Nettetal municipal AI portal (NetteKI)

IMPLEMENTED 2024–2026 · GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICES · GERMANY · BAND D · CLAIMED ONLY
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The town of Nettetal in North Rhine-Westphalia runs an AI portal for its staff. Sensitive data is processed by an open-weight Qwen model on the town's own GPU servers, and other data goes to European or international cloud models. The head of IT says about 300 of the town's 580 employees use it regularly.

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AT A GLANCE

AI used: Generative AI portal: open-weight Qwen model on the town's own servers, plus cloud models for other data.

Implemented: 2024–2026. Grade: band D, Task support, Claimed only.

Headline result, as reported: About 300 of 580 staff use a self-run AI portal, with sensitive data kept on the town's own GPU servers, by the head of IT's account

1 · The case

The facts, as reported by the 2 sources listed at the end. Where a source is silent, the field says "Not reported".

Organisation

Stadt Nettetal. Town administration in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, with about 43,500 inhabitants and about 580 employees, by T-Systems and CIO. Canvas block: 6. Data and technology. Also 8. Governance and risk, 5. People and skills.

Business challenge

The challenge. The head of IT says the town faced staff shortages, tight budgets and rising legal requirements, and that commercial AI products often failed data protection tests and risked dependence on international suppliers. The aim, by T-Systems' account, was an AI chatbot for every workplace that respects the protection level of each kind of data.

Who implemented it

Qwen (Model or cloud provider): Open-weight model family run on the town's own GPU servers and, by T-Systems' account, in the cloud zone; the sources do not name the company behind it..
T-Systems (Software vendor): Supplies AI Foundation Services on a sovereign cloud for the yellow and red zones, by its own account..
In-house (In-house): Nettetal IT service: Built and runs the portal, the on-premise zone and the training programme..
CIO reports the town built the portal without external service providers, while T-Systems reports it supplies the cloud zones. The sources differ on scope.

Technology (SEAM pillar E)

SEAM types: T6 Open-source / locally hosted models, T4 RAG / vector search over your own data. Deployment: Mixture. Vendors and products: Qwen, Mistral, T-Systems, NetteKI portal, Qwen open-weight model (27B per CIO, 32B per T-Systems), Mistral and Qwen models on T Cloud Public, retrieval over internal documents, self-hosted workflow engine.

Where it was built in: A staff portal with three data zones: open-weight models on the town's own GPU servers for sensitive data, European cloud models for personal data, and frontier models for anonymised queries; retrieval over internal documents such as planning statements.

What changed

Before: not reported. After: about 300 of 580 staff use the portal regularly, by the head of IT's account. [1] [2]

What it cost

Not reported

What it saved

No cost or time figures reported. The head of IT says planning staff now get answers from planning statements in seconds instead of searching for hours, and that the portal handles about 60 requests a day. [1] [2]

Governance and control

By the head of IT's account, a binding AI guideline, tiered training before access and a rule matching data type to zone apply. The head of IT also said uncertainty among staff, managers and the staff council was the largest hurdle. Review of AI outputs: Not reported.

S2 · Accountable owner · Claimed
The head of IT and co-lead of eGovernment, Thorsten Rode, leads the project with a five-person team, by his account in CIO. [1]

A1 · Safe use · Claimed
A binding AI guideline and a tiered training programme are required before access; the zone model ties the data type to where it may be processed, by the head of IT's account. [1] [2]

A2 · Human in the loop · Not reported
Employees choose the zone case by case; review of outputs by a person is not reported. [2]

A3 · Monitoring and assurance · Not reported
The IT team counts about 60 requests a day; quality or safety assurance of outputs is not reported. [1]

A4 · Vendor AI · Claimed
European cloud services are used for the yellow zone and frontier models only for anonymised, non-personal queries, by the head of IT's account. [1] [2]

A5 · Agent controls · Not reported
A self-hosted workflow engine for process automation is mentioned; agent controls are not reported. [1]

A6 · Standards and regulation · Claimed
The portal is described as GDPR-compliant; in November 2025 it received a third place (CIO) or bronze (T-Systems) Digital Award at a trade fair, which is a recognition and not a compliance finding. [1] [2]

What worked, what did not, what is unproven

WORKED

– Use by about 300 of 580 staff, by the head of IT's account.

– Keeping sensitive data on the town's own servers, by the head of IT's account.

– A named use case in planning, with answers in seconds, by the head of IT.

DID NOT

– The head of IT said building the local infrastructure took more effort than expected and tied up much of a small team.

– The sources give different model names, 27B in CIO and 32B in T-Systems, so the current model is unclear.

UNPROVEN

– Whether time saved or quality improved, as no measures are published.

– Whether the portal scales to more staff and heavier use on the town's own hardware.

– How outputs are checked before use.

Timeline

2024 The town begins building the on-premise zone on its own GPU servers with open-source models including Qwen 32B [2]

Nov 2025 The portal wins a Digital Award at the Kommunale trade fair in Nuremberg [1]

Oct 2026 CIO reports about 300 of 580 staff use the portal regularly [1]

2 · Grade and SEAM assessment

MarLuc's opinion, made on the evidence above. How cases are graded: marluc.co.uk/case-studies/how-we-rate

Level of change and impact

Claimed: Not applicable. Grade: D, Task support. Proof: Claimed only. Level of change: Task support.

Task support (Level 1, band D). Staff use the tool for individual tasks; no process, team or budget

The SEAM view and lessons learnt

The notable choice is the zone model: the data type decides where it is processed, and local open-weight models handle the most sensitive material. Evidence of benefit is usage only. For a larger organisation, the transferable point is to match data classes to hosting options and train users before they get access.

1. Match each data class to a hosting zone.
2. Train users before granting access.
3. Budget for the operating effort of running models locally.

Evidence

Score 1 of 4. Self-reported: the figures come from the town's head of IT, reported by CIO and by supplier T-Systems; no independent check.

Evaluation method. Self-reported company figures: executive interview in CIO, and a supplier customer story; no outcome measures.

Sources disagree. CIO names a Qwen 3.8 27B model; T-Systems says Qwen 32B. CIO says the town built the portal without external service providers; T-Systems says it supplies the yellow and red zones. CIO reports a third place at the Digital Award, T-Systems a bronze award.

Status. Ongoing: CIO reported use in October 2026.

3 · Original sources

Read these in full. To challenge a fact or a grade, use the contact form at marluc.co.uk or the link on https://marluc.co.uk/case-studies/nettetal-municipal-ai-portal

[1] CIO Germany: Stadt Nettetal setzt auf souveräne KI in der Verwaltung (20 October 2026)
https://www.cio.de/article/4219136/stadt-nettetal-setzt-auf-souveraene-ki-in-der-verwaltung.html

[2] T-Systems: AI Foundation Services for the public administration of Nettetal
https://www.t-systems.com/de/en/success-stories/digital/ai-foundation-services-for-the-public-administration-of-nettetal

Stadt Nettetal website: https://www.nettetal.de

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