Beger

Science, Higher Education, Media, Culture and Tourism

Torsten Gahler

1st COVID-19 Investigation Committee

Thomas Prantl

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Thomas Thumm

Petitions

Norbert Mayer

BSW:

Social affairs, Education, Health

Janina Pfau

Domestic Policy, Municipal Issues, Justice, Democracy, Peace, International Affairs, Migration

Jens Hentschel-Thöricht

Economy, Finance, Agriculture, Science, Culture

Uta Knebel



SPD:

Domestic Policy, Local Government, Sport / Economy, Labour, Energy and Climate Protection / Infrastructure and Regional Development / Environment and Agriculture / Budget and Finance

Juliane Pfeil

Schools and Education / Social Affairs, Health and Social Cohesion / Science, Higher Education, Media, Culture and Tourism / Constitution and Law, Europe / Petitions

Gerald Eisenblätter

BÜNDNISGRÜNE:

Environment, Economy, Labour, Finance, Transport, Climate, Energy, Construction, Infrastructure

Thomas Löser

Domestic Policy, Law, Europe, Gender Equality, Migration

Katja Meier

Education, Social Affairs, Culture, Higher Education and Science, Media

Dr Claudia Maicher

How is the State Parliament organised?



Committees

The State Parliament forms committees for the duration of each legislative term. These cover all policy areas that fall within the responsibility of state-level politics. In committees, specialist politicians from all parliamentary groups examine individual issues thoroughly and in detail.

Committees can be

- ▶ **standing committees** (subject-specific committees and other permanent committees), and
- ▶ **temporary committees** (investigatory committees and commissions of inquiry)

Parliamentary party groups are represented on committees in proportion to their number of seats in the State Parliament. The number of committee chairpersons drawn from each group also reflects the group's strength in the State Parliament.

Duties

THE COMMITTEES

- ▶ act as preparatory bodies, making recommendations to the State Parliament on submissions referred to them (e.g. bills, motions),
- ▶ provide specialist and political input to prepare issues for decision in the plenum,
- ▶ can hold public hearings with experts (select committees)
- ▶ have the right of initiative in relation to other issues within their area of competency,
- ▶ can put questions to the State Government.

Standing committees and their chairpersons



**Domestic Policy,
Local Government and
Sport Committee**
Lars Kuppi (AfD)



**Budget and Finance
Committee**
Holger Hentschel (AfD)



**Science, Higher Education,
Media, Culture and Tourism
Committee**
Sandra Gockel (CDU)



**Infrastructure and Regional
Development Committee**
Oliver Fritzsche (CDU)



**Schools and
Education Committee**
Romy Penz (AfD)



**Environment and
Agriculture Committee**
Simone Lang (SPD)



**Constitution, Law and
Europe Committee**
Dr Volker Dringenberg (AfD)



**Economy, Labour,
Energy and Climate
Protection Committee**
Sören Voigt (CDU)



**Social Welfare, Health
and Community Cohesion
Committee**
Ronny Kupke (BSW)



Petitions Committee
Daniela Kuge (CDU)

Other committees



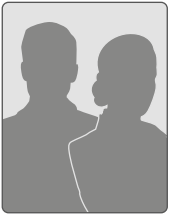
Rules of Procedure and Immunity Matters Committee

Susan Leithoff (CDU)



Election Scrutiny Committee

Martin Modschiedler (CDU)



Evaluation Committee N. N.

Investigatory Committees

The State Parliament is able to form temporary committees, including, in particular, investigatory committees. According to the Constitution of the Free State of Saxony, a motion by one fifth of the members of the State Parliament is required to set up an investigatory committee. This key minority right is exercised primarily by the opposition to investigate potential political or administrative malpractice or possible misconduct on the part of politicians.

1st Investigatory Committee



“Investigation into the state government’s crisis management policy with regard to SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19”

Andreas Nowak (CDU)

Commissions of Enquiry

Parliament can set up commissions of enquiry to prepare decisions on wide-ranging and significant issues, or to gather independent information on complex topics. These commissions may include both members of parliament and external experts. Their work results in numerous recommendations for action, which are compiled in a report and adopted by the plenary.



“Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic: Lessons for future pandemic management in the Free State of Saxony”

Iris Firmenich (CDU)



“A Saxony worth living in – through municipal budgets that empower and strengthen decision-makers”

Thomas Thumm (AfD)



Sächsischer Landtag
Sächsische Kringssäm

How is the State Parliament organised?



Plenum

The plenum is the plenary assembly of all the members of the State Parliament. Members generally meet for two days each month in the plenary chamber of the Saxon State Parliament in Dresden. No plenary sessions are held when Parliament is not sitting (e.g. summer recess).

