

IREb2014

CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

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Fall 2020-2021

Session 2: German Federalism

Introduction to Germany



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- **German Politics**
 - The Federal System
 - Political Parties
 - Electoral System
 - Coalition Building
 - The Current Parliament



German Federalism



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- Federal, Parliamentary Republic (Bund)
- 16 states (Länder)
- City States
- Bavaria > Bremen



German Federalism



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- In Germany, political power is shared between the **central government** and the **governments of the 16 states**
- Federalism => Union of separate states within an overreaching political system, territorial division of power
 - 10 states in the West
 - 6 states in the East
- State Jurisdiction => education, law enforcement, etc.
- The Länder are unique!



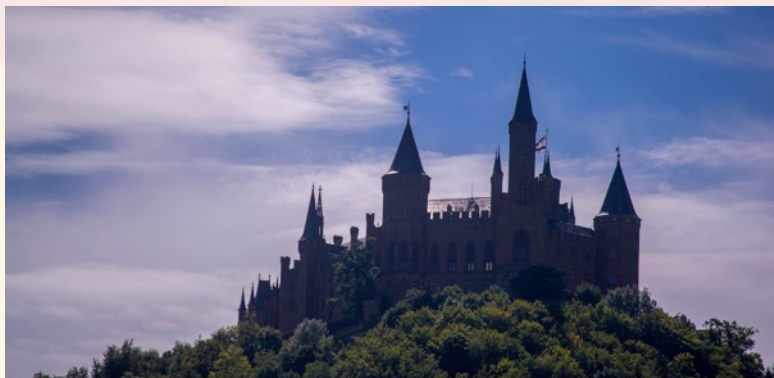
German Federalism



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■ Richest:

- Hamburg
- Bremen
- Bayern/Bavaria
- Hessen/Hesse
- Baden-Württemberg



■ Poorest:

- Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
- Saxony-Anhalt
- Thuringia
- Brandenburg
- Saxony/Sachsen





Area/Population

Most Populated:

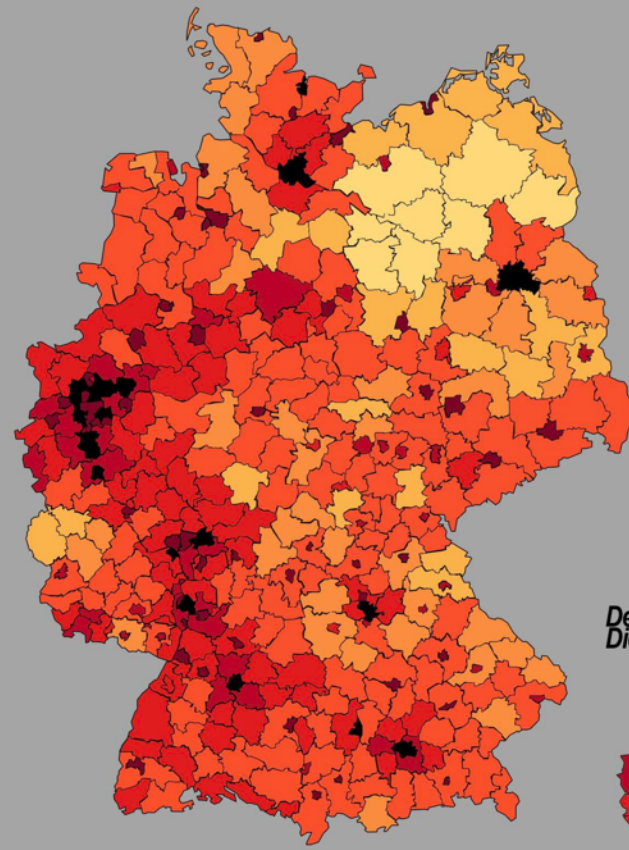
- Nordrhein-Westfalen (north Rhine-Westphalia)
- Bayern (Bavaria)
- Baden Württemberg

Least Populated:

- Bremen
- Saarland
- Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (western Pomerania)



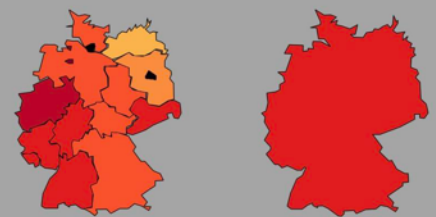
Population Density in Germany Bevölkerungsdichte in Deutschland



Anzahl der Personen pro Quadratkilometer.

