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AUTHOR Reeve, Ines; And Others  
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ABSTRACT

This guide celebrates the 40th anniversary, in 1989, of the Federal Republic of Germany and is designed to provide an opportunity to review how firmly the principles of democracy have become established in the people and the government of West Germany today. Part 1 gives an overview of the West German democratic experience, covering such topics as the historical background of the Federal Republic, the development of the Basic Law (Grundgesetz), political parties, social programs, security and peace, trends in education, and demographic changes. A time line of related political and economic events, a glossary of German political terms, and a list of 30 publications on the Federal Republic are included. Part 2, "Teaching Strategies and Getting the Word Out about German Events," contains six teaching suggestions for elementary and intermediate levels, nine instructional suggestions for advanced or high school level, a lesson plan for comparing the U.S., French, and West German constitutions, and suggestions for organizing activities concerned with the Federal Republic of Germany. The guide is illustrated with photographs, charts, and maps. (PPB)

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Route 38

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## Introduction

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The 40th anniversary of the Federal Republic of Germany provides us with an opportunity to review how firmly the principles of democracy have become established in the people and the government of West Germany today. Teachers of German and of the social sciences have the potential of being among the major conveyors of information and perceptions about the democratic experience in Germany.

This guide provides information, classroom strategies, references and suggested activities to assist educators in implementing a study unit about the Federal Republic in their curriculum. It is meant to be a practical tool for teachers.

The time line offers a quick overview of the chronological sequence of events since 1945. Each topic thereafter provides basic information to the teacher. The margins are annotated with key words for easy reference. Teachers may want to use these key words to initiate further student research.

Part I ends with a glossary of terms in English and German, and a list suggesting books and publications available free of charge, for further information. Part II is devoted to teacher strategies, providing suggestions for classroom teachers with two sample lessons and two strategies for publicizing German events. The basic suggestions for publicity and good public relations are only a start for what should be an ongoing program of getting the word out on activities involving German students.

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AATG thanks the following readers of this manuscript for their advice and good suggestions: Stephen Feinberg, Ann B. Irish, Bobbi Schildt, Claudia D. Schroeder, Carl R. Schulkin, Alice Garrett, and Mary McBride, all members of the National Council on the Social Studies, Fritz Albert, friend of things German, and Gerald Fetz and Gerhard Weiss of the AATG.

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Ines Reeve, a teacher of German and Social Studies in the Fairfax County Public School System in Virginia, received her BA in International Relations from the American University and her MS in German Linguistics from Georgetown University.

She is a former Fulbright Grant recipient and has done extensive research in the Federal Republic of Germany. In addition to conducting numerous workshops on German language and culture, she has been instrumental in developing enrichment programs, exchange programs and partnerships for students at the high school level.

# **DEMOCRACY IN ACTION**

## **PART I: AN OVERVIEW**

**By  
Ines Reeve**

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## Time Line

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1945	Nazi capitulation; Potsdam Conference; creation of four occupation zones
1948	Currency reform; Soviet blockade of West Berlin; airlift
1949	Ending of blockade; approval of Basic Law; founding of Federal Republic of Germany and German Democratic Republic; Adenauer becomes Chancellor
1950's	"Economic Miracle" gains momentum
1951	"Co-determination" in the mining and steel industry
1953	Revolts in East Germany
1954	Federal Republic becomes a member of NATO
1955	Federal Republic gains sovereignty
1956	<i>Bundeswehr</i> draft system
1957	European Economic Community (EEC) is founded; Saarland becomes a federal state
1959	SPD Godesberger <i>Programm</i>
1961	Berlin Wall
1963	End of the "Adenauer Era"
1966	Grand Coalition: CDU/CSU and SPD
1969	SPD, in coalition with FDP, gains majority
1970's	Ostpolitik
1970	Treaties between the FRG and Soviet Union, also Poland
1971	Nobel Peace Prize for Chancellor Willy Brandt
1972	Basic Treaty with GDR
1973	The FRG and GDR join the United Nations
1976	<i>Mitbestimmungsrecht</i> (law on co-determination for employees in all large businesses)
1978	First Economic Summit in Bonn; Brezhnev visits the Federal Republic
1981	Chancellor Schmidt meets East German Head of State Erich Honecker in the GDR
1982	Helmut Kohl becomes Chancellor
1983	A new party, the "Greens", gains seats in parliament; CDU/CSU regain majority
1987	Erich Honecker visits the Federal Republic
1989	40th anniversary of the Basic Law and the Federal Republic of Germany

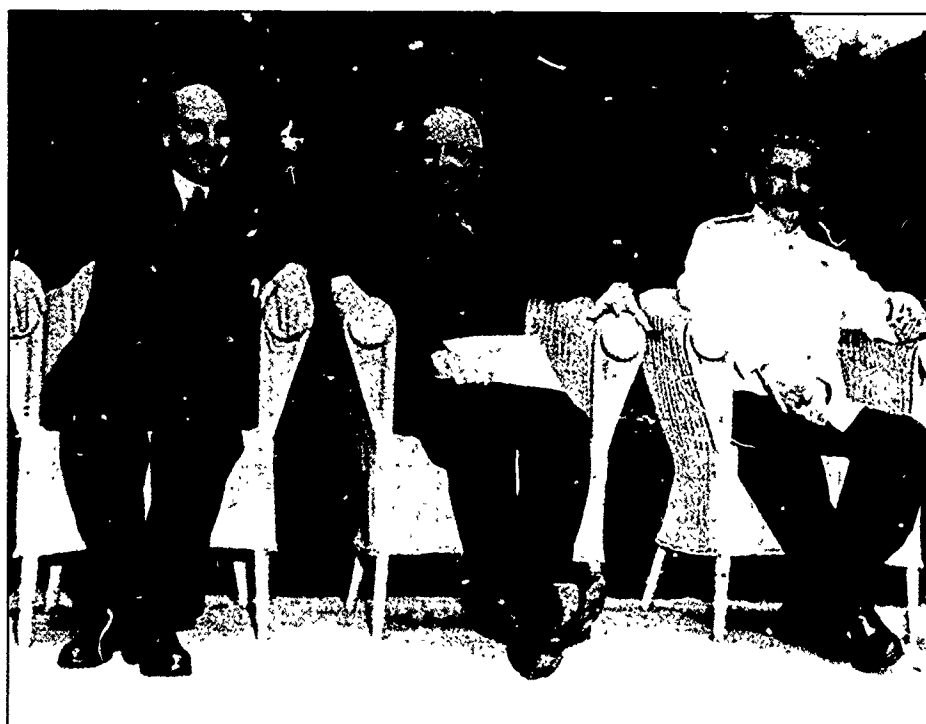
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## A New Beginning: Historical Aspects

On May 8, 1945, the *Wehrmacht* capitulated, and the Reich signed an unconditional surrender. The war in Europe had ended, and Germany and Berlin were subsequently divided into four occupation zones: American, British, French, and Soviet. The agreement for this division had been worked out by the Allies during 1944 and early 1945, but in July of 1945, American, British, and Soviet leaders met in Potsdam to settle the details.

**OCCUPATION  
ZONES**

**POTSDAM  
CONFERENCE**



Potsdam Conference 1945: Attlee, Truman and Stalin

Soon it became apparent that each of the victorious powers was interpreting the Potsdam Agreement in its own way and in its own interests. The basic disagreement between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union dominated political life and led to total polarization between East and West.

**COLD WAR**

As early as 1946 local elections were held in all four zones. The results were overwhelmingly anti-communist. In Berlin, the Communist Party (KPD) was badly defeated by the Social Democrats (SPD). The Soviets, eager to introduce their own political system, changed tactics. Without a vote, they decided to merge the KPD and SPD in their zone to form a new party, the Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei* or SED), which was to offer a single unified list of candidates for election. People were asked to vote "yes" or "no" on the entire list. The SPD in the Western zones protested these procedures and voted against merging with the KPD, but in their own zone Soviets never-

**EARLY  
ELECTIONS**



---

theless proceeded to set up a skeleton government with German officials of their choosing at all levels.

## **CURRENCY REFORM**

Exasperated by the deadlock in their efforts to establish a single democratic government for all of Germany, the U.S. and Britain united their zones of occupation and were later joined by France to form a single Western Zone. In June of 1948 they implemented a currency reform and the new D-Mark was also introduced in the Western sectors of Berlin. In protest, the Soviet Union cut off all access routes to West Berlin and imposed a blockade. American General Lucius Clay organized an airlift for Berlin, and for ten months the population of more than two million people in West Berlin was supplied with goods by air.

## **BASIC LAW**

The same year a Parliamentary Council was established in Bonn to work out a constitution. Under the leadership of Konrad Adenauer, the 65 members drafted a Basic Law which was ratified by the various *Länder* (states) on May 23, 1949. Elections for the first *Bundestag* (parliament) took place on August 14. Konrad Adenauer became the first Chancellor and Theodor Heuss the first President.



Airlift 1948-49:  
Berlin children greet U.S. "raisin bomber"



## **The Basic Law (Grundgesetz)**

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At the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, the victorious Allied powers agreed that their goal was not to destroy Germany, but to give its people an opportunity to build a new existence based on peace and democracy. No central government was set up, and at first each occupation zone was administered by an Allied military commander whose word was law. The American zone was the first to permit democratic government to emerge at the grass roots level by establishing states, setting up state constitutions, and holding local elections.

As the rift between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union widened, it became apparent that each of the Big Powers had a different vision of Germany's future. The French wanted to avoid a strong centralized government. The British sought a centralized political system and nationalization of industry. The Soviets were prepared to place prominent German communists in leading positions if a central authority was established. The Americans advocated a federal system based on the right to private property.

Economic conditions and the lack of cooperation from the Soviets eventually led the Western Allies to draw up an agreement in London in 1948; an interim West German government, federalistic and under Allied control was to be established until an East-West agreement could be reached. A constitutional convention was to be held to draft a democratic constitution.

When the German representatives were consulted in Frankfurt, they were not happy with these recommendations. They felt that the division of Germany would be legalized if they drafted a real constitution for a partial German state. Only the German people in their entirety should ratify such a new constitution. Instead, German representatives suggested a "parliamentary council" to draft a "Basic Law" which in turn should be ratified by the state governments.

While the Soviets were blockading Berlin and the airlift was going on, the 65-member Parliamentary Council and 5 delegates from West Berlin met in Bonn to deliberate on a proper document. They studied various constitutional models: the American Constitution, the German Constitution of 1848, and the Constitution of the Weimar Republic. The Council sought to learn from the mistakes of the past, to avoid the pitfalls of the Weimar Constitution, and to incorporate those features of the American Constitution which would lend themselves to the German way of life.

On May 8th, 1949, the Parliamentary Council presented its finished document to the Western military governors for approval. In the ensuing weeks the *Länder* parliaments gave their approval, and on May 24, 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany came into existence.

The German Basic Law emphasizes four principles: human rights, a democracy ruled by law, federalism, and the state's obligation to social justice. The first 17 articles list the basic human rights and include such liberties as free-

**COLD WAR**

**LONDON  
AGREEMENT**

**THE BASIC LAW**

**THE PRINCIPLES OF  
THE BASIC LAW**

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## **HUMAN RIGHTS**

dom of faith and creed, freedom of expression, assembly and movement, postal privacy, and the right to property. In addition, the Basic Law guarantees the equality of men and women and the right of conscientious refusal of military service (Article 12a was added in 1954-56, together with other defense addenda). These articles on fundamental human rights were placed at the beginning of the Basic Law to bind them directly to the legislative, executive and judicial functions of government, because the authors were eager to avoid the kinds of mistakes which contributed to the collapse of the first German republic in 1933.

