

Appendix B – Rationale for the Political Knowledge Scale

Whenever possible, the German items were translated in a way that is still meaningful and representative for a general political knowledge. All of those items (except for two) will be part of the Political Knowledge scale administered in this study. Item 4 and 5 were removed as the Green Party in Germany is much more popular among the general public than their equivalent in the US.

Item 9 and item 15 to 20 were removed because they tackled specific political affairs in Germany for which an exact equivalent in an US American context is hard to find. Therefore, nine items from the Annenberg Civics Knowledge Survey will be included with slight modifications. Q1 was excluded because of the binary response option and Q2 was rephrased so that the response option could be multiple-choice instead of open-ended.

Any item included in the survey is marked in bold font.

Items of Political Knowledge Test in Ihme & Tausendpfund (2018) as listed in their appendix.

Dimension	#	Item wording	Notes	American equivalent	Multiple choice options (correct answer in <i>italics</i>)
Party allegiances of politicians and names of certain Federal ministers	1	Heiko Maas is member of the following party:	Heiko Maas: Minister of Foreign Affairs (party: SPD)	Mike Pompeo is a member of which party:	a) Democratic Party b) <i>Republican Party</i> c) Libertarian Party d) Green Party e) I don't know
	2	Andrea Nahles is member of the following party:	Andrea Nahles: former Leader of the SPD	Nancy Pelosi is a member of which party:	a) <i>Democratic Party</i> b) Republican Party c) Libertarian Party d) Green Party e) I don't know
	3	Gerd Müller is member of the following party:	Gerd Müller: Minister of Economic Cooperation and Development (party: CSU)	Wilbur Ross is a member of which party:	a) Democratic Party b) <i>Republican Party</i> c) Libertarian Party

				d) Green Party e) I don't know
	4	Anton Hofreiter is member of the following party:	Anton Hofreiter: Co-Leader of Bündnis 90/Die Grünen	Jill Stein is a member of which party: Green Party
	5	Katrin Göring-Eckhardt is member of the following party:	Katrin Göring-Eckhardt: Co-Leader of Bündnis 90/Die Grünen	Ajamu Baraka is a member of which party: Green Party
	6	Who is the current Federal minister for family, senior citizens, women and the young?	Franziska Giffey (party: SPD)	Who is the current Secretary of Labor? a) Steven Mnuchin b) Elaine Chao c) Alex Azar d) <i>Eugene Scalia</i> e) I don't know
Details of the German political system	7	Who is the current Federal minister for health?	Jens Spahn (party: CDU)	Who is the current Secretary of Health and Human Services? a) <i>Alex Azar</i> b) Mark Esper c) Eugene Scalia d) William Barr e) I don't know
	8	Who elects the Federal Chancellor of Germany?	Elected by a majority of the members of the Bundestag upon the proposal of the President	Who elects the President of the United States? a) The Congress b) <i>The Electoral College</i> c) The National Convention d) The Political Parties e) I don't know
	9	Who commands the so-called 'Richtlinienkompetenz'?	The German Chancellor is authorized to define the course of politics to be followed irrespective of any potential disagreement with	N/A N/A

		their Federal Ministers in this regard.		
	10	Who elects the Federal President of Germany?	The Federal Convention	Who elects the Vice President of the United States? a) The Congress b) <i>The Electoral College</i> c) The National Convention d) The Political Parties e) I don't know
	11	During Bundestag elections you have two votes, a first and a second vote. Which of these votes is crucial for the allocation of seats in the Bundestag?	The second vote where electors vote for a party in general, i.e. a regional electoral list put together by each party. The first vote determines who will get a "direct mandate", i.e. candidates can be voted for directly.	What is the so called "winner takes all" principle in an electoral system? a) <i>the candidate who receives the relative majority of votes wins, even if they did not receive an absolute majority of the votes</i> b) the candidate who receives the absolute majority of votes wins, even if they did not receive a relative majority of the votes c) the candidate who receives the majority of votes gets to appoint the Senators. d) the candidate who receives the majority of votes gets to appoint the members of the House of Representatives. e) I don't know
Details on the current state of affairs in Germany	12	How high was the percentage of foreign nationals in Germany at the end of 2013?	7.015.000 (according to statista)	In 2019, what percentage of the American population was foreign-born? [Note: according to US census] a) 26.9% b) 13.7% c) 8.2% d) 3.7% e) I don't know

