

3.7 WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Why is it important to have female leaders, and how can societies work to increase the number of women in positions of power?

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| C3 Framework Indicator | <p>D2.Civ.1.3-5. Distinguish the responsibilities and powers of government officials at various levels and branches of government and in different times and places.</p> <p>D2.Civ.3.3-5. Examine the origins and purposes of rules, laws, and key U.S. constitutional provisions.</p> <p>D2.Civ.6.3-5. Describe ways in which people benefit from and are challenged by working together, including through government, workplaces, voluntary organizations, and families.</p> | |
| Staging the Compelling Question | Students will examine the qualities of effective leadership and review the profiles of German women leaders to determine their individual leadership characteristics. | |
| Supporting Question 1 | Supporting Question 2 | Supporting Question 3 |
| Who are our leaders? | Who are the female leaders in Germany, and how have they influenced Germany? | Are women equally represented? |
| Formative Performance Task | Formative Performance Task | Formative Performance Task |
| Students will identify a person whom they regard as a great leader, using the list of leadership traits and skills. | In groups, students will examine the profiles of German female leaders and answer the questions on Handout 3.7.2 . | In groups, students will read the information in Handout 3.7.3 and answer the questions. |
| Featured Sources | Featured Sources | Featured Sources |
| Source A: Handout 3.7.1 | <p>Source A: Handout 3.7.2</p> <p>Source B: Antje Boetius</p> <p>Source C: Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana</p> <p>Source D: Ursula von der Leyen</p> <p>Source E: Angela Merkel</p> <p>Source F: Martina Merz</p> <p>Source G: Luisa Neubauer</p> <p>Source H: Alice Schwarzer</p> <p>Source I: Özlem Türeci</p> | Source A: Handout 3.7.3 |
| Summative Performance Task | <p>Argument: Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical or contemporary sources, while acknowledging competing views.</p> <p>Extension: Research female political leaders in your local or state government and create a poster that highlights their achievements and the barriers they faced.</p> | |
| Taking Informed Action | <p>Understand: There is a lack of female leaders at the local, state, federal, and global levels.</p> <p>Assess: Research the gender of leaders in your school, school district, or local or state government.</p> <p>Act: Create a social media campaign to share your findings on gender leadership in your local area.</p> | |

? COMPELLING QUESTION

- **Why is it important to have female leaders, and how can societies work to increase the number of women in positions of power?**

INQUIRY OVERVIEW

In this inquiry, students will examine the qualities of effective leadership and review the profiles of German women leaders to determine their individual leadership characteristics.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

"In the US, women are underrepresented in virtually all types of leadership. Women make up only 23 percent of chief executives in U.S. organizations, and only 17 percent of the U.S. Congress. Of about 190 heads of state in the world, only 22 of them are women (11 percent). White men make up 84 percent of these seats when they only account for 31 percent of the U.S. population. In Barron's 2016 list of the World's Best CEOs, all 30 were men" (Chin, 2019).

In Germany, women continue to be underrepresented in many leadership positions, although the federal government passed a law in 2016 introducing a 30 percent quota for women on supervisory boards. Even this legislation, though, did not lead to an increase of women in positions of power in the business world. In 2019, data showed that under one in three managers (29.4 percent) consisted of female board members, managing directors, or executives in trade, production, and services. However, in fields outside of business, the percentages of women were significantly higher, especially in professions such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, and social scientists. In these areas, the proportion of women was 45.4 percent in 2019. Unlike among managers, the proportion of women in academic professions has increased by a 24 percent since the 1990s (Statistisches Bundesamt).

In 2005, there was great optimism regarding female leadership around the world. Angela Merkel was sworn into office in the Bundestag and made history as the first woman to lead the Federal Republic. Yet the number of women in the German federal parliament (Bundestag) remains stagnant, falling from 36.5 percent in 2017 to 30.9 percent in 2021 and then increasing slightly to 34.7 percent after the September 26, 2021, elections. In late 2018, on the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in Germany, the chancellor lamented the low numbers of women in leadership positions in both politics and business, with zero women on the boards of roughly one-third of the companies listed on the German Stock Exchange.

Scholars found additional barriers for female leaders, such as negative perceptions from the public, political elites, and the mass media regarding their leadership capabilities and competence, compared to their male counterparts. Also, there are stereotypical masculine traits, such as strength of leadership and quick decision making that are often prized over stereotypically feminine traits like deliberation and compromise. An overview of basic leadership competencies is needed to guide students as they examine leadership through the lens of German women who have changed the world. Teachers should be prepared



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to discuss gender biases and lead a discussion on the statistics around female leadership and the potential reason for minimal female leaders in the United States and abroad.