## **DEMOCRACY RULED BY LAW**

The democratic principle means that the people are sovereign. All state authority derives from the people, and they exercise their power through elected representatives and political parties. All government actions are subject to law and justice. Germans have the right to resist any person or organization wanting to abolish the democratic order, and a German citizen may challenge the legality of any act of government in the Federal Constitutional Court. Even the controversial Emergency Laws which were added as amend-



**Basic Law adopted by Parliamentary Council, Bonn, May 1949**



Adenauer signs Basic Law, May 23, 1949

Der Parlamentarische Rat hat das vorstehende Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland in öffentlicher Sitzung am 8. Mai des Jahres Eintausendneuhundertneunundvierzig mit dreiundfünfzig gegen zwölf Stimmen beschlossen. Zu Urkunde dessen haben sämtliche Mitglieder des Parlamentarischen Rates die vorliegende Urschrift des Grundgesetzes eigenhändig unterzeichnet.

BONN AM RHEIN, den 23. Mai des Jahres Eintausendneuhundertneunundvierzig.

*Konrad Adenauer*

PRÄSIDENT DES PARLAMANTARISCHEN RATES

*Adolph Schönfelder*

I. VIZEPRÄSIDENT DES PARLAMANTARISCHEN RATES

*Hermann Hees*

II. VIZEPRÄSIDENT DES PARLAMANTARISCHEN RATES

A page of the original of the Basic Law

ments to the Basic Law in 1968 cannot revoke this right. The Basic Law comprehensively details the responsibilities and powers of the Constitutional Court. In creating this court, the Parliamentary Council took as its model the Supreme Court of the United States.

The principle of federalism pertains to a political system with a central government and a number of separate subordinate units or states, each of which retains control of its own internal affairs.

Federative structure is an old German constitutional tradition. Germany has never been a unitary state for long. Even in 1848-49, the German National Assembly at the Paulskirche in Frankfurt considered it important to define each

federal state as having autonomy. Given the regional diversity within Germany, this form of government made it possible to consider regional ethnic peculiarities, cultural characteristics, and other special problems. It has per-

**FEDERALISM**

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mitted citizens to take part in the democratic process at the grass roots level, which is more familiar to the people than the government in the capital. It has maintained a balance of power between federal and state government. The powers of the *Länder* include environmental protection, crime prevention, education, and cultural affairs, as well as the application of federal laws.

## **SOCIAL WELFARE**

The fourth principle emphasized by the Basic Law grew out of the experience of a worldwide depression, mass unemployment, and its political consequences. The authors felt that in a modern society the state has an obligation to guarantee a minimum of social welfare thus protecting the economically weaker and mitigating social contrasts. Basic social rights to employment, to housing, to education and training, to vacations, and to social security are not expressly mentioned in the Basic Law, but they have been implemented by numerous legislative acts. The Parliamentary Council purposely avoided prescribing any particular social or economic order in the Basic Law.

## **PROVISIONAL NATURE OF THE BASIC LAW**

The preamble of the Basic Law emphasizes that it was created "to give a new order to political life for a transitional period". Its provisional nature is further stated in Article 146: "The Basic Law shall cease to be in force on the day on which a constitution adopted by the free decision of the German people comes into force."

### **Some Similarities between the U.S. Constitution and the German Basic Law**

*"No other legal system has determined German legal thinking since 1787 as much as the American."*

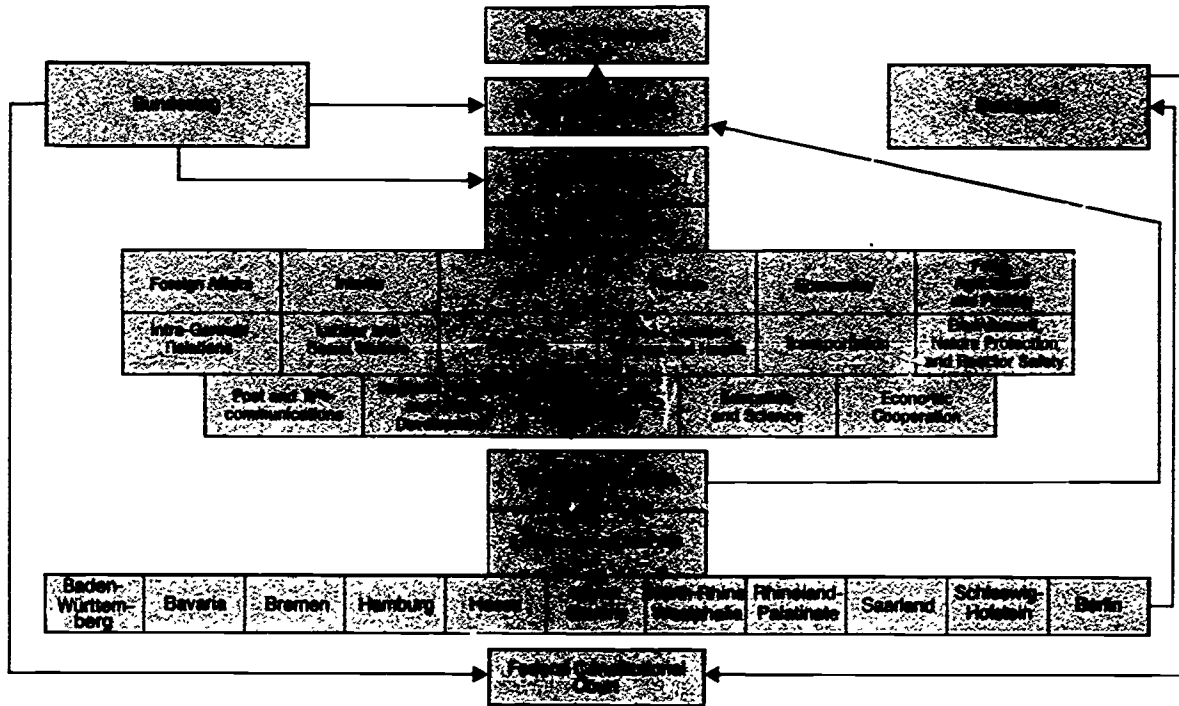
(Helmut Steinberger, former justice of the Federal Constitutional Court)

1. Distribution of powers between the federal government and the states (federalism).
2. Separation of powers: legislative, executive, and judicial functions.
3. Creation of a German Federal Constitutional Court modeled after the Supreme Court of the United States.
4. Inclusion of the Bill of Rights in the American Constitution, and Articles of Rights in the German Basic Law.
5. Election of the American President is by popular vote via the Electoral College. The German Federal Chancellor is elected by the Bundestag.

# The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

**GERMAN  
PARLIAMENTARIANISM**

The government of the Federal Republic is a parliamentary system with multiple checks and balances. In 1948-49, when the Parliamentary Council drew up the Basic Law, some consideration was given to implementing the U.S. presidential system. The Council felt that this would concentrate too much power in the president or executive branch, and due to the experiences during the Nazi regime they did not choose this system. Instead, they developed a new variant of parliamentarianism based on the principle of separation of powers, but including multiple checks and balances.



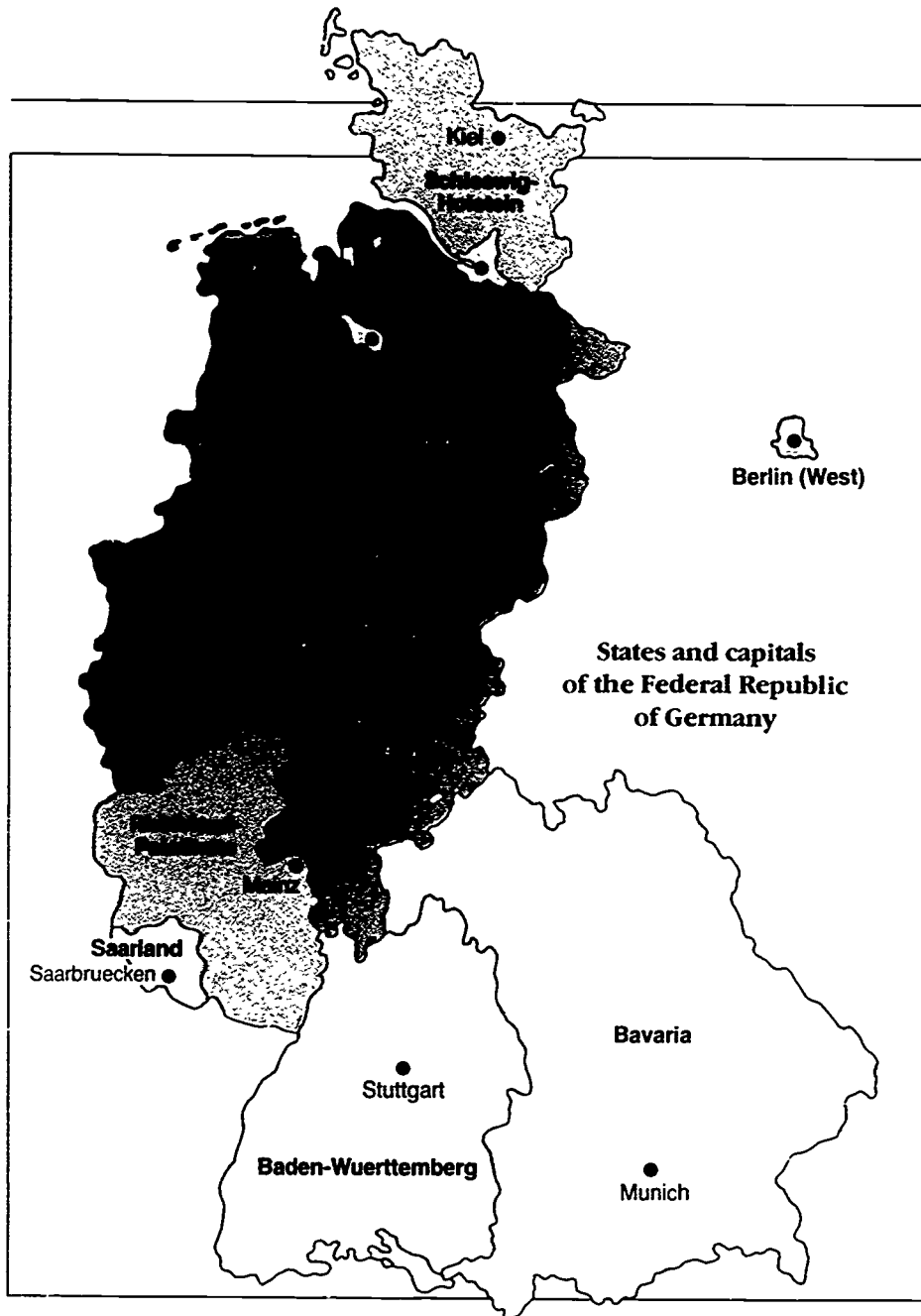
Constitutional structure of the Federal Republic of Germany

The Federal Republic has three branches of government: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The legislative branch consists of the *Bundestag* (House of Representatives) and the *Bundesrat* (Federal Council of States). The *Bundestag* has a minimum of 496 members elected for a maximum of four years by nationwide ballot. In addition, 22 elected deputies from the Berlin city-state legislature are delegated to the *Bundestag* in an advisory capacity.

**LEGISLATIVE  
BRANCH OF  
GOVERNMENT**

A government is formed by the majority party or by a coalition of parties representing a majority of seats in the *Bundestag*. The Federal President may dissolve the *Bundestag* before a regular election, if the deputies fail to elect a chancellor or if the chancellor loses a vote of confidence while in office. The *Bundestag* cannot dissolve itself. The *Bundestag* adopts laws, determines the federal budget, approves all treaties, elects the Federal Chancellor and members of the Federal Courts.

