

CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES- IRE214

Maya Hadar

Fall 2018

Session 2: Germany

Germany: Introduction

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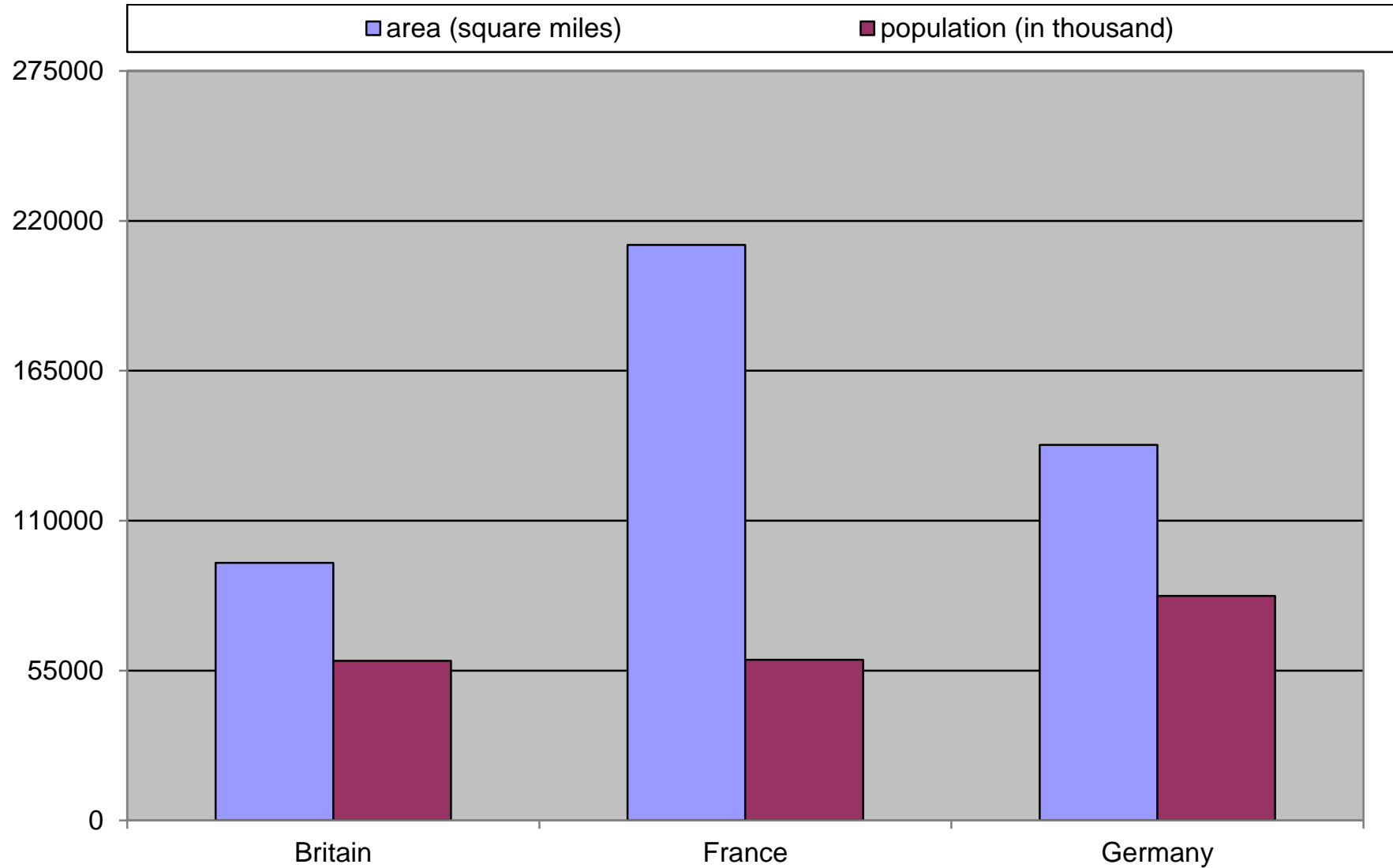
- Germany's Federal System
- Germany's Political System
- German Economy
- German Foreign Policy



Area/Population



3



Germany's Federal System



4

- Federal government (Bund)
- 16 states (Länder)
- Bavaria > Bremen
- Richest:
 - North Rhine-Westphalia
 - Bavaria
 - Baden-Württemberg
- Poorest:
 - Bremen
 - Saarland
 - Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



Germany's Federal System



5

- Most Populated:
 - Nordrhein-Westfalen (NRW)
 - Bavaria
 - Baden Württemberg
- Least Populated:
 - Bremen
 - Saarland
 - Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (Vorpommern)/Hamburg



Germany's Federal System



6

- Federalism => division of power => territorial
- In Germany the power is shared between the central government and the governments of the 16 states (Länder);
 - 10 states in the West
 - 6 states in the East
- Other federal systems => United States (Switzerland: cantons)



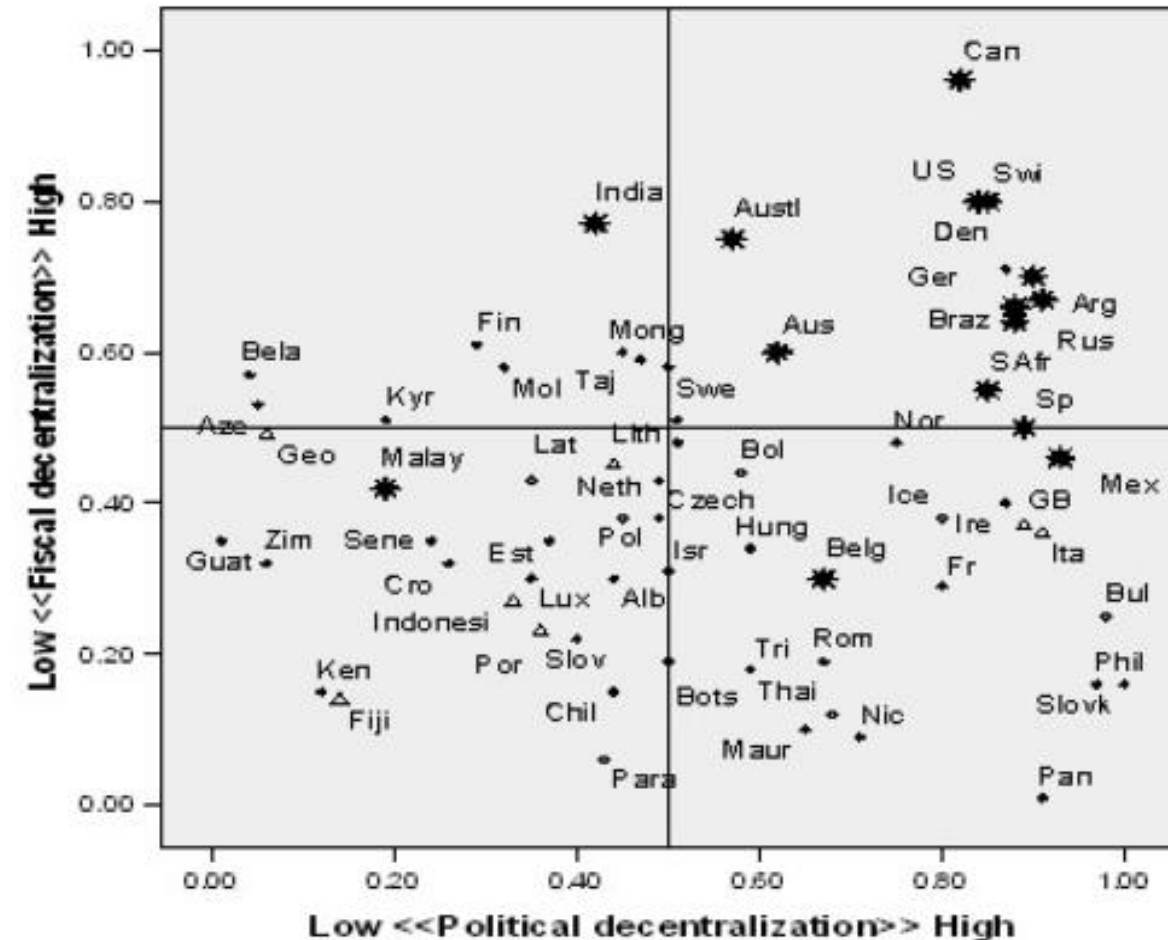
Germany's Federal System



7

- Many differences between the Länder (historical traditions, social structure, dialect, economy)
- State jurisdiction => education, culture, law enforcement, regional planning (More governmental overlap than in the U.S)
- * Federal

