

Chapter 1 : Politics of Germany - Wikipedia

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History of Germany 1945 Occupation zone borders in Germany, Bremen was an American enclave within the British zone. Berlin was a four-power area within the Soviet zone. On 11 February 1945 leaders from the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union held the Yalta Conference where future arrangements as regards post-war Europe and strategy against Japan in the Pacific were negotiated. The conference agreed that post-war Germany would be divided into four occupation zones: Berlin was separately divided into four zones. These divisions were not intended to dismember Germany, only to designate zones of administration. Eight million German expellees and refugees eventually settled in West Germany. Between 1945 and 1949, three of the occupation zones began to merge. First, the British and American zones were combined into the quasi-state of Bizonia. Soon afterwards, the French zone was included into Trizonia. In 1949, with the continuation and aggravation of the Cold War witness the Berlin Airlift of 1948-49, the two German states that were originated in the Western Allied and the Soviet Zones became known internationally as West Germany and East Germany. In 1971, West Germany and East Germany jointly signed the Treaty on the Final Settlement With Respect to Germany; by which transitional status of Germany following World War II was definitively ended, the Four Allied powers relinquished their joint residual sovereign authority for Germany as a whole, the two parts of Germany confirmed their post-war external boundaries as final and irreversible including the transfer of former German lands east of the Oder-Neisse line, and the Allied Powers confirmed their consent to German Reunification. The former capital, Berlin, had been divided into four sectors, with the Western Allies joining their sectors to form West Berlin, while the Soviets held East Berlin. West Berlin was completely surrounded by East German territory and had suffered a Soviet blockade in 1948-49, which was overcome by the Berlin airlift. Though the EDC treaty was signed May 1950, it never entered into force. Then other means had to be found to allow West German rearmament. West Germany was to be permitted to rearm an idea many Germans rejected, and have full sovereign control of its military, called the Bundeswehr. The WEU, however, would regulate the size of the armed forces permitted to each of its member states. Also, Germans could reject military service on grounds of conscience, and serve for civil purposes instead. The three Western Allies retained occupation powers in Berlin and certain responsibilities for Germany as a whole. Under the new arrangements, the Allies stationed troops within West Germany for NATO defense, pursuant to stationing and status-of-forces agreements. France withdrew from the collective military command structure of NATO in 1966. Reforms during the s[ edit ] Konrad Adenauer was 73 years old when he became chancellor, and for this reason he was initially reckoned as a caretaker. However, he stayed in power for 14 years. The grand old man of German postwar politics had to be dragged almost literally out of office in 1963. In 1963 it was time to elect a new President and Adenauer decided that he would nominate Erhard, the architect of the economic miracle. He apparently believed that this would allow him to dominate the scene for up to ten more years in spite of the growing mood for change. However, when his advisers informed him that the powers of the president were almost entirely ceremonial, he quickly lost interest. Spiegel scandal In October 1964 the weekly news magazine Der Spiegel published an analysis of the West German military defence. The conclusion was that there were several weaknesses in the system. Ten days after publication, the offices of Der Spiegel in Hamburg were raided by the police and quantities of documents were seized. Chancellor Adenauer proclaimed in the Bundestag that the article was tantamount to high treason and that the authors would be prosecuted. Adenauer was still wounded by his brief run for president, and this episode damaged his reputation even further. He announced that he would step down in the Fall of 1963. His successor was to be Ludwig Erhard. In 1966 growth rate was 4. After a brief recovery, the growth rate slowed again into a recession, with no growth in 1967. A new coalition was formed to deal with this problem. Erhard stepped down in 1966 and was succeeded by Kurt Georg Kiesinger. This was important for the introduction of new emergency acts: These controversial acts allowed basic

constitutional rights such as freedom of movement to be limited in case of a state of emergency. Rudi Dutschke, student leader During the time leading up to the passing of the laws, there was fierce opposition to them, above all by the Free Democratic Party, the rising German student movement, a group calling itself Notstand der Demokratie "Democracy in Crisis" and members of the Campaign against Nuclear Armament. A key event in the development of open democratic debate occurred in 1968, when the Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, visited West Berlin. Several thousand demonstrators gathered outside the Opera House where he was to attend a special performance. Supporters of the Shah later known as Jubelperser, armed with staves and bricks attacked the protesters while the police stood by and watched. A demonstration in the centre was being forcibly dispersed when a bystander named Benno Ohnesorg was shot in the head and killed by a plainclothes policeman. It has now been established that the policeman, Kurras, was a paid spy of the East German security forces. Protest demonstrations continued, and calls for more active opposition by some groups of students were made, which was declared by the press, especially the tabloid Bild-Zeitung newspaper, as a massive disruption to life in Berlin, in a massive campaign against the protesters. Protests against the US intervention in Vietnam, mingled with anger over the vigour with which demonstrations were repressed led to mounting militance among the students at the universities in Berlin. One of the most prominent campaigners was a young man from East Germany called Rudi Dutschke who also criticised the forms of capitalism that were to be seen in West Berlin. Just before Easter, a young man tried to kill Dutschke as he bicycled to the student union, seriously injuring him. All over West Germany, thousands demonstrated against the Springer newspapers which were seen as the prime cause of the violence against students. Trucks carrying newspapers were set on fire and windows in office buildings broken. The proceedings of the War Crimes Tribunal at Nuremberg had been widely publicised in Germany but until a new generation of teachers, educated with the findings of historical studies, could begin to reveal the truth about the war and the crimes committed in the name of the German people. One courageous attorney, Fritz Bauer patiently gathered evidence on the guards of the Auschwitz concentration camp and about twenty were put on trial in Frankfurt in 1963. Daily newspaper reports and visits by school classes to the proceedings revealed to the German public the nature of the concentration camp system and it became evident that the Shoah was of vastly greater dimensions than the German population had believed. The term "Holocaust" for the systematic mass-murder of Jews first came into use in 1964, when an American mini-series with that name was shown on German television. The processes set in motion by the Auschwitz trial reverberated decades later. The calling in question of the actions and policies of government led to a new climate of debate. The issues of emancipation, colonialism, environmentalism and grass roots democracy were discussed at all levels of society. Also of great significance was the steady growth of a feminist movement in which women demonstrated for equal rights. Until a married woman had to have the permission of her husband if she wanted to take on a job or open a bank account. Logo of the Red Army Faction Anger over the treatment of demonstrators following the death of Benno Ohnesorg and the attack on Rudi Dutschke, coupled with growing frustration over the lack of success in achieving their aims led to growing militance among students and their supporters. In May 1968, three young people set fire to two department stores in Frankfurt, they were brought to trial and made very clear to the court that they regarded their action as a legitimate act in what they described as the "struggle against imperialism". Several groups set as their objective the aim of radicalising the industrial workers and taking an example from activities in Italy of the Red Brigades Brigade Rosse, many students went to work in the factories, but with little or no success. The most notorious of the underground groups was the "Baader-Meinhof Group", later known as the Red Army Faction which began by making bank raids to finance their activities and eventually went underground having killed a number of policemen, several bystanders and eventually two prominent West Germans, whom they had taken captive in order to force the release of prisoners sympathetic to their ideas. In the 1970s attacks were still being committed under the name "RAF". The last action took place in 1975 and the group announced it was giving up its activities in 1976. Evidence that the groups had been infiltrated by German Intelligence undercover agents has since emerged, partly through the insistence of the son of one of their prominent victims, the State Counsel Buback. Although Chancellor for only just over four years, Willy Brandt was one of the most popular politicians in the whole period. Brandt

