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On the one hand, digitalisation creates new business models, whilst on the other it provides the government with new enforcement mechanisms. How these business models can be efficiently taxed and what the government needs to pay attention to when using digitalisation for the purposes of enforcement – this is the focus of the research Tina Ehrke-Rabel and her colleagues at the Institute of Tax and Fiscal Law are conducting in collaboration with researchers from other disciplines. An interdisciplinary and comparative legal perspective aims to produce outcomes that are internationally relevant and applicable.

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**Another question with an eye to the future:**

# Do Bitcoins undermine the government?

## KEY FINDING

Blockchain-based cryptocurrencies are not entirely new from the perspective of tax law. The government just needs to correctly categorise them: they are not exempt from the law because they are virtual assets. What overwhelms the government is how to enforce the taxes. It can lose track of those with tax liabilities and potential responsible parties if the blockchain network recognises no hierarchies and encryption obscures the relevant actors. In addition, a government's authority ends at its borders, whereas technology effortlessly transcends the same. If the law cannot be enforced, the government's finances and its existence will be at risk.

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST CHALLENGE AT THE MOMENT?

We want to find out how efficient tax regulation can function against the backdrop of key findings if the private sphere and constitutional democracy as a whole are to be preserved and cross-border cooperation cannot be assumed.

## WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT YOUR APPROACH?

In addition to technology, we take socio-political and intellectual concepts into account in order to show, with reference to the taxes (that ensure that the government can finance its responsibilities), how changes in society also necessitate shifts in legal concepts. We provide concrete practical solutions and interpretations of legal policy and, additionally, a foundation that other fields can build on.

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOUR STUDENTS?

The realisation that curiosity and the capacity for enthusiasm are the essence of progress, that the courage to transgress one's own boundaries, to take new paths and to leave the herd behind are how we and our society move forward. And that everything can and should be questioned and critiqued in a constructive way!

## WHAT EFFECTS MIGHT YOUR RESEARCH HAVE BY 2030?

Hopefully they will be profound enough to be included in the history books. 😊 In any case, they will make a contribution to new regulatory models.

*We work for*  
**tomorrow**

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