

Diploma Supplement

This Diploma Supplement model was developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES. The purpose of the supplement is to provide sufficient independent data to improve the international 'transparency' and fair academic and professional recognition of qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates etc.). It is designed to provide a description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed by the individual named on the original qualification to which this supplement is appended. It should be free from any value judgements, equivalence statements or suggestions about recognition. Information in all eight sections should be provided. Where information is not provided, an explanation should give the reason why.

1. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION

The holder of the qualification is shown on the *Bachelor-Zeugnis*.

2. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION

2.1 Name of qualification and (if applicable) title conferred (in original language)

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

2.2 Main field(s) of study for the qualification

Communication Design

2.3 Name and status of awarding institution (in original language)

Technische Hochschule Mannheim – University of Applied Sciences

2.4 Name and status of institution administering studies (in original language)

see 2.3

2.5 Language(s) of instruction/examination

German. Some lectures might be held in English

3. INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL AND DURATION OF THE QUALIFICATION

3.1 Level of the qualification

First Cycle (Bachelor's Degree), EQF-6

3.2 Official duration of programme in credits and/or years

3,5 Years including industrial placement – 210 ECTS points

3.3 Access requirement(s)

Higher Education Entry Qualification (HEEQ): General HEEQ, Specialised HEEQ, HEEQ for UAS (cf. 8.7) or equivalent

4. INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME COMPLETED AND THE RESULTS OBTAINED

4.1 Mode of study

Full Time, attendance study

4.2 Programme learning outcomes

The Communication Design programme in Mannheim aims to provide a comprehensive education for designers capable of developing cross-media strategies to address complex communication challenges. A hallmark of the Mannheim approach is the integration of creative, strategic, and critical design perspectives. This triad forms the foundation of the curriculum and reflects the faculty's research-driven orientation.

Graduates acquire both theoretical knowledge and practice-oriented competencies, enabling them to act as responsible, reflective, and professionally versatile designers—whether in employed positions or in independent practice.

A recent graduate profile indicates the following distribution of professional fields:

- 25% Digital Design (UX, Social Media, Apps, Web)
- 21% Strategic Design (Brand Communication, Advertising, Branding)
- 17% Concept Development
- 17% Editorial Design (Books, Print, Text)
- 17% Film and Photography

This distribution highlights the programme's strong foundation in strategic and digital communication design, while maintaining a focus on classical design competencies such as typography, narrative, and moving image. Graduates are thus well prepared for the diverse demands of a dynamic professional field

Strategic Orientation of the Faculty

The Faculty of Design at Technische Hochschule Mannheim combines interdisciplinary thinking, critical analysis, and creative practice, applying design as a tool for the improvement of present and future quality of life.

Through a broad foundation programme and a flexible main study phase, students are encouraged to develop individual specialisations—ranging from digital and strategic design to audiovisual media and photography.

The faculty offers a studio-like, supportive learning environment that promotes social competencies, prepares students for real-world design practice, and provides the freedom to design in creative and responsible ways.

Structure of the Degree Programme

The Bachelor's programme in Communication Design at Technische Hochschule Mannheim is structured to develop professionals capable of creating cross-media strategies to address complex communication challenges. The curriculum integrates creative, strategic, and critical design elements, reflecting the research orientation of the faculty.

The programme is organised into seven interconnected components:

- **Fundamentals:** Provide technical, creative, and theoretical foundations in areas such as graphic and drawing techniques, typography, interactive media, photography, and film. These modules are typically completed in the first two semesters.
- **Advanced Modules:** Build on the fundamentals to deepen knowledge and skills in specific areas of communication design. Students are required to complete three different advanced modules between the third and fifth semesters.
- **Specialisation Modules:** Allow students to focus on individual areas of interest through self-directed projects and the development of a personal design profile. Three specialisation modules are to be completed between the fourth and sixth semesters.
- **In-depth Modules:** Offer further specialisation and depth in selected subject areas, contributing to a distinct professional profile.
- **Context Modules:** Provide theoretical and contextual knowledge related to communication design, including academic, cultural, societal, legal, design-theoretical, linguistic, and psychological dimensions.
- **Internship:** A practical semester—usually undertaken between the fourth and sixth semester provides hands-on experience in a professional setting.
- **Bachelor Thesis:** In the final semester, students devote three months to the completion of their bachelor's thesis, demonstrating their ability to apply and integrate the knowledge and skills acquired during the programme.

This comprehensive structure ensures that graduates emerge as professionally competent, ethically responsible, and critically reflective designers, equipped to succeed in both employed and self-employed positions within the dynamic field of communication design.

