

Procurement Office
of the Federal Ministry
of the Interior

Operating guide for the ZRE web interface

Operating guide for manually creating electronic
invoices (and test invoices) in the XRechnung standard,
for submission to Germany's federal administration

Last updated: 7 December 2022



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Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 16:00

How are electronic invoices in the XRechnung standard created and submitted using Germany's Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)?

Background / Basics

As part of its digital transformation strategy, the German government has set up a portal for submitting electronic invoices to the federal administration. It is called the **Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)** (*Zentrale Rechnungseingangsplattform des Bundes*)¹ and can be accessed at <https://xrechnung.bund.de>.

You can use the ZRE portal to create electronic invoices and send them to recipients within the federal administration. During the process, electronic invoices are automatically checked to ensure that they are formally correct and complete. Details of requirements and accepted formats for electronic invoices can be found in the ZRE terms of use, which can be accessed via the ZRE portal.

The invoices you create are forwarded within the ZRE to the customer by means of a buyer reference (*Leitweg-ID*), which the customer should have provided you with. Please ask your customer for a buyer reference if they have not yet provided you with one.

¹ The comprehensive organisational strategy behind the transmission of electronic invoices via the ZRE can be found [here](#) (in German).

You can submit electronic invoices via the ZRE using the following transmission methods:

- Web submission (<https://xrechnung.bund.de>)
- Upload (<https://xrechnung.bund.de>)
- Email (xrechnung@portal.bund.de)
- Peppol

Please note that no matter which transmission method you use, you will have to create a ZRE account.

About this guide

The purpose of this operating guide is to familiarise suppliers and service providers with the web interface of the ZRE portal, which can be accessed here: <https://xrechnung.bund.de>. The steps involved in creating and submitting an electronic invoice are explained using screenshots of the English-language version of the web interface.

To use the ZRE portal, you will need a user account. To create a user account, you must register with the portal as an invoice sender.

The data displayed in this operating guide are fictitious and are included only as examples.



Contents

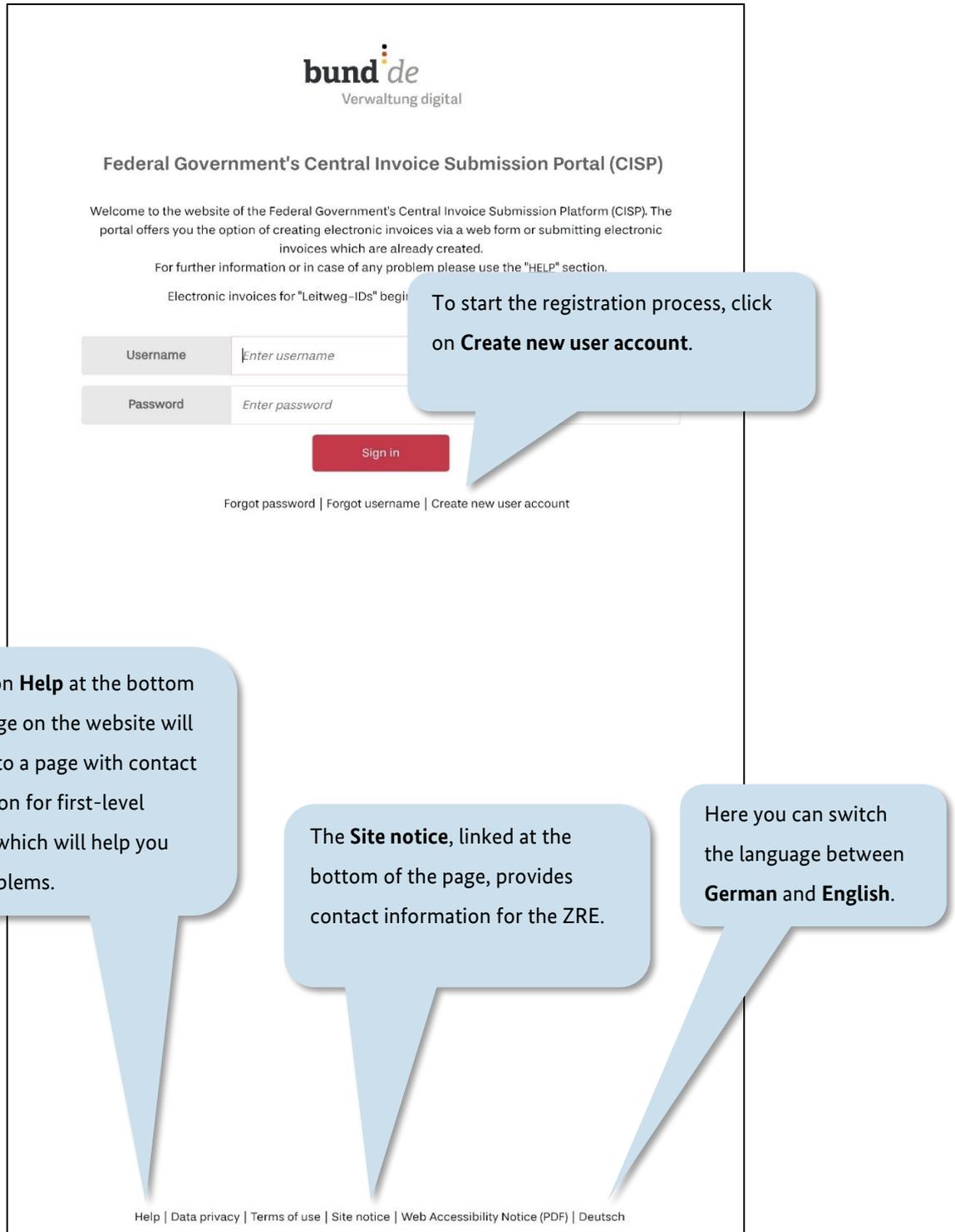
Background / Basics	3
About this guide	4
1 Creating a new ZRE user account	7
2 Signing in to your ZRE user account	13
2.1 Account overview	18
2.2 Registering your personal ZRE account	20
3 User management	24
3.1 Editing your user profile	26
3.2 Creating and registering a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account) ...	27
3.3 Inviting users to join a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)	29
3.4 Accepting an invitation to join a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)	31
3.5 Managing a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)	33
4 Creating invoices.....	36
4.1 Invoice data	39
4.2 Invoice issuer.....	45
4.3 Invoice recipient	49
4.4 Invoice lines.....	51
4.5 Document totals	53
4.6 Payment details	56
4.7 Supporting documents.....	58



4.8	Completion	60
4.9	Confirmation	65
5	Saving your invoice as a draft or template	68
6	Uploading a draft invoice or template	70
7	Uploading and submitting externally created invoices	73
8	Viewing invoice status	76
9	ZRE user profile	81
10	Submitting invoices via email	85
11	Submitting invoices via Peppol	87
12	Testing the ZRE portal.....	93

1 Creating a new ZRE user account

As an invoice sender you can access the ZRE portal at <https://xrechnung.bund.de>, which will take you straight to the **login page**. Here you can either sign in with your username and password or create a new user account. At the bottom of this page you can change the language from German to English.



The screenshot shows the login page for the Federal Government's Central Invoice Submission Portal (CISP). The page features the **bund.de** logo and the tagline "Verwaltung digital". The main heading is "Federal Government's Central Invoice Submission Portal (CISP)". Below this, there is a welcome message and instructions on how to use the portal. A registration form is visible, including fields for "Username" and "Password", and a "Sign in" button. A callout box points to the "Create new user account" link, stating: "To start the registration process, click on **Create new user account**." Another callout box points to the "Help" link at the bottom of the page, stating: "Clicking on **Help** at the bottom of any page on the website will take you to a page with contact information for first-level support, which will help you solve problems." A third callout box points to the "Site notice" link at the bottom of the page, stating: "The **Site notice**, linked at the bottom of the page, provides contact information for the ZRE." A fourth callout box points to the language switcher at the bottom of the page, stating: "Here you can switch the language between **German** and **English**." The footer of the page contains links for "Help", "Data privacy", "Terms of use", "Site notice", "Web Accessibility Notice (PDF)", and "Deutsch".

Figure 1.1 Login page

Clicking on **Create new user account** will take you to the registration page, where you can create an account.



ZRE user account - Create new user account

Please enter your user information. Required fields are marked with an asterisk (*).

Username *

First name *

Last name *

Email address *

Re-enter email address *

Telephone number

To successfully register your account, be sure to complete all required fields! These are marked with an asterisk: *

Figure 1.2 Creating a new ZRE user account (registration) (I/II)

Please create your password according to the specified requirements.

Password *

Your password must meet the following requirements:

- Must be at least 14 characters long.
- Must include at least one number '0-9'.
- Must include at least one upper case letter.
- Must include at least one lower case letter.
- Must include at least one special character from '/', '!', '#', '+', '@', '&', '?', '_,
- Must not contain any special character other than '/', '!', '#', '+', '@', '&', '?', '_,
- The first three characters must not match the first three characters of your username.
- No duplicate characters are allowed among the first three characters (e.g. XX, xx, XaX).
- The first three characters must not be a space character.
- The first character must not be '?', '!', or a space character.

Re-enter password *

Your password must meet the following requirements:

- Must be at least 14 characters long.
- Must include at least one number '0-9'.
- Must include at least one upper case letter.
- Must include at least one lower case letter.
- Must include at least one special character from '/', '!', '#', '+', '@', '&', '?', '_,
- Must not contain any special character other than '/', '!', '#', '+', '@', '&', '?', '_,
- The first three characters must not match the first three characters of your username.
- No duplicate characters are allowed among the first three characters (e.g. XX, xx, XaX).
- The first three characters must not be a space character.
- The first character must not be '?', '!', or a space character.

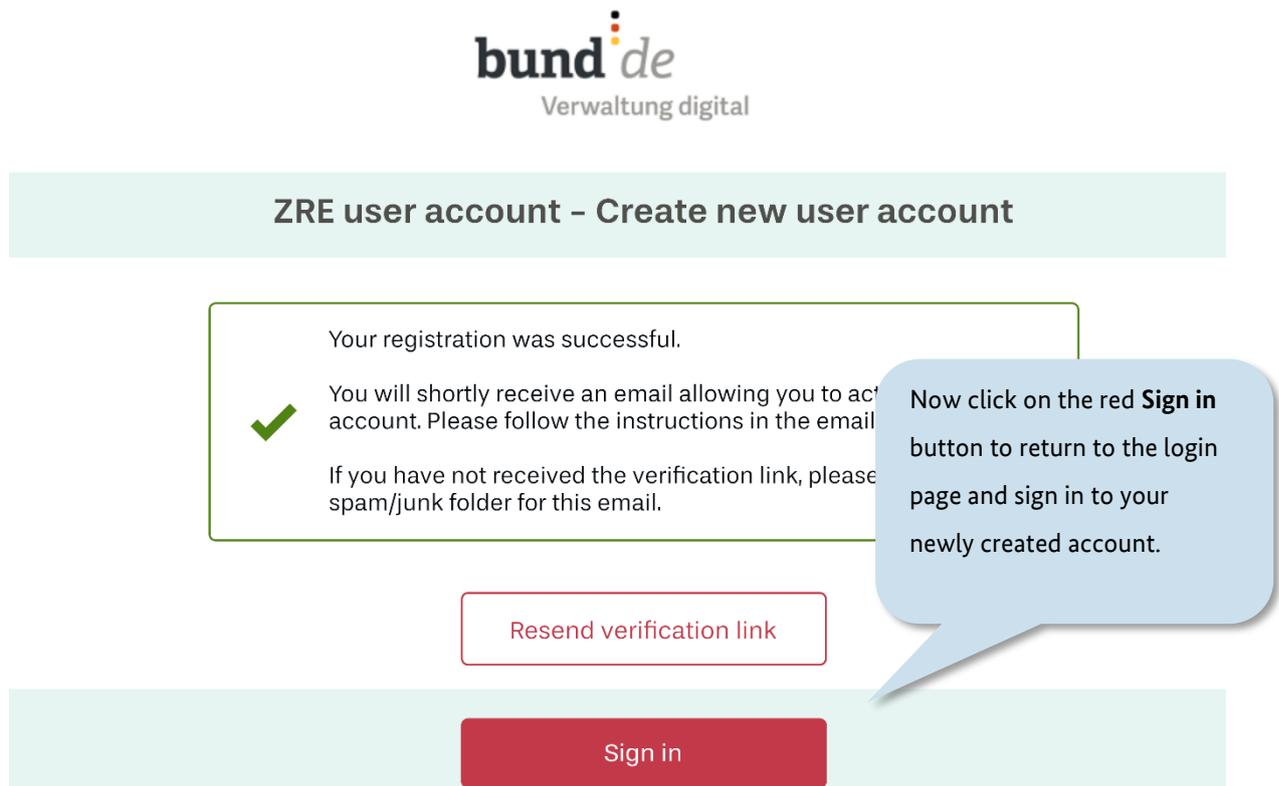
I hereby accept the terms of use and the privacy policy.

[Register now](#)

[Cancel](#)

Figure 1.3 Creating a new ZRE user account (registration) (II/II)

Having successfully registered your account, you will see the following message informing you that a link has been sent to your email address. Please click on the link to activate your user account.



bund.de
Verwaltung digital

ZRE user account - Create new user account

Your registration was successful.

✓ You will shortly receive an email allowing you to activate your account. Please follow the instructions in the email. If you have not received the verification link, please check your spam/junk folder for this email.

Now click on the red **Sign in** button to return to the login page and sign in to your newly created account.

Resend verification link

Sign in

Figure 1.4 Confirmation of successfully registered ZRE user account

Clicking on the activation link will take you to the screen shown below.

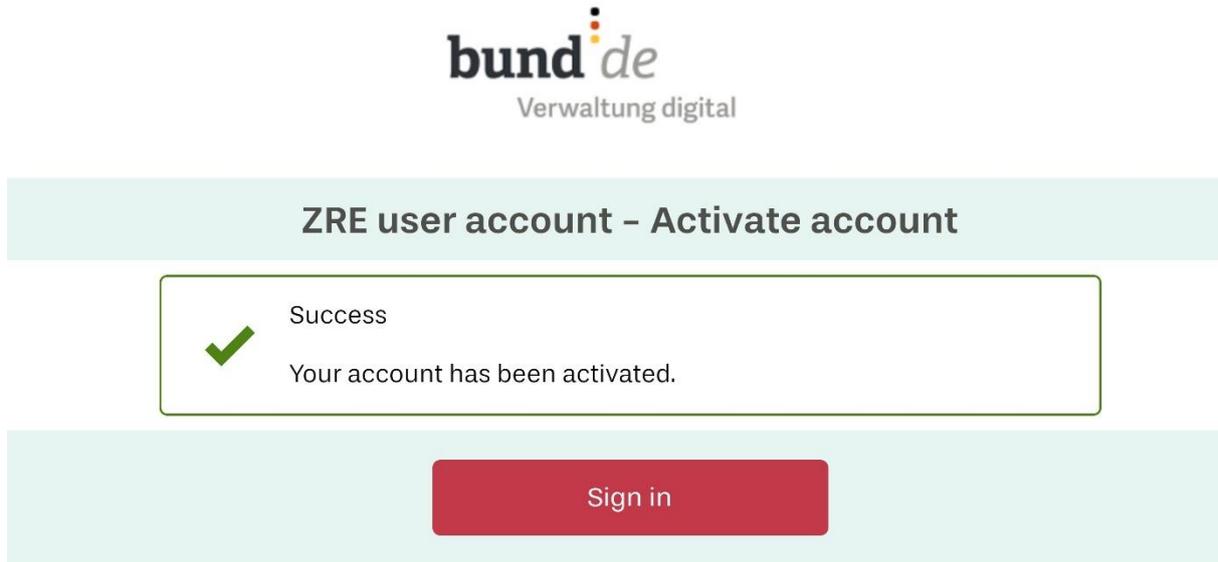


Figure 1.5 Confirmation of successfully activated ZRE user account

Your user account has been activated. You can now sign in to the ZRE portal and set up one or more invoicing accounts (i.e. company accounts or other legal entity accounts) which you will need in order to use the portal.

2 Signing in to your ZRE user account

If you are already registered as an invoice sender, you can access the ZRE portal at <https://xrechnung.bund.de> and sign in to your account.

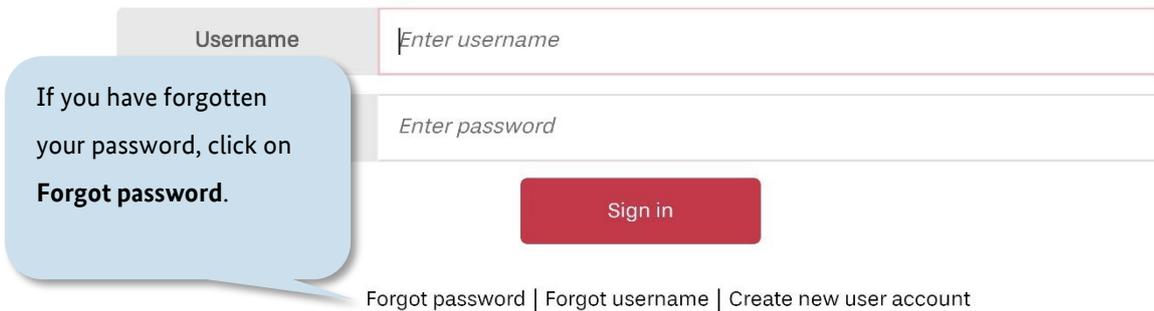


Federal Government's Central Invoice Submission Portal (CISP)

Welcome to the website of the Federal Government's Central Invoice Submission Platform (CISP). The portal offers you the option of creating electronic invoices via a web form or submitting electronic invoices which are already created.

For further information or in case of any problem please use the "HELP" section.

Electronic invoices for "Leitweg-IDs" beginning with "991-..." are accepted.



Username

Sign in

Forgot password | Forgot username | Create new user account

Figure 2.1 Login page – Forgot password

To receive an email link to reset your password, you will need to enter your username.



User account - Forgot password

Please enter your username and click "Forgot password".

An e-mail will be sent to your e-mail address.
Please follow the instructions in the e-mail.

Username

Forgot password

[Cancel](#)

Figure 2.2 Forgot password – Enter username

You will then see the message below informing you that you have been sent an email (with a link) containing further instructions.

User account – Forgot password



If a user account exists for the provided user name an e-mail with instructions on how to reset your password has been sent to the e-mail address corresponding to that user account.

Please follow the instructions in the e-mail.

Sign in

Figure 2.3 Forgot password – Link sent via email

The link in the email will take you to the screen shown below, where you can enter a new password. Please create your new password according to the specified requirements.

ZRE user account – Change password

Please enter your new password and click "Change password".

New password *

Your password must meet the following requirements:

- Must be at least 14 characters long.
- Must include at least one number '0-9'.
- Must include at least one upper case letter.
- Must include at least one lower case letter.
- Must include at least one special character from '/', '!', '!', '#', '+', '@', '&', '!', '?', '!', '!'.
-  Must not contain any special character other than '/', '!', '!', '#', '+', '@', '&', '!', '?', '!', '!'.
- The first three characters must not match the first three characters of your username.
- No duplicate characters are allowed among the first three characters (e.g. XX, xx, XaX).
- The first three characters must not be a space character.
- The first character must not be '?', '!', or a space character.

Re-enter new password *

Your password must meet the following requirements:

- Must be at least 14 characters long.
- Must include at least one number '0-9'.
- Must include at least one upper case letter.
- Must include at least one lower case letter.
- Must include at least one special character from '/', '!', '!', '#', '+', '@', '&', '!', '?', '!', '!'.
-  Must not contain any special character other than '/', '!', '!', '#', '+', '@', '&', '!', '?', '!', '!'.
- The first three characters must not match the first three characters of your username.
- No duplicate characters are allowed among the first three characters (e.g. XX, xx, XaX).
- The first three characters must not be a space character.
- The first character must not be '?', '!', or a space character.

Change password

[Cancel](#)

Figure 2.4 Forgot password – Change password

If the password in the field **New password** matches the one in the field **Re-enter new password**, you will see a message confirming that the password was changed successfully. From there you can return to the login page.



ZRE user account – Password changed



Success!

You have reset your password. You can now sign into the ZRE.

Sign in

Figure 2.5 Forgot password – Password changed successfully

2.1 Account overview

Once you have signed in, you will first need to choose an account with which to operate the ZRE. The first time you sign in to your personal account, you will see only one ZRE account with which to create and submit e-invoices. To set up an additional account (e.g. for your company or another legal entity), click on **Start user management** (see section 3).

Your choice of account does not affect the functions available in the ZRE portal. Once you have chosen the account you wish to use, you will be taken to the invoice dashboard, where you can select one of four options. For detailed information on the different options, see section 4 onwards.

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Please select the account you wish to use to submit an invoice, check the processing status of an invoice or edit your user profile.
Or select "Start user management" to manage your ZRE user account/s.

Open invoice dashboard via the relevant account

Natural person - Max Mustermann

Please select a company account

|-- Please select --

Open user management dashboard

Start user management

With your newly registered ZRE user account comes a personal ZRE account.

From the user management dashboard you can set up additional ZRE accounts (see section 3).

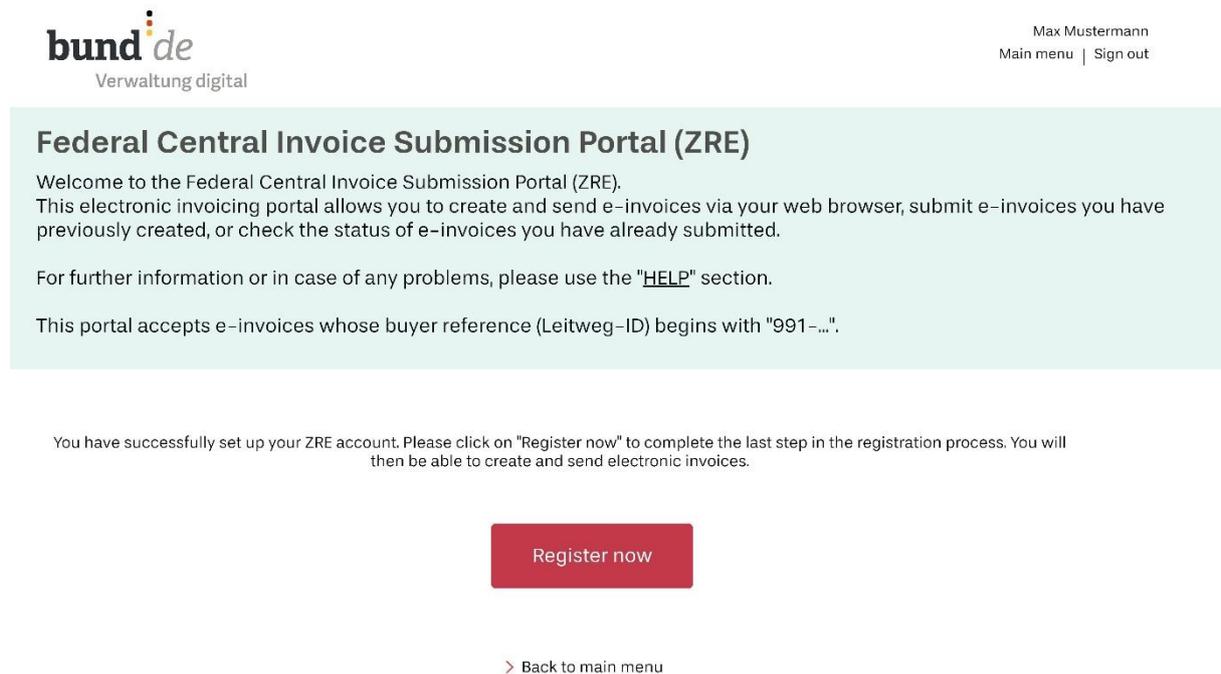
Note: Multiple individuals can submit or create invoices using the same company account. To enable individuals to use the company account, an account administrator must add the individuals' "natural person" accounts to the company account (see section 3).

Help | Privacy policy | T

Figure 2.5 Main menu

2.2 Registering your personal ZRE account

If you are using the ZRE for the first time, your personal ZRE account must be enabled to create invoices. For this, one final step is required. When you click the button “Natural person...” to access the invoice dashboard, you will first be taken to the page shown below.



The screenshot shows the user interface of the Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE). At the top left is the logo for 'bund.de' with the tagline 'Verwaltung digital'. At the top right, the user's name 'Max Mustermann' is displayed along with links for 'Main menu' and 'Sign out'. The main content area has a light green background and features the title 'Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)'. Below the title, there is a welcome message and instructions: 'Welcome to the Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE). This electronic invoicing portal allows you to create and send e-invoices via your web browser, submit e-invoices you have previously created, or check the status of e-invoices you have already submitted. For further information or in case of any problems, please use the "HELP" section. This portal accepts e-invoices whose buyer reference (Leitweg-ID) begins with "991-...".' At the bottom of this section, a message states: 'You have successfully set up your ZRE account. Please click on "Register now" to complete the last step in the registration process. You will then be able to create and send electronic invoices.' A prominent red button labeled 'Register now' is centered below this message. At the very bottom, there is a link '> Back to main menu'.

Figure 2.6 Registering a new ZRE account

At this point you are prompted to click on “Register now”, which completes the last step in the registration process. You will then be able to create and send electronic invoices. Here it is important to provide a contact email address, not a no-reply address.

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

To register, please enter your email address and accept the terms of use.

E-mail address

Please enter a valid email address.

I hereby accept the [terms of use](#) and the [privacy policy](#).

You must accept the terms of use
to complete the registration.

> Cancel

Create a ZRE account

Figure 2.7 Registering a new ZRE account – Enter email address

After you have entered your email address and accepted the terms and conditions, you will receive another **activation link** by email.

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Your registration with the Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal.



Success!
Your registration has been accepted.
You will soon receive an email containing an activation link.

[> Back to main menu](#)

Figure 2.8 Registering a new ZRE account – Activation link via email

As soon as you have clicked on the activation link in the email, the registration of your ZRE account is complete. The next time you log in, you will see the following message:

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Your registration with the Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal.



[Main menu](#)

Figure 2.9 Registering a new ZRE account – Successful activation of ZRE account

You are now ready to start creating invoices. Please note: if you wish to use email as a transmission method, you will first have to activate it before sending invoices in this way (see section 10).

If you cannot find the activation link in your email inbox, please check your spam/junk folder.

3 User management

To open the user management dashboard, click on **Start user management** in the main menu.

