

Episode 57DEL February 24 2025 German election Firewall excludes AfD from coalitions Die Linke rises

In Episode 57DEL 1A The German future response on Ukraine under Merz 1B How Germany under Merz will deal with Trump 1C The Die Linke far left party gains in response to Musk interference 1D Criticism of SDP and Scholz On Sunday voters blamed the previous Scholz administration for high grocery prices and this is the primary reason Scholz lost votes 1E Failure when Musk attempted to influence German voters to vote for the Neo Nazi party the Alternative for Germany AfD 2A Takeaways From the Election in Germany Friedrich Merz and his party won Elon Musk did not seem to move voters and more lessons from an early German vote with big implications for Europe 2B Friedrich Merz a Conservative Is Poised to be the Next Chancellor of Germany The Christian Democrat who appeared to have a path to a stable governing coalition hopes to lead the response of Europe to the reshuffling of alliances by Trump 2C Votes in Germany Are Cast What Happens Now? The country will need a coalition government But the process of building one could take months 2D Firewall? Why the Far Right Is Unlikely to Join the Next Government of Germany The collective shunning of the AfD party is part of a longstanding attempt to blunt its move into the mainstream Main Content

**1 RAWSEP Excerpts** about Musk influence on German snap election held February 23 2025 and other issues in the German Snap Election held February 23 2025 including blaming the incumbent Olaf Scholz and the SDP for high grocery prices

1A The Merz factor The German future response on Ukraine under Merz **RAWSEP first excerpt** Merz will seek to lead Europe in trade and security conflicts with which has rapidly been reshuffling the United States global alliances My top priority for me will be to strengthen Europe as quickly as possible so that we can gradually achieve real independence from the USA Merz said in a televised round table after polls closed I would never have thought I would be saying something like this on TV but after comments last week from Trump it is clear that this administration is largely indifferent to the fate of Europe or at least to this part of it Merz vowed to bring a more assertive foreign policy to help Ukraine and stronger leadership in Europe at a moment when Trump has sowed anxiety by scrambling traditional alliances and embracing Russia Merz was once seen as a potentially better counterpart for the American president than Scholz but in the final days of the campaign Merz mused about whether the United States would remain a democracy under Trump He strongly condemned what Germans saw as meddling by Trump officials on behalf of the far right Alternative for Germany or AfD

1B How Germany under Merz will deal with Trump **RAWSEP second Excerpt** If the Trump threats of a trade war and less military protection had already been worrying Germans the American Vice President JD Vance speech and the Trump subsequent U turn on Ukraine caused a near panic in Germany Among German voters 65 percent are worried that Germany is helpless against Trump and Putin of Russia according to a poll released on Sunday afternoon On Sunday night in a post election debate between leaders Merz quickly brought up the threat that Germany and Europe face because of the new US administration It has become clear that the Americans at least this part of the Americans this government is largely indifferent to the fate of Europe he said I am very curious to see how we approach the NATO summit at the end of June whether we are still talking about NATO in its current state or whether we need to establish an independent European defense capability much more quickly

1C The Die Linke Party gains The Musk interference unintended consequence of boosting the Leftist Die Linke Party from 3 percent in 2021 to 10 percent in this 2025 election **RAWSEP third Excerpt** Reaction to the AfD support from Trump may have mobilized a late burst of support to Die Linke the party of the German far left The surprise of the night Two months ago Die Linke was dying Die Linke languished at 3 percent But Die Linke managed to turn things around in just months thanks to a new pair of charismatic and social media savvy leaders and the alienation that many young voters feel with mainstream parties It surged to what appeared to be around 10 percent Its campaign events started attracting so many young people that they became must see affairs as much dance party as political rally The party leaders became social media stars Heidi Reichinnek who is credited for much of the turnaround told a crowd on Sunday night that they owed their success to the many volunteers who went from door to door talking to people about pocketbook issues Ms Reichinnek told supporters they did everything right Everything is getting more expensive and at the same time wages are not rising said a 20 year old man The 20 year old man voted for Die Linke With support for the AfD on the rise a 59 year old man who is an educator and musician in Potsdam split his ticket between the Greens and Die Linke and said he hopes the German defensive democracy holds fast against the right wing threat I am hoping that this system will show itself to be resilient enough The 59 year old man said that Germany can manage the problems we have without drifting to one extreme or the other