Fiscal and Political Decentralization



Germany's Parliamentary System



8

- Central institutes of the Federal government:
 - **Bundestag** (lower house)
 - **Bundesrat** (upper house)
- Chancellor => chief executive + head of state
- President => ceremonial role, mostly
- Germany's constitution: Basic Law => Germany is a welfare state (unemployment, sick, poor, disabled: state benefits)



Bundestag (Parliament: Lower House)



9

- Basic Law, 1949 => all and only major parties are represented in the Bundestag
 - Proportional representation
 - Traditionally done in continental Europe
 - Avoid fragmentation in the party system (Weimar Republic)
 - Avoid the rise of extremists small parties





Bundestag (Parliament: Lower House)

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- Legislative branch
- 598 base seats
- Directly elected by citizens every 4 years
- Members of this house elect the Chancellor
 - Parliamentary Democracy: leader is elected through the legislature, not directly by the people



Bundestag (Parliament: Lower House)



- Hybrid electoral rules =>
 - Candidate in their constituency (local)
 - Similar to American's congressional representative in the district- single member district
 - Candidate with plurality of votes wins
 - 299 constituencies in Germany (half the Bundestag)

Stimmzettel
für die Wahl zum Deutschen Bundestag im Wahlkreis 136 Kreisfreie Stadt Wiesbaden am 2. Dezember 1990

Sie haben 2 Stimmen

hier 1 Stimme
für die Wahl
eines/einer Wahlkreis-
abgeordneten
Erststimme

hier 1 Stimme
für die Wahl
einer Landesliste (Partei)
- mitgezählte Stimmen für die Verteilung der
Sitze insgesamt auf die einzelnen Parteien -
Zweitstimme

1	Rönsch, Hannelore Angestellte 6250 Wiesbaden Teil von Kreiswahl Nr. 36	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>
2	Wiesmann-Zeul, Hildemarie Lehrerin 6212 Wiesbaden Wahlkreiswahl Nr. 37	Sozialistischer Partei Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>
3	Koch, Ulrich Friedrich Schichtleiter 6210 Wiesbaden Poststraße 27	GRÜNE ODER GRÜNEN	<input type="radio"/>
4	Dr. Funke-Schmitt-Rink, Margret Mitarbeiterin 6210 Wiesbaden Rosenberger Nr. 1	F.D.P. Freie Demokratische Partei	<input type="radio"/>
5			
6	Langer, Herbert Ordnungs- 6210 Wiesbaden Rosenberger Nr. 27	REP Die REPUBLICANER	<input type="radio"/>
7	Deubert, Ernst Wilhelm Bauarbeiter 6210 Wiesbaden Rosenberger Nr. 27a	National demokratische Partei Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>
8			
9			

<input type="radio"/>	CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	1
<input type="radio"/>	SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	2
<input type="radio"/>	GRÜNE	Die GRÜNEN In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	3
<input type="radio"/>	FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	4
<input type="radio"/>	Die GRÜNEN	Die GRÜNEN (früher vom Sozialisten-Schutz Bund) („GRÜNE“) In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	5
<input type="radio"/>	REP	Die REPUBLICANER In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	6
<input type="radio"/>	NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	7
<input type="radio"/>	ÖDP	Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	8
<input type="radio"/>	PDS/ Linke Liste	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus/Linke Liste In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden In: 6210 Wiesbaden	9

Bundestag (Parliament: Lower House)



- Hybrid electoral rules =>
 - Political Party (seats)
 - Select a party at the federal level
 - All votes are aggregated nationwide
 - Parties put together lists of candidates
 - Results determine which candidates make it to the remaining 299 seats (party representatives)
 - Parties need at least 5% of the votes in a state to qualify for a seat

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Erststimme

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2	Wiesmann-Zeul, Hildemarie Lehrerin SPD Kreiswahl Nr. 37 Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>
3	Koch, Ulrich Friedrich Schriftführer GRÜNE Kreiswahl Nr. 38 DIE GRÜNEN	<input type="radio"/>
4	Dr. Funke-Schmitt-Rink, Margret Musiklehrin FDP Kreiswahl Nr. 39 Freie Demokratische Partei	<input type="radio"/>
6	Langer, Herbert Oberstadtrat REP Kreiswahl Nr. 41 DIE REPUBLICANER	<input type="radio"/>
7	Deubert, Ernst Wilhelm Rentner NPD Kreiswahl Nr. 42 Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>

1	<input type="radio"/> CDU Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands Kreiswahl Nr. 36 Kreiswahl Nr. 36	1
2	<input type="radio"/> SPD Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands Kreiswahl Nr. 37 Kreiswahl Nr. 37	2
3	<input type="radio"/> GRÜNE DIE GRÜNEN Kreiswahl Nr. 38 Kreiswahl Nr. 38	3
4	<input type="radio"/> FDP Freie Demokratische Partei Kreiswahl Nr. 39 Kreiswahl Nr. 39	4
5	<input type="radio"/> DIE GRAUEN DIE GRAUEN (Freie Demokratische Partei) Kreiswahl Nr. 40 Kreiswahl Nr. 40	5
6	<input type="radio"/> REP DIE REPUBLICANER Kreiswahl Nr. 41 Kreiswahl Nr. 41	6
7	<input type="radio"/> NPD Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands Kreiswahl Nr. 42 Kreiswahl Nr. 42	7
8	<input type="radio"/> ÖDP Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei Kreiswahl Nr. 43 Kreiswahl Nr. 43	8
9	<input type="radio"/> PDS/ Linke Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus/Linke Liste Kreiswahl Nr. 44 Kreiswahl Nr. 44	9

Bundestag (Parliament: Lower House)