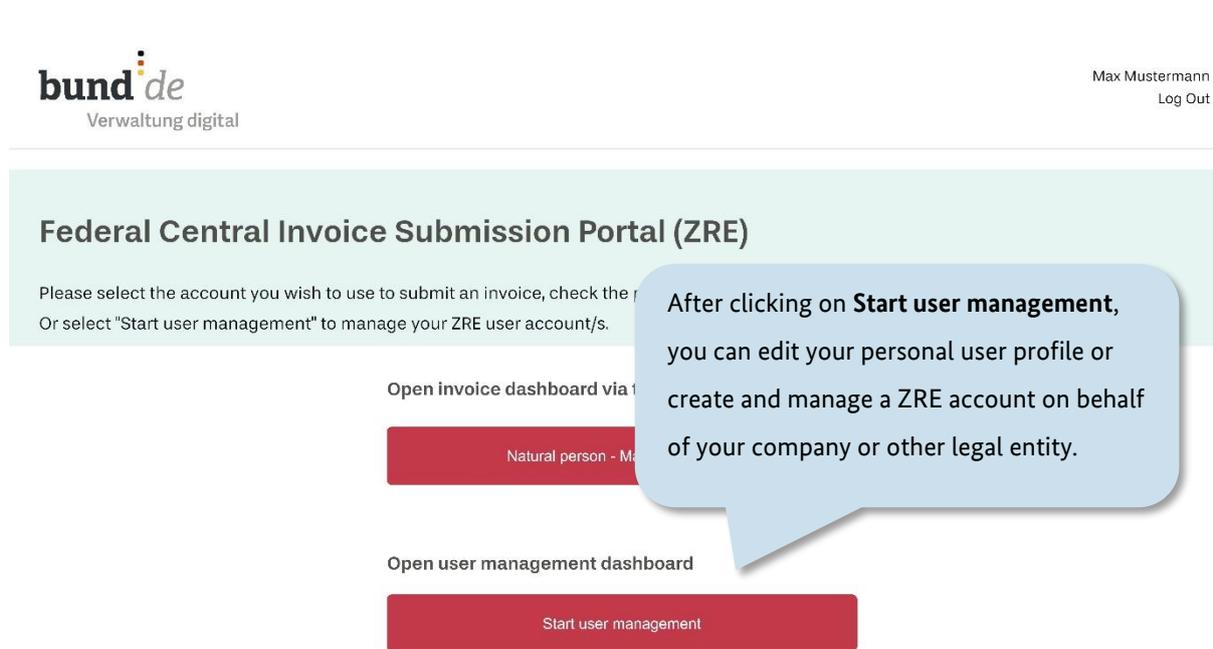
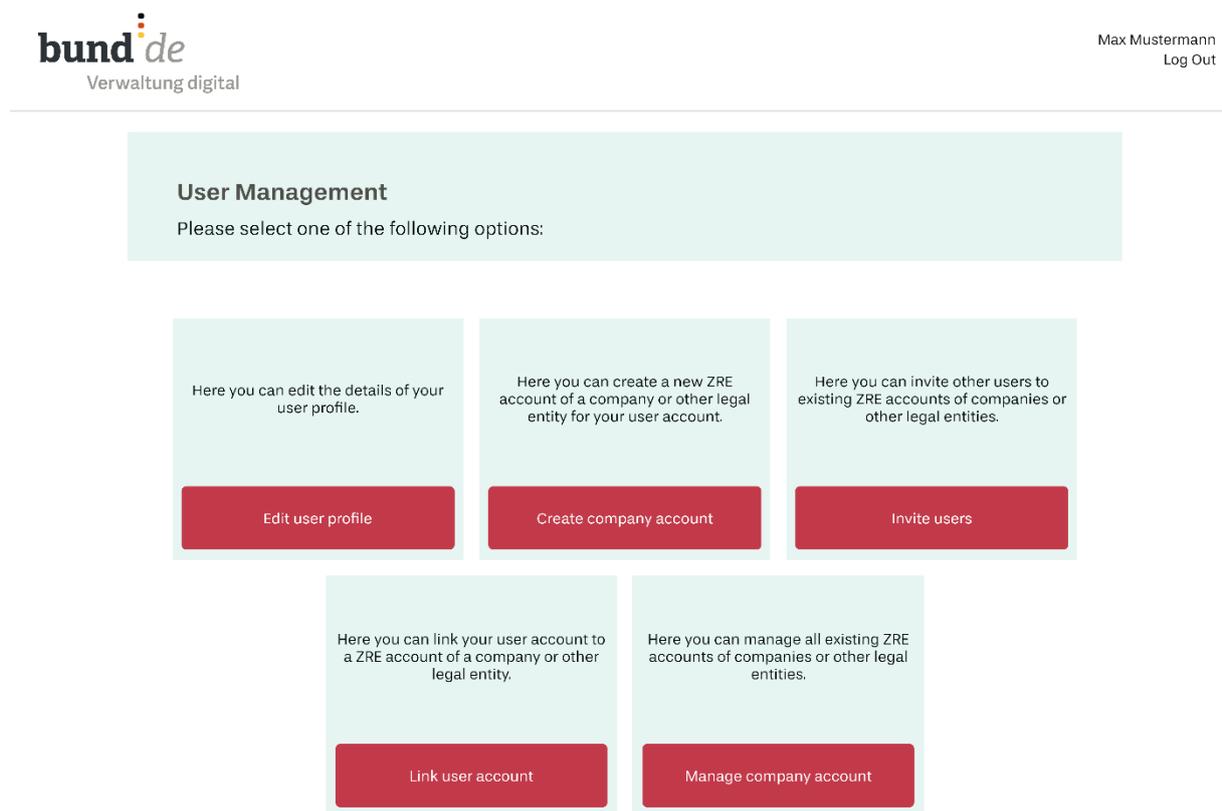


Figure 3.1 Starting user management from the main menu

The user management dashboard gives you five options to choose from. Apart from editing your own user profile, you can create and manage a company account and add users. Select one of the options.



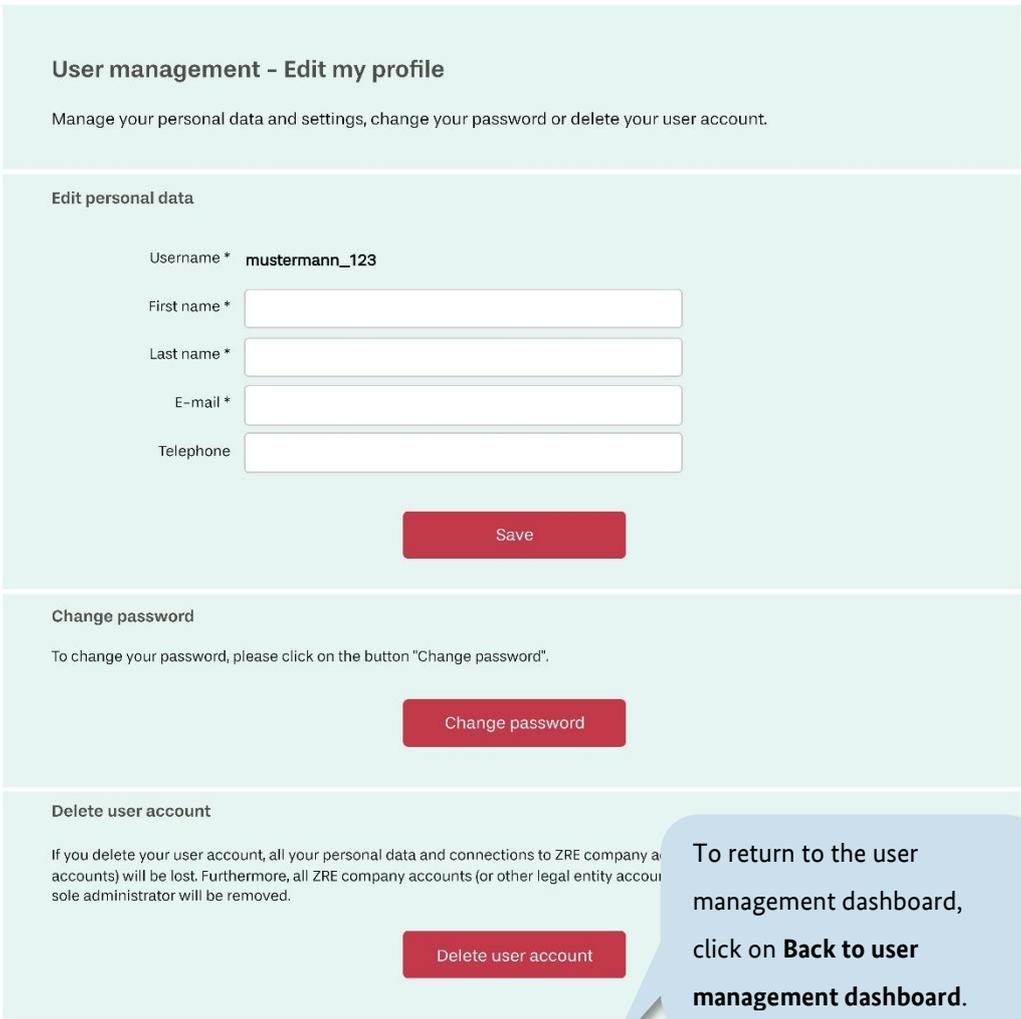
The screenshot shows the 'User Management' section of the bund.de web interface. At the top left is the bund.de logo with the tagline 'Verwaltung digital'. At the top right, the user 'Max Mustermann' is logged in, with a 'Log Out' link. The main content area is titled 'User Management' and contains the instruction 'Please select one of the following options:'. Below this are five interactive cards, each with a description and a red button:

- Edit user profile:** Here you can edit the details of your user profile.
- Create company account:** Here you can create a new ZRE account of a company or other legal entity for your user account.
- Invite users:** Here you can invite other users to existing ZRE accounts of companies or other legal entities.
- Link user account:** Here you can link your user account to a ZRE account of a company or other legal entity.
- Manage company account:** Here you can manage all existing ZRE accounts of companies or other legal entities.

Figure 3.2 User management dashboard

3.1 Editing your user profile

The first of the five options on the user management dashboard is **Edit user profile**. From the “Edit my profile” page you can manage your personal data and settings, change your password or delete your user account.



User management - Edit my profile

Manage your personal data and settings, change your password or delete your user account.

Edit personal data

Username * **mustermann_123**

First name *

Last name *

E-mail *

Telephone

Save

Change password

To change your password, please click on the button "Change password".

Change password

Delete user account

If you delete your user account, all your personal data and connections to ZRE company accounts will be lost. Furthermore, all ZRE company accounts (or other legal entity accounts) will be removed. The sole administrator will be removed.

Delete user account

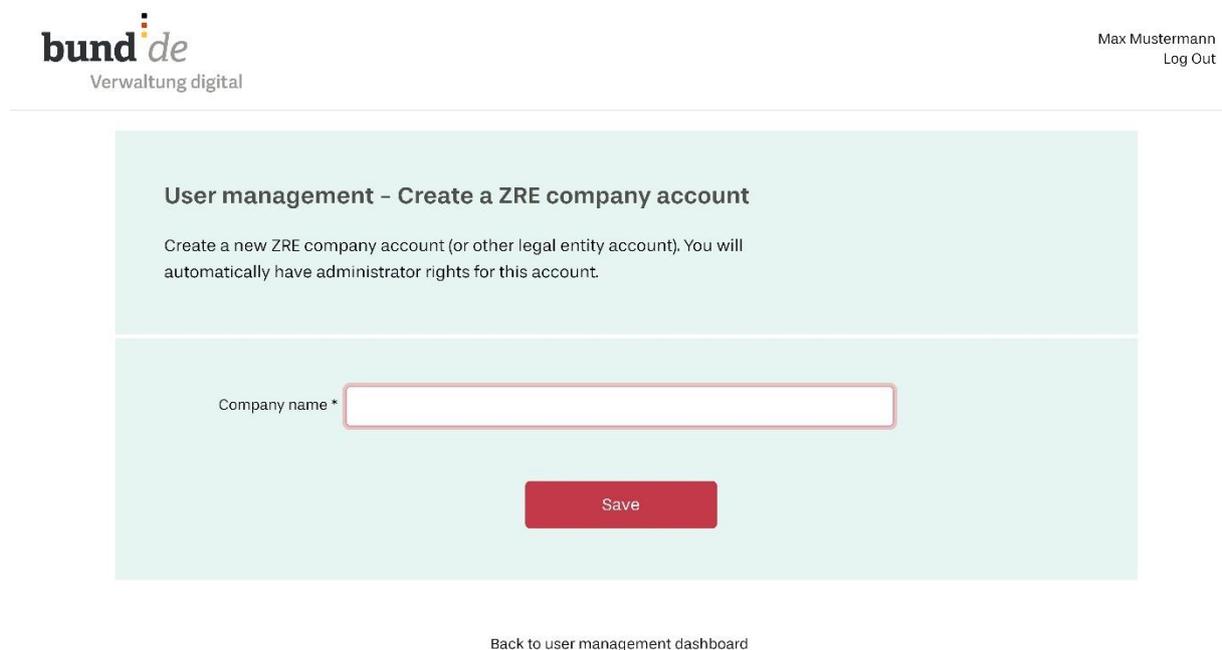
To return to the user management dashboard, click on **Back to user management dashboard**.

[Back to user management page](#)

Figure 3.3 User management – Editing your user profile

3.2 Creating and registering a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

The second option on the user management dashboard is **Create company account**. Here you can create a ZRE account for your company or other legal entity (e.g. an association). You might need to create a ZRE account for your company if other people besides yourself will be submitting invoices for that company via the ZRE and will need access to the company account for invoice information. If this is the case, enter your company name and click **Save**.



bund.de
Verwaltung digital

Max Mustermann
Log Out

User management - Create a ZRE company account

Create a new ZRE company account (or other legal entity account). You will automatically have administrator rights for this account.

Company name *

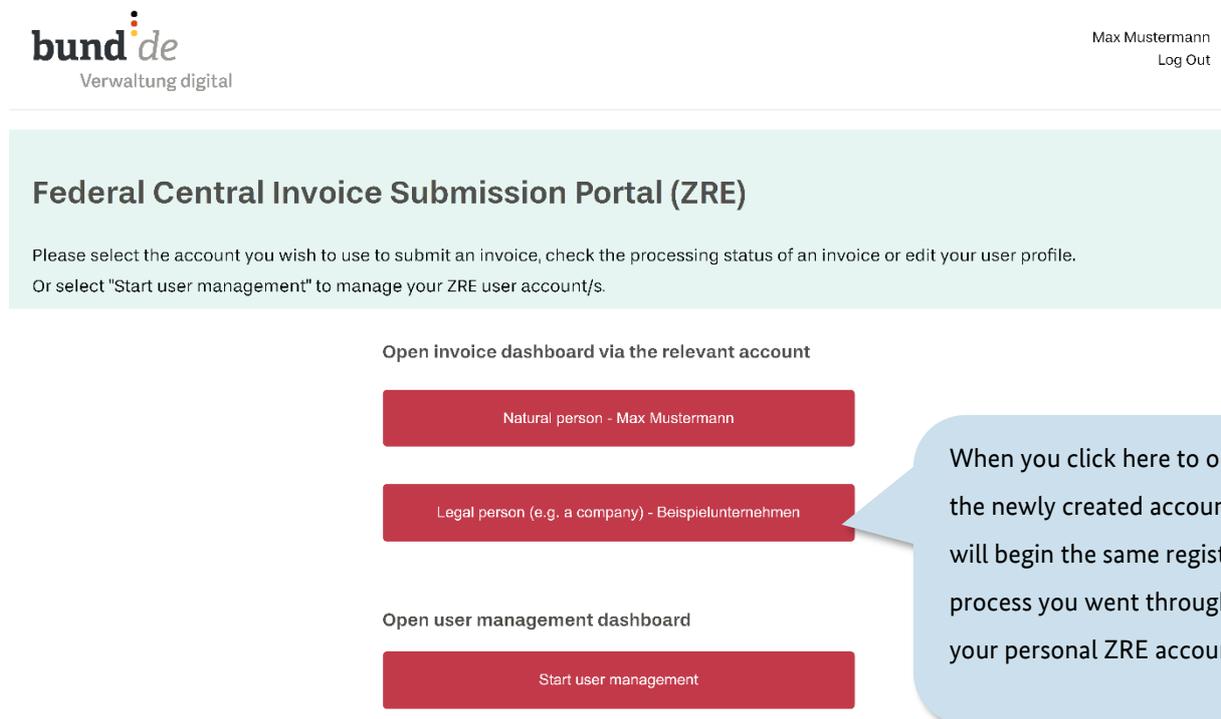
Save

[Back to user management dashboard](#)

Figure 3.4 User management – Creating a company account

A window will then appear confirming that you have successfully created a ZRE account for your company (or other legal entity). Click **OK** in this window and you will return to the main menu. There, below the button for your personal account, you will see a button for the newly created company (or other legal entity) account. If your personal account is linked

with more than two company accounts, you will see a drop-down menu from which to select the relevant account (see section 3.4). Before you can create and send electronic invoices from this account, you will need to register it. To do this, click on the button for the newly created company account – or select the relevant company account from the drop-down menu – and follow the instructions. You will already be familiar with the steps from having registered your personal ZRE account. They are described in section 2.2.



bund.de
Verwaltung digital

Max Mustermann
Log Out

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Please select the account you wish to use to submit an invoice, check the processing status of an invoice or edit your user profile.
Or select "Start user management" to manage your ZRE user account/s.

Open invoice dashboard via the relevant account

Natural person - Max Mustermann

Legal person (e.g. a company) - Beispielunternehmen

Open user management dashboard

Start user management

When you click here to open the newly created account, you will begin the same registration process you went through with your personal ZRE account.

Help | Privacy policy | Terms of use | Site notice | Web Accessibility Notice (PDF) | Deutsch

Figure 3.5 Successfully created company account

Please note that at least one person should have administrator rights for this company account so that it can be deleted if necessary. Please also bear in mind that if a user of this account leaves the company or is no longer required to work with electronic invoices, then that person should no longer have access to the account. Such users can simply be deleted from the company account.

3.3 Inviting users to join a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

The third option on the user management dashboard is **Invite users**. This allows you to add other users to your ZRE company account. We recommend adding several users to the account. That way, if one user is absent or leaves the company, there will still be other users to operate the company account.

To invite a new user, first select the name of the company account from the search field. A field will then appear in which you can enter the email address of the new user. You can add an unlimited number of users to the account. And you can specify which users will have administrator rights. We recommend granting several users administrator rights so that if one of them is absent or leaves the company there will still be other users who can manage the account.

When you click on **Invite user(s)**, an email is sent to the new user(s) enabling them to connect their personal ZRE account to the company account which they have been invited to join.

User management – Invite users to join a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

First select a company account (or other legal entity account) which you want to connect. You can then enter the email addresses of other users and invite them to join that company account. The users you are inviting to join should have administrator rights for the relevant ZRE company account.

Select a ZRE company account

Company name
Test Mustermann Company ...

Select user accounts

Email address of invited user

Invitation valid until
14.02.2023

User will have administrator rights

[Back to user management dashboard](#)

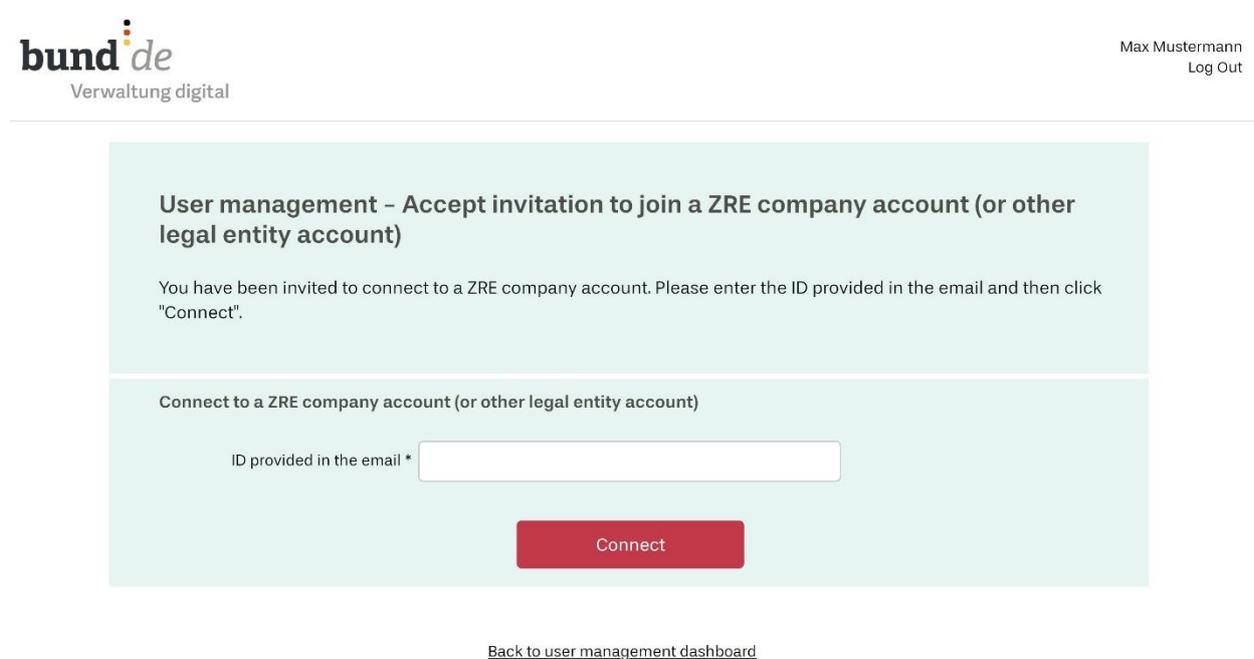
Click on the three dots to select the name of the company account. The name of the company account will also appear if you begin typing it into the search field.

If you check this box, the user will be granted administrator rights to the company account.

Figure 3.6 User management – Inviting other users to join a company account

3.4 Accepting an invitation to join a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

The fourth option on the user management dashboard is **Link user account**. The invitation email (see section 3.3) asks the user to sign in to the ZRE portal and to open the user management dashboard. Once there, the user should click the option **Link user account**, then enter the ID number from the invitation email into the field marked “ID provided in the email”. The user should then click **Connect** to link their own account with the company account in question.



The screenshot shows the user management interface. At the top left is the logo for 'bund.de' with the tagline 'Verwaltung digital'. At the top right, the user's name 'Max Mustermann' and a 'Log Out' link are visible. The main content area has a light green background and contains the following text:

User management – Accept invitation to join a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

You have been invited to connect to a ZRE company account. Please enter the ID provided in the email and then click "Connect".

Connect to a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

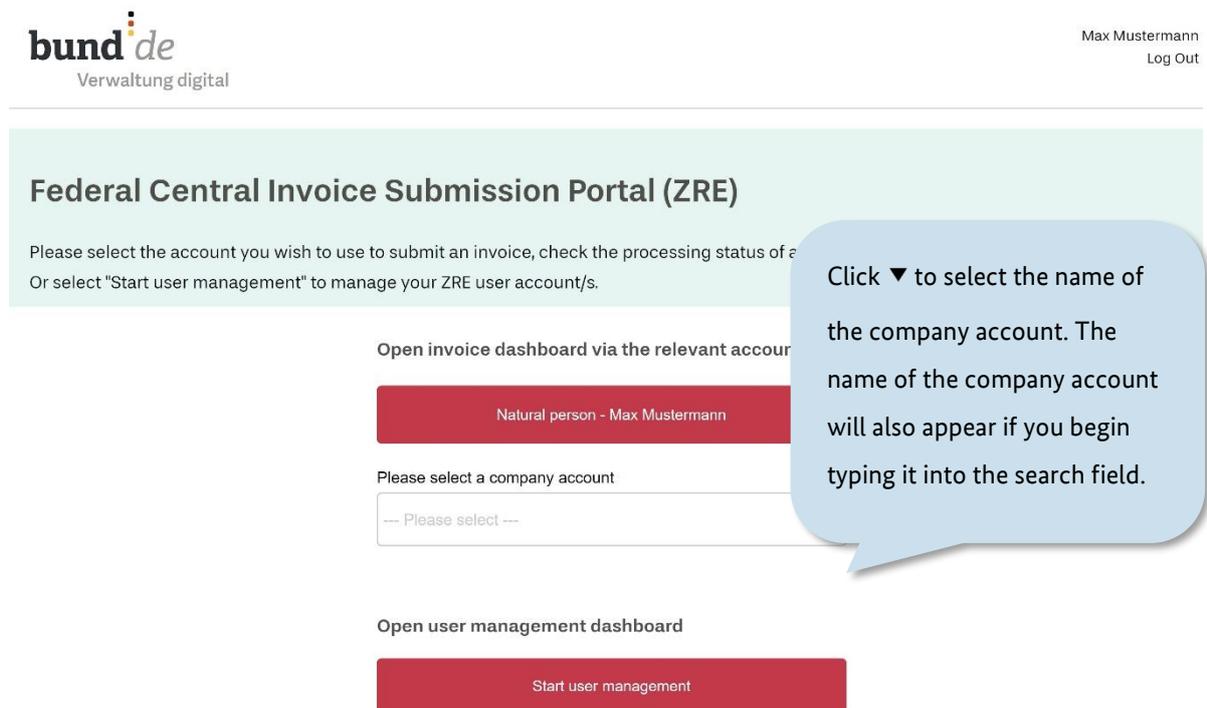
ID provided in the email *

Connect

[Back to user management dashboard](#)

Figure 3.7 User management – Entering an ID number to connect to a company account.

A message then appears telling the user that their account was successfully linked with the company account. After clicking **OK** in this window, the user will return to the main menu. Having accepted the invitation, the user can then select the relevant company account using the corresponding button (or the drop-down menu) located below the button for their personal account. If the user is now linked with more than two company accounts, the buttons for those accounts are replaced by a drop-down menu, from which the relevant company account must be selected. This menu lists all the company accounts (or other legal entity accounts) with which the user's account is linked. To select the relevant account, the user must first open the menu by clicking on the ▼ symbol.



bund.de
Verwaltung digital

Max Mustermann
Log Out

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Please select the account you wish to use to submit an invoice, check the processing status of e...
Or select "Start user management" to manage your ZRE user account/s.

