



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

ELECTIONS TO THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT (BUNDESTAG)
26 September 2021

ODIHR NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION REPORT
2 - 5 June 2021



Warsaw
22 July 2021

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ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report

I. INTRODUCTION

Following an invitation from the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to observe the 26 September 2021 elections to the Federal Parliament (*Bundestag*) and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) conducted a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) from 2 to 5 June 2021. The NAM was composed of Ana Rusu, ODIHR Senior Election Adviser, and Hamadziripi Munyikwa, ODIHR Election Adviser.

The purpose of the mission was to assess the pre-election environment and the preparations for the elections. Based on this assessment, the NAM recommends whether to deploy an ODIHR election-related activity for the forthcoming elections, and if so, what type of activity best meets the identified needs. Due to the global health emergency and consecutive introduction of restrictions on cross-border travel throughout the OSCE region, the NAM was conducted remotely, using the means of information and communication technologies. This approach was chosen due to the current extraordinary situation and in view of the need to ensure sufficient time for the preparation of the possible deployment of an election-related activity for the 26 September elections. Meetings were held with officials from federal institutions, including the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, and the Election Scrutiny Board, as well as representatives of political parties, civil society, and the media. A full list of meetings is annexed to this report.

ODIHR would like to thank the Federal Foreign Office for its assistance and co-operation in organizing the NAM. ODIHR would also like to thank all of its interlocutors for taking the time to meet with the NAM.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 08 December 2020, Federal President of Germany, announced that elections to the Federal Parliament (*Bundestag*) will be held on 26 September 2021. Members of the *Bundestag* are elected for four-year terms through a mixed electoral system which combines seats elected through single member majoritarian constituencies with proportional representation through closed party lists.

The legal framework provides a stable basis for the conduct of genuinely democratic elections. Since the last general elections the legal framework has been amended to permit citizens under custodianship to vote and reduce the signature requirements for the registration of party lists, as well as minor amendments to the method for distributing additional seats in order to maintain proportionality. Changes have also been made to the regulation of campaign finance which prohibit members of the *Bundestag* from engaging in business deals involving the government. All ODIHR NAM interlocutors assessed these changes positively and expressed overall confidence in the legislation governing the federal elections.

Elections are administered through a four-tiered structure comprising the Federal Election Committee (FEC), *Länder* Election Committees (LECs), District Election Committees (DECs) and Election Boards (EBs). Chairpersons of the LECs, DECs and EBs are appointed by the *Länder* executive

authorities. Parties are entitled to nominate members to election bodies and almost all ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the work and independence of the election administration.

Every citizen over 18 years of age by election day, domiciled in Germany or holding permanent residency for at least three months is eligible to vote. All voters are entitled to cast a postal ballot should they request to do so. While most OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the integrity of the postal voting system citing Germany's long history with postal ballots, some interlocutors indicated potential difficulties related to the management of an increased number of requests for postal voting expected for these elections.

Citizens permanently residing abroad are eligible to vote via postal ballot if they have had at least three months of continual residence in Germany within the last 25 years and over the age of 14, or if they are able to demonstrate personal and direct familiarity with and are affected by the political situation in the Federal Republic. Citizens residing abroad cast their ballots by post. All ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the voter registration process and accuracy of the voter lists.

All eligible voters are able to stand as candidates. Parties with at least five members in the *Bundestag* or a *Länder* parliament can nominate candidates and candidate lists without having to collect supporting signatures for their lists. All other parties and associations wishing to field candidates are required to formally notify the FEC of their intention to contest the elections. The deadline for conclusion of candidate registration takes place 14 days before the elections. The FEC determines whether parties are eligible to compete. Any decision concerning rejected lists can be appealed to the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC). Most ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed general confidence in the candidate registration process. Most political parties that the ODIHR NAM met with indicated that they apply internal gender quotas.

Federal regulation of campaigns is limited, with the conduct of the election campaign mostly governed at *Länder* level. Most ODIHR NAM interlocutors considered the campaign environment open and free. Nevertheless, a few ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concerns related to equal access to campaign venues as well as the potential use of inciteful speech and threats of electoral violence targeting individual politicians.

