



1. Historical Context and democratic structure of Germany

The political structures that existed before a united German state emerged were dominated by relatively small political entities, which enjoyed varying degrees of political autonomy. The Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Federal Republic of Germany) is formally only 70 years old. Unsurprisingly, this history of federalism is represented in the Bundesrepublik as well. Today we have 16 federal states. This decentralization is one of the most important parts of our democracy.

Berlin, as the capital, was and is the best symbol of Germany's colourful past. West Berlin's location deep within the territory of Eastern Germany made it an island of the Bundesrepublik (Western Germany). West Berlin has had a very special phase after WWII that was deeply intertwined with the Cold War. With the end of the Cold War, the two German states the German Democratic Republic or GDR (East Germany) and Bundesrepublik finally became a united state again. Today, Berlin with its 3.6 million inhabitants, is Germany's biggest city, its capital and the place to be for culture, arts, lifestyle, politics and science.

Germany's democratic system is a federal parliamentary republic with two chambers: the Bundestag (Germany's parliament) and the Bundesrat (the representative body of the federal states). Germany's political system is essentially a multi-party system, which includes a 5% threshold (parties representing recognised national minorities, for example Danes, Frisians, Sorbs and Romani people are exempt from the 5% threshold, but normally only run in state elections). There are six groups in the parliament now: the Christian Democratic Union (CDU, which is united with a regional Bavarian party named Christian Social Union of Bavaria, CSU), the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), the Alternative for Germany (AfD), a young right-wing populist party, the Liberals (FDP), the Left Party (Die Linke), an alliance of the former PDS of East-Germany and the West-Germany Electoral Alternative for Labour and Social Justice and Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen (Alliance 90/ The Greens). As a whole, there are now 709 seats in the 19th Bundestag, resulting from proportional representation combined with elements of first-past-the-post system. Every voter has two votes: a constituency and a list vote.

2. The Political Development of Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen

Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen is a political party, based on a cooperation of two movements. The western German Die Grünen and the eastern German Bündnis 90. The eastern part was a cooperation of civil society groups which formed after the end of the German Democratic Republic (DDR) in East Germany, made up of peace activists, civil-rights campaigners and environmental movements. The western part was founded in 1980. It emerged out of pro-ecology and anti-nuclear demonstrators and was a melting pot of alternative social movements in the 1970s. To get more political and social influence, they formed Die Grünen as an anti-establishment party. The main themes were pacifism, environmental protection, gender equality and grassroots democracy. Five years after the foundation, Joschka Fischer, one of the prominent leaders at this time, became the first Green Minister in Hesse and the Green party was also elected into the Bundestag. During the 1990 election, Die Grünen in the West did not pass the 5% threshold on its own. Bündnis 90, however, won eight seats. In 1993 the two parties merged into the new BÜNDNIS 90 / DIE GRÜNEN.

In 1998 they became part of the government for the first time, as a junior partner of the Social Democrats. Joschka Fischer became Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister, and the Greens also appointed Jürgen Trittin, the Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and Andrea Fischer/Renate Künast, the Minister for Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture. The coalition of Social Democrats and the Greens was re-elected in 2002. The successes of this period were, for example, the Renewable Energy Act, the Registered Partnership Law, which allowed homosexual partnerships more equality, and organic labelling. The coalition's most critical and worthwhile project was the Agenda



20/10. It was one of the biggest restructuring efforts of the labour market and the social system in Germany. It had a hugely significant impact but was not greatly appreciated by the people and led to great losses for the Social Democrats in federal state elections and ultimately to the coalition's premature end before the regular end to the legislative period. After the end of the red-green Government in 2005, the Greens returned to the role of an opposition party. During this period in the opposition, the party grew and became increasingly influential in the federal states.

After the general election in 2017, a chance emerged for the first so-called Jamaica coalition (CDU, Liberals and the Greens) on a federal level. The negotiations failed however after the Liberals left the negotiating table.

Now Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen is part of nine federal state governments in different coalitions with the Social Democrats, the CDU, Liberals and the Left. They have been able to become the leading party in Baden-Württemberg in two consecutive elections. Consequently, Winfried Kretschmann has been Minister President since 2011. Moreover, the Greens are in numerous city councils and there are Green mayors in over 50 German cities, such as Stuttgart, Darmstadt, Greifswald and Berlin. It is currently enjoying membership at record high numbers, totalling upwards of 70,000 people. In Europe, Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen is part of the European Green Party (EGP).

Annalena Baerbock and Robert Habeck were elected as the party co-chairs in January 2018. Michael Kellner is the current Secretary General, Benedikt Mayer, the Treasurer, Jamila Schäfer, the International Secretary, and Gesine Akena, the Spokesperson for Women's Affairs.

3. The political programme of Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen

The political programme dates back to 2002. Since then things have changed, most notably Fukushima, Brexit, Trump, new scientific knowledge and the Paris climate agreement. After nearly 20 years, it is becoming apparent that party programmes need updating in order to tackle those questions that are relevant now and in the upcoming decade(s). The first convention begun in April this year under the slogan 'Neue Zeiten. Neue Antworten' (New Times. New Answers). The plan until 2020, the deadline for the programme, is to find new answers for new questions. The board wants to embed party members in the creation of the programme as much as possible. As such, there is an ambitious list of different conferences due to be held over the following two years. The main themes are structured into six clusters:

1. Ecology
2. Economic and social policy
3. Digitalisation
4. The knowledge society and bioethics
5. European, foreign, security and human rights policy
6. A pluralistic society.

Members have the possibility to suggest new themes and topics. In order to have a formalised connection between board and party, the online-platform *Beteiligungsgrün* (Green Participation) has been set-up. Members have the option to discuss, as well as to introduce topics and motions in order to get a more direct input within the process. Generally speaking, there are no taboos and no no-go topics, except themes of an illegal nature or those that run against the online code-of-conduct within our party.