13

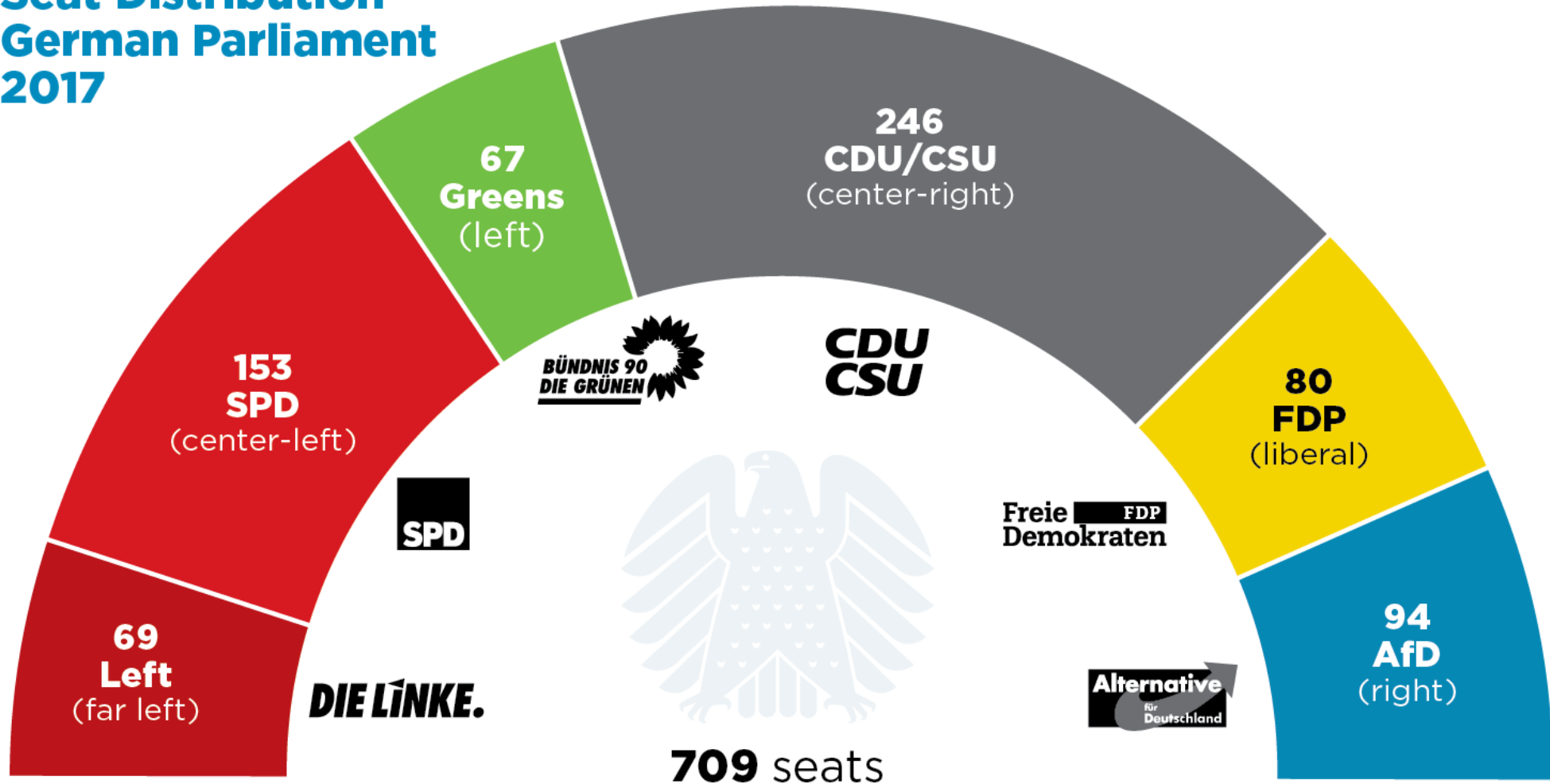
- What if Germans split their votes (vote for a candidate from one party and for a different party?)
- “Overhang” or “balance seats”- extra seats which ensure that every candidate who was directly elected gets a seat while political parties are still proportionally represented based on the number of votes they received
- German state’s population is taken into consideration when votes are converted to seats



Bundestag (Parliament: Lower House)



Seat Distribution German Parliament 2017



Bundesrat (Parliament: Upper House)



15

- Represents states' governments in the federal level;
- 69 (3 - 6 per state) Appointed by state government
- Over represents small states
 - Bremen, 700,000 people= 3 seats
 - North Rhine Westphalia, 18 mil= 6 seats
- Mainly concerned with laws that affect states (education & local government)
- Bundesrat's president is Germany's vice President



The Chancellor



16

- The Chancellor is the chief executive, head of Government (like an PM)
 - Defines government policy
 - Heads the Cabinet (recommends the formal appointment/dismissal of ministers)
- Elected by the Bundestag (legislature)
- May be subjected to Constructive Vote of No Confidence (1982)
- Currently Angela Merkel (since 2005)



The German Federal President



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- The president is the official head of state;
- Usually a moderate;
- Elected by the Federal Convention (federal assembly or *Bundesversammlung*)
 - Sole purpose is to elect the president
 - Consists of all Bundestag members and an equal number of states delegates elected by the Länder
- 5 years term, Re-electable only once;
- Previously seen as “retirement office” or as reward for service



Frank-Walter Steinmeier
(since March 2017), SPD

The German Federal President



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- Has important “reserve powers” (A81 Basic Law)
 - In case of legislative emergency he can accept legislation without Bundestag’s approval
- Represents Germany in matters of international law, concludes treaties with foreign states, accredits diplomats (A 59(1) Basic Law)
- Signs all legislation and can technically veto a law on substantive constitutional grounds (exercised 8 times thus far)



Frank-Walter Steinmeier
(since March 2017), SPD

The German Federal President



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- Has the right to pardon criminals for federal crimes
- Dissolves the Bundestag if a Chancellor loses a motion of confidence
- Appoint/dismiss federal judges, military officers & federal civil servants
- Mediator of national emergencies



Frank-Walter Steinmeier
(since March 2017), SPD

The German Cabinet



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- *Bundeskabinett/Bundesregierung*
- **Chief executive body**, consists of the Chancellor & cabinet ministers
- Its composition is a major issue in building a coalition
- The cabinet ministers have the freedom to carry out their duties independently, but they must follow the Chancellor's directive
- Ministers may dismiss the Chancellor with constructive vote of no confidence (must elect a new one)



The German Cabinet



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- *Bundesminister* (Federal Ministers) appointed by the president based on the recommendation of the chancellor.
- 6/11 women (43.8%):
 - Education and research
 - Environment, nature, conservation & nuclear safety
 - Family affairs, senior citizens, women and youth
 - Food and agriculture
 - Defense
 - Justice and consumer protection (non German parent)