Proceedings

Plenary sessions generally begin at 10 am and run until the evening, or sometimes even into the night. Plenary sessions are public and are led by the President of the State Parliament or one of his deputies.

Media representatives, citizens and registered visitor groups may observe sessions from the gallery. However, interjections such as heckling or applause are not permitted. The State Parliament live-streams plenary sessions on its website.

Duties

THE MEMBERS OF THE STATE PARLIAMENT IN THE PLENUM

- ▶ debate current issues,
- ▶ vote on bills and motions, elect representatives to a range of bodies and offices (e.g. President of the State Parliament, Prime Minister),
- ▶ put questions to members of the State Government,
- ▶ bring forward their arguments publicly.

The order of events is set out in the agenda, which is agreed in advance. Parliamentary party groups may not exceed their agreed speaking time.

Votes are signalled by a gong that can be heard throughout the Parliament building. The purpose of this is to ensure that members are present in the plenary chamber in time to vote.

Significance

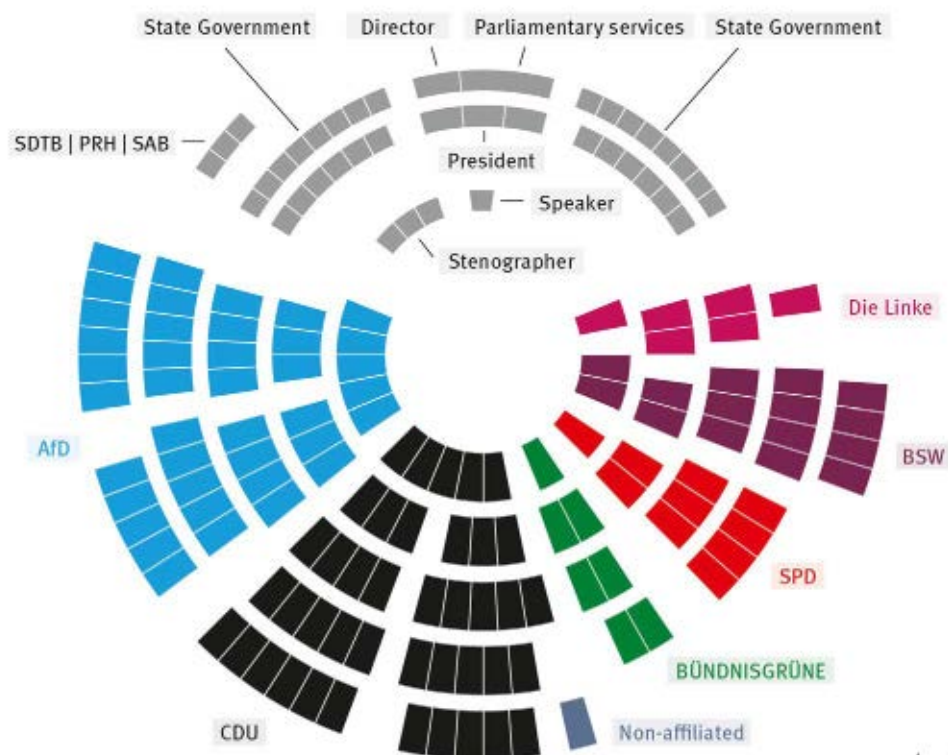
Members are familiar from prior discussion with the submissions that are debated and voted on in the plenum. The working groups, parliamentary party groups and standing committees give members the opportunity to work intensively on submissions in advance and to exchange points of view.

The main purpose of the plenary sessions is therefore to publicly document and track the political decision-making process. It is here that the decisions prepared in the bodies, parliamentary party groups and committees are recorded and formally voted on. All parliamentary party groups also have the opportunity to present their political points of view to the general public.

Seating arrangements

Members of the State Parliament have their own personal seats and sit together in their parliamentary party group. The Chairs and Parliamentary Secretaries of parliamentary party groups usually sit in the first row. To the right and left of the President of the session are the government benches, where the Prime Minister and his cabinet members sit during plenary sessions.

The plenary chamber also includes seats for stenographers, who transcribe all of the speeches and any interjections, producing a verbatim record. Additional seats are reserved for the President of the Court of Auditors (PRH) and the Saxon Commissioner for Data Protection and Transparency (SDTB).



How is the State Parliament organised?



Members of the State Parliament

The members of the State Parliament are representatives of the people, elected to their seats by the citizens of Saxony. As parliamentarians, they represent the entire population of the state of Saxony. At present, the Saxon State Parliament has 120 members. They have the designation 'MdL' ('Mitglied des Landtags', meaning 'member of the State Parliament').

Anyone wishing to stand as a candidate for election to the State Parliament must be aged 18 or over and have been resident in Saxony for at least 12 months (main residence). The aim of this is to ensure that prospective candidates have a good knowledge of the region and its people before they stand for election.