1D Criticism of SPD and Scholz On Sunday voters blamed the previous Scholz administration for high grocery prices and this is the primary reason Scholz lost votes **RAWSEP fourth excerpt** Scholz is out but his party marches on Despite polling predicting his third place finish Chancellor Olaf Scholz had insisted until the very end that he would somehow retain his job He was wrong His Social Democratic Party won a record low 16 percent coming in third place Though Scholz will continue as a caretaker chancellor until Merz is sworn in he is widely expected to step down from active politics His party will live on though It will very likely slip into the familiar role of junior partner in a government led by the conservatives The so called grand coalition supported then CDU leader Angela Merkel through three of her four terms and it could be the best shot for Merz for a stable government in a tumultuous time for Germany

1E Failure when Musk attempted to influence German voters to vote for the Neo Nazi party the Alternative for Germany AfD **RAW SEP fifth Excerpt** Musk did not seem to sway voters The AfD vote share appeared to fall short of its high water mark of support in polls from 2023 a year ago The AfD received public support from American Vice President JD Vance and an endorsement by the billionaire Trump adviser Elon Musk But a boon for AfD never materialized

2A Takeaways From the German Election Friedrich Merz and his party won Elon Musk did not seem to move voters and more lessons from an early German vote with big implications for Europe **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** The New York Times Feb 24 2025 Germany is getting a new chancellor Its current leader is heading out of power but his party probably will stick around in a diminished capacity as junior partner in a coalition with the Merz CDU And the efforts of Trump to influence the vote do not seem to have done much The election returns on February 23 2025 The center right Christian Democrats will be able to lead Germany with only one coalition partner returning the country to the more durable two party form of government that has led Germany for most of the twenty first century Here are five takeaways from the returns Merz is the likely new chancellor The largest

German turnout in decades gave the most votes to the Christian Democrats and their sister party the Christian Social Union Merz lost a power struggle to lead the Christian Democrats early in the 2000s to Angela Merkel who went on to serve 16 years as chancellor Years ago voters criticized an Angela Merkel plan to rely more heavily on Russia for natural gas a plan that did not pay off

2B Friedrich Merz a Conservative Is Poised to Be the Next Chancellor of Germany The Christian Democrat who appeared to have a path to a stable governing coalition hopes to lead the response of Europe reshuffling of alliances by Trump Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization The New York Times Feb 24 2025 Germans voted for a change of leadership on Sunday handing the most votes in a parliamentary election to centrist conservatives and rebuking the German left leaning government for its handling of the economy The election became an essential part of the European response to the new world order of Trump It drew the highest voter turnout in decades Merz at age 69 has promised to slash taxes and business regulations in a bid to kick start economic growth Merz is a businessman who has never served as a government minister Returns showed that the Christian Democrats of Merz and their sister party the Christian Social Union won just under 29 percent of the vote combined Merz clearly plans for a rerun of the centrist governments that ran Germany for much of the 16 year tenure of former Chancellor Angela Merkel The Christian Democrats in the lead with the Social Democrats as a lone junior partner The most likely coalition partner for Merz appears to be the center left Social Democrats SDP of Scholz even though the SDP experienced a steep drop in support from 2021 four years ago Merz will try to reinvigorate a slumping economy that has not grown in real terms for 5 years Voters said they would look to the next government to stoke growth and cushion the pain of post COVID 19 pandemic inflation

2C Votes in Germany Are Cast What Happens Now? The country will need a coalition government But the process of building one could take months Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization The New York Times Feb 23 2025 The next government needs two or three parties to get together The president of Germany Frank Walter Steinmeier will invite the leader of the winning party Friedrich Merz from the Christian Democrats CDU to a meeting to ask Merz to try to form a government Merz will talk with other parties to try to find the partners to get a majority 316 seats in parliament Formal coalition talks are the most complex part of the negotiations and take the longest As neighboring Austria showed when its conservative far right coalition talks surprisingly ended in January the most likely outcome of such a failure would be to go talk with other parties again Once the coalition agreement is drafted and the ministries set parties may have to go back to their base to get approval Only then do parties sign the agreement and return to parliament to elect the chancellor who then names his ministers Until then Olaf Scholz and his ministers will remain on as the caretaker government How long all of that would take remains to be seen in the past it has varied greatly from government to government In 2017 it took 171 days Ms Merkel remained chancellor for 73 days after the 2021 election before being replaced by Scholz

2D Firewall? Why the Far Right Is Unlikely to Join the Next Government of Germany The collective shunning of the AfD party is part of a longstanding attempt to blunt its move into the mainstream