4.3 Programme details, individual credits gained and grades/marks obtained

The Bachelor's programme in Communication Design at Technische Hochschule Mannheim is designed to educate design professionals capable of developing cross-media strategies to address complex communication challenges. The curriculum combines creative, strategic, and critical design elements, in alignment with the faculty's research-oriented approach.

The programme covers a range of interconnected subject areas, including:

- Graphic Design
- Drawing
- Typography
- Interactive Media
- Photography
- Film
- Strategic Design
- Advertising Design
- UI/UX Design
- Navigation Design
- 3D Design

These applied fields are complemented by modules addressing the academic, cultural, societal, legal, design-theoretical, linguistic, and psychological contexts of communication design. This integrated structure enables graduates to act as competent, reflective, and socially responsible designers across a wide spectrum of professional environments.

The individual credits gained and grades obtained are shown on the *Bachelor-Zeugnis*. The English translation can be found on the transcript of records

4.4 Grading system and, if available, grade distribution table

Grades		Graduates (01/22-12/24)	
		abs. No.	%**
1,0 - 1,2*	very good	34	26 %
1,3 - 1,5		66	50 %
1,6 - 1,8	good	29	22 %
1,9 - 2,2		4	3 %
2,3 - 2,5		0	0 %
2,6 - 2,8	satisfactory	0	0 %
2,9 - 3,2		0	0 %
3,3 - 3,5		0	0 %
3,6 - 3,8	sufficient	0	0 %
3,9 - 4,0		0	0 %
Ø** 1,4		133	100 %

* With distinction

**Calculated only if at least 20 students finished the programme within the given timeframe.

4.5 Overall classification of the qualification (in original language)

The overall classification of the qualification is shown on the *Bachelor-Zeugnis*. The English translation can be found on the transcript of records.

5. INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION**5.1 Access to further study**

The degree qualifies the holder to apply for a second cycle degree (see 8.4.2)

5.2 Access to a regulated profession (if applicable)**6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION****6.1 Additional information****6.2 Further information sources**

<https://www.th-mannheim.de>

7. CERTIFICATION

This Diploma Supplement refers to the following original documents:

Document on the award of the academic degree (Urkunde über die Verleihung des Akademischen Grades)

Transcript of Records (Zeugnis)

8. NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

The information on the national higher education system on the following pages provides a context for the qualification and the type of higher education institution that awarded it.

8. INFORMATION ON THE GERMAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM¹

8.1 Types of Institutions and Institutional Status

Higher education (HE) studies in Germany are offered at three types of Higher Education Institutions (HEI).²

- *Universitäten* (Universities) including various specialised institutions, offer the whole range of academic disciplines. In the German tradition, universities focus in particular on basic research so that advanced stages of study have mainly theoretical orientation and research-oriented components.

- *Fachhochschulen (FH)/Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaften (HAW)* (Universities of Applied Sciences, UAS) concentrate their study programmes in engineering and other technical disciplines, business-related studies, social work, and design areas. The common mission of applied research and development implies an application-oriented focus of studies, which includes integrated and supervised work assignments in industry, enterprises or other relevant institutions.

- *Kunst- und Musikhochschulen* (Universities of Art/Music) offer studies for artistic careers in fine arts, performing arts and music; in such fields as directing, production, writing in theatre, film, and other media; and in a variety of design areas, architecture, media and communication.

Higher Education Institutions are either state or state-recognised institutions. In their operations, including the organisation of studies and the designation and award of degrees, they are both subject to higher education legislation.

8.2 Types of Programmes and Degrees Awarded

Studies in all three types of institutions have traditionally been offered in integrated "long" (one-tier) programmes leading to *Diplom- or Magister Artium* degrees or completed by a *Staatsprüfung* (State Examination).

Within the framework of the Bologna-Process one-tier study programmes are successively being replaced by a two-tier study system. Since 1998, two-tier degrees (Bachelor's and Master's) have been introduced in almost all study programmes. This change is designed to enlarge variety and flexibility for students in planning and pursuing educational objectives; it also enhances international compatibility of studies.