The legislation does not establish limits on the amounts that political parties may raise or spend during the campaign. Parties' campaign-related income and expenditure is reported through annual financial reports submitted to the President of *Bundestag*, which are made public at the close of the year following the elections. Most ODIHR NAM interlocutors were satisfied with the transparency of existing party financing regulation. However, a few ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted some concerns with the thresholds for requiring immediate disclosure of donations, the lack of financial reporting requirements during the campaign period, and the long time frame for the publication of financial reports after the election.

The media landscape is pluralistic and characterized by a strong tradition of public service broadcasting and a vibrant print media market. Several ODIHR NAM interlocutors pointed to the increasing role of the Internet as a main source of political information. There are generally no media-related regulations at the federal level and the activities of broadcast media are regulated by the *Länder* laws. Media are required to provide plurality of opinion, balanced coverage for all important political, ideological and social forces and parties with a list in at least one *Länder*, and are legally obliged to provide an 'appropriate amount' of broadcasting time. Some ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted concerns with the inequitable access to media, potential biased coverage and threats to the safety of female journalists in covering some campaign events. Coinciding with the COVID-19

pandemic, ODIHR NAM interlocutors also noted growing distrust in mainstream media and a ground for alternative online media with potential for disinformation including during elections.

Election related complaints including on validity of elections are handled by the *Bundestag* Committee for the Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure, whose decisions can be further appealed to the FCC. While all ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence with the election dispute resolution system, some interlocutors noted potential delays in hearing complaints due to the fact that the appointment of the *Bundestag* Committee is contingent on the formation of the government.

The election legislation does not contain specific provisions regarding international election observation, though it does stipulate that polling should be public.

The ODIHR NAM noted confidence among most of its interlocutors in the integrity of the electoral process and the professionalism and impartiality of the election administration. However, some interlocutors expressed potential concerns about the management of postal voting should there be an increased number of requests to use this method as well as equal campaign opportunities, campaign finance and the regulation of campaigns. Taking into account these issues raised by ODIHR NAM interlocutors and the lack of implementation of previous recommendations related to campaign finance regulation and oversight, the ODIHR NAM recommends deploying an Election Expert Team (EET) for the 26 September federal elections to the *Bundestag* to assess the handling of postal voting, the campaign environment, and the oversight of campaign finance. ODIHR stands ready to offer its assistance upon request in a post-election follow-up process.

III. FINDINGS

A. BACKGROUND

Germany is a federal republic composed of 16 states (*Länder*) vested with extensive autonomy. The federal legislative power rests in the Federal Parliament (*Bundestag*), with members directly elected for four-year terms. The Federal Council is the body through which the *Länder* participate in the legislation at the federal level with its members delegated by the respective state governments.

Executive power is vested in the Federal Cabinet led by the Federal Chancellor, who is elected by the parliamentary majority at the proposal of the Federal President. The Federal President is elected by a Federal Convention, which consists of members of the federal parliament and *Länder* parliaments, as well as members elected by the *Länder* parliaments. On 20 December 2020, the Federal President called the elections to the *Bundestag* to be held on 26 September 2021.

Following the last parliamentary elections on 24 September 2017, seven political parties secured seats in the 709 member bundestag which resulted from these elections. These were, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) with 200 seats, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) with 153 seats, Alternative for Germany (AfD) 94 seats, the Free Democratic Party (FDP) 80 seats, the Left (*Die Linke*) with 69 seats, Alliance '90/The Greens (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*) with 67 seats, and the Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU) with 46 seats.¹ In total, 218 women were elected to the bundestag in 2017, representing approximately 31 per cent of the total number of MPs.

¹ In addition there is one independent member. While the CDU and CSU are separate political entities, they cooperate at the federal level and together represent the largest political bloc in the *Bundestag*.