was a gifted speaker and the growth of the Social Democrats from there on was in no small part due to his personality. The issue of improving relations with Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany made for an increasingly aggressive tone in public debates but it was a huge step forward when Willy Brandt and the Foreign Minister, Walther Scheel FDP negotiated agreements with all three countries. Schmidt, a strong supporter of the European Community EC and the Atlantic alliance, emphasized his commitment to "the political unification of Europe in partnership with the USA". Following national elections in March , Kohl emerged in firm control of both the government and the CDU. In January the Kohl-Genscher government was returned to office, but the FDP and the Greens gained at the expense of the larger parties. German reunification With the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe in , symbolised by the opening of the Berlin Wall , there was a rapid move towards German reunification ; and a final settlement of the post-war special status of Germany. They formally joined the Federal Republic on 3 October , raising the number of states from 10 to 16, ending the division of Germany. One day later, the parliament of the united Germany would assemble in an act of symbolism in the Reichstag building. However, at that time, the role of Berlin had not yet been decided upon. Only after a fierce debate, considered by many as one of the most memorable sessions of parliament , the Bundestag concluded on 20 June , with quite a slim majority, that both government and parliament should move to Berlin from Bonn. West German "economic miracle"[ edit ] The West German Wirtschaftswunder "economic miracle", coined by The Times in was due to the economic aid provided by the United States and the Marshall Plan. The Allied dismantling of the West German coal and steel industry finally ended in . At the time Germany had a large pool of skilled and cheap labour, partly as a result of the flight and expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe, which affected up to . This helped Germany to more than double the value of its exports during the war. Apart from these factors, hard work and long hours at full capacity among the population and in the late s and s extra labour supplied by thousands of Gastarbeiter "guest workers" provided a vital base for the economic upturn. This would have implications later on for successive German governments as they tried to assimilate this group of workers. The East German economy showed a certain growth, but not as much as in West Germany, partly because of continued reparations to the USSR in terms of resources. On 5 May West Germany was declared to have the "authority of a sovereign state". In , West Germany's home to roughly 1. In the FRG held a 7. Demographics[ edit ] Population and vital statistics[ edit ] Total population of West Germany from to , as collected by the Statistisches Bundesamt.

**Chapter 2 : Formats and Editions of West Germany; politics of non-planning. [www.nxgvision.com]**

*West Germany: Politics of non-planning: 6. West Germany: Politics of non-planning. by Hans-Joachim Arndt Print book: English. (Syracuse, N.Y. 7. West Germany.*

Bring fact-checked results to the top of your browser search. Smaller parties generally either have allied themselves with the larger ones, have shrunk into insignificance, or simply have vanished. In addition, there are four smaller, but still important, parties: The 5 percent threshold for elections has proved a highly effective instrument in excluding radical parties of whatever stripe and in preventing the formation of splinter parties. However, the proportional element of the electoral system has necessitated the formation of coalition governments. Since all federal governments have been composed of at least two parties. Dissent within the major parties is contained in the wings and factions of each respective party. The Christian Democratic parties The CDU is a centre-right party that endorses conservative social values and the social market economy. It is established in all states except Bavaria , where the more conservative CSU functions as its counterpart in effectively a permanent coalition. However, it was only tolerated to preserve the facade of a multiparty system. The party broadened its base to attract increasingly greater segments of the middle class. The SPD was cautious about unification, fearing that it would unleash enormous financial and emotional costs. The successor of the older German liberal parties, the FDP has generally adopted free trade , pro-business, and anticlerical positions. The party now serves as a liberal, bourgeois alternative to the CDU and SPD and often exercises a power far beyond the 6 to 10 percent support it regularly receives in national elections. In it won its best-ever electoral resultsâ€” It has been the only completely new party to win national representation in the post-World War II era. Formed by mainly younger groups of environmentalists, opponents of nuclear power , and pacifists, the Greens successfully broke the 5 percent barrier in the election. On the heels of the accident at the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl , Ukraine , in , the Greens captured in excess of 8 percent of the overall vote and sent 22 delegates to the Bundestag. In the Green Party failed to surpass the 5 percent threshold. The party increased its representation in the Bundestag to 68 seats in the election. After unification the SED lost most of its supporters and members. The PDS won 11 percent of the vote in eastern Germany in the first all-German election in , giving it 17 seats in the Bundestag. During the s the party gained strength in eastern Germany, where unemployment remained stubbornly high and economic conditions lagged. Although it did not surpass the 5 percent threshold in , the PDS won enough constituency seats to gain Bundestag representation, and in it captured 5. The PDS largely remained a regional party, but it scored successes in eastern German states and even formed a coalition government with the SPD in Berlin in In it again failed to cross the 5 percent threshold, but in the PDS and its left allies in western Germanyâ€”together known as the Left Partyâ€”captured nearly 9 percent of the national vote and won more than 50 seats in the Bundestag. Support for the Left Party continued to grow, and in it won nearly 12 percent of the national vote and increased its number of seats in the Bundestag to With their tiny memberships, neither of these parties has been able to surmount the 5 percent barrier in national elections. The Pirate Party of Germany, an outgrowth of the larger Pirate Party movement that began in Sweden in , promoted a broadly populist platform that focused on copyright reform and Internet freedom. Riding a wave of antiestablishment sentiment , the Pirates scored a string of electoral successes at the state level in â€”12, winning representation in regional legislatures in Berlin, Saarland , Schleswig-Holstein, and North Rhineâ€”Westphalia.

