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Bundestag Election in Germany on 26 September 2021

Final Results

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› While a preference for the SPD's top candidate is evident from their election outcome, the spillover effects on the perception of the party are negligible. As for the CDU/CSU, on the other hand, the party and top candidate were rated more poorly than in the 2017 election. While the Greens did better than at the last election, they fell short of expectations. They have even lost authority in the important sphere of environmental and climate policy compared to 2017.

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The 2021 Bundestag Election in Germany
1. The Election Result

In the September 26, 2021 federal election, voter turnout rose slightly for the third time in a row to 76.6 percent (+0.4 percentage points).

Due to overhang and levelling mandates, the German Bundestag will comprise 736 seats.

The **SPD** gains 5.2 points and becomes the most powerful party with 25.7 percent of the second votes. The SPD already achieved 25.7 percent of the second votes in 2013. This is their third worst result since 1949. In the first votes, the SPD was at 26.4 percent. That is an increase in 1.8 points. Thus, the SPD is sending 206 members to the Bundestag (+53), 121 of which are direct mandates. This is an increase in 62 direct mandates, which all went to the CDU in 2013. However, at the same time, the SPD lost four constituencies to the Greens (Bonn, Hamburg-Eimsbüttel, Hamburg-Altona, Berlin-Mitte), and one to the CDU (Märkischer Kreis II). 36 of the 206 seats of the SPD are levelling mandates.

In western Germany, the SPD can claim a slightly above-average result (26.1 percent), whereas it has performed below average in eastern Germany (24.1 percent). In the federal states, the SPD performed the best in Saarland at 37.3 percent, and the worst in Bavaria, where it won only 18.0 percent of the second votes. On a constituency level, the SPD achieved its best second vote result in Aurich-Emden at 43.3 percent, and its worst in Bad Tölz-Wolfratshausen - Miesbach at 13.5 percent. The SPD achieved the highest gains in the constituency of Mecklenburgische Seenplatte II - County Rostock III (+15.4 points). The SPD also achieved its best first vote outcome in Aurich-Emden at 52.8 percent (Johann Saathoff). Olaf Scholz won his constituency of Potsdam - Potsdam-Mittelmark II - Teltow-Fläming II directly with 34.0 percent of the first vote, beating Annalena Baerbock (18.8 percent).

The **CDU/CSU** became the second strongest party, and won 24.1 percent of the second vote. This corresponds to a decrease in 8.9 points compared to 2017. The CDU lost 7.9 points, coming in at 18.9 percent, while the CSU came in at 5.2 percent of the second vote (-1 point). This is the Union's worst outcome since 1949. The Union also faced losses in the first vote. The CDU won 22.5 percent of the first vote (-7.7 points), while the CSU won 6.0 percent (-1.0 point). The CDU has obtained 152 mandates (-48), including 98 direct and 30 levelling mandates. Compared to 2017, the CDU lost 87 direct mandates this election, of which 68 went to the SPD, 9 to the Greens, and 13 to the AfD. The CDU manages to obtain one constituency each from the SPD (Märkischer Kreis II, Paul Ziemiak) and The Left (Berlin-Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Mario Czaja). The CSU will be represented by 45 members (-1) in the Bundestag, all of whom have been elected directly. The CSU lost one direct mandate to the Greens (Munich South constituency). 11 seats of the CSU are overhang mandates.

The CDU/CSU scored above average at 25.6 percent (-8.5 points) in western Germany, but below average at 16.9 percent (-10.7 points) in eastern Germany. The CSU saw the best outcome of the Union in Bayern out of all the federal states, at 31.7 percent. The CDU achieved its best second vote result in North Rhine-Westphalia at 26.0 percent. The CDU's weakest performance was in Brandenburg, where it won 15.3 percent of the second vote. At a constituency level, the CDU/CSU achieved its best second vote result in Cloppenburg-Vechta at 38.5 percent, and its worst in Berlin-Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg – Prenzlauer Berg East at 7.0 percent. The Union suffered the highest losses in the constituency of Mecklenburgische Seenplatte II - Rostock County III

(-17.1 points), and the lowest losses in Nuremberg South (-1.2 points). The Union also achieved its best first vote outcome in Cloppenburg-Vechta at 49.1 percent (Silvia Breher). Armin Laschet did not stand as a direct candidate in a constituency and entered the Bundestag via the North Rhine-Westphalia party list.

