



An introduction to German politics and national elections

UDLS
December 13, 2024



Why?

The German government collapsed November 5

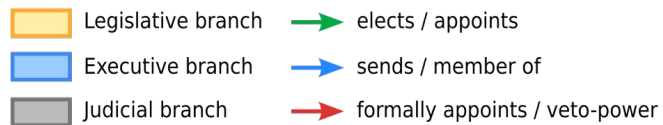
Re-election will be held February 23

Political system, parties, coalitions ...

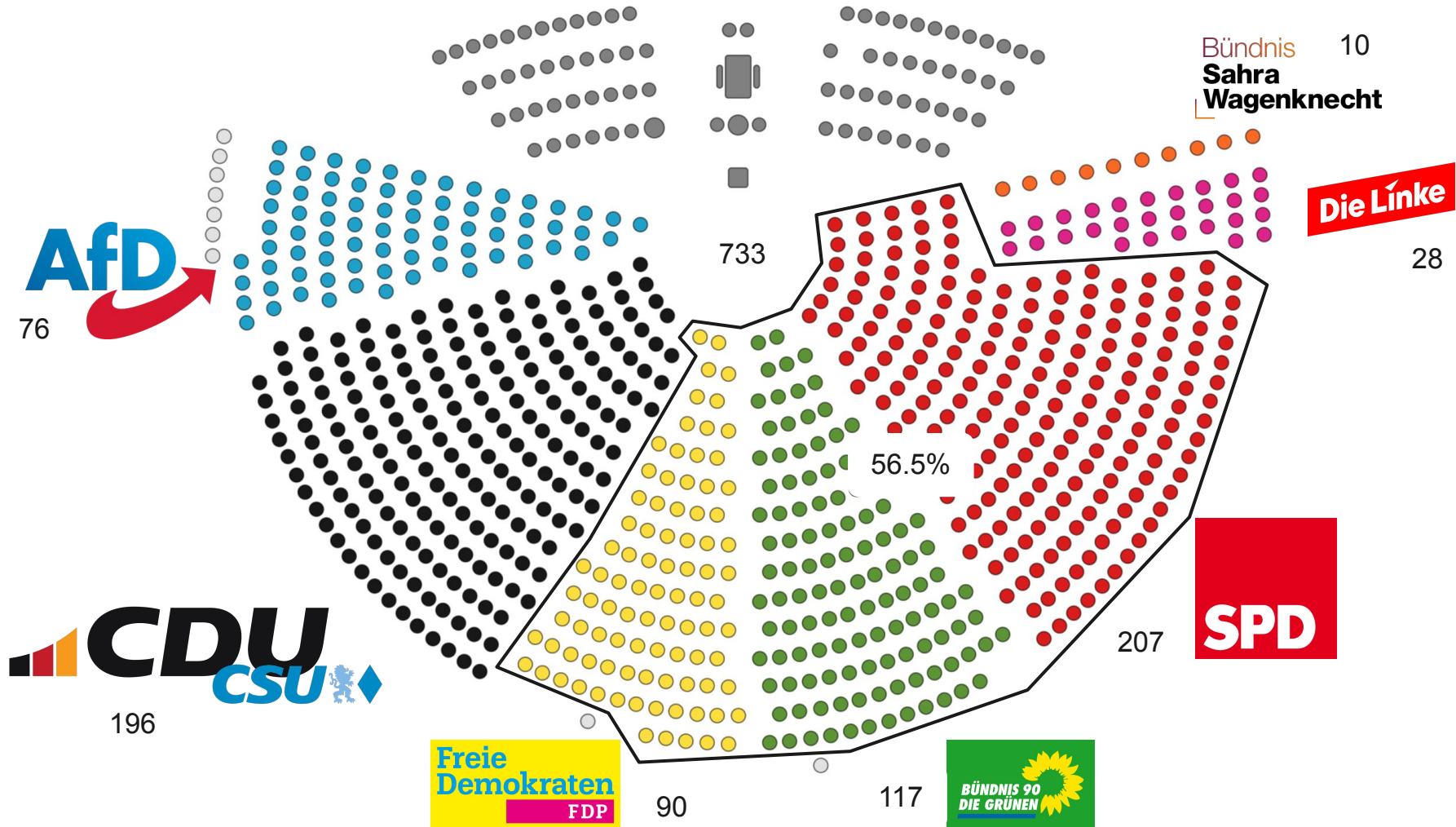
National election system

German political landscape

February 23



- 1: Every 4 years, election of direct mandates and parties
- 2: State chamber. Apportionment is based on each states' population
- 3: Head of government with policy-making power. Is proposed by the President
- 4: Head of state. "Neutral power" - only in state of emergency increased power
- 5: The state levels and the names of the organs vary widely from state to state





