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More than 1,200 Castor casks with disused, highly radioactive fuel elements are stored above ground in our decommissioned nuclear power plants. It will take decades before final disposal in deep geological formations is possible. Without a solution for the radioactive waste, no nuclear power should be generated.

The fact that the election victory of the Greens in Baden-Württemberg further strengthens this insight,

wishes

## Uprising for Decency Demo in Heidelberg on 7 March 2026

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**Der KlimaProtestChor** often sings at the start of demos and rallies. In keeping with the current occasion, newly written lyrics are accompanied by well-known melodies. On March 7, the day before the state election in Baden-Württemberg, the choir opened the protest march in front of the Heidelberg City Library.



**With a strong police presence** the demonstration marched through Heidelberg's old town.



The days leading up to important events are often celebrated particularly loudly in order to duly point out the following events, such as the bachelor party for the wedding.

The day before March 8, International Women's Day, would certainly not have been spectacularly celebrated in Heidelberg if the election to the state parliament in Baden-Württemberg had not taken place on this day in the Federal Republic of Germany in 2026. This election, which was the prelude to another four voters' votes, played a key role. The state election in Baden-Württemberg on March 8 will be followed by the elections:

- Rheinland-Pfalz (22. March)
- Sachsen-Anhalt (6. September)
- Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (20. September)
- Berlin, Abgeordnetenhaus (20. September)

Not only did the federal government under Chancellor Friedrich Merz want to have its course confirmed by this state election, but the outgoing Prime Minister of the state of Baden-Württemberg, Winfried Kretschmann, wanted his state to continue to be governed by the Greens. The fact that the 77-year-old Kretschmann exercised his government responsibility in the Villa Reitzenstein, his official residence in the state capital Stuttgart, until the end of his third term in office, made it difficult for the designated successor Cem Özdemir, born on December 21, 1965 in Urach, to be elected prime minister. If Kretschmann had resigned in favour of Özdemir a year before the official expiration date, he could have scored additional points with the office bonus.

### **Green Election Strategy**

But the former Green Minister of Agriculture Özdemir increased his popularity in the polls in such a way

that he emphasized his closeness to the fatherly Kretschmann and at the same time distanced himself as much as possible from the official party The Greens, which he joined in 1981. He described himself as an Anatolian Swabian who has been eating vegetarian food since his youth. As a secular Muslim, Özdemir feels obliged to the state's commandment of religious and ideological neutrality. What constitutes secular Islam is laid down in the joint declaration of secular Muslims in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, the so-called Freiburg Declaration of 2016. This means that state employees, especially teachers and judges, refrain from wearing religiously motivated clothing, namely the headscarf.

In view of the five million Muslims in Germany with different religious views on Islam, it is important to know the location of the designated Prime Minister Cem Özdemir. As a future head of government with Turkish roots, he will increasingly become the target of slander and hate campaigns. If the people in the state are informed about his attitudes, they can let hostility come to nothing.

Özdemir's challenger, CDU state and parliamentary group leader Manuel Hagel, wanted to take the lead himself after ten years in coalition with the Greens in Stuttgart. At times, Hagel was over ten percent ahead of Özdemir in the polls. In the final spurt of the election campaign, the lead of the CDU man Hagel over the Green Özdemir melted completely.

### **No Alternative**

Are there really alternatives for Germany on the right-wing fringe? The AfD, which wants to be an al-

ternative to the established parties, received just under ten percent of the votes in Baden-Württemberg in the last election. For 2026, it was expected to double its mandates. There were only seven women and 63 men on the AfD candidate list. This represents a blatant under-representation of the female part of society. In addition, the foreign policy spokesman of the AfD parliamentary group, Markus Frohnmaier, offered himself directly as prime minister for Baden-Württemberg without appearing on the state list. Frohnmaier is considered an outspoken right-wing extremist agitator with good contacts to Russian politicians and supporters of Trump. This precarious situation before the state elections demanded a clear signal against the strengthening extreme right in Heidelberg.

### **Demo against Right-Wing Extremists**

One day before the state elections, on Saturday, March 7, 2026, a demonstration against right-wing extremism took place in Heidelberg. This was the third time that the alliance "No Step to the Right Heidelberg" had organized such an event. Now the motto was "Uprising for decency – demonstration for democracy and social cohesion." The voices of the Climate Protest Choir Heidelberg rang out at the Schwanenteichanlage even before the actual rally. In bright sunshine, amplified by a loudspeaker system, it resounded from 13 throats across the square in front of the Heidelberg City Library. As a result, passers-by became attentive, stopped and sometimes even sang along to the well-known melodies, such as the melody of the well-known Christmas carol "Tomorrow,



**Students against Right-wing Extremists** were represented in large numbers at the demo and raised their voice.

**Omas gegen RECHTS**

Grannies against the RIGHT formed a strong group with the nearby Neckargemünd delegation.

1.)  
*Morgen Kinder wird's was geben,  
morgen werden wir uns freu'n.  
Wir, nicht ihr! So spielt das Leben!  
Ihr könnt gerne weiter träum'n!  
Einmal werden wir doch wach –  
ups, schon lässt der Golfstrom nach.*

2.)  
*Wie sie feiern, wie sie tanzen  
am Davoser Weltkongress!  
Oligarchen und Hofschranzen,  
ja, so geht big business!  
Einmal kurz nicht hingeschaut –  
schwups, die Gletscher weggetaut.*

3.)  
*Dass wir Öl und Gas verbrennen  
jeden Tag und jede Nacht,  
kann man nur idiotisch nennen.  
Aber weil's ein jeder macht,  
finden wir es ganz normal –  
nur das Wetter ist brutal.*



children will give something."  
"Choral singing connects," say the singers, "singing is emotional, singing together makes you healthy!" So that everyone could participate, flyers with the song lyrics and demo slogans were distributed. On the march through Heidelberg's old town, the whippers chanted various slogans, such as:

*Small and large, young and old,  
for diversity and cohesion!  
We're here, we're loud,  
Because attitude is urgently needed!*

The demonstrators walked from the Schwanenteich meeting point via Poststraße, Sophienstraße to Hauptstraße to Universitätsplatz. There, the speakers of the participat-

**Die Neue Universität** –The New University Building – Where the Nazis burned books in 1933. Now posters of the queer community hung during the rally "Uprising for Decency".



ing groups, such as the Studis, Schülis, Fridays for Future, Queer Space and Omas gegen Rechts, affirmed: "Never again is now." The event manager Sonja Bernitt thanked for the committed participation and was pleased that 5,000 people had come to the demonstration march through the old town of Heidelberg.

Even though The Action Against the Un-German Spirit in Nazi Germany was not directly addressed, it should be remembered that the National Socialist Student Association burned outlawed books at this very spot on May 17, 1933 – female students were not to be seen in the historical photos with the stake in front of the New University. SA and SS formations and local group members of the NSDAP also threw books by Kurt Tucholsky, Bertolt Brecht, Erich Kästner and others into the fire alongside publications by Jewish professors.

### **What did it achieve?**

Seconds after the polls closed at six o'clock on Sunday evening, the figures calculated by polling institutes from the post-election poll (English: exit poll) were announced. In contrast to opinion polls before election day, where non-voters and undecided voters also announce their intention to vote, the ultra-quickly presented figures at 6 p.m. are based on the information provided by "real" voters after they have left the polling station. In less than one percent of randomly selected voting districts, they are asked to fill out a questionnaire and put it in a box similar to a ballot box. From this, the expected final result is calculated. This data is compared with previous elections, broken down by social struc-

ture and age, as well as voter migration between parties.

In Germany, research on voting behaviour is carried out by the private institutes Infratest dimap and the Elections Research Group for Public Radio and TV Broadcasters (ARD / ZDF). Their first forecasts saw the Greens with 32 percent clearly ahead of the CDU. The Green lead melted in the course of the evening as more and more results from the constituencies were determined. In the end, the Greens were 27,312 votes ahead of the CDU. After second votes, the Greens would be entitled to 43 mandates, one more than the CDU. Many directly won constituencies of the CDU result in overhang and compensatory mandates, so that in the end both parties have 56 seats each, despite the Greens' lead in votes.

### **Heidelberg remains green**

Fortunately, voter turnout in the state election was high overall. 69.6 percent of eligible voters cast their votes; that was 5.8 percentage points more than five years ago. Among the 157 members of the state parliament, there are 4.6 percentage points more women than in 2021. The 53 women represent 33.8% of the mandates. The proportion of women is above average in the Greens (50.0%) and the SPD (50.0%). The proportion of women is below average in the CDU (28.6%) and the AfD (11.4%).

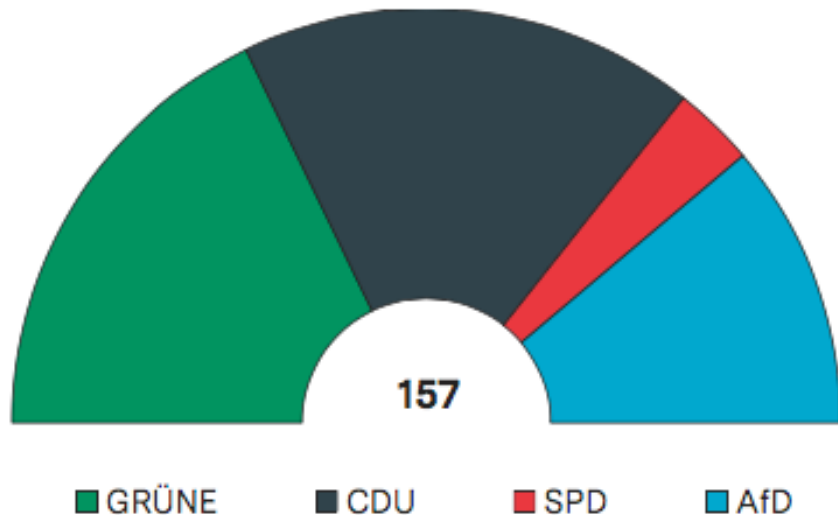
Of Heidelberg's 15 districts, the Greens won 13 of them. The supporters of the SPD made long faces. The Social Democratic Party had just passed the 5% hurdle, while Die Linke and the Free Democrats failed to enter the state parliament.



***Slogans to Smile*** about were shown on self-made posters.

**Distribution of seats in 2026 18th state parliament of Baden-Württemberg – The Greens and CDU each have 56 mandates and together a 2/3 majority.**

AfD 35 Mandate  
SPD 10 Mandate



In the two large housing estates from the 1960s-70s, Emmertsgrund and Boxberg, the AfD dominated. There, the right-wing extremists had received 768 votes from the total of 100,964 eligible voters in Heidelberg. In these districts, the populist party was able to double its share of the vote compared to the last election, accompanied by a much lower voter

turnout (47.86% and 49.14%) than in the other Heidelberg constituencies. The lowest voter turnout was 64.24% in Pfaffengrund and the highest was 79.76% in Neuenheim.

It would certainly be beneficial if the next demonstration against the shift to the right went from Boxberg to Emmertsgrund, also to mobilize their non-voters. □

## Impressum



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Chart (page 6) and election results from the Election Night Report – Publisher: Statistisches Landesamt Baden-Württemberg. Vorläufige Ergebnisse auf dem Stand vom 9. März 2026

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