**Chapter 3 : List of political parties in Germany - Wikipedia**

*As of mid 1990, Germany was a country coming to terms with the recent unification of its western and eastern portions following four decades of Cold War division. Achieved in October 1990, German unification consisted, in effect, of the incorporation of the German Democratic Republic (GDR, or East Germany) into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, or West Germany).*

The Federal President, by their actions and public appearances, represents the state itself, its existence, its legitimacy, and unity. Their office involves an integrative role. The President is not obliged by Constitution to refrain from political views. He or she is expected to give direction to general political and societal debates, but not in a way that links him to party politics. Most German Presidents were active politicians and party members prior to the office, which means that they have to change their political style when becoming President. The function comprises the official residence of Bellevue Palace. Under Article 59 1 of the Basic Law, the Federal President represents the Federal Republic of Germany in matters of international law, concludes treaties with foreign states on its behalf and accredits diplomats. The Federal President does have a role in the political system, especially at the establishment of a new government and the dissolution of the Bundestag parliament. This role is usually nominal but can become significant in case of political instability. Additionally, a Federal President together with the Federal Council can support the government in a "legislative emergency state" to enable laws against the will of the Bundestag Article 81 of the Basic Law. However, until now the Federal President has never had to use these "reserve powers. The other members of the government are the Federal Ministers; they are chosen by the Chancellor. Germany, like the United Kingdom, can thus be classified as a parliamentary system. The office is currently held by Angela Merkel since 2017. The Chancellor cannot be removed from office during a four-year term unless the Bundestag has agreed on a successor. This constructive vote of no confidence is intended to avoid a similar situation to that of the Weimar Republic in which the executive did not have enough support in the legislature to govern effectively, but the legislature was too divided to name a successor. The current system also prevents the Chancellor from calling a snap election. Except in the periods 1963–1965 and 1973–1974, when the Social Democratic party of Chancellor Brandt and Schmidt came in second in the elections, the chancellor has always been the candidate of the largest party, usually supported by a coalition of two parties with a majority in the parliament. The chancellor appoints one of the federal ministers as their deputy, [15] who has the unofficial title Vice Chancellor German: The office is currently held by Olaf Scholz since March 2021. It consists of the chancellor and the cabinet ministers. The current cabinet is Merkel IV since 2017. Bundestag and Bundesrat of Germany Federal legislative power is divided between the Bundestag and the Bundesrat. The federal legislature has powers of exclusive jurisdiction and concurrent jurisdiction with the states in areas specified in the constitution. In practice, however, the agreement of the Bundesrat in the legislative process is often required, since federal legislation frequently has to be executed by state or local agencies. In the event of disagreement between the Bundestag and the Bundesrat, a conciliation committee is formed to find a compromise. Reichstag building The Bundestag Federal Diet is elected for a four-year term and consists of 99 members elected by a means of mixed-member proportional representation, which Germans call "personalised proportional representation. Parties that obtain fewer constituency seats than their national share of the vote are allotted seats from party lists to make up the difference. In contrast, parties that obtain more constituency seats than their national share of the vote are allowed to keep these so-called overhang seats. In the parliament that was elected in 2017, there were 24 overhang seats, giving the Bundestag a total of 99 members. The current Bundestag is the largest in German history with 99 members. A party must receive either five percent of the national vote or win at least three directly elected seats to be eligible for non-constituency seats in the Bundestag. Following reunification, elections for the first all-German Bundestag were held on 2 December 1990. The last federal election was held on 24 September 2017.

**Chapter 4 : German Political Parties After World War II / Useful Notes - TV Tropes**

*West Germany is the common English name for the Federal Republic of Germany (German: Bundesrepublik Deutschland) in the period between its creation on 23 May and German reunification on 3 October*

Recent developments after the federal elections of 1998 have shook the political spectrum again and as of the state elections of 2002, it does not seem to have settled into a "new normal" yet. Shortly after the war ended in 1945, the largest parties were founded or refounded. A number of smaller parties were also founded, of special note those founded by people expelled from previously German territories that were annexed by Poland and the Soviet Union. Large parts of eastern Poland were also annexed by the Soviet Union, expelling Poles that partially settled in the previously German territories. The formative years ended with a number of developments: West Germany from late Fifties to mid Nineties. While West Germany was formed in 1949, its party system reached a stable form about a decade later, when it just consisted of three or four parties in the German parliaments: Then the "social-liberal" SPD-FDP coalition was formed, and the NPD fortunes waned quickly, while on the left the 68ers tried to create niches for their ideas about society. Around 1970, large anti-nuclear and pacifist protest movements gave rise to the Greens. Some of the figures of 1968 - among them Rudi Dutschke - were among the founding members of the Greens, but it would be wrong to simply call them the "parliamentary arm" of the movement. Other groups left the party, which then developed two wings: Fundis saw their party as a shining beacon people would eventually follow, while Realos wanted to reach actual change in government by compromise. Hardline Fundis eventually left, but a strong left wing remained. Greens were elected into state and federal parliaments, but badly overplayed their hands both after Chernobyl and after reunification, scaring away voters. After reunification, the West German party system remained unchanged for a while, and was mostly carbon copied to the East German states. Elections were nominally held, but through arrangements or outright fraud, the power balance never shifted. Revolution of 1989. In the fall of 1989, a lot of protest movements were formed or became widely known, and when the East German government finally gave in, a new party system shortly formed for the only free Volkskammer election in March 1990. Later, they dropped the SED part completely. The elections were won by the CDU, with the voters wanting to support the western counterpart, not the block party. When reunification was agreed on among both German states and the Allies, a number of party fusions took place: The Berlin Republic since the mid Nineties. A few years after reunification, the political pendulum swung back to the left side. First in the states, then on the federal level the SPD won elections. This was actually rather delayed - from shortly after the election of 1998 until late 2002, the Kohl coalition had been steadily declining in the polls and had actually been expected to lose the West German elections expected for 2002, but reunification gave them a few more years of life - mostly on the East German vote. In 2002, a "red-green coalition" of SPD and Greens took office, while also having a majority in the Bundesrat they lost that in the very next year, though. This grand coalition was better liked than the first one in the 1990s and made Merkel popular. On the left, the attempt to gerrymander the PDS out of the only constituency they won in backfired when the PDS nearly doubled their support and won three constituencies, thus giving them full representation in the Bundestag. Being allied with them in any way whether forming a coalition with them or a minority government tolerated by them used to carry a large stigma, but this slowly faded over time. After rumours about more constituency victories being necessary for full representation, the PDS finally agreed to merge with the newly formed WASG in the West, and then former SPD chairman Oskar Lafontaine joined in and eventually became chairman of the merged Left Party. In the early 2000s the rise of Neo-Nazism became a big problem and several parties tried to bring Far Right politics into the Bundestag: With rising competition from further right in form of the Deutsche Volksunion DVU and the re-strengthened NPD the Republikaner faded from view to become a marginalised slightly harsher center-right party. An attempt to outlaw the party on the same grounds as the SRP before it failed in because the Constitutional Court decided that the undercover agents used to gather information about the party were responsible for most of the criminal acts committed tied to the party. A second attempt at outlawing the party is currently underway. Recent Developments after the federal elections In the federal elections all three smaller parties gained seats, while