Elections

Representatives are elected to the State Parliament every five years by secret ballot in free and direct elections on the basis of universal and equal suffrage. They gain their seat either by winning their own constituency (direct seat) or as a result of their position on their party's state list (list seat), which the parties draw up before the state elections.





Rights

Members are bound only by their own conscience in the exercise of their office, not by instructions or orders.

However, in practice, members often have to observe party discipline. This means that the parliamentary party group comes to an agreement prior to important votes on how all of its members will vote.



Members of the State Parliament have immunity. They are thus exempt from criminal prosecution for the duration of their term of office. This even applies to statements they make in the State Parliament after their term of office has concluded. They also have the right to refuse to give evidence to investigatory authorities and courts.

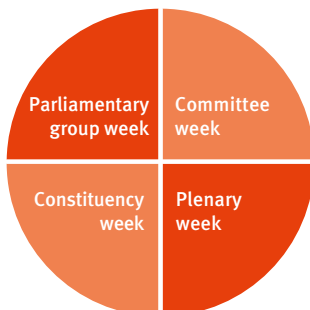
How is the State Parliament organised?



Members of the State Parliament

Parliamentary work

At the seat of the State Parliament in Dresden, members focus primarily on parliamentary work. They take part in a wide range of consultations (plenary sessions, committee meetings, parliamentary group consultations, working groups), which also require preparatory and follow-up work, for example drafting speeches, reading written opinions and having detailed discussions with colleagues.



Duties

MEMBERS OF THE STATE PARLIAMENT

- have a wide range of duties to perform. They function as important links between the citizens of Saxony and the decisions taken in the State Parliament, and play a key role in policy delivery.

Constituency work

In addition, members are key points of contact for citizens, businesses and associations across Saxony and in their constituencies. Most members have an office in their constituency (called a 'Bürgerbüro'), where they hold regular surgeries and discuss issues with local people. This enables them to make citizens' voices heard in the State Parliament and to also explain Parliamentary debates and decisions to their constituents.



PLENARY CYCLE

In order to enable members to perform their diverse duties effectively, the meetings calendar sets out a structure with a different work focus for each individual week. The calendar distinguishes between plenary, committee, parliamentary party group and constituency weeks, which rotate on a regular basis.



Other activities as a member of parliament

Members of parliament have other responsibilities as part of their role, for instance within the parliamentary group or party, dealing with correspondence, travelling on behalf of the State Parliament, attending events and conferences, talking to media representatives, and other public engagements.

REMUNERATION | SALARIES

Members of the State Parliament are entitled to a level of remuneration (salary) that ensures they are appropriately independent. This comprises basic pay (€7,315.70 as at 1 April 2025) and a tax-exempt flat rate for expenses (€4,708.13 to €5,301.83 as at 1 April 2025). The flat rate for expenses varies depending on the distance between a member's primary residence and the seat of the State Parliament in Dresden. It covers, for example, constituency work, travel to the State Parliament, and rent for the member's constituency office.





Seating arrangements in the plenum

SDTB | PRH | SAB

State Government

Director

State Government

Recording clerk

Stenographer

Saxon Commissioner for Data Protection and Transparency (SDTB)
President of the Court of Auditors (PRH)

Parliamentary services

State Government

President Recording clerk

State Government

Speaker



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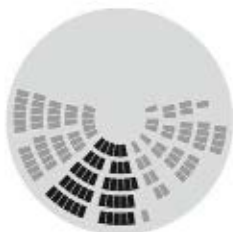
The CDU Parliamentary Group in the Saxon State Parliament

With 41 members, the CDU Parliamentary Group is the largest party group in the Parliament. The CDU has been the strongest party group in the State Parliament since 1990, and has formed part of every government.



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Andreas
Nowak



Sandra
Gockel



Jan
Löffler



Christian
Hartmann



Sören
Voigt



Andreas
Heinz



Kay
Ritter



Holger
Gasse



Martin
Modschiedler



Ines
Saborowski



Alexander
Dierks



Stephan
Weinrich



Susan
Leithoff



Peter Wilhelm
Patt



Ingo
Flemming



Oliver
Fritzsche



Tom
Unger



Ronny
Wähler



Daniela
Pfeiffer



Dr. Frank
Kromer



Elaine
Jentsch



Felix
Hitzig



Dr. Sven
Eppinger



Tina
Trompter



Ina
Klemm



Michael
Kretschmer



Rick
Ulbricht



Jessica
Steiner



Thomas
Schmidt



Jörg
Schmidt



Kerstin
Nicolaus



The AfD Parliamentary Group in the Saxon State Parliament

The AfD Parliamentary Group consists of 40 members. The AfD first entered the Saxon State Parliament in 2014. It is currently the largest opposition group.



