

GERMANY (FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF)

Date of Elections: 5 October 1980

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).

Generally, 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. In the 1980 elections, 519 Deputies were elected (see below).

The term of the *Bundestag* is 4 years.

The *Bundesrat* consists of delegates from each of the 11 *Länder* (States) constituting the Federation. At the present time, the total number of delegates is 45, including 4 delegates from West Berlin. 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.

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.

Mutually incompatible are ministerial posts in a Federal State and membership of the *Bundestag*. A seat in Parliament, however, is not incompatible with membership of the

Federal Government. Rights and duties of civil servants are suspended during their membership of the *Bundestag*.

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 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.

A party which has not been continuously represented in the *Bundestag* or in the Parliament of a given *Land* by at least five members nominated by the party itself may only submit a nomination as a party if it has announced its intended participation in the election to the Federal Returning Officer not later than the 47th day before the election, and has been recognized as a party by the Federal Electoral Committee.

Candidatures for *Land* party lists may be presented by any political party, recognized as above. Where the party 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 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 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 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. It is possible for a party, as happened in the 1980 elections in one case, to have what are known as "surplus" seats when it wins more seats in the constituencies on the "first" vote than it is entitled to according to the result of the "second" vote calculation.

The party list of any party 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 Considerations and **Conduct of the Elections**

A total of 12 political parties and 2,325 candidates contested the party list ("second vote") seats, while 1,525 candidates were in competition for the 248 constituency ("first vote") seats. There were numerous women candidates; 889 of all candidates were nominated in a constituency and at the same time on a party list.

Principal challengers to the ruling coalition of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP)—in power since 1969—were, once again, the united forces of the Christian Democratic Party (CDU) and the Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU).

Prior to the elections, the four above-mentioned parties pledged themselves, in 1980, to conduct a fair and non-polemical campaign and to set up a joint arbitration body to monitor the observance of this agreement. The campaign in fact developed largely into a confrontation between Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Mr. Franz Josef Strauss, leader of CSU, who had emerged as the CDU/CSU candidate for Chancellor.

On polling day, both the SPD and the FDP picked up seats, the latter to an unforeseen degree; the CDU/CSU, on the other hand, lost 17 seats. The SPD and FDP therefore renewed their coalition and re-elected Mr. Schmidt as Chancellor. In keeping with the coalition agreement, the FDP continued to hold four of the Cabinet posts.

Statistics

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

Number of registered electors.	43,231,741
Voters.	38,292,176 (88.57%)
Blank or void "first votes".	485,645
Valid "first votes".	37,806,531
Blank or void "second votes".	353,195
Valid "second votes".	37,938,981

Political Group	Number of Candidates	"Second Votes" obtained		Total Number of Seats (including Berlin)	Total Number of Seats won at Previous Elections (including Berlin)
Social Democratic Party (SPD)	707	16,260,677	42.9	228	224
Christian Democratic Union (CDU)	630	12,989,200	34.2	185	201
Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU)	104	3,908,459	10.3	52	53
Free Democratic Party (FDP)	574	4,030,999	10.6	54	40
Green Party.	395	569,589	1.5		
German Communist Party (DKP)	628	71,600	0.2	—	—
National Democratic Party (NPD)	218	68,096	0.2	—	—
Citizens' Party.	30	11,256			—
Popular Front (V)	145	9,319			
Communist League of West Germany (KBW)	257	8,174			
European Workers' Party (EAP)	139	7,666	—	—	—
Christian Bavarian People's Party (CBV)	7	3,946	—	—	—
				519*	518

*One "surplus" seat was allotted in the 1980 elections.

Germany (Federal Republic of)

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

Civil servants	187
Employees in industry and commerce	84
Liberal professions	84
Employees of political and social organizations	61
Self-employed	46
Workers	M)
Others	27
	519

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

Men	475
Women	44
	519

4. *Average Age of Members of the Bundestag: 46.9 years*