► Sources

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 **TIME:** Two to three 45-minute class periods

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

- Leadership Traits & Skills (**Handout 3.7.1**)
- Women Who Move Germany (**Handout 3.7.2**)
- Gender Representation (**Handouts 3.7.3**)
- Berg, K. (2019, July 26). Young, Female, Innovative—We Present Five Women Who Are Changing Germany. <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/knowledge/these-women-are-shaping-the-future>.
- Martina Merz. (2020). *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/profile/martina-merz/?sh=3545e6ef4f7c>.
- Göbel, J. (2020, February 7). *Cutting-Edge Research With Strong Women*. Deutschland.de. <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/knowledge/women-in-research-portraits-of-top-scientists>.
- Heinrich Böll Stiftung. (n.d.). *Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana*. <https://eu.boell.org/en/person/pierrette-herzberger-fofana>.
- Müller, E. (2021, February 26). *The Women Behind the Vaccine*. Deutschland.de. <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/knowledge/coronavirus-vaccine-ozlem-tureci-of-biontech>.
- Petrikowski, N. (n.d.). Angela Merkel. *Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Angela-Merkel>.
- Schütz, S. (2020, July 3). *Make the Climate A Priority Again, Says Germany's Student Activist Neubauer*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/03/885644410/make-the-climate-a-priority-again-says-germany-s-student-activist-neubauer>.
- Strack, C. (2019, June 16). Who Is Ursula von der Leyen, the New European Commission President? *Deutsche Welle*. <https://www.dw.com/en/who-is-ursula-von-der-leyen-the-new-european-commission-president/a-49447961>.
- Wydra, K. (2017, January). *For Women, by Women—Alice Schwarzer and the Feminist Magazine EMMA*. Alumniportal. <https://www.alumniportal-deutschland.org/en/germany/country-people/emma-alice-schwarzer-feminist/>.



INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

Ask students to share what they think makes a good leader. Write student responses on the board for discussion later in the inquiry.

Explain to students that leadership is any behavior that influences the actions and attitudes of others to achieve certain results; they should be able to lead others by example. This is the reason there have been leaders who have made positive and negative contributions in the world. People can become leaders in different ways, such as by becoming qualified in a field (e.g., teacher), through merit and performance (e.g., captain of a football team), or by applying for a leadership position (e.g., principal or mayor). Relate to the students that we all have the potential to be leaders and thus influence the lives of others in positive or negative ways.

? SUPPORTING QUESTION 1

Who are our leaders?

► Formative Performance Task

Working independently, students should identify a person that they regard as a great leader, using the list of leadership traits and skills in **Handout 3.7.1**. This leader could be someone they know, or someone they have heard or read about. Students will indicate the traits or skills they believe that person demonstrates.

Once students have completed the handout, provide time for them to share their answers.

Once done, ask students to identify the number of female and male leaders on their list. On the board, record the gender of leaders listed to determine the gender ratio. Guide students in a discussion about why there were more female or male leaders listed.

If time allows, ask students to explain their choice of leader, and allow other students to respond or provide counter-arguments to their peers. Explain to the students that females and males share the same leadership traits, but most business and political leaders are male. Students will learn about German female leaders and explore their leadership paths and identify potential barriers.

► Resource

- Leadership Traits & Skills (**Handout 3.7.1**)

? SUPPORTING QUESTION 2

Who are the female leaders in Germany, and how have they influenced Germany?

► Formative Performance Task

Explain to students that they will learn more about important women leaders in Germany.

Divide the class into small groups. Assign each group one German female leader from the list below to research. Students should answer the questions in **Handout 3.7.2** as a group. Once completed, the teams should select a leader or spokesperson to share more about their assigned leader with the class.

Examples of women leaders in Germany:

- Antje Boetius – polar and marine researcher
- Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana – first Black German member of the European Parliament
- Ursula von der Leyen – first female president of the European Commission
- Angela Merkel – first female chancellor of Germany

- Martina Merz – German CEO
- Luisa Neubauer – climate activist
- Alice Schwarzer – female rights activist
- Özlem Türeci – cofounder of BioNTech

More female leaders: <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/knowledge/these-women-are-shaping-the-future>

► Resources

- Women Who Move Germany (**Handout 3.7.2**)
- Berg, K. (2019, July 26). Young, Female, Innovative—We Present Five Women Who Are Changing Germany. <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/knowledge/these-women-are-shaping-the-future>.
- Martina Merz. (2020). *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/profile/martina-merz/?sh=3545e6ef4f7c>.
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- Heinrich Böll Stiftung. (n.d.). *Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana*. <https://eu.boell.org/en/person/pierrette-herzberger-fofana>.
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- Petrikowski, N. (n.d.). Angela Merkel. *Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Angela-Merkel>.
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? SUPPORTING QUESTION 3

Are women equally represented?

► Formative Performance Task

In their groups, students will read the information on **Handout 3.7.3** and answer the questions. Once completed, teams should select a new leader or spokesperson to share their answers with the class. The teacher should guide the discussion and highlight any similarities or differences in answers.

► Resource

- Gender Representation (**Handout 3.7.3**)

✓ SUMMATIVE PERFORMANCE TASK

Why is it important to have female leaders, and how can societies work to increase the number of women in positions of power?

Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from contemporary sources, while acknowledging competing views.

+ EXTENSION (OPTIONAL) TASK

Research female political leaders in your local or state government and create a poster that highlights their achievements and the barriers they faced.

TAKING INFORMED ACTION

Understand: There is a lack of female leaders at the local, state, federal, and global levels.

Assess: Research the gender of leaders in your school, school district, or local or state government.

Act: Create a social media campaign to share your findings on gender leadership in your local area.

CONCEPTS LIST

- East Germany
- Berlin Wall
- Christian Democratic Union (CDU)
- Barriers
- Gender
- Leadership
- Chancellor
- Politics
- Traits
- Skills
- Angela Merkel