

GERMANY (FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF)

Date of Elections: October 3, 1976

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of the *Bundestag* on the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany consists of the *Bundestag* (Federal Assembly) and the *Bundesrat* (Federal Council).

The *Bundestag* is composed of 518 deputies, of whom 496 are elected by universal suffrage and 22 by the House of Representatives of West Berlin. The term of the *Bundestag* is 4 years.

The *Bundesrat* consists of delegates from each of the 10 *Länder* (States) constituting the Federation. The delegates must be members of the Government of the *Land* (State) that delegates them; it is the Government of the *Land* that appoints and recalls its delegates. The number of delegates from each *Land* depends on the size of its population: each *Land* having more than 6 million inhabitants may appoint 5 delegates; each *Land* having between 2 and 6 million inhabitants may appoint 4 delegates; each other *Land* may appoint 3 delegates. The votes of each *Land* may be cast only as a block vote.

At the present time, the total number of delegates from the 10 *Länder* is 41. In addition, West Berlin appoints 4 delegates.

Electoral System

Any citizen is entitled to vote provided he has attained the age of 18 years and has resided for at least three months in the country (although civil servants, members of the armed forces, employees and workmen in public service who are abroad pursuant to orders, as well as members of their households, also have the right to vote). Persons under guardianship and the insane may not vote.

Electoral registers are continually kept up to date and open for public inspection between the 20th and the 15th day preceding the elections. Voting is not compulsory. Any person entitled to vote but unable to do so at his

place of residence may obtain a voter's certificate and may vote elsewhere or by correspondence.

Any qualified elector who has attained 18 years of age and has been a citizen for at least one year is eligible to become a deputy.

Candidatures to the *Bundestag* may be for constituencies or for *Land* party lists.

Candidatures for constituencies may be presented by a political party or by individuals. In the latter case, or where the political party (other than of an ethnic minority) does not have at least five seats in the *Bundestag* or in the Parliament of a given *Land*, the candidature must be supported by at least 200 persons having the right to vote in the constituency concerned. For each constituency, each party may present only one candidate. Such candidate must have been chosen in a secret ballot in which members of the party who have the right to vote in the constituency, or their elected representatives, may participate.

Candidatures for *Land* party lists may be presented by any political party, selected as above. Where the party (other than of an ethnic minority) does not have at least five seats in the *Bundestag* or in the Parliament of a given *Land*, the list must be supported by the signature of one per thousand (but not more than 2,000) eligible voters in the *Land* concerned. The list must indicate the names of the candidates in order of preference. In each *Land*, each party may present only one list.

Each voter for deputies has two votes: one (the "first vote") for an individual candidate in one of the 248 constituencies, and one (the "second vote") for a party list established, for each of the 10 *Länder*, by each political party. Half of the said 496 deputies are elected from among the individual candidates (one in each of the 248 constituencies), and half of them on the basis of the said party lists.

Among candidates from a given constituency, the candidate having received the highest number among the "first" votes becomes deputy.

In each *Land*, every party is entitled to the number of seats that corresponds to its share in the "second" votes. The computation is made according to the d'Hondt system. The number of deputies belonging to the party who were elected in the vote in the individual constituencies is subtracted from the total of the seats available to the party. The remaining number of seats go to the candidates indicated on the party list, in the order in which they were indicated.

Any "second" vote of an elector who has given his "first" vote for a candidate who is not a member of a party or who is a member of a party which has not submitted a party list in the *Land* concerned is disregarded.

The party list of any party (other than of an ethnic minority) that has obtained less than 5% of all the " second " votes in the country is disregarded unless at least three candidates of that party have been elected in constituencies.

When the seat of a deputy who was a member of a party which presented a party list becomes vacant, it is filled by the next candidate on that list, even when the deputy had been elected in an individual constituency. If the seat of a deputy who was not the member of a political party which presented a party list and who had been elected in an individual constituency becomes vacant, it is filled through a special election in that constituency. Such election must take place within 60 days from the date the seat becomes vacant.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The election date was announced on January 21, 1976. A total of 17 political parties and 3,244 candidates (544 for constituency seats, 2,700 for party list seats), among whom 415 women, contested the 496 (minus West Berlin) *Bundestag* seats. Principal challengers to the ruling coalition of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP) were, once again, the united forces of the Christian Democratic Party (CDU), led by Mr. Helmut Kohl, and the more conservative Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU), headed by Mr. Franz Josef Strauss.

The SPD launched its campaign with a two-day convention in June, at which Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt noted that the Federal Republic had withstood the recent world-wide recession with fewer hardships than any other Western country and announced that the country's rate of growth in 1976 would reach 6%. The campaign slogan of the CDU was " freedom instead of socialism ", with Mr. Kohl speaking out against policies that threatened individual liberties and business confidence. Regarding foreign affairs, the Chancellor promised continued efforts to strengthen ties with the German Democratic Republic and other socialist States of Eastern Europe (the *Ostpolitik*).

On election day, both the SPD and the FDP lost seats. The CDU/CSU on the other hand picked up all of these losses so that Mr. Kohl, as leader of the largest party (CDU/CSU) in the *Bundestag*, claimed that he should be given the task of forming the next Government. Mr. Schmidt nevertheless was asked to remain Chancellor after the FDP leader assured the President of the Republic that his party would continue supporting Mr. Schmidt.

Statistics

*1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in the Bundestag*

Number of registered voters.	42,058,015	
Voters.	38,165,753	(90.74%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	343,253	
Valid votes.	37,822,500	

Political Group	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats		R
			First Votes	Second Votes	
Social Democratic Party (SPD)	16,099,019	42.6	114	100	
CDU/CSU	18,394,801	48.6	134	109	
— Christian Democratic Union (CDU).	14,367,302	38.0	94	96	
— Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU).	4,027,499	10.6	40	13	
Free Democratic Party (FDP)	2,995,085	7.9		39	
National Democratic Party (NPD).	122,661	0.3			
German Communist Party (DKP).	118,581	0.3			
Communist Party of Germany (KPD).	22,714	0.1			
Action Association of Indepen- dent Germans (AUD)	22,202	0.1			
Communist Union of West Ger- many (KB W).	20,018	0.1			
Others.	27,419				
			248	248	

2. *Distribution of Members of the Bundestag
according to Professional Category*

Civil servants.114
Employees in industry and commerce	69
Members of political and social organizations	65
Liberal professions.	62
Self-employed.	58
Teachers.	55
Members of the Government	36
Employees of public services.	34
Housewives.	7
Clergy.	4
Others.14
	518

3. *Distribution of Members of the Bundestag according to Sex*

Men	480
Women	<u>38</u>
	518

4. *Distribution of Members of the Bundestag
according to Age Group*

25-30 years.	4
31-35.	50
36-40.	69
41-45.	84
46-50.	117
51-55.	114
56-60.	43
61-65.	27
66-70.	6
71-75.	3
76-80.	<u>J</u>
	518