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Germany

Germany's election results

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The Social Democrats (SPD) and the Christian conservative parties (CDU/CSU) both won 38.5% of the votes, but the SPD emerged with slightly more deputies (251 against 248 for the CDU/CSU) because of its greater number of direct mandates.

[https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/27_schroderchirac.jpg]

Schröder and Chirac

For the CDU/CSU 38.5% was an improvement on the 35.1% it scored in 1998, while the SPD, who won 40.9% then, lost votes in both percentage and absolute terms. The government's majority was based on the success of the Greens, who, having won 6.7% of the vote in 1998, scored 8.6% this time. The liberal FDP also made gains, going from 6.2% in 1998 to 7.4% this time. Far right candidates largely gained less than 2%.

The big disappointment on the left was the score for the PDS. In 1998, it was able to establish a group in the Bundestag with 5.1% of the vote and 36 deputies, but this time it only won 4% of votes and it no longer has a parliamentary group. Only two PDS candidates were directly elected, both in Berlin. With a third direct mandate the 4% would have been sufficient to allow the PDS to have a number of deputies corresponding proportionally to its vote. The Greens had a candidate directly elected for the first time in Kreuzberg-Friedrichshain; it was Hans-Christian Ströbele, a pacifist on the far left of the party who had been excluded from its proportional list.

The losses by the PDS (who won some 1.9 million votes, less than that of the 'Trotskyists' in France in the first round of the 2002 presidential election) were more serious in the East of Germany, while in the West it stagnated around 1% of the vote. In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, where the PDS co-governs with the SPD, it lost a third of its vote, falling from around 24% to around 16%. It will however continue its participation in this coalition - regional elections in this Land on the same day yielded similar results. In Berlin, where the PDS also participates in a 'red-green' coalition there were also losses, although less spectacular. A large part of the votes lost by the PDS (around 300,000) were lost through abstention - turnout for the election fell from 82.2% in 1998 to 79.1% in 2002.