**Comprehensive design**

To this date GLES is the largest and most ambitious election study in Germany. Also it is one of the most comprehensive national election studies worldwide. GLES sets itself apart by employing a wide array of methodologies. Of special interest are the short-term and long-term dynamics of electoral-decision making. Moreover, GLES is incorporated in several internationally comparative projects. The study's ten components combine quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including cross-section, panel and rolling cross-section surveys, but also content analyses of media coverage. In addition to widely established modes of questionnaire administration (CATI and CAPI), GLES also makes use of online surveys and harnesses the power of qualitative methodology. Having started at the 2009 German federal election, GLES will gradually build up a longitudinal data base which eventually will include all elections until 2017.

**Data preparation, distribution and archiving**

Preparation, distribution and archiving of GLES data is done by GESIS. Given its widespread expertise with social science research projects, GESIS is ideally suited to assist and advise the GLES team. This expertise helps guaranteeing high data quality as well as immediate dissemination and long-term archiving of the datasets.

**Free data access**

GLES distributes its data as “public good”. Data are prepared immediately after the fieldwork process and made available to the scientific community without further restrictions. This way the unique analytical possibilities are opened up to all interested scientists.

Data service of GLES is provided by the RDC Elections (www.gesis.org/fdzwahlen).

**GESIS – Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences**

www.gesis.org

GESIS – Supporting social science research since 1986 in all phases of research:

- **Research**: Information on data, literature, research projects, important institutions and conferences
- **Study planning**: Consultation and services for planning and conducting a survey
- **Data collection**: Consultation and services during the data collection phase
- **Data analysis**: Support, consultation and data for secondary analysis and reference, analyzing tools
- **Archiving and registering**: Longterm permanent archiving and registration of data and publications

In addition, GESIS offers user conferences and research methods training events for all these phases.
German Longitudinal Election Study

GLES is funded by the German National Science Community (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG) and started at the 2009 federal election. It is the largest and most ambitious election study conducted so far in Germany. Although the initial mandate is to examine and analyze the electorate for three consecutive elections, the aspired goal is to integrate the project as an institutionalized election study after the federal election of 2017, and hence to make it a permanent research program.

Overview of GLES components

The components of GLES are connected by a common core questionnaire. On the basis of temporal, regional and other factors it is possible to merge the datasets.

1. Pre- and post-election Cross-section

The cross-sectional face-to-face surveys were conducted in 2009. The post-election cross-section contains the current module of the “Comparative Study of Electoral Systems” (CSES).

2. Rolling Cross-section Campaign Survey with Post-election Panel Wave (RCS)

The RCS design allows analysis of election campaign dynamics on a daily basis, so that short-term effects become visible.

3. Short-term Campaign Panel

The seven-wave online panel allows the investigation of individual decision making dynamics during the electoral campaign.

4. Campaign Media Content Analysis

During the election campaign thematic and actor-related attributes of political coverage of the most important German mass media (TV news and newspapers) were coded.

5. TV Debate Analysis

Employing an experimental approach this component investigates the effects of the TV Debate.

6. Candidate Campaign Survey

The Candidate Campaign Survey measures, among other things, the attitudes and campaign behavior of the candidates running for the Bundestag.

7. Long-term Panel

The long-term panel builds on the cross-sectional surveys and measures individual changes over three consecutive federal elections.

8. Long-term Online Tracking

The start of the first waves of the Online Trackings preceded the federal elections. The data are collected every three months. In cases where Länder elections are taking place an additional sample is drawn in those concerned Länder.

9. Long-term Media Agenda Analysis

Coding of the news published and broadcast in the most important mass media between the federal elections.

10. Multi-Level Panel

The Multi-Level Panel connects the federal election with the Länder elections and elections to the European parliament, which have taken place shortly before the federal election.