The **Greens** have emerged as the third strongest party. With 14.8 percent of the second votes and an increase in 5.8 points, they fell short of expectations and the polls, but attained their best second vote result in a federal election. The Greens also made gains in the first vote, seeing an increase in 5.9 points to reach 14.0 percent. The Greens will be represented in the Bundestag with 118 seats (+51), 16 of which are direct mandates (+15). The Greens won 10 constituencies from the CDU and CSU, 4 from the SPD and one from The Left. 24 seats of the Greens are levelling mandates.

The Greens fared much better in western Germany at 16.0 percent than in eastern Germany, where they won only 9.1 percent of the second votes. The Greens achieved their best second vote result in Hamburg out of all the federal states (24.9 percent), and their worst in Saxony-Anhalt (6.5 percent) and Saarland, where the Greens' party list was excluded, resulting in their being unable to win any second votes there. At the constituency level, the Greens performed best in the Berlin constituency of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg - Prenzlauer Berg East with 36.7 percent of the second votes, and worst in the Erzgebirgskreis I constituency at 3.3 percent. They received 0 percent of the vote in all of the Saarland constituencies. The Greens achieved their highest growth in the Cologne II constituency (+16.4 points). The Greens attained their best first vote outcome in the Stuttgart I constituency (Cem Özdemir, 39.9 percent). Annalena Baerbock lost in Potsdam, at 18.8 percent of the first vote, to Olaf Scholz (34.0 percent), but entered the Bundestag via the Brandenburg party list.

The **FDP** won 11.5 percent of the second votes. This represents a slight increase of 0.7 points. In the first votes, the FDP recorded an increase of 1.7 points and achieved 8.7 percent. The FDP is sending 92 representatives (+12) to the Bundestag, all of whom have entered via the party list. 16 seats are levelling mandates.

The FDP achieved a better second-vote result in western Germany (11.9 percent) than in eastern Germany (9.5 percent). Out of all the federal states, the FDP achieved its best second-vote result in Hesse (12.8 percent) and its worst in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (8.2 percent). At the constituency level, the FDP performed best in Rottweil - Tuttlingen and Böblingen at 18.1 percent each, and worst in the Berlin constituency Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg - Prenzlauer Berg East with 6.3 percent of the vote. The FDP made its biggest gains in Rottweil - Tuttlingen (+4.6 points).

The **AfD** entered the Bundestag as the fifth strongest party for the second time in a row. It suffered a slight loss, winning 10.3 percent of the second votes (-2.3). It also lost 1.3 points in the first votes, scoring 10.1 percent of the votes. The AfD will be represented in the Bundestag with 83 seats, i.e. 11 seats fewer than in 2017. The AfD won 16 direct mandates, which is an increase of 13 mandates, all of which the AfD was able to win from the CDU. All of the AfD's direct mandates are in the eastern German states (Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia). 14 AfD seats are levelling mandates.

In eastern Germany, the AfD did well above average with 20.5 percent of the second votes. In western Germany, however, it attained a below-average result of 8.2 percent. At the federal state level, the AfD achieved its best second vote result in Saxony. It became the strongest party in the state with 24.6 percent of the votes. The AfD's worst second-vote result was in Hamburg

(5.0 percent). At a constituency level, the AfD performed its best in Görlitz (32.5 percent) and worst in Münster (2.9 percent). The AfD made the most gains in the constituency of Suhl - Schmalkalden-Meiningen - Hildburghausen - Sonneberg (+3.3 points), and suffered its biggest losses in the constituency of Leipzig I (-5.3 points). The AfD achieved its best first-vote result in Görlitz at 35.8 percent. This means that Tino Chrupalla was able to win his constituency of Görlitz directly, while Alice Weidel entered parliament via the party list.

