



**CONFERENCE:
THE SPANISH AND GERMAN ELECTORAL SYSTEMS —
WHAT NEXT FOR ELECTORAL REFORM?**

Zaragoza, 12th March, 2012

Organized by

Manuel Giménez Abad Foundation
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

With the support of

Cortes of Aragón

Co-ordinated by:

Mario Kölling, Manuel Giménez Abad Foundation, Center of Political and
Constitutional Studies
Verena Geier, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

Since the transition to democracy the Spanish electoral system, whose foundations are laid in the Constitution of 1978, provided the political stability necessary to establish a continuous and peaceful democratic coexistence among all political parties. The electoral system consolidated a party system, that made possible the democratic renewal of the different levels of government and that accommodated the territorial diversity and political pluralism of Spain.

Electoral systems are key parts of democratic states as they put the democratic principle into practice in the sense that they enable the citizens' political participation and transform their votes into seats. Hence, any reform of the electoral law can only be addressed from a high consensus among all political forces and within the established constitutional framework.

The permanent review of the functioning of the electoral law contributes to increase the democratic quality of political systems and facilitates the exercise of the right to vote.

In Spain, over the last few years and in the context of recent elections, various political forces and the civil society have made reform proposals relating to various aspects of the general electoral system.

In fact the electoral system of the Spanish Congress has some aspects that could be susceptible of improvement, in order to ensure the equality of voters and political parties in the electoral process and in order to value the participation of citizens in the appointment of their representatives.

In our conference we would like to compare the Spanish and German electoral systems and examine the recent reform of the German electoral system. Experts from Germany will share their knowledge on this issue with their Spanish counterparts, the best-practice-exchange will draw out lessons that can be learned from both national experiences during recent years.

PROGRAMME

9: 30h. *Welcome*

José Tudela, General Secretary, Manuel Giménez Abad Foundation,
Saragossa

Thomas Bernd Stehling, Representative of the Konrad Adenauer
Stiftung in Spain and Portugal

10:00h. *Session I: The German electoral system*

Introduction: **Gregor Thüsing**, Professor, University of Bonn

Presentation: “*The objectives and results of the recent reform of the electoral system in Germany*” **Günter Krings**, Member of the German Bundestag, Deputy Chairman of the CDU / CSU parliamentary group

Questions and Answers/Discussion

11:30h.: *Coffee Break*

12:00h.: *Session II: "The Spanish electoral system: An analysis of the achievements and deficits and the debate about a reform of the system"*

Presentation: **Paloma Biglino Campos**, Professor of Constitutional Law, University of Valladolid

Comment, **Manuel Delgado-Iribarren**, Legal Counsel, Spanish Congress and Technical Director of the Central Electoral Committee.



12:45h.: "Session III: Specific issues concerning the Spanish electoral system"

"The principle of re-eligibility in the Spanish electoral system"

Eloy García López, Professor of Constitutional Law, University of Vigo

"The principle of proportionality in the Spanish electoral system"

Rosa Ripollés Serrano, Director of Studies, Analysis and Publication of the Congreso de los Diputados

Questions and Answers/Discussion

13:30h.: Final discussion

Chair: **José Manuel Sáenz Rotko**, Professor, Comillas Pontifical University

14:30h.: Closure