

Directorate-General for the Presidency  
 Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments

## Factsheet: The German Bundesrat



### 1. At a glance

The German Basic Law stipulates clearly that "the Federal Republic of Germany is a democratic and social federal state" and that "except as otherwise provided or permitted by this Basic Law, the exercise of state powers and the discharge of state functions is a matter for the Länder".




The Bundesrat has a total of 69 full Members and the same number of votes. The Bundesrat is composed of Members of *Länder* governments and not of directly elected Members. Since elections in the 16 German *Länder* take place at different times, the political composition and the majority in the Bundesrat often changes. It is in fact the executive power of the *Länder* which is represented in the Bundesrat. The *Länder* governments do not need a formal parliamentary mandate for their voting behaviour for individual acts in the Bundesrat.

### 2. Composition

Land	Population, m	Minister-President	Votes	Parties in government
Baden-Württemberg	10.75	Winfried Kretschmann (Grüne/Greens-EFA)	6	Grüne/CDU (Greens-EFA/EPP)
Bayern	12.52	Markus Söder (CSU/EPP)	6	CSU (EPP)/Freie Wähler(tbc)
Berlin	3.42	Michael Müller (SPD/S&D)	4	SPD/Linke/Grüne (S&D/GUE-NGL/Greens-EFA)
Brandenburg	2.53	Dietmar Woidke (SPD/S&D)	4	SPD/Die Linke (S&D/GUE-NGL)
Bremen	0.66	Carsten Sieling (SPD/S&D)	3	SPD/Grüne (S&D/Greens-EFA)
Hamburg	1.77	Peter Tschentscher, (SPD/S&D)	3	SPD/Grüne (S&D/Greens-EFA)
Hessen	6.07	Volker Bouffier (CDU/EPP)	5	CDU/Grüne (EPP/Greens-EFA)
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	1.67	Manuela Schwesig (SPD/S&D)	3	SPD/CDU (S&D/EPP)
Niedersachsen	7.97	Stephan Weil (SPD/S&D)	6	SPD/CDU (S&D/EPP)
Nordrhein-Westfalen	17.97	Armin Laschet (CDU/EPP)	6	CDU/FDP (EPP/ALDE)
Rheinland-Pfalz	4.04	Malu Dreyer (SPD/S&D)	4	SPD/Grüne (S&D/Greens-EFA)
Saarland	1.03	Tobias Hans (CDU/EPP)	3	CDU/SPD (EPP/S&D)
Sachsen	4.21	Michael Kretschmer (CDU/EPP)	4	CDU/SPD (EPP/S&D)
Sachsen-Anhalt	2.40	Rainer Haseloff (CDU/EPP)	4	CDU/SPD (EPP/S&D)
Schleswig-Holstein	2.84	Daniel Günther (CDU/EPP)	4	CDU/Grüne/FDP (EPP/Green-EFA/GUE-NGL)

Land	Population, m	Minister-President	Votes	Parties in government
Thüringen	2.28	Bodo Ramelow (Die Linke/GUE)	4	Die Linke/SPD/Grüne (GUE-NGL/S&D/Green-EFA)

### 3. Officeholders

President of the Bundesrat	Chairperson of the Committee for EU Affairs	Chairperson of the Europakammer
 <p>Christian Günther (CDU/EPP) Minister President of Schleswig-Holstein since 1 November 2018</p>	 <p>Guido Wolf (CDU/EVP), Baden-Württemberg</p>	 <p>Klaus Lederer (Die Linke/GUE) Berlin</p>
<p><b>Secretary General of the Bundesrat:</b> Ms. Dr. Ute RETTLER, Staatssekretärin und Direktorin des Bundesrates (since 1 April 2015)</p>		

### 4. Relations with Members of the European Parliament

<b>Participation rights for German MEPs in plenary sittings</b>	Within the discretion of the President
<b>Participation rights for German MEPs in committee meetings</b>	Within the discretion of the Committee
<b>Availability of videoconferencing system in German Federal Council</b>	No

### 5. Information links

- Official website: <http://www.bundesrat.de/>
- [Rules of procedure in English](#)
- [List of committees](#)
- [Recent documents submitted by the Federal Council to the Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange \(IPEX\)](#)
- [European Parliament Information Office in Berlin](#)

### 6. Contacts

<p><b>Factsheet author and contact in the EP Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments:</b></p> <p>Mr Ulrich Hüschen Office WIE 05U045, 1047 Brussels Phone +32 2 284 4870 <a href="mailto:ulrich.hueschen@ep.europa.eu">ulrich.hueschen@ep.europa.eu</a></p>	<p><b>Brussels-based contact of the German Bundesrat:</b></p> <p>Mr. Mathias Voigt Office WIE 06U030, 1047 Brussels Phone +32 2 28 43896 <a href="mailto:michael.hoessl@ep.europa.eu">michael.hoessl@ep.europa.eu</a></p>
---	---