For the first time since 2002, The **Left** Party narrowly missed crossing the five-percent threshold, garnering 4.9 percent of the second votes. Compared to 2017, The Left Party lost 4.3 points. In the first vote, it lost 3.6 points and came in at 5.0 percent. Since The Left managed to win 3 direct mandates (Berlin-Lichtenberg, Berlin-Treptow-Köpenick, Leipzig II), it is still entering the Bundestag in line with its share of the second votes and will be represented by 39 MPs (-30). Compared to 2017, The Left lost 2 direct mandates, one each to the Greens (Berlin-Pankow) and the CDU (Berlin-Marzahn-Hellersdorf). In the constituency of Leipzig II, the Left Party won the direct mandate with only 22.8 percent of the votes, while it attained its best first vote in Berlin-Treptow-Köpenick (Gregor Gysi, 35.4 percent). Janine Wissler and Susanne Hennig-Wellsow entered the Bundestag via the party list.

The Left fared much better in eastern Germany at 10.4 percent than in western Germany, where they won only 3.7 percent of the second votes. The Left achieved its best second-vote results in Berlin and Thuringia, each at 11.4 percent, and its worst in Bavaria, at only 2.8 percent. At the constituency level, The Left attained its best second vote outcome in Berlin-Lichtenberg (18.2 percent), and its worst in Donau-Ries and Deggendorf (1.8 percent). The Left Party suffered its smallest losses in the constituency of Borken II (-1.7 points), where it also only won 2.4 percent of the votes. It suffered its greatest losses in Berlin-Lichtenberg (-11.1), even though it still achieved its best second-vote result in Germany there.

In addition, the **South Schleswig Voters' Association (SSW)** is represented in parliament for the first time with one seat. The SSW achieved 0.1 percent of the second votes and also 0.1 percent of the first votes nationwide. The SSW is only represented in Schleswig-Holstein, where it won 2 percent.

Among the **smaller parties**, the Free Voters reached 2.4 percent (+1.4 points), die Basis ("The Grassroots") 1.4 percent and The PARTY 1 percent (+0.0 points), which means they attained enough votes to receive state funding as a party.

2. Key Determinants of the Election[1]

The outcome of the 2021 Bundestag election marks a shift in the electoral landscape, the signs of which had been looming for quite some time. This shift is visible for the first time in the 2021 Bundestag election outcome. Above all, it was the willingness to switch party preferences that decided the election outcome. The switching in party preferences no longer happens within political camps such as CDU/CSU-FDP or SPD- Greens, but instead criss-crosses political constituencies. Moreover, the percentage is increasing from election to election. In this year's election, about three-quarters of the parties' electorates were willing to shift their vote in the run-up to the election.

The election was characterised by a weak performance of the CDU/CSU against the Greens, SPD and FDP, while the political fringes lost (the AfD by a smaller margin, and The Left by a considerable percentage). There are also major changes in the distribution of direct mandates. While the candidates from the Union and the SPD won the most direct mandates, the Greens and AfD also made significant gains. On the other hand, however, the political fringes lost out on second votes (the AfD by a smaller margin, and The Left by a considerable percentage).

While a preference for the SPD's top candidate is evident from their election outcome, the spillover effects on the perception of the party are negligible. As for the CDU/CSU, on the other hand, the party and top candidate were rated more poorly than in the 2017 election. While the Greens did better than at the last election, they fell short of expectations. They have even lost authority in the important sphere of environmental and climate policy compared to 2017.

As the willingness of supporters to switch party affiliations became ever more widespread, election campaigns were faced with ever greater problems. A survey by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung[2] conducted at the end of 2020 shows that only around a quarter of those who intended to vote did not name any other alternative party that they could also imagine voting for. This means that around three quarters of potential voters also had alternative options in mind. About one-fifth of CDU/CSU supporters could imagine voting for either the Greens or the SPD, and a further 13 percent, for the FDP. 2 percent of each would have been willing to vote for The Left or the AfD.[3] There was also a major overlap in potential voting behaviour among the other parties, which does not fit into the logic of political camps. In a sense, this potential of voter migration materialised in the Bundestag election. The Union lost the most votes to the SPD, followed by losses to the Greens. In third place, the FDP gained votes from the Union (voter migration record by Infratest dimap).