The election is of particular political significance as it is the first in which outgoing chancellor Angela Merkel will not be participating since she was elected to the role in 2005. The COVID-19 pandemic, its social and economic effects as well as revelations of inappropriate financial transactions by members of the ruling coalition have been the dominant political themes in the build-up to the calling of these elections.²

Most recently, ODIHR deployed an Election Expert Mission (EET) for the 2017 parliamentary elections.³ The 2017 EET assessed the legal framework and party and campaign finance issues. The EET found that the legal framework is robust and constitutes a solid basis for the conduct of genuine and democratic elections. It recommended that consideration could be given to the regulation of campaigning by third-parties, the timely disclosure of financial reports, lowering the reporting threshold for the immediate disclosure of donations, establishing effective and independent oversight for campaign financing and reasonable deadlines for the resolution of post-election complaints.⁴

B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Elections are governed by the 1949 Basic Law, the 1956 Federal Electoral Act (FEA), the 2002 Federal Electoral Regulations (FER), and the 2012 Law on the Scrutiny of Elections, as well as by relevant Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) rulings. Relevant provisions of the 1994 Political Parties Act, the 1999 Law on Election Statistics, and the 2002 Civil and 1998 Criminal Codes are also applicable for the conduct of federal elections. Following the last federal parliamentary elections, legislation has been amended to permit citizens under custodianship to vote as well as minor amendments to the method for distributing additional seats in order to maintain proportionality and a reduction in the number of signatures required for the registration of party lists in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Changes have also been made to the regulation of campaign finance by prohibiting members of the *Bundestag* from engaging in business deals which involve the government. All ODIHR NAM interlocutors assessed these changes positively and expressed overall confidence in the legislation governing the federal elections.

Members of the *Bundestag* are elected through a mixed electoral system combining proportional representation and majoritarian systems. Candidates compete in 299 single-seat electoral districts under a first-past-the-post system, and closed party lists in 16 *Land* multi-seat constituencies. Seats in the *Bundestag* are apportioned in relation to the overall proportional vote with the number of direct seats won by a party in a *Land* deducted from the number it is entitled to from its *Land* list.

Voters are entitled to cast two votes. The first vote is cast for a candidate in a single-seat district. The second vote is cast for a party list. The candidate obtaining the majority of votes cast in each district is elected. Parties that have surpassed a five per cent threshold of valid second votes at the national level or have won seats in at least three single-seat districts are eligible to participate in the allocation of proportional seats.

An independent constituency commission reviews electoral district boundaries on the basis of population changes that are subject to approval by the *Bundestag*. According to the legislation, the number of voters in each constituency in the *Länder* should not deviate from the average by more than 15 per cent and, if the deviation is greater than 25 per cent, the boundaries must be redrawn.⁵ In

² See [media coverage](#) on the transactions.

³ See previous ODIHR [election-related reports on Germany](#).

⁴ In paragraph 25 of the [1999 OSCE Istanbul Document](#), OSCE participating States committed themselves “to follow up promptly the ODIHR’s election assessment and recommendations”.

⁵ Additionally, the number of constituencies in the individual *Länd* must correspond to the population in the *Länd* as close as possible

general, while ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted the expanding nature of the membership of the *Bundestag* due to the allocation of extra seats in order to maintain proportionality, none expressed any serious concerns with the electoral system and the distribution of seats in the *Bundestag*.

C. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The elections are administered by a four-tiered structure, composed of the Federal Election Committee (FEC), 16 *Länder* Election Committees (LECs), 299 single-mandate District Election Committees (DECs) and some 90,000 Election Boards (EBs).

All committees are chaired by returning officers and EBs by electoral officers. The Federal Returning Officer and *Länder* returning officers are appointed by the Federal Ministry of Interior and the *Länder* executive authorities, respectively. District returning officers and electoral officers are appointed before each election by the *Länder* executive authorities. The 11-member FEC includes the Federal Returning Officer as the chairperson who appoints eight members and two judges of the Federal Administrative Court.⁶ The LECs and DECs have seven members with a returning officer as a chairperson who appoints the other six members. Two judges of the *Länder* Higher Administrative Court are additionally appointed to each LEC. EBs have an electoral officer as the chairperson, plus a deputy, and from three to seven members appointed from among voters.

All voters are entitled to cast a postal ballot should they request to do so. The timeframe for postal voting requests has been extended up to two days before the elections with postal services planned to work overtime during these two days to ensure that all ballots are delivered on time. Most ODIHR NAM interlocutors indicated that they expect voters to rely more heavily on postal voting for these elections compared to the past. While most ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the integrity of the postal voting system citing Germany's long history with postal ballots, some interlocutors indicated potential difficulties related to the management of an increased number of requests for postal voting expected for these elections.