the SPD lost big. But a series of blunders by Union and FDP politicians both on state and federal level followed. Then it turned out the FDP got huge donations from hoteliers. Then the trouble around "Stuttgart 21" started, a billion-euro project to build a new train station and railways underground, while putting areas currently used for railways for development. Opponents said it was much too expensive and that the Deutsche Bahn AG was the only one profiting from it. Half a year before the state election the situation escalated when the police used strong water cannons, and protesting high schoolers and pensioners were hit. Then it turned out the police had order to be tough to unmask the protesters as chaots; that backfired immensely, and the government lost support while the Greens, who were against the project, gained. A mediation by a senior CDU politician calmed down the situation a bit, but then Minister-President Mappus committed the next blunder by buying the En BW energy producer behind the backs of the state parliament. More expensive than necessary. Negotiated with a personal friend. When in Japan the Fukushima reactor went out of control it was only the last straw: She had to reverse course to not lose more popular support, and was still worse off than if she never got out of the red-green plans at all. And during all the time, the sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone got worse, and Merkel repeated her behavior a few times: All this had an effect on the political spectrum: The Pirates did not do very well and were not able to increase their share of the vote by all that much. While the FDP is slowly gaining ground and has made its way back into some state parliaments, the Pirate Party has been all but eliminated even though they still have some seats in state parliaments due to their former electoral successes. However, the most important development was the rise of the AfD. In fact, the gains by the AfD were so big that in some states an SPD-CDU grand coalition would not have a majority of the seats, something which has not happened since the consolidation of the party system in the s. The situation is still in flux.

**Chapter 5 : Comparisson of East and West Germany**

*12 Society and Politics in West Germany POLITICS AND THE SOCIAL SYSTEM It has been stressed throughout this book that the politics of West Germany must be understood as a compound of particular historical forces - the 'German' aspects - and the influences that are common to all modern, industrialised societies.*

West Germany then comprised 11 states and West Berlin, which was given the special status of a state without voting rights. As a provisional solution until an anticipated reunification with the eastern sector, the capital was located in the small university town of Bonn. On October 7, 1949, the Soviet zone of occupation was transformed into a separate, nominally sovereign country under Soviet hegemony, known formally as the German Democratic Republic and popularly as East Germany. The five federal states within the Soviet zone were abolished and reorganized into 15 administrative districts (Bezirke), of which the Soviet sector of Berlin became the capital. Full sovereignty was achieved only gradually in West Germany; many powers and prerogatives, including those of direct intervention, were retained by the Western powers and devolved to the West German government only as it was able to become economically and politically stable. West Germany finally achieved full sovereignty on May 5, 1949. Gradual rapprochements between the two governments helped regularize the anomalous situation, especially concerning travel, transportation, and the status of West Berlin as an exclave of the Federal Republic. The dissolution of the communist bloc in the late 1980s opened the way to German unification. As a condition for unification and its integration into the Federal Republic, East Germany was required to reconstitute the five historical states of Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia. As states of the united Germany, they adopted administrative, judicial, educational, and social structures parallel and analogous to those in the states of former West Germany. East and West Berlin were reunited and now form a single state. For example, Berlin was no longer technically occupied territory, with ultimate authority vested in the military governors. In reaction to the centralization of power during the Nazi era, the Basic Law granted the states considerable autonomy. In addition to federalism, the Basic Law has two other features similar to the Constitution of the United States: The formal chief of state is the president. Intended to be an elder statesman of stature, the president is chosen for a five-year term by a specially convened assembly. However, the president cannot dismiss either the federal chancellor or the Bundestag (Federal Diet), the lower chamber of the federal parliament. Among other important presidential functions are those of appointing federal judges and certain other officials and the right of pardon and reprieve. The government is headed by the chancellor, who is elected by a majority vote of the Bundestag upon nomination by the president. Vested with considerable independent powers, the chancellor is responsible for initiating government policy. The cabinet and its ministries also enjoy extensive autonomy and powers of initiative. The chancellor can be deposed only by an absolute majority of the Bundestag and only after a majority has been assured for the election of a successor. Indeed, the constructive vote of no confidence has been used only once to remove a chancellor from office in Helmut Schmidt was defeated on such a motion and replaced with Helmut Kohl. The cabinet may not be dismissed by a vote of no confidence by the Bundestag. The president may not unseat a government or, in a crisis, call upon a political leader at his discretion to form a new government. The latter constitutional provision is based on the experience of the sequence of events whereby Adolf Hitler became chancellor in 1933. The German Bundestag, Berlin. These nondelegate members speak or answer questions during parliamentary debates. The Bundestag, which consists of about 71 members (the precise number of members varies depending on election results), is the cornerstone of the German system of government. It exercises much wider powers than the member upper chamber, known as the Bundesrat (Federal Council). Bundesrat delegations represent the interests of the state governments and are bound to vote unanimously as instructed by their provincial governments. All legislation originates in the Bundestag; the consent of the Bundesrat is necessary only on certain matters directly affecting the interests of the states, especially in the area of finance and administration and for legislation in which questions of the Basic Law are involved. It may restrain the Bundestag by rejecting certain routine legislation passed by the lower chamber; unless a bill falls within certain categories that enable the Bundesrat

to exercise an absolute veto over legislation, its vote against a bill may be overridden by a simple majority in the Bundestag, or by a two-thirds majority in the Bundestag should there be a two-thirds majority opposed in the Bundesrat. To amend the Basic Law, approval by a two-thirds vote in each chamber is required. The powers of the Bundestag are kept in careful balance with those of the Landtage, the state parliaments. Certain powers are specifically reserved to the republic—for example, foreign affairs, defense, post and telecommunications, customs, international trade, and matters affecting citizenship. The Bundestag and the states may pass concurrent legislation in such matters when it is necessary and desirable, or the Bundestag may set out certain guidelines for legislation; drawing from these, each individual Landtag may enact legislation in keeping with its own needs and circumstances. In principle, the Bundestag initiates or approves legislation in matters in which uniformity is essential, but the Landtage otherwise are free to act in areas in which they are not expressly restrained by the Basic Law. Regional and local government Certain functions e. The state governments are generally parallel in structure to that of the Bund but need not be. In 13 states the head of government has a cabinet and ministers; each of these states also has its own parliamentary body. In the city-states of Hamburg, Bremen, and Berlin, the mayor serves simultaneously as the head of the city government and the state government. In the city-states the municipal senates serve also as provincial parliaments, and the municipal offices assume the nature of provincial ministries. The administrative subdivisions of the states exclusive of the city-states and the Saarland are the Regierungsbezirke administrative districts. Below these are the divisions known as Kreise counties. Larger communities enjoy the status of what in the United Kingdom was formerly the county borough. Voters may pass laws on certain issues via referenda at the municipal and state levels.