Cabinet

- **Chancellor** 
- Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action 
- Minister of Finance 
- Minister of the Interior and Community 
- Minister for Foreign Affairs 
- Minister of Justice 
- Minister of Digital and Transport 
- Minister of Labour and Social Affairs 
- Minister of Defence 
- Minister of Food and Agriculture 
- Minister of Education and Research 
- Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth 
- Minister of Health 
- Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection 
- Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development 
- Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Building 
- Federal Minister for Special Tasks 
- Head of Federal Chancellery 



Bills

- Each member of the parliament can introduce bills
- Requires majority of the votes in the diet
- Requires majority of votes in the Federal Council (consent sometimes not required)
- President can veto bills
 - Mechanism to verify bills for constitutionality
 - 9 bills were vetoed for in the last 75 years
 - 3 bills were still passed after minor amendments
- Anyone can file a suit against a bill at the Federal Constitutional Court

⇒ Bills are passed if it was passed by the Federal Diet, the Federal Council and certified by the President



Dissolution of the government

Constructive vote of no confidence

- Initiated by at least 25% of the Federal Diet
- Motion requires candidate(s)
- Successful vote (50% of the Federal Diet): dissolution of the current government and the appointment of the candidate as Chancellor by the President
- Re-elections not possible

Vote of confidence

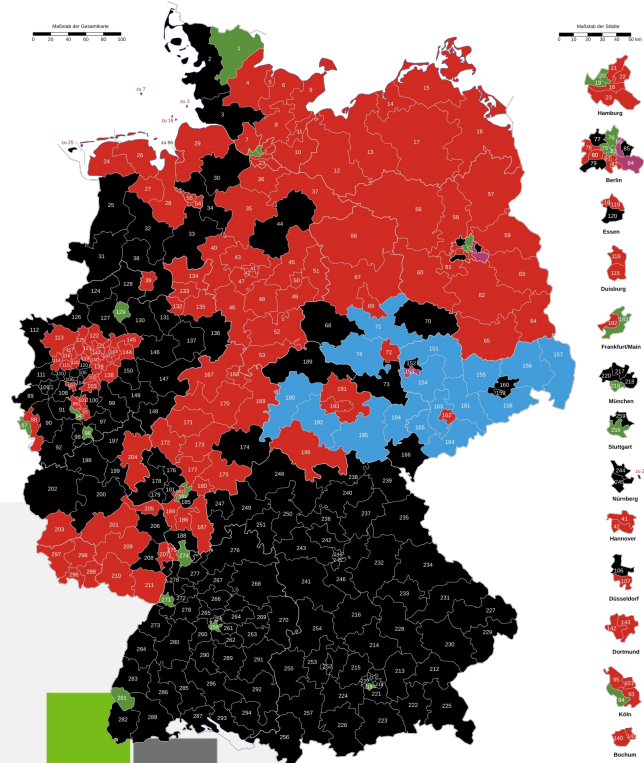
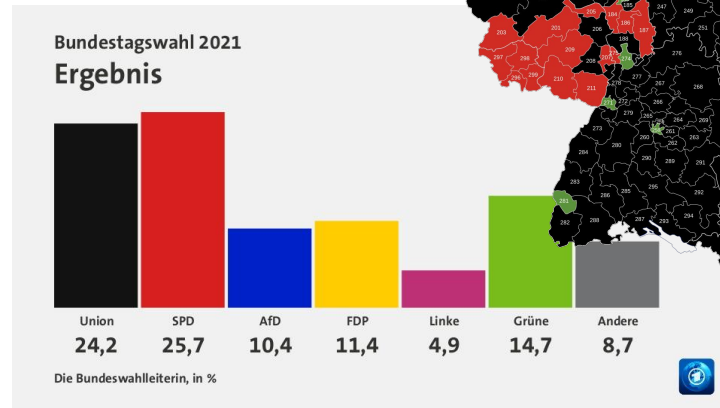
- Chancellor questions the Federal Diet's confidence in the government
- Unsuccessful vote allows the Chancellor to recommend re-elections to the President
- Possible: Federal Diet votes for a new Chancellor
- Motion will be filed on December 11 and voted for December 16

