

German officials to probe Twitter election leaks

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Ballot counters count the votes in Berlin. German election officials Sunday said they would investigate the appearance of broadly accurate exit poll results on the Twitter microblogging site before voting had ended.

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It is illegal in [Germany](#) to publish exit polls before the cut-off point for voting but a number of tweets claiming to show the scores for the main parties surfaced one hour before polling stations closed.

The Twitter figures were very similar to those of the first official exit polls.

Preliminary results showed Angela Merkel swept to a second mandate in Sunday's election at the head of a new centre-right alliance she said would jumpstart Europe's ailing powerhouse economy.

A spokesman for the federal [election](#) commission said an investigation would be carried out to ascertain whether actual figures obtained from pollsters were leaked.

Anyone releasing figures early is liable for a fine of up to 50,000 euros (73,000 dollars).

German politicians were angered in late August when exit polls for state elections were leaked early on [Twitter](#) before voting ended.

At the time, the deputy parliamentary head of Merkel's Christian Democrats, Wolfgang Bosbach, said the leaking of the results "damaged democracy."

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