Number of people per square kilometre.	Number of people per square mile.
2000+	5180+
1000 - 2000	2590 - 5980
500 - 1000	1295 - 2590
200 - 500	518 - 1295
100 - 200	259 - 518
75 - 100	194 - 259
50 - 75	130 - 194
35 - 50	91 - 130
20 - 35	52 - 91
10 - 20	26 - 62
5 - 10	13 - 26
1 - 5	2.6 - 13
0.5 - 1	1.3 - 2.6
< 0.5	< 1.3

Density by State : National Average :
Dichte nach Staat : Nationaler Durchschnitt :



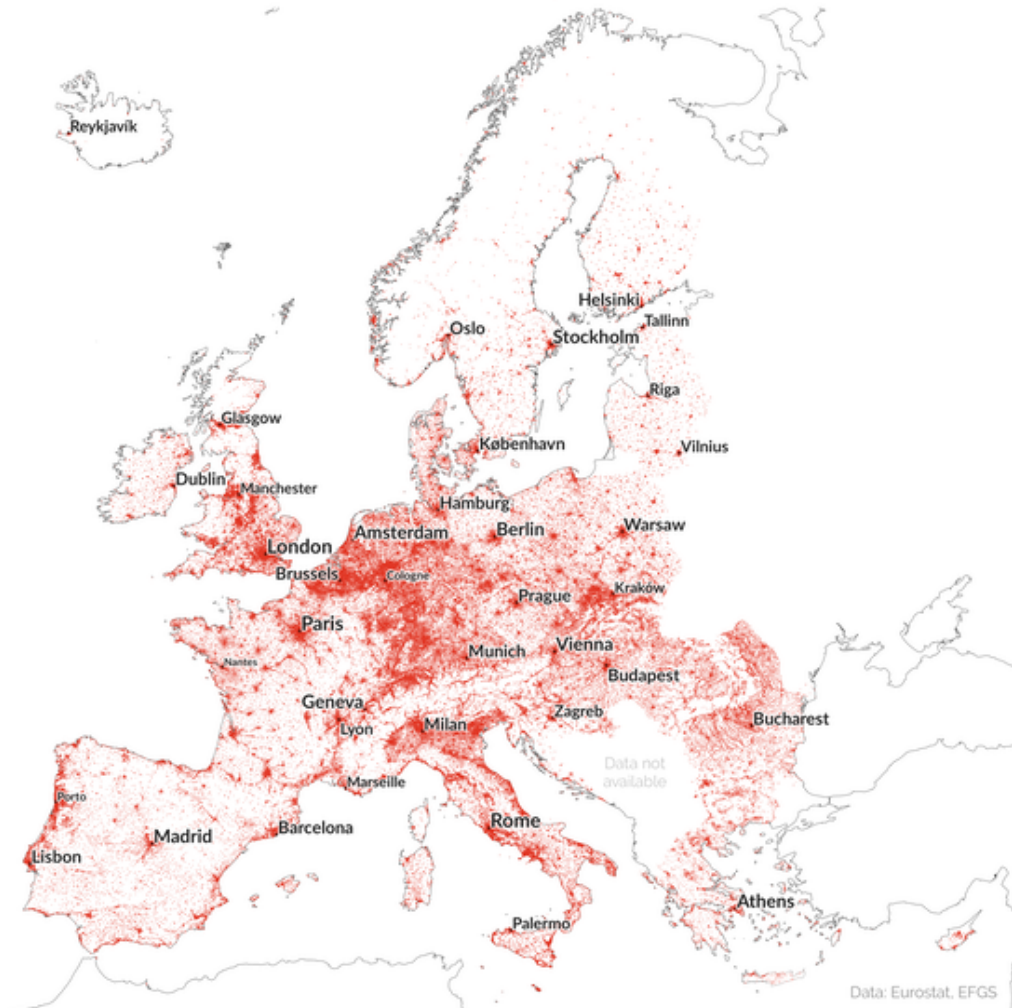


Area/Population

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POPULATION DENSITY IN EUROPE

Areas with 250 people or more, per sq. km.



