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ELECTION PARTY

Berlin Watches the U.S. Drama Unfold

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The perhaps most globally-anticipated U.S. election of all time is underway. Nowhere else in Germany is there as much interest in the outcome as in Berlin.

WHY IT MATTERS

Germany is the biggest European trading partner of the U.S. and the sixth largest market for U.S. exports. Numerous U.S. election night parties are taking place in Berlin, where interest is particularly high.

FACTS

Many citizens of Berlin as well as American expats don't spend election night at home, but at one of numerous election parties across the city.

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tial election campaign and only 20 percent consider the U.S. electoral system to be democratic.

Until today, German Chancellor Angela Merkel has remained mum on the U.S. presidential campaign.

The United States' brutal presidential election campaign has scared many Germans.

According to a recent INSA survey, 54 percent stated they were frightened and only 20 percent consider the U.S. electoral system to be democratic. A whopping 60 percent think Ameri-

cans should make less use of their leading role in the world.

Yet, the majority of Germans are still pro-American: 53 percent see the U.S. as an important ally, regardless of who the next president might be. To be sure, if the German public had a chance to vote in today's election, they'd still overwhelmingly pick

Hillary Clinton. And among German economists, a recent poll by the Munich-based Ifo Institute found that 99 percent would vote Democratic.

Nowhere else in Germany is there as much interest in the elections as in Berlin. This is not only due to the more than 16,000 U.S. citizens that

currently have their main residence in the German capital and were able to vote for Ms. Clinton or Donald Trump. Berliners also share deep historical, emotional and economic ties with the United States.

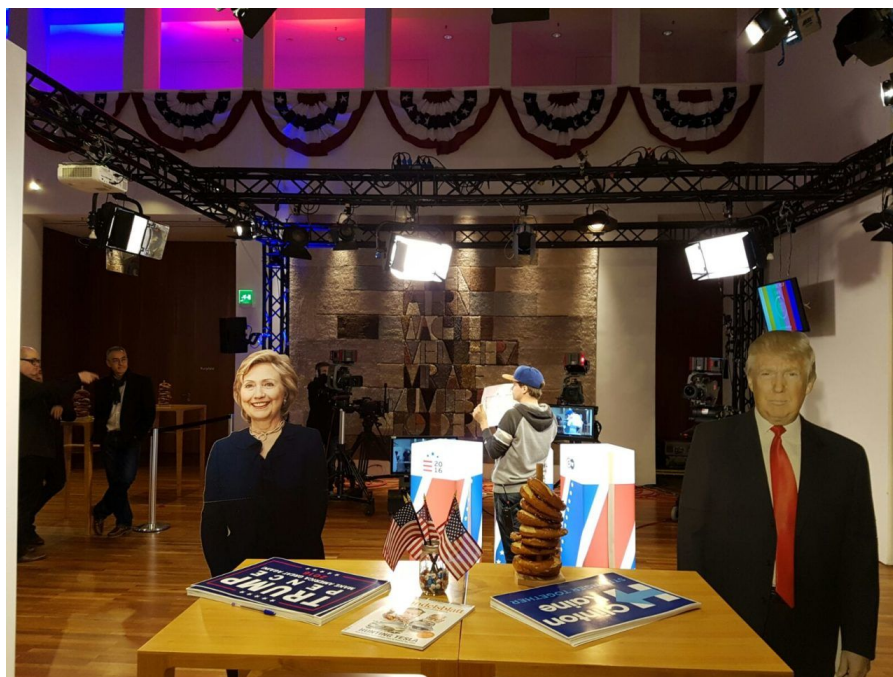
“The suspense and concerns towards the election campaign are much more extreme here than elsewhere in Germany,” Manfred Görtemaker, professor of contemporary history at the University of Potsdam, told

 regional broadcaster rbb.

Accordingly, many citizens of Berlin as well as American expats don't spend election night at home, but at one of numerous election parties across the city. One of the largest will be the official U.S. election night party, organized by the Aspen Institute and the embassy of the United States of America, in cooperation with Handelsblatt Global.

About 1,200 guests from the spheres of politics, economy, science and culture will be spending the night at the Baden-Württemberg State Representation, located in the embassy district on Berlin's famous Tiergarten Street only minutes away from the Bundestag and the federal chancellery.

Against the gloomy backdrop of a typically rainy and cold November evening in Berlin, experts are analyzing the election outcomes and discussing potential effects on U.S. foreign, security, and economic policy as well as German and European hopes and expectations for the in-



TV broadcasters setting up for election night in Berlin. Source: Barbara Woolsey

coming American president. CBS live coverage is being broadcast live.

The event's audience includes a variety of high-level guests, such as the U.S. ambassador to Germany John B. Emerson, Deputy Finance Minister Jens Spahn and Agriculture Minister Christian Schmidt, who is also president of the German Atlantic Association.

Sigmar Gabriel, Germany's deputy chancellor and economics minister, paid a short visit, talking to public broadcaster ARD. Handelsblatt Global spoke to Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière, who pointed out that even a Clinton presidency would mean tougher times in relations between the U.S. and Europe.

Jürgen Hardt, coordinator of trans-Atlantic cooperation at Germany's foreign ministry, told us that relations between the U.S. and Germany

on a governmental level are currently better than ever.

As was to be expected, the German federal government so far has mostly been keeping quiet on the U.S. elections, even though some senior officials have vocally condemned Mr. Trump. In the background, [plans have been put together](#) to deal with the impact a Trump victory may have on the economy and on security.

On Monday, Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert refused to comment on how the chancellor will be informing herself about the election outcome, merely stating: “We are assuming we will have a result by Wednesday and then there will be a reaction by the federal government.”

But Ms. Merkel broke her silence during a press conference with Norway's prime minister, Erna Solberg, on Tuesday. The German leader said

a victory by Hillary Clinton would bring the world closer to gender equality. “Then we would come one step closer to a balance between men and women in leading positions,” Ms. Merkel said.

Also follow our coverage from the heart of the action in downtown DC in our [live blog here](#).

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