Open invoice dashboard via the relevant account

Natural person - Max Mustermann

Please select a company account

--- Please select ---

Open user management dashboard

Start user management

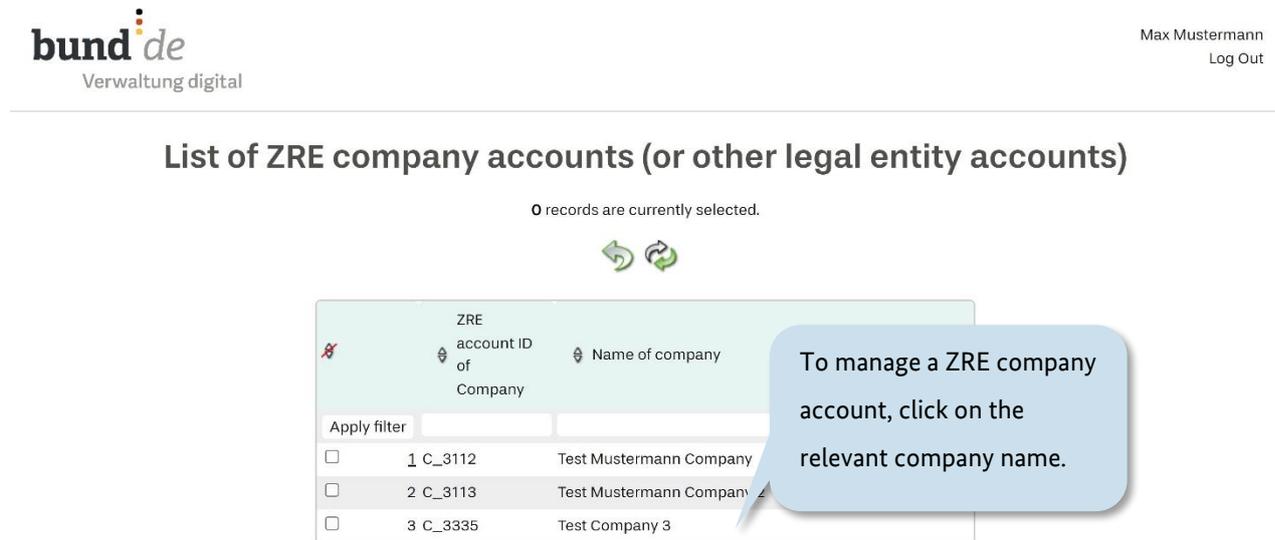
Click ▼ to select the name of the company account. The name of the company account will also appear if you begin typing it into the search field.

Figure 3.8 Selecting a company account

The user then clicks on the selected company account. This opens the invoice dashboard for that account (see section 4).

3.5 Managing a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

The fifth option on the user management dashboard is **Manage company account**. When you click on this option, the following page will open:



bund.de
Verwaltung digital

Max Mustermann
Log Out

List of ZRE company accounts (or other legal entity accounts)

0 records are currently selected.

	ZRE account ID of Company	Name of company
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 C_3112	Test Mustermann Company
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 C_3113	Test Mustermann Company
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 C_3335	Test Company 3

To manage a ZRE company account, click on the relevant company name.

Figure 3.9 User management – Managing a company account

When you click on the relevant company name, the following page will open:

User management - Manage data of a company account (or other legal entity account)

Manage the data of your company account (or other legal entity account), remove connections to user accounts, or delete your ZRE account.

Manage company data

Company name *

Save

Connected user accounts

The following users are connected to your company account (or other legal entity account):

Max Mustermann (Administrator)

Delete a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

account (or other legal entity account), all data from that account will be lost, as well as all connected user accounts.

Delete a ZRE company account (or other legal entity account)

[List of ZRE company accounts \(or other legal entity accounts\)](#)

Figure 3.10 User management – Editing a company account

On this page you can change the company name. If you want to delete the ZRE company account (or other legal entity account), you can do so by clicking the corresponding button. In order to delete it successfully, you need to have first deleted the relevant company account (or other legal entity account) in the user profile of that account. How to delete a ZRE account is explained in section 9.

To return to the user management dashboard, first click on the link that reads “List of ZRE company accounts (or other legal entity accounts)”; and on the next page, click the  symbol.

List of ZRE company accounts (or other legal entity accounts)

0 records are currently selected.

Click the “Back” button to return to the user management dashboard.

Account ID	Name of company
1	Test Mustermann Company
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 C_3113 Test Mustermann Company 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 C_3335 Test Company 3

Figure 3.11 User management – List of ZRE company accounts

4 Creating invoices

Create invoice is one of the options presented by the invoice dashboard of the ZRE portal. The invoice dashboard is the first page that opens when you select a user account from the main menu. It provides four options for creating or submitting invoices.

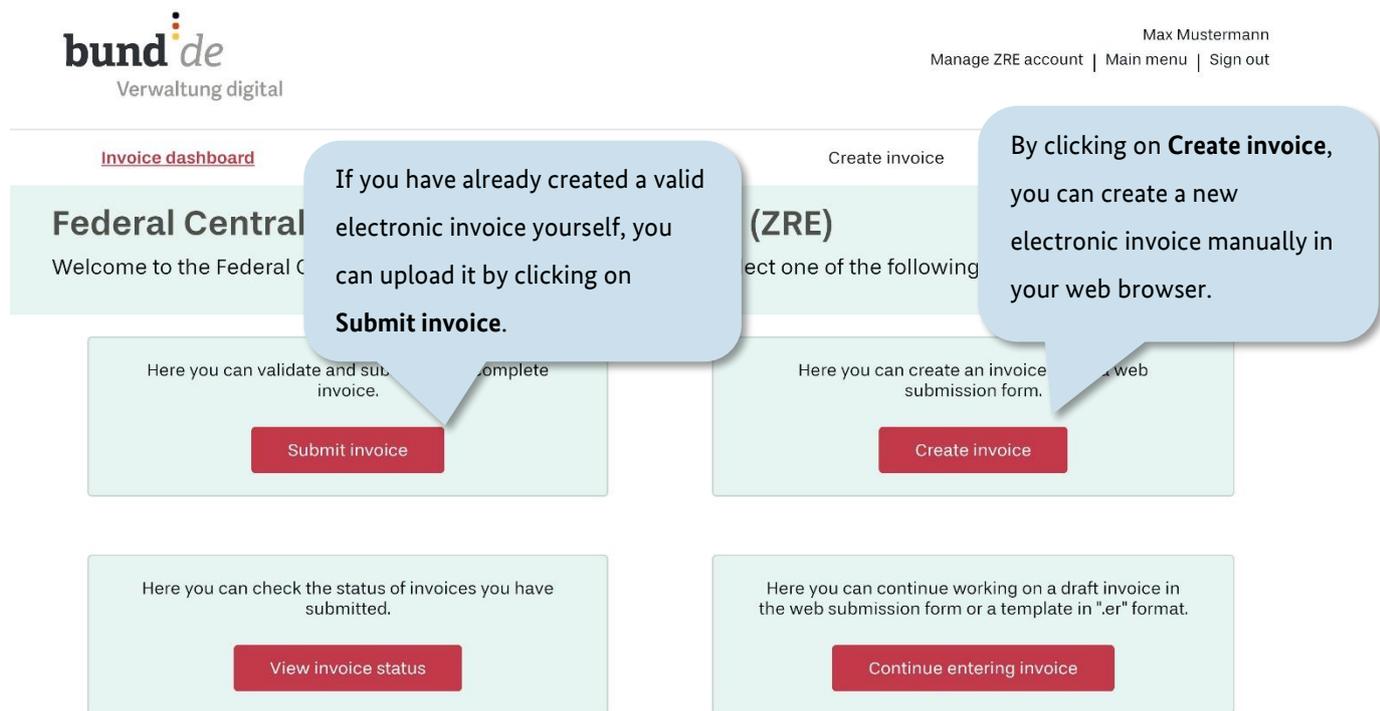


Figure 4.1 Invoice dashboard of the ZRE portal

[Invoice dashboard](#) View invoice status Submit invoice Create invoice Continue entering invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Welcome to the Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal. Please select one of the following options:

Click on **View invoice status** for information on the status of electronic invoices you have already submitted.

Here you can check the status of invoices you have submitted.

View invoice status

Click on **Continue entering invoice** to resume work on any unfinished invoices.

Here you can continue working on a draft invoice in the web submission form or a template in ".er" format.

Continue entering invoice

Figure 4.2 Invoice dashboard of the ZRE portal

Clicking on **Create invoice** takes you to the first step in the invoice creation process. At the top of the page is a navigation bar showing all nine steps involved in the process (see figure 4.3). You can save the invoice at any time during the process and upload it again later to continue working on it (see section 5).

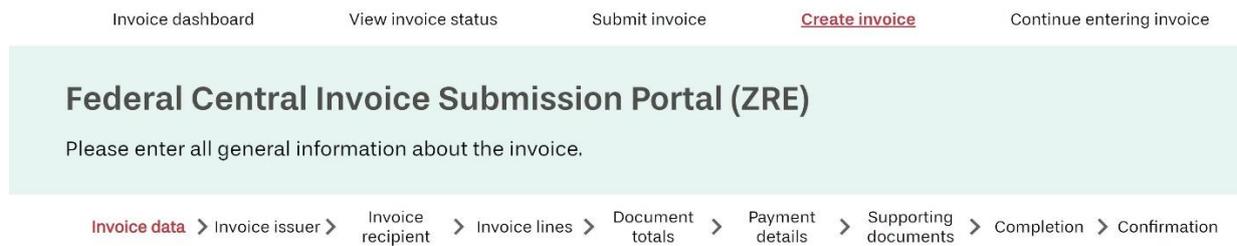


Figure 4.3 Creating invoices – The nine steps of the invoice creation process

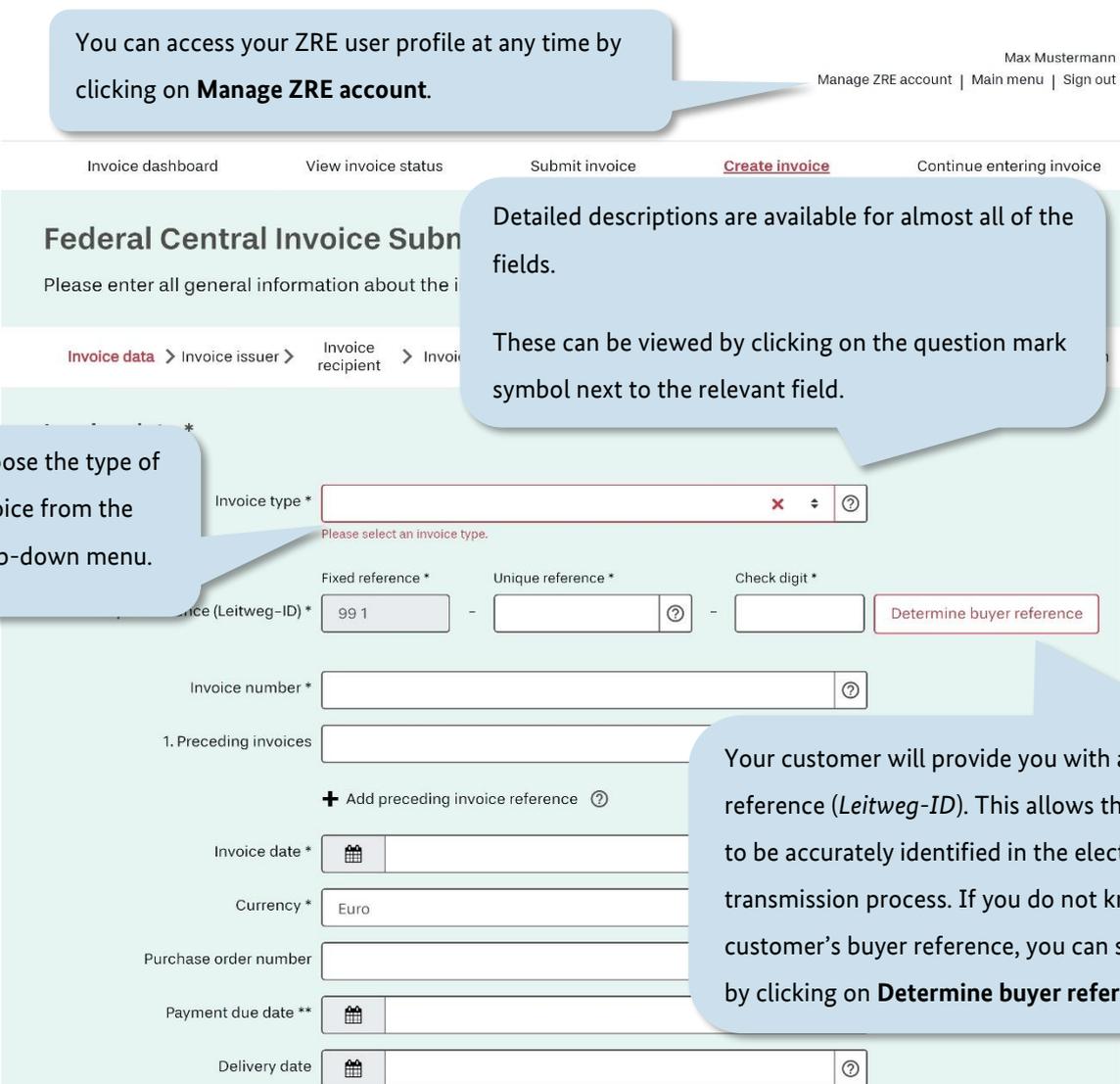
General note on the invoice creation process

The following sections explain the nine steps of the invoice creation process. In each step, items marked with an asterisk (*) are required and must be filled in to complete the invoice.

4.1 Invoice data

On the first page, titled **Invoice data**, you can enter key data for your invoice.

(For better readability, the “Invoice data” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I” and “II” in the figure captions. There is also a third screenshot showing a pop-up window.)



The screenshot shows the 'Create invoice' page in the ZRE web interface. The page title is 'Federal Central Invoice Submission' and the subtitle is 'Please enter all general information about the invoice'. The breadcrumb navigation is 'Invoice data > Invoice issuer > Invoice recipient > Invoice data'. The main navigation bar includes 'Invoice dashboard', 'View invoice status', 'Submit invoice', 'Create invoice' (highlighted), and 'Continue entering invoice'. The user's name 'Max Mustermann' and links for 'Manage ZRE account', 'Main menu', and 'Sign out' are visible in the top right corner.

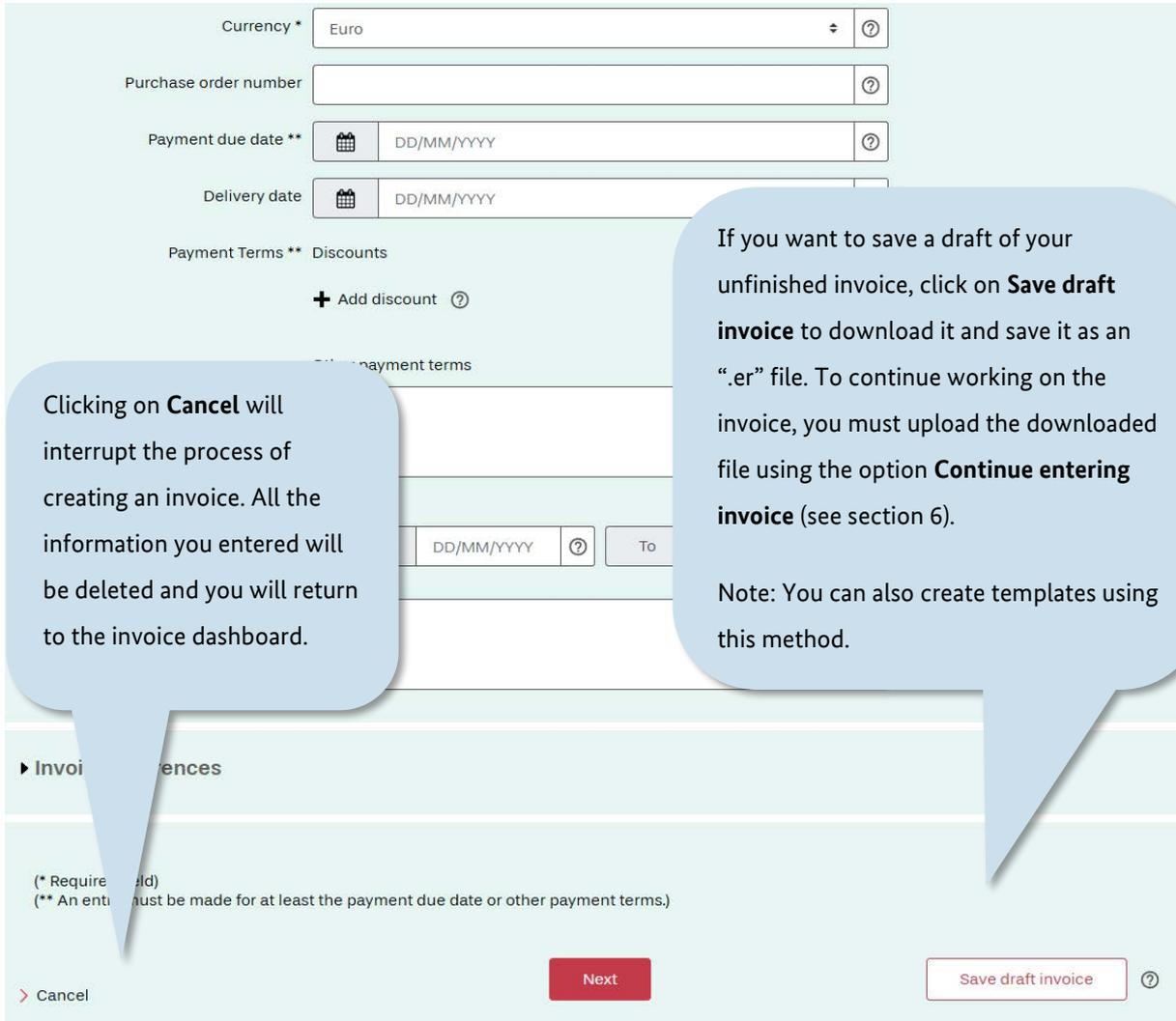
Callouts provide the following information:

- Top left callout:** You can access your ZRE user profile at any time by clicking on **Manage ZRE account**.
- Top right callout:** Detailed descriptions are available for almost all of the fields. These can be viewed by clicking on the question mark symbol next to the relevant field.
- Left callout:** Choose the type of invoice from the drop-down menu.
- Bottom right callout:** Your customer will provide you with a buyer reference (*Leitweg-ID*). This allows the recipient to be accurately identified in the electronic transmission process. If you do not know your customer's buyer reference, you can search for it by clicking on **Determine buyer reference**.

The form fields include:

- Invoice type * (drop-down menu)
- Fixed reference * (Leitweg-ID) * (input field with value '99 1')
- Unique reference * (input field with question mark icon)
- Check digit * (input field)
- Determine buyer reference (button)
- Invoice number * (input field with question mark icon)
- 1. Preceding invoices (input field)
- + Add preceding invoice reference (button with question mark icon)
- Invoice date * (calendar icon)
- Currency * (input field with value 'Euro')
- Purchase order number (input field)
- Payment due date ** (calendar icon)
- Delivery date (calendar icon)

Figure 4.4 Creating invoices – The “Invoice data” page (I/II)



Currency * Euro

Purchase order number

Payment due date ** DD/MM/YYYY

Delivery date DD/MM/YYYY

Payment Terms ** Discounts

+ Add discount ?

DD/MM/YYYY ? To

► Invoices

(* Required field)
(** An entry must be made for at least the payment due date or other payment terms.)

> Cancel Next Save draft invoice ?

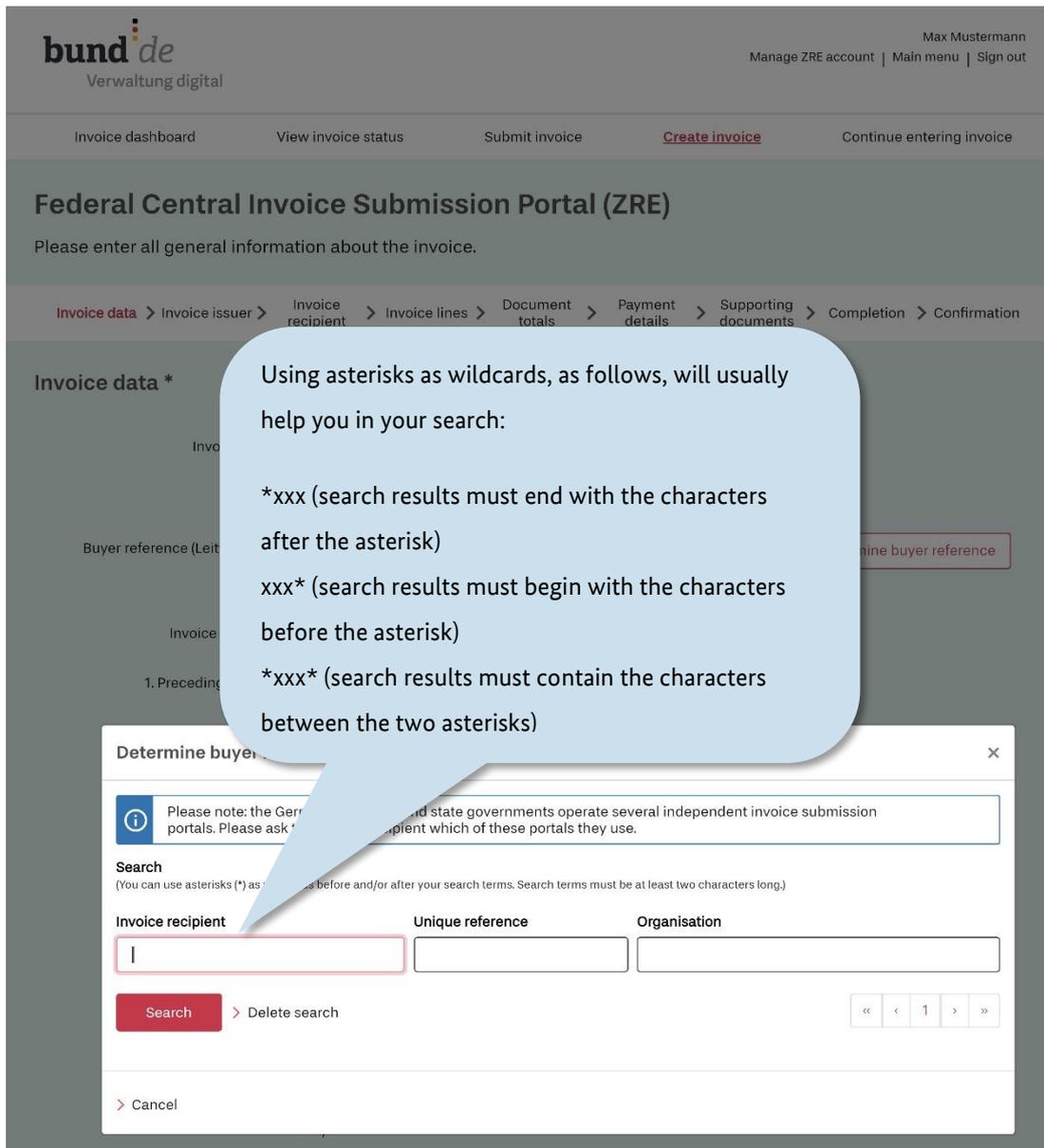
Clicking on **Cancel** will interrupt the process of creating an invoice. All the information you entered will be deleted and you will return to the invoice dashboard.

If you want to save a draft of your unfinished invoice, click on **Save draft invoice** to download it and save it as an ".er" file. To continue working on the invoice, you must upload the downloaded file using the option **Continue entering invoice** (see section 6).

Note: You can also create templates using this method.

Figure 4.5 Creating invoices – The “Invoice data” page (II/II)

If you do not know your customer's buyer reference (*Leitweg-ID*), you can search for it by clicking on **Determine buyer reference** (see figure 4.4). A pop-up window will open allowing you to search by "Invoice recipient", "Unique reference" or "Organisation". Alternatively, ask your customer directly about which buyer reference to use.



The screenshot shows the 'bund.de' portal for the 'Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)'. The 'Invoice data' section is active, and a 'Determine buyer reference' pop-up window is open. A callout box provides search tips:

- Using asterisks as wildcards, as follows, will usually help you in your search:
- *xxx (search results must end with the characters after the asterisk)
- xxx* (search results must begin with the characters before the asterisk)
- *xxx* (search results must contain the characters between the two asterisks)

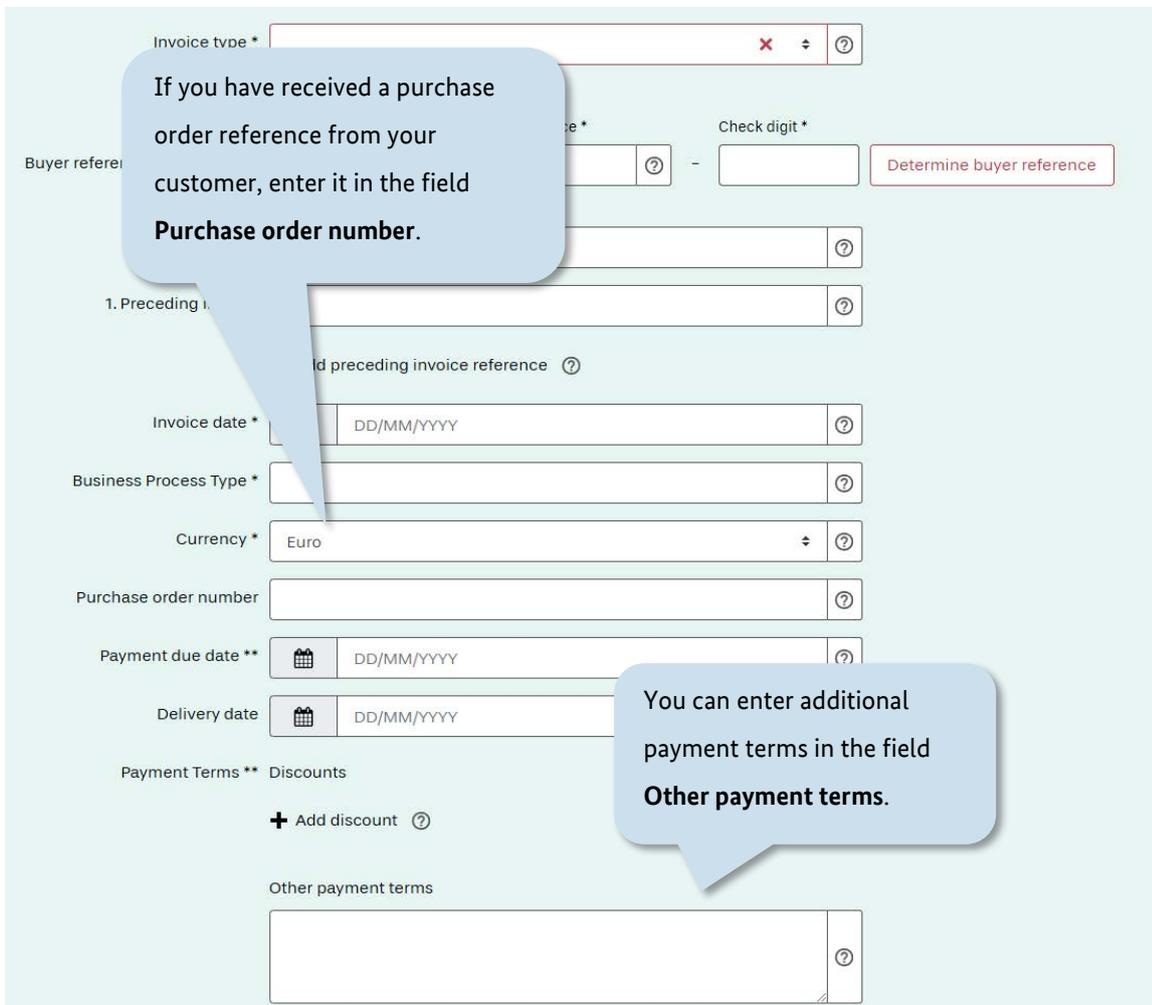
The pop-up window includes a search bar with the text 'Invoice recipient' and a 'Search' button. The background page shows a breadcrumb trail: Invoice data > Invoice issuer > Invoice recipient > Invoice lines > Document totals > Payment details > Supporting documents > Completion > Confirmation.