Germany

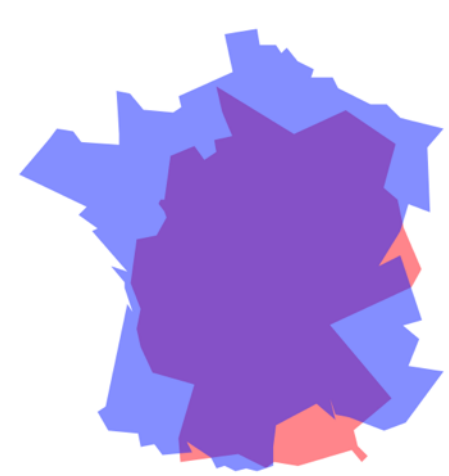


France

Germany



Czech Republic



Germany

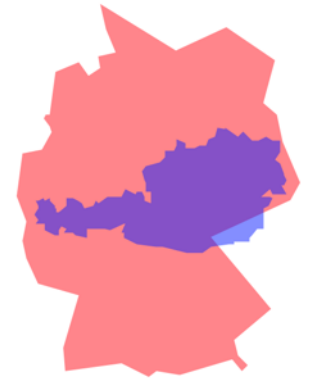


Switzerland

Germany



Austria

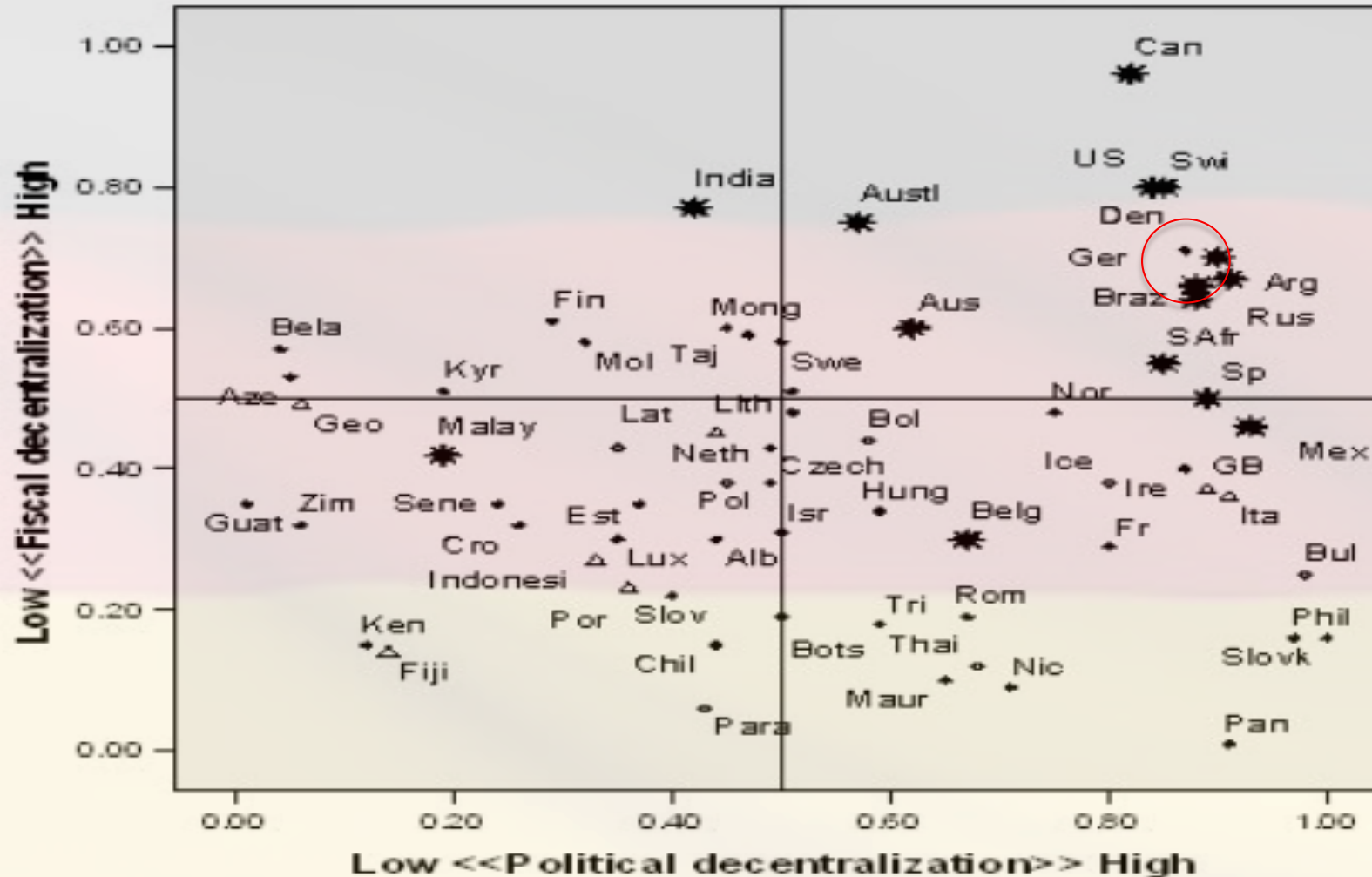


Data: Eurostat, EFGS

German Federalism



Fiscal and Political Decentralization



Germany's Parliamentary System

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- Central institutes of the Federal government:
 - **Bundestag** (Parliament)
 - **Bundesrat** (Federal Council)
- Chancellor => Chief executive + head of state
- President => Ceremonial role (mostly)
- The German **Basic Law** (Grundgesetz) states that Germany is a **welfare state** (unemployment benefits, state benefits for the sick, poor & disabled)