*However, Germany saw in the following two distinct party systems: the Green party and the Liberals remained mostly West German parties, while in the East the former socialist state party, now called PDS, flourished along with the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats.*

Below an overview of six German decades. Twelve years of Nazi dictatorship have plunged Europe into the abyss, led to racial fanaticism and horrific crimes, and cost the lives of almost 60 million people in the war and the extermination camps. The victorious Allies divide Germany into four zones. The western powers foster the development of a parliamentary democracy, while the Soviet Union opens the door for socialism in the east. The Cold War begins. Germany is in effect divided into east and west. The young Federal Republic builds close links with the western democracies. Economic and social stabilization makes rapid progress. At the same time, the Federal Republic acknowledges its responsibility towards the victims of the Holocaust: He later became Federal Chancellor. During the next 28 years many people lose their lives attempting to cross it. It is certainly an eventful year. It brings about a lasting change in the political culture and society of western Germany. Feminism, new lifestyles, antiauthoritarian education and sexual freedom, long hair, debates, demonstrations, rebellion and new liberality – democracy in the Federal Republic experiments in many directions. The societal changes of this time still continue to have an impact today. Willy Brandt leads a social-liberal government that implements numerous domestic reforms ranging from the expansion of the social welfare system to the improvement of education. Nobel Peace Prize Willy Brandt kneels down at the monument to the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto. It is 7 December and the picture goes round the world. It lays the foundation for a new peace architecture as one of a series of treaties with eastern Europe. In Willy Brandt is honored with the Nobel Peace Prize for his policy of understanding with the countries of eastern Europe. In the same year, with the Four Power Agreement, the Soviet Union in effect recognizes that West Berlin belongs to the economic, social and legal order of the Federal Republic of Germany. It enters into force with the other eastern treaties in and eases the situation in divided Berlin. Also in , both German states become members of the United Nations. The s are a decade of external peace, but internal tension: The terror reaches its climax in – and concludes with the suicide of the leading terrorists in prison. The Greens, the party that grew out of the peace movement and environmental groups, is founded in Just three years later, it enters the Bundestag for the first time – with knitted sweaters and sunflowers. Culture shock for the established parties. What Germans in east and west had come to regard as almost impossible now happens: The era of German division comes to an end. This event was preceded by the weeks of the peaceful revolution in the GDR: The very same night, thousands of GDR citizens rush to the border with West Berlin, where GDR border guards open numerous crossings without clear orders: At the same time, however, more and more Germans in the east demand German reunification at demonstrations. The election campaign focused mainly on the shape and speed of unification with the Federal Republic. The election result, a victory for the conservative Alliance for Germany, is a clear vote in favor of the fastest possible unification and the introduction of a social market economy. In foreign policy terms, the road to German unification requires the consent of the four victorious powers of the Second World War: United Germany gains full sovereignty and the Allies territorial rights end on 3 October The first all-German Bundestag elections are held in December The foreign policy of the Federal Republic strongly supports the deepening of the European community: The s are strongly marked by the economic consequences of unification and the reconstruction in eastern Germany. Federal and State Governments conclude a solidarity pact to even out the differences arising from 40 years of division. Additionally, a Solidarity Tax is levied in east and west to benefit the reconstruction of eastern Germany. The s - Globalization Reforms - World Cup The first decade of the new millennium presents a number of occasions for the world to look towards Germany. The first World Exposition of the century is held in Hanover: Expo is the first at which presentations focus on the themes of sustainability and a balance between humankind, nature and technology. That is appropriate in a new era with new coordinates: The World Cup puts the country into optimistic party mood. The Berlin Declaration recalls the accomplishments of the EU

and the shared values and roots of the member states. In and the community grows by 12 countries to reach a total of 27 member states. The new members are primarily central European countries. In the same year the G8 also meets in Germany: In foreign policy, during this decade Germany frequently demonstrates its readiness to assume wide-ranging international responsibilities within the framework of the international community to contribute to solving conflicts and promoting civil society. In November , a woman becomes government leader for the first time: Merkel and Steinmeier are the leading candidates of their respective parties for the Bundestag elections in September

## Chapter 7 : History of the Federal Republic of Germany

*West Germany under Construction not only expands our understanding of the early formation of West German society, it also outlines ways to continue the excavation of that past. It will be mandatory reading for students and scholars alike.*

At the present time, the world accepts the economic status of the powerful German state as a normal part of the international order. Coincidentally, this time period was also the beginning of the Cold War and the ideological division of the world could not be any more noticeable than in the governing of the zones. The three western powers united their zones into a region simply known as Trizonia while the Soviet Union held onto its region in the eastern half of the nation. The division of Germany was an accidental result of the Cold War as the controlling world powers imposed their own economic and social ideals on their respective areas.