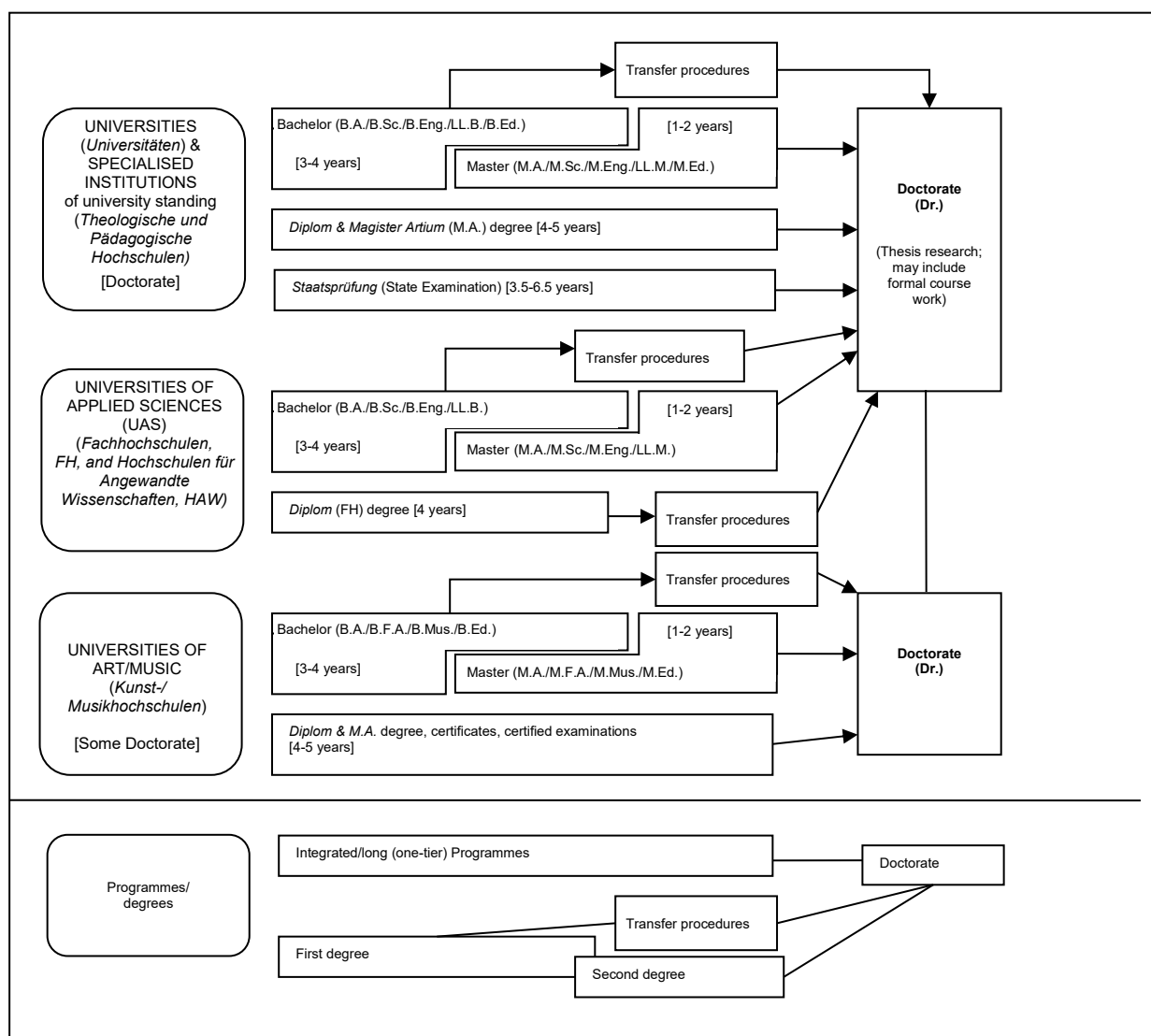
The German Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (HQR)³ describes the qualification levels as well as the resulting qualifications and competences of the graduates. The three levels of the HQR correspond to the levels 6, 7 and 8 of the German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning⁴ and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning⁵.

For details cf. Sec. 8.4.1, 8.4.2, and 8.4.3 respectively. Table 1 provides a synoptic summary.

8.3 Approval/Accreditation of Programmes and Degrees

To ensure quality and comparability of qualifications, the organisation of studies and general degree requirements have to conform to principles and regulations established by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK).⁶ In 1999, a system of accreditation for Bachelor's and Master's programmes has become operational. All new programmes have to be accredited under this scheme; after a successful accreditation they receive the seal of the Accreditation Council.⁷

Table 1: Institutions, Programmes and Degrees in German Higher Education



8.4 Organisation and Structure of Studies

The following programmes apply to all three types of institutions. Bachelor's and Master's study programmes may be studied consecutively, at various higher education institutions, at different types of higher education institutions and with phases of professional work between the first and the second qualification. The organisation of the study programmes makes use of modular components and of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) with 30 credits corresponding to one semester.