The Bundestag

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- **The German Parliament/Legislative branch** (lower house)
- Established by the Basic Law, 1949 => heir to the **Reichstag**
- **Tasks:**
 - legislation + overseeing government
 - **Elects the Chancellor**
- Parliamentary Democracy: leader of the state (**Chancellor**) is **elected by the legislature**, not directly by the people

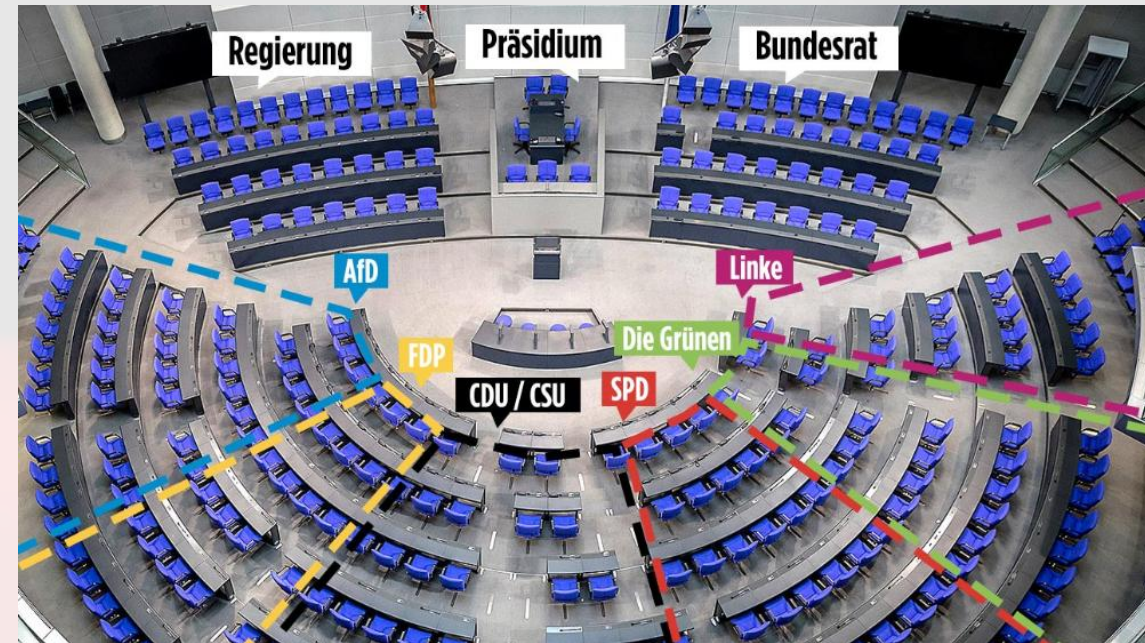


The Bundestag

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- **Proportional representation** (traditionally done in continental Europe)
 - **Small parties** are also represented in proportion to the mandate given to them