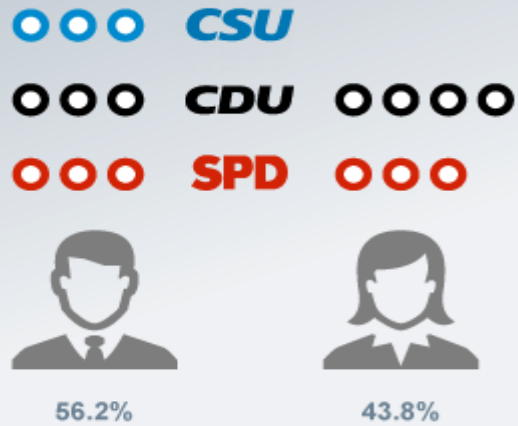




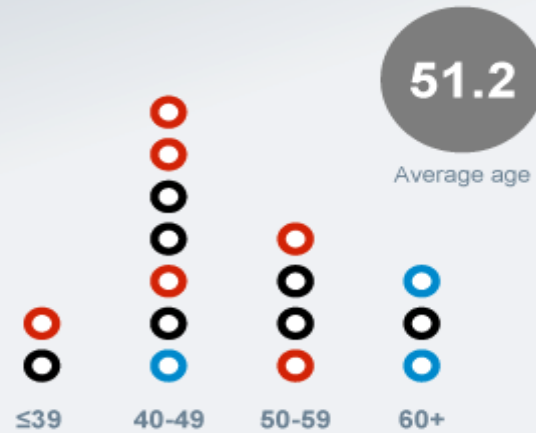
The German Cabinet

Members of the German cabinet

Men vs. women



Age groups

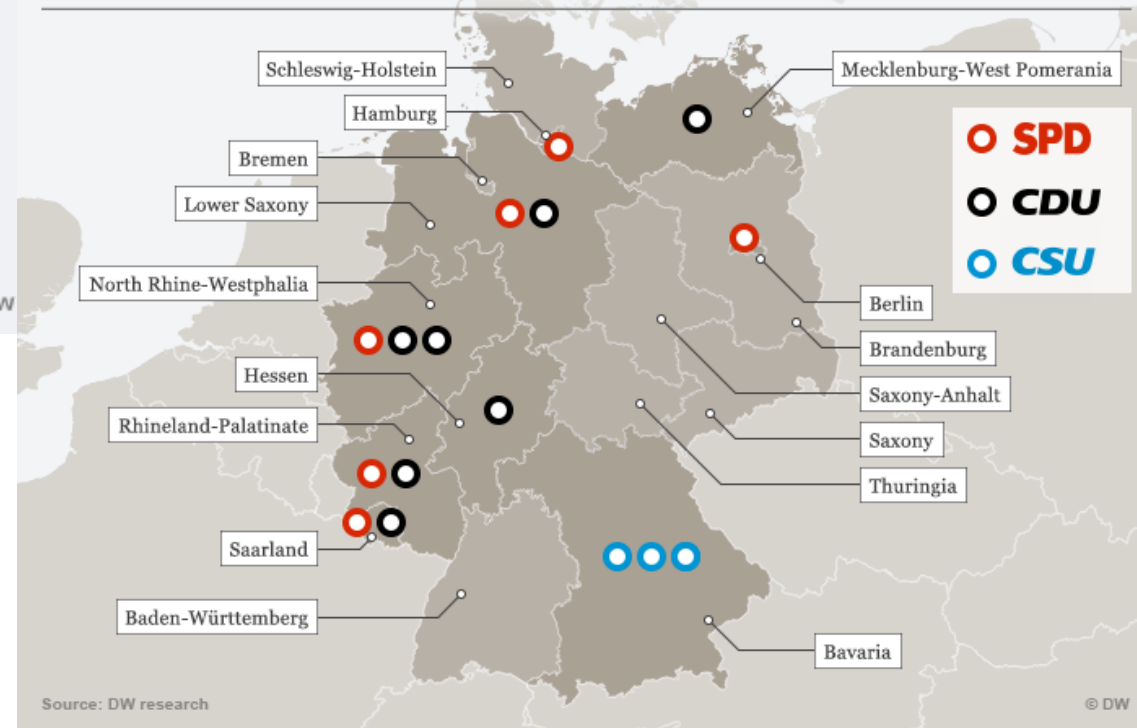


Source: DW research, Bundestag

- 7 years older than the German population
- Hold a university degree
 - 5 have Phd, 1 Prof M.D
 - 6: poli-sci, 4:law,
 - 3: economics/business,
 - 2: Medicine

- East underrepresented
- Saarland overrepresented (1 m<)

What states are the cabinet members from?



Federal Constitutional Court



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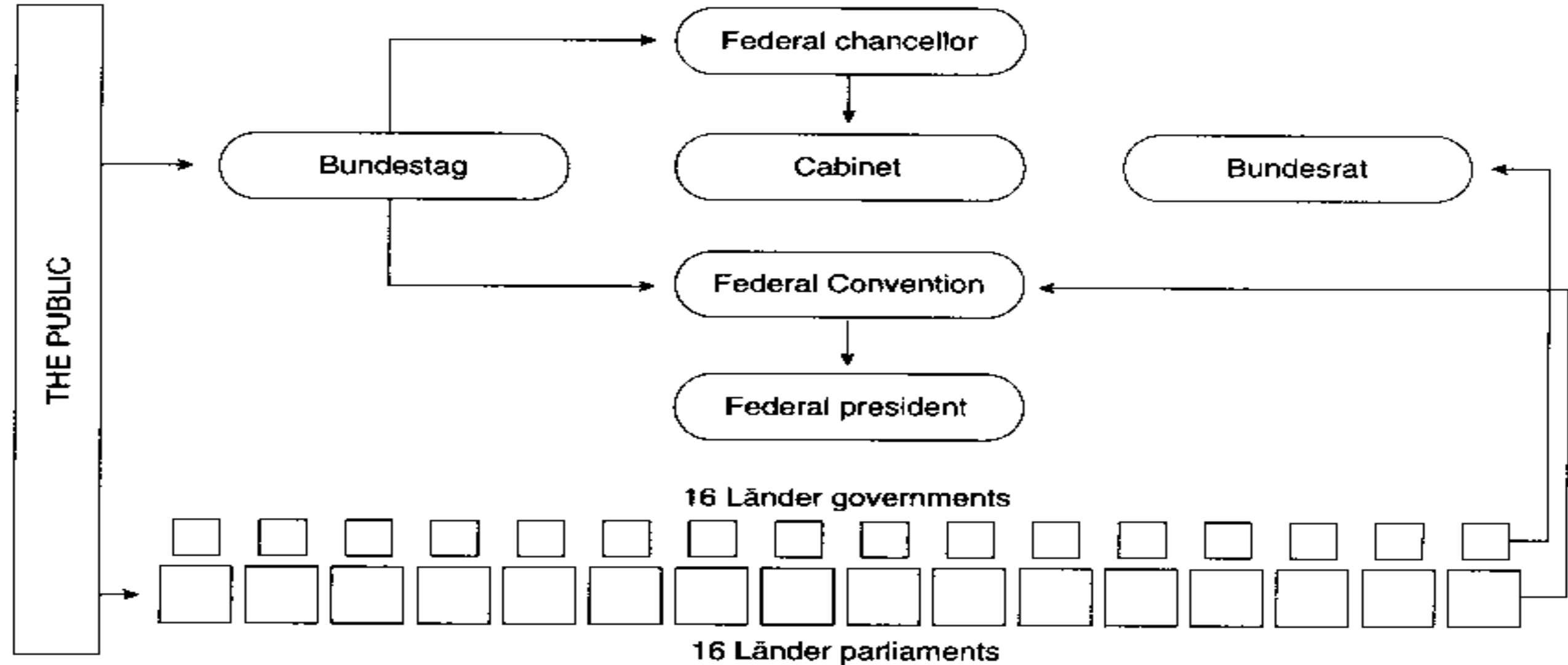
- Reviews the constitutionality of legislation
- Can limit the decision-making power of the Bundestag
- Hears:
 - Constitutional issues that are brought before it (also by individuals)
 - Cases referred by a lower court
 - Federal or state governments or 1/3 of Bundestag deputies can request review of law