**BUNDESTAG**



## BUNDES RAT

The *Bundesrat* represents the 11 federal states, including West Berlin. States are represented, according to their populations, by a minimum of three deputies but by no more than five. The President of the *Bundesrat* is the deputy of the Federal President. Functions of the *Bundesrat* include making decisions on legislative proposals by the *Bundestag*, and approving most decrees and administrative regulations issued by the Federal Government.

## EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT

The executive branch of government is vested in the office of the Federal President, the Federal Chancellor and the Cabinet. Unlike the American President, the German Federal President performs mainly representative duties as





*Konrad Adenauer*



*Ludwig Erhard*



*Kurt Georg Kiesinger*



*Willy Brandt*



*Helmut Schmidt*



*Helmut Kohl*

**The German Federal Chancellors from 1949 to the present**

head of state and is given merely titular powers. His role is comparable to that of the British monarch. The Federal Chancellor has a stronger position. He or she is the only member of government elected by parliament and is alone responsible to it. He is the nation's political leader. While the Federal President is head of state, the Federal Chancellor is head of government. This office is similar to that of the British Prime Minister. The Cabinet is made up of 15 to 20 ministers (the number can vary) whose duties are similar to the members of the Cabinet in the United States. However, German Cabinet members are usually members of Parliament as well.

The judiciary power is vested in the federal court system. Six federal courts act as courts of last appeal in their respective areas: the Federal Constitutional Court, the Federal Court for Civil and Penal Cases, the Federal Administrative Court, the Federal Financial Court, the Federal Labor Court, and the Federal Social Court.

**CHANCELLOR**

**CABINET**

**JUDICIAL  
BRANCH OF  
GOVERNMENT**



## Political Parties and Elections

Five parties are currently represented in the federal parliament:

Christian Democratic Union (CDU)

Christian Social Union (CSU)

Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)

Free Democratic Party (FDP)

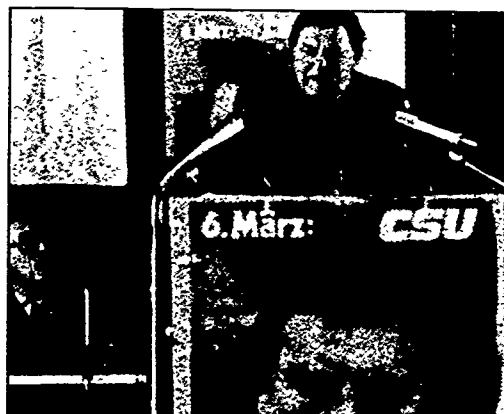
Green Party

### CDU/CSU

The CSU is the Bavarian sister party of the CDU. Influence of the CDU/CSU spreads across all social strata from large entrepreneurs and small artisans to farmers and workers. It advocates private ownership, an expanding European Community, and a strong Atlantic Alliance. Chancellor Helmut Kohl is a member of the CDU.

### SPD

The SPD is the oldest party in Germany (founded in 1863). Its main support has come from industrial workers, particularly those organized in unions, although it has now recruited substantial support from the middle class. It has long been viewed as a social reformist party. It supports a social market econ-



Leading party candidates during election campaigns

omy largely based on private ownership but with controls on economic power. It calls for labor representation on corporation boards and continuing reform of the educational system. In foreign affairs the SPD advocated the major treaties between the Federal Republic and the Soviet Union and Poland. It also advocates a strong European Community and maintenance of the Atlantic alliance.

The FDP is much smaller than the other three, but it has played a very important role since its inception in 1949 by joining either the CDU/CSU or the SPD to form a coalition when no single party won a majority in parliament. The FDP advocates maximum economic freedom and a cultural and educational policy free from church or religious influence. Its members are mainly younger white collar workers, businessmen, and professionals.

The newest party in Bonn is the Green Party, which won seats in the *Bundestag* for the first time in 1983. It developed into a political party out of an environmental protection movement, opposing nuclear power and representing pacifist tendencies. Most of its support comes from men and women under age 35. The Green Party makes something of a principle of downplaying leadership. Until recently its parliamentary representatives rotated services every two years.

Under a law designed to counteract the system's tendency to produce parliamentary splinter parties which might paralyze the legislative process, a party must win at least five percent of all second votes (see below) or carry three electoral districts to enter the *Bundestag*.

National elections are held every four years. Special off-year elections for a new *Bundestag* can be called if

1. the regular election has not resulted in a parliamentary majority for any party or coalition of parties, or
2. a chancellor in office is toppled by a vote of no-confidence in parliament and asks the Federal President to dissolve the *Bundestag*.

Every German citizen 18 and over who has resided in the Federal Republic at least three months prior to the election is entitled to vote.

Each voter has two votes. The first vote is cast for a specific candidate. The winner of a plurality of these votes represents that electoral district in the *Bundestag*. The second vote is cast

**FDP**

**GREEN PARTY**

**FIVE PERCENT RATIO**

**ELECTIONS**

**Stimmzettel**  
für die Wahl zum Deutschen Bundestag im Wahlkreis 63 Bonn am 29. Januar 1987

**Sie haben 2 Stimmen**

hier 1 Stimme für die Wahl eines Abgeordneten  
 hier 1 Stimme für die Wahl eines Abgeordneten

Erststimme

1. Dr. Beate, Frau CDU Christa Deutsche Frau Partei	<input type="radio"/>	CDU	Christa Beate Frau Partei
2. Prof. Dr. Eberhard, Herr SPD Eberhard Sozialistische Partei	<input type="radio"/>	SPD	Eberhard Sozialistische Partei
3. Böttger, Friedrich FDP Friedrich Freie Partei	<input type="radio"/>	FDP	Friedrich Freie Partei
4. Frau Dr. Beate, Frau GRÜNE Beate Grüne Partei	<input type="radio"/>	GRÜNE	Beate Grüne Partei
ZENTRUM Zentrum Partei	<input type="radio"/>	ZENTRUM	Zentrum Partei
Mündige Bürger Mündige Bürger Partei	<input type="radio"/>	Mündige Bürger	Mündige Bürger Partei
FRAUEN Frauen Partei	<input type="radio"/>	FRAUEN	Frauen Partei
MLPD MLPD Partei	<input type="radio"/>	MLPD	MLPD Partei
NPD NPD Partei	<input type="radio"/>	NPD	NPD Partei
ÖDP ÖDP Partei	<input type="radio"/>	ÖDP	ÖDP Partei
Patrioten Patrioten Partei	<input type="radio"/>	Patrioten	Patrioten Partei

**Patrioten**  
 **FRÖN**

## LANDESLISTE

for a party. Each party in each of the federal states draws up a list of candidates for this vote, the "*Landesliste*", which contains the names of some ten to thirty leading politicians. They are ranked on the list according to their influence in their party.

The total number of seats each party receives in the *Bundestag* is determined by its total nationwide share of the second votes. Once the seats won by individual candidates in the first vote have been filled, the remainder of a party's allotment is filled from its *Landesliste*, starting at the top. One-half of the *Bundestag* membership is elected through the first vote (majority representation); the other half is elected through the second vote (proportional representation). Proportional representation is designed to give a minority party a share in the legislature. This is how the Free Democratic Party, for example, has won seats in federal elections even though it could not carry a single electoral district in the country. The effect of this system is to benefit smaller parties and prevent the kind of landslide victories that occur under majority representation.

TABLE OF ELECTION RESULTS

Election Year	Party	Percentage of Vote	Government	Election Year	Party	Percentage of Vote	Government
1949	CDU/CSU	31.0%	CDU/CSU and FDP	1972	CDU/CSU	44.9%	SPD and FDP
	SPD	29.2%			SPD	45.8%	
	FDP	11.9%			FDP	8.4%	
	Others	27.8%			Others	0.9%	
	Voter Turnout:	78.5%			Voter Turnout:	91.1%	
1953	CDU/CSU	45.2%	CDU/CSU	1976	CDU/CSU	48.6%	SPD and FDP
	SPD	28.8%			SPD	42.6%	
	FDP	9.5%			FDP	7.9%	
	Others	16.7%			Others	0.9%	
	Voter Turnout:	86.0%			Voter Turnout:	90.7%	
1957	CDU/CSU	50.2%	CDU/CSU	1980	CDU/CSU	44.5%	SPD and FDP
	SPD	31.8%			SPD	42.9%	
	FDP	7.7%			FDP	10.6%	
	Others	10.3%			Others	0.5%	
	Voter Turnout:	87.8%			Voter Turnout:	88.6%	
1961	CDU/CSU	45.3%	CDU/CSU and FDP	1983	CDU/CSU	48.8%	CDU/CSU and FDP
	SPD	36.2%			SPD	38.2%	
	FDP	12.8%			FDP	7.0%	
	Others	5.7%			Greens	5.6%	
	Voter Turnout:	87.7%			Others	0.5%	
1965	CDU/CSU	47.6%	"Grand Coalition" CDU/CSU and SPD	1987	CDU/CSU	44.3%	CDU/CSU and FDP
	SPD	39.3%			SPD	37.0%	
	FDP	9.5%			FDP	9.1%	
	Others	3.6%			Greens	8.3%	
	Voter Turnout:	86.8%			Others	1.3%	
1969	CDU/CSU	46.1%	SPD and FDP	Voter Turnout:	84.3%		
	SPD	42.7%					
	FDP	5.8%					
	Others	5.4%					
	Voter Turnout:	86.7%					

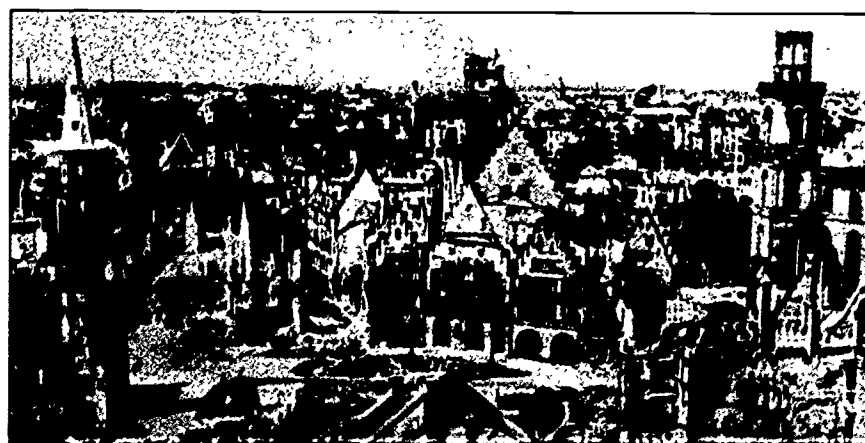
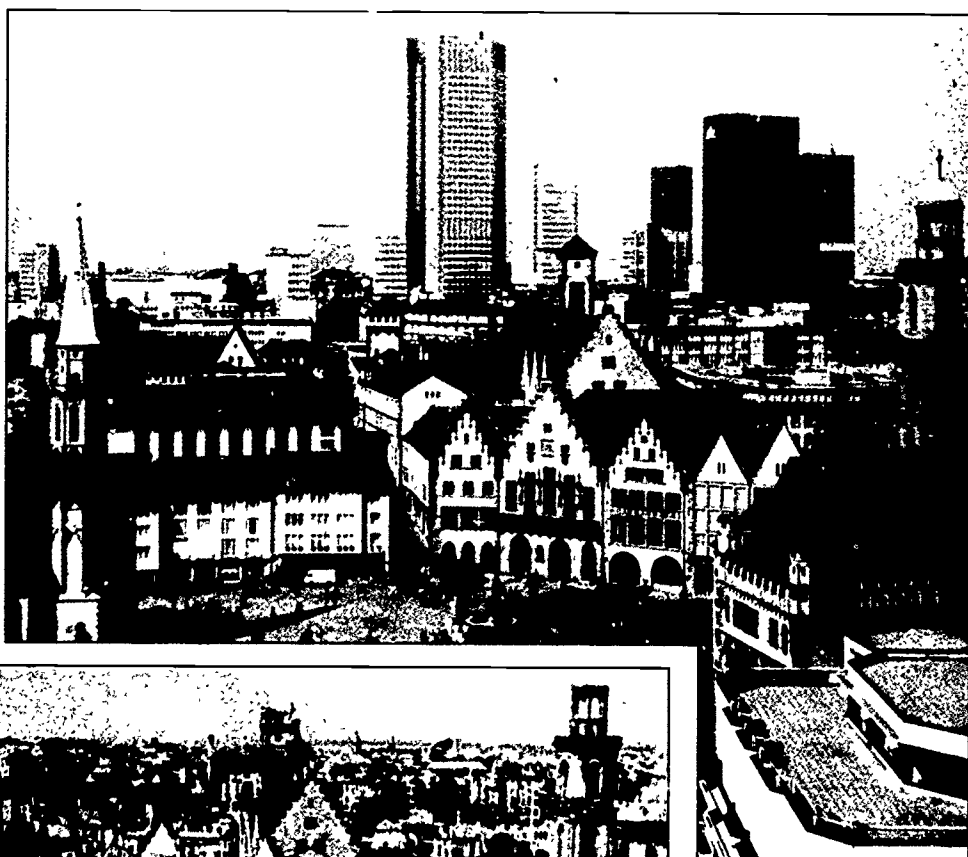
## Economic Developments

