

First Government Coalition Between Social Democrats and Liberals (1969)

Abstract

The Federal Republic was founded in 1949, and for two decades all of its governing coalitions were led by the conservative CDU/CSU. In 1969, a social-liberal governing coalition (SPD-FDP) formed for the first time, ushering in a new political era. Chancellor Willy Brandt's policies toward Eastern Europe and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) led to the abandonment of the Hallstein Doctrine and a policy of détente with the Soviet Union, the GDR, and the Eastern bloc countries. In domestic policy, the social-liberal coalition introduced, among other initiatives, a long-overdue reckoning with the National Socialist past and strove for a more consequent democratization under the motto "dare more democracy."

Source

Translation of transcript

September 28, 1969. The elections to the sixth German Bundestag pave the way for the first social-liberal coalition in the history of the Federal Republic. Social Democrat Willy Brandt becomes the Chancellor and leads the new government while FDP party chairman Walter Scheel becomes the Foreign Minister. Brandt's term in office brought extensive changes in domestic and foreign policy. In particular, the government steered a new course in the area of German-German relations and *Ostpolitik*. In 1970, for example, Brandt met with GDR Minister President Willi Stoph for the first German-German meeting. In Moscow, he signed an agreement to improve cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic, and he recognized the existing borders of Poland and the GDR. In Warsaw, he confirmed that agreement with another treaty and famously commemorated the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto by kneeling at the memorial. After Brandt's resignation, the social-liberal coalition was continued by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

Source: 28. September 1969 – First Social-Liberal Coalition. History Vision (history-vision.de), Clip-ID: JHT000015D (1969).

history-vision.de

Recommended Citation: First Government Coalition Between Social Democrats and Liberals (1969), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/ghdi:video-5007>> [April 27, 2024].