Germany's Federal System



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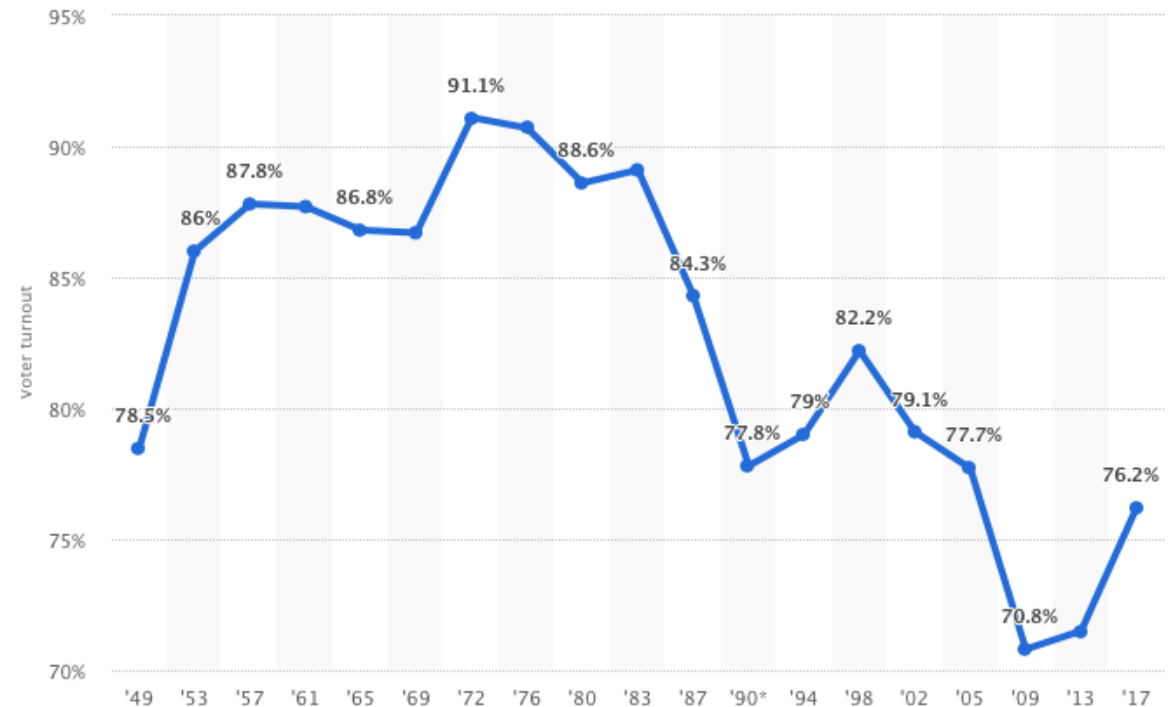
Citizen Participation & rights



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- Citizens are treated equally and have the right to worship as they choose
- Citizens enjoy the freedom of speech, right to a fair trial, the right to own property, and the right to security
- Citizens do not directly elect the leaders (only the Bundestag)

Voter turnout at general election in Germany



German Parties



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- The 2 major parties are the CDU (Christian democratic union) and the SPD (Social democratic party), but neither can easily achieve a parliamentary majority

- Other parties include:

- CSU (sister party to the CDU)
- FDP (Free Democratic Party)
- Green Party
- Left Party (Linke)



- Since 1966, all federal governments have been formed of at least two parties. Currently, the CDU is in power in a coalition with the SPD

German Parties- CDU



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- Center right Christian Democratic Union of Germany is the main conservative party
- Originates in the Catholic Center Party founded after the WW2
- Traditionally supported by Catholics, nowadays also by Germans with other/no religion
- Merkel, CDU leader and Chancellor (since 2005) is a protestant who was raised in former East Germany



German Parties- CDU



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- Supports:
 - Conservative social values
 - Social market economy (free market whilst ensuring social quality)
- CDU has had 2 Grand Coalitions with the SPD in the past.
- CDU's preferred partner is Free Democratic Party (1949–56, 1961–66, 1982–98, and 2009–13)



German Parties- SPD



29

- The center left Social Democratic Party of Germany originated in the 19-century labor movement
- Traditionally representing the working class, supported by protestant and industrial cities
- Party platform is social democracy, believing in:
 - A strengthened social market economy
 - A welfare state
 - Civil rights
 - European integration



German Parties- SPD



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- Was the largest party in Germany until the last decade
- Lost voters when the last SPD Chancellor made extensive welfare cuts in the early 2000s and later when the left party was formed
- Was last in power in 2009



Smaller German Parties



31

- The **CSU**, Christian Social Union of Bavaria party, sister party to CDU;
 - Generally more socially conservative than the CDU;
 - Founded in 1945, governed Bavaria since 1949;
- CDU/CSU => the union parties (Unionsparteien) or the Union, center-right Christian democratic political alliance
- Union due to German Federal Electoral Law: parties who share the same basic political goals mustn't compete



Smaller German Parties



32

- Party (**FDP**) is a liberal party founded in 1948
- Supporting:
 - Economic and social liberalism
 - Free market economy
 - Civil liberties and human rights
 - Internationalism
- Shifted from the center to the center-right
- Has been the junior partner in coalitions with both major parties and, as such, has actually been in power for longer than any other party



Smaller German Parties



33

- **The Alliance '90/Green Party, formed in 1993;**
 - The environment & pacifisms were cornerstone issues, but pacifism was dropped when it joined the Federal government in coalition with SPD in 1998;
 - Supports:
 - Alternative energy
 - Sustainable development & green transport policy
- **Mainly supported by higher income city dwellers**

- **Die Linke** (Left Party), formed in 2007;
 - The most left-wing (and fourth largest) party in the *Bundestag*;



Smaller German Parties



34

- ▣ **Die Linke** (Left Party), formed in 2007;
- ▣ The most left-wing (and smallest) party in the *Bundestag*;
- ▣ Supports:
 - ▣ Increased government public spending
 - ▣ Higher taxes for corporations and high earners;
- ▣ Mainly supported by older Germans.

The logo for the political party Die Linke, featuring the text "DIE LINKE." in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a solid red rectangular background. The letter "I" in "LINKE" has a unique design with a white triangle pointing upwards from its top bar.

Smaller German Parties



35

- The neo-Nazi National Democratic Party (NPD), the nationalist German People's Union (DVU) and The Republicans are the far right parties
- The **Alternative for Germany**, right-wing populist & Eurosceptic political party
 - Founded in April 2013, won 4.7% of the votes in 2013 federal election
 - In 2014, won 7.1% and 7/96 German seats in the European election
 - Gained representation in 10 of the 16 German state parliaments



Smaller German Parties



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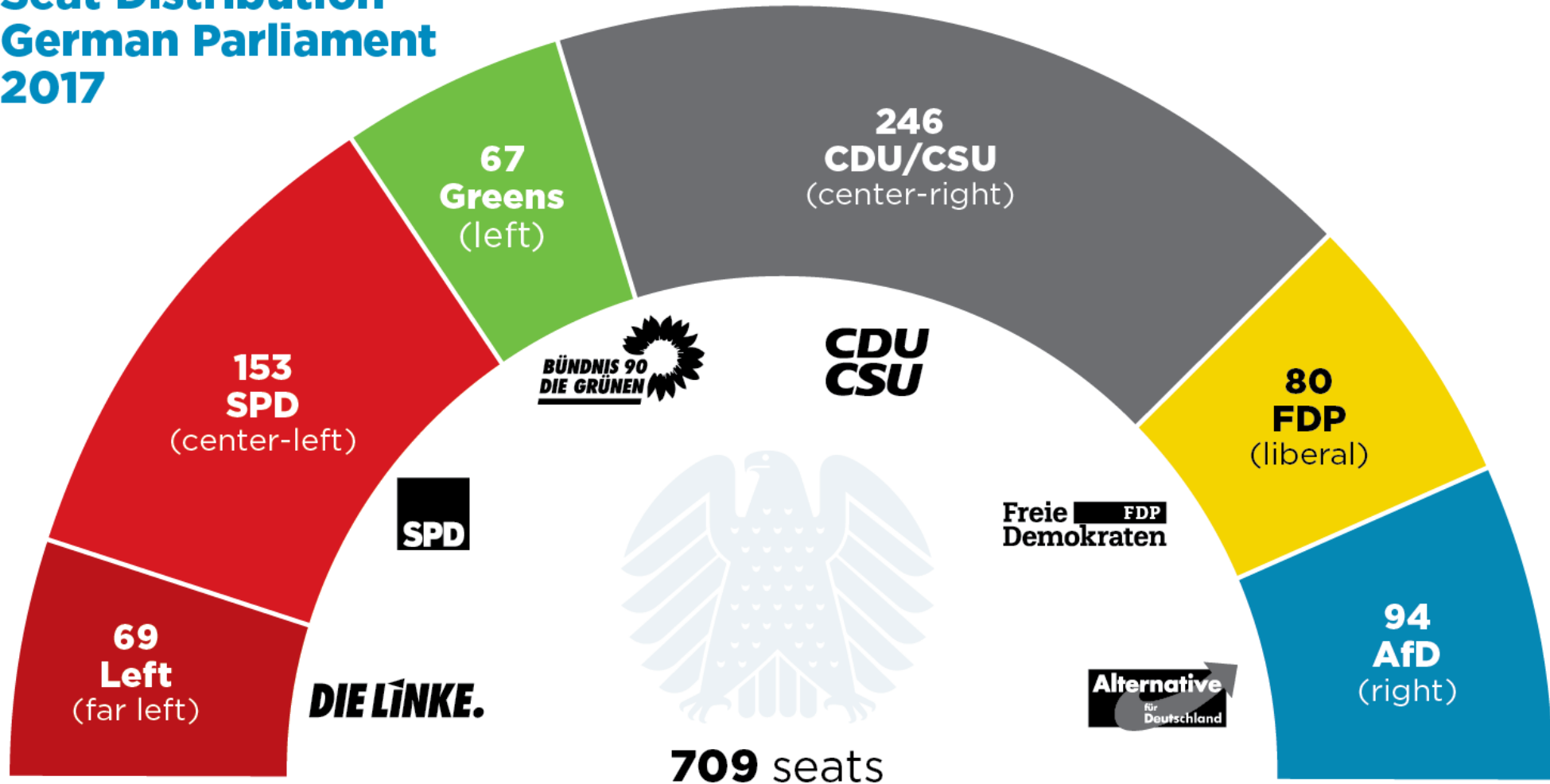
- **The German Pirate Party** (*Piratenpartei Deutschland*) was founded in 2006 after similar parties were founded in France and Sweden
- Broke through into national politics in 2011, winning several seats at state level
- Supports:
 - Internet freedom (part of n int. movement to shape the “digital revolution”)
 - Political transparency, direct democracy
 - Anti-corruption
- Diminishing popularity, so far failed to win a seat at the federal level