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Urban



Katja
Dietz



André
Wendt



Martin
Braukmann



Dr. Joachim
Michael Keiler



Lars
Kuppi



Alexander
Wiesner



Roberto
Kuhnert



Hajo
Exner



Jonas
Dünzel



Thomas
Thumm



Torsten
Gahler



Hans-Jürgen
Zickler



Thomas
Prantl



Mike
Moncsek



Jörg
Domau



Thomas
Kirste



Tobias
Heller



Roman
Golombeck



Norbert Otto
Mayer



Andreas
Gerold



Rene
Standke



Romy
Penz



Carsten
Hütter



Dr. Volker
Dringenberg



Doreen
Schwietzer



Timo
Schreyer



Frank
Peschel

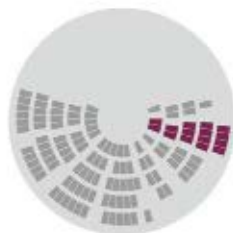


The BSW Parliamentary Group in the Saxon State Parliament

The BSW Group in Parliament consists of 15 members. The BSW first entered the Saxon State Parliament in 2024.

**Bündnis
Sahra
Wagenknecht**
BSW-Landtagsfraktion
Sachsen

BSW Parliamentary Group
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The SPD Parliamentary Group in the Saxon State Parliament

The SPD Parliamentary Group consists of ten members. The SPD has sent representatives to every State Parliament since 1990, and has formed part of several governing coalitions, including – since 2024 – the CDU.



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The BÜNDNISGRÜNE Parliamentary Group in the Saxon State Parliament

The BÜNDNISGRÜNE Parliamentary Group has seven members in the Saxon State Parliament. BÜNDNISGRÜNE was represented in the 1st Saxon State Parliament, and has had representatives in every legislative session since 2004.



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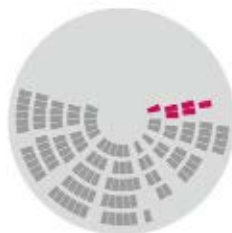


The Die Linke Parliamentary Group in the Saxon State Parliament

With six MPs,
the Left Party is the
smallest party group in
Parliament. The Die Linke party
has had representatives in the
Saxon State Parliament since
1990. The group has always been
in opposition.



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What does the State Parliament do?



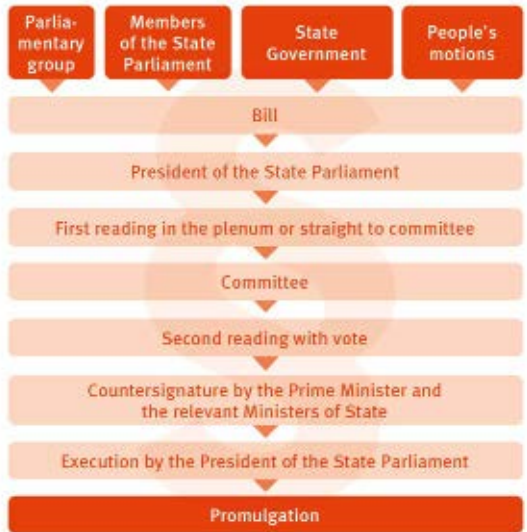
Passing laws

The Saxon State Parliament decides on all legislation that falls within the jurisdiction of the Free State of Saxony. This includes, for example, schools and education, police law and the right to assembly, culture, media policy, and local government.

Budget

The members of the State Parliament adopt the state budget, which sets out the revenue and expenditure of the Free State of Saxony for a two-year period. The Saxon Constitution bans all new borrowing. This means that if more is invested in one area, savings must be made in another.

Exceptions may be made to this ban in the event of natural disasters or in emergency circumstances (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic).



Procedure

Bills can be introduced in the Parliament by Parliamentary Party Groups, members of parliament, the State Government or citizens. Before a law is passed, it must go through several legislative stages. The members of the relevant standing committee discuss the draft and proposed amendments in detail before presenting a recommendation for a resolution to Parliament.



Electing representatives

Not only do the members of the Saxon State Parliament elect their own representatives, such as the President and Vice Presidents, they also elect individuals to a large number of other posts.

Prime Minister

One of the most prominent appointments is that of Prime Minister. The State Parliament elects the Prime Minister through a majority vote in a secret ballot of its members, without debate. If no one receives a majority of votes, the candidate who secures a majority of the

votes cast in a subsequent ballot is elected. The legitimacy of the State Government thus derives solely from the State Parliament. Once elected, the Prime Minister appoints a cabinet on their own authority.