The unexpectedly rapid economic recovery of the Federal Republic after World War II is commonly referred to as "the Economic Miracle". In 1945 no one thought it possible that a decade later West Germany could be counted among the industrial giants of the world. Several factors contributed to this success:

**ECONOMIC  
MIRACLE**

1. In 1947, President Truman and Secretary of State Marshall initiated the European Recovery Plan or "Marshall Plan". Goods, raw materials, and money in the form of credit ( \$3.5 billion ) were sent to aid the Western zones of Germany.
2. In 1948 Ludwig Erhard, future Federal Minister of Economics, persuaded the Allies to permit a currency reform and to allow his administration to initiate a policy of radical decontrol of goods.
3. German workers proved eager to earn hard currency to buy goods and rebuild the country. They worked longer hours than other workers in Europe, and trade unions cooperated with management, often holding back on their demands so that capital could be invested.

Currency reform, 1949, sets stage for recovery: Frankfurt, 1945 and today



**Co-  
DETERMINATION**

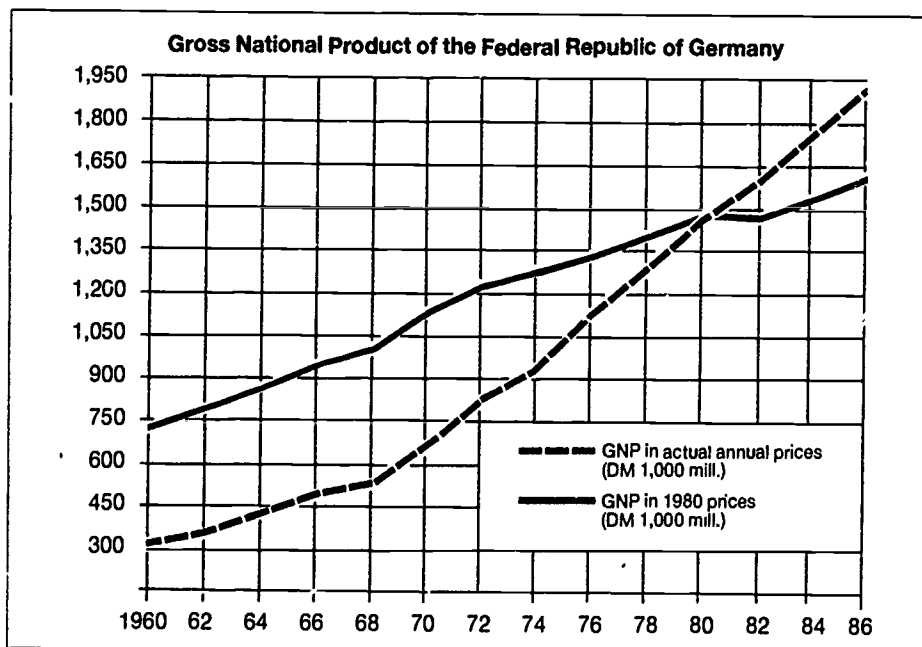
**BETRIEBSRAT**

In contrast with workers in France and Britain, those in West Germany were less disposed to view employers as adversaries and more inclined to recognize a common interest with industry. This co-operation manifested itself in the co-determination right (*Mitbestimmungsrecht*) of 1951, expanded in 1976. In large industrial enterprises, labor representatives were given seats with votes on the governing board of the corporation. Employees also elect a works council (*Betriebsrat*) which co-determines with management questions of personnel policies and working conditions.

4. Most of the industrial installations destroyed or dismantled after the war were replaced by new, more modern and efficient equipment. This permitted technical ingenuity to be applied to improve production methods and product design, resulting in better and cheaper goods.
5. The demands of the domestic market were great. Much had been destroyed and needed to be rebuilt. The Germans needed and wanted housing, transportation, furniture, and other material goods.
6. Due to the Korean conflict, West Germany found a ready world market for its exports.

**ECONOMIC  
GIANT**

Very quickly the Federal Republic became a major industrial country. Overall economic performance today places it in fourth position in the world. Germany exports mainly cars, machinery, chemical products, pharmaceuticals,



German economic growth at a glance

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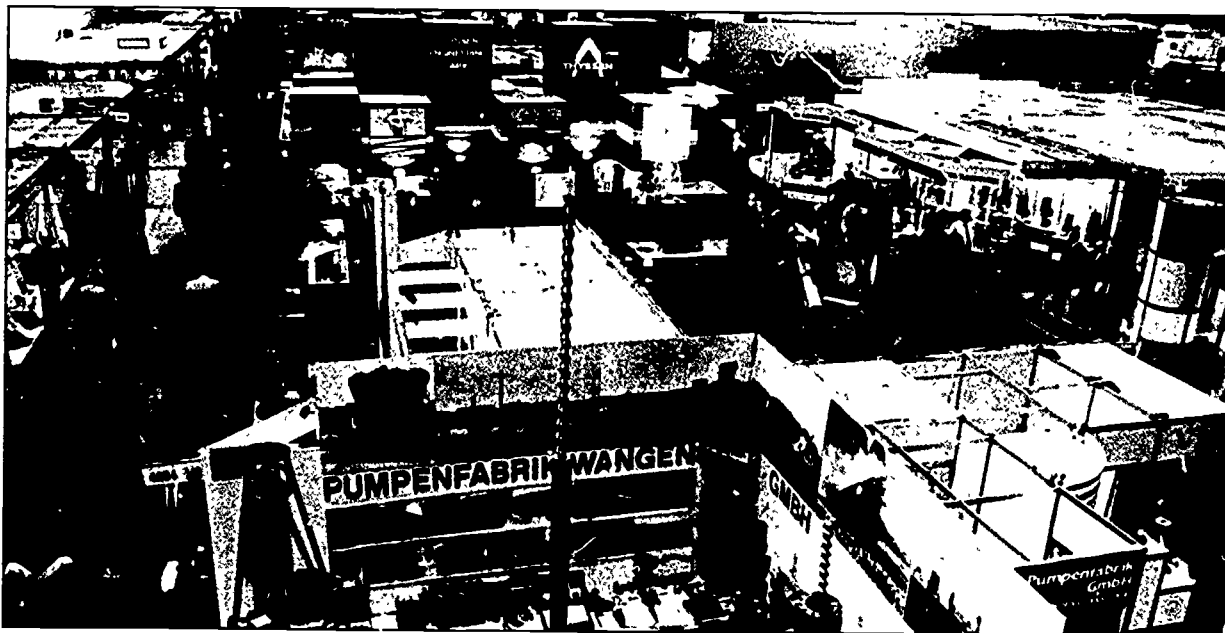
and electronics. Its gross national product increased about ten percent annually in the late Fifties and early Sixties and has more than doubled in the last two decades.

In the Sixties, workers began to reap generous benefits from the "*Wirtschaftswunder*". Wages increased an incredible 97 percent; unemployment was down to almost zero. In fact, the labor shortage became so acute that businesses started to recruit "guest workers" from Mediterranean countries. Today, they constitute a number of ethnic minorities in West Germany. The largest group is the 1.5 million Turks.

The West German economy is a social market economy. It fosters private enterprise, coupled with governmental enforcement of orderly competition and a comprehensive system of social security norms. Some enterprises are

## GUEST WORKERS

## SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY



One of Germany's many industrial fairs

owned and operated by the government (utilities, communications, and transportation for example); others are subsidized, such as the airline industry. Most are private. The government relies on market forces and does not decide what and how much should be produced, nor is there any price or wage fixing.

Recent issues most pertinent to the West German economy have been the rise in unemployment in the eighties, the fluctuation of the dollar and its effect on German exports, and the preparations necessary for 1992, when all restrictions on trade will be lifted among the member countries of the European Community.



## Social Programs

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### **SOCIAL WELFARE BENEFITS**

The Basic Law emphasizes the government's obligation to maintain the well-being of all citizens. The Federal Republic has built a model program of social security, socialized medicine, accident benefits, disability payments, unemployment insurance, child benefits, rent subsidies, job retraining, and old age pensions. In addition, on-the-job benefits are standard for the German work force. The German worker is one of the best paid and most socially secure in the world. Fringe benefits include Christmas bonuses (a "thirteenth month" salary) and vacation bonuses (*Urlaubsgeld*). Federal law requires that all employees receive at least 18 vacation days, and between 25 and 30 days for workers under the age of 19. However, 72 percent of the country's workforce enjoys at least six weeks of paid vacation in addition to legal public holidays (10 to 13 a year, depending on state law).

### **WOMEN'S BENEFITS**

Women receive special consideration during pregnancy. They have six weeks off before and eight weeks after delivery with full pay. An additional four-month leave is optional thereafter. Many employers also offer child care services at the work place.

Special social compensation (*Wiedergutmachung*) has been set up for the victims of the Nazi regime and of World War II. Benefits include:

### **WIEDER- GUTMACHUNG**

**Restitution**—Anyone who was persecuted because of his opposition to National Socialism and the Hitler regime or on grounds of race, creed or ideology has a claim to compensation. It is given mainly in the form of pensions, lump sums, capital restitution or loans. To date, five million applications have been filed and all but a small number of persons have received benefits. In addition, Israel was paid integration support for Jewish refugees, and a hardship fund for persecuted Jews living outside of Israel was established. The Federal Republic also has compensation agreements with 12 European states for the benefit of their Nazi-persecuted nationals and their dependents. Compensation disbursements to date total about DM 75 billion.

**Burden-sharing**—Inhabitants who had lost their homes and possessions in World War II receive compensation and pensions from a special equalization fund.

**Integration**—Expellees and refugees from East European countries receive aid from a special fund created by the Federal Republic.