Bundestag (Parliament: Lower House)



Seat Distribution German Parliament 2017



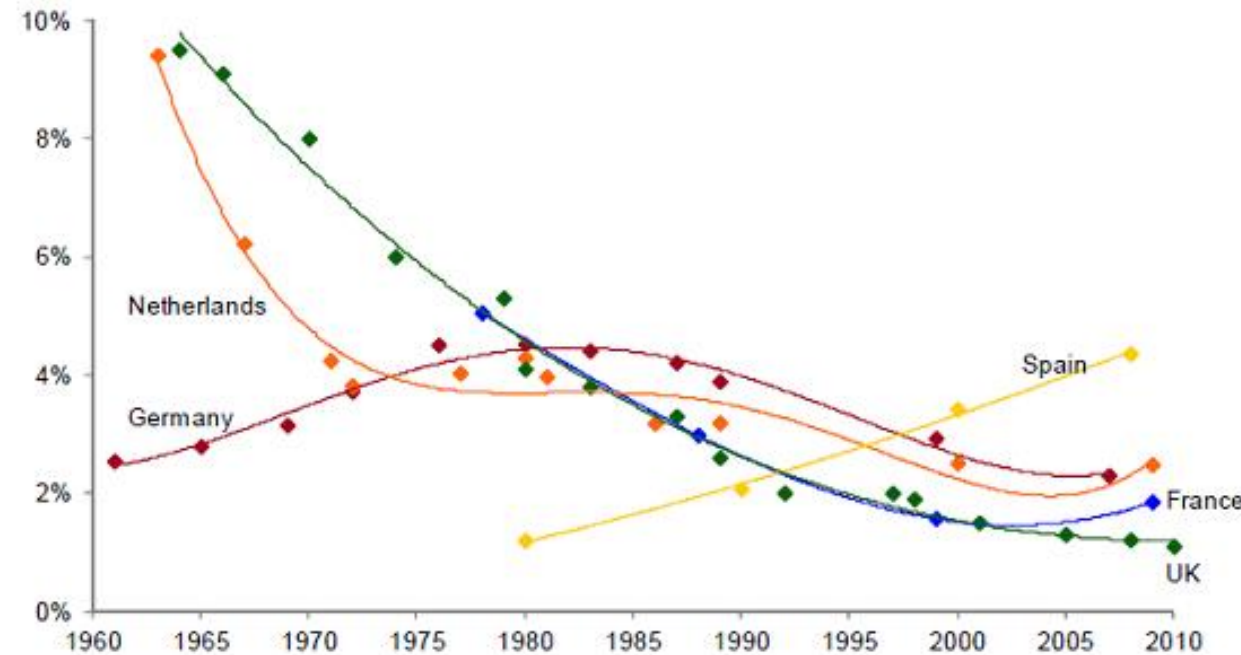
German Political Parties



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- Party funding comes from membership dues
- The political parties receive free campaign advertising on public television and radio stations for European, national & local elections
- All major parties experienced a decrease in party membership in the early 1990s, possibly a result of the increased general distrust of political parties

