



BUNDESTAGS  
WAHL  
2021

Arbeitsblatt  
Worksheet 5



## Comparing electoral systems in the U.S. and in Germany

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Browse the videos on the project webpage...

▶ WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST INTERESTING ABOUT THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM IN THE U.S.?

...or use the direct link to watch the separate videos:

▶ Junge Union (CDU)

▶ Junge Grüne (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen)

▶ SPD

**Both the U.S. and Germany are federal and democratic states.  
Yet, there are interesting differences between both electoral systems.**

1

Watch the videos **What do you find most interesting about the electoral system in the U.S.?**  
What do the speakers find most interesting and curious about the voting process in the U.S.?  
Mark the correct answers.

CORRECT WRONG

- a The candidate with most popular votes does not always win the elections. \_\_\_\_\_
- b The Senate elects the President. \_\_\_\_\_
- c (Ex-)Convicts are not allowed to vote in some states. \_\_\_\_\_
- d Senators are directly elected into Congress. \_\_\_\_\_
- e There are only two big political parties in the US. \_\_\_\_\_
- f Voters have to be registered to vote. \_\_\_\_\_
- g There is no voter registration. \_\_\_\_\_
- h Each US state has one elector. \_\_\_\_\_
- i A President is elected by a group of electors. \_\_\_\_\_



Let's have a closer look at two interesting differences between the German and the U.S. electoral systems: the multi-party system and the unlimited term of office for the chancellor in Germany.

## 2

**The multi-party system:**

**More than 40 political parties are expected to participate in the German Federal Election in September 2021.**

**Seven of them will probably pass the 5%-hurdle and take seats in the German parliament, the Bundestag.**

**What are the advantages of a multi-party system in comparison to the two-party system of the United States?**

### 2a

Write your own ideas in the table below.

#### ADVANTAGES MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM

#### ADVANTAGES TWO-PARTY SYSTEM

#### DISADVANTAGES MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM

#### DISADVANTAGES TWO-PARTY SYSTEM



### 2b

Do some internet-research (e.g. "multi-party versus two-party systems") and add more points to your list.

List at least three arguments in each box above.

### 2c

Your opinion: What do you personally find the better system? Write a short opinion piece in which you either plead for the introduction of a multi-party system in the US or of a two-party system in Germany.

### 3

#### The unlimited term of office:

While an American president can only run for two terms, there is no such limit for the German "Bundeskanzler\*in". For this reason, Angela Merkel has been in office for 16 years this September and the decision not to run again was her own.

#### 3a

What do you think are the consequences and risks of an unlimited term of office?



#### 3b

Why are American presidents limited to two terms? Watch this [video](#) about presidential term limits in the U.S..

Do you think a limitation on the term of office for the head of government is good? Can you think of downsides to the limited term of office? Make notes below.

Record your opinion in a one-minute audio on [www.vocaroo.com](http://www.vocaroo.com) or on your mobile phone. Send the audio file to your teacher.

