

Video Conferencing in the Federation

Legal framework conditions and practical experience in the German court system

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The presentation will provide an overview of the proceedings and the circumstances in which the use of video-conference technology is admissible in German court proceedings. This includes both an outline of the legal framework as well as rulings of the higher courts putting elements of that framework in more specific terms.

Specific attention will be given to the fact that competence for the organisation of the courts and the provision of technical equipment for them largely lies with the 16 German Federal *Länder* – resulting in noticeable regional differences with regard to the availability and frequency of use of video-conference facilities. Insofar as data is available in this respect, it is planned that the factors which present an obstacle to wider acceptance on the part of potential participants (e.g. parties to the proceedings, lawyers) will also be presented.

Following on from this overview of the national system, the second part of the presentation will look at experience with cross-border video-conference proceedings, the frequency of such proceedings and the practical problems that arise during their use. It will also address the subject of the “German Justice Portal” and the information it contains on video-conference facilities in German courts.