



Erasmus+

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Young People and Political Participation



Project meeting in
Finland

18th February to
24th February

1. Has the voting age been changed in Germany since WWII?

Before WWII:

- during the „Weimarer Republik“ there was a discussion about reducing the voting age from 25 years to 20. In 1920, they finally introduced an active voting age of 20 and a passive voting age of 25.
- (active: you are allowed to elect sb.,
passive: you can be elected yourself)

After WWII:

- 23rd May 1949: adoption of the German Constitution
- article 38 gives everybody the right to vote
- (active voting from the age of 21 and passive voting from the age of 25)
 - 31st July 1970: Willy Brandt reduces the active voting age to 18 and the passive voting age to 21. In 1975 the passive voting age also becomes 18.

2. Differences in voting ages

- The voting age depends on in which federal state of Germany you live and the kind of election you want to participate

In Baden Württemberg:

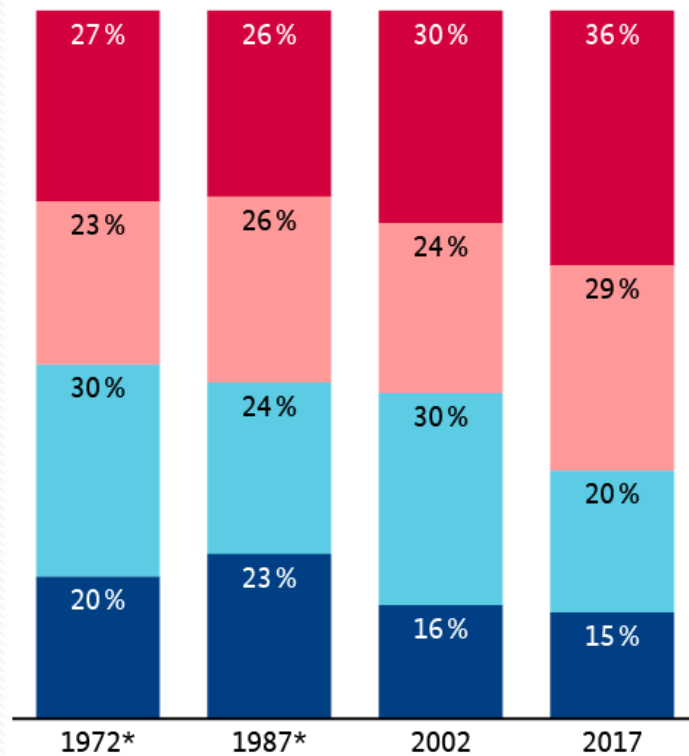
- In local government elections young people at the age of 16 are allowed to vote
 - > increase young people's interest in politics
- In regional elections at the age of 18 (in some other federale states already at the age of 16)
- For the „Bundestag“ elections you have to be already 18 years old

3. What were the voter turnouts among the young people in the previous elections?

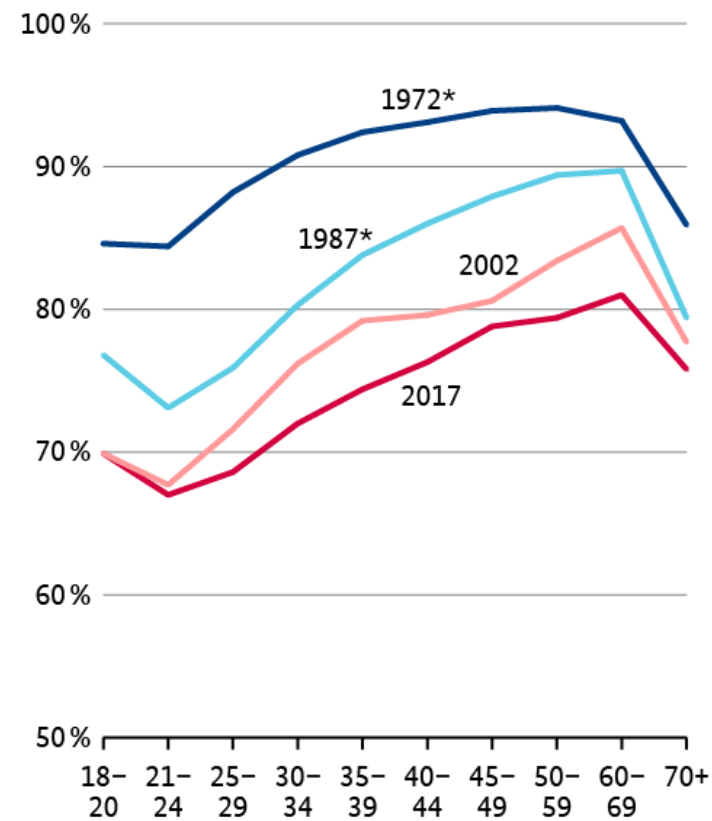
Wahlberechtigte und Wahlbeteiligung bei Bundestagswahlen nach Altersgruppen

Wahlberechtigte nach Alter (in Jahren)

■ < 30
 ■ 30-44
 ■ 45-59
 ■ ≥ 60



Wahlbeteiligung nach Alter (in Jahren)



* früheres Bundesgebiet ohne Westberlin

Datenquelle: Bundeswahlleiter; Berechnungen: BiB

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Explanation of the statistic