Figure 4.6 Creating invoices – Finding the buyer reference via the "Invoice data" page

Because you can only send invoices via the ZRE to recipients whose buyer reference begins with “991”, that fixed reference number is already entered on the form.

After you have entered the recipient’s buyer reference, you can continue entering invoice data and/or proceed with the next steps in the invoice creation process.

(Once again, the “Invoice data” page is shown using multiple screenshots. Again, these are labelled “I” and “II” in the figure captions.)



Invoice type *

Buyer reference * - Check digit * Determine buyer reference

1. Preceding invoice reference *

Invoice date * DD/MM/YYYY

Business Process Type *

Currency * Euro

Purchase order number

Payment due date ** DD/MM/YYYY

Delivery date DD/MM/YYYY

Payment Terms ** Discounts

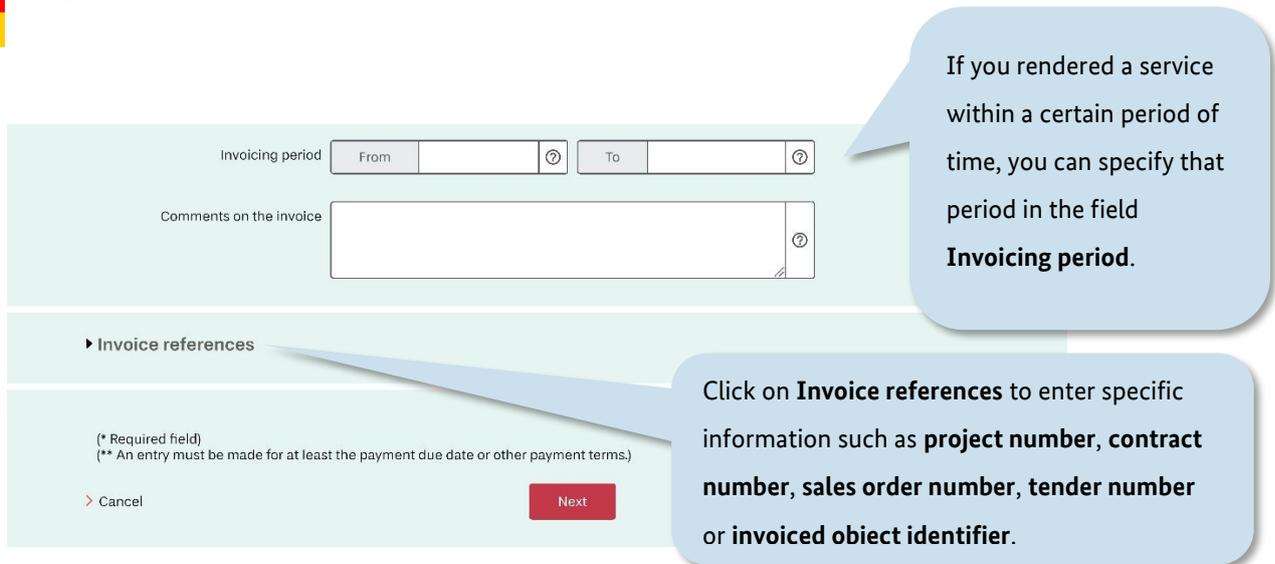
+ Add discount

Other payment terms

If you have received a purchase order reference from your customer, enter it in the field **Purchase order number.**

You can enter additional payment terms in the field **Other payment terms.**

Figure 4.7 Creating invoices – The “Invoice data” page (I/II)



Invoicing period From To

Comments on the invoice

► Invoice references

(* Required field)
(** An entry must be made for at least the payment due date or other payment terms.)

> Cancel

If you rendered a service within a certain period of time, you can specify that period in the field **Invoicing period**.

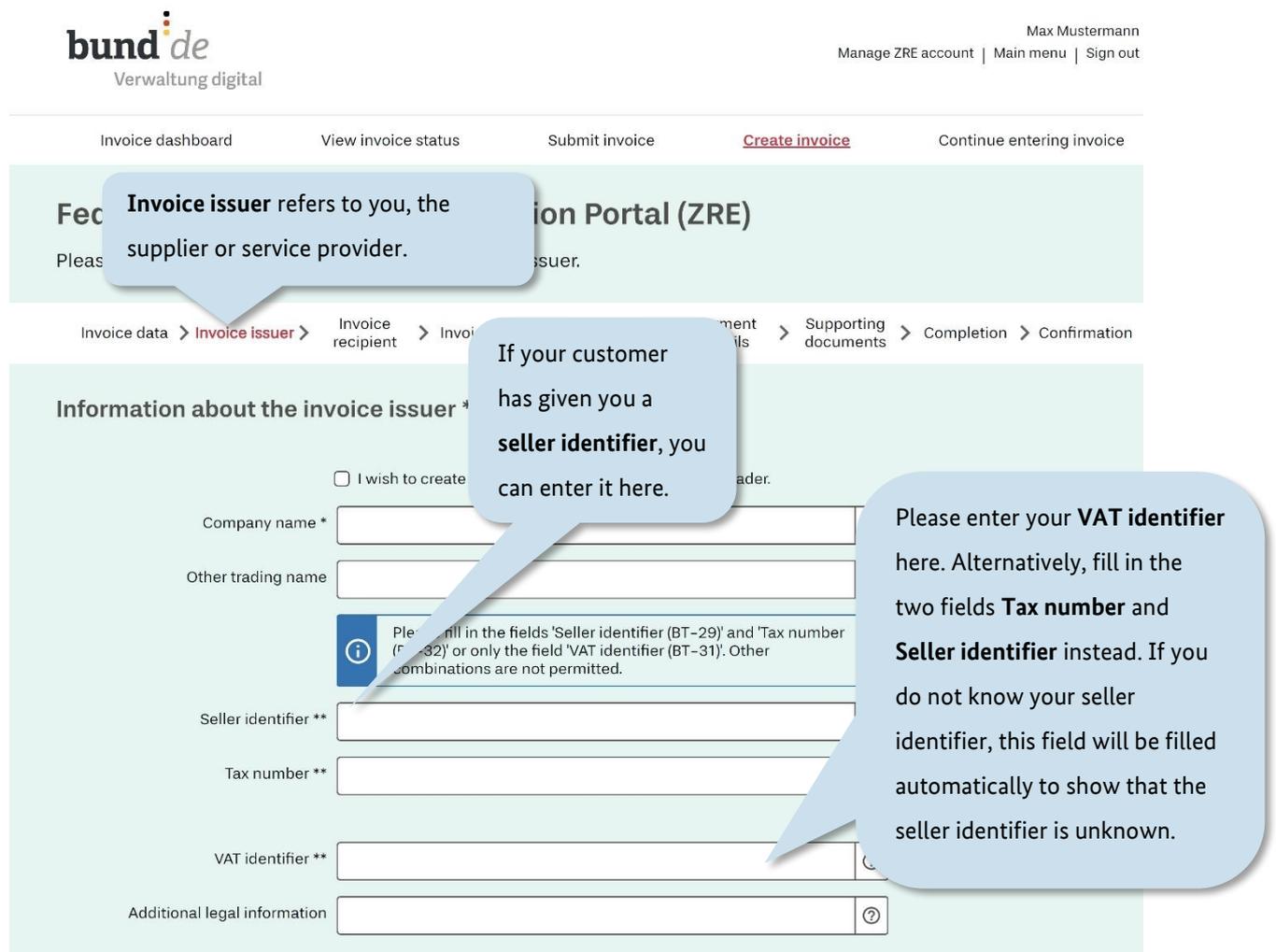
Click on **Invoice references** to enter specific information such as **project number, contract number, sales order number, tender number** or **invoiced object identifier**.

Figure 4.8 Creating invoices – The “Invoice data” page (II/II)

4.2 Invoice issuer

On the second page, titled **Invoice issuer**, you can enter your information, postal address and contact details.

(The “Invoice issuer” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I”, “II” and “III” in the figure captions. There is also a fourth screenshot showing a pop-up window.)



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Max Mustermann
 Manage ZRE account | Main menu | Sign out

Invoice dashboard | View invoice status | Submit invoice | **Create invoice** | Continue entering invoice

Information about the invoice issuer

I wish to create...

Company name *

Other trading name

Seller identifier **

Tax number **

VAT identifier **

Additional legal information

Invoice issuer refers to you, the supplier or service provider.

If your customer has given you a seller identifier, you can enter it here.

Please enter your VAT identifier here. Alternatively, fill in the two fields Tax number and Seller identifier instead. If you do not know your seller identifier, this field will be filled automatically to show that the seller identifier is unknown.

Please fill in the fields 'Seller identifier (BT-29)' and 'Tax number (BT-32)' or only the field 'VAT identifier (BT-31)'. Other combinations are not permitted.

Figure 4.9 Creating invoices – The “Invoice issuer” page (I/III)

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Please provide all required details about the invoice issuer.

Invoice data > **Invoice issuer** > Invoice recipient > Invoice issuer > Document > Payment > Supporting documents > Completion > Confirmation

Information about the invoice issuer *

I wish to create this invoice

Company name * ?

Other trading name ?

i Please fill in the fields 'Seller identifier (BT-29)' and 'Tax number (BT-32)' or only the field 'VAT identifier (BT-31)'. Other combinations are not permitted.

Seller identifier **

Tax number **

VAT identifier **

Additional legal information

If your trading name is different from your company name, you can enter the trading name here.

In the field **Additional legal information**, you can enter information such as the names of board members.

Figure 4.10 Creating invoices – The “Invoice issuer” page (II/III)

Invoice issuer's postal address *

Street name / house number ?

Post-office box number ?

Post code / town or city * ? ?

Province/state ?

Country * ?

Invoice issuer's contact details *

Name * ?

Email * ?

Telephone * ?

Payee (if different from invoice issuer)

Invoice issuer's tax representative

(* Required field)
(** If you enter a value in the field 'VAT number (BT-32)' or only the field 'VAT identifier (BT-31)', other combinations are not possible.)

> Call ?

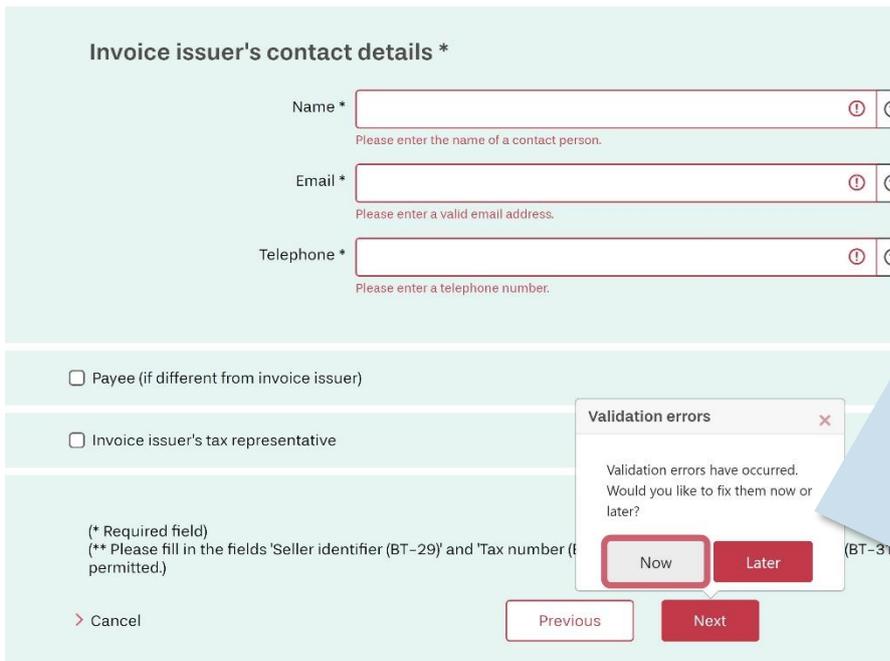
If the payee is different from the invoice issuer, click this checkbox to enter the payee information.

Click Next to proceed to the next page.

Click Previous to return to the previous page.

Figure 4.11 Creating invoices – The “Invoice issuer” page (III/III)

If a validation error is detected while you are creating an invoice (e.g. if a required field has not been filled in), you will be notified of this as soon as you attempt to leave the current step in the invoice creation process (see figure 4.12).



The screenshot shows a form titled "Invoice issuer's contact details *". It contains three input fields: "Name *", "Email *", and "Telephone *". Each field has a red border and a red error icon (a circle with an exclamation mark) to its right. Below each field is a red error message: "Please enter the name of a contact person.", "Please enter a valid email address.", and "Please enter a telephone number." respectively. Below the form are two checkboxes: "Payee (if different from invoice issuer)" and "Invoice issuer's tax representative". At the bottom left, there is a "Cancel" button with a right-pointing arrow. At the bottom center, there are "Previous" and "Next" buttons. A "Validation errors" dialog box is overlaid on the form, containing the text: "Validation errors have occurred. Would you like to fix them now or later?". The dialog box has two buttons: "Now" (highlighted with a red border) and "Later" (highlighted in red).

This notification appears if you have forgotten to fill in a required field, or if some information you have entered does not conform to requirements.

If you want to make the correction at a later time, click **Later** to continue the process without correcting the error for now.

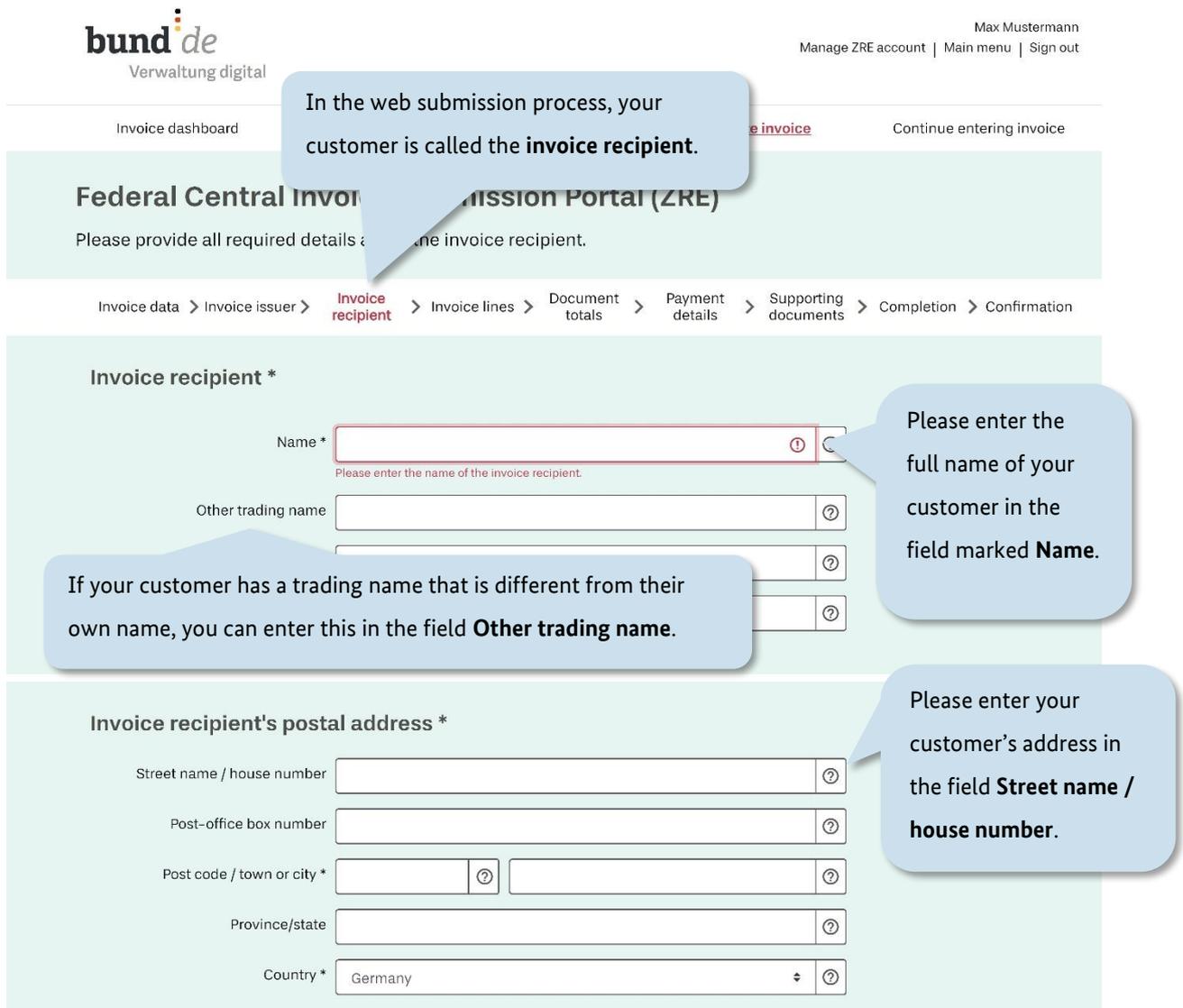
You will be reminded to correct these errors at the end of the invoice creation process.

Figure 4.12 Creating invoices – Example of a validation error on the “Invoice issuer” page

4.3 Invoice recipient

On the third page, titled **Invoice recipient**, you can enter details about your customer.

(For better readability, the “Invoice recipient” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I” and “II” in the figure captions.)



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Max Mustermann
 Manage ZRE account | Main menu | Sign out

Invoice dashboard [Create invoice](#) Continue entering invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)
 Please provide all required details about the invoice recipient.

Invoice data > Invoice issuer > **Invoice recipient** > Invoice lines > Document totals > Payment details > Supporting documents > Completion > Confirmation

Invoice recipient *

Name * ⓘ
Please enter the name of the invoice recipient.

Other trading name ?
 ?
 ?

Invoice recipient's postal address *

Street name / house number ?

Post-office box number ?

Post code / town or city * ? ?

Province/state ?

Country * ?

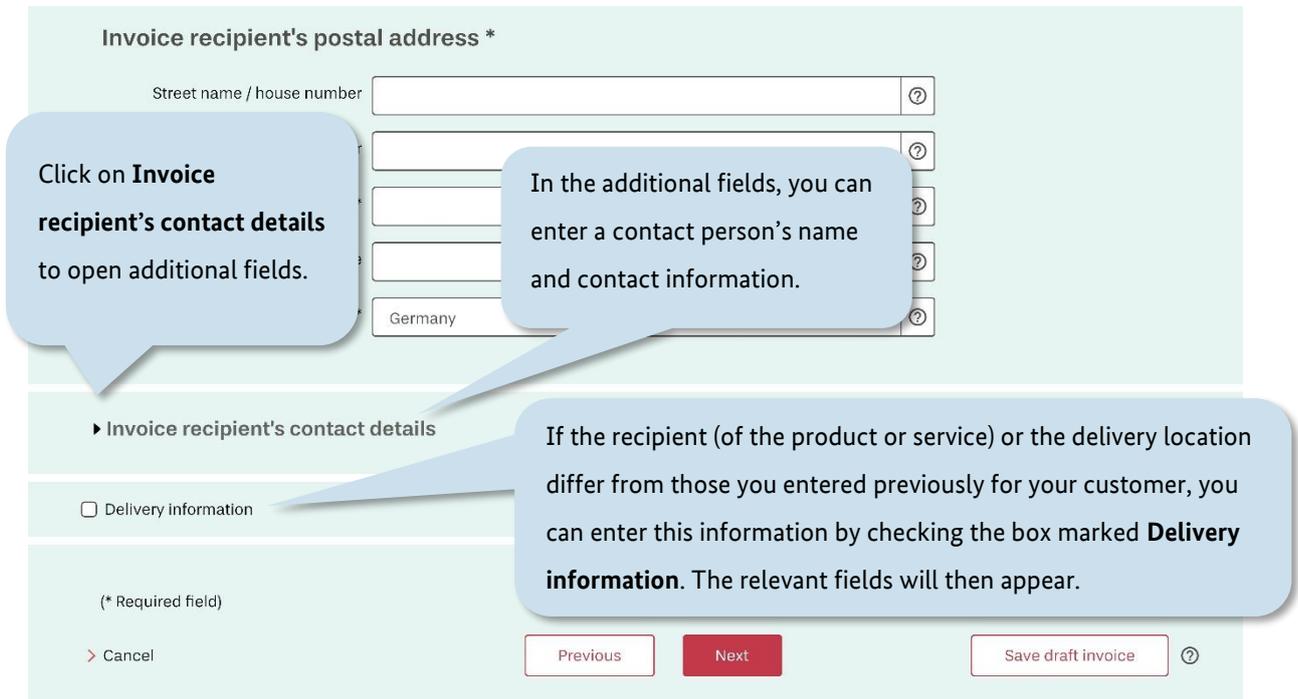
In the web submission process, your customer is called the **invoice recipient**.

Please enter the full name of your customer in the field marked **Name**.

If your customer has a trading name that is different from their own name, you can enter this in the field **Other trading name**.

Please enter your customer's address in the field **Street name / house number**.

Figure 4.13 Creating invoices – The “Invoice recipient” page (I/II)



Invoice recipient's postal address *

Street name / house number ?

?

?

?

?

Germany ?

Click on **Invoice recipient's contact details to open additional fields.**

In the additional fields, you can enter a contact person's name and contact information.

► Invoice recipient's contact details

Delivery information

If the recipient (of the product or service) or the delivery location differ from those you entered previously for your customer, you can enter this information by checking the box marked **Delivery information. The relevant fields will then appear.**

(* Required field)

> Cancel

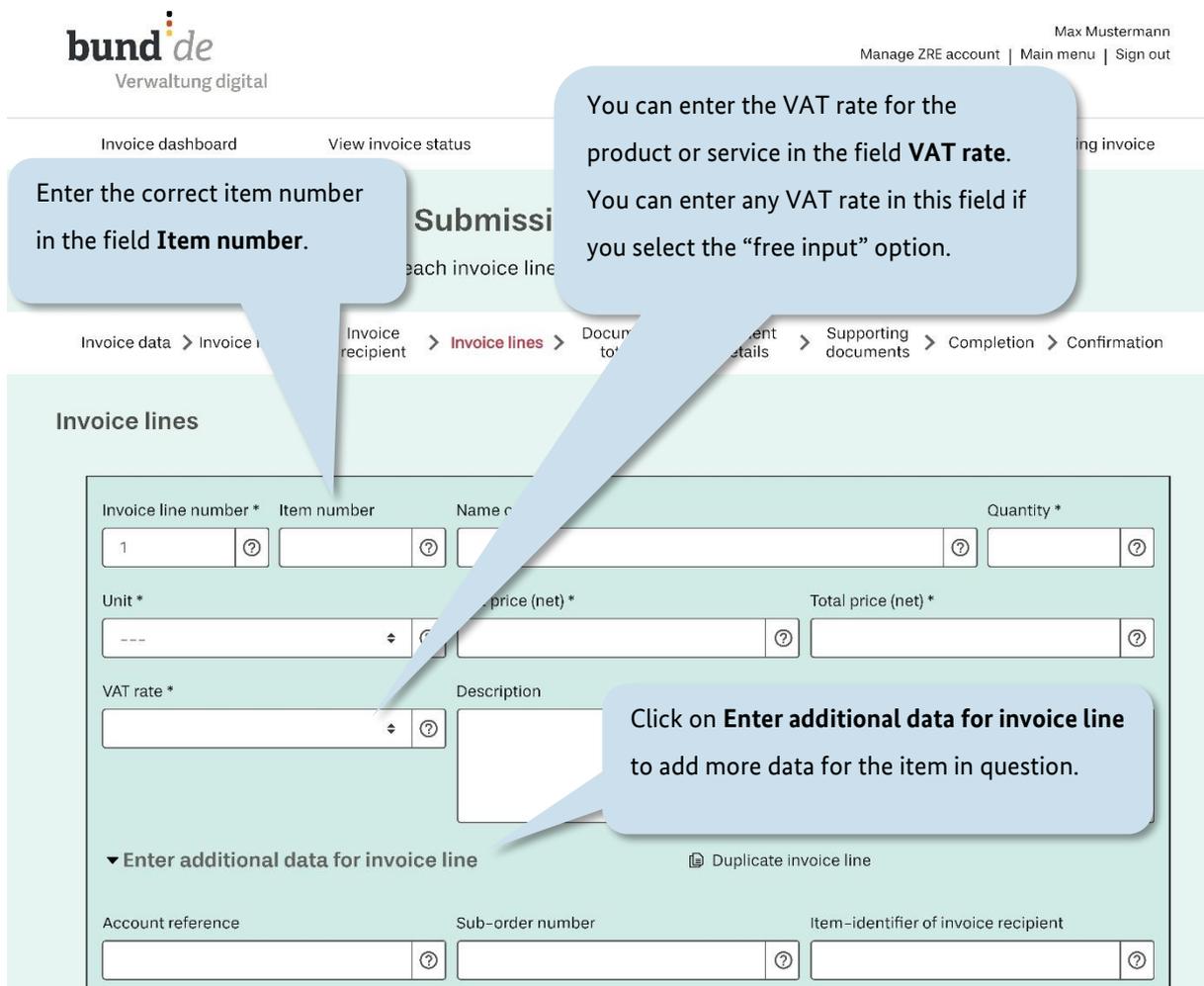
Previous Next Save draft invoice ?

Figure 4.14 Creating invoices – The “Invoice recipient” page (II/II)

4.4 Invoice lines

On the fourth page, titled **Invoice lines**, you can add line items to your invoice.

(For better readability, the “Invoice lines” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I” and “II” in the figure captions.)