**History** The history of the two German states can be divided into five time periods. The first began in the years directly following World War II and continued until the recognition of the two states as distinct governments in 1949. During this time, the governments of the United States, United Kingdom and France controlled the western half of Germany. These nations were constantly backing the region with financial support including the heralded Marshall Plan of 1948, which supplied massive amounts of aid to western European nations. Fulbrook 14 The governments also dismantled any current socialist reforms and unions as well as aided the right wing government to consolidate their power. Fulbrook 15 At the same time, the Soviet Union was stripping the land of the eastern half of Germany for what it considered to be reparations for the damage caused by the German armies during the war. They were also beginning to implement Soviet style reforms in the region including a land reform in that effectively broke up large estates and the nationalization of industry in 1948. Fulbrook 14 Many Germans were not deeply involved in the political arena and were simply trying to reestablish their lives after the war. For this reason, they may have been more susceptible to the increased role of other nations in their own governments. Berlin remained an international city and was divided in a similar fashion as the rest of the nation. As the economy of West Germany recovered, the governing powers introduced the new currency "the deutsch mark. Fearful of the new currency and the invasion of capitalist ideas, Josef Stalin closed the borders to Berlin in 1948 and forced the United States to airlift in the commodities needed in the western half of the city. Stalin, citing the repair of roads as his ostensible reason for closing the region, ended the blockade after the success of the airlift. This event would foreshadow the events that would occur only a decade later. The second period of post war German history occurred between 1949 and 1961. This was the time after the creation of the two separate nations but before the building of the Berlin Wall. In the West, Konrad Adenauer came into power and was a supporter of the western world. Fulbrook 18 In the east, communist Walter Ulbricht maintained control and implemented programs to assume full control of the many communist factions including the removal of the upper house of parliament and the abolition of the leaders of the regional governments. Fulbrook 19 It was during this time that central planning of heavy industry and the collectivization of agriculture experienced their first declines. This economic downturn resulted in an exodus of skilled workers into West Berlin. Fulbrook 19 The governments remained separated by their ideological differences and would receive sovereignty in 1955. West Germany was a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Economic Community, which promoted economic cooperation on the continent. Fulbrook 19 West Germany refused to recognize the existence of the GDR stated in the Hallstein Doctrine and the two states drifted into further isolation from one another. Fulbrook 20 The next period was the decade from 1961 until 1989. In the East, there was a definitive change in the domestic atmosphere, as a physical wall had closed the nations off from the rest of the world. It was a society based on militarization and repression including the use of border guards and the State Security Police or Stasi. Fulbrook 39 The government established a full communist political system emphasizing nationalization of industry and property, labor reform, centralization of power and the formidable role of the Socialist party SED. Fulbrook 21 In the West, the economy continued to grow along with their similarities to other western European nations. Fulbrook 22 To the east of the Wall, Honecker made the GDR the most successful nation in the communist bloc and continued the use of five-year plans and communist economic systems. In 1989 he made an unprecedented visit to

West Germany. Fulbrook 23 Political activism was on the rise especially among environmental groups along with an air of conservatism in the west and instability in the east. In , Mikhail Gorbachev rose to power and installed his programs of openness in the bloc. A month later, he announced permission for unlimited travel out of East Germany. Fulbrook 24 The strong binds of communism were quickly unraveling. The currency was officially united in the summer of and the country was officially unified in October of that year. Fulbrook 25 The divided country of Germany had finally been reestablished after 40 years II. There were watchtowers and about people arrested attempting to cross. Berlin Wall Online The most famous was Checkpoint Charlie, a crossing point maintained by the United States, which provided some East German residents with some of their only looks into the western world. The wall stood from until The wall was also in many ways a psychological as well as a political and social boundary. The social differences between the people living their lives on either side were much larger than the short distance of land that separated them. It has been a common description to say that crossing that arbitrary line was like driving from black and white into Technicolor. After the wall fell, the social stigma attached to it became even more obvious. These people had been separated for forty years and some of the younger generations had not even know what it was like to live any other way. The older generations were astounded by the changes that had taken place and felt isolated by their inability to catch up. It stands as an icon of the Cold War world and the alienation of two states which would soon become one nation. The FRG was always economically on the upswing, upholding a capitalist market economy. It was also aided by the financial assets of the Marshall Plan and the migration of skilled labor from the East before the Berlin Wall. Schnitzer 53 The FRG also focused much of its energy on obtaining a role in the collective economy of the European continent. West Germany followed a policy of codetermination after , which gave workers a recognized voice in the structure of industry. In , this was followed by the introduction of work councils, allowing more even further communication between employees and employers. Schnitzer 50 There was one union per industry to decrease the amount of infighting and increase the bargaining power of the unions. An example of this was the German Trade Union Federation. Schnitzer 50 The West remained capitalist throughout its entire existence with varying amounts of state power in the economy as a response to world conditions. For example, there was more state control of the economy during the oil crisis of to Schnitzer 51 The economy of the GDR, on the other hand, was a perfect example of the Soviet command and control type. They utilized central planning, state control of the financial markets as well as a tendency to stress quantity over quality. Schnitzer 52 As was mentioned, they initiated massive land reforms in , effectively breaking down large estates. Schnitzer 52 The land had lost most of its industrial capability after the Soviet Union had stripped it of its primary machinery after the war. Schnitzer 52 However, it came too little and too late. Labor was organized into one large union called the Free German Trade Union that was essentially a mouthpiece for the ruling SED party and had little power to change the working environment. Schnitzer 53 This region had less industrial and natural resources to use for growth from the onset. Schnitzer 47 In the FRG, private citizens controlled the bulk of the industry and market forces determined the prices. Schnitzer 35 Agriculture amounted for a small sector of the economy and they imported most of their foodstuffs. Schnitzer 39 The fiscal system was controlled on three levels by the local, state and national governments and they invested heavily in the economy as well as set the taxation rate to support the public sector. Schnitzer Unlike the GDR, there was little economic planning. Schnitzer 48 The banking system was controlled on the national level by the Deutsches Bundesbank. Schnitzer The bank was considerably independent from the national government, with a structural system similar to the Federal Reserve Bank in the United States. Meanwhile, smaller banks were usually independently owned. The unemployment rate averaged around one percent for the first three decades of the nations existence Schnitzer The average wage and national income were almost double that of the GDR. Schnitzer In the East, the allocation of resources was a result of the government-planned economy. Industry was maintained by either state or semi state owned institutions, cooperatives, or by private companies with strong governmental oversight. Schnitzer The economy was dominated by their remaining industrial sector, which accounted for some sixty percent of their Gross National Product, and large agricultural sector. Schnitzer Instead of a reliance on the market economy similar to the FRG, East Germany depended two, five and seven year plans for economic growth submitted by

the government. They were usually written and administered by the State Planning Commission. Schnitzer These plans usually established the volume and distribution of national income, investment, industrial production, retail trade and expected increases during the upcoming set time period of labor productivity and the income of the population. There were also plans developed for the financial planning of the monetary and banking system. These plans were then sent on to the ministries of each industry for implementation. Schnitzer All enterprises within the GDR were responsible for submitting an annual operating plan, which was developed in the framework of the national plans. Schnitzer There was a high amount of bureaucracy and plans were passed between sectors and ministries without ever being successfully implemented. With the beginning of the aforementioned New Economic System, the focus became placed primarily on the construction of development of primary industries and capital goods. No attention was paid to the increase in consumer goods, which resulted in the unhappiness of the people and the scarcity of the commodities. Schnitzer In the labor market, profit was the main criteria for performance and a portion of any profits were distributed to the workers as bonuses. However, these bonuses were offset by the high levels of levies placed on all sectors of the economy which resulted in the lowering of wages. Most of the expenditure of the government in the public sector was for social services or education. Schnitzer The state budget was essentially a plan for the whole economy and financial planning was based on the estimated levels of output for each year as a result of the output levels of the year before. The banking system was planned by the Ministry of Finance and expectations were handed down to the central bank or Staatsbank on topics such as currency emission standards, the refinancing of other banks, and the needed preparations for other banks to maintain national plan. Schnitzer There were certain specialized bank for each sector of the economy as well including the Industrial and Commercial Bank and the Agricultural Bank. Schnitzer The two separate economic systems of divided Germany differ by their procedures of implementation, allocation and treatment of labor. Schnitzer In the FRG, they already had a strong foundation of industrialization to build off of before the division of the nation. The Allies also took extreme measures to break down cartels and monopolies, ostensibly to break down the capabilities of any future war-making machine. Schnitzer 55 This continuing trend of preserving the rights of competition among the firms in the FRG helped to establish a busy and growth oriented market, if only in some cases for businessmen to preserve their own livelihood. This also increased competition among smaller firms and provided for employment concentration in the larger firms. Schnitzer 56 A reliance on larger firms, although it could deter economic growth, made the West German state a powerful economic icon through its encouragement of extreme capitalism and competition. Schnitzer The state was never involved in ownership and the prevalent industries were the chemical, electro technical, machinery and automobiles.