Saxon Constitutional Court

The State Parliament elects the members of the Saxon Constitutional Court for a term of nine years each, on the basis of a two-thirds majority of its members. The Constitutional Court is a constitutional body with equal status to the State Parliament and State Government. Its responsibilities include deciding how to interpret the Saxon Constitution in disputes between constitutional bodies, and on the compatibility of state laws with the Constitution.



The State Parliament also elects the President of the Saxon Court of Auditors and the two State Commissioners (the Saxon Commissioner for Foreign Nationals and the Saxon Commissioner for the Reappraisal of the SED Dictatorship) and the Saxon Commissioner for Data Protection and Transparency.

What does the State Parliament do?



Scrutinising the State Government

The Saxon State Parliament scrutinises the work of the State Government. This is a key element of the parliamentary system of government. Traditionally, public scrutiny is conducted primarily by opposition parliamentary groups. The State Government is required to answer to the State Parliament. A diverse range of instruments and procedures are available to the members of the State Parliament as part of this process, for example:

Minor interpellations

Minor interpellations are the most commonly used instrument. All members of the State Parliament can put questions to the State Government in written form. These questions must – with a few exceptions – be answered. Besides providing information to members, they also serve as a means of scrutinising the work of the State Government. During the 7th legislative term, this form of scrutiny was used over 14,000 times. Minor interpellations are most frequently used by members of the opposition.

Questions to the State Government

Members have the opportunity during each plenary week to question a member of the State Government in Parliament. Questioning takes place on the second day of each plenary week after, the Current Affairs hour. A time slot of approximately 45 minutes is allotted for this. The Prime Minister is questioned at least once a year.

Investigatory committees

Investigatory committees are a special type of parliamentary scrutiny. Parliament establishes them if requested to do so by one fifth of its members in order to investigate and clarify specific matters in the public interest, particularly in cases of misconduct. On 25 October 2024, the 1st Committee of Inquiry, entitled ‘Investigation into the state government’s crisis management policy with regard to SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19’ was established.



Articulating opinions

Another important function of the State Parliament is to act as a public political forum for the Free State of Saxony. The aim is to give expression to as wide a range of opinions as possible, to contribute to the political decision-making process. The views of the citizens of Saxony are also given voice in the Saxon State Parliament. In plenary sessions, members of parliament publicly debate their differing political positions, which have been coordinated in advance within their parliamentary groups.

Visitors' gallery/Lobby

Citizens, pre notified visitor groups and media representatives can observe plenary sessions from the visitors' gallery, which accommodates up to 150 people. Those in the visitors' gallery are forbidden from expressing views whether positive or negative, and from applauding. The lobby outside the plenary chamber serves as a meeting point for members of parliament, members of the State Government and journalists for discussions and interviews.

Plenary session broadcasts

If you do not have time to visit the State Parliament, you can keep up to date on the latest political disputes, or follow plenary session broadcasts, in the media.

- **Web:** The State Parliament live-streams all plenary sessions on its website.
- **Audio:** Follow plenary sessions via live audio stream on MDR SACHSEN EXTRA (DAB+).
- **Local television:** Local broadcasters Sachsen Fernsehen in Dresden, Leipzig, Chemnitz and the Vogtland region transmit parts of the sessions in the afternoon. Regional broadcaster Sachseneins broadcasts parts of the sessions live.

In addition, the State Parliament livestreams many public committee hearings. All plenary and hearing videos from the current and previous legislative periods are available on the Parliament's website.

How can people participate?



Submitting petitions

The right of petition is a valuable asset and a fundamental democratic right, which is exercised frequently by Saxon citizens. The Saxon State Parliament Petitions Committee examines citizens' requests and complaints and attempts to provide solutions.

You can bring your problems and concerns to the Petitions Committee regardless of whether the issue in question affects only one person or is supported by thousands of people.

ARTICLE 35 OF THE SAXON CONSTITUTION

“Every person has the right to address requests and complaints in writing to the competent authorities and to the Parliament individually or in association with others. They also have the right to receive a reasoned response within a reasonable period of time.”

Petitions Committee

With 24 members, the Petitions Committee is the largest committee in the State Parliament. This highlights the level of priority accorded by the Parliament to citizens' concerns. The committee can, for example, request opinions from the State Government, hold hearings with petitioners or experts, examine records and undertake site visits.

Petitions provide valuable input to MPs' work by

- highlighting the concerns and needs of the public,
- identifying gaps in legislation or regulations, and
- reflecting public opinion on current political issues.