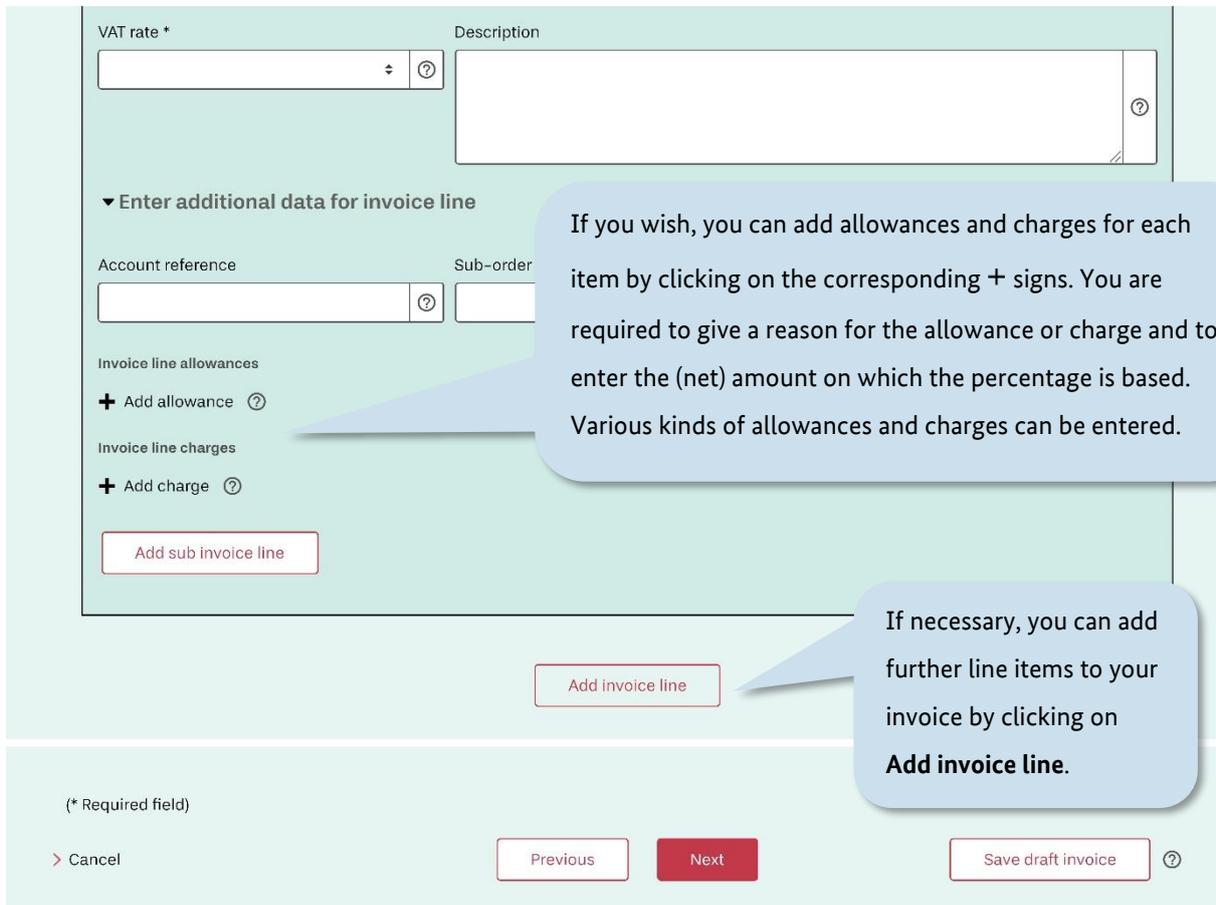
The screenshot shows the 'bund.de' logo and navigation menu at the top. The main content area is titled 'Invoice lines' and contains a form for adding invoice items. The form includes the following fields and actions:

- Invoice line number ***: A text input field containing the number '1'.
- Item number**: A text input field with a help icon.
- Name of product or service**: A text input field with a help icon.
- Quantity ***: A text input field with a help icon.
- Unit ***: A dropdown menu showing '---'.
- Unit price (net) ***: A text input field with a help icon.
- Total price (net) ***: A text input field with a help icon.
- VAT rate ***: A dropdown menu.
- Description**: A text input field with a help icon.
- Enter additional data for invoice line**: A button with a downward arrow.
- Duplicate invoice line**: A button with a copy icon.
- Account reference**: A text input field with a help icon.
- Sub-order number**: A text input field with a help icon.
- Item-identifier of invoice recipient**: A text input field with a help icon.

Callout boxes provide the following instructions:

- “Enter the correct item number in the field **Item number**.”
- “You can enter the VAT rate for the product or service in the field **VAT rate**. You can enter any VAT rate in this field if you select the “free input” option.”
- “Click on **Enter additional data for invoice line** to add more data for the item in question.”

Figure 4.15 Creating invoices – The “Invoice lines” page (I/II)



VAT rate * Description

▼ Enter additional data for invoice line

Account reference Sub-order

Invoice line allowances
+ Add allowance ?

Invoice line charges
+ Add charge ?

Add sub invoice line

Add invoice line

(* Required field)

> Cancel Previous Next Save draft invoice ?

If you wish, you can add allowances and charges for each item by clicking on the corresponding + signs. You are required to give a reason for the allowance or charge and to enter the (net) amount on which the percentage is based. Various kinds of allowances and charges can be entered.

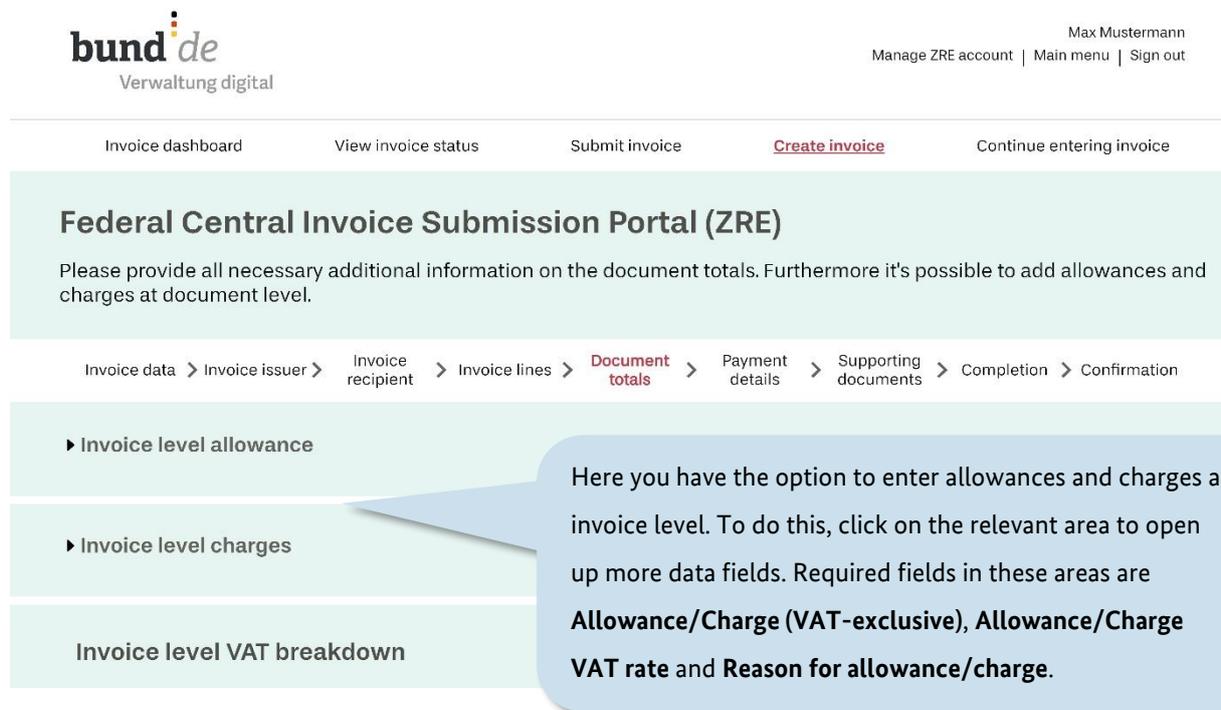
If necessary, you can add further line items to your invoice by clicking on **Add invoice line.**

Figure 4.16 Creating invoices – The “Invoice lines” page (II/II)

4.5 Document totals

On the fifth page, titled **Document totals**, the amounts from each invoice line item (entered on the previous page) are added together. The total amounts are displayed and summarised according to their VAT rate. You can also add allowances and charges to the invoice as a whole.

(For better readability, the “Document totals” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I”, “II” and “III” in the figure captions.)



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Max Mustermann
 Manage ZRE account | Main menu | Sign out

Invoice dashboard View invoice status Submit invoice **Create invoice** Continue entering invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Please provide all necessary additional information on the document totals. Furthermore it's possible to add allowances and charges at document level.

Invoice data > Invoice issuer > Invoice recipient > Invoice lines > **Document totals** > Payment details > Supporting documents > Completion > Confirmation

- ▶ Invoice level allowance
- ▶ Invoice level charges
- Invoice level VAT breakdown

Here you have the option to enter allowances and charges at invoice level. To do this, click on the relevant area to open up more data fields. Required fields in these areas are **Allowance/Charge (VAT-exclusive)**, **Allowance/Charge VAT rate** and **Reason for allowance/charge**.

Figure 4.17 Creating invoices – The “Document totals” page (I/III)

Submission Portal (ZRE)

The field **Total amount (VAT exclusive)** shows the total taxable invoice amount in this VAT category.

The field on the right shows the total amount of VAT payable in this VAT category.

You can enter a reason for exemption from VAT in the field **Exemption reason**.

► Invoice level allowar

► Invoice level charges

Invoice level VAT breakdown

Total amount (VAT-exclusive) *	VAT rate	VAT amount *
<input type="text" value="123.00"/>	19.00%	<input type="text" value="23.37"/>

Exemption reason

Figure 4.18 Creating invoices – The “Document totals” page (II/III)

Document Totals

Sum of invoice line net amount * ⓘ

document level ⓘ

document level ⓘ

Amount without VAT * ⓘ

Total VAT amount * ⓘ

Amount (VAT-inclusive) * ⓘ

Paid amount ⓘ

Rounding amount ⓘ

Amount due for payment * ⓘ

(* Required field)

> Cancel ⓘ

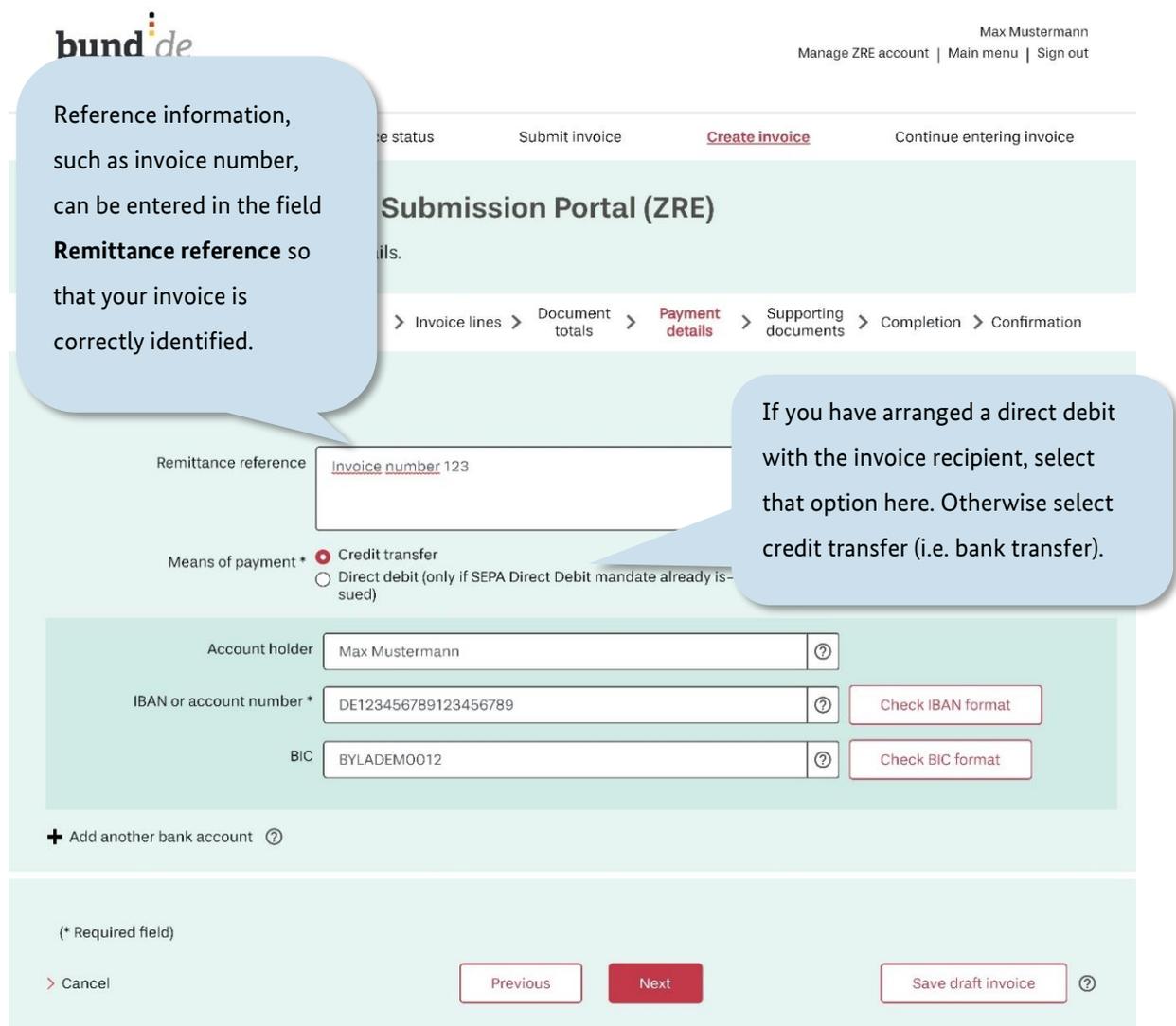
Under **Document totals**, the totals of all the invoice amounts are automatically displayed as a summary.

Figure 4.19 Creating invoices – The “Document totals” page (III/III)

4.6 Payment details

On the sixth page, titled **Payment details**, you can enter the information required for your customer to transfer the payment due.

(For better readability, the “Payment details” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I” and “II” in the figure captions.)



Reference information, such as invoice number, can be entered in the field **Remittance reference** so that your invoice is correctly identified.

If you have arranged a direct debit with the invoice recipient, select that option here. Otherwise select credit transfer (i.e. bank transfer).

Figure 4.20 Creating invoices – The “Payment details” page (I/II)

Please enter your International Bank Account Number (IBAN) so that your account can be properly identified. If your bank does not participate in the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA), just enter the account number here.

There is no need to add the Business Identifier Code (BIC) if your account has an IBAN and your bank participates in the SEPA (with the exception of Switzerland, Monaco and San Marino). Otherwise, you will need to add the BIC.

Payment details > Supporting details > Completion > Confirmation

Reference: Invoice number 123

Payment method *
 Credit transfer
 Direct debit (only if SEPA Direct Debit mandate already is issued)

Account holder: Max Mustermann

IBAN or account number *: DE123456789123456789

BIC: BYLADEM0012

+ Add another bank account

(* Required field)

> Cancel

Figure 4.21 Creating invoices – The “Payment details” page (II/II)

4.7 Supporting documents

On the seventh page, titled **Supporting documents**, you can attach up to 200 files to support your invoice. The files should not exceed 11 MB in total.

(For better readability, the “Supporting documents” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I” and “II” in the figure captions.)

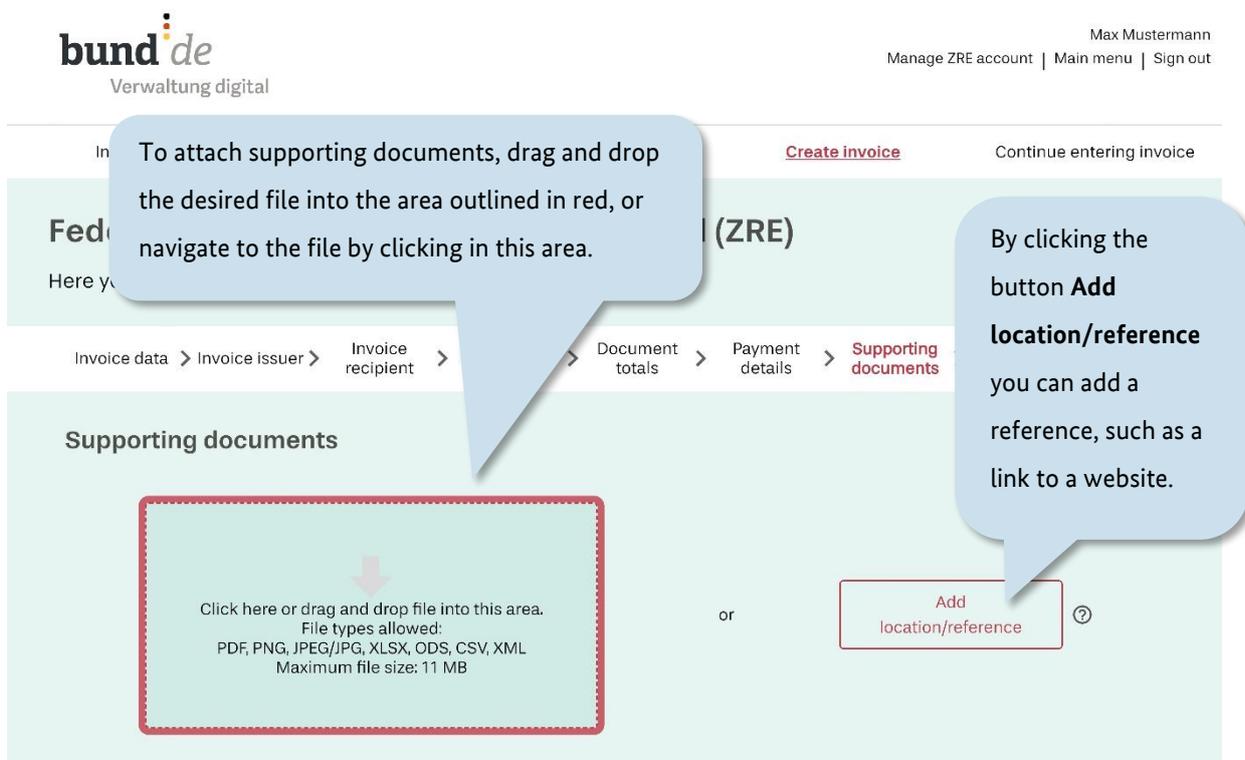


Figure 4.22 Creating invoices – The “Supporting documents” page (I/II)

Supporting documents

Click here or drag and drop file into this area.
File types allowed:
PDF, PNG, JPEG/JPG, XLSX, ODS, CSV, XML
Maximum file size: 11 MB

or

For each uploaded file, a reference must be added in the field **Identifier**.

File name or location/reference	File type	Identifier *
<input type="text"/>	Location/reference	<input type="text"/>
Description		<input type="text"/>

If you wish to remove a file you have already uploaded, you can do so by clicking **Delete**.

(* Required field)

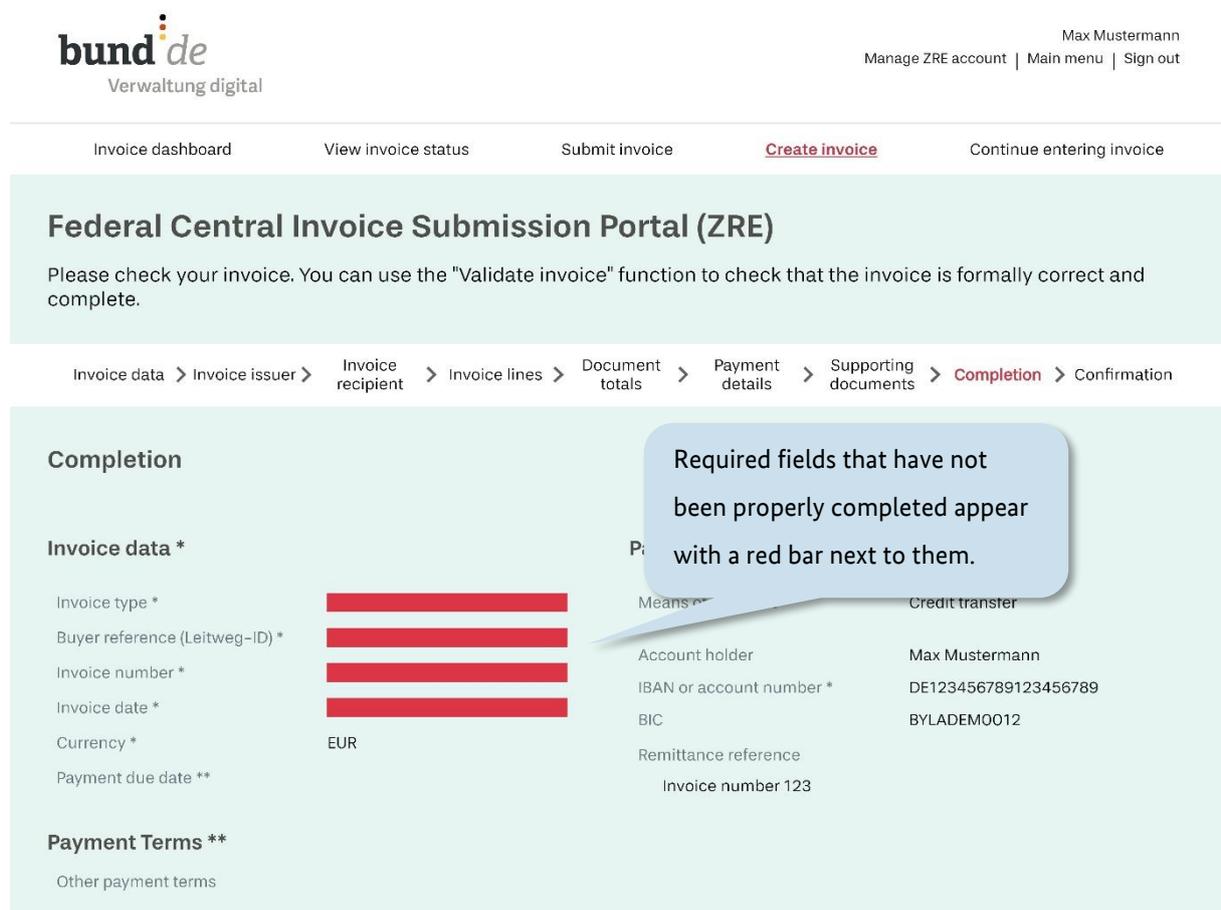
> Cancel Previous Next Save draft invoice

Figure 4.23 Creating invoices – The “Supporting documents” page (II/II)

4.8 Completion

Almost done! On the eighth page, titled **Completion**, the information you have entered is checked. Required fields that have not been properly completed are marked red.

(For better readability, the “Completion” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I”, “II” and “III” in the figure captions.)



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Max Mustermann
 Manage ZRE account | Main menu | Sign out

Invoice dashboard | View invoice status | Submit invoice | **Create invoice** | Continue entering invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Please check your invoice. You can use the "Validate invoice" function to check that the invoice is formally correct and complete.

Invoice data > Invoice issuer > Invoice recipient > Invoice lines > Document totals > Payment details > Supporting documents > **Completion** > Confirmation

Completion

Invoice data *

Invoice type *	<div style="background-color: red; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div>	Means of payment	Credit transfer
Buyer reference (Leitweg-ID) *	<div style="background-color: red; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div>	Account holder	Max Mustermann
Invoice number *	<div style="background-color: red; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div>	IBAN or account number *	DE123456789123456789
Invoice date *	<div style="background-color: red; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div>	BIC	BYLADEM0012
Currency *	EUR	Remittance reference	
Payment due date **		Invoice number	123

Payment Terms **

Other payment terms

Required fields that have not been properly completed appear with a red bar next to them.

Figure 4.24 Creating invoices – The “Completion” page (I/III)

Contact Information

Information about the invoice issuer *

Company name * Test Company

Seller identifier ***

VAT identifier ***

Tax number ***

Invoice issuer's postal address *

Post code / town or city * [REDACTED]

Country * Deutschland

Invoice issuer's contact details *

Name * [REDACTED]

Email * [REDACTED]

Telephone * [REDACTED]

Invoice recipient *

Name * [REDACTED]

Invoice recipient's postal address *

Post code / town or city * [REDACTED]

Country * [REDACTED]

Invoice lines

Invoice line number *	Item number	Name of item *	Total price (net) *
1	123	Test	15,129.00 EUR
Description		Unit * Working day	Quantity * 123
		VAT rate * [REDACTED]	Unit price (net) * 123 EUR

Sum of invoice line net amount *	15,129.00 EUR
Invoice total amount without VAT *	15,129.00 EUR
Total VAT amount *	0.00 EUR
Total amount (VAT-inclusive) *	15,129.00 EUR
Amount due for payment *	15,129.00 EUR

Figure 4.25 Creating invoices – The “Completion” page (II/III)

Supporting documents

File name or location/reference	File type	Identifier *
Document.pdf	Datei	Document

(* Required field)
 (** An entry must be made for at least the payment due date or other payment terms.)
 (***) Please fill in the fields 'Seller identifier (BT-29)' and 'Tax number (BT-32)' or only the field 'VAT identifier (BT-31)'. Other combinations are not permitted.)

Validation of the Invoice

i Please run a validation check to ensure that your invoice is formally correct. If the invoice contains errors, it will be automatically rejected.

Validate Invoice

Submit Invoice

> Cancel

Previous

Save draft invoice ?

The ZRE can help check that your information is correct and complete. To carry out this check, click on **Validate invoice**.

Figure 4.26 Creating invoices – The “Completion” page (III/III)

The ZRE helps you to identify places where corrections must be made. To carry out a check, click on **Validate invoice** (see figure 4.26). **Please note: The validation check can only confirm that the invoice is formally correct. Suppliers of goods and services are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of invoice content.**

After running the validation check, you will continue to see the “Completion” page. If errors were detected, you will see the notice “Validation errors” in the lower part of the page (see figure 4.27).

(For better readability, the invoice validation process is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I” and “II” in the figure captions. There is also a third screenshot showing a “Validation successful” notice.)