**Benefits for veterans and their dependents**—Pensions are paid to the widows and orphans of German soldiers. In addition, they receive therapy and support in starting work and a career. Soldiers of the *Bundeswehr* or people doing substitute civilian service whose health has been impaired and their dependents also receive these benefits.

## Security and Peace

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The year of the establishment of the Federal Republic, 1949, also marks the foundation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In view of the Cold War and the increasing tension between East and West, the Western powers felt it necessary to establish an Atlantic alliance to secure the freedom and independence of Western Europe.

At first, no one advocated the participation of the Federal Republic. After all, the Allies had required total disarmament and demilitarization of Germany. In 1950, however, the communist forces of North Korea crossed the 38th parallel, invading South Korea, and it became clear that the possibility of similar invasions in Europe could no longer be ruled out. In the Council of Europe, England's Winston Churchill proposed the inclusion of German soldiers in a West European army. Konrad Adenauer, the first chancellor of the Federal Republic, took up this proposal and offered a German contribution to defense.

**NATO**

**KOREAN WAR**

**REARMAMENT**



German and American soldiers during NATO maneuver



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## SOVEREIGNTY

He saw here an opportunity to establish the sovereignty of the Federal Republic with its membership, on equal terms, in a community of European nations. In 1954 the Federal Republic became a full-fledged member of NATO, gaining complete sovereignty a year later.

## BUNDESWEHR

At the same time, the country prepared for a new German army. This subject was extremely controversial in domestic politics. German citizens demonstrated under the slogan "Ohne mich", and some members of parliament resigned in protest. But on New Year's Day 1956 the first volunteers for the new *Bundeswehr* reported for duty, and in July of the same year a draft system went into effect. Today the *Bundeswehr* with its army, air force, and navy is an indispensable partner in NATO. It enjoys the trust and cooperation of its allies.

## U.S. TROOPS IN GERMANY

Since the European balance of power can only be maintained with cooperation between the U.S. and the Federal Republic, German-American relations are of great importance for the alliance as a whole. Approximately 250,000 American forces are stationed in West Germany and Berlin. The Federal Republic contributes to their support financially and by furnishing military installations, training areas, and housing on a no-cost basis.

## POWER OF COMMAND

Present strength of the *Bundeswehr* is 495,000. It does not possess nuclear weapons or any strategic offensive weapons, but it is prepared to play an important defensive role. The power of command over the armed forces lies with the Minister of Defense, who is responsible to the parliament. In a state of emergency, the power passes to the Chancellor. If a constitutional emergency occurs, a Joint Committee of 33 members of parliament comes into existence to guarantee the subordination of military command to political leadership.

## MILITARY SERVICE

All German men between the ages of 18 and 45 are subject to the draft; women are not liable to conscription. As of July 1, 1989, basic military service is 18 months. Article 12 of the Basic Law guarantees the right of conscientious refusal of military service. Citizens who exercise this right can render a substitute civilian service in such institutions as hospitals or nursing homes.

## RIGHTS OF SOLDIERS

To safeguard the constitutional rights of soldiers, the Federal parliament elects a commissioner every five years whose duties are to listen to complaints of individual soldiers and to inspect the records of all military agencies. He also visits *Bundeswehr* installations without notice.

The *Bundeswehr* offers support for further education or vocational training for soldiers serving longer than the basic 18 months. In the Seventies, it also began establishing military academies for officer candidates.



Conscientious objectors in  
alternative service

## The Federal Republic and the European Community



The destruction and the suffering endured by Europeans during World War II led them to realize that they needed to cooperate in order to avoid such catastrophes and face the challenges of the future. The idea of a "United States of Europe" grew out of this conviction. The authors of the Basic Law incorporated these beliefs in the preamble of this document. Since its foundation in 1949, the Federal Republic has pursued the objective of European unification.

Unification is a step-by-step procedure. It takes time and patience to dismantle national and cultural barriers and to assimilate national differences and eccentricities. The process of European unification began in 1950, when French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman proposed the European Coal and Steel Community, and the "Europe of the Six" (Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg) was born.

In 1957, these nations established the European Economic Community (EEC or Common Market)\* and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). Since then unification has passed the following milestones:

- 1968 The Community of Six rescinded tariffs, thus establishing a Customs Union.
- 1970 European Political Cooperation (EPC) was founded.

**EUROPEAN COAL  
AND STEEL SOCIETY**

**EUROPEAN  
ECONOMIC  
COMMUNITY**

\*Later European Community

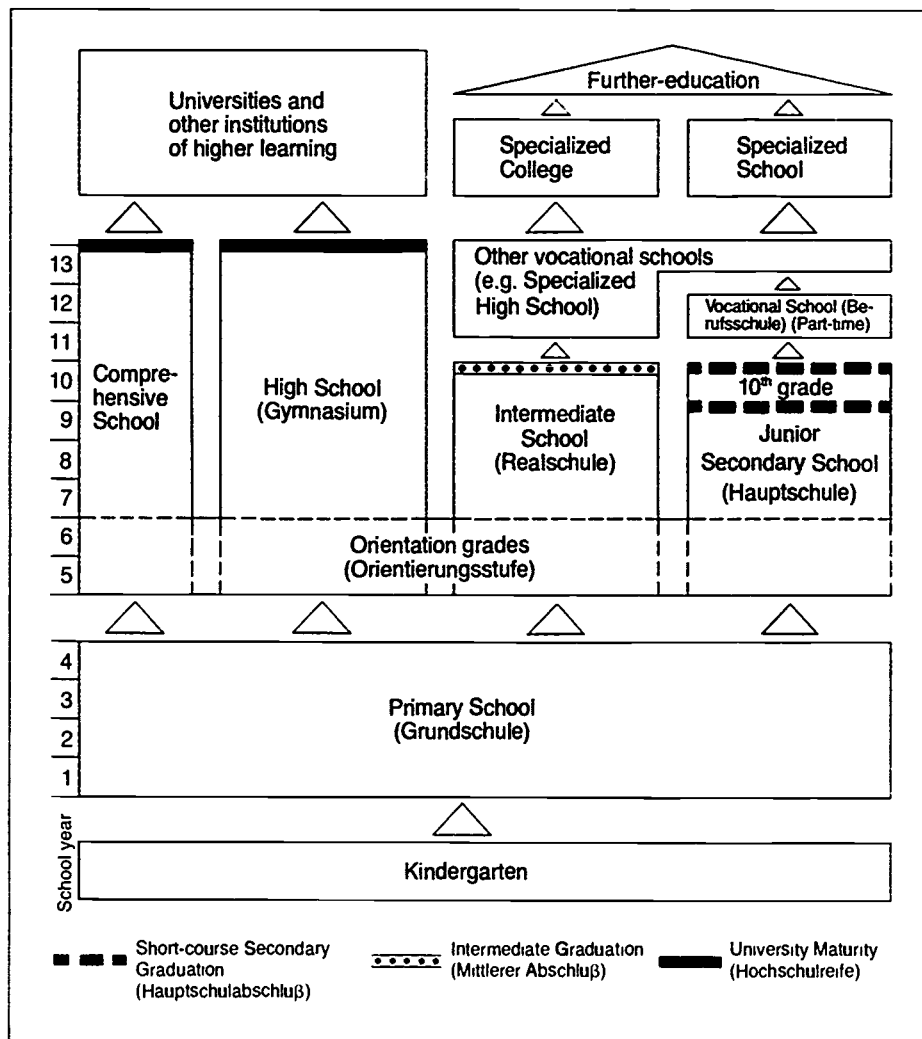
- 
- 1972 The community expanded with development of a common environmental policy, common social and regional policy, an economic and monetary union, and scientific and technical co-operation.
  - 1973 Great Britain, Ireland, and Denmark became members.
  - 1975 The European Audit Bureau was created and the budgetary powers of the European Parliament expanded.
  - 1979 Popular elections were held to choose members of the European Parliament located in Strasbourg, France. The European Monetary System went into effect.
  - 1981 Greece joined the European Community.
  - 1986 Spain and Portugal became members, increasing membership to twelve.
  - 1992 All border barriers and other impediments to the free flow of people, goods, services, and money will be lifted.

The 1992 deregulation project will make the EC the world's largest single market. The EC has 323 million consumers, one-third more than the United States and 2½ times more than Japan.



**The European Parliament in session**

## Trends in Education



**Schematic depiction of the education system**

The reconstruction effort in postwar Germany also applied to its system of education. Schools had to be rebuilt and new books printed. The Allied measures of "denazification" meant removal of about 60 percent of the teaching personnel, educators who had been members of the Nazi party. A re-education program was implemented to insure that the process of democratization would reach every aspect of education. The trend of updating school curricula has continued to the present. For example, the history of the holocaust is an obligatory part of all secondary school programs today.

However, the basic structure of the school system remained intact. After all, the German educational system had a long-standing tradition of excellence. It grew out of 19th century reforms and at that time served as a model for educational policies in the U.S. Ironically now, a century later, the roles have

**DEMOCRATIZATION**

**HISTORY**

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been reversed, and German educators look towards the United States for educational innovations.

## ORGANIZATION

By tradition, almost all West German schools are public, financed by the individual states. There is no Federal Department of Education in Bonn, but there are also no local school boards. Each state has a Ministry of Education which is responsible for school matters and for hiring and paying teachers. School systems vary somewhat across the country, but coordinating efforts have existed since 1949. The state Ministers of Education convene regularly to deliberate on issues of common concern. As a result, the standards of teaching and exams are similar throughout the country.

## TYPES OF SCHOOLS

School attendance is compulsory from the age of 6 to 16. Attendance at all public schools and universities is free. But the Federal Republic does not have unified comprehensive schooling from 1-12, as is the case in the United States. Only during the first four years of elementary school (*Grundschule*) do all children attend the same type of school. After that, they choose among three possibilities:

1. an academically, university-oriented curriculum with nine years of schooling at an academic high school called a *Gymnasium*,
2. a commercially oriented curriculum with six years of schooling at a high school called a *Realschule*, or
3. a vocationally oriented curriculum with five years of schooling at a *Hauptschule*, followed by three years of practical vocational training.

During the 40 years of democratic tradition in the Federal Republic, a number of reforms have taken place to guarantee full equality of opportunity and to insure that curriculum choices are made according to the wishes of parents and students, and not based on social class distinctions. Consequently, there are more pupils attending a *Gymnasium* today than at any other time in history (about 30 percent of the total student population). Other reforms in the educational system include:

1. Grades 5 and 6 in all types of schools are designated as "orientation level" to facilitate changing from one type of school to the other.
2. Comprehensive schools, modeled after the U.S. concept, have been introduced in some states.
3. Students are being given a greater choice among subjects they may study, and
4. more opportunities for alternative routes to education through evening courses and adult education have been established.

## UNIVERSITY TRADITIONS

New trends and reforms have also been implemented at the university level. German universities had traditionally been elitist institutions with total aca-

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**Typical young students of today**

democratic freedom and autonomy. Professors could freely select the topics of their courses, and they were granted total freedom of research and teaching. Students made their own choices as to which lecture courses they wanted to attend and how often, and decided for themselves how much time they would spend at the university. There were no semester exams, only the final comprehensives for a degree. Too often, students spent years studying a certain subject, only to find they could not pass the final exams.

The student movement in the Sixties led to major changes. Universities today are no longer elitist institutions. The hierarchical power of senior faculty has been reduced. Students have a voice in university decisions; they are represented on the Council (the decision-making body at a university) and serve on important committees. Guidelines and introductory courses are offered to students in their fields of study, and intermediate examinations are given to afford them a measure of their academic progress.