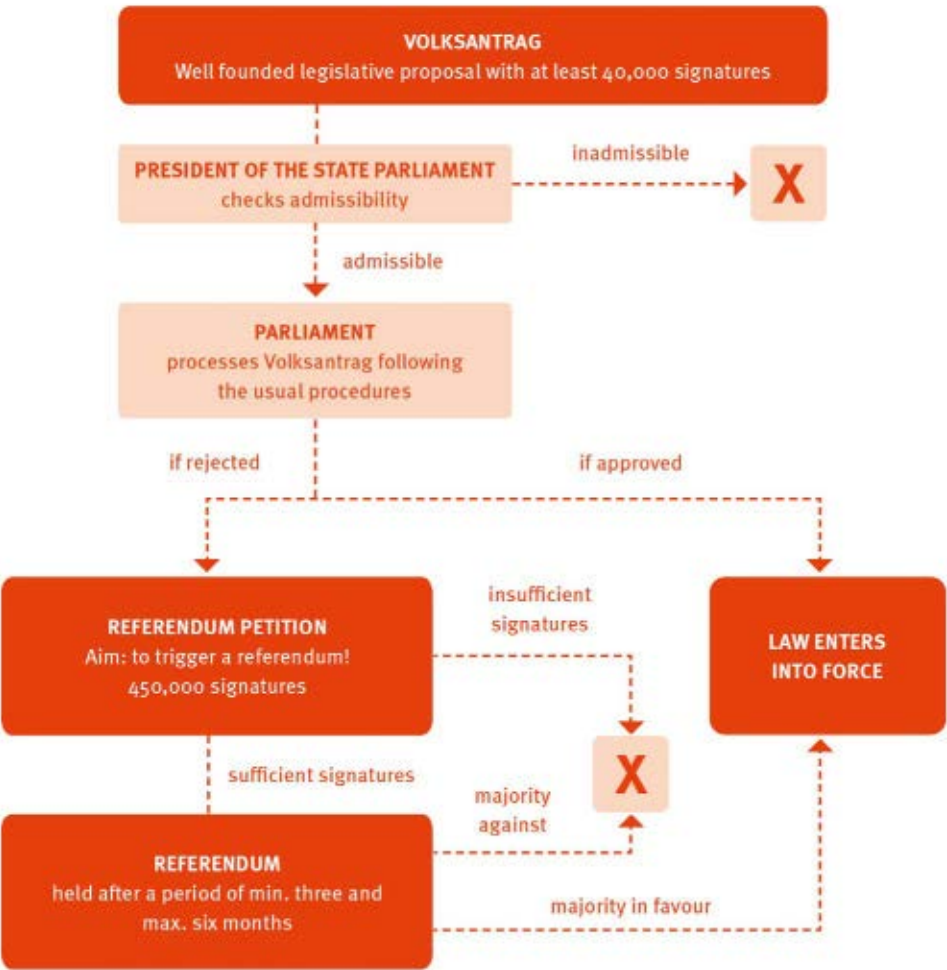
Petitions are easy to submit to the State Parliament, and may be presented in writing or as an online petition via the Parliament website.

Introducing bills

Citizen lawmaking is an important element of direct democracy. Residents of Saxony can introduce legislation directly to Parliament through a people's motion (Volksantrag). Motions must be signed by at least 40,000 eligible voters, and it must be accompanied by a well-founded legislative proposal. The

procedure is set out in the Saxon Constitution, the Rules of Procedure of the State Parliament, and in a specific statute.

If a Volksantrag is not accepted in the plenum, it may still be passed by means of a referendum petition and a referendum.



How can people participate?



Staying informed

Democracy thrives on the engagement of its citizens. Take advantage of your opportunities to help shape political developments in Saxony. It is important to remember, however, that participation requires knowledge and information. So it is essential to keep up to date with current political issues in the region.

The Saxon State Parliament provides lots of resources with information on current regional issues and parliamentary processes.

Publications

The Parliament offers many publications, which you can order free of charge or read online on the website.

Landtagskurier

The Landtagskurier parliamentary magazine reports regularly on parliamentary debates and explains important laws. It also provides valuable background information on

the work of the Saxon State Parliament, and insights into the everyday work of members, and informs readers about upcoming events.



People's Handbook

Who are the people who sit in the State Parliament? Find out by taking a look at the 8th Saxon State Parliament People's Handbook, which contains biographies and photographs of all 120 members. It also provides information on the composition of the Parliament.



ORDER PUBLICATIONS/ SUBSCRIBE TO LANDTAGSKURIER

Tel. +49 (0)351 493-5133
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www.landtag.sachsen.de/publikationen



Visiting the State Parliament

You are welcome to visit the State Parliament in Dresden, talk to members, or take a seat in the plenary chamber.

Guided tour

A guided tour provides fascinating insights into the work and role of the Parliament, and also includes many historical and architectural details. An extended visit to the heart of the Parliament building – the plenary chamber – is the highlight of the visit.