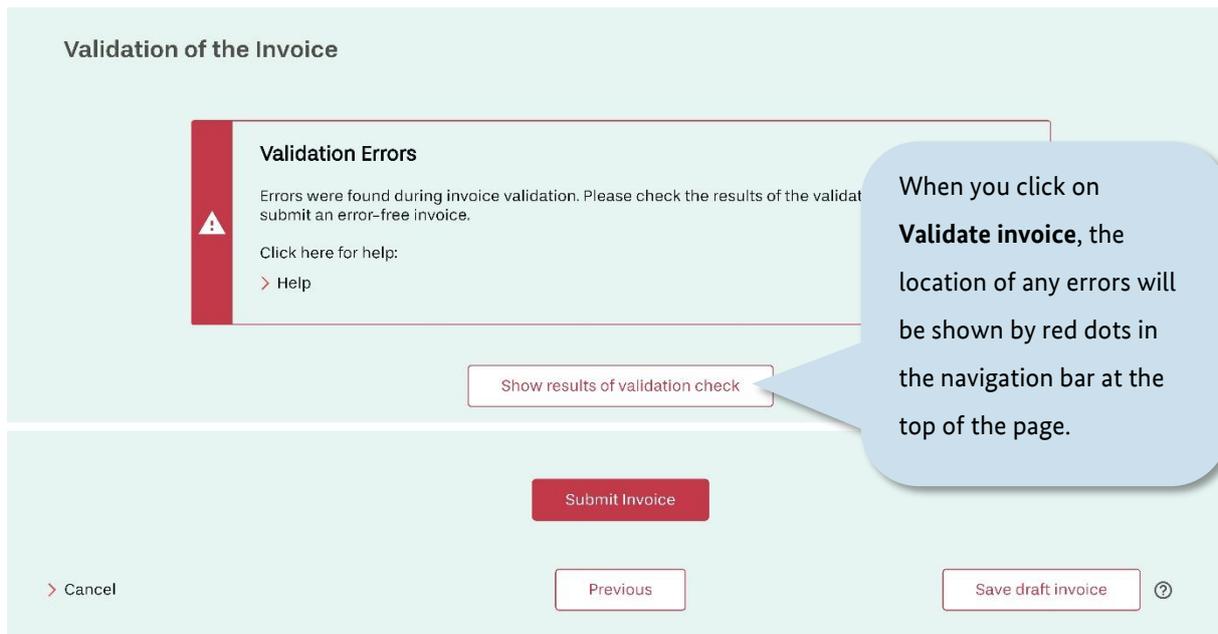


Figure 4.27 Invoice validation (I/II)

In the upper part of the “Completion” page, red dots (notifications) in the navigation bar show the steps in the invoice creation process where corrections must be made. Click on any steps in the navigation bar marked with red notifications to return to the relevant pages and correct the errors.

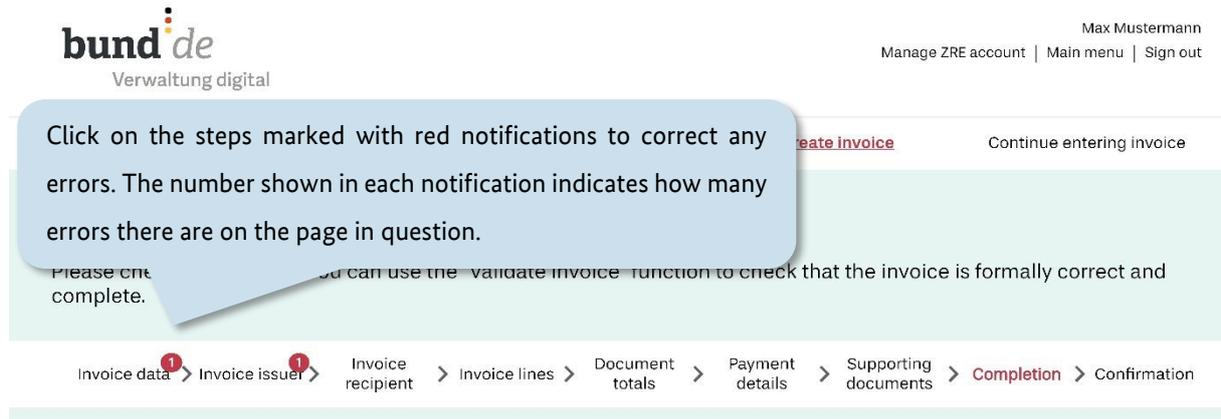


Figure 4.28 Invoice validation (II/II)

After you have made any necessary corrections, run another validation check on the invoice.

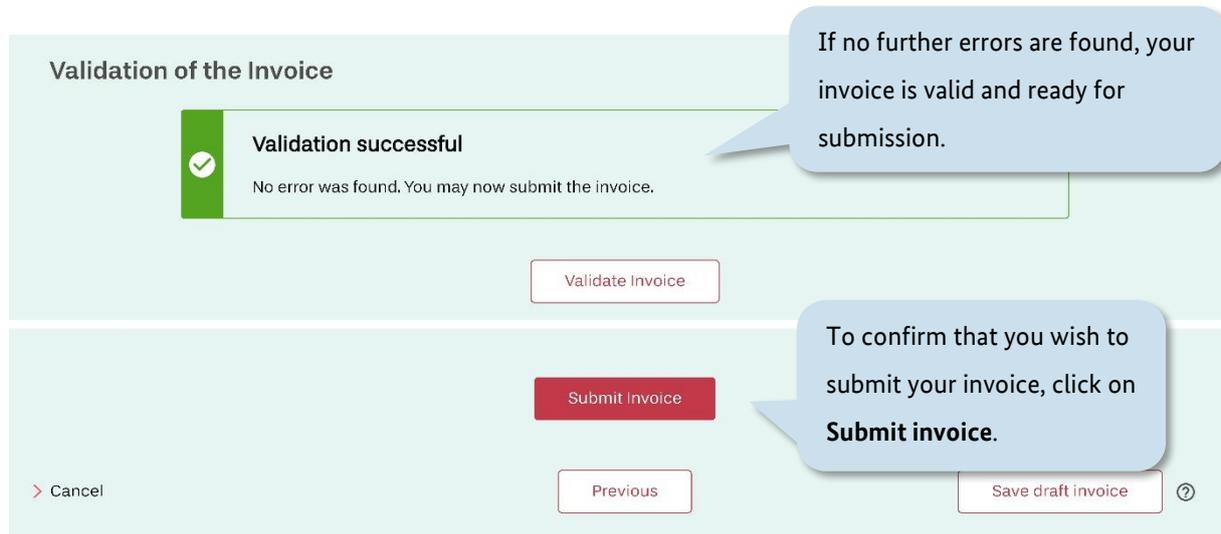


Figure 4.29 Invoice validation (validation successful)

If no further errors are found by the validation check, a notice will appear confirming that the validation was successful. You can then submit the invoice by clicking the **Submit invoice** button.

4.9 Confirmation

If the submission of your invoice is successful, a notice will appear informing you of your legal requirement to archive a copy of the invoice.

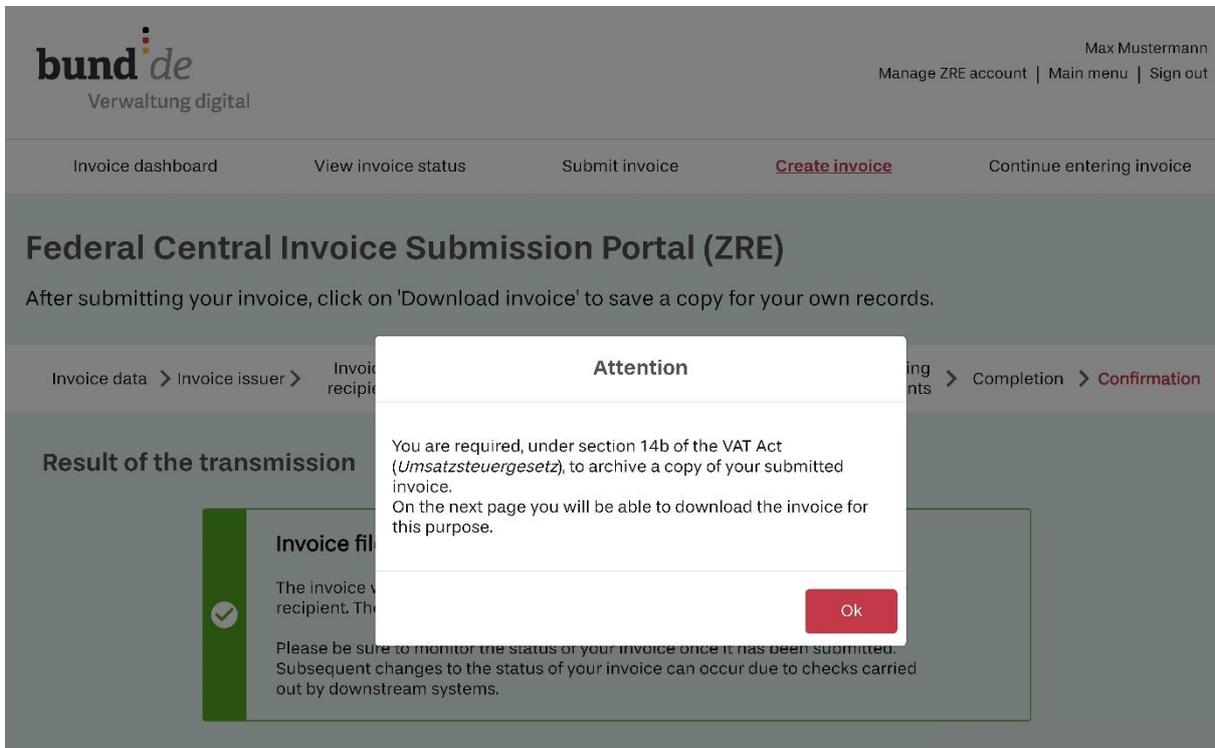
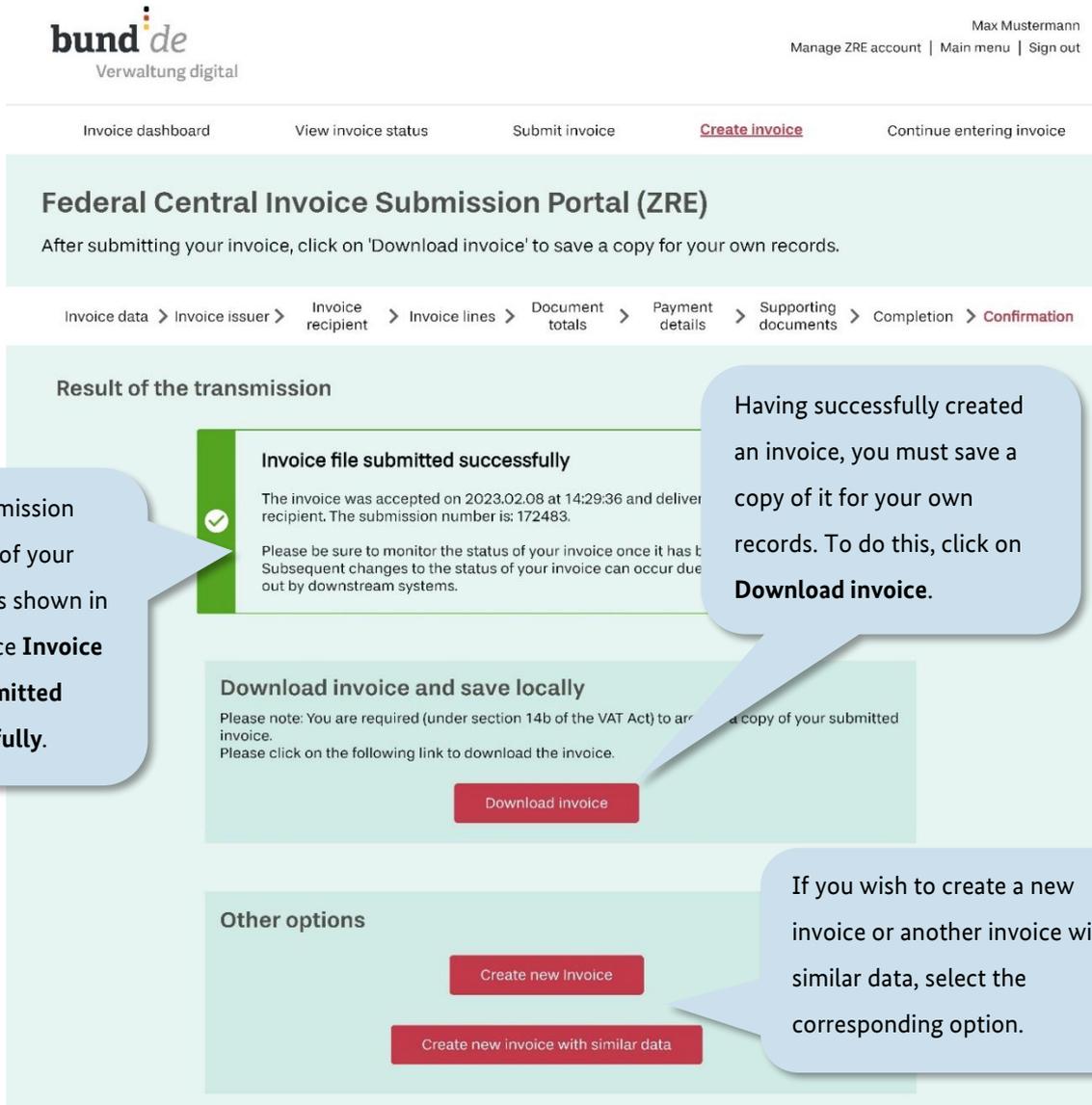


Figure 4.30 Creating invoices – Legal notice that appears on the “Confirmation” page upon successful submission of an invoice

When you click **Ok**, the legal notice disappears to reveal another notice containing the submission details, including the submission number of your invoice (see figure 4.31). Please remember to save a copy of your invoice for your own records. To do this, click on **Download invoice**.



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Max Mustermann
 Manage ZRE account | Main menu | Sign out

Invoice dashboard | View invoice status | Submit invoice | **Create invoice** | Continue entering invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

After submitting your invoice, click on 'Download invoice' to save a copy for your own records.

Invoice data > Invoice issuer > Invoice recipient > Invoice lines > Document totals > Payment details > Supporting documents > Completion > **Confirmation**

Result of the transmission

Invoice file submitted successfully


 The invoice was accepted on 2023.02.08 at 14:29:36 and delivered to the recipient. The submission number is: 172483.

Please be sure to monitor the status of your invoice once it has been accepted. Subsequent changes to the status of your invoice can occur due to changes in the data or out by downstream systems.

Download invoice and save locally

Please note: You are required (under section 14b of the VAT Act) to archive a copy of your submitted invoice. Please click on the following link to download the invoice.

[Download invoice](#)

Other options

[Create new Invoice](#)

[Create new invoice with similar data](#)

The submission number of your invoice is shown in the notice **Invoice file submitted successfully**.

Having successfully created an invoice, you must save a copy of it for your own records. To do this, click on **Download invoice**.

If you wish to create a new invoice or another invoice with similar data, select the corresponding option.

Figure 4.31 Creating invoices – The “Confirmation” page, with notice containing submission details of your invoice

You will find the downloaded copy of your invoice in your computer's download folder. The invoice creation process is now complete. Your invoice has been successfully submitted.

5 Saving your invoice as a draft or template

The ZRE allows you to save your invoice locally in the file format “.er” for later use. This means you can save invoices which are not yet finished, upload them again later to the ZRE, and continue the process from where you left off. You can also use .er files as templates for future invoices and test invoices. The advantage of this is that after uploading an .er file (see section 6) you can edit all the data and create a new invoice in just a few steps. However, you can only use .er files in the ZRE, not in any other portal.

To save a draft copy of your current invoice, click the **Save draft invoice** button, which appears at the bottom right of every page in the invoice creation process.

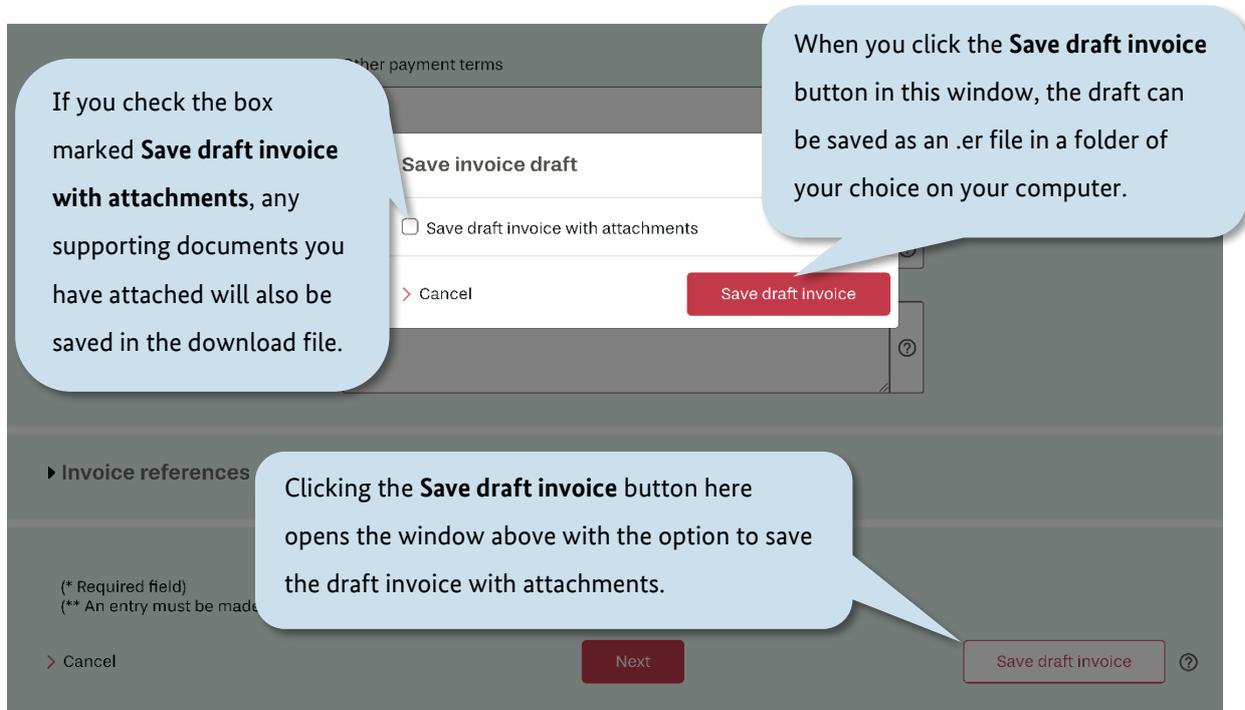
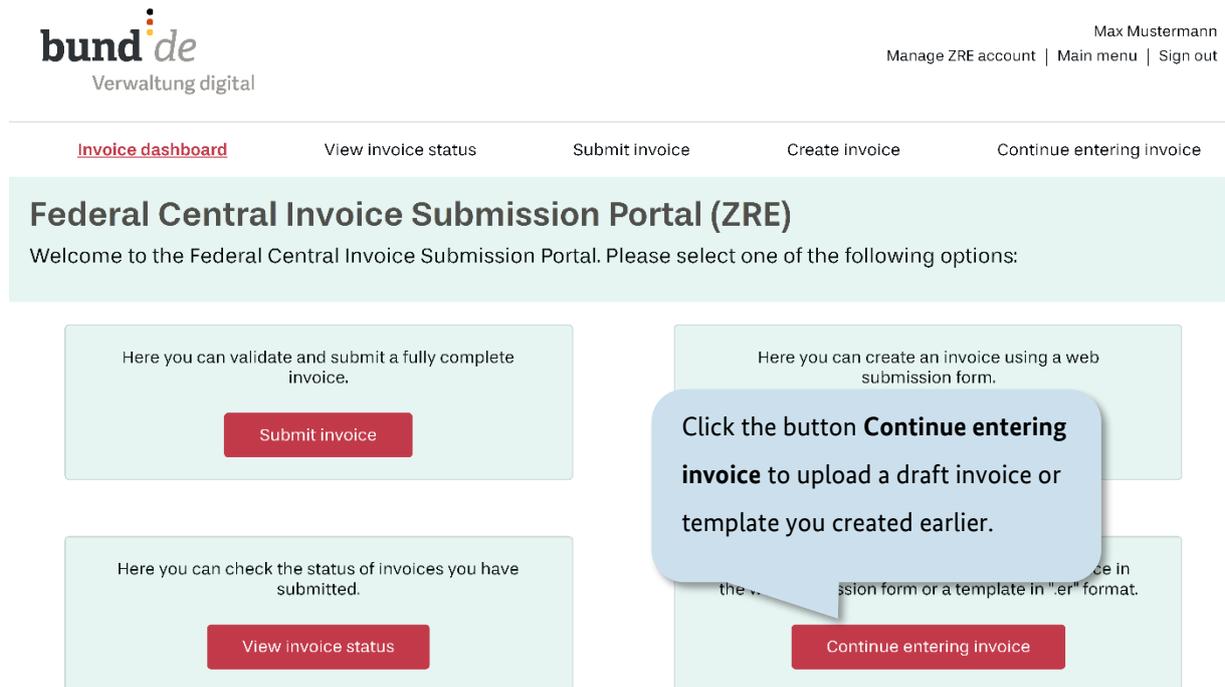


Figure 5.1 Saving a draft invoice

6 Uploading a draft invoice or template

To continue working on a draft invoice, or to upload a template you created earlier, first return to the invoice dashboard.



The screenshot shows the 'bund.de' logo and 'Verwaltung digital' text on the left. On the right, the user 'Max Mustermann' is logged in, with links for 'Manage ZRE account', 'Main menu', and 'Sign out'. The navigation bar includes 'Invoice dashboard' (highlighted), 'View invoice status', 'Submit invoice', 'Create invoice', and 'Continue entering invoice'. The main content area is titled 'Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)' and contains a welcome message. Three cards are visible: 'Submit invoice' (with a red button), 'View invoice status' (with a red button), and 'Continue entering invoice' (with a red button). A blue callout box points to the 'Continue entering invoice' button with the text: 'Click the button **Continue entering invoice** to upload a draft invoice or template you created earlier.'

Figure 6.1 “Continue entering invoice” – The button to select on the invoice dashboard

Having selected the option **Continue entering invoice**, you will see the upload screen shown below. Here you can upload the file you saved earlier.

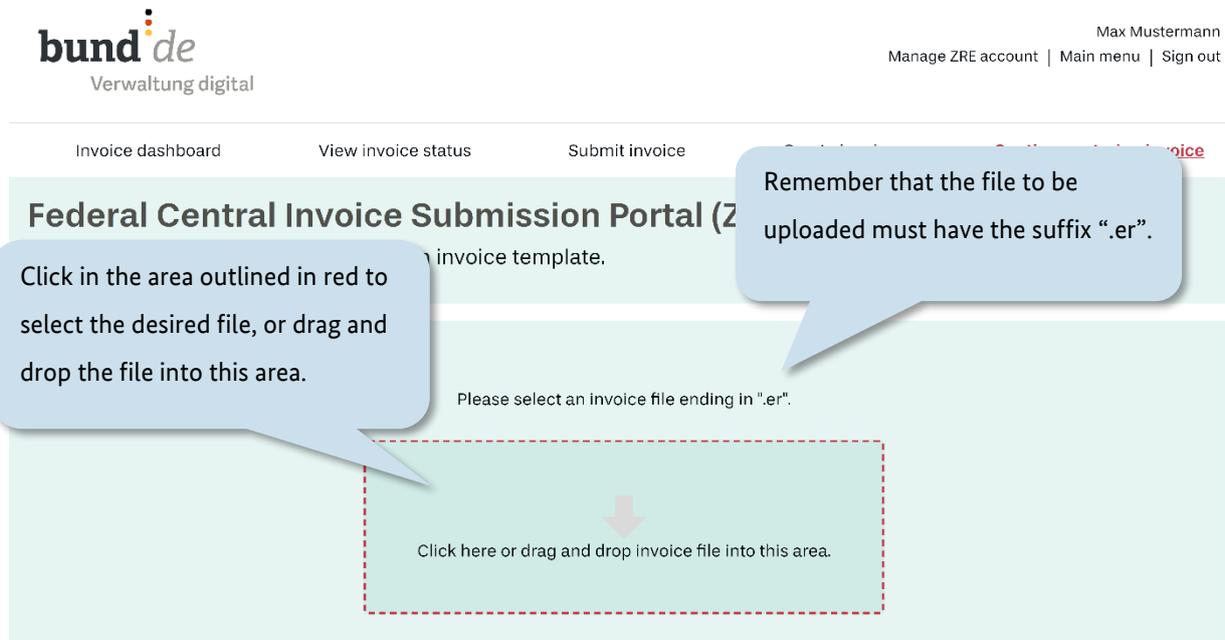
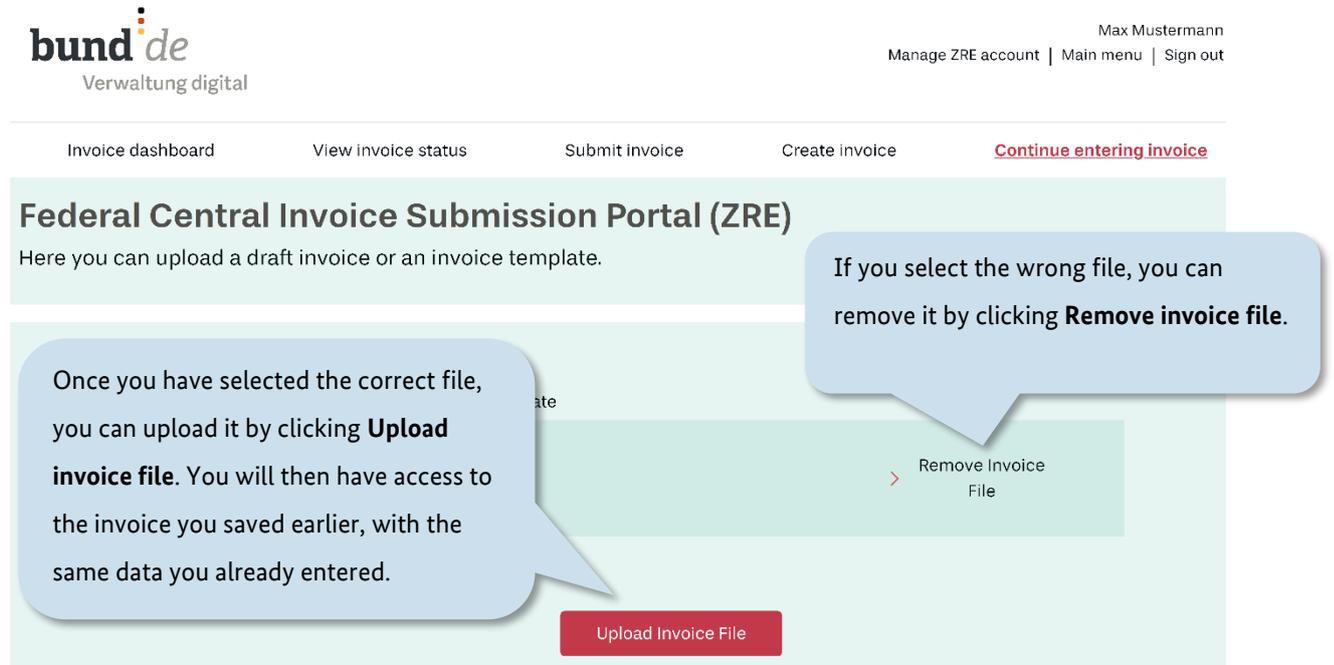


Figure 6.2 “Continue entering invoice” – The upload page

After selecting the desired file, you can upload it.