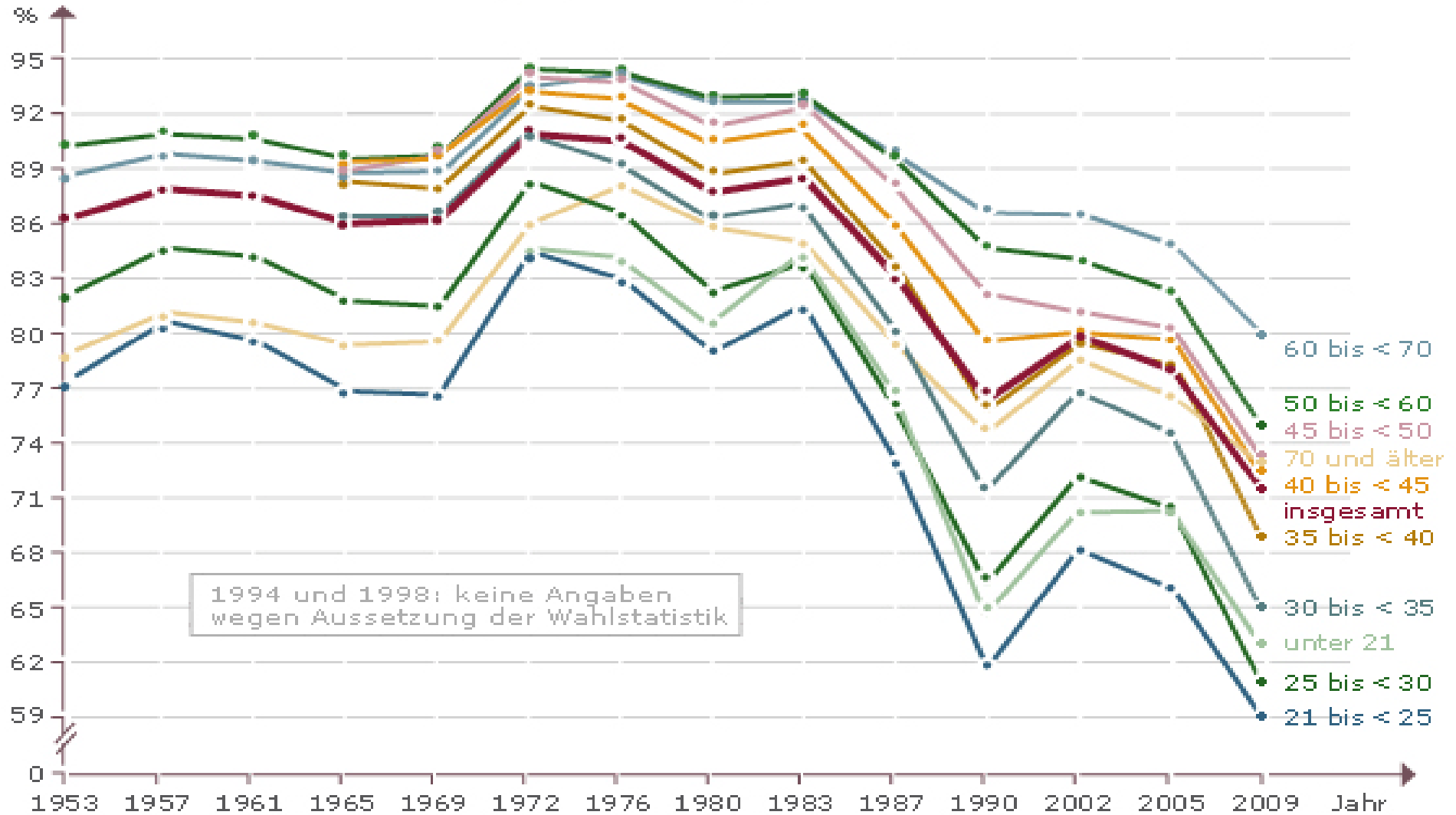
The statistic shows that the participation of young voters under the age of 30 (dark blue) has decreased during the last years and has never been as low as at the „Bundestag“ election in 2017 (15%). In contrary to this, the participation of people older than 60 has increased among the last years.

4. Has the situation among the young in Germany changed since WWII and how?

The political participation among the young people in Germany did drop. It is obvious that the older the people are, the higher is their quote of political participation. A probable reason is that they are content with the German politics so they don't think it's necessary to participate at the elections.

Wahlbeteiligung nach Altersgruppen

In Prozent der Wahlberechtigten, Bundestagswahlen 1953 bis 2009



1994 und 1998: keine Angaben wegen Aussetzung der Wahlstatistik

Quelle: Statistisches Bundesamt: Repräsentative Wahlstatistik
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 Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2010, www.bpb.de

5. What has been done to lift political participation of young people?

The 8 point-plan:

1. Lower voting age down to 16 years
2. Campaigns to lift political participation (→ non- voters get personal contact)
3. Bonus to financing of parties (→ lifting political participation becomes a bigger interest for parties)
4. Modernisation and mobilisation of „ballot box election“

5. Introduce e-voting (→ electing gets less dependant on a position and time-dependant)
6. Facilitate postal voting
7. Less voting dates (f.ex. only 2 per year)
8. Easier and more transparent arrangement of the voting right



6. Our personal opinion: how to increase young people's interest and participation in politics?

- More possibilities for young people to get informed about politics and political problems
- Integrate young people's opinions and wishes in politics (we are the future!)
- Reduce voting age to 16
- Make politics more interesting for young people
- Explain young people why political participation is that important