

GERMAN ELECTION UPDATE

September 2017

Immigration

This overview summarises the immigration components of the manifestos published by the main political parties running for the *Bundestag*. We hope that our summary helps you to understand what is being said about immigration.

Introduction

Federal elections for the 19th Deutscher Bundestag, Germany's parliament, will be held on September 24, 2017. The Bundestag is the legislative body at federal level in Germany, elected every four years. Germans vote for the Bundestag, which then is entitled to elect the Bundeskanzler, Germany's Chancellor. Usually, an absolute majority is not reached by any political party. Therefore, after the federal election political parties negotiate and form a coalition, which is the basis for the next federal government.

The coalition negotiations usually take several weeks and, therefore, it may take a few months until the new Chancellor is elected.

Political parties currently represented in the Bundestag are the Conservatives (*CDU/CSU*), the Social Democrats (*SPD*), the Left Party (*Die Linke*), and the Greens (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*). Further parties with serious chances of winning seats in the September elections include the Liberals (*FDP*) and a right wing party (*AfD*).

Since 2013, the federal government has been a "Grand Coalition" of the *CDU/CSU* and the *SPD*. **Angela Merkel**, *CDU*, has been Germany's Chancellor since 2005 and is the top candidate for the *CDU* in this election. The candidate for the chancellorship for the *SPD* is **Martin Schulz**, former President of the European Parliament.

POLICY SUGGESTIONS OF THE PARTIES

Reform existing immigration categories



CDU: Make the existing categories more concise and efficient, and stick with a demand based system; job offer always required for labor market access



FDP: Lower salary levels for the EU Blue Card

Implement new immigration categories



SPD: Demand based points system with an annual quota determined by a non-political expert commission demand; job offer still required for labor market access



FDP: Supply based points system with quota as a job seeker permit for one year; "Chancen-Karte"



B'90/Die Grünen: Supply Based Points system with quota as a work permit



CDU: No points based system brought forward by the Conservatives

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New immigration code



SPD, B'90/Grüne, FDP, Die Linke

Compile all non-asylum immigration into one law: "Einwanderungsgesetz"



CDU: Compile labour migration categories only into one law "Fachkräftzuwanderungsgesetz"

GENERAL TRENDS



Strengthen immigration authorities with staff and training; welcome centres;



Enhance and extend vocational/university degree recognition process



Extend and consolidate integration efforts; sanctions for non-integration



Increase efficacy and numbers of deportations



Strengthen external border security



Asylum/externalisation of refugee status determination into transit countries



Brexit: Freedom of movement is an inseparable part of the EU single market

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?



New immigration code likely



New points based immigration category likely



Additional discretionary immigration category for low skilled migrants likely, but accompanied by strong labour market protection clauses



Consolidation of immigration authorities or a new federal ministry for migration unlikely



More effective and stringent deportation system



Full support for quick implementation of all EU measures, such as SMART borders package



Strengthening of external Schengen borders



Externalisation of borders and refugee processes



Brexit-Standpoint: Freedom of movement inseparable part of the EU single market

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