

- » About 150 statements concerning applications for guarantees, public sector loans and other subsidies are processed.
- » The chamber receives about ten requests to provide statements within the context of the aliens law.
- » The chamber receives on average around 100 requests to provide statements in local land-use planning proceedings.
- » The IHK issues more than 400 licences relating to the transportation of hazardous materials.
- » On average 13,500 export documents are issued each year to allow goods produced in this region to be sent to specific countries.
- » Information is provided on foreign markets about 800 times and more than ten consultation days are held about foreign countries per year.
- » The IHK provides information on current customs and foreign trade laws at specific events, which are usually held once a month.
- » Advice and information is provided around 5,000 times on customs legislation.
- » The IHK provides information on innovation and environment matters around 400 times.
- » We provide information to our members on a monthly basis in the IHK magazine "Economic Report", which has a print run of 25,000.
- » IHK employees regularly visit member companies to help them to solve problems on site.
- » We maintain regular contact with political mandate holders in order to represent the interests of the regional economy.
- » More than 2,000 business owners and company employees offer their support as volunteers in carrying out our work.
- » We provide these and other services for a reasonable price: In 2008 the average IHK compulsory contribution was about EUR 280. The contribution, which depends on a company's revenue, has remained at 0.29 % for the past ten years. In 2013 this contribution has been lowered to 0,27 %. Approximately 40 % of all members do not make any contributions as their business does not exceed the minimum turnover.



### In Place of the State

The Chambers of Industry and Commerce are self-regulatory bodies within the regional economy. In this function they carry out a number of tasks, which are allocated to them by the State. These tasks and the membership in the IHK are regulated by IHK law. Any local business owner who takes up a commercial activity becomes a member of the Siegen Chamber of Industry and Commerce if he does not belong to the skilled crafts or liberal professions.



### The business owners decide

Elected representatives of the business owners in the IHK General Assembly determine the direction of the IHK. Every four years all IHK business owners vote in the IHK elections on the composition of the General Assembly from which the IHK Executive Board and the IHK President are elected. Each company's vote has the same weight irrespective of its size. More than 2,000 company employees volunteer their expertise to assist the IHK Siegen by sitting on committees, in the General Assembly or by acting as examiners. These volunteers ensure that the economy in the Siegen-Olpe-Wittgenstein region looks after their interests better, with a more practical orientation and more cost-effectively than the State could do.



### - a supportive society

To finance the work that the IHK carries out, all member companies are charged a membership fee, which depends on their earning power. This kind of financing guarantees that the Chamber of Industry and Commerce remains independent from the State and from individual interests. The General Assembly decides about the height of these membership fees.



### Would you like to know more?

The brochure "IHK Service from A to Z" provides a detailed overview of all the services provided by the IHK Siegen. The Chamber of Industry and Commerce's annual report provides information on the work of the IHK in the previous year. It also contains important figures concerning the IHK's work and about the Chamber's financial situation.

Both brochures can be obtained free of charge from the IHK (Tel: (+49) 271 / 33 02-317). Every member of the Siegen Chamber of Industry and Commerce also receives a copy of our monthly magazine "Economic Report". This regional business magazine provides invaluable advice and background information on current business issues but, more importantly, it provides news from the region and from the IHK.

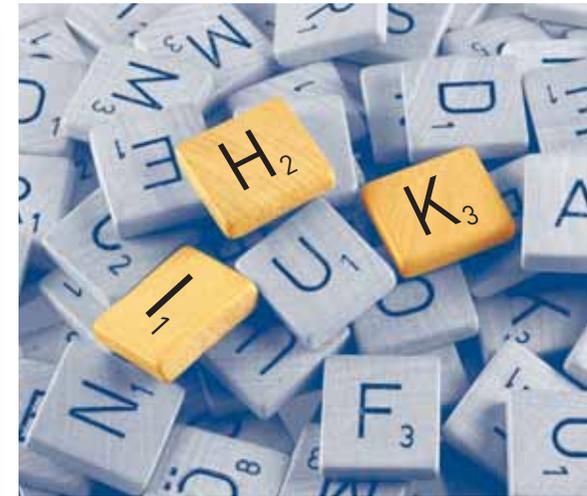
Have a look at the wealth of information on the IHK's website. Visit [www.ihk-siegen.de](http://www.ihk-siegen.de) to keep up to date on important industry-related issues 24 hours a day. You can also subscribe to the various IHK publications.