Advantages gained from faithful electorates have thus levelled out over time, with only AfD supporters showing greater attachment to the party. When asked about emotional closeness to parties, i.e. whether people like or dislike them, it becomes clear that eligible voters feel closeness not only to two, but significant more parties. According to data from the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 23 percent of eligible voters sympathise with 3 parties, 9 percent with 4 parties and 2 percent with 5 parties.

This high propensity for switching party preferences also shaped the climate of opinion before the election. Opinion polls revealed major shifts in the political climate, as seen primarily in approval ratings for parties and candidates. Declining support among the Green Party's supporters became evident from around May and among the CDU/CSU from July/August, while the SPD recovered in the polls. It was at around this time that inconsistencies in the Green Party's top candidate's CVs, delays in reporting her income to the Bundestag administration and accusations of plagiarism in her recently published book came to light. In July, the Union's top candidate was caught on camera sniggering during an address by the German president for the victims of the flood.

If we follow the model that is most frequently used in election research to explain voting behaviour, there is initially a commitment to parties that precedes the current voting decision. In Germany, this fundamental preference for one party has meanwhile given way to openness to parties. The actual voting decision is then made depending on the assessment of the candidates and the voters' own stand on political issues. The weaker this emotional attachment to a party, the greater the short-term influence of candidates and issues on voting decisions.

A distinct tendency to endorse incumbents has long been observed at the state level. The advantage of being in office thus explains the parties' performance to a large extent. The change of government this year therefore became the exception.

After Chancellor Angela Merkel announced in October 2018 that she would no longer be running for office, this year's election marked the first time that an incumbent would not stand for election (except, of course, in the first election in 1949). Regardless, eligible voters remained very satisfied with Angela Merkel's work until Election Day. Since the 10 most important politicians from the respondents' point of view are usually federal ministers, the SPD's Finance Minister, Olaf Scholz, had an advantage during the election campaign that came closest to this advantage of being in office. The incumbency advantage is an aid or even a buffer in election campaigns, since a certain trust was built up and an assessment of the candidate's personality made a long time ago. To a certain extent, this advantage also protects the candidate from events with a short-term impact. Here, the lack of incumbency advantage is evident in the top candidate of the CDU/CSU and of the Greens alike. After events that had little to do with holding a chancellorship became the focus of public attention, the reputation of both parties fell abruptly and little changed in the electorate's evaluation of the candidates until Election Day.

At the end of the election campaign, 48 percent of eligible voters said they would prefer Olaf Scholz as chancellor. 24 percent named CDU/CSU candidate Armin Laschet, and 14 percent said that they would prefer the Green Party candidate, Annalena Baerbock, as chancellor (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen). All other opinion poll responses followed this pattern. Whether the question was about suitability for office or satisfaction, or about personal qualities (such as likeability, credibility, expertise or problem-solving skills), the answer was almost always in the same order: first Scholz, then Laschet, and finally Baerbock. Baerbock only did a little better in the category of likeability (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, Infratest dimap).

In the assessment of the parties, the Union scored worse than in the previous election, while the SPD and the Greens stagnated. On a scale of +5 to -5, the SPD was at 1.3 (unchanged from the previous election) and the Greens 0.4 (2017: 0.5). The Union has suffered a loss of image compared with 2017. It has a score of 0.7 among all eligible voters, compared to 1.7 in 2017 (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen).

The Union, at 0.5, also scored worse than in 2017 when it came to evaluating the government (at 1.0 in 2017 and at 0.5 in 2021). In the case of the SPD, on the other hand, the evaluation of the government was not vastly different from what it was in 2017. It attained a score of 0.8 in 2021 and 0.9 in 2017. Overall, the government was rated slightly worse than in 2017. Its rating dropped from 1.0 to 0.8 (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen).