8.4.1 Bachelor

Bachelor's degree programmes lay the academic foundations, provide methodological competences and include skills related to the professional field. The Bachelor's degree is awarded after 3 to 4 years. The Bachelor's degree programme includes a thesis requirement. Study programmes leading to the Bachelor's degree must be accredited according to the Interstate study accreditation treaty.⁸

First degree programmes (Bachelor) lead to Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.), Bachelor of Engineering (B.Eng.), Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.), Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.), Bachelor of Music (B.Mus.) or Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.).

The Bachelor's degree corresponds to level 6 of the German Qualifications Framework/ European Qualifications Framework.

8.4.2 Master

Master is the second degree after another 1 to 2 years. Master's programmes may be differentiated by the profile types "practice-oriented" and "research-oriented". Higher Education Institutions define the profile.

The Master's degree programme includes a thesis requirement. Study programmes leading to the Master's degree must be accredited according to the Interstate study accreditation treaty.⁹

Second degree programmes (Master) lead to Master of Arts (M.A.), Master of Science (M.Sc.), Master of Engineering (M.Eng.), Master of Laws (LL.M.), Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.), Master of Music (M.Mus.) or Master of Education (M.Ed.). Master's programmes which are designed for continuing education may carry other designations (e.g. MBA).

The Master's degree corresponds to level 7 of the German Qualifications Framework/ European Qualifications Framework.

8.4.3 Integrated "Long" Programmes (One-Tier): Diplom degrees, Magister Artium, Staatsprüfung

An integrated study programme is either mono-disciplinary (*Diplom* degrees, most programmes completed by a *Staatsprüfung*) or comprises a combination of either two major or one major and two minor fields (*Magister Artium*). The first stage (1.5 to 2 years) focuses on broad orientations and foundations of the field(s) of study. An Intermediate Examination (*Diplom-Vorprüfung* for *Diplom* degrees; *Zwischenprüfung* or credit requirements for the *Magister Artium*) is prerequisite to enter the second stage of advanced studies and specialisations. Degree requirements include submission of a thesis (up to 6 months duration) and comprehensive final written and oral examinations. Similar regulations apply to studies leading to a *Staatsprüfung*. The level of qualification is equivalent to the Master's level.

- Integrated studies at *Universitäten (U)* last 4 to 5 years (*Diplom* degree, *Magister Artium*) or 3.5 to 6.5 years (*Staatsprüfung*). The *Diplom* degree is awarded in engineering disciplines, the natural sciences as well as economics and business. In the humanities, the corresponding degree is usually the *Magister Artium* (M.A.). In the social sciences, the practice varies as a matter of institutional traditions. Studies preparing for the legal, medical and pharmaceutical professions are completed by a *Staatsprüfung*. This applies also to studies preparing for teaching professions of some *Länder*.

The three qualifications (*Diplom*, *Magister Artium* and *Staatsprüfung*) are academically equivalent and correspond to level 7 of the German Qualifications Framework/European Qualifications Framework.

They qualify to apply for admission to doctoral studies. Further prerequisites for admission may be defined by the Higher Education Institution, cf. Sec. 8.5.

- Integrated studies at *Fachhochschulen (FH)/Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaften (HAW)* (Universities of Applied Sciences, UAS) last 4 years and lead to a *Diplom (FH)* degree which corresponds to level 6 of the German Qualifications Framework/European Qualifications Framework.

Qualified graduates of FH/HAW/UAS may apply for admission to doctoral studies at doctorate-granting institutions, cf. Sec. 8.5.

- Studies at *Kunst- und Musikhochschulen* (Universities of Art/Music etc.) are more diverse in their organisation, depending on the field and individual objectives. In addition to *Diplom/Magister* degrees, the integrated study programme awards include certificates and certified examinations for specialised areas and professional purposes.

8.5 Doctorate

Universities as well as specialised institutions of university standing, some of the FH/HAW/UAS and some Universities of Art/Music are doctorate-granting institutions. Formal prerequisite for admission to doctoral work is a qualified Master's degree (UAS and U), a *Magister* degree, a *Diplom*, a *Staatsprüfung*, or a foreign equivalent. Comparable degrees from universities of art and music can in exceptional cases (study programmes such as music theory, musicology, pedagogy of arts and music, media studies) also formally qualify for doctoral work. Particularly qualified holders of a Bachelor's degree or a *Diplom (FH)* degree may also be admitted to doctoral studies without acquisition of a further degree by means of a procedure to determine their aptitude. The universities respectively the doctorate-granting institutions regulate entry to a doctorate as well as the structure of the procedure to determine aptitude. Admission further requires the acceptance of the Dissertation research project by a professor as a supervisor.