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Max Mustermann
Manage ZRE account | Main menu | Sign out

Invoice dashboard | View invoice status | Submit invoice | Create invoice | **Continue entering invoice**

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Here you can upload a draft invoice or an invoice template.

Once you have selected the correct file, you can upload it by clicking **Upload invoice file**. You will then have access to the invoice you saved earlier, with the same data you already entered.

If you select the wrong file, you can remove it by clicking **Remove invoice file**.

Remove Invoice File

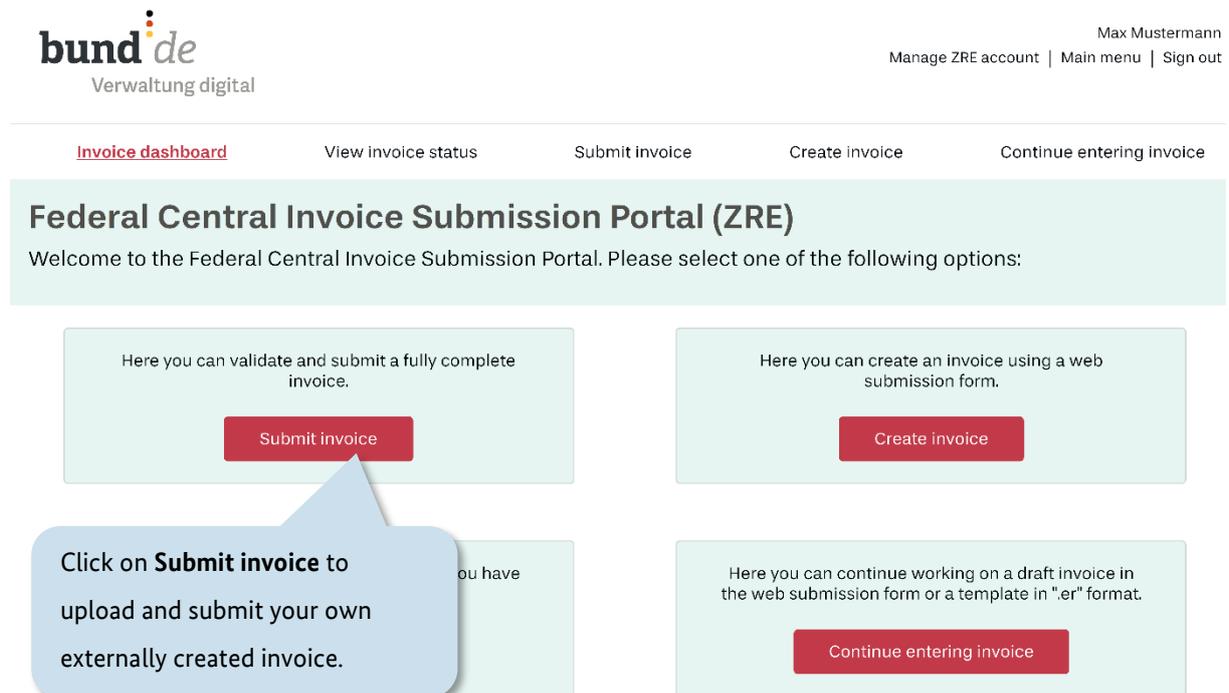
Upload Invoice File

Figure 6.3 “Continue entering invoice” – The upload page with uploaded invoice

The data from the uploaded invoice is then displayed on the relevant pages in the ZRE, allowing you to continue creating your invoice from where you left off last time (see section 4.1 onwards).

7 Uploading and submitting externally created invoices

To upload externally created invoices, go to the invoice dashboard and select the option **Submit invoice**.



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Max Mustermann
Manage ZRE account | Main menu | Sign out

[Invoice dashboard](#) | [View invoice status](#) | [Submit invoice](#) | [Create invoice](#) | [Continue entering invoice](#)

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Welcome to the Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal. Please select one of the following options:

- Here you can validate and submit a fully complete invoice.
[Submit invoice](#)
- Here you can create an invoice using a web submission form.
[Create invoice](#)
- Here you can continue working on a draft invoice in the web submission form or a template in ".er" format.
[Continue entering invoice](#)

Click on **Submit invoice** to upload and submit your own externally created invoice.

Figure 7.1 “Submit invoice” – The button to select on the invoice dashboard

A page will open showing an area outlined in red. Clicking in this area will allow you to find and select the invoice file from where it is saved on your computer. Alternatively, you can drag and drop the invoice file into this area.

Invoice dashboard

View invoice status

Submit invoice

Create invoice

Continue entering invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Here you can submit an existing invoice.

Please select an invoice file (XML only)

Click here or drag and drop invoice file (XML) into this area.

Click on the outlined area to select a file from your computer, or drag and drop the file into the outlined area.

Figure 7.2 “Submit invoice” – The upload page for externally created invoices

Once you have uploaded your invoice to this page, the buttons **Validate invoice** and **Submit invoice** will appear.

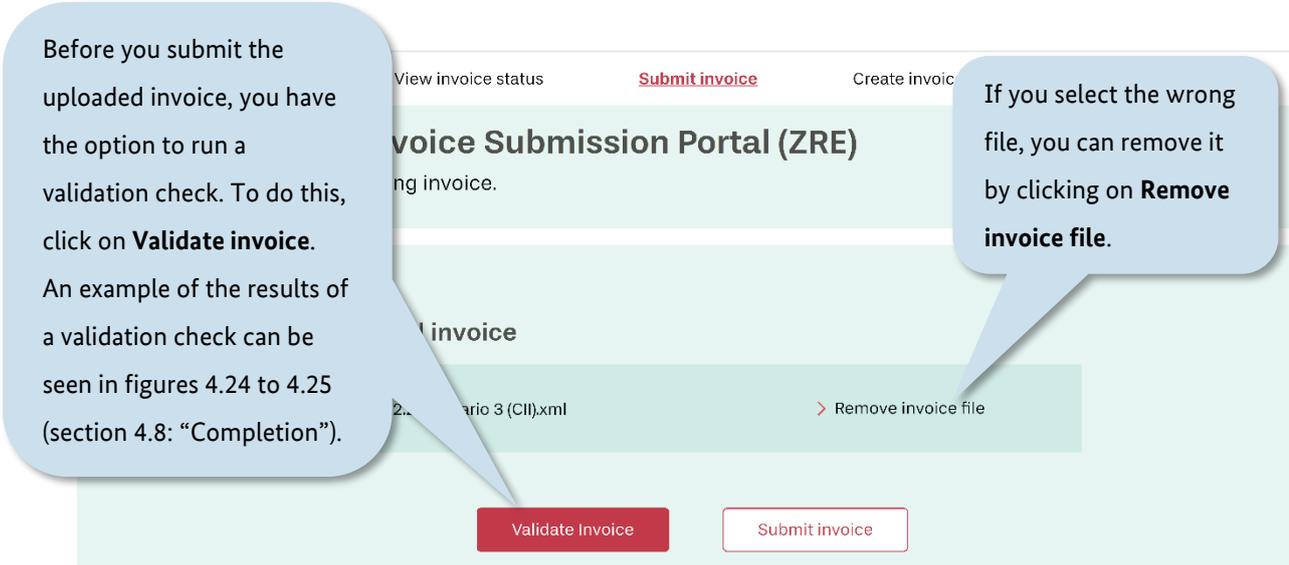
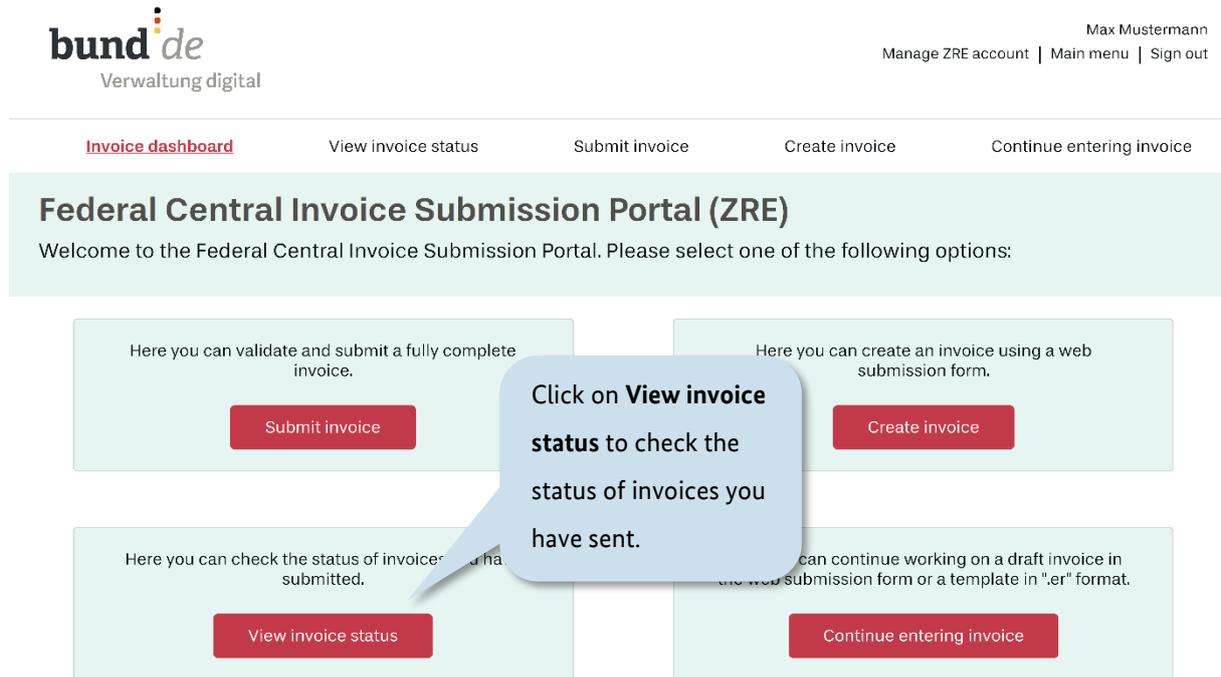


Figure 7.3 “Submit invoice” – An externally created invoice uploaded to the ZRE

8 Viewing invoice status

To check the status of invoices you have sent, go to the invoice dashboard and select the option **View invoice status**.



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Max Mustermann
Manage ZRE account | Main menu | Sign out

Invoice dashboard | View invoice status | Submit invoice | Create invoice | Continue entering invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Welcome to the Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal. Please select one of the following options:

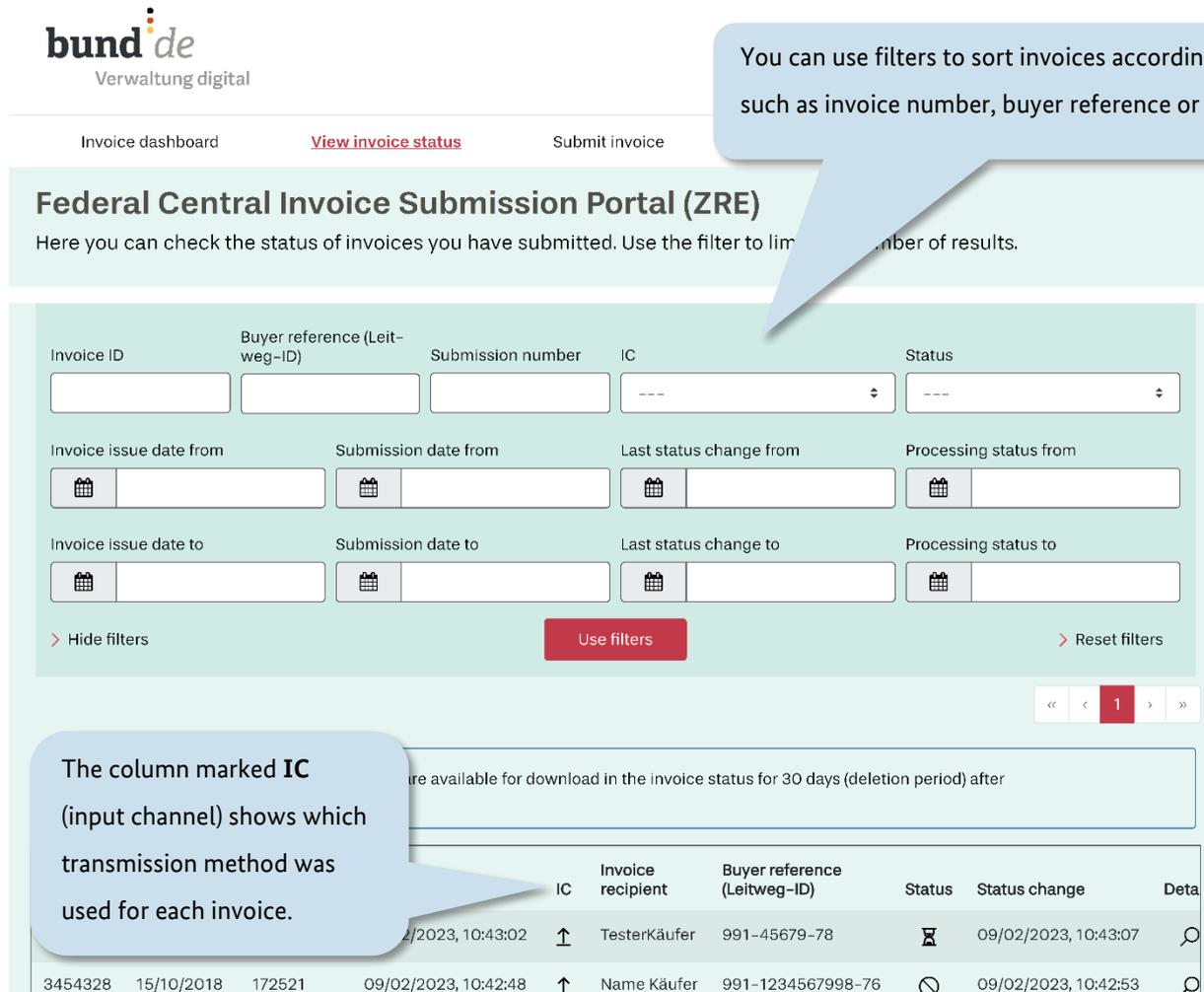
- Here you can validate and submit a fully complete invoice.
Submit invoice
- Here you can create an invoice using a web submission form.
Create invoice
- Here you can check the status of invoices you have submitted.
View invoice status
- You can continue working on a draft invoice in the web submission form or a template in ".er" format.
Continue entering invoice

Click on **View invoice status** to check the status of invoices you have sent.

Figure 8.1 “View invoice status” – The button to select on the invoice dashboard

The status page lists all the invoices you have sent and shows their current status.

(For better readability, the “View invoice status” page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I”, “II” and “III” in the figure captions.)



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Invoice dashboard [View invoice status](#) Submit invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Here you can check the status of invoices you have submitted. Use the filter to limit the number of results.

Invoice ID:
 Buyer reference (Leitweg-ID):
 Submission number:
 IC:
 Status:

Invoice issue date from:
 Submission date from:
 Last status change from:
 Processing status from:

Invoice issue date to:
 Submission date to:
 Last status change to:
 Processing status to:

[Hide filters](#) [Use filters](#) [Reset filters](#)

« < 1 > »

The column marked IC (input channel) shows which transmission method was used for each invoice.

Documents are available for download in the invoice status for 30 days (deletion period) after

Invoice ID	Invoice issue date	Submission date	IC	Invoice recipient	Buyer reference (Leitweg-ID)	Status	Status change	Details
3454328	15/10/2018	172521	↑	TesterKäufer	991-45679-78	⌛	09/02/2023, 10:43:07	🔍
		09/02/2023, 10:42:48	↑	Name Käufer	991-1234567998-76	🚫	09/02/2023, 10:42:53	🔍

Figure 8.2 “View invoice status” – List of submitted invoices with filter function (I/III)

You can also download any invoices you have created manually using the ZRE web submission process. This is possible for up to 30 days after their submission date. The download option for each invoice is in the very last column of the list. You may need to scroll to the right in order to see it (see figure 8.3).

Status	Status change	Details	Download
	20/02/2023, 13:51:26		
	09/02/2023, 10:43:07		
	09/02/2023, 10:42:53		
	09/02/2023, 10:42:38		

To download an invoice, click on the arrow symbol in the **Download** column.

Click on the magnifying glass symbol to see details of checks carried out at particular stages in the invoice creation process.

Figure 8.3 “View invoice status” – List of submitted invoices with filter function (II/III) (close-up)

If you click on the magnifying glass symbol in the **Details** column, you will see information from formal checks carried out on the invoice in question, e.g. the reason why a submitted invoice was rejected.

Invoice dashboard [View invoice status](#) Submit invoice Create invoice Continue entering invoice

Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Here you can check the status of invoices you have submitted. Use the filter to limit the number of results.

> Hide filters
Use filters
> Reset filters

<< < 1 > >>

i Invoices submitted via web submission date.

Invoice ID	Invoice issue date	Submission number	Buyer reference (Leitweg-ID)	Status	Status change	Details
233	27/10/2020	172522	991-45679-78	⌚	09/02/2023, 10:43:07	🔍
4328	15/10/2018	172521	991-45679-76	⊘	09/02/2023, 10:42:53	🔍
233	27/10/2020	172520	991-45679-78	⌚	09/02/2023, 10:42:38	🔍
233	10/03/2020	172519	991-45700-15	⌚	09/02/2023, 10:42:28	🔍

The hourglass symbol means that your invoice is awaiting collection.

The circle with a diagonal line means that your invoice has been rejected.

Figure 8.4 “View invoice status” – List of submitted invoices with filter function (III/III)

Clicking on the magnifying glass symbol in the **Details** column will take you to the page shown below. Here you can see the results of checks carried out at particular stages in the invoice creation process.

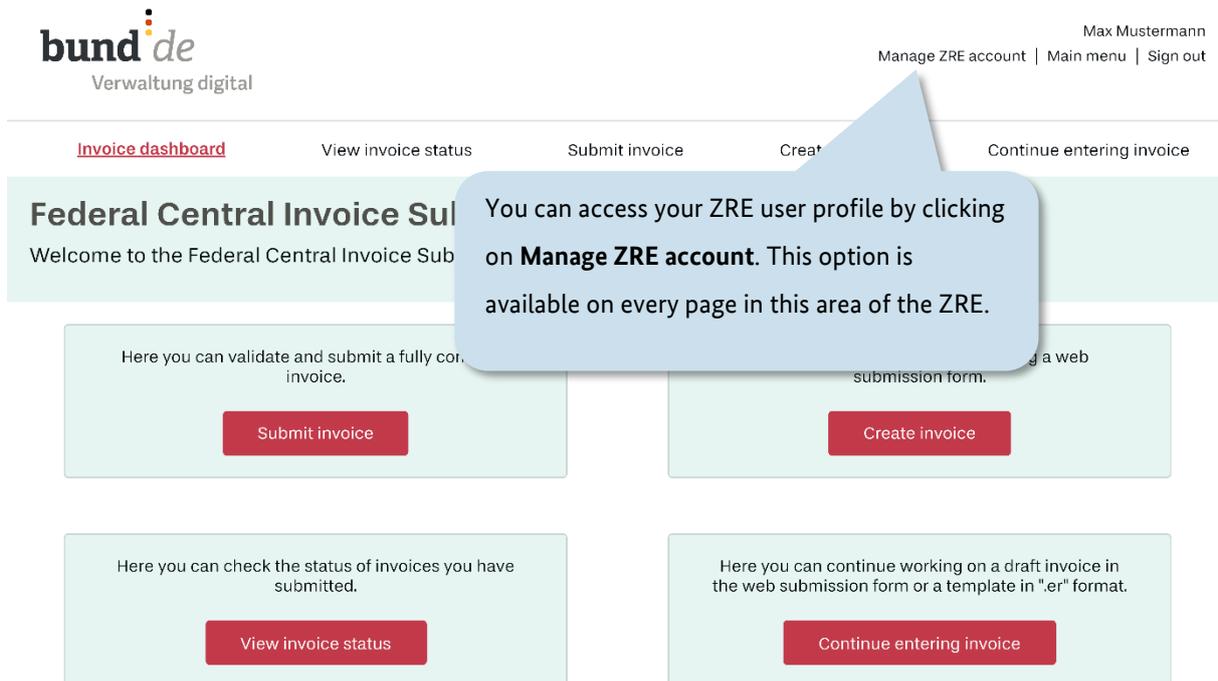
Processing step	Result	Date	Responsible	Additional text
UTF8_CHECK	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:02	ZRE	The invoice is UTF-8 encoded.
RECEIPT	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:02	ZRE	The invoice (file name: Version 1.2.2. Szenario 2 (UBL CreditNote).xml) from service account ER_5609 has been submitted for processing.
SIZE_CHECK	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:02	ZRE	The invoice (file name: Version 1.2.2. Szenario 2 (UBL CreditNote).xml) from service account ER_5609 has been submitted for processing.
ATTACHMENT_CHECK_NUMBER	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:02	ZRE	The invoice (file name: Version 1.2.2. Szenario 2 (UBL CreditNote).xml) from service account ER_5609 has been submitted for processing.
ATTACHMENT_CHECK_FILE_TYPE	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:02	ZRE	The invoice (file name: Version 1.2.2. Szenario 2 (UBL CreditNote).xml) from service account ER_5609 has been submitted for processing.
ATTACHMENT_CHECK_FILE_TYPE	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:07	ZRE	Supporting media are allowed to be sent to security authorities.
VIRUS_SCAN	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:07	ZRE	There are no supporting attachments, so a virus scan is not performed.
SCHEMATRON_VALIDATION	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:07	ZRE	No errors were found during invoice validation (XRechnung 1.2.2). > Show results
BUYER_REFERENCE_VALIDATION	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:07	ZRE	The structure of buyer reference 991-45679-78 has been validated.
DELIVERY	✓	09/02/2023, 10:43:07	ZRE	Invoice recipient: 991-45679-78 (Günes)

To view the report for the schema and schematron validation (which checks compliance with formal XML requirements and relevant business rules), click on **Show results**.

Figure 8.5 A processing report for an e-invoice (accessible via the “View invoice status” page)

9 ZRE user profile

To open your user profile, click on the words **Manage ZRE account**, which appear at the top right of every page that can be accessed via the invoice dashboard.

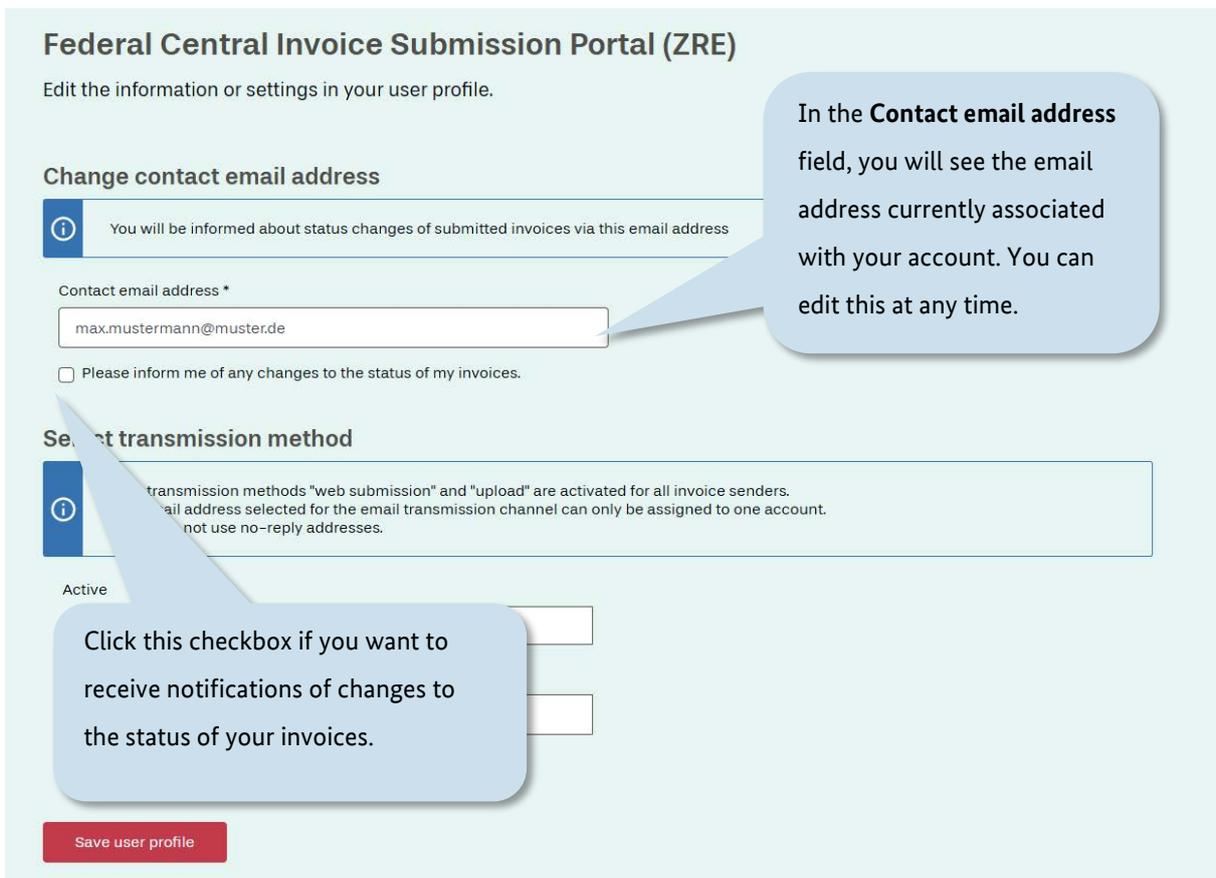


The screenshot shows the ZRE invoice dashboard interface. At the top left is the logo for 'bund.de' with the tagline 'Verwaltung digital'. At the top right, the user's name 'Max Mustermann' is displayed, along with navigation links for 'Manage ZRE account', 'Main menu', and 'Sign out'. Below the header, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Invoice dashboard', 'View invoice status', 'Submit invoice', 'Create invoice', and 'Continue entering invoice'. The main content area features a large heading 'Federal Central Invoice Submission' and a welcome message. Below this, there are four distinct action cards, each with a red button: 'Submit invoice', 'Create invoice', 'View invoice status', and 'Continue entering invoice'. A light blue callout box with a pointer highlights the 'Manage ZRE account' link in the top right corner, containing the text: 'You can access your ZRE user profile by clicking on **Manage ZRE account**. This option is available on every page in this area of the ZRE.'

