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Germany

# **Elections in Germany: Breakthrough of the extreme right; Spectacular losses of CDU / CSU and SPD**

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**On September 24, 2017, the spectacular losses of the Christian-conservative CDU / CSU parties and the Social Democratic SPD forming up to now the governing grand coalition under Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU), and the dramatic success of the AfD with a nationalist, racist, ultra-conservative and far-right profile, are the marking points of the results of the recent elections to the Bundestag. Indeed, the CDU / CSU with 33% of the votes loses 8.5 percentage points measured to 2013 and the SPD loses 5.2 arriving at 20.5% - it is the expression of an apparently irresistible erosion of the Social Democratic electorate since the implementation of anti-social counter-reforms of the SPD / Green government's 2010 agenda under SPD Chancellor Gerhard Schröder.**

The AfD reached 12.6% of the votes compared to 4.7% in 2013 and becomes the 3rd force in the Bundestag with 94 deputies. Moreover, the AfD becomes the 1st party in Saxony with 27% of the votes against the CDU with 26.9%, and in general 1st force in the male electorate of the new Länder of East Germany. In Bavaria, the AfD comes in second place behind the CSU in many constituencies.

The AfD was able to take more than one million votes in the CDU / CSU, almost half a million in the SPD and almost 400,000 in the party Die Linke party, and mobilize more than one million of those who were not to go to the polls in 2013, in the framework of a participation of 76.2% of the electorate compared to 71.5% in 2013. Despite the great electoral success, the conflict reigns at the summit of the AfD after these elections: Frauke Petry, who obtained a direct mandate in Saxony, co-chair of the party with a more "moderate" profile than the first candidates of the party, Alexander Gauland and Alice Weidel, has just announced that it will not be part of the parliamentary fraction of the AfD to the new Bundestag. The words of Alexander Gauland announcing "to open the hunt against Merkel" and its fascistoid verbal provocations displeased her.

Another spectacular result of these elections is the success of the Liberal FDP, which had not been able to break the 5% barrier in 2013 and now enters the Bundestag again with 10.7% and 80 deputies, earning 5.9 points of percentage. The FDP was able to take 1.3 million votes from the CDU / CSU, 430,000 from the SPD and even 70,000 from Die Linke. The Greens reach 8.9% of the votes compared to 8.4% in 2013 by losing no electors to the AfD. They are "beaten" closely by the party Die Linke that obtains 9.2% of the votes gaining 0.6 points measured to 2013 (that gives it 69 deputies), and also winning votes in absolute numbers (Die Linke had its best result in 2009 with 11.9% of the vote).

The evening after the elections, SPD's main candidate Martin Schulz said his party refuses to continue the "grand coalition" as a junior partner of the CDU / CSU under the old and most likely also the new Chancellor Angela Merkel. He wants to regenerate the SPD in the role of an opposition party by emphasizing the themes of defending democratic values ??and "social justice".

If the SPD does not reverse this decision, the formation of a ruling coalition with the CDU / CSU as a majority party will be difficult. Theoretically, the only remaining possibility is a so-called "Jamaica" coalition with Christian Lindner's Liberal FDP and the Green party. It is difficult to see the possible compromise for example in the field of climate policy which, for the FDP of Lindner, must be carried out solely by "free market" methods. Although nothing can be ruled out - we shall see what happens in the next few months - the results of the elections in the Bundestag seem to lead to a political and parties crisis which could even lead to new premature federal elections.

For Die Linke, the stakes are enormous: to fight mercilessly for unitary actions against the extreme right, while

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presenting itself as the true opposition to established pro-capitalist and neo-liberal policies.

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