These new trends in education have been accompanied by an increase in the number of university students to about ten times that of 1949 (about 1,300,000 students). In spite of considerable expansion of the university system, overcrowding persists and has led to admission restrictions. The available openings are distributed by a central office in Dortmund, which takes into consideration such factors as high school grades and how long the student has waited for admission.

**UNIVERSITY  
REFORMS**

**NUMERUS  
CLAUSUS**



## Demographic Changes

### WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Four decades of democratic stability in the Federal Republic have brought interesting changes in the structure of German society. Many of the traditional roles of men and women have disappeared. Women constitute an active and demanding part in politics and in the work force. Today, the majority of voters (54 percent) are women, and there are more women delegates than ever before in parliament (79 delegates, or 15.2 percent). 52 percent of the graduates of the *Gymnasium*, the academically oriented high school, are women, as are almost 40 percent of university students. Every second woman between the ages of 15 and 65 is employed outside the home. Household duties are often shared between marriage partners.



Sharing household duties



Training apprentices to be electromechanics

The role of women in society first changed after World War II, because it was the women who bore the main burden of reconstruction work. So many men had lost their lives in the war (approximately 19 million Germans were dead or missing in action) that the hard work of carting rubble and rebuilding cities was left largely to women. In Berlin alone, there were 170 women for every 100 men. These "women of the ruins", called *Trümmerfrauen*, became the

**TRÜMMERFRAUEN**

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symbol of the upturn. Women also did their share in building a new and democratic life in Germany. Several outstanding women participated in drafting the Basic Law which assures equal rights. In the years of the economic miracle that followed, with increasing demands of industry, women became an indispensable part of the work force. In the home and family certain legally sanctioned inequalities continued until 1957, when a law was passed giving women equality in the division of matrimonial property. Further matrimonial rights were addressed and passed into law in 1977.

There is no dispute, however, that women in the Federal Republic have special problems. Discrimination still exists against women in employment, notably in pay and in vocational advancement. There are also almost three million more women than men. Even today, the aftermath of the Second World War dominates the lives of an entire generation of women.

Another change in demographics occurred in the density of population. In 1937, 43 million persons lived in the area that now constitutes the Federal Republic. Today, there are 61.4 million people in this same area. Most of this increase is due not to the birth rate but to the influx of more than 11 million refugees who were expelled or who fled from former German territories in Eastern Europe after World War II. Three million alone escaped from East Germany before the Berlin Wall was built. The refugees brought their skills,

## **SPECIAL PROBLEMS**

## **POPULATION DENSITY**



Foreign "guest workers" in a German factory



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habits and traditions, and added to the variety of social life and customs in the Federal Republic. They also made the Federal Republic one of the most densely populated countries in the world (635 people per square mile, compared to 59 people per square mile in the U.S.)

### **BIRTH RATE**

Demographic proportions have shifted in the Federal Republic. In 1950 births outnumbered deaths by 5.7 per thousand population. Today, there is a deficit of two per thousand. The Federal Republic has the lowest birth rate in the world, and this influences the age distribution of the population. One in twenty men and one in five women are 65 years of age or older.

### **GUEST WORKERS**

In addition, there are four million foreigners living in the Federal Republic. Most came in the Sixties and Seventies when an acute labor shortage created a demand for workers from abroad. German businesses set up official recruiting offices in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey, and recruited foreign workers to come as "guest workers" for a limited time, one to three years, to the Federal Republic. Many, however, stayed and brought their families.

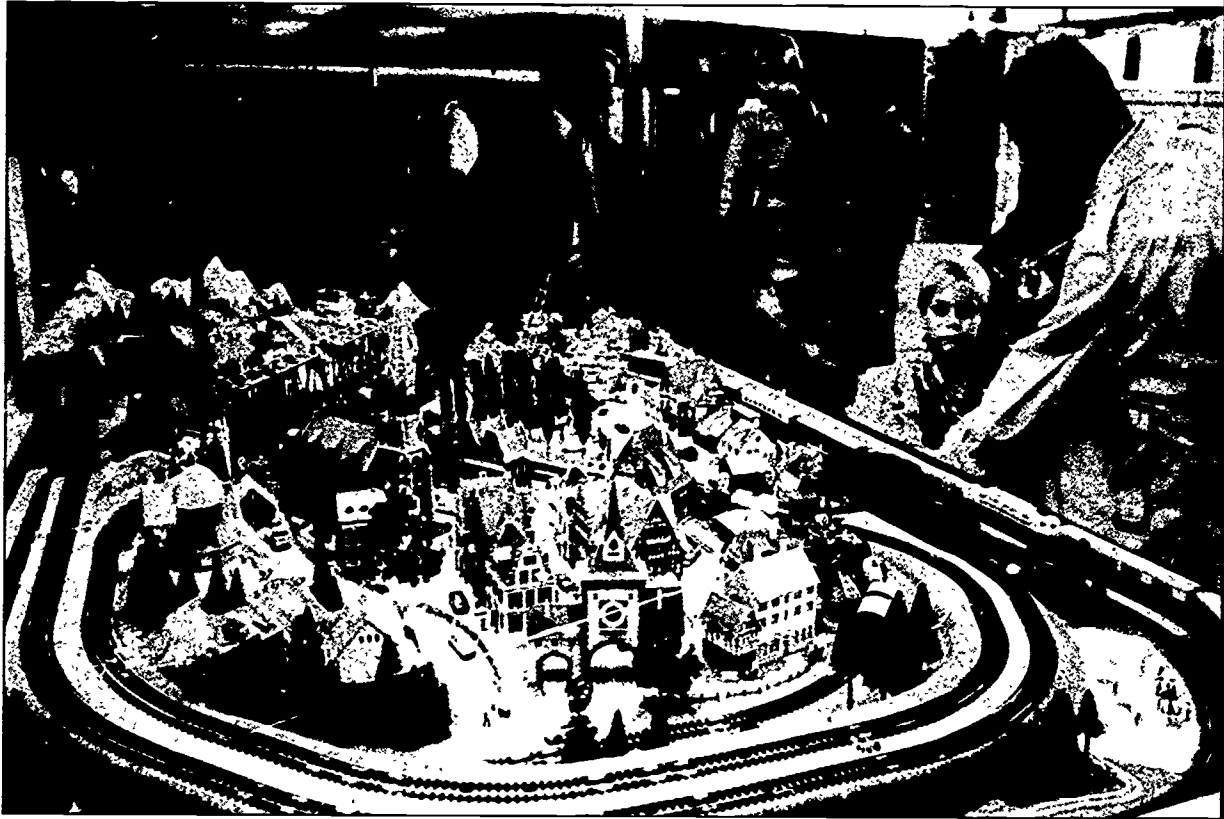
### **FOREIGNERS SEEKING ASYLUM**

Never before had Germans been confronted with such a situation, and some find it hard to accept these new minorities. The government's policy reflects this uncertainty. Unlike the United States, Germany has never been a nation of immigrants in the classical sense. It is a country with a rather homogeneous cultural life, making it difficult for foreigners to become integrated. It is not easy for aliens to gain citizenship. Nor are their children automatically German citizens as a result of being born in the Federal Republic. West Germany's law of citizenship is based on "ius parentum", i.e. children obtain their parents' citizenship.

The Basic Law states that "the politically persecuted are given the right of asylum", and thus far the Federal Republic has been generous in granting such requests. About 15 percent of the foreign population in the Federal Republic is composed of political refugees seeking asylum. They must apply for admission, and although there is a waiting period of five years, over 100,000 have already been admitted. Given the fact that West Germany is a very densely populated country, this influx of foreigners is presently receiving much attention in the press and in government.

## Social Trends and Leisure Time

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Parents and children visit a museum in Frankfurt

The life style of West Germans has changed considerably in the forty years since the founding of the Federal Republic. The average daily free time of workers increased from two and a half hours in 1952 to four hours in the 1980s. West Germany has become a "leisure society" and places great importance on recreation and vacations, cultural activities, and personal hobbies.

Each decade had its own new trend. First came consumerism in the 1950s and '60s. Germans were preoccupied with acquiring "the better things in life": good food, a nice place to live, furniture, a car, fashionable clothing. The American influence showed in every aspect of life, from rock 'n roll and Elvis Presley in music to petticoats in fashion. "Amerika Häuser" disseminated information, books, and audio-visuals on subjects dealing with the United States.

**KONSUMWELLE**

Consumerism also sparked the urge to travel: to discover excitement in exotic places. Today, more than half of the population takes at least one vacation trip a year, and German tourists can be met in any accessible country. More Germans than Americans travel abroad during vacation times, spending over \$20 billion a year on foreign travel. Favorite destinations are the sunny

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countries, particularly those on the Mediterranean, and also France, Austria, Switzerland, and the United States.

## APO

By the end of the Sixties, the euphoria of consumer spending and a perception of growing apathy about societal needs became cause for alarm among many Germans. In expressing this concern the younger generation took the lead. When the Grand Coalition government amended the Basic Law with a series of emergency measures, these young people took to the streets in protest of what they considered too much government control and too many restrictions on personal liberties. They organized an "extra-parliamentary opposition" (*Ausserparlamentarische Opposition* or *APO*) and demonstrated against government policies, against the war in Vietnam, and for university reforms.



Participants in a "Get Trim" event

## BÜRGER-INITIATIVEN

Whatever these political actions may or may not have achieved, they led to raising the consciousness of society as the Seventies began. Germans showed a greater awareness of the environment and began searching for alternative ways to improve the quality of life by solving energy and traffic problems, and pollution. Leisure time was spent joining citizens' action groups and looking for new ways to stay healthy and fit. "Natural" products, free of preservatives and chemicals, became fashionable, as well as leisure time activities and rec-



**Monitoring environmental pollution**

reational sports that contributed to physical fitness. In the Federal Republic today every third person is a member of one or more of 60,000 athletic clubs. There are also 40,000 sports fields, 25,000 gyms, courts, and arenas, and 7,400 indoor and outdoor public swimming pools. Most of these facilities are used for recreational purposes as well as for competitive events. The most popular individual sports in West Germany are swimming, hiking, walking, jogging or running, tennis, and skiing and ice-skating in the winter. Most popular team sports are soccer, ice-hockey, gymnastics, volleyball, and, in recent years, basketball. A number of West German athletes have gained international reputations, and some have been recruited by American teams.

The dominant trend of the 1980s has been a continuing demand for recreation as well as a growing concern about protecting the environment. Forest damage by pollution (*Waldsterben*) and the hazards of nuclear contamination are particular concerns of the Eighties, initiating a new awareness of conservation and protection. Young people mirror the feelings of society. Even those who adhere to a "no future" philosophy are likely to list "self-fulfillment" as the central concept of their existence. Cultural aspects are given priority, and young people make full use of the wide range offered in the Federal Republic. They attend symphonies and art exhibits as well as rock concerts. Of the 40 million West Germans who visit museums and exhibits every year, two thirds are younger than 35.

Germany is rich in theaters, operas, concert halls, museums, and libraries, most of which are supported by state subsidies. In the forty years since its foundation, the Federal Republic's "economic miracle" has been accompanied by an equally impressive "miracle of reconstructing the arts". The results are seen in a multitude of cultural centers which offer a diversity of events and provide a showcase for the resurgence of artistic talent from theater to cinema, from art to literature, and from music to design.

