

12 February 2023 is Election Day:
Immigrants also have a say –
for social justice and equal rights!
#ZusammenBerlin

Dear Pankowers,

The year 2022 demanded a lot from all of us. The Russian war of aggression in Ukraine sparked an energy crisis and high inflation. The SPD has done a lot to protect people from sliding into debt and money troubles, and to welcome refugees.

Through reforms to social benefits (*Bürgergeld*), help with energy costs (*Energiegeld*), increases in housing assistance (*Wohngeld*) and the minimum wage, the 29-Euro-Ticket, Semester-Ticket and 9-Euro Social Ticket, the hardship fund and Bündnis für Wohnen, the SPD at state and federal levels is providing determined leadership to see us through the crisis.

These efforts also help many migrants. Turning them into citizens with equal rights is the stated goal of the SPD. In order to increase the speed with which citizenship applications are processed and naturalizations take place, the SPD has taken the initiative to create a Berlin-wide centre for naturalizations. The Berlin Naturalization Centre (*Landeseinbürgerungszentrum*) should open in autumn 2023. From that point, citizenship applications should be processed at state level and decided within 6 months, with 20,000 naturalizations a year representing a tripling of the current rate. At the federal level, we will reform the citizenship law: immigrants should become eligible for citizenship after only 5 years living in Germany, and dual citizenship will be allowed for all.

A strong SPD is needed to get us all through the crisis and to achieve equal rights for immigrants. On 12 February 2023, the repeat election for the *Abgeordnetenhaus* of Berlin (state parliament) and the *Bezirksverordnetenversammlungen* (borough councils) will take place. Immigrants who have become German citizens, as well as those from other EU member states, can vote.

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For social justice and equal rights – vote SPD on 12 February!

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Executive Board of the AG Migration and Diversity in the SPD Pankow

Information on the Elections to be held on 12 February 2023

What is being voted upon on 12 February?

- 1) The **borough council of Pankow, the “Bezirksverordnetenversammlung (BVV)”**. The BVV shapes public life in Pankow, selects someone as borough mayor, and decides on local topics!
- 2) The **state parliament of Berlin, the “Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus (AGH)”**. The AGH decides on state-level issues and selects the governing mayor of Berlin. At the moment, that is Franziska Giffey (SPD).

Who can vote on 12 February?

1) Local elections (BVV)

At the local elections, any German or other EU-member state citizen aged 16 and above may vote. To be eligible, they must have been registered (*Anmeldung*) as living in PANKOW for three months (deadline: 11 November 2022). Every voter has one vote for a party list.

2) State parliament (AGH)

At the state election, any German citizen aged 18 and above may vote. To be eligible, they must have been registered (*Anmeldung*) as living in BERLIN for three months (deadline: 11 November 2022). Every voter has two votes – one for a direct candidate and a second vote for a party list.

Have a say and use your vote to join the SPD in improving the lives of the people of Berlin!

Eligible voters can take part in the elections on 12 February 2023 at their local polling station or can apply to vote via post. The application is sent automatically along with the election notification.