In contrast to other federal elections, coalition preferences were not strongly expressed. No potential coalition met with the approval of a majority. Of the coalitions, mathematically possible on 27 September, a coalition of CDU/CSU, Greens and FDP was approved by 30 percent, slightly less than the approval of a Grand Coalition by SPD and CDU/CSU (approved by 34 percent, which in turn was just behind a coalition by SPD, Greens and FDP (37 percent; a coalition by SPD, CDU/CSU and FDP was not polled; September 2021). In 2017, a Grand Coalition by CDU/CSU-SPD and a coalition of CDU/CSU and FDP was favoured by 40 percent each, a further 33 percent preferred CDU/CSU and Greens, and 30 percent were for a coalition of CDU/CSU, Greens and FDP. In a pre-election poll, of the possible coalitions, CDU/CSU-Greens-FDP came out first with 33 percent (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen).

The most important political issue of 2021 is climate change, with 46 percent of mentions. In 2017, just 6 percent mentioned the issue. In turn, the top issue in the 2017 federal election, immigration policy, fell from 44 percent to 11 percent of mentions. 23 percent cited the pandemic, and a further 12 percent cited pensions, which was mentioned by 24 percent in the previous election. However, other political issues were important in the people's actual voting decisions. Pensions was mentioned by 48 percent and social justice by 45 percent, followed by 33 percent who cited climate change. Thus, there appears to be an agenda for Germany and a personal agenda that differ considerably from each other. In addition, pessimistic expectations for the future spread in the election year 2021. While 52 percent said in 2017 that Germany was well prepared for the future, this figure dropped to 39 percent in 2021. The assessment of the economic situation was also gloomier. In 2017, 62 percent were of the opinion that Germany's economic situation was good; in 2021, only 42 percent agreed with this statement. Despite this change in basic sentiment, 65 percent rated their own economic situation as good. This assessment has thus barely changed compared with 2017 (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, similar figures also from Infratest dimap).

The CDU/CSU has lost considerable ground compared with the previous election in both the key election-critical issues and important political problems, as well as its competencies. It has long been observed that general problem-solving skills or competency for the future lends itself quite well to predicting an election result. And this can be seen in this election as well. While 38 percent trusted the Union to solve future problems in 2017, this figure fell to 22 percent in 2021. The SPD improved slightly from 17 to 20 percent, and the Greens from 3 to 14 percent (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen). Infratest dimap arrived at similar figures for the question of who could tackle the most important issues in Germany. The Union dropped from 49 to 26 percent, the SPD rose from 19 to 28 percent, and the Greens from 4 to 10 percent.

The Union suffered significant losses compared to 2017, particularly in its main areas of competency: economy 57:32; crime 50:35 and foreign policy 49:32 (Infratest dimap). By contrast, the SPD's competencies hardly changed (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, Infratest dimap). In fact, the SPD managed to make slight gains in the spheres of economic policy and social justice over 2017 (economic policy 14:22; social justice 34:42 - Forschungsgruppe Wahlen; economic policy 17:25; social justice 38:40 Infratest dimap).

While the SPD remained largely stagnant compared to the previous election in almost all political issues polled, the Greens lost ground (56:48) compared with 2017 in their traditional area of competence in climate and environmental policy (Infratest dimap). On the other hand, the Greens gained ground, albeit to a slight extent, in the spheres of education, asylum policy and family policy compared with 2017 (Infratest dimap, Forschungsgruppe Wahlen). The FDP also recorded a slight increase in competencies compared to 2017, attaining a double-digit score in the economic and tax policy. Changes are also evident in the AfD, which achieved double-digit ratings in the areas of crime and migration (Infratest dimap).

While the opposition parties succeeded in building up competencies between 2017 and 2021, the same could not be said of The Left. It suffered losses of competence in the areas of social justice (16:11), fair wages (14:9), family policy (10:7) and old-age provisions (10:7).