## **FITNESS**

## **TRENDS OF THE EIGHTIES**

## **CULTURE**

## Glossary

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### English Terms:

Academic high school  
Airforce  
Armed forces of the FRG  
Basic Law  
CDU  
Chancellor  
Co-determination  
Commercially oriented high school  
Common Market  
Constitution  
CSU  
Currency reform  
Economic miracle  
Elementary school  
Extra-parliamentary opposition  
Federalism  
Federal Constitutional Court  
Federal Republic of Germany  
Federal Council of States  
German Democratic Republic  
Greens  
Guest worker  
House of Representatives  
KPD  
Navy  
Occupation zone  
Parliamentary Council  
Reparations to victims of Nazi regime  
SED  
Social market economy  
Social welfare state  
SPD  
States in the FRG  
Vocationally oriented school  
Works Council

### German Equivalent:

das Gymnasium  
die Luftwaffe  
die Bundeswehr  
das Grundgesetz  
die Christlich-Demokratische Union  
der Kanzler  
die Mitbestimmung  
die Realschule  
der Gemeinsame Markt  
die Verfassung  
die Christlich-Soziale Union  
die Währungsreform  
das Wirtschaftswunder  
die Grundschule  
die ausserparlamentarische Opposition (APO)  
der Föderalismus  
das Bundesverfassungsgericht  
die Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
der Bundesrat  
die Deutsche Demokratische Republic  
die Grünen  
der Gastarbeiter, die Gastarbeiterin  
der Bundestag  
die Deutsche Kommunistische Partei  
die Marine  
die Besatzungszone  
der Parlamentarische Rat  
die Wiedergutmachung  
die Sozialistische Einheitspartei  
die soziale Marktwirtschaft  
der Sozialstaat  
die Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands  
die Länder  
die Hauptschule  
der Betriebsrat

## Resources

The following publications are available free of charge from the German Information Center or from the consulate general of the Federal Republic of Germany in your area.

### THE BASIC LAW OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

As amended up to and including August 3, 1976—170 pages

Published by the Federal Press and Information Office, Bonn, 1987

### GRUNDGESETZ FÜR DIE BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND

Includes Deutschlandvertrag, Menschenrechtskonvention, Bundeswahlgesetz, Parteiengesetz

Published by Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Stand März, 1987—271 pages

### • FACTS ABOUT GERMANY

Published on behalf of the Federal Press and Information Office, Bonn

(Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag, 1988) 413 pages

### • TATSACHEN ÜBER DEUTSCHLAND

German edition of the above—415 pages

### INFORMATION—THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY AT A GLANCE

A 16-page brochure giving a general description of the country and its people, 2 maps

Published by the Federal Press and Information Office, Bonn, 1987

### • DIE BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND AUF EINEN BLICK

German edition of the above

### INFORMATION—FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Published by the Federal Press and Information Office, Bonn

This series offers the material of the various chapters of *FACTS ABOUT GERMANY* in separate brochures (14 pages each) to be used by students for assignments on specific topics

### INFORMATION—THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY AND THE USA

Brochure on *German-American relations*, 16 pages

Published by the German Information Center, New York, 1988

### INFORMATION—THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY AND THE USA

Brochure on *German immigration to the USA*, 16 pages

Published by the German Information Center, New York, 1988

### STATISTICAL COMPASS

Published by the Federal Statistical Office, Wiesbaden, 1988, 48 pages

### ZAHLENKOMPASS

German edition of the above

### • FACTS AND FIGURES

A Comparative Study of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic

Published by the Federal Press and Information Office, Bonn, 1985, 108 pages

### • ZAHLENSPIEGEL—EIN VERGLEICH

Bundesrepublik Deutschland—Deutsche Demokratische Republik

German edition of the above

Published by the Federal Ministry for Intra-German Relations, 1988—144 pages

### • DEMOCRACY IN GERMANY—HISTORY AND PERSPECTIVES

Published by the Federal Press and Information Office, Bonn, 1985—190 pages

### • OUTLOOK BERLIN

Published by the Berlin Information Centre, 1988, 96 pages

### • IM ÜBERLICK—BERLIN

German edition of the above—96 pages

### • ROOTS IN THE RHINELAND

America's German Heritage in Three Hundred Years of Immigration 1683-1983

By Christine M. Totten

Published by the German Information Center, New York, 1983 (Revised edition 1988)—80 pages

### • FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY—A DIRECTORY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Published by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Washington, D.C., 1987

\* Single copies available for teachers and libraries

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**THE GERMAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE  
COMMON DEFENSE**  
Published by the Federal Press and  
Information Office in cooperation with the  
Press and Information Office of the Federal  
Ministry of Defense, Bonn, 1986—24 pages

- **WESTERN DEFENSE: THE EUROPEAN ROLE  
IN NATO—EUROGROUP**  
Published by the Eurogroup, an organization of  
twelve of the European members of the  
alliance, Brussels, May 1988—32 pages

**SCHOLASTIC UPDATE**  
4-page supplement: Federal Republic of  
Germany 1949-1989: Modern Democracy in  
Action, November 18, 1988

- **FEATURING...the European Unified Market  
of 1992**  
Published by the German Information Center,  
New York, October 1988—11 pages

**INFORMATION—FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF  
GERMANY RESTITUTION**  
A 10-page brochure, published by the Federal  
Press and Information Office, Bonn, 1988

- **THESE STRANGE GERMAN WAYS**  
Published by Atlantik-Brücke, Hamburg,  
Fifteenth Edition—142 pages

- **MEET GERMANY**  
Published by Atlantik-Brücke, Hamburg,  
1987—139 pages

**SCALA Magazine, US-SPECIAL '88**  
Published by Frankfurter Societäts-Druckerei,  
Frankfurt, 1988—59 pages

#### **Newsletters and other publications**

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**THE WEEK IN GERMANY**  
An eight-page weekly news bulletin in English,  
containing a roundup of political, economic  
and miscellaneous news from Germany and a  
two-page review of the German press  
Published by the German Information Center,  
New York

**DEUTSCHLAND-NACHRICHTEN**  
An eight-page weekly news bulletin in  
German, containing a roundup of political,  
economic, cultural and sports news from  
Germany (Not a translation of THE WEEK IN  
GERMANY)  
Published by the German Information Center,  
New York

**FOCUS ON GERMANY**  
A 16-page monthly publication presenting news,  
features and practical information on Germany  
Published by the Federal Press and  
Information Office, Bonn

**FILMS ABOUT GERMANY**  
A Catalog of films available on loan—27 pages

\* Single copies available for teachers and libraries

# **DEMOCRACY IN ACTION**

**PART II:  
TEACHING STRATEGIES  
AND  
GETTING THE WORD OUT  
ABOUT GERMAN EVENTS**



## Introduction

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Many parents and students in the United States recognize the growing need to learn about other countries and cultures. America's economic future as well as its national security depend upon a "world view" that the schools have an obligation to provide. The 40th anniversary of the founding of the Federal Republic offers an opportunity to contribute to that goal.

The topic "40 Years Federal Republic of Germany" as a teaching module is applicable to any level of instruction. However, since students' abilities differ at each level and instructional approaches and length of class periods vary considerably among teachers and schools, the following guidelines are merely suggestions and practical hints on how to approach this topic at different levels. They may help in directing the teacher's choice of activities, techniques, and materials.

All strategies and activities are equally applicable in German or social studies classrooms. Social studies teachers may omit the language requirement, or they may want to set up an interdisciplinary approach at their schools with the German department.

## **Suggestions for Elementary and Intermediate Levels**

1. Given the maturity level of younger students and the lack of language background, it is advisable to use English for this unit. Teach a few terms in German, such as "Bundesrepublik", "Deutschland", and "Grundgesetz". Also teach the months and numbers 1-100 in order to practice saying dates.

Students remember numbers more easily if they can be reviewed each time a lesson begins. Use flash cards, or play a game to reinforce memorization. A good game is "Boom":

Ask the class to count in German, each student saying a number in turn. However, a prearranged number—7, for example, and any number containing that digit—may not be spoken. The student has to say "boom" instead. If he/she makes a mistake, he/she is out of the game and has to stand up. The game continues until only two students remain seated. If the counting reaches 100, simply start again with 1, but change the "boom" number. For added challenge, include all multiples in the boom category.

Your students will enjoy learning numbers in this manner.

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2. Have students look up the words "federalism" and "republic", and share with the class what they have learned. Explain the unique qualities of a "federal republic", and compare this form of government to a confederation or centralized republic or monarchy.

Divide your class into groups, and have each group create a word search game using the vocabulary words above. Let the groups exchange games to see who can finish their word search first.

To reinforce the memorization of words, play a "pyramid game":

Write any appropriate word vertically on the board. Ask students to think of appropriate words and write them horizontally on their papers, one word for each letter. Give a small prize to a student who finishes first.

Example: R U L E R  
E U R O P E  
P A R L I A M E N T  
U N I O N  
B U N D E S R E P U B L I K  
L A W  
I M P E R I A L  
C O N F E D E R A T I O N

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3. Find the Federal Republic on a world map. Show where Germany is located in comparison to the U.S. On an overhead transparency or on a worksheet, have students transpose a map of the Federal Republic onto a map of the U.S. (same scale) to teach them the difference in size.

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4. Practice saying dates in German. Select the date "May 1949" and explain its significance to the class. Point out the fact that May 1989 is an anniversary date. Teach students to read a time line, then ask them to make one of their own.

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5. Have students look up information on the U.S. Constitutional Convention and compare this information with the Parliamentary Council of the Federal Republic. Ask the students to explain the difference between a "constitution" and a "basic law". Ask them to explain why the Federal Republic has a basic law.

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6. Below are some dates and events in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. Complete the time line by arranging the events in order in the space provided at the right. Then answer the questions that follow.

40th anniversary of the Federal Republic	1945
End of World War II	1949
The Berlin Wall	
Founding of the Federal Republic	1961
Nobel Peace Prize for Chancellor Willy Brandt	1963
End of "Adenauer Era"	1971
Helmut Kohl is elected Chancellor	1981
	1989

- How many years has the Federal Republic been in existence?
  - How many years elapsed between the foundation of the Federal Republic and the erection of the Berlin Wall?
  - How many years elapsed between the end of the Adenauer Era and the election of Helmut Kohl?
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## Suggestions for Advanced Placement Levels (High School)

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1. Expect your students to speak German throughout the discussion of this unit. Set the tone by example: address your students in German not only in class, but anytime you see them.

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2. Make up a handout with basic words and phrases your students will need during discussion of this unit. Include nouns (articles and plurals), verbs (different tenses), adjectives, and idiomatic phrases. You can either include the meanings of the words in the handout or assign students to look them up and share them with the class.

Ask your students to memorize this basic vocabulary. Reinforce memorization daily with a short warm-up drill.

Example: Write three words from the vocabulary list on the board. Give students five minutes to write a sentence for each word. The sentence must explain the word and the word must be used correctly. Have students share their sentences aloud.

Example: Grundgesetz, verabschieden, Rat

Das Grundgesetz ist die Verfassung der Bundesrepublik.

1976 verabschiedeten die Abgeordneten ein neues Gesetz.

Der Rat besteht aus einer Gruppe von Leuten, die Entscheidungen für das Volk treffen.

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3. Lecture in class in German on the basic information listed in this guide about the development of the Basic Law. Write key names, dates, and terms as "Stichwörter" on the board. Then ask your students to recapture what you have said, using the "Stichwörter" as a guide. Do this orally for speaking practice and for oral review.

