The HPI "Schul-Cloud" (School Cloud) is the technical basis for digital teaching and learning in schools. It makes available digital learning contents, methods and tools from various vendors. The Germany-wide school platform is sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and developed by the Hasso-Plattner Institute (HPI) and MINT-EC, the national excellence network currently comprising 316 schools with a particularly strong profile in mathematics, information technology, natural sciences and technology. The network operates under the patronage of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German federal states. The aim of MINT-EC is to include the participating schools in the development process of the platform, establish framework conditions for its use, and build up an advisory network.

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Schools are not making the most of the great potential offered by digitalization. Germany is in danger of falling behind other countries in this regard. There are many reasons for this: although many schools do have individual computer and server rooms, these are often equipped with obsolete software that is rarely maintained properly. License fees for programs and applications are high, and other international digital learning environments are not compatible with German data protection guidelines. Teachers and pupils need a platform that is tailored precisely to the needs of schools and allows easy secure access to digital tools, applications and materials.

By adopting design thinking approaches, the team places the users of the school platform at the center of the development process. As a digitally networked system that can be used throughout Germany, the HPI Schul-Cloud helps to embed digitalization into the school day, preparing the next generation for the employment market of the future.

To identify the special requirements of schools with regard to a digital school platform, pilot schools from the MINT-EC network of schools are actively testing the HPI Schul-Cloud. In this way, MINT-EC can initiate development processes that are triggered directly by the schools. This feedback flows directly into the technical further development of the HPI.

MINT-EC services that are helping participating schools to implement more digitalization in the classroom:
• Best practice sharing among pilot schools on introducing and using the HPI Schul-Cloud
• Joint development of framework conditions with the pilot schools in the MINT-EC "Schul-Cloud" topic cluster, focusing on concepts relating to teaching, school organization and information technology
• Regular feedback on system requirements and bugs as well as ideas and other challenges relating to introduction and use
• Establishment of a schools advisory network to support the introduction and use of the HPI Schul-Cloud, and to help schools keep pace with the advancing digital transformation