



The procurement advisory centre in Saxony



Public Procurement Principle: **Capacity**



Procurement Stage: **All stages**



Audience: **Policy maker, Procuring entity, Private sector**

Description

Saxony's Procurement Advisory Centre (Auftragsberatungsstelle Sachsen e.V., ABSt) advises public authorities, companies and interest groups with regard to professional public procurement. Similar to the competence centres at the federal level like the KNB or KOINNO, ABSt provides support for contracting authorities as needed in support of specific procurements. In addition, ABSt provides support for all aspects of public procurement, rather than just specialised aspects.

ABSt was first established in 1994. Under public law, several organisations serve as sponsors (Träger) of ABSt. They include: the local Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts in Dresden, Chemnitz and Leipzig; Saxony's Architecture Chamber; and the Free State of Saxony (i.e. the government of Saxony), represented by the Saxon State Ministry for Economy, Labour and Transport (Sächsisches Staatsministerium für Wirtschaft, Arbeit und Verkehr, SMWA). The desk officers in the ABSt include a mix of lawyers and business economists. ABSt's headquarters are located in Dresden. Additionally, the ABSt offers monthly walk-in hours in Chemnitz and Leipzig.

The services provided by ABSt range from providing information on new laws, regulations and court decisions to training and on-demand support. Support includes help for public authorities in conducting a procurement process and advice for companies and public authorities with regard to complaints. During 2018, ABSt also offered six training seminars.

When supporting a procurement process, ABSt goes beyond legal compliance and applies a coaching concept that targets the entire procurement cycle. The institution reviews tender documents in terms of legal compliance, but also offers advice on content (for example on how to structure selection criteria). ABSt also conducts aspects of procurement like communications, dissemination of the offer, retrieving additional information from the bidders and more. Advice is free of charge for up to one hour. Should a party require additional time, ABSt is remunerated by way of an individual contract.

The ABSt also pre-qualifies potential suppliers for bidding. Companies in possession of the ABSt certificate only need to submit this certificate in bids as proof of their qualification, as opposed to the entire suite of documentation. To receive a pre-qualification certificate, companies need to file a request 244 | PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN GERMANY © OECD 2019 with ABSt based on a set of documents. ABSt reviews the documentation and includes the pre-qualified companies in an online database covering all of Germany. The process costs EUR 180 plus a EUR 50 administration fee that goes to the local chamber of industry and commerce. For repeat registrations, the charge is lower.

As a registered association (eingetragener Verein), ABSt is led by a board with three board members. These board members are drawn from both business and government, illustrating the close cooperation between the two spheres within the ABSt. ABSt's current chair is also the CEO of the Chamber of Crafts Dresden, while his deputy is the CEO of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce Dresden. The second deputy of ABSt is the desk officer in charge of procurement of Saxony's Ministry for Economy, Labour and Transport.

Source: OECD (2019), [Public Procurement in Germany: Strategic Dimensions for Well-being and Growth](#), OECD Publishing, Paris