**Chapter 8 : West Germany - Wikipedia**

*The document explained how the political structures and policies of West Germany would be extended to the east, how other institutions--such as the education system--would be coordinated, and which issues would be resolved later--for instance, abortion policy.*

Once-fertile fields were scarred by bomb craters and tank tracks. In cities, seas of rubble â€” an estimated million cubic tons of it in Germany alone â€” surrounded abandoned, gutted buildings. With factories and businesses destroyed, many people were unemployed. Food was so scarce that millions existed on the verge of starvation. Life in Europe, especially Germany, was dismal at best. As the Marshall Plan became established, communist opposition grew. Addressing the representatives of the countries involved in the Marshall Plan, Hoffman suggested creating a united western European market based on elimination of customs barriers and tariffs. American, British, Soviet, and French forces occupied separate zones, and national matters came before an Allied Control Council comprising the commanders of the four occupation armies. Berlin, lying deep in the Soviet zone in eastern Germany, was similarly divided and governed. That is, the city of Berlin, surrounded by the Soviet Zone, was partitioned into four zones. The zones occupied by the Allies lay on the west side of the city, and east Berlin was occupied by the Soviets. West Germany and West Berlin received massive injections of U. In the American zone, Army occupation troops proceeded rapidly with disarmament, demilitarization, and eradication of Nazi influence from German life. Meanwhile, American officials participated as members of an International Military Tribunal, known as the Nuremberg Trials , which tried 22 major leaders of the Nazi party, sentencing 12 to death, imprisoning seven, and acquitting three. An Office of Military Government supervised German civil affairs within the American zone, working increasingly through German local, state, and zonal agencies with politically reliable staffs. Constabulary, organized by the Army as demobilization reduced the strength of armed units in Germany, operated as a mobile police force. Each of the other occupying powers organized its zone along similar lines. However, the Allied Control Council, which could act only by unanimous agreement, failed to achieve unanimity on such nationwide matters as central economic administrative agencies, political parties, labor organizations, foreign and internal trade, currency, and land reform. Each zone inevitably became a self-contained administrative and economic unit, and some two years after the German surrender, little progress had been made toward reconstruction of German national life. The eventual result, first taking shape in September , was a divided Germany: The rise of a new opponent The Berlin Airlift from to was the stirring response to a bitter example of Soviet geopolitical exploitation. The American response was a foreign policy of "containment", as defined in the Truman Doctrine , of blocking any extension of communist influence. The Cold War era had begun. The partition of West and East Germany was established on May 23, The leader of West Germany was Konrad Adenauer. He was a non-Nazi patriot who attempted to reunite his country. Adenauer was unsuccessful and, beginning in , the sides were occupied by military forces of the U. With the support of the Western Allies, the west German government, with German officials in place, assumed more authority. The Allies arranged for a general assembly to write a federal constitution. The three zones were combined into the Federal Republic of Germany, and West Germany began to prosper. The Berlin Wall By June , efforts to find a resolution to the German question continued, but a solution remained elusive. President Kennedy met with Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna, but the positions of the two leaders, particularly on Berlin, prove irreconcilable. The following month, he abandoned a projected reduction in Soviet armed forces, and announced a substantial increase in the defense budget. The Soviet Union threatened to call up reserves. The deepening crisis resulted in large numbers of East Germans fleeing to the West. In the first six months of , the number rose to more than , mostly young and skilled workers. The wall would divide Germany until it was torn down in During the Ronald Reagan presidency the fall of the Berlin Wall, which separated West Berlin from East Berlin, officially brought the two sides back together in The event also marked the beginning of the demise of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the end of the Cold War. The announcement made by President Gorbachev in July , accepting the participation of the united Germany in NATO, was explicitly linked to the positive nature of the

Turnberry message, and to the substantive proposals and commitments made by alliance governments in London. After 16 years it came to an end when a coalition of Social Democrats and Greens took office in . After the new government took office in , an investigation disclosed that Kohl and his conservative Christian Democratic Union party had operated a slush-fund in defiance of the German constitution. Germany has absorbed the majority of refugees from the former Yugoslavia. Those and other immigrants are targets of racist attacks. The extreme right wing, cagey and sporadically violent, is politically weak. The united Germany has its problems, but the social dislocation that was widely forecast has proven to be minimal. Although the elation of reunification has subsided, and there is still some animosity from both sides, Germany is working towards true unity. Off-site search results for "West Germany"

*INTRODUCTION. Unlike the American political system [] and the British political system [] which essentially have existed in their current form for centuries, the current German political system is a much more recent construct dating from when the American, British and French zones of occupation were consolidated into the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany).*

