



*A monthly overview of current opinion data and statistical information in the Federal Republic of Germany*

### Politics

According to the preliminary official election results, the CDU got 33.8% (down 1.4%, the worst result for the CDU since 1946), the SPD 23.0% (down 11.2%, the worst result since 1946), the FDP 14.6% (up 4.8%), the Green Party 10.7% (up 2.6%), the Left Party 11.9% (up 3.2%) and other parties together 6% (up 2.1%). The voter turnout was 70.8% (down from 77.7% in 2005; lowest voter turnout since the end of WWII). CDU/CSU and FDP will form a coalition government under Angela Merkel. The next Bundestag will have 622 seats, including 24 so-called overhang seats, which all went to the CDU. (Major papers, 09/28/09)

State parliament elections in Schleswig-Holstein: The mainstream parties lost a considerable share of votes, and the future government will likely be formed by the CDU and the FDP. The CDU achieved 31.5% (down 8.7%), the SPD, 25.4% (down 13.3%), the FDP 14.9% (up 8.3%), the Green Party 12.4% (up 6.3%) and the Left Party 6% (up 5.2%). The SSW from upper Schleswig Holstein, which presents the Danish minority in the north, received 4.3% and will be represented in the Landtag despite not exceeding the five percent hurdle because it represents an ethnic minority. (Major papers, 09/28/09)

State parliament elections in Brandenburg: The SPD gained 1.1% and now has 33%; the Left Party reached 27.2% (down 0.7%). The CDU gained 0.5% and reached 19.8%, the FDP 4% and returned with 7.2% to the state parliament after an absence of 15 years. The Green Party reached 5.6% (up 2.0%). The extremist right-wing DVU reached 1.2% and dropped out of the state parliament. A future coalition is now possible between the SPD and the CDU or the SPD and the Left Party. (Major papers, 09/28/09)

### Economy

The jobless rate decreased in September to 8% (August: 8.3%), as the number of jobless decreased by 125,000 to 3,346 million. (Federal Labor Agency, 09/30/09)

Consumer prices were down 0.3% on the year in September, dropping into negative territory for the second time in 2009. The annual inflation rate stood at zero in August after declining 0.5% in July. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 09/29/09)

German exports were up 2.3% in the month in July showing their third consecutive monthly improvement. Germany exported goods and services worth 70.5 billion Euros in July. The 2.3% month-on-month increase compares with a steep 6.1% rise in June and a modest 0.2% increase in May. In year-on-year terms, however, exports were still down 18.7% in July. However, that was less steep than the previous month's 22.9% drop. (Federal Statistical Office. Handelsblatt, 09/09/09)

### Society

Two-thirds of Germans said the state does not do enough for the security of its citizens. Seventy-five percent said restrictions of data protection laws would be acceptable if child pornography or the spread of extremist right-wing contents could be limited. Seventy-eight percent consider Internet crimes to be a threat, while 73% supported the surveillance of public places with cameras. (Forsa. Sueddeutsche, 09/11/09)

The rejection of the Bundeswehr mission in Afghanistan has dropped despite the controversial airstrike. Fifty-seven percent of the interviewed advocated a quick withdrawal from Afghanistan, but these were 12% less than in July. The number of supporters of the mission increased to 37% (up 10%). Three percent had no opinion. (Deutschlandtrend. 09/11/09)

According to an OECD study on education spending, Germany spends only 4.8% of its GDP on education, while the average is 6.1% on the international level. Only the Slovak Republic, Spain, and Ireland are spending less than Germany. At the top of the list are Korea, the United States and Denmark which spend more than 7% of the GDP on education. (Major papers, 09/09/09)

The economic crisis has shaken Germans' confidence in politics. Two-thirds of the interviewed said they had lost confidence in politics. Sixty-three percent are expecting negative implications of the crisis on their own income, while 52% are also worried about their jobs. (TNS/Emnid. Die Welt, 09/09/09)

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