Talk to members

Visitors can request an additional 60-minute session with members of the State Parliament after the tour; members will be happy to answer questions.

Open tours

No booking? No problem! We offer open guided tours for individuals or groups of fewer than ten people. These usually take place on the second and fourth Friday of the month at 5 pm. You will find upcoming dates on the Parliament's website.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

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Digital Parliament

Social media

The Saxon State Parliament is active on the social media platforms YouTube, Instagram and X, where citizens can find all the latest news. These platforms are also used to announce events and to showcase the work of the Parliament, for example through explanatory videos.



YouTube: *Sächsischer Landtag*



Instagram: *sachsen_landtag*



X: *@sax_lt*

Website

The Parliament website brings together all key information about the State Parliament. Whether you're interested in session dates, news, member biographies or digital resources – just visit www.landtag.sachsen.de!

Virtual tour

Take a virtual tour of the Parliament, and get a unique opportunity to climb up to the roof of the Parliament building. Discover 14 locations through interactive 360° panoramic views.

www.landtag.sachsen.de/rundgang



How can people participate?



Taking a look inside the Parliament

Open day

Each year on 3 October, the State Parliament opens its doors and invites citizens to take a look behind the scenes. The programme gives visitors a special insight into Saxony's democracy and the work of the members of the State Parliament.



The Parliament Open Day is traditionally opened by State Parliament President Alexander Dierks. Visitors can explore the Parliament building, learn about the work of the parliamentary groups and meet members of parliament.

Exhibition in the Citizens' Foyer

The exhibition "The Saxons' Parliament" in the Citizens' Foyer provides information panels, interactive displays, a reading corner and a photo point, enabling visitors to learn more about the State Parliament.

VISIT THE EXHIBITION

Saxon State Parliament
Bernhard-von-Lindenau-Platz 1
New building entrance (Elbe side)
01067 Dresden

Opening hours:
Monday to Friday
9 am – 6 pm



Events for schools

Youth Debate Forum

Pupils from Years 8 to 12 put their debate skills to the test in Parliament by attempting to impress a distinguished panel of judges with their arguments and presentation style. The competition traditionally takes place in November.

In the morning, participants discuss current political topics in small groups. Before the debate begins, they have five minutes to familiarise themselves with the topic and make notes. The participants then debate for 15 minutes in front of an expert jury made up of representatives from the media, business, and communications sectors. In the final round in the afternoon, the ten highest-scoring pupils from the morning deliver a three-minute speech in the plenary chamber, addressing both the jury and an audience. Topics are assigned at random by drawing lots.

Youth History Days

For 20 years now, the Saxon Youth Foundation's "Spurensuche" (Tracing the Past) programme has been encouraging young people to rediscover the history of their local area. Participants explore regional historical events and work on projects that reflect the history of their home region.

The highlight of "Spurensuche" is the annual Youth History Days project fair at the State Parliament, where young people present the results of their research, explorations and investigations over recent months. The groups examine the lives of their ancestors, uncover and consider regional and historical events and investigate key figures in contemporary history. Youth History Days is traditionally held at the end of November.



Saxony in Europe

Citizens of Saxony are affected by many of the key decisions taken by the European Union, both directly and indirectly. It is therefore important that Saxony represents its interests to the European Union.

The European Union has extensive legal powers with regard to economic and monetary policy, foreign and security policy, and internal and legal affairs, and thus has a profound influence on Germany's constitutional order. The federal and state governments work together on European integration, which was incorporated into the German Constitution through Article 23 in 1992.

The Saxon State Parliament and the European Union

“The Union shall respect the equality of Member States before the Treaties as well as their national identities, inherent in their fundamental structures, political and constitutional, inclusive of regional and local

self-government.” (Article 4(2) of the Treaty on European Union, sentence 1)

The Treaty of Lisbon on European Union, which entered into force in 2009, makes explicit reference for the first time to regions and municipalities. Since then the Union has been obliged by Community law to respect the equality of Member States before the Treaties as well as their national identities. This also includes regional and local self-government. The Free State of Saxony therefore has the right to participate in the shaping of EU policy in order to ensure its interests are represented in Brussels. The Saxon State Parliament is thus responsible for ensuring that the citizens of the Free State of Saxony are informed about this process.



Subsidiarity

The Saxon State Parliament takes advantage of various opportunities to participate and play an active role in the process of European integration. Subsidiarity is an important concept in this context. According to the principle of subsidiarity, tasks that can be performed at a lower level of government should not be performed at a higher level, unless the lower level is dependent on the assistance of the higher level in certain areas. Thus, under the principle of subsidiarity, the Free State of Saxony actively takes advantage of the available opportunities for participation whilst being an integral part of the supranational system of the EU.