The doctoral degree corresponds to level 8 of the German Qualifications Framework/ European Qualifications Framework.

8.6 Grading Scheme

The grading scheme in Germany usually comprises five levels (with numerical equivalents; intermediate grades may be given): "Sehr Gut" (1) = Very Good; "Gut" (2) = Good; "Befriedigend" (3) = Satisfactory; "Ausreichend" (4) = Sufficient; "Nicht ausreichend" (5) = Non-Sufficient/Fail. The minimum passing grade is "Ausreichend" (4). Verbal designations of grades may vary in some cases and for doctoral degrees. In addition, grade distribution tables as described in the ECTS Users' Guide are used to indicate the relative distribution of grades within a reference group.

8.7 Access to Higher Education

The General Higher Education Entrance Qualification (*Allgemeine Hochschulreife*, *Abitur*) after 12 to 13 years of schooling allows for admission to all higher educational studies. Specialised variants (*Fachgebundene Hochschulreife*) allow for admission at *Fachhochschulen (FH)/Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaften (HAW)* (UAS), universities and equivalent higher education institutions, but only in particular disciplines. Access to study programmes at *Fachhochschulen (FH)/Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaften (HAW)* (UAS) is also possible with a *Fachhochschulreife*, which can usually be acquired after 12 years of schooling. Admission to study programmes at Universities of Art/Music and comparable study programmes at other higher education institutions as well as admission to a study programme in sports may be based on other or additional evidence demonstrating individual aptitude. Applicants with a qualification in vocational education and training but without a school-based higher education entrance qualification are entitled to a general higher education entrance qualification and thus to access to all study programmes, provided they have obtained advanced further training certificates in particular state-regulated vocational fields (e.g. *Meister/Meisterin im Handwerk*, *Industriemeister/in*, *Fachwirt/in (IHK)*, *Betriebswirt/in (IHK)* und *(HWK)*, staatlich geprüfte/r *Techniker/in*, staatlich geprüfte/r *Betriebswirt/in*, staatlich geprüfte/r *Gestalter/in*, staatlich geprüfte/r *Erzieher/in*). Vocationally qualified applicants can obtain a *Fachgebundene Hochschulreife* after completing a state-regulated vocational education of at least two years' duration plus professional practice of normally at least three years' duration, after having successfully passed an aptitude test at a higher education institution or other state institution; the aptitude test may be replaced by successfully completed trial studies of at least one year's duration.¹⁰ Higher Education Institutions may in certain cases apply additional admission procedures.

8.8 National Sources of Information

- Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) [Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany]; Graurheindorfer Str. 157, D-53117 Bonn;

Phone: +49(0)228/501-0; www.kmk.org; E-Mail: hochschulen@kmk.org

- Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) as German NARIC; www.kmk.org; E-Mail: zab@kmk.org

- German information office of the *Länder* in the EURYDICE Network, providing the national dossier on the education system; www.kmk.org; E-Mail: Eurydice@kmk.org

- Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK) [German Rectors' Conference]; Leipziger Platz 11, D-10117 Berlin, Phone: +49 30 206292-11; www.hrk.de; E-Mail: post@hrk.de

- "Higher Education Compass" of the German Rectors' Conference features comprehensive information on institutions, programmes of study, etc. (www.higher-education-compass.de)

¹ The information covers only aspects directly relevant to purposes of the Diploma Supplement.

² *Berufsakademien* are not considered as Higher Education Institutions, they only exist in some of the *Länder*. They offer educational programmes in close cooperation with private companies. Students receive a formal degree and carry out an apprenticeship at the company. Some *Berufsakademien* offer Bachelor courses which are recognised as an academic degree if they are accredited by the Accreditation Council.

³ German Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Degrees. (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 16 February 2017).

⁴ German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (DQR). Joint resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the German Conference of Economics Ministers and the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 15 November 2012). More information at www.dqr.de

⁵ Recommendation of the European Parliament and the European Council on the establishment of a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning of 23 April 2008 (2008/C 111/01 – European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning – EQF).

⁶ Specimen decree pursuant to Article 4, paragraphs 1 – 4 of the interstate study accreditation treaty (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 7 December 2017).

⁷ Interstate Treaty on the organization of a joint accreditation system to ensure the quality of teaching and learning at German higher education institutions (Interstate study accreditation treaty) (Decision of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 8 December 2016), Enacted on 1 January 2018.

⁸ See note No. 7.

⁹ See note No. 7.

¹⁰ Access to higher education for applicants with a vocational qualification, but without a school-based higher education entrance qualification (Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 6 March 2009).