Among the parties' supporters, candidate, programme and party loyalty had a varying influence on the election results. With an increase of 14 points to 36 percent, the choice of candidate had the greatest impact on the SPD electorate.[4] For Union supporters, on the other hand, the

programme and party loyalty increased by 7 points (programme 45 percent, loyalty 30 percent). Both Green Party and FDP supporters were more convinced by the party's programme than in the

previous election. For the FDP, the candidate was the deciding factor for 17 percent (down 8 points), and 72 percent said the programme influenced their voting decision (up 10 points). Among the Greens, 82 percent (+11) said they voted for the party because of its statements on its programme. Supporters of the Greens (71 percent), the Union (64 percent), The Left (61 percent) and the SPD (60 percent) were more likely than average to say they voted for the party out of conviction. By contrast, there are significant changes in the AfD and the FDP: the number of individuals voting for the AfD because they believed in their agenda rose by 17 points to 48 percent, and 42 percent said they voted for the FDP because they were disappointed by other parties (an increase of 10 points). The traditionally low level of preference for candidates fell by 4 points to 9 percent for The Left (Infratest dimap).

3. Social Structure and Voter Migration[5]

The **SPD** gained voters from almost all political camps, with the most votes coming from the Union. 1,530,000 former Union supporters jumped ship to cast their vote for the SPD this year. The SPD gained 640,000 votes from the Left and 260,000 from the AfD. It also managed win over 180,000 former FDP voters. The SPD also won over 520,000 non-voters. The SPD only lost votes to the Greens (-260,000) and the smaller parties (-120,000).

It fared better with older voters than with the younger ones. It also recorded above-average gains among the over-60s, while on the other hand, it suffered slight losses among the under-30s. The SPD made above-average gains among women aged 60 and over in particular, as well as among pensioners.

The **Union** managed to gain only a small number of votes from the AfD (+80,000) and The Left (+20,000). In fact, it lost voters to all the other parties. 1,530,000 voters switched from the Union to the SPD. With 920,000 votes, the Union recorded the second-largest outflow to the Greens. Moreover, 490,000 voters each switched from the Union to the FDP and to the smaller parties. The Union also lost 50,000 votes to the non-voter camp.

As with previous elections, the Union fared best among the over-60s, and worst among the under-30s. Among the over-60s, it came in second place, just behind the SPD, and among the under-30s, it trailed behind the Greens, FDP and SPD. The CDU/CSU also recorded above-average losses among the under-30s and the 30-44 age group.

It also lost female voters, especially women over 60, at an above-average rate. Since the findings of Infratest dimap and Forschungsgruppe Wahlen are not entirely consistent here, we will have to wait for the data from the representative electoral statistics to make a final assessment. However, both institutes reported above-average losses among women aged 30-44 (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen) and 35-44.

In addition, the CDU/CSU lost disproportionately among salaried employees.

In terms of denomination, the familiar pattern emerged: the Union unsurprisingly performed better among Catholics than Protestants, and better among Protestants than those without any religious affiliation. In all three groups, however, the Union lost by the same number of votes compared to 2017.

The Union also continued to perform better in rural areas than in large cities. However, this time, it lost an above-average number of votes in rural areas.

The **Greens** saw their biggest gains from the Union. 920,000 former Union voters voted this year for the Greens. The Greens also managed to win over 480,000 former supporters of The Left. Furthermore, 260,000 voters switched over from the SPD, 240,000 from the FDP, 100,000 from other parties and 60,000 from the AfD to the Greens. In addition, 300,000 former non-voters cast their ballot for the Greens.

The Greens did particularly well among younger voters under 30 (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen) / under 34 (Infratest dimap), especially among younger women. In the under-30 age group, the Greens were the strongest force. The Greens also recorded the highest gains in this group. Among the over-60s, on the other hand, the Greens attained a significantly below-average result. However, they scored above average among civil servants and people with a high level of formal education, where they also make above-average gains.

