

**Political career**

Since December 2017:	Deputy chairman of the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag, responsible for the environment, nature conservation and nuclear safety, energy, food and agriculture and tourism
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
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