

Chapter 6: Germany



THE BASICS

Germany

Size	356,910 sq km (about two-thirds the size of France)
Population	82 million
GNP per capita	\$31,900
Currency	1.29€ = US\$1
Ethnic composition	91.5% German; of the largest remaining groups, 2.4% Turkish
Religion	34% Protestant, 34% Catholic, 3.4% Muslim, remainder unaffiliated or undeclared
Capital	Berlin
Form of government	Federal republic
Head of state	Horst Köhler (2004–)
Head of government	Angela Merkel (2005–)

Thinking About Germany

- The Basics
 - Europe's strongest economy
 - Europe's most populous country
 - One of world's richest countries
 - Europe's most extensive social service system
 - Eastern states far poorer than Western ones
 - Eastern states sites of neo-Nazi organizations
 - Economy less flexible than others
 - As socially diverse as France or Britain

Thinking About Germany

- Key Questions
 - Why did it take Germany so long to unite, and how did that delay affect German behavior once it did come together under Prussian rule in the 1870s??
 - Why did Germany's first attempt at democracy give way to Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime?
 - How did the division of Germany and other events after WWII help create the remarkable prosperous and stable democratic Federal Republic of Germany in the west but also the stagnant and repressive DDR in the east?
 - Why did reunification occur with the end of the cold war in Germany, and what new challenges has it posed for what is now the largest and richest country in Europe?

The Evolution of the German State: The German Questions

- Unification and the Kaiser's Reich
 - Prussia's expansion led to first German state
 - Leadership of Bismarck and Prussian elite were crucial
 - Elections without democracy
 - State capitalism: top-down modernization of military and economy making Germany a global power
 - Those changes and rivalries in Europe led to WWI

TABLE 6.1 German Regimes since 1871

YEAR	REGIME
1871–1918	Second Reich
1919–33	Weimar Republic
1933–45	Third Reich
1949–	Federal Republic
1949–90	German Democratic Republic

The Evolution of the German State: The German Questions

- Weimar and the rise of Hitler
 - Fragmented party system and legislature
 - Coup attempts from left and right
 - Reparations and depression
 - Hitler and Nazi came to power as solution to Germany's problems

The Evolution of the German State: The German Questions

- The Third Reich
 - Rearmament with economic and nationalistic goals
 - WWII and Holocaust

The Evolution of the German State: The German Questions

- Occupation and the two Germanys
 - Restructuring of political systems
 - Massive financial aid (especially in West)
 - Cold War motivated integration of Western occupation zones
 - Stalinist regime established in Eastern zone

TABLE 6.2 German Chancellors since 1948

YEAR	CHANCELLOR	POLITICAL PARTY
1948–63	Konrad Adenauer	CDU
1963–66	Ludwig Erhard	CDU
1966–69	Kurt Georg Kiesinger	CDU
1969–74	Willy Brandt	SPD
1974–82	Helmut Schmidt	SPD
1982–98	Helmut Kohl	SPD
1998–2005	Gerhard Schröder	SPD
2005–	Angela Merkel	CDU

The Evolution of the German State: The German Questions

- Building a democratic Germany in the West
 - Strong, pragmatic leadership built effectiveness and legitimacy
 - Three-party system became well-established

Creating a Political Culture

- Economic growth provided stability
- Gradually rising levels of participation demonstrated growing legitimacy
- Rise of Green Party and post-materialist values latest changes
- Intense academic study finds 3 reasons for changes
 - Federal Republic has been an effective regime
 - Political socialization (from schools to families) has changed
 - Generational distance from the 1930s

TABLE 6.3 Germans and Democracy (percentage agreeing)

	1980	1983	1989
The Present National Government Protects Our Basic Liberties	89.5	81.6	79.0
The Political System as a Whole is Just and Fair	87.6	86.8	77.0

Source: Adapted from Dieter Fuchs, "Trends of Political Support in the Federal Republic of Germany," in *Political Culture in Germany*, ed. Dirk Berg-Schlosser and Ralf Rytlewski (London: Macmillan, 1993), 249.

