

Lightning Country Snapshot Germany

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Main actors responsible for communicating scientific evidence to the public during crises

Basic principle for crisis response: departmental responsibility

- At federal level, the ministry that is technically responsible for the subject matter always takes the lead, depending on the type of threat or damage
- Other ministries then send liaison officers to the crisis unit of the lead ministry and work together there.

Central role of the Interior Ministry (BMI)

- The BMI has its own department for “Crisis Management and Civil Protection”, which serves as a coordination centre for crisis management

Interministerial cooperation

- All federal ministries have crisis units that can be activated at any time and that are, when needed, composed across ministries.

System of scientific advice, before and during crises

The Federal Government relies on a **network of ministerial research institutes, expert councils, advisory boards and external research institutions**, rather than a single chief scientific adviser. Main actors:

- Research institutes directly attached to ministries (so-called “Ressortforschungseinrichtungen”, e.g. Robert Koch Institute, German Weather Service, Federal Institute for Risk Assessment)
- Permanent expert councils and advisory boards counsel the government or individual ministries
- Ad-hoc expert commissions are set up for specific issues and for a limited time and produce reports and recommendations.
- Universities, non-university research organisations, think tanks and foundations also advise the government (studies, commissioned research, hearings)