

## *A long way to the White House*



*You learned a lot about the elections in the USA. Now, let's see how much you already know about the electoral system in Germany.*

### **1. Which kind of election doesn't exist in Germany?**

- ☐ primary election
- ☐ general election
- ☐ convention

### **2. Who elects the Federal Chancellor (Bundeskanzler/-in)?**

- ☐ Federal Assembly (Bundesversammlung)
- ☐ Federal Diet (Bundestag)
- ☐ Federal Council (Bundesrat)

### **3. What does "The winner takes it all" mean with regard to the presidential elections in the USA?**

- ☐ The candidate who gets the most votes during the Election Day becomes president.
- ☐ The presidential candidate who gets the most popular votes in a state wins all the electors of that state who then later officially elect the next president.
- ☐ The winner of the election does not only become president, he also is granted the important right to chose all the governors of the different US-states as well as the right to change the law first hand. The losers do not get anything at all.

### **4. Is there a similar rule in Germany?**

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no

### **5. These are the rules that apply for the right to vote in the USA. The people that fulfill the following conditions are allowed to vote. Which of these rules does not apply for elections in Germany?**

Voters...

- ☐ must be citizens of the USA (Germany).
- ☐ must be 18 years or older.
- ☐ must register to vote.

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### Kontrollblatt:

Answers to the questions

#### 1. Which kind of election doesn't exist in Germany?

- ☒ primary election
- ☐ general election
- ☐ convention

Primary elections don't exist in Germany. During a primary election, the candidates who will run for office in the general election are chosen. In contrast, candidates are elected by their party in Germany. A convention is a meeting to elect the candidates. In Germany, there are conventions, too. The difference: In the USA, the delegates vote according to the results of the primary election.

#### 2. Who elects the Federal Chancellor (Bundeskanzler/-in)?

- ☐ Federal Assembly (Bundesversammlung)
- ☒ Federal Diet (Bundestag)
- ☐ Federal Council (Bundesrat)

The Federal Diet (Bundestag) elects the Federal Chancellor. The Federal Diet is the German Parliament. The delegates are elected during the general elections (Bundestagswahlen).

The *Bundesversammlung* elects the Federal President. It consists of all Members of the *Bundestag* and an equal number of members elected by the parliaments of the *Länder*. By way of the Federal Council (*Bundesrat*) the *Länder* can directly participate in the legislation and administration process of the country.

#### 3. What does the rule "The winner takes it all" mean with regard to the presidential elections in the USA?

- ☐ The candidate who gets the most votes during the Election Day becomes president.
- ☒ The presidential candidate who gets the most popular votes in a state wins all the electors of that state who later select the next president officially.
- ☐ The winner of the election does not only become president, he also is granted the important right to choose all the governors of the different US-states as well as the right to change the law first hand. The losers do not get anything at all.

The presidential candidate who gets the most popular votes in a state wins all the electors of that state. They vote for him later in the Electoral College where the next president is selected officially. Those candidates who get less votes do not get any of the electors.

There is a majority voting system in the USA. This means that the votes for the candidates that don't get the most votes in a certain state do not count at all. If the elections in several states turn out to be close-run elections, it might happen that the elected president of the USA does not have the majority of all the votes at all. There have been several presidential elections in which this was the case for example with Trump/Clinton in 2016. In 1824, this happened for the first time (John Quincy Adams got president). The most recent case was in 2000, when George W. Bush won.

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### Kontrollblatt:

*Answers to the questions*

#### 4. Is there a similar rule in Germany?

- ☐ yes  
☒ no

In Germany the general election is designed differently. Each voter casts two votes: The first one is directly for one candidate, the second vote is for a party. The second vote determines the total number of delegates that represent a party in the Bundestag. Almost half of them are elected directly, the other half is appointed by way of the second vote. This procedure is called personalised proportional representation (*personalisiertes Verhältniswahlrecht*).

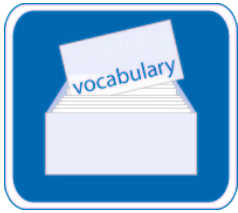
#### 5. These are the rules that apply for the right to vote in the USA. The people that fulfill the following conditions are allowed to vote. Which of these rules does not apply for elections in Germany?

Voters...

- ☒ must be citizens of the USA (Germany)  
☒ must be aged 18 or older  
☐ must register to vote

In Germany, you do not have to register to vote. For the registration, Americans must meet the residency requirements of their states and comply with voter-registration deadlines.

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### ■ **Vocabulary:**

assembly

to ballot

ballot paper

to campaign

candidate

to cast a ballot

caucus

citizen

congress

conservatives

Democrats

delegate

to elect

elector

electoral college

Federal Assembly

Federal Chancellor

Federal Council

Federal Diet

general election

government

impeachment

inaugural address

legislation

majority

midterm election

minority

national convention

nomination

political party

primary election

to raise money

to register

registration

Republicans

to run for president

running mate

secret ballot

vice president

to vote for

voter

voter turnout