- **Coalition governments** are the rule in Germany
 - The '**5% hurdle**' => Threshold to avoid fragmentation in parliament (lesson from the Weimar republic)
- **598 base seats, now 709, directly elected by citizens** every 4 years

Sie haben 2 Stimmen

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

hier 1 Stimme
für die Wahl
einer Landesliste (Partei)
= maßgebende Stimme für die Verteilung der
Sitze insgesamt auf die einzelnen Parteien
Zweitstimme

Electoral System

- Proportional representation + Single member districts => **Hybrid electoral system of personalized proportional representation**
- Constituencies (Left side): Choosing a candidate to represent the district in the Bundestag
- The **candidate** with the majority of the votes wins
- 299 constituencies** in Germany (half the seats in the Bundestag)

1	Rönisch, Hannelore Angenehm 6200 Wiesbaden Teil von Clemens Str. 36	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>
2	Wiesmann-Zeul, Heidi Maria Lehrerin 6210 Wiesbaden Waldemarstr. 10	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>
3	Koch, Ulrich Friedrich Kaufmann 6200 Wiesbaden Friedrichstr. 27	GRÜNE DE GRÜNEN	<input type="radio"/>
4	Dr. Funke-Schmitt-Rink, Margret Medizinisch 6210 Wiesbaden Kaiserstraße 1	F.D.P. Freie Demokratische Partei	<input type="radio"/>
6	Langer, Herbert Ordnungs 6200 Wiesbaden Rosenberger Str. 27	REP Die REPUBLICANER	<input type="radio"/>
7	Deubert, Ernst Wilhelm Rechner 6210 Wiesbaden Gartenstraße 21a	NPD Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>

<input type="radio"/>	CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands Dr. Hans-Dieter Genscher Dr. Klaus Kinkel Dr. Hans-Joachim Lauth Dr. Hans-Joachim Lauth	1
<input type="radio"/>	SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands Jürgen Scheufele Dr. Gert Wöhrle Dr. Gert Wöhrle	2
<input type="radio"/>	GRÜNE	Die Grünen Ulrich Gellert Dr. Gert Wöhrle Dr. Gert Wöhrle	3
<input type="radio"/>	FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei Dr. Gert Wöhrle Dr. Gert Wöhrle Dr. Gert Wöhrle	4
<input type="radio"/>	DIE GRAUEN	DIE GRAUEN Siegfried Schütz Siegfried Schütz	5
<input type="radio"/>	REP	Die Republikaner Dr. Gert Wöhrle Dr. Gert Wöhrle	6
<input type="radio"/>	NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands Dr. Gert Wöhrle Dr. Gert Wöhrle	7
<input type="radio"/>	ÖDP	Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei Dr. Gert Wöhrle Dr. Gert Wöhrle	8
<input type="radio"/>	PDS/ LINKE	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus/Linke Liste Dr. Gert Wöhrle Dr. Gert Wöhrle	9

Electoral System

Sie haben 2 Stimmen

hier 1 Stimme
für die Wahl
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Erststimme

hier 1 Stimme
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einer Landesliste (Partei)
= maßgebende Stimme für die Verteilung der
Sitze insgesamt auf die einzelnen Parteien
Zweitstimme

- Hybrid Electoral Rules =>
 - Political Parties (right side of the form)
 - Parties put together lists of candidates
 - Votes are **aggregated** nationwide
 - Results determine which **candidates** occupy the remaining 299 seats (**party representatives**)

1	Rösch, Hannelore Angestellte 6200 Wiesbaden Eck von Clemm Nr. 36	CDU Christlich Demokrische Union Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>
2	Wiesmann-Zeul, Hildemarie Lehrerin 6210 Alsbach Waldmühlweg 10	SPD Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>
3	Koch, Ulrich Friedrich Bauingenieur 6200 Alsbach Friedstraße 27	GRÜNE Die Grünen	<input type="radio"/>
4	Dr. Funke-Schmitt-Rink, Margret Mitarbeiterin 6210 Alsbach Königsberger Straße 1	F.D.P. Freie Demokratische Partei	<input type="radio"/>
6	Langer, Herbert Arbeiter 6200 Wiesbaden Rosenberger Str. 27	REP Die Republikaner	<input type="radio"/>
7	Deubert, Ernst Wilhelm Beamter 6200 Wiesbaden Gartenstraße 21a	NPD Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands	<input type="radio"/>