National elections

February 23

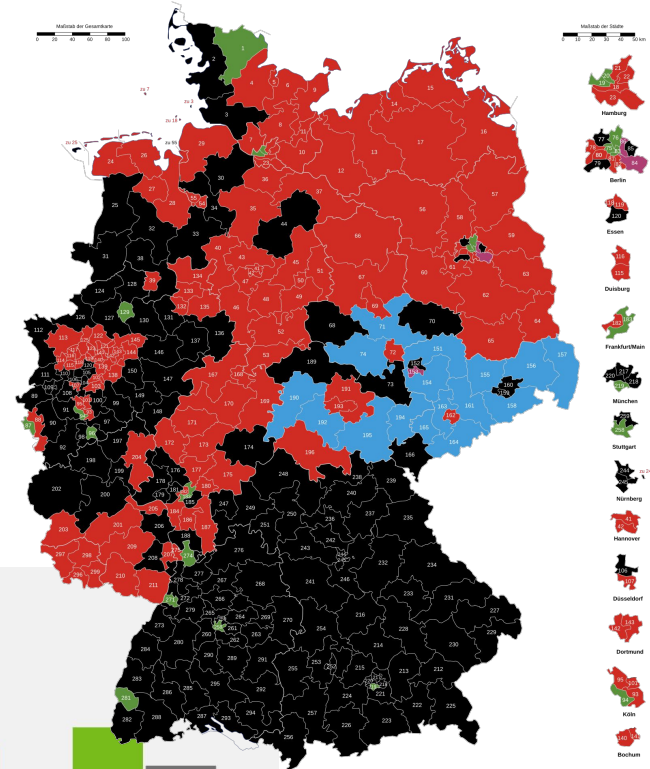
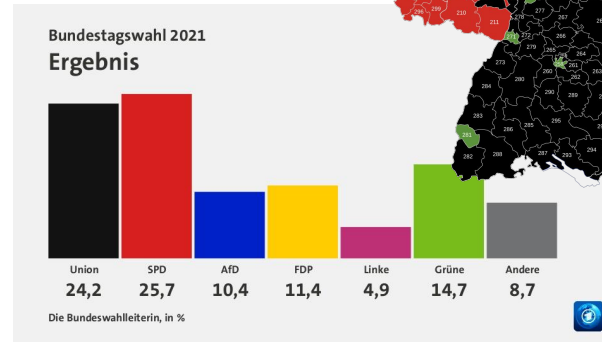
National elections

- Eligibility
 - German citizenship
 - At least 18 years old
- Location
 - Constituency
- Who
 - Representative
 - Party



National elections

- Each representative elected in a constituency gets a seat in the Federal Diet
- Each party has a list of representatives for each state
- Seats in the Federal Diet are allocated based on the lists
- Number of seats is defined by the distribution of party votes