Figure 9.1 Opening your ZRE user profile

In your user profile you can change your email address and transmission methods. You also have the option to delete your ZRE account.

(For better readability, the user profile page is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I”, “II” and “III” in the figure captions.)



Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)
Edit the information or settings in your user profile.

Change contact email address

i You will be informed about status changes of submitted invoices via this email address

Contact email address *

max.mustermann@muster.de

Please inform me of any changes to the status of my invoices.

Select transmission method

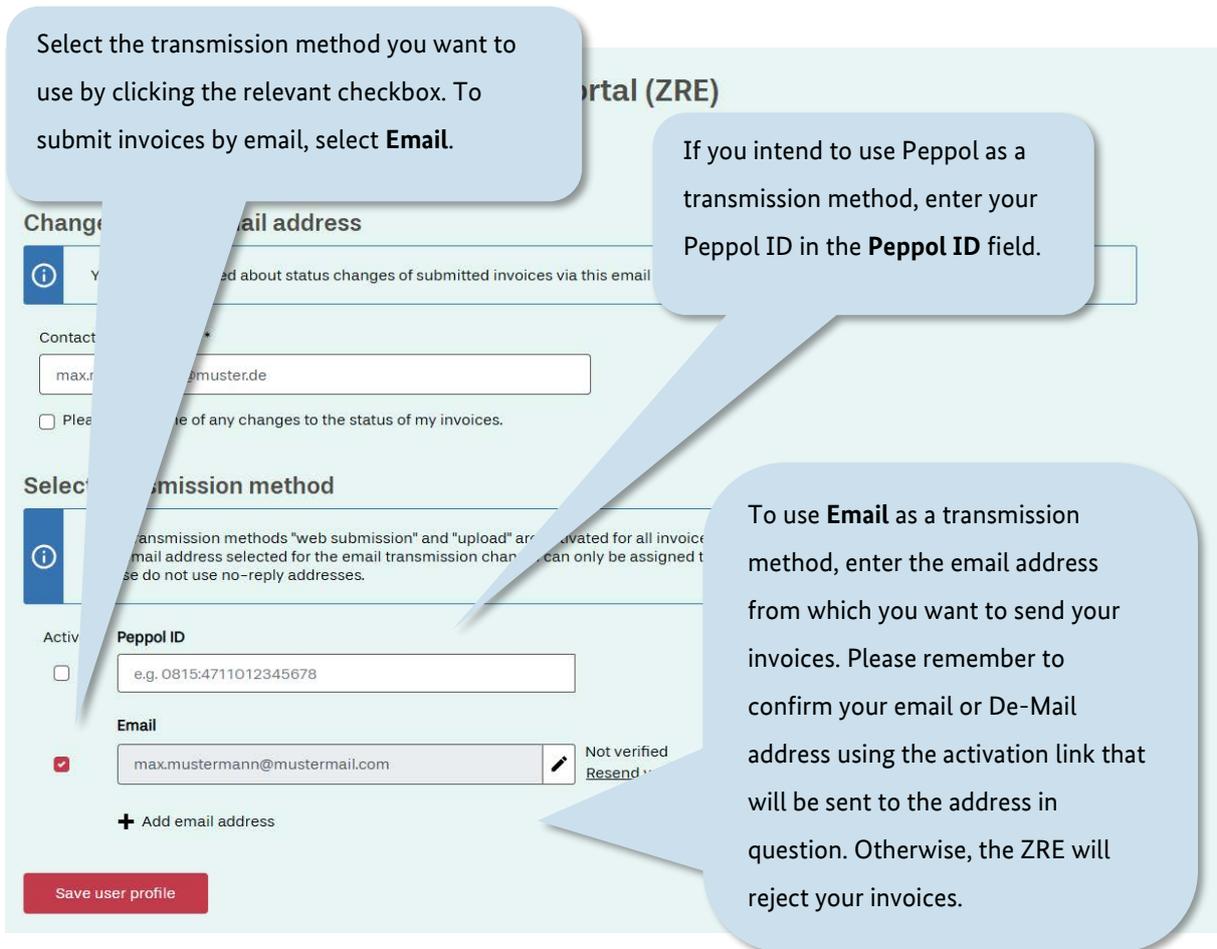
i Transmission methods "web submission" and "upload" are activated for all invoice senders. The email address selected for the email transmission channel can only be assigned to one account. Do not use no-reply addresses.

Active

Click this checkbox if you want to receive notifications of changes to the status of your invoices.

Save user profile

Figure 9.2 “Manage ZRE account” (I/III)



The screenshot shows the 'Manage ZRE account' interface. It is divided into two main sections: 'Change email address' and 'Select transmission method'.
1. 'Change email address': Includes a contact information field with 'max.mustermann@mustermail.com' and a checkbox for 'Please inform me of any changes to the status of my invoices.'
2. 'Select transmission method':
- 'Peppol ID': An input field with 'e.g. 0815:4711012345678' and an unchecked checkbox.
- 'Email': An input field with 'max.mustermann@mustermail.com', a 'Resend' link, and a checked checkbox.
- A '+ Add email address' button is located below the email field.
- A red 'Save user profile' button is at the bottom left.
Three callout boxes provide instructions:
- Top left: 'Select the transmission method you want to use by clicking the relevant checkbox. To submit invoices by email, select **Email**.'
- Top right: 'If you intend to use Peppol as a transmission method, enter your Peppol ID in the **Peppol ID** field.'
- Bottom right: 'To use **Email** as a transmission method, enter the email address from which you want to send your invoices. Please remember to confirm your email or De-Mail address using the activation link that will be sent to the address in question. Otherwise, the ZRE will reject your invoices.'

Figure 9.3 “Manage ZRE account” (II/III)

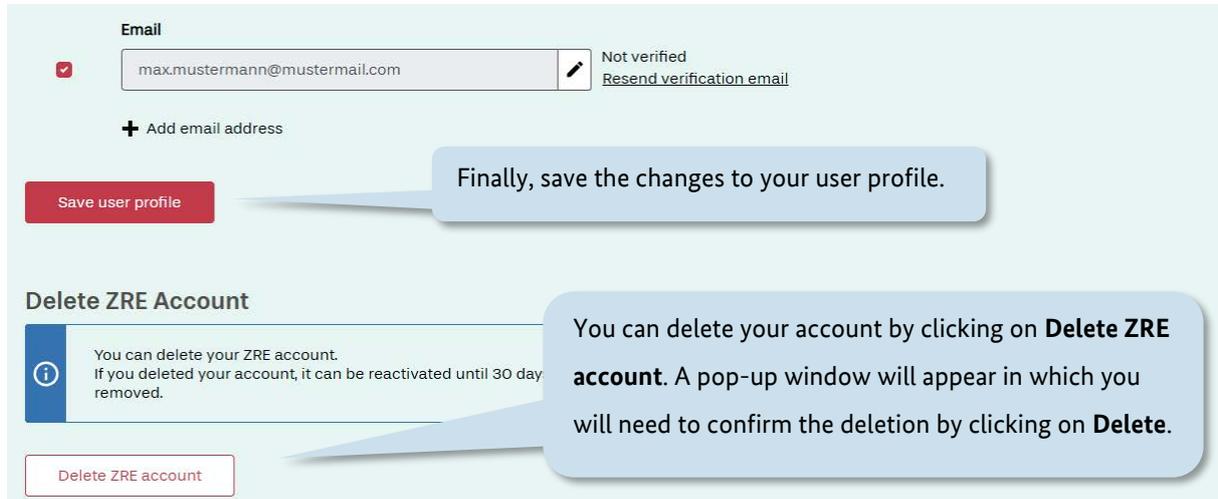


Figure 9.4 “Manage ZRE account” (III/III)

To save your changes, click on **Save user profile**.

The email address you use as a transmission method can be the same as your contact email address. Please do not use a no-reply address for your contact email, because this address will be used to notify you of changes in the status of your invoice. You may enter up to five email addresses.

10 Submitting invoices via email

The ZRE allows you to submit invoices by email. To use email as a transmission method you will need to enter an email address for this purpose in your ZRE user profile (see figure 9.4).

After saving the changes to your user profile, you will be notified that the email address entered as your transmission method has not yet been verified. You will then receive an email from the ZRE containing an activation link. The link is valid for 24 hours. If you do not receive an email automatically, click on **Resend verification email**. Click on the activation link to verify your email address. If you do not click on the link within 24 hours, you can go to your user profile and request a new activation link to be sent to your email address.

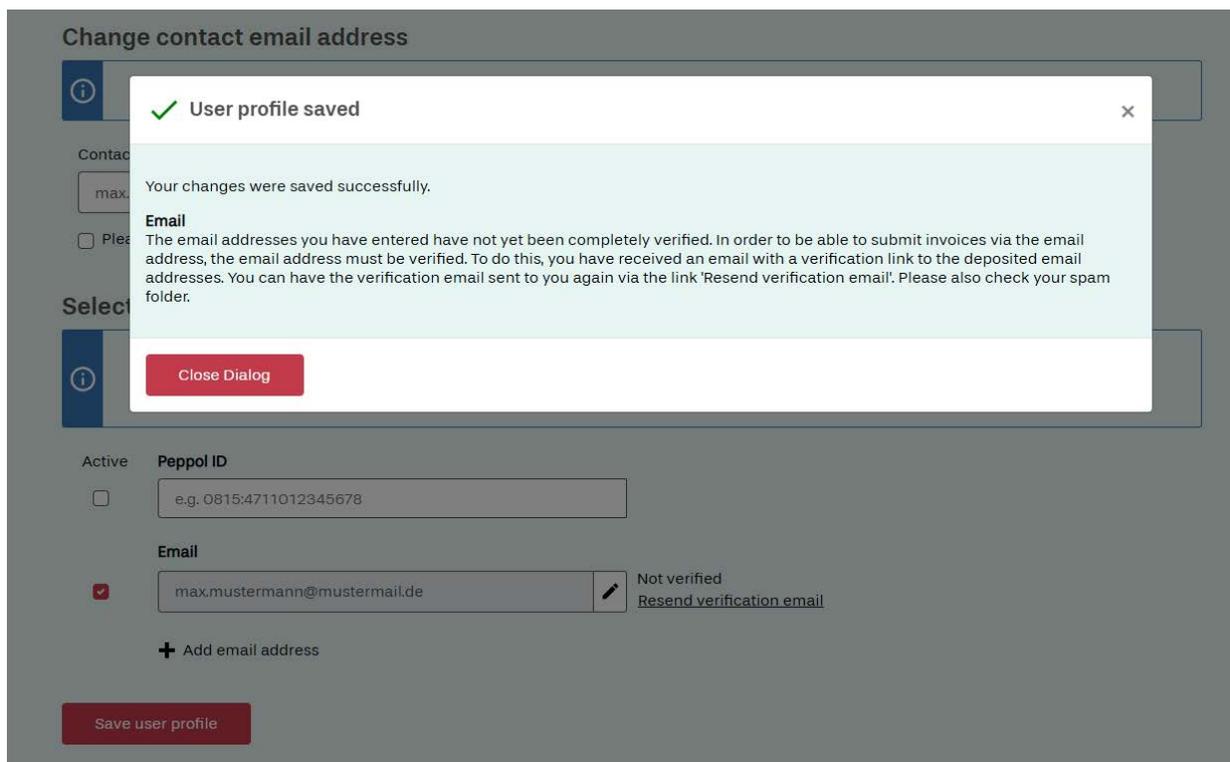


Figure 10.1 Activating email as a transmission method

To send an electronic invoice from your newly verified email address, attach the invoice as a file in XML format and send your email to xrechnung@portal.bund.de

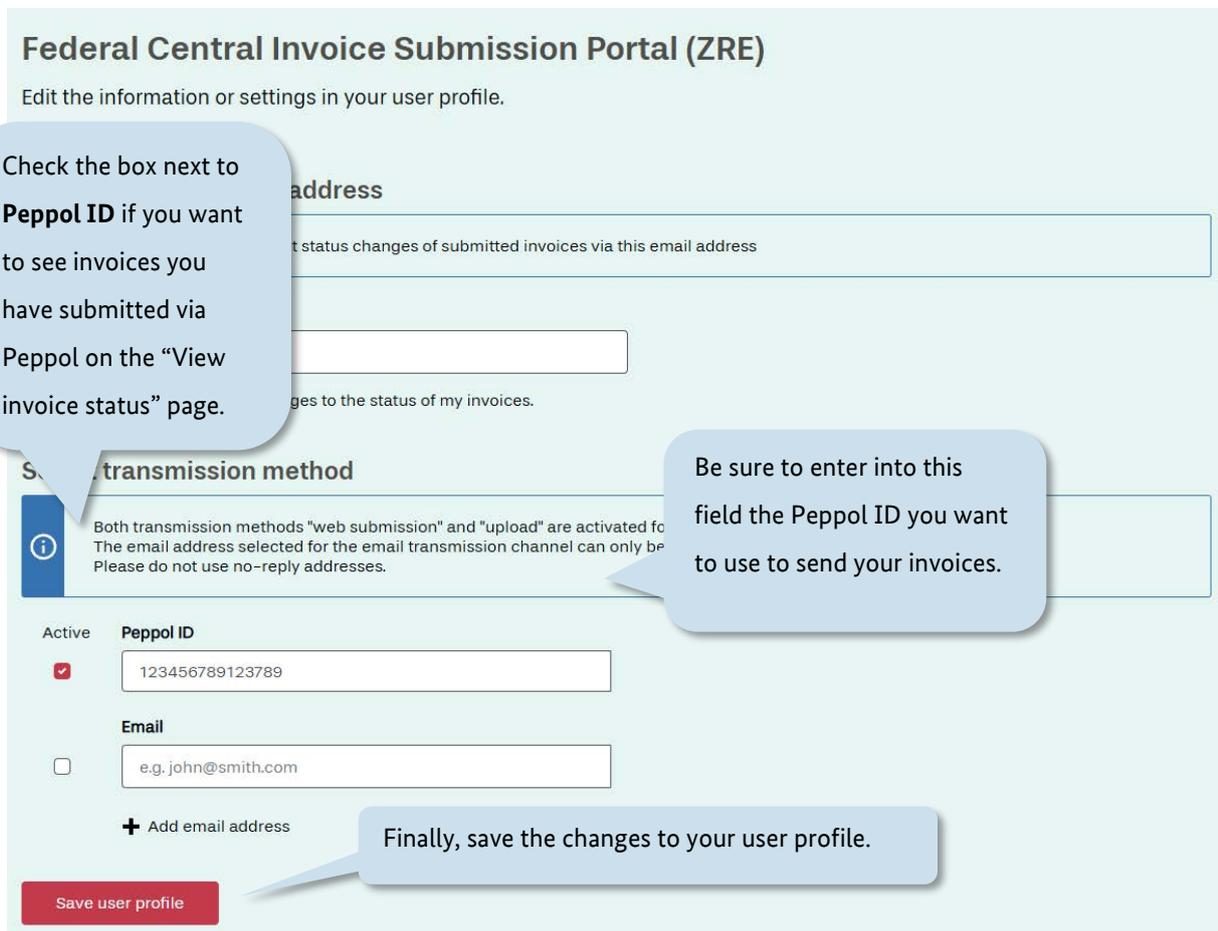
Please note the following points:

1. To submit invoices via email, you must send them from the email address you entered in your user profile as your transmission method.
2. Each email may only include one XML file. Otherwise the email will be rejected with an error message.
3. The XML file must be in a format recognised by the ZRE. For details of currently valid file formats, see the ZRE terms of use, which can be accessed via the link at the bottom of every page on the ZRE website.
4. You can check the “View invoice status” page to see whether an invoice you have submitted has been delivered (transmission method = ). In the “Details” column of the list, you can call up detailed information on each invoice you have submitted.
5. If, after multiple requests, you still haven’t received a link to verify your email address as a transmission method, please contact the help desk. Use the keyword “bounce” to describe the problem.

11 Submitting invoices via Peppol

The ZRE allows you to submit e-invoices via Peppol. To check invoices submitted via Peppol on the “View invoice status” page, you must select Peppol as the transmission method in your ZRE user profile. It is possible to submit invoices via Peppol without entering your Peppol ID in your ZRE user profile, but this is not recommended, because then your invoices will not be identified as belonging to your account and will not be shown on the “View invoice status” page.

(For better readability, the process for activating Peppol as a transmission method is shown using multiple screenshots. These are labelled “I”, “II” and “III” in the figure captions.)



Federal Central Invoice Submission Portal (ZRE)

Edit the information or settings in your user profile.

address

status changes of submitted invoices via this email address

changes to the status of my invoices.

Selected transmission method

Both transmission methods "web submission" and "upload" are activated for...
The email address selected for the email transmission channel can only be...
Please do not use no-reply addresses.

Active

Peppol ID

123456789123789

Email

e.g. john@smith.com

+ Add email address

Save user profile

Check the box next to **Peppol ID** if you want to see invoices you have submitted via Peppol on the "View invoice status" page.

Be sure to enter into this field the Peppol ID you want to use to send your invoices.

Finally, save the changes to your user profile.

Figure 11.1 Activating Peppol as a transmission method (I/III)

After saving the changes to your user profile, you will be notified that your Peppol ID has not yet been verified. The ZRE will generate a “verification attachment” for you to download.

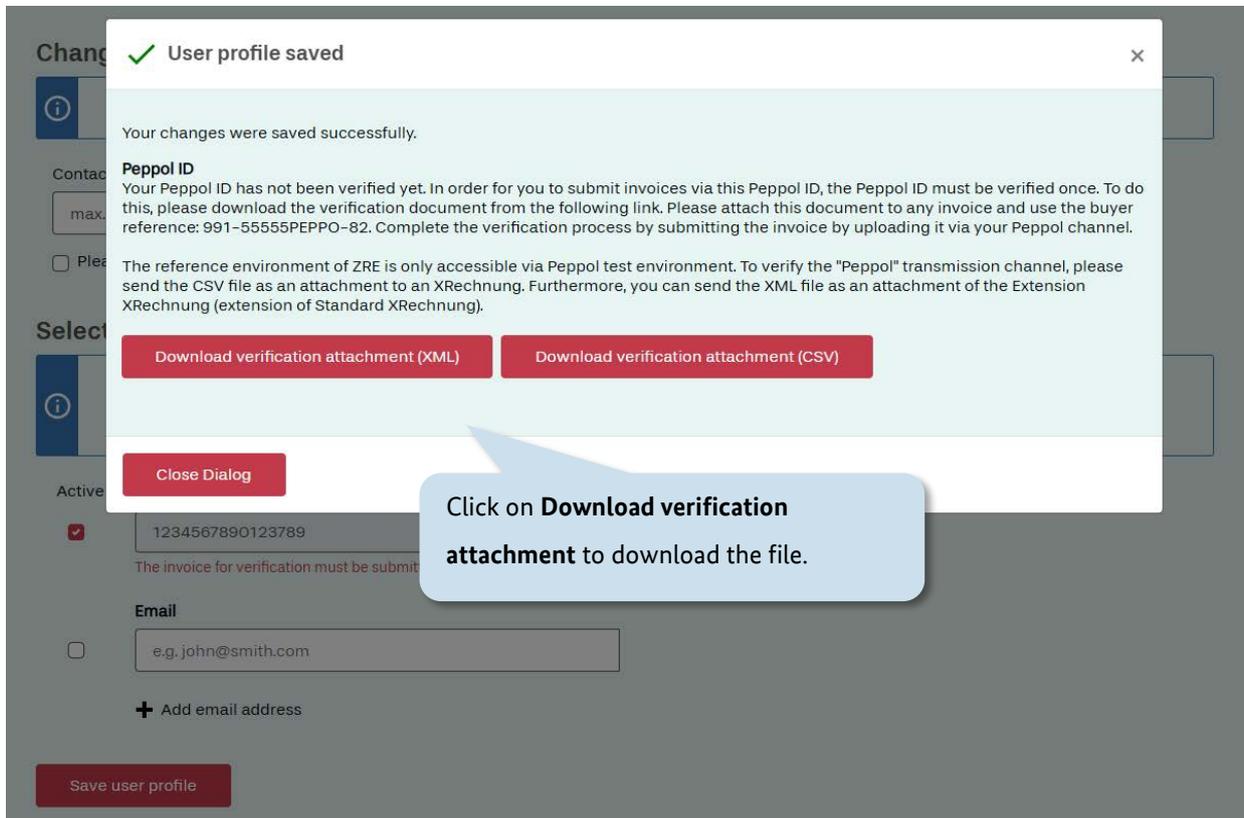


Figure 11.2 Activating Peppol as a transmission method (II/III)

Once you have downloaded and saved the verification attachment (XML version), embed the entire contents of the XML file (Base64-encoded, with padding) to any electronic invoice. Please use the appropriate syntax for the format of the invoice.

For invoices in the **UN/CEFACT** format, use the following path:

```
/rsm:CrossIndustryInvoice/rsm:SupplyChainTradeTransaction/ram:ApplicableHeaderTradeAgreement/ram:AdditionalReferencedDocument/ram:AttachmentBinaryObject
```

For invoices in the **UBL** format, use the following path:

```
/cac:AdditionalDocumentReference/cac:Attachment/EmbeddedDocumentBinaryObject
```

Example (UBL):

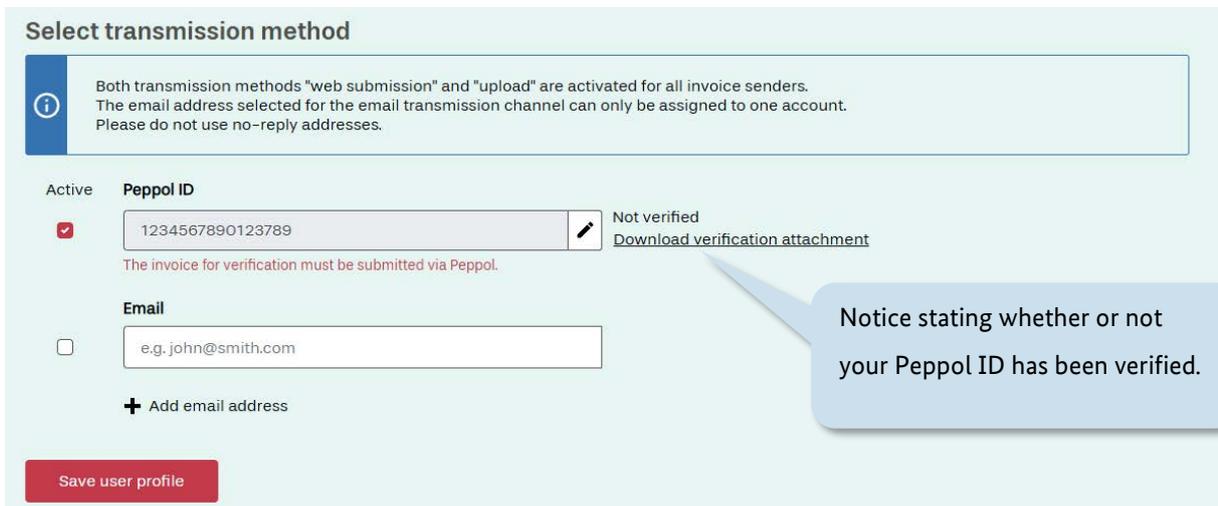
```
<cac:AdditionalDocumentReference>  
  <cbc:ID>some</cbc:ID>  
  <cac:Attachment>  
    <cbc:EmbeddedDocumentBinaryObject mimeType="application/xml"  
filename="Verifizierungs_Anhang_PEPPOL.xml">BASE_64_ENCODED_XML</cbc  
:EmbeddedDocumentBinaryObject>  
  </cac:Attachment>  
</cac:AdditionalDocumentReference>
```

Enter the buyer reference (*Leitweg-ID*) “991-55555PEPPO-82” into the invoice (see also section 4.1).

To verify your Peppol ID, send the invoice via Peppol using the Peppol receiver ID “0204:991-55555PEPPO-82”. Please note that verification attachments are currently only valid for 24 hours. However, you can download a new attachment at any time from your user profile page.

It is important that the invoice meets the criteria for the XRechnung standard. All required fields must therefore be filled in. The content of these fields (such as invoice recipient or invoice line items) is not important, since the invoice is only a verification document and will not be sent to a receiving system for payment.

Until your Peppol ID has been verified, the notice “Not verified” will appear next to the Peppol ID field in your user profile (see below):



Select transmission method

Both transmission methods "web submission" and "upload" are activated for all invoice senders. The email address selected for the email transmission channel can only be assigned to one account. Please do not use no-reply addresses.

Active **Peppol ID**

1234567890123789  Not verified
[Download verification attachment](#)

The invoice for verification must be submitted via Peppol.

Email

e.g. john@smith.com

+ Add email address

Save user profile

Figure 11.3 Activating Peppol as a transmission method (III/III)

As soon as the verification invoice has been transmitted successfully, your Peppol ID will be recorded as verified in your user profile. After this, any invoices you send via Peppol using your Peppol ID will be displayed on the “View invoice status” page.

You can find more information about Peppol, such as the format of the Peppol ID, at

<https://en.e-rechnung-bund.de/transmission-methods/peppol/>

12 Testing the ZRE portal

The instructions provided in this guide refer to the live/production environment of the ZRE portal. The live ZRE portal should be used only when creating and submitting **genuine e-invoices**. **Under no circumstances should you use the live ZRE portal for test or practice purposes.**

To **practise** operating the ZRE portal (e.g. to practise creating invoices or managing your user account) you should use the **test environment** of the portal, which can be accessed here: ref.xrechnung.bund.de. In the test environment you can even practise sending invoices via email using the address ref.xrechnung@portal.bund.de (see section 10 on submitting invoices via email). Invoices submitted in the test environment are not processed – and will not be paid!

Please ensure that you always use the live ZRE portal, not the test environment, to submit your genuine invoices.

To use the test environment, you will need to create a separate user account, for which you will need to register as an invoice sender (as with your regular account).

Since the test environment is used for testing and development purposes, it may differ from the live portal.

Any questions?

The website www.en.e-rechnung-bund.de has a lot of helpful information about e-invoicing.

The FAQs section provides answers to many different questions. If you don't find an answer to your question there, please contact the help desk.

Point of contact for questions about the ZRE:

Help desk: +49 30 2598 4436

Email: sendersupport-xrechnung@bdr.de

Contact form: <https://en.e-rechnung-bund.de/contact-request/>

Availability: Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 16:00