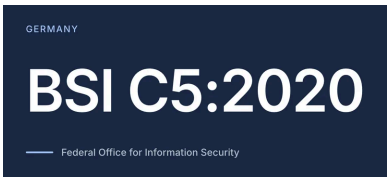
SmartSuite

Framework / Cloud Security / BSI IT-Grundschutz

BSI C5:2020

C5:2020 is the BSI's cloud security criteria catalog for C5 attestations, superseded by C5:2026 (7 April 2026) for audit periods from 1 June 2027.



What it is

C5:2020 is the 2020 edition of the BSI's C5 criteria catalog, the German Federal Office for Information Security's minimum requirements for the information security of cloud services, against which auditors issue C5 attestations to cloud providers. It has been superseded by C5:2026, published by the BSI on 7 April 2026 (version 1.1.0 of 11 August 2026): C5:2020 may still be used for audit periods beginning before 1 June 2027, and the BSI recommends C5:2026 for audit periods ending on or after that date.

At a glance

PUBLISHER
Federal Office for Information Security (BSI)

TYPE
Control Framework

VERSION
C5:2020 (superseded by C5:2026, published April 7, 2026)

EFFECTIVE
January 2020 (recommended for audit periods ending on or after February 15, 2021; C5:2026 for periods from June 1, 2027)

DOMAIN
Cloud Security

FAMILY
BSI IT-Grundschutz

REGION
Germany

INDUSTRY
Cloud & Technology Providers

ADOPTION MODEL
Industry Requirement

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY
High

Source: bsi.bund.de/dok/7685384

Why it matters

- **Minimum requirements, not best practice** C5 defines the level of information security a cloud service should not fall below, and section 5 lists the criteria auditors test.
- **Basic and additional criteria** Basic criteria are mandatory for every attestation; additional criteria, classified by confidentiality or availability, extend the audit for higher customer needs (section 2.1).
- **Transparency parameters** Section 4 requires statements on the system description, jurisdiction and data locations, disclosure and investigatory powers, and certifications (UP-01 to UP-04).
- **Reasonable assurance by public auditors** Audits are attestation engagements with reasonable assurance under ISAE 3000 (Revised), with ISAE 3402 and IDW PS 951 applied correspondingly (section 3.2).

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How SmartSuite supports BSI C5:2020

Service and Region Scope Record

Record each cloud service and region covered by the attestation, the audit period, the report type and whether the engagement runs on C5:2020 or C5:2026.

Criteria Library (OIS to MDM)

Hold the 17 sections' basic and additional criteria as controls with owners, implementation status, evidence links and the confidentiality or availability class of each additional criterion.

Surrounding Parameters File

Keep the UP-01 to UP-04 statements on system description, jurisdictions and data locations, disclosure powers and certifications as controlled records for the report.

System Description and Assertion

Maintain the system description and management's written assertion with version history and sign-off for the auditor.

Audit Findings and Exceptions

Log exceptions reported by the auditor, corrective actions and retest results, with closure before the next period.

Provider Report Review (customer side)

Request each provider's C5 report yearly, record the reading against the BSI evaluation guide and your complementary user controls, and track residual risks.

Common framework mappings

CSA CCM v4 | GDPR | ISO 27001:2022 | ISO 27002:2022 | ISO 27017 | ISO 27018 | ISO 27701 | NIST 800-53 Rev.5

Official resources

C5:2020 Cloud Computing Compliance Criteria Catalogue

BSI's criteria catalog for assessing the information security of cloud services.

bsi.bund.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/EN/BSI/Publications/CloudComputing/ComplianceControlsCatalogue-Cloud_Computing-C5.pdf

BSI Cloud Computing Overview

Outlines the key aspects and objectives of the C5 compliance framework.

bsi.bund.de/EN/Themen/Unternehmen-und-Organisationen/Informationen-und-Empfehlungen/Empfehlungen-nach-Angriffszielen/Cloud-Computing/Kriterienkatalog-C5/kriterienkatalog-c5_node.html

Implementing C5:2020 Controls

Official BSI guide on integrating C5 controls into cloud security programs.

bsi.bund.de/EN/Themen/Unternehmen-und-Organisationen/Informationen-und-Empfehlungen/Empfehlungen-nach-Angriffszielen/Cloud-Computing/Kriterienkatalog-C5/kriterienkatalog-c5_node.html

Frequently asked questions

Is C5:2020 still current?

No. The BSI published C5:2026 on 7 April 2026 (version 1.1.0 followed on 11 August 2026). Under C5:2026 section 3.5 its criteria apply to type 1 engagements with reference dates on or after 1 June 2027 and to type 2 periods beginning on or after that date; earlier application is allowed, and a period that straddles the date should stay on C5:2020 rather than mix editions.

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What is a C5 attestation?

A report from a public auditor (Wirtschaftsprüfer) issued after an attestation engagement with reasonable assurance under ISAE 3000 (Revised) that tested at least all basic criteria of the catalog for named cloud services in named regions. It is a report, not a certificate, and the BSI is not involved in the audit or in evaluating the report.

What is the difference between basic and additional criteria?

Basic criteria are the minimum every attestation must cover. Additional criteria are optional and classified by whether they address confidentiality, availability or both; customers with higher needs can require them, and C5:2026 further classes them as sharpening an existing basic criterion or complementing it with new requirements.

When is a C5 attestation legally required?

Since section 393 SGB V took effect on 1 July 2024, cloud services used in the German healthcare system need a C5 attestation or a comparable attestation or certificate. The BSI states that interpreting section 393 SGB V, including what counts as comparable, is for the Federal Ministry of Health.

Which report type should a customer ask for?

A type 2 report. The BSI considers a type 2 report, covering usually twelve and at least six months of control effectiveness, necessary for a meaningful opinion; a type 1 report on control design at a point in time is for exceptional cases such as a newly launched service and should not be repeated several times in a row.

License included / downloadable: Yes The BSI publishes C5:2020 and C5:2026 free of charge in PDF, editable and (for C5:2026) machine-readable form; the attestation audit is a paid engagement with a public auditor.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/germany-c5-2020-cloud-computing-compliance-controls-catalogue