Political Participation

- Parties and the electoral process
 - Constitutionally, parties play official roles in nominating officials
 - Half of Bundestag seats elected proportionally from party lists
 - Parties have become primarily catch-all parties

TABLE 6.4 German Election Results since 1949 (percentage of vote)

PARTY	1949	1953	1957	1961	1965	1969	1972	1976	1980	1983	1987	1990	1994	1998	2002	2005
CDU/CSU	31.0	45.2	50.2	45.3	47.6	46.1	44.9	48.6	44.5	48.8	44.3	43.8	41.5	35.2	38.5	35.2
FDP	11.9	9.5	7.7	12.8	9.5	5.8	8.4	7.9	10.6	7.0	9.1	11.0	6.9	6.2	7.4	9.8
SPD	29.2	28.8	31.8	36.2	39.3	42.7	45.8	42.6	42.9	38.2	37.0	33.5	36.4	40.9	38.5	34.2
Greens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5	5.6	8.3	3.9	7.3	6.7	8.6	8.1
PDS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.4	2.4	5.1	4.7	8.7

Political Participation

- The Christian Democrats
 - Most powerful party
 - Long term commitment to social justice
 - Hampered by “federal” organization in states
 - Earned credit for economic growth and managing unification

Political Participation

- The Social Democrats
 - Second powerful party
 - Hampered by internal policy disagreements
- The Free Democratic Party
 - Power broker between larger parties
 - Old fashioned liberals

Political Participation

- The Greens
 - Broke 5% barrier in 1983
 - Ideology based on attempt at holistic analysis of social, economic, and political issues
 - Disunity has hampered its effectiveness

Political Participation

- The Party of Democratic Socialism
 - Descendant of Stalinist party in DDR
 - Uncertain future
- The Far Right – visible but not effective

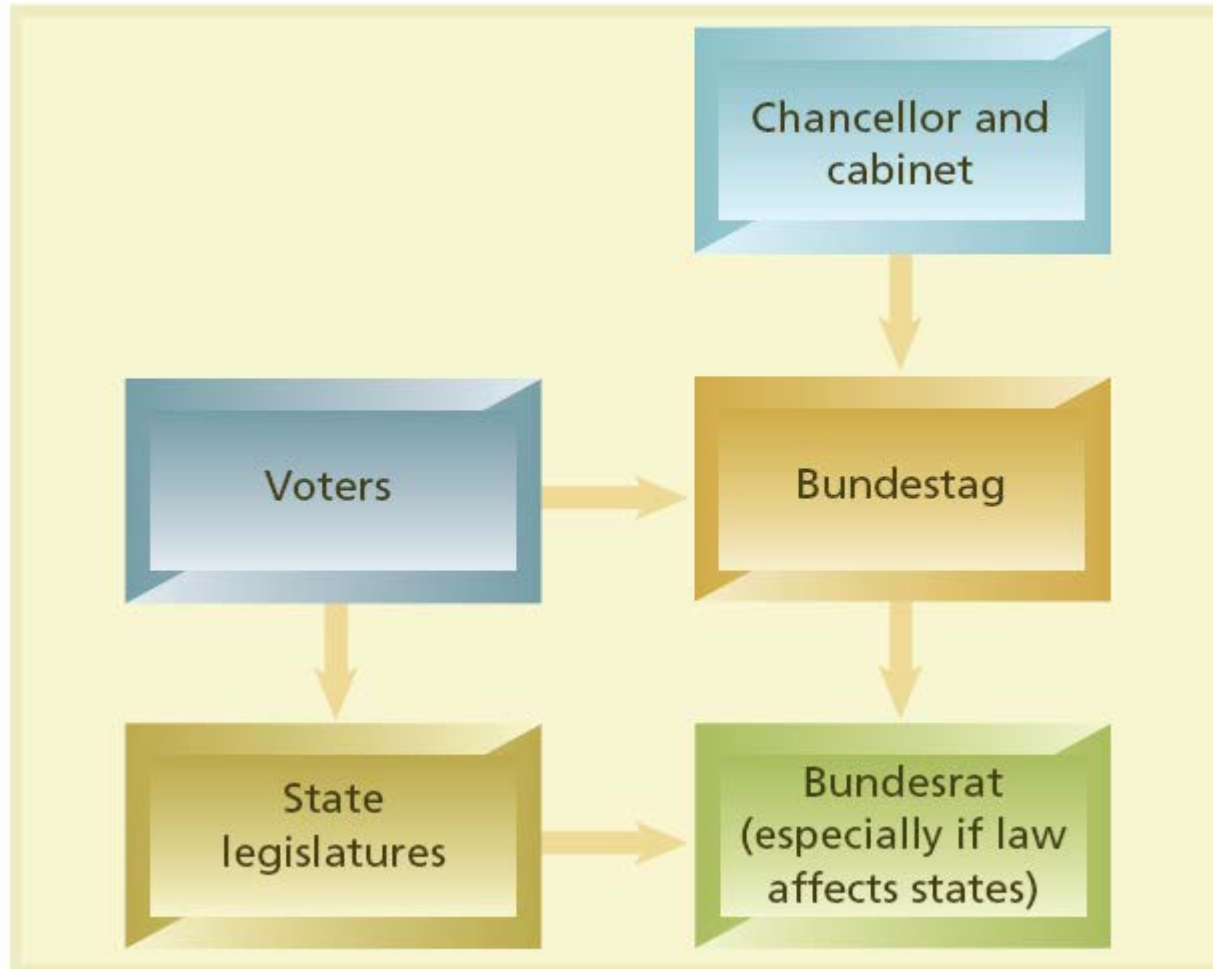
Political Participation

- Interest Groups
 - Large, unified labor union movement
 - Two large business groups participate in politics
 - Chambers of commerce and industry also active
 - Major groups have close ties to parties

