

Political career

Since December 2017:	Deputy chairman of the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag, responsible for the environment, nature conservation, building and nuclear safety, food and agriculture
2009-2017:	Spokesman on environmental policy for the SPD parliamentary group
Since June 2015:	Spokesman of the Parliamentary Left (PL) within the SPD parliamentary group
Since November 2013:	Member of the SPD party executive
2005, 2009, 2013 and 2017:	Directly elected Member of the German Bundestag for constituency 47 Hanover Land II
Since March 2009:	Chairman of the Hanover Region subdistrict branch of the SPD
Since June 2008:	Member of the presidium of the Lower Saxony <i>Land</i> branch of the SPD
2005-2009:	Deputy chairman of the Hanover Region county branch of the SPD
2001:	Expert consultant on the Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Parliament
2000-2005:	Deputy chairman of the Hanover Land subdistrict branch of the SPD
1995-2005:	Chairman of the SPD group on the Laatzen town council
Since 1991:	Member of the Laatzen town council
Since 1990:	Member of the SPD

Professional career

Since 2010:	In partnership with law firm Bernzen Sonntag
From 2000:	Partner in law firm Rischmüller – Pörtner and Colleagues
Since 2000:	Lawyer for criminal law
1999:	Earned doctorate in constitutional law and legal history from the University of Hanover
Since 1 July 1997:	Licensed to practice as a lawyer
1997:	Passed second state examination in law
1996:	Supplementary studies at the German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer
1993:	Passed first state examination in law
1988-1996:	Alternative service and subsequent work for the St John rescue and emergency service
1988:	Obtained <i>Abitur</i> (higher-education entrance qualification) from Albert Einstein comprehensive school in Laatzen
1985-1995:	Football referee for Hanover county and district
1983-1993:	Voluntary work for the YMCA and the St Thomas church community Laatzen

Memberships

Since September 2016:	Member of the Chamber for Sustainable Development of the Protestant Church in Germany
Since 2010:	Member of the board of trustees of the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU)
Other:	Member of the German Society for Nature Conservation (NABU), the YMCA, the National Association for Workers' Welfare (AWO) and voluntary member of the advisory council of Environmental Action Germany (DHU)

Personal information

Born on 19 December 1968 in Hanover
Registered civil partnership