Trends in Party membership in Europe-low membership countries

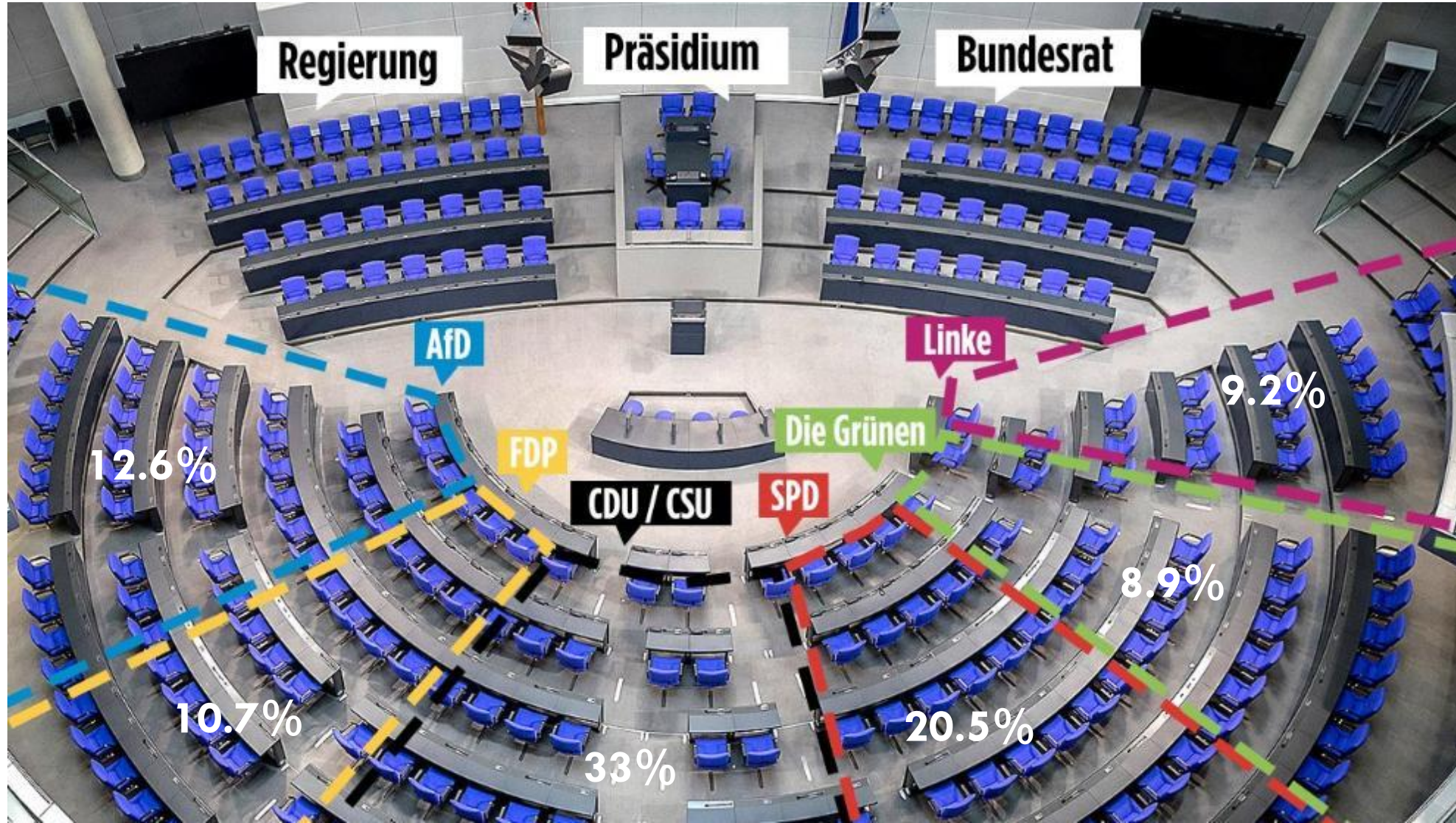


Liberal Democrat Voice 2012

Current Bundestag (2017)



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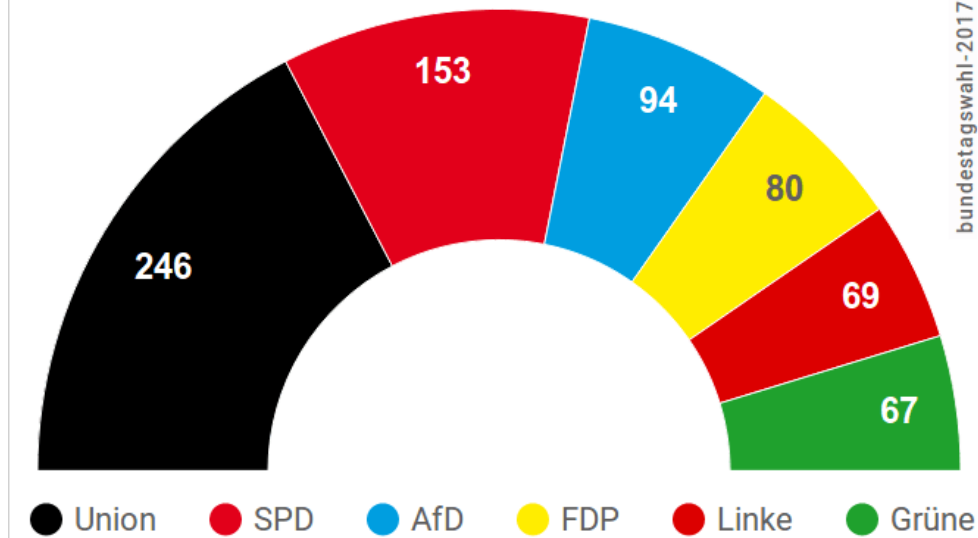
Current Bundestag (2017)



40

- 61,5 Million Germans could vote
- (3 Million first time voters)
- 299 constituencies (*Wahlkreise*), 4828 candidates, representing 42 political parties
- The two big parties, CDU/CSU and SPD suffered severe losses- second worst and worst result ever (respectively);
- Many votes went to smaller parties

Sitzverteilung im 19. Deutschen Bundestag
Ergebnis der Bundestagswahl 2017 (Vorläufiges Endergebnis)



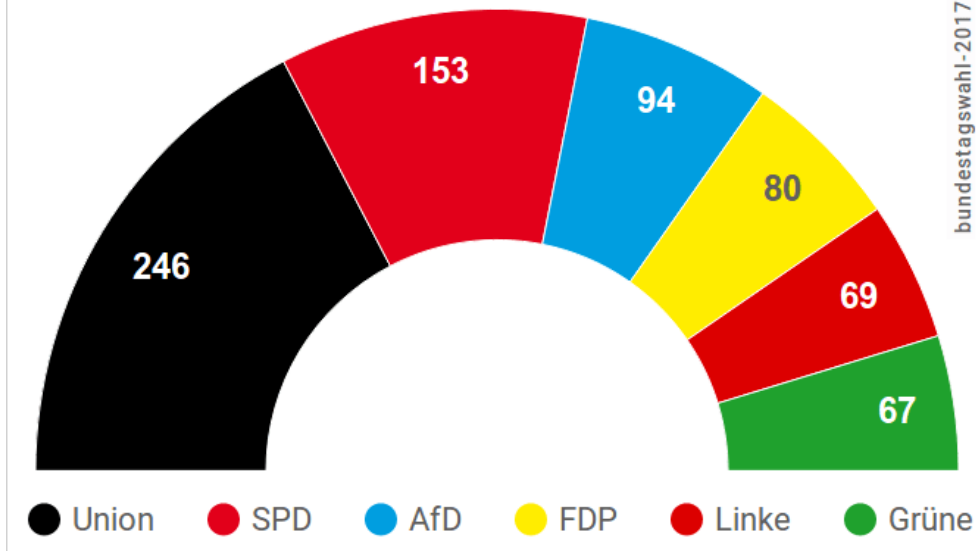
Current Bundestag (2017)



41

- AfD (Alternative for Germany), right-wing populist party got in the Bundestag: big shift in German politics: first far-right party to win seats in parliament since 1950s
- Merkel's (4th candidacy) CDU/CSU only reached 33.0% but won the highest number of seats (no realistic coalition without them)

Sitzverteilung im 19. Deutschen Bundestag
Ergebnis der Bundestagswahl 2017 (Vorläufiges Endergebnis)

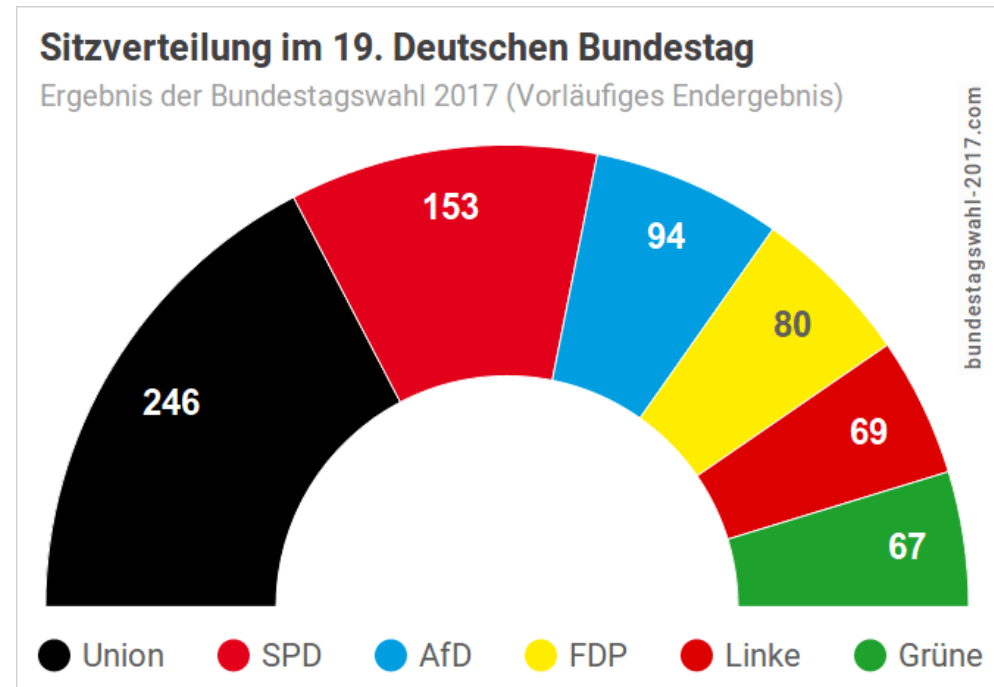


Current Bundestag (2017)



