

Participate in a federal election

You can find out how to exercise your right to vote in a Bundestag election here.

Competent Department

- [Statistisches Landesamt Bremen - Wahlen](#)

Basic information

Bundestag elections are held every 4 years. All citizens who meet the requirements may take part in the election and cast their vote. Every eligible voter has 2 votes to cast in the Bundestag election, the first vote for a member of parliament in the constituency and the second vote for the state list of a party.

You can either cast your vote in person at the polling station on election day or beforehand by postal vote.

At the polling station, you cast your vote on a ballot paper. You will receive this from the electoral board when you enter the polling station. You then take the ballot paper into a polling booth one at a time. There you mark the ballot paper. Then fold the ballot paper so that your mark cannot be seen. The electoral board will then check whether you are on the electoral roll and therefore eligible to vote using your polling card or ID. If this is the case, you can put your ballot paper in the ballot box. It will be noted in the electoral roll that you have cast your vote.

If you would like to cast your vote by postal vote, you must apply for this. A postal vote application can be submitted online, by post, fax or e-mail. You can apply in person at the electoral office or one of the branch offices. It is not possible to apply by telephone.

Requirements

You may vote in a Bundestag election if you

- have German citizenship,
- have reached the age of 18 on election day at the latest,
- have lived in Germany for at least 3 months or have otherwise habitually resided there and
- are not excluded from the right to vote (e.g. by a judge's decision).

What documents do I need?

- Polling station
 - Polling card, if applicable
 - identity document
- Postal vote
 - Provide personal data (name, date of birth, registration address/main address, different shipping address if applicable)

Procedure

Polling station

- You enter the polling station,
- The polling officer hands out a ballot paper,
- You mark and fold the ballot paper in the polling booth,
- You go to the voting table with the folded ballot paper,
- The polling officer checks your eligibility to vote against the electoral roll (if necessary, by presenting your voter's notification or an identification document),
- You drop the folded ballot paper into the ballot box.
- The polling station closes at 6 p.m. and all ballot papers cast are counted.

Postal voting

- You submit a postal vote application to the electoral office.
- The electoral office checks your entry in the electoral roll and thus your eligibility to vote.
- The postal voting documents are sent to you by the electoral office.
- You receive the postal voting documents and proceed as follows:
 - Mark the ballot paper and pack it in the white envelope.
 - The white envelope is placed in the red envelope.
 - Sign the enclosed ballot paper and also place it in the red envelope.
 - Seal the red envelope.
- Send the red envelope by post.
- The red envelope arrives at the electoral office. The electoral office stores all red envelopes securely until election day.
- On election day, all red envelopes and their contents are checked for formalities and the ballot papers are counted from 6 pm.

Legal bases

- [Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland \(GG\)](#)
- [Bundeswahlgesetz](#)
- [Bundeswahlordnung](#)

More information

Relocation

If you move house close to the election (6 weeks or less), this may affect your eligibility to vote. In principle, the day of registration with the registration office applies, not the day you actually move in! In such a case, please contact the electoral office as soon as possible to discuss your eligibility to vote.

Germans living abroad

Germans living abroad who are not registered in Germany are also referred to as Germans living abroad. They are not officially entered in a voters' register. If Germans living abroad wish to vote in a Bundestag election, they must submit a written application for entry in the voters' register of the relevant municipality before each election.

What deadlines must be paid attention to?

Voting is possible in the polling stations from 8:00 - 18:00.

The mailing of postal voting documents begins approx. 6 weeks before election day. Important! For new elections, shorter deadlines apply, which are set by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and for Home Affairs.

How long does it take to process

Not specified.

What are the costs?

There are no costs.