<input type="radio"/>	CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands Dr. Hans-Dieter Genscher, Ministerpräsident Dr. Klaus Kinkel, Bundeskanzler Dr. Hans-Dieter Genscher, Ministerpräsident	1
<input type="radio"/>	SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands Jürgen Scheufele, Bundesminister für Arbeit und Sozialordnung Dr. Hans-Joachim Lauth, Ministerpräsident	2
<input type="radio"/>	GRÜNE	Die Grünen Ulrich Deuschmann, Ministerpräsident Ulrich Deuschmann, Ministerpräsident	3
<input type="radio"/>	F.D.P.	Freie Demokratische Partei Dr. Gert-Dirk Hoffmann, Ministerpräsident Dr. Gert-Dirk Hoffmann, Ministerpräsident	4
<input type="radio"/>	DIE GRAUEN	DIE GRAUEN (Initiativ vom Sozialisten-Schütz Bulli) „Graue Panther“ e.V. (S.P.P.-G.P.) Führung: Klaus Müller, Ministerpräsident Dr. Wolfgang Schäfer, Ministerpräsident	5
<input type="radio"/>	REP	DIE REPUBLIKANER Dr. Peter-Ludwig Voigt, Ministerpräsident Dr. Peter-Ludwig Voigt, Ministerpräsident	6
<input type="radio"/>	NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands Wolfgang Koch, Ministerpräsident Wolfgang Koch, Ministerpräsident	7
<input type="radio"/>	ÖDP	Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei Gert-Dirk Hoffmann, Ministerpräsident Gert-Dirk Hoffmann, Ministerpräsident	8
<input type="radio"/>	PDS/ LINKE	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus/Linke Linke Manfred Grottel, Ministerpräsident Manfred Grottel, Ministerpräsident	9



Elections to the Bundestag

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- **What if Germans split their votes?** vote for a candidate from one party (to represent the district) and for a different party as ‘lead’ 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
 - **‘Proportionally represented’?** = Size matters! The bigger the state (population), the more seats the party gets in the parliament

The Bundesrat



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- State's represents in the Federal Level (upper house)
- Each state (gov, not people) appoints representatives
- 69 seats (3 - 6 per state)
- Small states are overrepresented:
 - Bremen, 700k people= 3 seats
 - North Rhine Westphalia, 18 Million= 6 seats



The Bundesrat

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- **Presidency rotates** annually among the states
- **Plenary sessions** once a month (not a lot)
 - voting on **legislation** prepared, before passing it to the Bundestag
 - Bundesrat must approve all **legislation affecting policy areas** for which the **states have concurrent powers**
- The Bundesrat has **increased its legislative responsibilities** over time
- The German **vice president** is also the **president of the Bundesrat**



The Chancellor

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- The **Chancellor** is the **chief executive**, head of Government
 - Elected by the Bundestag
 - Sets governments' policy
 - Appoints the federal ministers (**cabinet**)
- May be subjected to constructive **Vote of No Confidence** (1982)
 - No period without government in office
- Currently Angela **Merkel** (since 2005)





The Federal President

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- Official **head of state**
- Usually a **moderate**
- **Elected** by the **Federal Convention** (*'Bundesversammlung'*)
- 5 years term, Re-electable only once
- Constitutional Basis => Articles 54- 61 of the Basic Law
- Function of the Federal President in terms of **State Theory** =>
 - The **constitutional organ**, represents the Federal Republic of Germany domestically and abroad



The Federal President

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- Used to have “**reserve powers**” (Article 81 of the Basic Law)
 - In case of a **legislative emergency**, he has the capacity to **pass laws** without the Bundestag’s approval- restricted
 - Can’t appoint the chancellor or commend the army

- **Tasks of the Federal President =>**
 - Represents Germany in domestic + international issues
 - Concludes treaties with foreign states, accredits diplomats
 - Proposing the Federal Chancellor
 - Appointing & dismissing the Federal Chancellor + Federal Ministers, dissolving the Bundestag if a Chancellor loses a motion of no confidence



The Federal President

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- Mediates in cases of national emergencies
- Appointing/dismissing federal judges, federal civil servants, and officers of the Armed Forces
- May **pardon criminals**
- Certify + promulgate laws
 - Can technically **veto a law** on substantive constitutional grounds
- Currently Frank Walter **Steinmeier**