42

- All parties in the Bundestag ruled out a coalition with the AfD, the only options for a majority coalition were:
 - “Jamaican” coalition (CDU/CSU, FDP, Greens)
 - A grand Coalition with SPD
- Coalition talks between the three “Jamaican” parties broke and for the first time minority coalitions were seriously discussed;



Current Bundestag (2017)

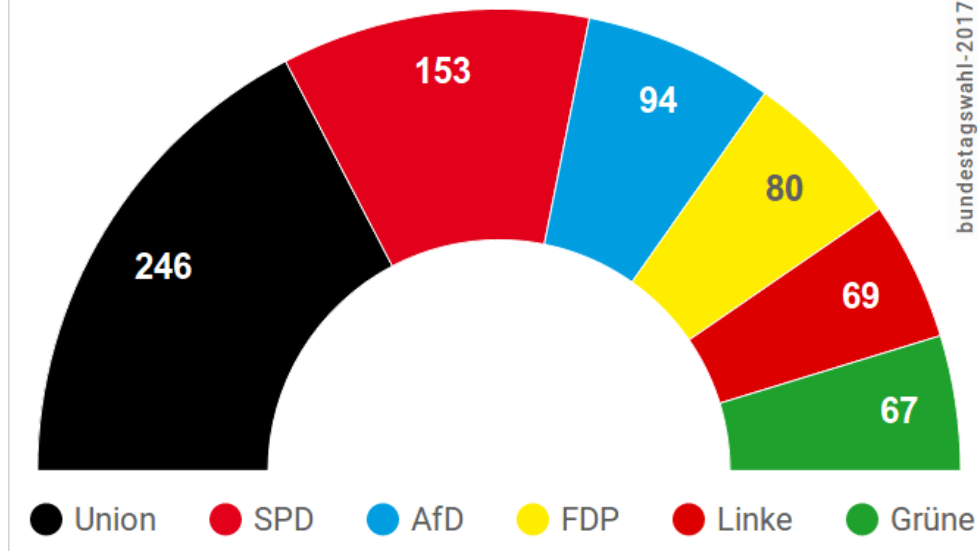


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- President Steinmeier invited leaders of all parties for talks (first President to do so)
- CDU/CSU and SPD agreed to renew the grand coalition and re-election of Angela Merkel as chancellor

Sitzverteilung im 19. Deutschen Bundestag

Ergebnis der Bundestagswahl 2017 (Vorläufiges Endergebnis)



Germany Economy



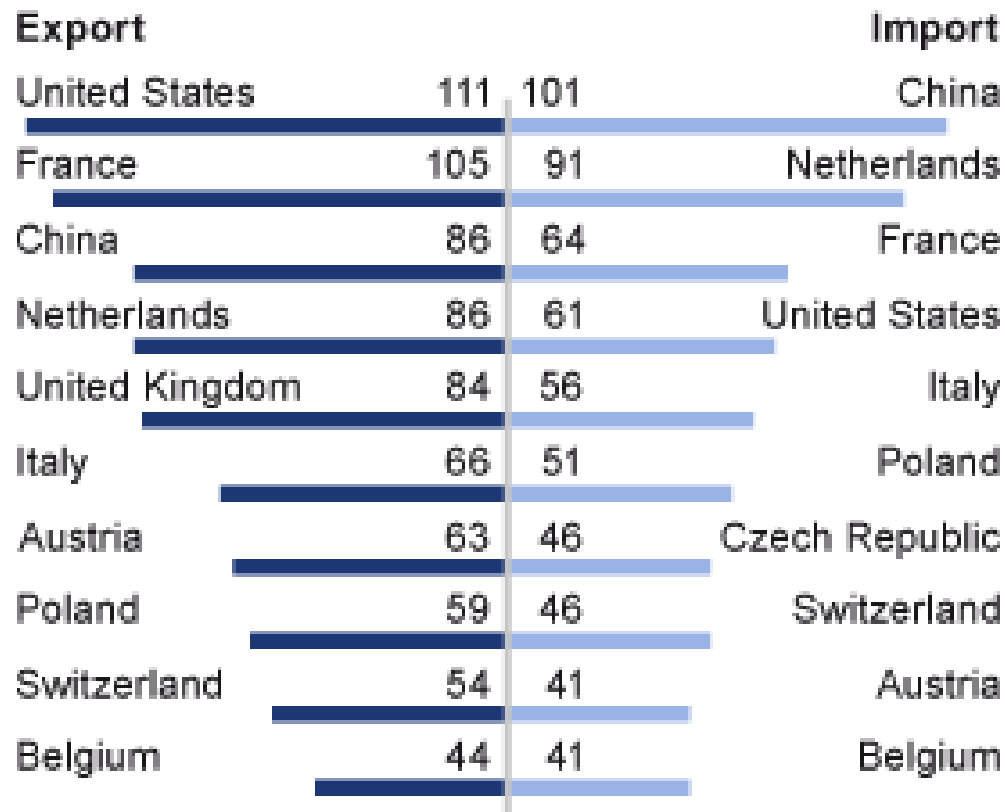
- Third largest economy in the world
 - Behind the U.S and Japan
 - Largest in Europe
- Remarkable achievements in:
 - Postwar economic development
 - Postwar democratic consolidation



A Global Economic Power



Germany's major trading partners, 2017
in EUR bn



Preliminary result

© Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis), 2018

- Main German trading goods (2017)
EUR bn:
 - Motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers 235
 - Machinery and equipment 185
 - Chemicals and chemical products 111
 - Electrical equipment 83
 - Basic pharmaceutical products 76
 - Other transport equipment 58
 - Basic metals 54 basic food products 54
 - Rubber + plastic products 46

A Global Economic Power



- Main exporter, produces **much more** than it consumes
- Needs markets => free trade within the EU
- 2008 economic crisis (Greece, Italy, Spain, Cyprus, Portugal)- demand for German products declined- 'saved' by the US
- China, Korea, India- major demand centers for German goods
- Depended on Russia for energy (Nord Stream 2 pipeline), Iran as an alternative?





German Foreign Policy

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- Oriented towards maintaining freedom, peace & prosperity
- Promoting democracy and safeguarding the future of the global community
- Driven by commercial interests
- Liberal Trade Policy (France- significant partner in Europe)
- **European level =>**
 - Deepening & enlarging the European Union
 - further development of partnership-relations with the regions bordering the EU (development and stability)
 - Promote European integration



German US relations

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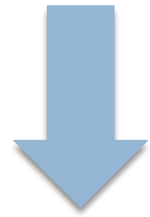
- Currently the US is Germany's biggest export market
 - Used to be a very close ally outside of the EU until Trump
 - Sent German troops to Afghanistan to support American Troops
- Current divergence => European exception from US' aluminum tariffs, Iran nuclear deal, intervention in Syria, sharing NATO expenses
- The 'responsible adult' in Europe



German US relations



- America First mission => reducing trade with Germany (started under Obama) + protectionist trade policies – a threat to German companies (automobile)



Trade war



Next Session...

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- ◆ Marks
- ◆ Hegel
- ◆ Luther's Protestant reformation
- ◆ Regional dialects
- ◆ ...





Thank You For Your Attention!