The German State: A Smoothly Functioning Democracy

- Chancellor Democracy
 - Fusion of executive and legislative power in Chancellor and cabinet
 - Constructive vote of no confidence procedure offers stability
 - Chancellor's large staff provides opportunity for wide oversight

FIGURE 6.1 Policy-Making Processes in Germany



The German State: A Smoothly Functioning Democracy

- The Bundestag
 - Power limited like that of UK's Parliament
 - Constructive vote of no confidence does offer real power at times of gridlock
 - Powerful committee system provides leverage
 - Party groups play essential roles in functioning of legislature

The German State: A Smoothly Functioning Democracy

- The Bundesrat
 - States select representatives
 - Most representatives are senior civil servants
 - Must approve all legislation affecting states
 - Convenes “Mediation Committees” when two houses disagree

TABLE 6.5 Bundesrat Delegations: Summer 2007

PARTY/COALITION	STATES CONTROLLED	BUNDESRAT SEATS
CDU	5	21
CDU/FDP	3	18
SPD/CDU	5	19
SPD/PDS	2	7
SPD	1	4

The German State: A Smoothly Functioning Democracy

- The Federal System
 - States have power for policy in wide range of areas
 - States administer most national laws and programs

The German State: A Smoothly Functioning Democracy

- The Civil Service
 - Long tradition of powerful senior civil servants
 - Decentralized – 90% are state employees

The German State: A Smoothly Functioning Democracy

- The Constitutional Court
 - Hears cases involving the constitutionality of state and federal laws
 - Can review laws passed without other legal proceedings

The German State: A Smoothly Functioning Democracy

- Corporatism
 - Concerted Action (1966-1977) brought government, business, and labor together to make economic policy
 - Strong informal ties between bureaucracy and business community
 - Wide consensus on economic policy between business and labor
 - Codetermination gives workers meaningful role on boards of large companies
 - German banks play large role in setting economic policy
 - Non-economic issue groups not represented in the corporatist system

Public Policy: Modell Deutschland

- The Social Market Economy
 - Government played major role in economic growth since 1945
 - Most globally-oriented European economy
 - Continuity of government policy an important feature
 - Agenda 2010 has offered needed flexibility to businesses

Public Policy: Modell Deutschland

- Unification
 - Significantly slowed economic growth
 - Transition has been expensive and a culturally difficult task

Feedback

- Quality newspapers have relatively small circulations
- More locally-produced television options than Britain or France
- Conclusion: Democratization

Learning Objectives

After mastering the concepts presented in this chapter, you will be able to:

- Gain knowledge of the history of the political system, economic development and statehood formation of Germany in the 20th century.
- Understand the role of Weimar Republic in the history of German statehood formation.
- Recognize the importance of Basic Law.
- Understand the specifications of the Modell Deutschland.
- Assess the importance of Angela Merkel's political victory.
- Understand the functionality and the structure of German federal system.
- Define civil society and political culture of Germany. Recognize the role of neo-Nazi and radical parties and social protest movements in Germany. Define faulted society period in German history.
- Understand the impact of Nazi regime and the World War II on the development of German state in the 20th century.

Learning Objectives

After mastering the concepts presented in this chapter, you will be able to:

- Define the role of political parties in the political process of Germany. Learn the ideological differences among the following political parties: CDU, FDP, PDS, SPD, Greens, NASSAP, DDR
- Describe the unique role and the structure of Bundesrat.
- Recognize the specification of German electoral system. Comparatively analyze the electoral system in Germany while using few other countries for your comparison.
- Identify the role of German civil service.
- Define the position of the Bundesbank in German economy and financial sector.

Learning Objectives

After mastering the concepts presented in this chapter, you will be able to:

- Describe the functionality of the Constitutional Court in Germany.
- Recognize the essence of German corporatism, including the Concerted Action specifications.
- Identify the uniqueness of codetermination in the German economic system.
- Understand the history and impact of the unification in Germany.
- Comprehend the impact of privatization and denationalization on economic and political development of the German state, specifically the East Germany. Define social market economy in Germany.
- Recognize economic, political and social challenges of unification, including the role of Treuhand.