The Federal Cabinet



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Bundeskabinett/Bundesregierung

- **Chief executive body**
- Chancellor & federal ministers
- **Chancellor** => 'Captain of the ship'
 - Appoints/dismiss ministers
 - Determines policy guidelines (Principle of **Chancellor policy guidelines**)
 - Bound by the terms of the coalition agreement



The Federal Ministers



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- **Cabinet Ministers =>**
 - Free to carry out their duties independently (Principle of **ministerial autonomy**), must follow the Chancellor's directive
 - May dismiss the Chancellor
- **Interplay of government powers: Chancellor + Cabinet**
 - Hierarchical + non-hierarchical
 - Principle of **joint Cabinet decision-making**



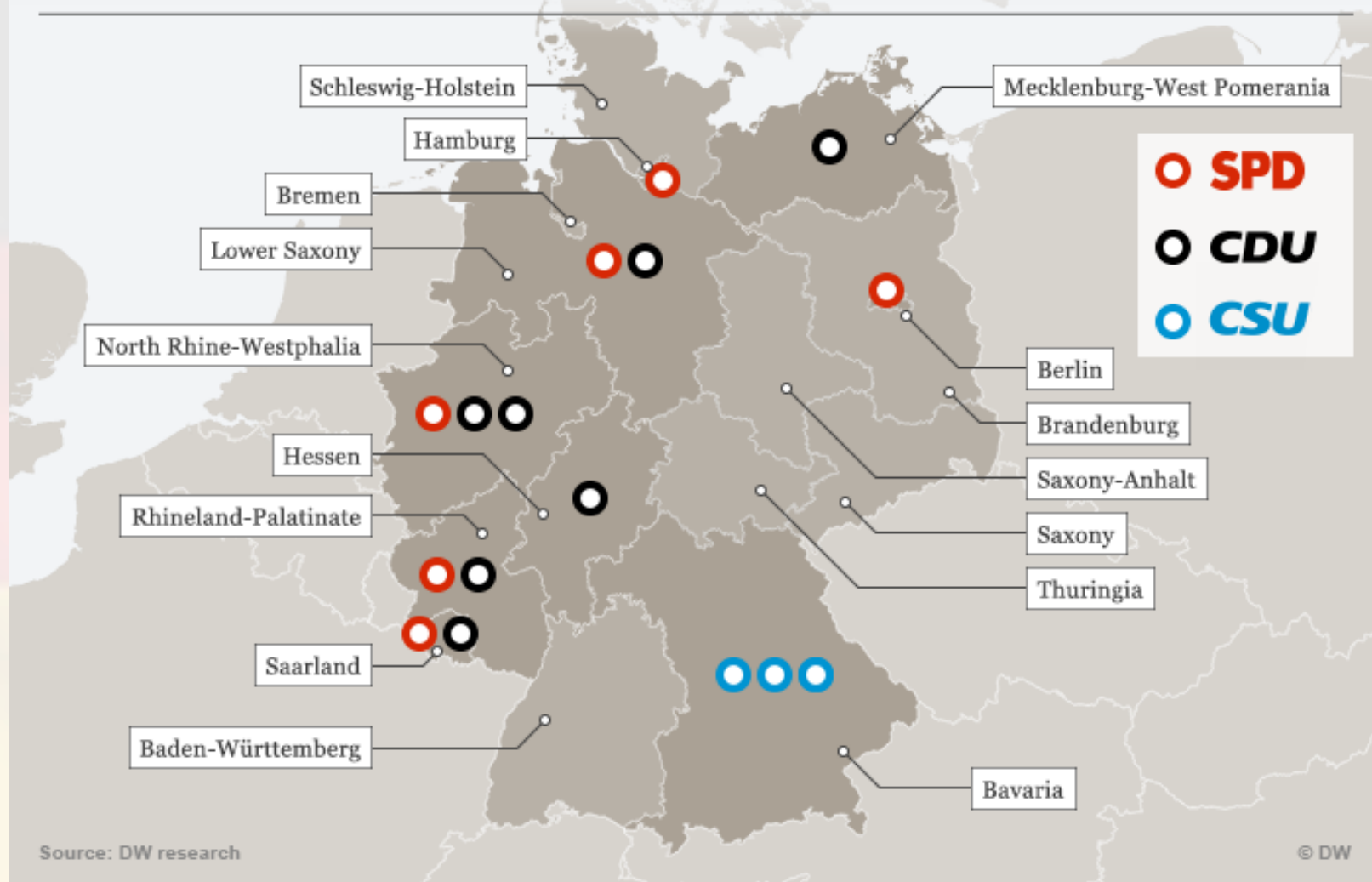


The Federal Ministers

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- 6/16 women
- East underrepresented
- Hold advanced degrees

