Germany's AfD set for big win in eastern state, just short of majority

LEVEL C1



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I. WARM-UP

1. What signs tell you an election is shifting toward one party?
2. How influential are TV exit polls in your country?
3. Should parties refuse coalitions on principle? Why or why not?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

projection
a forecast of an election result based on early counts or polls

mandate
the authority voters give a party to carry out its plans

majority
more than half of the votes or seats

watershed
a turning point that marks a major change

threshold
the minimum level needed to enter parliament or gain rights

turnout
the percentage of eligible voters who actually vote

coalition
a government formed by two or more parties working together

extremist
holding very radical political views, far from the mainstream

III. READING

Germany's Alternative for Germany (AfD) is heading for a commanding win in Saxony-Anhalt, with 44% of the vote in projections and the conservative CDU far behind on 17%. Although short of a majority, the party says the result gives it a mandate to govern.

Not since World War Two has a far-right party governed a German state. The AfD branch has been classified by domestic intelligence as right-wing extremist, a label Ulrich Siegmund rejects. Seat estimates put the AfD on 39 of 83 seats, three short of the 42 needed for an outright majority.

The BSW appears to have cleared the 5% threshold, reducing the AfD's chances. Siegmund refuses to lead a minority cabinet, while other parties keep a Brandmauer and reject any coalition with the AfD. A senior CDU figure conceded a heavy defeat, and SPD leader Lars Klingbeil called the outcome a signal to Berlin.

Turnout was high at 76.7%. The anti-migration AfD dominated the campaign, and Das Erste dropped Tatort to cover events. Abroad, Donald Trump shared a TV projection; Poland's Donald Tusk condemned the result. Many commentators called the night a watershed for German politics.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **BBC News***: "Germany's AfD set for big win in eastern state...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What vote share do projections give the AfD in Saxony-Anhalt?
2. Which party is second on 17% in the interim results?
3. How many seats is the AfD heading for, and how many make a majority?
4. What was the reported turnout in Saxony-Anhalt?
5. Which broadcaster dropped Tatort to cover the result?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Should other parties keep a firewall against the AfD?
2. What factors might explain the AfD's strength in Saxony-Anhalt?
3. Do reactions from abroad influence voters, or are they ignored?
4. Is high turnout always good for democracy? Why or why not?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Adding emphasis - inversion with negative adverbials

Use inversion after negative or limiting adverbials (Never, Rarely, Seldom, Hardly ever, Not since...). Put the auxiliary before the subject: auxiliary + subject + main verb.

"Not since World War Two **has a far-right party governed** *a German state."*

"Rarely **have other parties accepted** *any coalition with the AfD."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. Never (has the AfD / the AfD has) had such a lead. _____
2. Seldom (officials have / have officials) welcomed such a result. _____
3. Rarely (a party does / does a party) win 44% of the vote. _____
4. Hardly ever (do voters / voters do) change their view so fast. _____
5. Seldom (polls do / do polls) match the final count exactly. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.



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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 10 minutes grammar, 12–15 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach party names and acronyms (AfD, CDU, SPD, BSW) and the term Brandmauer as a political firewall.
- Run a gist task first (who is leading, by how much), then scan for figures (44%, 17%, 39/42, 76.7%, 5%). Pair-check before open class.
- Differentiate by product: stronger students summarise international reactions; others map seat maths and coalition options.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Take a quick show of hands, then pair pro/contra students to swap strongest reasons.
2. Elicit local economic, migration, and turnout factors; board them and ask for evidence from the text.
3. Split groups: one cites Trump/Tusk reactions; the other argues these have little effect, then compare.
4. Stage a mini debate: groups list benefits/risks of high turnout, then share one concise conclusion.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Debate: In two teams, prepare and deliver 90-second statements for or against a Brandmauer policy.

Writing: Individually, write a 120-word news brief summarising the result for readers outside Germany.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Adding emphasis - inversion with negative adverbials

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What vote share do projections give the AfD in Saxony-Anhalt?
   44%
2. Which party is second on 17% in the interim results?
   The CDU
3. How many seats is the AfD heading for, and how many make a majority?
   39 seats; 42 needed for a majority
4. What was the reported turnout in Saxony-Anhalt?
   76.7%
5. Which broadcaster dropped Tatort to cover the result?
   Das Erste

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Circle the correct option in each sentence.

1. Never (has the AfD / the AfD has) had such a lead.
   has the AfD
2. Seldom (officials have / have officials) welcomed such a result.
   have officials
3. Rarely (a party does / does a party) win 44% of the vote.
   does a party
4. Hardly ever (do voters / voters do) change their view so fast.
   do voters
5. Seldom (polls do / do polls) match the final count exactly.
   do polls

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use inversion after negative or limiting adverbials (Never, Rarely, Seldom, Hardly ever, Not since...). Put the auxiliary before the subject: auxiliary + subject + main verb. (Example 2 constructed.)

> *"Not since World War Two* **has a far-right party governed** *a German state."*
>
> *"Rarely* **have other parties accepted** *any coalition with the AfD."*