



Brandenburg Commissioner
for Data Protection and
Access to Information

Freedom of information has to defend itself against increasing criticism in Germany and Europe. Security concerns, efforts to cut red tape and austerity measures have, in some cases, already led to a rollback of legislation. Its value as a democratic safeguard and a civil right is often being overlooked in this context. For this symposium, we have invited international experts to report on successful strategies. Their perspectives offer insights into legal developments and the practical application of freedom of information, which are also of interest to Germany and Brandenburg.

The Symposium will be held in English and German. Simultaneous translation will be provided. **Everybody is cordially invited to take part in the discussion.**

As seating is limited, please register as soon as possible, at the latest by **11 September 2026**. Registration is on a “first come, first serve” basis. The organiser does not provide accommodation for participants and does not reimburse any travel expenses. Participants are kindly requested to make their own travel arrangements.

We intend to make a list of participants available to the participants of the event. When you register, please let us know whether we are allowed to include your name and organisation in the list. You can find information on data processing on our website.

We look forward to welcoming you

➤ Directions

Venue: **Brandenburg Hall**
Brandenburg State Chancellery
Heinrich-Mann-Allee 107
14473 Potsdam

The venue is located approximately 500 metres from Potsdam Central Station (Friedrich-Engels-Straße exit) and is a 5-minute walk from there.

We recommend travelling by public transport.

➤ Contact

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International Symposium 2026

Freedom of Information under
Pressure – Change of Direction
or Chance?



Monday 28 September 2026
Brandenburg State Chancellery, Potsdam

International Symposium 2026

Programme



**Monday
28 September 2026**



**Brandenburg
State Chancellery**

9 a.m. **Opening**

DAGMAR HARTGE
Brandenburg Commissioner for Data Protection and Access to Information, Kleinmachnow (DE)

Welcoming Speech

DR JAN REDMANN
Minister of the Interior and for Municipal Affairs of the State of Brandenburg, Potsdam (DE)

9.30 a.m. **Is EU Freedom of Information Still Up to Date? 25 Years of the EU Freedom of Information Regulation**

MARKUS SPOERER
General Secretariat of the European Council and the Council of the EU, Brussels (BE)

Access to Environmental Information under the Aarhus Convention: Implementation Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

MARYNA YANUSH
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Aarhus Convention Secretariat, Geneva (CH)

11 a.m. **Coffee Break**

11.30 a.m. **Access to Information under Martial Law**

OLEKSANDR YURCHENKO
Unit for the Right of Access to Information, Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Kyiv (UA)

The Guidance, the Penance, and the Damnation of Administrative Transparency in Portugal

TIAGO FIDALGO DE FREITAS
Lisbon Public Law Research Centre / University of Lisbon School of Law, Lisbon (PT)

1 p.m. **Lunch Break**

2 p.m. **FOI in the UK: Managing Pressure and Maximising Opportunities**

WARREN SEDDON
Director of Freedom of Information and Transparency, Information Commissioner's Office, Manchester (GB)

"We have nothing further to add" – Journalists' Rights to Access Information and Their Significance for Investigative Research Regarding Public Authorities

DR JOST MÜLLER-NEUHOF
Legal affairs correspondent and in-house lawyer, Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin (DE)

3.30 p.m. **Coffee Break**

4 p.m. **Panel Discussion with All Speakers**

BENJAMIN LASSIWE, Presentation
Brandenburg State Press Conference Association, Potsdam (DE)

5 p.m. **Closing Remarks**

DAGMAR HARTGE

End of Programme

Refreshments and Snacks