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## More to offer than you think

Facts and Information –  
IHK Siegen at a glance

**IHK** Siegen

## More to offer than you think

Representation of interests, exercising of public sector responsibilities, services in many different areas – this is the business of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK). The IHK's customers are more than 25,000 member companies from the industry, commerce and services sectors in the Siegen-Wittgenstein and Olpe districts, as are political and administrative stakeholders. The IHK is well respected as a competent authority and as the voice of the regional economy. The following examples provide an insight into the broad remit of the IHK's work:

### »1. Business Area Regional Economic Policy

The IHK plays an active role in the creation and safeguarding of reasonable conditions so that industry, commerce, services, tourism and transport operations in the region can function successfully. It works autonomously at a regional level, and works within a network of other IHKs at a state and federal level, as well as with the German Federation of Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK), the umbrella organisation of the IHKs. It gives its professional opinion on planned legislation and makes recommendations for the further development of the region and state, based on studies and location analyses. It works hard to improve the rail and road infrastructure and to allocate sufficient industrial areas. It also supports companies in their search for and selection of a suitable site for their business.

### »2. Business Area Training and Further Education

The IHK is the partner companies turn to for in-company vocational training – from qualified advice, to the registration of apprenticeships right up to the certification of interim and final examinations. It also actively promotes additional apprentice-

ship offers, supports the placement of young people in apprenticeships and facilitates contact between training organisations and vocational schools. The entire IHK organisation works to develop, modernise and customise training professions to bring them in line with technological developments. This approach, as well as working closely with businesses, associations, and trade unions, helps the IHKs to keep the dual system of vocational education up to date.

The IHK develops further education profiles and certificate programmes to meet demands and administers the examinations.

### »3. Business Area Start-up Assistance and Entrepreneurship

The IHK provides start-up assistance for new companies in the "NRW STARTER CENTER": It provides advice on the business concept, financing, registration formalities and funding opportunities. Where required, it also holds competence examinations, which are a prerequisite in certain industries when setting up a business.

The IHK provides support to companies in business and financing matters and in matters of company succession.

### »4. Business Area Innovation and Environment

The IHK advises companies on the transfer of technology, on questions regarding corporate environmental performance, on energy efficiency and on the transport of dangerous goods. It facilitates contact with research facilities and industry experts. It also tests and certifies courses and examinations for drivers of hazardous materials and safety advisors and issues the relevant certificates to graduates.

### »5. Business Area International

The IHK supports companies who are importing exporting or investing in foreign companies.

The chamber provides information on German foreign trade legislation and on the commercial law of other countries, as well as on customs matters. Companies can obtain certificates of origin, various other certificates, carnets and foreign trade forms from the IHK.

The IHK also organises business contacts abroad.

### »6. Business Area Legislation

The IHK provides information about a company's legal position. It is committed to fair competition and formulates the interests of the domestic economy as part of ongoing legislative procedures.

It recommends commercial judges and provides the opportunity to settle disputes out of court. It also appoints and swears in expert witnesses.

### »7. Business Area Economy, Employment, Statistics

Price indices, employment figures, industry data and reports on economic trends – the IHK provides all of these to its members, but also provides the public and political stakeholders with basic statistical information to assist with their commercial decisions and with policy decisions at a regional, state and federal level.



## about the work of the IHK Siegen

### What the IHK achieves in a year:

- » We look after more than 7,000 training contracts.
- » We administer more than 2,200 interim examinations and 2,400 final examinations in the initial vocational training disciplines, as well as around 420 examinations in further education.
- » We mediate approximately ten times out of court in disputes arising in matters of training, competition and other areas.
- » Around 1,000 prospective entrepreneurs contact us for information on starting a business.
- » We provide approximately 40 opinions on funding applications to promote the growth and future security of companies.
- » Around ten companies will be looked after at a "round table" session to provide assistance in crisis situations and to find them the appropriate aid.
- » Around 40 experts are appointed to the IHK. The IHK receives around 140 legal requests for the appointment of experts.
- » We instruct around 130 prospective gastronomes in our hospitality courses.
- » The chamber's employees are called upon several thousand times to provide information on almost all fields of law.
- » We provide our expert opinion to the courts around 800 times in matters related to commercial registers.
- » The IHK provides round 270 opinions on businesses requiring permits, hearings, applications for bans on engaging in commercial activities and permits for goods and passenger traffic.