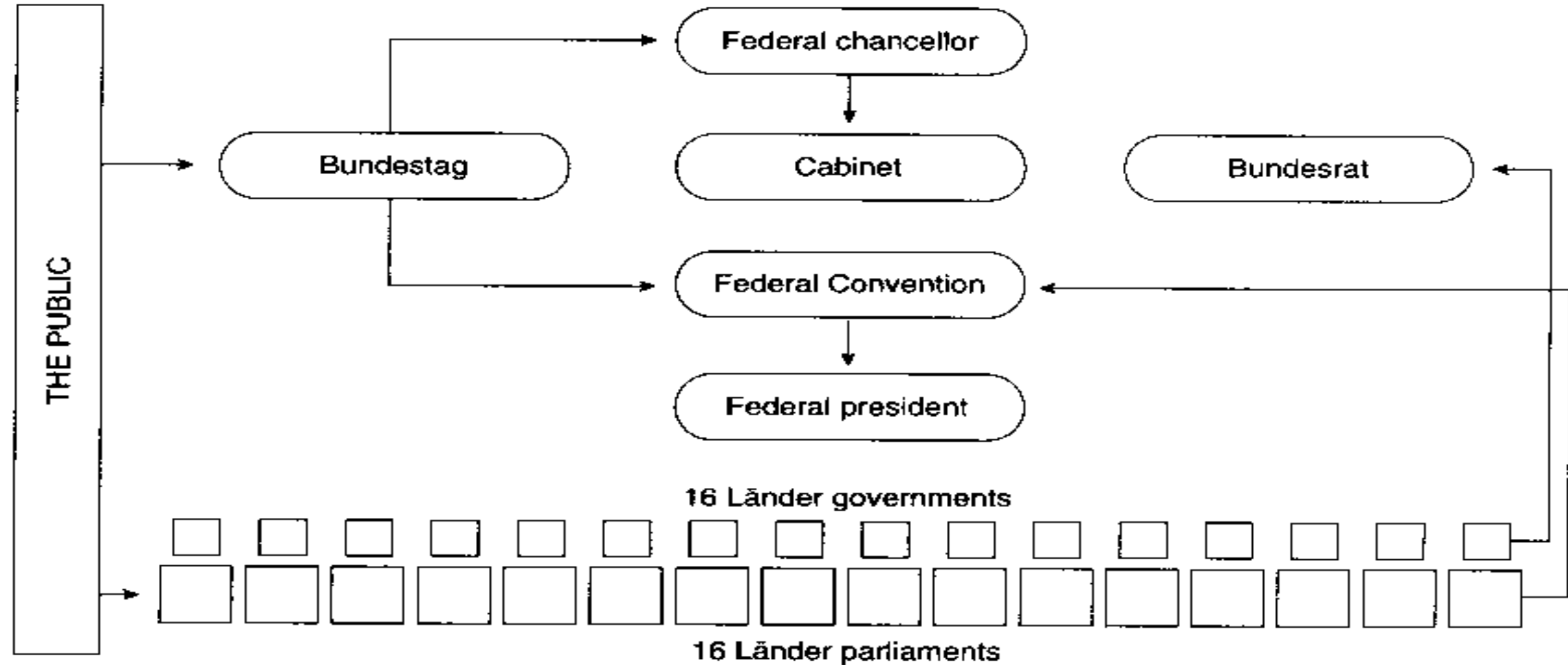
What states are the cabinet members from?



Germany's Federal System



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Next Session...

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- **The Federal Constitutional Court**
- **German Political Parties + Coalition Building**
- **The Current Parliament**
- **The German Economy**
 - A Global Economic Power
 - The Nord Stream 2 Pipeline
- **German Foreign Policy**
 - German US Relations





Thank You For Your Attention!

Questions?