Due consideration is given to parties in the nomination of members of the election bodies at the different levels in the order of the second votes the parties obtained in that area at the last *Bundestag* election. In addition to these nominations, local authorities request nominations from various federal and local public bodies and institutions to staff the EBs. In total, some 650,000 people will be recruited to administer the federal elections. Almost all OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the work and independence of the election administration.

D. VOTER REGISTRATION

Every citizen over 18 years of age by election day with a domicile in Germany or permanent residency for at least three months is eligible to vote. Voter registration is passive and voter lists are extracted from municipal civil registers based on a voter's permanent residence. From 20 to 16 days before the elections, voters may review voter lists and request corrections in cases of mistake or incomplete information.⁷ Some 61.5 million citizens are entitled to vote in the upcoming elections.

Individuals convicted of specific serious crimes by a court are ineligible to vote. The disenfranchisement of citizens under custodianship due to psychosocial disability was repealed in

⁶ Traditionally, the Federal Returning Officer is the head of the Federal Statistical Office (*Destatis*).

⁷ Voters can inspect and verify the voter list in person and challenge the registration of other voters if she/he produces facts confirming that the voters' register is incorrect or incomplete.

March 2019 thereby restoring the right to vote of some 80,000 citizens presumably affected by these restrictions.⁸ All ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the voter registration process and the accuracy of the voter lists.

Citizens permanently residing abroad are eligible to vote if they have three months of continual residence in Germany within the last 25 years (after reaching the age of 14). Additionally, citizens who have never resided in Germany are eligible to vote if they can demonstrate their connection to the country and familiarity with the political situation, and are affected by it. Eligible voters residing abroad vote by postal ballot.

E. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

Eligible voters can stand independently or as party candidates.⁹ Parties represented with at least five members in the *Bundestag* or in a *Länder* parliament can submit their nominations without supporting signatures. All other parties and associations wishing to field candidates are required to formally notify the FEC of their intention to contest the elections.

Ordinarily, following initial approval by the FEC, nominations of single-seat district candidates need to be submitted to their respective district returning officers accompanied by supporting signatures of at least 200 voters. Party lists must be submitted to the respective LEC returning officer and need to be supported by signatures of 1 per 1,000 eligible voters in the *Länder*, but not more than 2,000 signatures.¹⁰ However for these elections, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the requirements have been reduced to 25% at all levels and signatures can be presented electronically. Decisions on the registration of candidates and party lists are taken by the DEC and LECs, respectively.

It was unclear at the time of holding the NAM how many political associations intended to participate in the 2021 elections as final lists will only be available after 5 August following the ruling of FEC on appeals relating to Land Electoral Committees' decisions on the approval of individual Land lists. Most ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed general confidence in the candidate and party registration process.

F. ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The conduct of the election campaign is mostly regulated at *Länder* level, and local authorities may adopt campaign-related ordinances. The federal legislation provides limited regulation, which includes provisions of the Basic Law, the 1978 Law on Assemblies and Parades regarding the organization of public events and the Political Party Act that requires authorities to treat political parties equitably.

ODIHR NAM interlocutors from political parties informed that campaigns are likely to include door-to-door canvassing, billboards and leaflets, meetings with voters, spots in broadcast and advertisement in print media, as well as the use of social media. In general, campaign topics include security issues, economy, social welfare, the labor market and education. Most ODIHR NAM interlocutors considered the campaign environment open and free. However, some ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concerns related to equal access to campaign venues, the potential use of inciteful speech and threats of electoral violence targeting individual politicians.

⁸ See the decision of the [Federal Constitutional Court](#).

⁹ The only restriction is for voters which are deprived by judicial decision of eligibility to hold public or political office.

¹⁰ The requirement for additional signatures does not apply to lists of parties which represent national minorities.

The legislation does not provide for gender quotas for candidate nominations and party lists. However, most political parties that the ODIHR NAM met with indicated that they apply their own internal quotas, up to 50 per cent for some of them.