Cross-border cooperation

The Free State of Saxony advocates continuing European integration, as set out in Article 12 of the Saxon Constitution. The Saxon State Parliament actively supports the strengthening of the EU in relation to the areas of competence assigned to it. It should also be emphasised that the state of Saxony is committed

to maintaining good relations with its neighbouring regions in Poland and the Czech Republic, with whom it shares a border of over 500 km. The Saxon State Parliament therefore also strives to cultivate and deepen its existing relationships with its neighbours.

State Parliament liaison office in Brussels

The establishment of a liaison office in Brussels has enabled the Saxon State Parliament to take a further step towards strengthening its European connections. The office provides the Parliament with information on European policy issues which may be of relevance for policy at state level.



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Sächsischer Landtag

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CITIZENS' FOYER IN NEW BUILDING

Free entry for visitors to

“The Saxons’ Parliament” exhibition

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday, 9 am – 6 pm

STATE PARLIAMENT

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS



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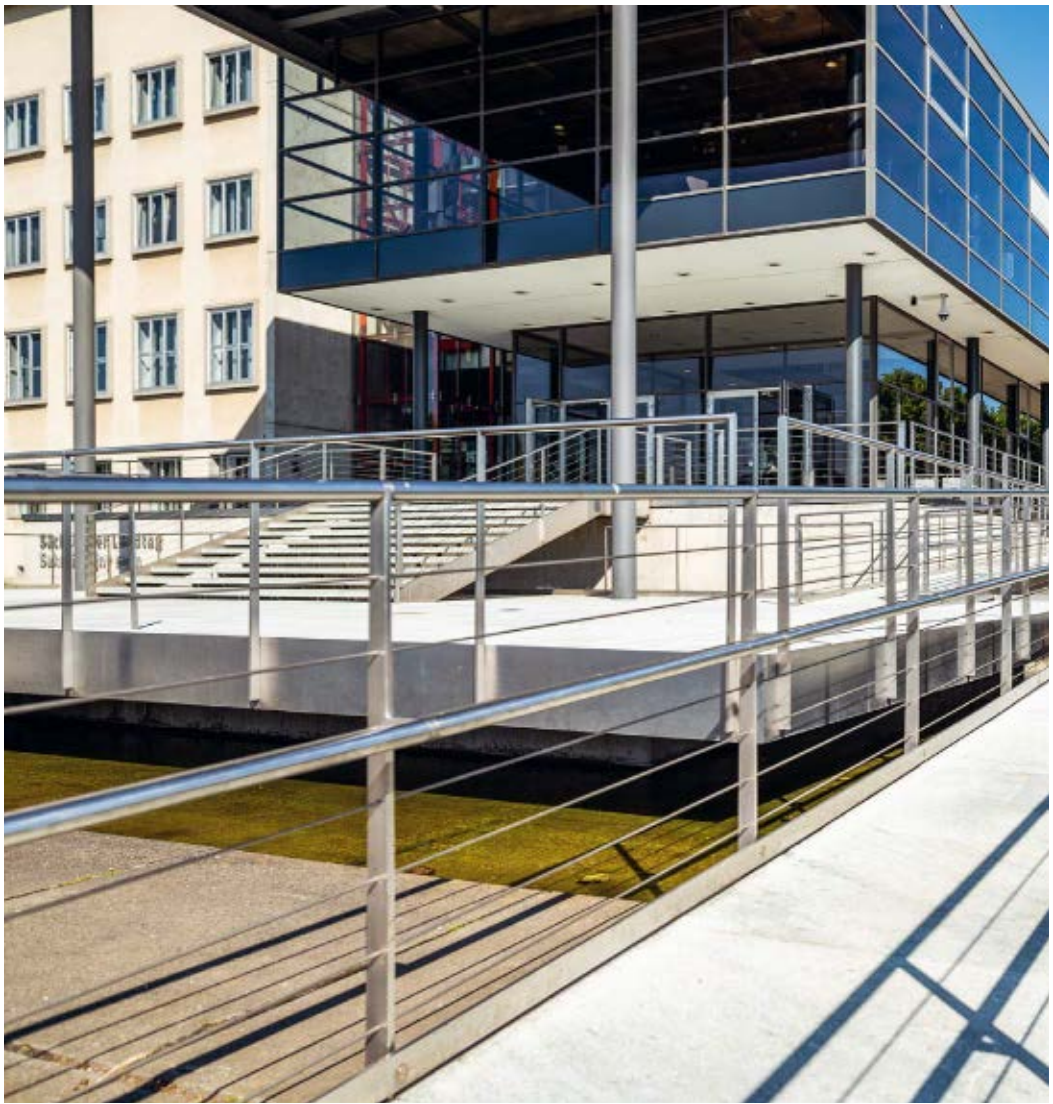
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