

**Prof. Dr. Ines Härtel, Digital Statesmanship: Federalism as Laboratory for Digital Transformation**in: Europäisches Zentrum für Föderalismusforschung Tübingen (ed.), Jahrbuch des Föderalismus 2017, S. 199-220.

### **Summary**

In contrast to the view that federalism burdens digitalization, German federalism can actually offer multiple, advantageous and creative possibilities for development in digital modernity. Beyond the executive branch's function to carry out the mandates of federalism, there is also a shaping and designing competence as seen in the innovative federal state structures having a guiding and preparatory function. Thus, all the individual federal states are meanwhile developing their own executive and/or participatory digital strategies (beginning with different time frames and political directions). An analysis reveals that the key points are the expanding of the digital infrastructure, as a new part of public services of general interest, and the building up of digital network structures between and among science, economy, governmental policy and civil society. The noticeable increasing significance of digital federalism reveals itself in both digital governmental ministries and cabinets as well as in substantial expansion of digital smart fields. Differences, peculiar to individual federal states, in coordination, cooperation, competence and competition are structuring a digitalization which finds its freedom justification in the goal for a „better life“.