

Polity IV Country Report 2007: Germany

Score:	2006	2007	Change			
Polity:	10	10	0			
Democ:	10	10	0			
Autoc:	0	0	0			
Durable:		17				
Tentative:		No				
SCODE	GMY	CCODE	255	Date of Report	1 November 2008	
Polity IV Component Variables						
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP	
3	3	4	7	5	5	
Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)						
End Date			Begin Date			
			2 October 1990 (Uni.)			
Polity Fragmentation: No						
Constitution	1949 (1990)					
Executive(s)	Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU); elected by Bundestag, 22 November 2005 (ruling coalition: CDU, CSU, SPD) Federal President Horst Köhler (CDU/CSU-FDP); indirectly elected, 23 May 2004					
Legislature	Bicameral: Bundestag (614 seats; 299 directly elected, 299 allotted for proportion of vote and extra seats because of this compensation; most recent elections, 18 September 2005) Christian-Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU): 226 Social Democratic Party (SPD): 222 Free Democratic Party (FDP): 61 The Left Party (formerly PDS): 54 Alliance '90/The Greens (Grüne): 51 Bundesrat (69 seats; selected by state governments)					
Judiciary	Federal Constitutional Court					

Narrative Description:¹

Executive Recruitment: Competitive Elections (8)

The head of the Federal Government, the Chancellor, is elected by the Bundestag, the first of two chambers of Parliament. The members of this body are chosen in direct, free, equal, and secret elections. As

¹ The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.

stipulated in the Constitution, they serve as representatives of the whole people and each is subject only to his own conscience. The electoral process is competitive and transparent and its outcomes are institutionally uncertain. In September 1998 elections, the incumbent Chancellor Kohl's party (Christian-Democratic Union or CDU) was defeated and lost the chief executive office to the Social Democratic Party (SPD) headed by Gerhard Schröder. In the most recent parliamentary elections (18 September 2005), a loose alliance between the Christian-Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU) gained a slight edge in the number of Bundestag seats over that of the incumbent Social Democratic Party (226 to 222), however it failed to form a ruling coalition with the smaller parties. After intense negotiations, a "grand coalition" was formed that included the CDU, CSU, and SPD; CDU party leader Angela Merkel was then elected to be Germany's first female, federal chancellor on 22 November 2005.

Executive Constraints: Executive Parity or Subordination (7)

Germany's government system is defined as a parliamentary democracy. The executive (chancellor) is chosen by the accountability group (Federal Assembly) and is dependent on its continued support to remain in office. The Federal Assembly may dismiss the chancellor by electing a replacement in a majority vote. It may also request the chancellor's removal by the president. The chancellor, however, may introduce a motion of no confidence in the Federal Assembly. If the motion is not passed, the president may dissolve the body. The judiciary is independent, both constitutionally and in practice.

Political Participation: Institutionalized Open Electoral Competition (10)

The West German multiparty system was carried over to the expanded federation after the country's reunification in 1990. Many Eastern and Western parties have merged where they represent similar ideologies. Several extreme right-wing parties have been banned since 1993 due to growing violence against immigrants and other indications of a resurgence of neo-Nazism. The existing parties are durable and have inclusive agendas with mass-based national constituencies: conservatives (CSU), moderate conservatives (CDU), centrists supporting both social reform and free enterprise (FDP), moderate left (SPD), extreme left (The Left Party, successor to the East German Socialist Unity Party and PDS), and ecologists (Greens). No substantial groups and issues are excluded from the political process although the Turkish Muslim population, which constitutes 4% of the population, does confront economic and social discrimination. Human rights and civil liberties are institutionally respected, and the law provides effective means of dealing with cases of individual abuse.