13	What is the current (1. quarter 2015) unemployment rate in Germany?	6.4% in all of 2015 (according to bpb)	In 2019, what was the annual unemployment rate in the United States? [Note: according to bls.gov]	a) 26.9% b) 13.7% c) 8.2% d) 3.7% e) I don't know
14	Which political department has the highest budget?	The Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs	Which federal executive department of the United states has the highest budget at their disposal?	a) <i>The Secretary of Health and Human Services</i> b) The Secretary of Labor c) The Secretary of Defense d) The Secretary of Education e) I don't know
15	Which one of the following parties argued for the collection and storage of contact data (e.g. telephone, internet) even without concrete cause?		N/A	N/A
16	Which one of the following parties argued against raising the top income tax rate?		N/A	N/A
17	Which one of the following parties argued for a general speed limit on the autobahn?		N/A	N/A
18	Which one of the following parties argued against BAföG-payments regardless of parents' income?	BAföG = Germany's Federal Training Assistance Act for students at secondary schools and universities in Germany	N/A	N/A

19	Which one of the following parties argued for a stricter public control of electricity tariffs?		N/A	N/A
20	Which one of the following parties argued against a decrease of the statutory retirement age?		N/A	N/A

Translation of general terms and names (alphabetical order):

Bundestag – German Federal Parliament

Bündnis 90/Die Grünen – Green party

CDU – Christian Democratic Party

CSU – Bavarian sister party of the CDU

Die Linke – The Left Party

FDP – Free Democratic Party

SPD – Social Democratic Party

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#	Item	Multiple choice options (correct answer in <i>italics</i>)
Q1	Do you happen to know any of the three branches of government?	a) Yes b) No
Q2	Which of the following does not describe one of the three branches of government? (Original wording: Would you mind naming any of them, the three branches of government?)	a) Judicial b) <i>Governmental</i> c) Executive d) Legislative e) I don't know
Q3	Which political party is in control of the U.S. House of Representatives, or are you not sure?	a) <i>Democratic Party</i> b) Republican Party c) Libertarian Party d) Green Party e) I don't know
Q4	Which political party is in control of the U.S. Senate, or are you not sure?	a) Democratic Party b) <i>Republican Party</i> c) Libertarian Party d) Green Party e) I don't know
Q5	If the president and Supreme Court differ on whether an action by the president is constitutional, who has the final responsibility for determining if the action is constitutional?	a) The President b) The U.S. Congress c) <i>The U.S. Supreme Court</i> d) The U.S. Senate e) I don't know
Q6	How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives to override a presidential veto?	a) 51 percent b) <i>Two-thirds</i> c) Three-quarters d) 90 percent

		e) I don't know
Q7	If the U.S. Supreme Court rules on a case 5 to 4, does this mean ...	a) <i>The decision is the law of the land and needs to be followed</i> b) The decision is sent back to Congress for reconsideration c) The decision is sent back to the federal court of appeals to be decided there d) The U.S. Supreme Court needs to reconsider and come to a unanimous decision e) I don't know
Q8	How accurate is the following statement: "the U.S. Supreme Court has held that a citizen has a constitutional right to own a handgun"?	a) <i>Accurate</i> b) Neither accurate nor inaccurate c) <i>Inaccurate</i> d) I don't know
Q9	How accurate is the following statement: "the U.S. Constitution allows a judge to insist that a defendant testify at his own trial"?	a) Accurate b) Neither accurate nor inaccurate c) <i>Inaccurate</i> d) I don't know
Q10	How accurate is the following statement: "those who are in the country illegally do not have any rights under the U.S. Constitution"?	a) Accurate b) Neither accurate nor inaccurate c) <i>Inaccurate</i> d) I don't know