The voters in the election for President are known collectively as the Federal Convention, which consists of all members of the Bundestag and an equal number of members nominated by the state legislatures - a total of 1, The head of the government is the Chancellor equivalent to the British Prime Minister. Merkel came into office in so that she has now served 13 years as Chancellor. However, following poor performances by her party in both federal and state elections, she has announced that she will step down as Chancellor at the next federal elections in Every four years, after national elections and the convocation of the newly elected members of the Bundestag, the Chancellor is elected by a majority of the members of the Bundestag upon the proposal of the President. This vote is one of the few cases where a majority of all elected members of the Bundestag must be achieved, as opposed to a mere majority of those that are currently assembled. Most significantly, the Chancellor cannot be dismissed by a simple vote of no confidence but only by a "constructive vote of no confidence" with majority support for an alternative named Chancellor. Since , only two constructive votes of no confidence have been attempted in and and only one that in has been successful. This special type of no confidence vote was invented in West Germany, but is today also used in other nations, such as Belgium, Spain, Hungary, Slovenia and Lesotho. In the six decades of the Bundestag, there have been only eight Chancellors - a remarkable element of stability. In the same period of time, Italy has had almost 40 Prime Ministers although some have served several separate terms of office. As in Britain or France, day to day government is carried out by a Cabinet, the members of which are formally appointed by the President but in practice chosen by the Chancellor. Since Germany has a system of proportional representation for the election of its lower house, no one party wins an absolute majority of the seats and all German governments are therefore coalitions. Following the federal election in , it took almost three months to form a new government. This forced the two major parties to negotiate another GroKo. After almost six months of uncertainty - the longest the country has been without a government in postwar history- an agreement was reached in March and subsequently endorsed in a ballot of SPD members. The price of this deal is that the Social Democrats take control of the finance, foreign and labour ministries. The CSU has the interior ministry. Its members are elected for four-year terms. The method of election is known as mixed member proportional representation MMPR , a more complicated system than first-past-post but one which gives a more proportional result a variant of this system known as the additional member system is used for the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly. Half of the members of the Bundestag are elected directly from constituencies using the first-past-the post method of election. Then the other half - another - are elected from the lists of the parties on the basis of each Land the 16 regions that make up Germany. This means that each voter has two votes in the elections to the Bundestag. The first vote allows voters to elect their local representatives to the Parliament and decides which candidates are sent to Parliament from the constituencies. The second vote is cast for a party list and it is this second vote that determines the relative strengths of the parties represented in the Bundestag. So each Land or state has a given number of directly elected members and each party in each Land has a list which determines the order of selection of any members chosen as a result of the application of the second vote. Each of these parties is allocated seats in the Bundestag in proportion to the number of votes it has received. This system is designed to block membership of the Bundestag to small, extremist parties. As a consequence, there are always a small number of parties with representation in the Bundestag - currently the figure is only seven and effectively the CDU and the CSU are the same party. There was a problem with the electoral system, however. Many voters "split" their ballots, voting for a candidate from one party with their first vote and for a different party with their second. This also meant that the Bundestag swelled from its theoretical size of seats to In , the Constitutional Court ruled that

this was unfair and unconstitutional. So, in , a new system was finally agreed. If direct mandates for any party exceed its second-vote ratio, then all the other parties get compensated so that the ratios again reflect the second votes exactly - so-called "Ausgleichmandate". In practice, that could make the Bundestag bigger again, with perhaps more than seats. Crucially, it also hurts one party by withdrawing an advantage it has enjoyed in the past: As a result, the CDU is likely to fare worse under the new system than it would have done under the previous system. A further consequence of this system is that every new legislative period begins with a construction crew moving, removing or adding seats on the plenary floor in the Reichstag. One striking difference when comparing the Bundestag with the American Congress or the British House of Commons is the lack of time spent on serving constituents in Germany. In part, it is because constituency service seems not to be perceived, either by the electorate or by the representatives, as a critical function of the legislator and a practical constraint on the expansion of constituent service is the limited personal staff of Bundestag members especially compared to members of the US Congress. Traditionally proceedings in the Bundestag have been conducted respectfully in contrast to many other legislatures around the world - but the result of the last federal election and the formation of a new grand coalition may change things somewhat. So the Bundestag is likely to hear a more robust tone from its members. The Bundestag elects the Chancellor for a four-year term and it is the main legislative body. The last federal election was held on 24 September and the next election to the Bundestag will be in Autumn there is a permissible window of two months. Voting is held on a Sunday. However, there are two fundamental differences in the German system: Its members are not elected, neither by popular vote nor by the state parliaments, but are members of the state cabinets which appoint them and can remove them at any time. Normally, a state delegation is headed by the head of government in that Land known in Germany as the Minister-President. The states are not represented by an equal number of delegates, since the population of the respective state is a major factor in the allocation of votes rather than delegates to each particular Land. The votes allocation can be approximated as 2. This means that the 16 states have between three and six delegates. This unusual method of composition provides for a total of 69 votes not seats in the Bundesrat. The state cabinet then may appoint as many delegates as the state has votes, but is under no obligation to do so; it can restrict the state delegation even to one single delegate. The number of members or delegates representing a particular Land does not matter formally since, in stark contrast to many other legislative bodies, the delegates to the Bundesrat from any one state are required to cast the votes of the state as a bloc since the votes are not those of the respective delegate. Even with a full delegate appointment of 69, the Bundesrat is a much smaller body than the Bundestag with over members. It is unusual for the two chambers of a bicameral system to be quite so unequal in size. The Bundesrat has the power to veto legislation that affects the powers of the states. The Centre-Right grouping comprises two political parties that operate in different parts of the country so that there is no direct electoral competition between them. These parties are most popular among rural, older, conservative and Christian voters. This the oldest party in Germany and it is strongest in industrial western Germany. It is led by Martin Schulz. In the last federal election, it only won seats which was the poorest result for the party since The other parties now represented in the Bundestag are: The Alternative for Germany in German: It is led by Christian Lindner and gained 80 seats. The electoral system in the German political system means that coalition governments are very common. Unusually political parties in Germany receive significant public funds and the costs of election campaigns are substantially met from the public purse. There are 16 judges divided between two panels called Senates, each holding office for a non-renewable term of 12 years. Half the judges are elected by the Bundestag and half by the Bundesrat, in both cases by a two-thirds majority. Once appointed, a judge can only be removed by the Court itself. The cities of Berlin and Hamburg are states in their own right, termed Stadtstaaten city states , while Bremen consists of two urban districts. Furthermore there is a strong system of state courts. Each Land has a unicameral assembly or parliament called the Landtag. Politics at the state level often carries implications for federal politics. The great strength of the system - a deliberate feature of the post-war constitution - is the consensual nature of its decision-making processes. The Bundesrat serves as a control mechanism on the Bundestag. On the other hand, it can be argued that the system makes decision-making opaque. Some observers claim that the opposing majorities in the two chambers lead to an increase in

backroom politics where small groups of high-level leaders make all the important decisions and then the Bundestag representatives only have a choice between agreeing with them or not getting anything done at all. Germany is increasingly a changing nation demographically and in alone some one million extra migrants entered the country. It is now a society in which one in five has a "migration background" as German bureaucratic jargon calls all those with foreign roots. The number and nature of these immigrants are having a growing impact on German political thinking. On the one hand, Germans themselves need to take on board these changes by rethinking the current pacifistic approach to world affairs and accepting that the Germany military has a role to play in international peace-keeping.