G. CAMPAIGN FINANCING

The Political Party Act provides the main legal framework for party and campaign finance. The legislation does not establish limits on the amounts that political parties may raise or spend during the campaign. Parties are mostly financed through membership fees, private contributions and public funding, which cannot be higher than the funds the party collects from private sources.¹¹ To increase party finance transparency, the *Bundestag* amended the legal framework making it illegal for parliamentarians to participate in any business deals which involve the government and prohibiting candidates from receiving direct funding. Donations from public and foreign entities are also forbidden. There are no rules on the use of third-party financing for election related activities; however, given the absence of limits on campaign expenditures, in general parties are not inclined to rely on this type of support.

A Law on the Exclusion of Anti-constitutional Parties from Party Financing was adopted on 23 June 2017 to prohibit public funding to parties that are declared unconstitutional by the FCC.¹² Parties' campaign-related income and expenditure are reported through annual financial reports, audited by a certified auditor or auditing firm, and submitted to the President of the *Bundestag*. No separate reporting during or shortly after an electoral period is required, except for donations exceeding EUR 50,000, which must be reported immediately and sources of donations totaling above EUR 10,000 within one year to be included in the annual party finance reports.¹³ In practice, the annual reports that will cover the campaign-related expenses for these elections will be made public in about one year. By law, failure to submit a financial report or an inaccurate report may cause financial or criminal sanctions or a party can lose its legal status for six years.

Most ODIHR NAM interlocutors were satisfied with the existing regulation of party and campaign financing and opined that it provides for an adequate level of transparency and accountability. However, Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) reports and a number of ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted that the transparency of party and campaign funding could benefit from lowering the threshold for immediate disclosure of donations, requiring at least some degree of financial reporting during campaign periods, and publication of separate campaign finance reports immediately after elections.

¹¹ Parties that have received 0.5 per cent of the valid votes in federal elections or 1 per cent of the valid votes in a *Länder* parliament elections qualify for public funding. In 2015, amendments to the Political Party Act, increased the amount of state subsidy per each vote received (currently 0.83 EUR).

¹² According to law, parties that “by reason of their aims or the behaviour of their adherents, seek to undermine or abolish the free democratic basic order or to endanger the existence of the Federal Republic of Germany shall be unconstitutional.”

¹³ The GRECO [reports](#) on the transparency of party funding in Germany, among others, recommended that the country: “i) should introduce a system for the publication of election campaign accounts at the federal level, which would make the information available shortly after election campaigns; ii) to lower the 50,000 Euro threshold for the immediate reporting and disclosure; iii) to consider reducing significantly the threshold for the disclosure of donations and donors; iv) to ensure that the body to which the supervision of party financing is attributed, enjoys a sufficient degree of independence and is equipped with proper means of control, adequate staffing and appropriate expertise.”

H. MEDIA FRAMEWORK

The media landscape is pluralistic and characterized by a strong tradition of public service broadcasting and a vibrant print media market. Several ODIHR NAM interlocutors pointed to the increasing role of the Internet as an important source of political information.

There are generally no media-related regulations at the federal level and the activities of broadcast media are regulated by *Länder* laws. The Interstate Treaty on Broadcasting and Telemedia provides a general framework stipulating requirements of plurality of opinion, balanced coverage for all important political, ideological and social forces, and requires those parties with a list in at least one *Länder* be granted an ‘appropriate amount’ of broadcasting time. The allocation of airtime is based on each party’s result in the previous general elections. In public media, election broadcasts are provided free-of-charge, while in private media electoral contestants can purchase broadcasting time on equal conditions.

Oversight of media conduct in public broadcasting corporations is ensured by independent Broadcasting Councils and private broadcasters are scrutinized by supervisory bodies at the *Länder* level. The German Press Council, a voluntary self-monitoring body, reviews complaints and oversees the print media and journalistic coverage on the Internet, assessing journalistic practice against the Press Code. Most ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the professionalism of the media and considered the political and election coverage as fair and balanced. Some ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted concerns with the inequitable access to media, potential biased coverage and threats to the safety of female journalists in covering some campaign events. With COVID-19 pandemic, ODIHR NAM interlocutors also noted growing distrust in mainstream media and a ground for alternative online media with potential for disinformation including during elections

I. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Voters can submit complaints to various levels of election administration on issues related to voter registration, polling cards and the nomination of candidates and party lists. Other election related complaints including on the validity of elections are handled by the *Bundestag* Committee for the Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure (the Committee). The Committee is currently composed of 14 members. Committee members are appointed by the *Bundestag* following the formation of the government for the duration of the legislature’s term. Eligible voters may file a complaint with the Committee on election day and within two months after election day.¹⁴ While all ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence with the election dispute resolution system, some interlocutors noted potential delays in hearing complaints due to the fact that the appointment of the *Bundestag* Committee is contingent on the formation of the government.