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4. Divide the class into groups of two or three and assign the following political terms to be researched and shared with the class. You may want to spend a class period in the library or assign this for homework:

Was ist...(der) Föderalismus	ein Grundgesetz
ein Einheitsstaat	ein Parlament
eine Republik	eine Demokratie
ein Bund	ein Sozialstaat
eine Monarchie	
eine Diktatur	
eine Verfassung	

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As your students give their oral presentations to the class, interject to give examples or to draw parallels and comparisons with the U.S. or other European countries (especially members of the European Community; this will set the scene for a future lesson on German membership in the EC, since the Federal Republic is the only federal system in the EC).

Example: Föderalismus: Die Bundesrepublik ist der einzige  
föderalistische Staat in der Europäischen  
Gemeinschaft.

vs.

Einheitsstaat: Frankreich ist eine Republik, aber mit einer  
zentralen Verwaltung in Paris. Das ist das  
Gegenteil von einer föderalistischen Struktur.

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5. Discuss the provisional status of the Basic Law. Solicit students' opinions orally. Then assign a composition in which students express their opinions in written form.

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6. Discuss Article 146 of the Basic Law:

“Dieses Grundgesetz verliert seine Gültigkeit an dem Tage, an dem eine  
Verfassung in Kraft tritt, die von dem deutschen Volke in freier  
Entscheidung beschlossen worden ist.”

English translation: This Basic Law shall cease to be in force on the day on  
which a constitution adopted by the free decision of the German people  
comes into force.

Have your students prepare a debate on the possibility of reunification  
(Wiedervereinigung):

Wird es eine Wiedervereinigung für Deutschland geben?

Ja vs. Nein

Divide the class into two teams. Assign one team the “ja” position, the other  
team the “nein” position. Allow each team enough time to research and to  
discuss their position and to come up with enough support for it. Each student  
on a team must be prepared to make one statement in favor of his or her  
position and defend that statement against attacks from the other side, and he  
or she must be prepared to argue at least once in opposition to the other team.

For the actual debate, have teams seated facing each other. Select individual  
students in turn to make a statement, but let students volunteer to give a  
rebuttal. In this fashion, each student will be given the opportunity to speak  
twice in the target language, and the more vocal students won't dominate the  
activity.

You may want to judge the debate, assigning points for statements and  
rebuttals. The team with the highest number of points wins the debate.

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**7. Expect students to acquire a copy of the Basic Law. Assign a paper comparing the Basic Law to various aspects of the U.S. Constitution. Suggested topics:**

- 1) The Bill of Rights vs. the Basic Rights
- 2) Influences of the U.S. Constitution on the Basic Law of the Federal Republic

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**8. Compare various articles of the Basic Law with U.S. constitutional law, and assign oral presentations on different aspects.**

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**9. Ask students to make some tough decisions. Set up some moral dilemmas and draw an analogy: what is most like Germany at the end of WW2?**

## Lesson Plan

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### TOPIC

### A Comparative Analysis of Preambles to Constitutions of the United States of America, France and the Federal Republic of Germany

### LESSON FOCUS

Carl Van Doren, in his book, *The Great Rehearsal, The Story of the Making and Ratifying of the Constitution of the United States*, asserts, "The supporters of the Constitution in 1787 knew they were planning a government not only for the United States, but believed their experiment would instruct and benefit mankind." He refers to the undertaking of the writing of the United States Constitution as "a rehearsal for the federal governments of the future."

In writing the Constitution of the United States, the authors sought to introduce the living document by way of an introduction that would state the reason for intent of the law therein. In constitutions of many of the countries of the world, preambles are used as introductory statements or part of the constitution.

### CONNECTION TO TEXTBOOKS

This lesson compares foreign constitutions and their purpose of intent. It can enrich textbook treatments that focus only on the United States Constitution.

### OBJECTIVE STATEMENT

As a forerunner of a comparative study of the United States and French Constitutions, we will compare preambles to the constitutions of France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States.

### OBJECTIVES

Students will be expected to:

1. Speculate about the reason for intent of the law of the people as found in the selected preambles.
2. Identify parts of the selected preambles that are similar.
3. Identify examples of differences in the selected preambles
4. Identify the purposes served by preambles to constitutions.

### TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

This lesson can serve as a prerequisite to an in-depth study on analyzing and comparing constitutions of countries of the world. This lesson may also be used as a research exercise giving students an opportunity to practice concepts of investigation and questioning.

*Developed by Alice J. Garrett, Social Studies Teacher, Raleigh, NC*

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### **Opening the Lesson**

- Ask students how many of them belong to various school, church and community clubs and organizations? Do these clubs have written constitutions or rules? How are the rules or constitutions of the various clubs and organizations organized?
- Define the term preamble.
- After careful thought, write out the intent or purposes of the United States Constitution as spelled out in the preamble.
- Tell students that the main part of this lesson compares introductions to constitutions of three selected countries.

### **Developing the Lesson**

- Distribute copies of the preamble to the constitutions of France, the United States of America, and the Federal Republic of Germany Hand out Purpose and Intent Herringbone and the comparison charts to students.
- Have students work in small groups to complete activities.
- Tell students to read the selected preambles and answer questions as directed on the herringbone and chart

### **Concluding the Lesson**

- Using an overhead projector, check answers by soliciting responses from students and record correct responses on a projected transparency of activities.
- Ask students to explain the purpose and intent of each preamble. Students will also be asked to elaborate on the differences and similarities of the three preambles in relationship to responses on the chart activity.

# Preambles

## THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### *Preamble*

We, the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

## FRANCE

The French people hereby solemnly proclaims its attachment to the Rights of Man and the principles of national sovereignty as defined by the Declaration of 1789, reaffirmed and complemented by the Preamble of the Constitution of 1946

By virtue of these principles and that of the free determination of peoples, the Republic hereby offers to the Overseas Territories that express the desire to adhere to them, new institutions based on the common ideal of liberty, equality and fraternity and conceived with a view to their democratic evolution.

## FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

PROMULGATED  
BY THE PARLIAMANTARY COUNCIL  
ON 23 MAY 1949

AS AMENDED AND  
UPDATED THROUGH 1984

[Proclaimed May 23, 1949]

Conscious of its responsibility before God and mankind, filled with the resolve to preserve its national and political unity and to serve world peace as an equal partner in a united Europe, the German people

in the Laender Baden, Bavaria, Bremen, Hamburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, Schleswig-Holstein, Wuerttemberg-Baden and Wuerttemberg-Hohenzollern

has, by virtue of its constituent power, enacted this Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany to give a new order to political life for a transitional period.

It acted also on behalf of those Germans to whom participation was denied.

The entire German people is called upon to accomplish, by free self-determination, the unity and freedom of Germany

### PREAMBLE

The German People  
in the Laender of Baden, Bavaria, Bremen, Hamburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, Schleswig-Holstein, Wuerttemberg-Baden and Wuerttemberg-Hohenzollern,

Conscious of their responsibility before God and men,

Animated by the resolve to preserve their national and political unity and to serve the peace of the world as an equal partner in a united Europe,

Desiring to give a new order to political life for a transitional period,

Have enacted, by virtue of their constituent power, this Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany.

They have also acted on behalf of those Germans to whom participation was denied

The entire German people are called upon to achieve in free self-determination the unity and freedom of Germany

**Activity #1**

**PURPOSE AND INTENT HERRINGBONE**

Preamble Purposes:

*United States of America*

*Federal Republic of Germany*

*France*

Constitutions of Countries of the World—  
Preambles of the United States, France, Federal Republic of Germany

*(When Adopted)*

*(Why)*

*(Basic Idea)*

United States

France

Germany

United States

France

Germany

United States

France

Germany

## Charting Preambles

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**PREAMBLE:** An introductory statement or part of a constitution or statute that usually states the reason for intent of the law.

Provisions for	France	United States of America	Federal Republic of Germany
<i>Ideas of</i>			
<i>Mention of Religion</i>			
<i>Year/Dates Mentioned</i>			
<i>What is said about the people?</i>			
<i>What is being established?</i>			

## **Getting the Word Out About German Events**

### **Introduction**

Celebrating the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany affords teachers an opportunity to bring the German democratic experience not only to the attention of their students but also to the attention of the community. Public relations efforts foster an awareness and understanding of all things German and help in dispelling misconceptions. Such efforts will also generate an interest in German studies and contribute to the prestige of the teacher.

## How to Get Started

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1. Don't feel you have to create a major event. **START SMALL!** The most effective approach is a continuous flow of communication with the public, not a one-time event.
2. Start with the PTA newsletters to parents, who are eager to share in their children's experiences and to know what's going on in the classroom. Create a regular feature, such as a "German Corner", and write about special class activities or assignments, student achievements, and special events.
3. Once you have a news release, disseminate it to all publications at school or in the community: school bulletins, P.A. announcements, bulletins circulated within the school system, and school and community newspapers. *Remember to do this on a regular basis!*
4. Use an upbeat style for your message. Enthusiasm is catching! To be successful, your message must be friendly, polite, and positive.
5. Have your students create a newspaper as a special class activity for the 50th Anniversary and/or German-American Day. Send copies to parents, school administrators, and special members of the community.
6. Request a German-American Day proclamation from your mayor or governor, and include it in your communiques to the public. Also post copies of the proclamation in prominent places.
7. Make May 23 and October 6 special days at your school! **START A TRADITION!** Give a trivia quiz on the P.A. announcements or daily bulletin (first student with the correct answer gets a small prize). Ask your students to create a colorful bulletin board. Initiate a poster contest.
8. Work with your public library on an appropriate book display or an exhibit around May 23 and/or October 6.
9. Have your students or your after-school club take part in an ongoing community event such as a festival or Volksmarsch. Feature a German anniversary display or sell food or T-shirts.
10. Ask for parent volunteers, and tap their knowledge and resources.
11. Do a special video project with your students dealing with German-American Day or with the 40th Anniversary. Invite parents and friends to a private viewing, and also ask local community TV stations to show the video on their channel.
12. Create a community-wide annual "Special Recognition" ceremony around May 23. With the help of teachers in other schools in the community, honor students' achievements in German and/or Social Studies at this event. Invite prominent members of the school system and of the community to attend. Ask newspapers to announce the event and to take photos at the ceremony. Decorate the meeting place with appropriate German-American displays and with a collection of students' artwork from the academic year.

## **Getting the Word Out About German Events**

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The following thoughts should help you in your publicity attempts:

### **Know Your Audience**

If you want to communicate effectively, you must know who is likely to read your leaflet, your newspaper or newspaper article or might listen to your radio or TV program.

### **How to Reach Your Audiences**

You might reach some people best with a leaflet in their mailbox, others with a newspaper announcement. Still others depend on the radio or television to find out about public events.

Some people are easy to reach; they are organized and meet regularly and can share your message at their meeting. Sometimes the persons with whom you wish to communicate are dispersed over a huge area, over the state or even the nation. The US Mail is a most effective answer. A letter, even a mimeographed letter, can be personal and deliver a concise message.

### **Your Audiences Are:**

- PERSONS who are already interested, and only want to know when and where.
- PERSONS who ought to be interested, because of background and civic role, and who read program details.
- PERSONS who have little direct interest in the German language and culture, but who care about education and recognize the diversity on which this nation's strength is built.

### **The Style of Your Message**

When you sit down and prepare your "communique", try to picture the reader or the listener whom you want to reach.

Be informative. Try to anticipate all the questions your readers or listeners are likely to ask. Develop your message with clarity: choose words your audience can easily understand.

Remember, you might be talking to recent immigrants who still have a limited vocabulary. To be successful, your message must be friendly and polite.

### **What is it You Want to Accomplish?**

You want to contribute to a better knowledge about the role of the Germans in the United States. You want to inform about Germany and its history. This all will help to understand others better and will widen everyone's horizon.

*Developed by Fritz Albert, University of Wisconsin, Madison*

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