Seat allocation

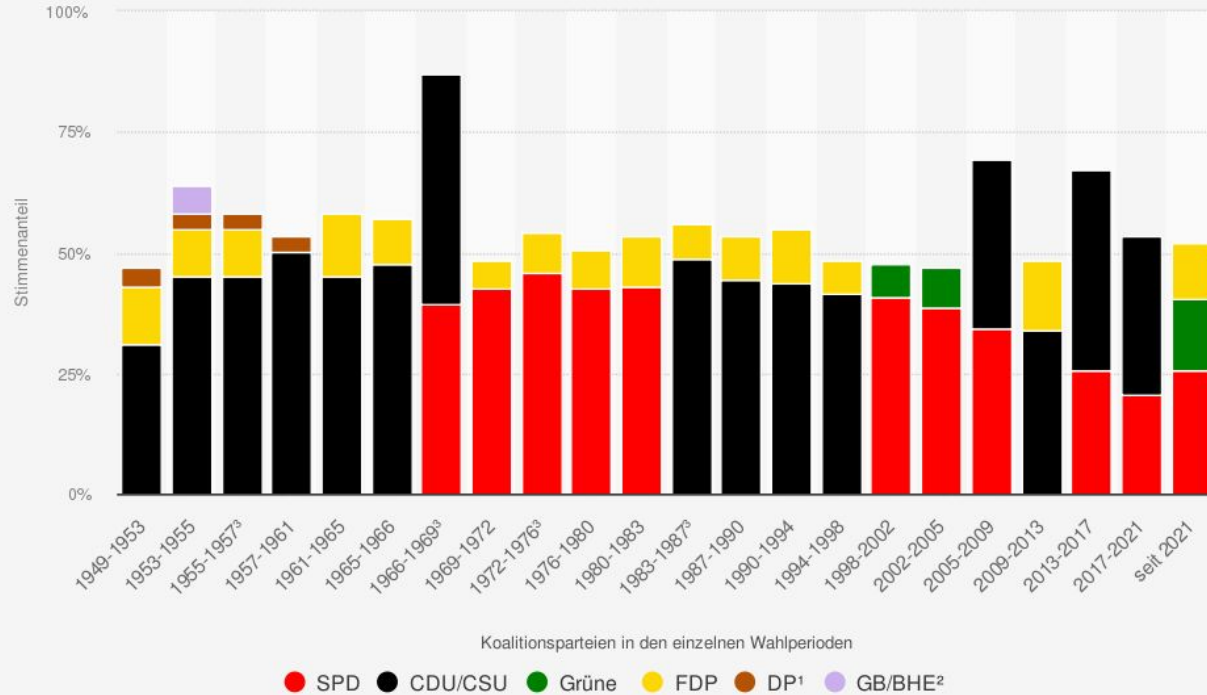
- Parties are required to have 5% of the votes or to win at least 3 constituencies (some exceptions)
- Minimum of 598 seats will be allocated
- Possible: party has won more constituencies as indicated by their popular vote
 - Additional seats are allocated to other parties to match the distribution of the popular vote
- Federal diet size varies in each election
- Attempts to change the seat allocations made
- Constitutional court ruled against any of these modifications



Coalitions

- No majority nationwide Germany since 1949
- 4 minority governments existed
- None lasted more than 5 months
- Coalitions necessary to ensure functional government on federal level
- Each party can join coalitions
- Majority of seats as goal
- Has to be certified by the President
- Informal agreements:
 - Party with the most votes has priority
 - Chancellor from the election winning party
 - Vice Chancellor from the runner up