The **FDP** gained the most votes from the Union. 490,000 voters switched over from the Union to the FDP. In addition, 210,000 former AfD voters now voted for the FDP. The FDP won over 110,000 votes from The Left, and 40,000 former non-voters voted for the FDP. However, the FDP lost votes to the Greens (-240,000), the smaller parties (-240,000) and the SPD (-180,000).

Similarly to the Greens, the FDP achieved an above-average result among younger voters, and above-average gains. However, unlike the Greens, it did particularly well among younger men. Among the over-60s, on the other hand, the FDP suffered slight losses. The FDP achieved its best results among people with a formally high level of education.

The **AfD** lost ground in almost all directions. Only from The Left did it manage to win 90,000 votes. The AfD lost most of its voters to the SPD (-260,000), followed by the FDP (-210,000). In addition, 180,000 former AfD voters switched over to other parties. The AfD also lost a small number of supporters to the Union (-80,000) and the Greens (-60,000). Moreover, 180,000 former AfD voters refrained from voting altogether.

As in previous elections, the AfD scored above average in the middle age groups this time too, especially among middle-aged men. It also managed to achieve above-average results among workers and people with low or medium levels of formal education. In addition, the AfD was voted by an above-average number of individuals unaffiliated with any religion. The AfD also did better in rural areas than in large cities, where it lost more than average.

The **Left** lost to all parties and as well as non-voters. Its biggest losses were to the SPD, with 640,000 voters switching from the Left to the SPD. The Left also lost 480,000 votes to the Greens. Moreover, 270,000 voters switched from The Left to the smaller parties, and 110,000 to the FDP. The Left lost fewer votes to the AfD (-90,000) and the Union (-20,000). In addition, 320,000 former Left voters switched over to the non-voter camp.

The Left attained its best results among younger voters. In this group, their losses were also slightly below average. Among voters with a higher level of formal education, The Left achieved slightly above-average results. While it was also able to gain above-average numbers of unemployed persons, it simultaneously recorded above-average losses. The same applies to voters unaffiliated with any religion.

The **smaller parties** made gains from almost all directions, losing only 100,000 votes to the Greens. 490,000 voters switched from the CDU/CSU to the smaller parties, 270,000 from The Left and 240,000 from the FDP. Voters also abandoned the AfD (+180,000) and the SPD (+120,000) in favour of the smaller parties. In addition, 210,000 former non-voters decided to support one of the smaller parties.

Parties in Germany

CDU/CSU	Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union	center-right
SPD	Social Democratic Party Germany	center-left
Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (Grüne)	Alliance 90/The Greens	center-left
FDP	Liberal Democratic Party	center-right
Die Linke	The Left	far-left
AfD	Alternative for Germany	far-right
SSW	South Schleswig Voters' Association	Danish minority

[1] Sources: Forschungsgruppe Wahlen and Infratest dimap.

[2] Cf. Neu, Viola, 2021: Des Wählers Herz. Emotionale Parteienbewertung aus repräsentativen und qualitativen Umfragen, https://www.kas.de/de/einzeltitel/-/content/des-waehlers-herz. Neu, Viola/Pokorny, Sabine, 2021: Vermessung der Wählerschaft vor der Bundestagswahl 2021. Ergebnisse einer Umfrage zu politischen Einstellungen, https://www.kas.de/de/monitor/detail/-/content/vermessung-der-waehlerschaft-vor-der-bundestagswahl-2021.

[3] Neu, Viola/Pokorny, Sabine, 2021: Vermessung der Wählerschaft vor der Bundestagswahl 2021. Ergebnisse einer Umfrage zu politischen Einstellungen, https://www.kas.de/de/monitor/detail/-/content/vermessung-der-waehlerschaft-vor-der-bundestagswahl-2021, p. 57.

[4] At the time this analysis was written, Infratest dimap had compiled tables with minor variations in the institute's different sources.

[5] The data on voter migration refers exclusively to the data provided by Infratest dimap. Due to differences in the findings of Infratest dimap and Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, only similar findings have been reported.

Imprint

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