The FCC deals with appeals against decisions of the Committee, including on the validity of elections and decisions of election administration including on candidate registration process for which it has to issue a decision within 14 days. FCC proceedings are open to public and decisions are taken by a collegium of eight justices.

¹⁴ Following the 2017 federal elections, 275 complaints were submitted to the ESB and were all rejected. Most complaints in the past were related to the counting of results, other aspects of election administration and the right to vote of persons with disabilities.

J. ELECTION OBSERVATION

The legislation states that polling shall be public and that the public shall have access to the polling station during voting, counting and announcement of results without disrupting the process. The election legislation, however, does not contain specific provisions for the presence of international election observers.¹⁵

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ODIHR NAM noted confidence among most of its interlocutors in the integrity of the electoral process and the professionalism and impartiality of the election administration. However, some interlocutors expressed potential concerns about the management of postal voting should there be an increased number of requests to use this method as well as equal campaign opportunities, campaign finance and the regulation of campaigns. Taking into account these issues raised by ODIHR NAM interlocutors and the lack of implementation of previous recommendations related to campaign finance regulation and oversight, the ODIHR NAM recommends deploying an Election Expert Team (EET) for the 26 September federal elections to the *Bundestag* to assess the campaign environment, the regulation of campaigns and oversight of campaign finance. ODIHR stands ready to offer its assistance upon request in a post-election follow-up process.

¹⁵ Paragraph 8 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen document states that: “the participating States consider that the presence of observers, both foreign and domestic, can enhance the electoral process for States in which elections are taking place. They therefore invite observers from any other CSCE participating States and any appropriate private institutions and organizations who may wish to do so to observe the course of their national election proceedings, to the extent permitted by law. They will also endeavour to facilitate similar access for election proceedings held below the national level. Such observers will undertake not to interfere in the electoral proceedings.”

ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS

Federal Foreign Office

Ambassador Susanne Schütz, Director for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey and EFTA States, Federal Foreign Office

Federal Ministry of Interior

Dr. Henner-Jörg Boehl, Head of Division V I 5 (Election Law, Law of Political Parties)

Committee for the Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure

Dr. Matthias Barktke, Member of the Bundestag

Dr. Jürgen Martens, Member of the Bundestag

Dr. Manuela Rottmann, Member of the Bundestag

Mrs. Ziegenhorn, Secretary

Federal Constitutional Court

Peter Müller, Judge and Rapporteur on the Electoral Law

Federal Returning Officer

Karina Schorn, Head of Office, Federal Returning Officer

The Social Democratic Party

Volker Norbisch, Division for Politics and Political Programmes

Alexander Petring, Head of Strategy Center

Volkmar Stein, Legal Advisor

Saskia Freiesleben, Secretary

The Christian Democratic Union

Bertil Wenger, Advisor for Foreign Affairs and European Politics

The Left

Claudia Gohde, Head of Party Headquarters

Alliance '90/The Greens

Katja Keul, Member of the Bundestag

Alternative for Germany

Beatrix von Storch, Member of the European Parliament

Hans-Holger Malcomess, Head of Party Headquarters

The Free Democratic Party

Email with questions sent to Michael Zimmermann, General Manager of FDP

University of Münster

Prof. Dr. Norbert Kersting, Chair of Comparative Political Science

Transparency International Germany

Dr. Anna-Marja Mertens, Managing Director

Lobby Control

Annette Sawatzki,
Jörg Rohwedder

German Press Council

Dr. Susanne Pfab, Secretary General
Roman Portack, Executive Director

Media

Maximilian Steinbeis, Verfassungsblog