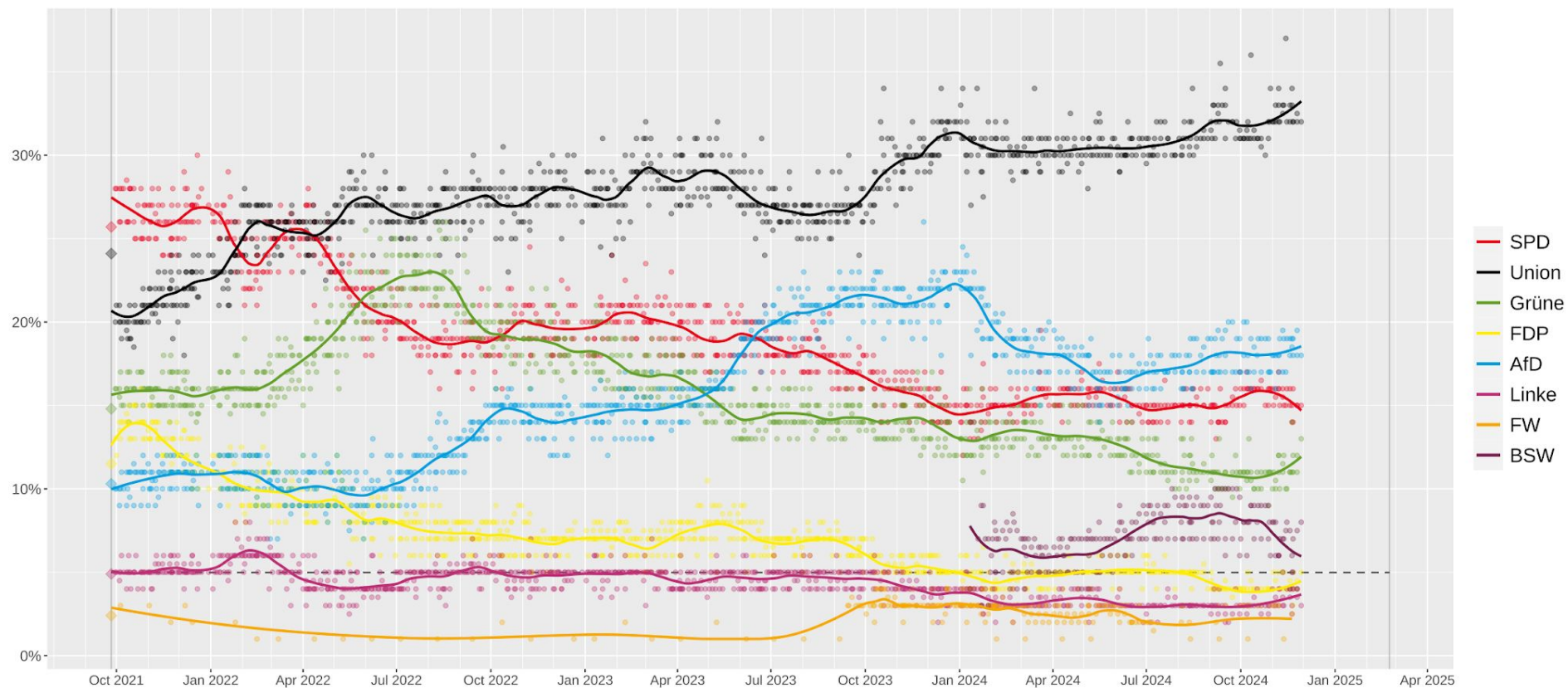
An den Regierungskoalitionen im Bund beteiligte Parteien nach Stimmenanteil von 1949 bis 2024



Quellen
wahlrecht.de; bpb
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Weitere Informationen:
Deutschland





Elections 2025

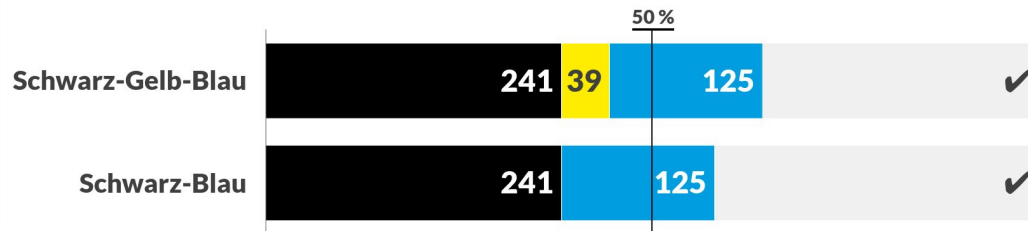
Mögliche Koalitionen

nach der Bundestagswahl 2025 (Projektion)



Koalitionsmöglichkeiten mit der AfD

nach der Bundestagswahl 2025 (Projektion)



Anzahl der Sitze im Bundestag laut Projektion. ✓: Mehrheit der Sitze; ✗: keine Mehrheit
Insgesamt 630 Sitze (ohne Überhang- und Ausgleichsmandate). Stand: 19.05.2024

Vorsicht: Bei dieser Projektion handelt es sich lediglich um eine einfache Sitzzuteilung
nach dem Sainte-Laguë/Schepers-Verfahren, ohne Überhang- und Ausgleichsmandate.

Diagramm/Projektion: www.wahlen.info

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Anzahl der Sitze im Bundestag laut Projektion. ✓: Mehrheit der Sitze; ✗: keine Mehrheit
Insgesamt 630 Sitze (ohne Überhang- und Ausgleichsmandate). Stand: 06.08.2023

Vorsicht: Bei dieser Projektion handelt es sich lediglich um eine einfache Sitzzuteilung
nach dem Sainte-Laguë/Schepers-Verfahren, ohne Überhang- und Ausgleichsmandate.

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Questions?