

The Head of State is the President of the Federal Republic of Germany. Richard von Weizsäcker assumed office on July 1, 1984, for a five-year term. He represents the country in a largely ceremonial capacity as the political power is vested in the Chancellor and his cabinet. The Federal Parliament, the Bundestag (519 deputies), is the Federal Republic of Germany's national assembly and its most important legislative body. Its members are elected every four years. Today, a coalition of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) with 185 deputies, its Bavarian sister-party, the Christian Social Union (CSU) with 49 deputies and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) with 48 deputies hold power. The Social Democratic Party (SPD) with 193 deputies, the party of the Greens, with 43 deputies and 1 independent deputy form the opposition. The present cabinet is led by Chancellor Dr. Helmut Kohl (CDU). Other important members of his cabinet are the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hans-Dietrich Genscher (FDP), the Minister of Finance, Dr. Gerhard Stoltenberg (CDU), the Minister of Economics, Dr. Helmut Haussmann (FDP) and the Minister of Defence, Prof. Dr. Rupert Scholz (CDU).

The Bundesrat (akin to the Canadian Senate), consists of 45 members of the ten provinces, led by the provincial Premiers, and of Greater Berlin. They ensure that provincial (Land) concerns are met in the federal legislative and executive process. The position of the President of the Bundesrat rotates among the Premiers of the Provinces (Länder).