



Germany: Facts & Figures October 2009

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

Politics

If Bundestag elections would have been held on November 1, the CDU/CSU would have received 35% of the vote, the SPD 20%, the Green Party 12%, the FDP 15%, the Left Party 12%, and all other parties combined 6%. (Forsa. 10/28/09)

Two-thirds of Germans have great confidence in the new CDU/CSU/FDP coalition under Chancellor Merkel's leadership. The most important topics for the new government are, according to the interviewed, the fight against unemployment, the improvement of the educational system, and coming to terms with the effects of the financial crisis. Twenty-five percent also said the most important issue is the withdrawal of the Bundeswehr from Afghanistan, the introduction of minimum wages and the safeguarding of the old age pension system. (Info Opinion Poll. Major papers, 10/16/09)

The majority of Germans are satisfied with the outcome of the Bundestag elections, even though Germans do not expect the new coalition partners to bring about change. Thirty-four percent of the interviewed said that a CDU/CSU/FDP government would be better at solving the upcoming problems than the previous government. Fifty-four percent assumed that fundamental changes would not happen, while 36% expect changes to the social security system. (Politbarometer. Major papers, 10/05/09)

Economy

The jobless rate decreased in October to 7.7% (September: 8%), as the number of jobless decreased by 118,000 to 3,229 million. (Federal Labor Agency, 10/30/09)

Confidence among German managers over an economic recovery is increasing. For the first time in a year, the share of managers who want to increase their investments (29%) outnumbers the share of managers who want to scale down investments (14%). (Handelsblatt Business Monitor, 10/14/09)

Tax revenue dropped again in September. Compared to the September 2008, revenue has dropped by 7.4%. At the end of September, public budgets were 22 billion euros short. (Federal Statistical Office. Handelsblatt, 10/13/09)

Retail sales in Germany fell 1.5% in August, thus suggesting that household spending remains weak despite the first signs of a gradual recovery from the recession. Sales were down 2.6% on the year in August. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 10/02/09)

Society

The share of mothers working part-time in Germany rose strongly in the past ten years. In 2008, 69% of mothers in employment who cared for children under eighteen in their households had a part-time job (1998: 53%). (Federal Statistical Office, 10/14/09)

A total of 874,700 persons were convicted of crimes or offences in Germany in 2008, a decline of 3% compared with the previous year. The most frequent sentence imposed is a fine (618,100), in 159,500 cases a prison sentence was imposed. Roughly 70% of all prison sentences were suspended on probation (111,000). Another 97,000 persons were sentenced to disciplinary or educative measures under juvenile criminal law. (Federal Statistical Office, 10/08/09)

Water utilities in Germany supplied 3.6 billion cubic meters of drinking water to households and small businesses in 2007. That amount corresponds to an average per-capita consumption of 122 liters per day. The trend of many years towards reducing water consumption continued. In 2004, every inhabitant in Germany had used an average 4 liters more per day. Compared with 1991, the daily per-capita consumption fell by 22 liters. A total of 99.2% of the population were connected to public water supply in 2007. (Federal Statistical Office, 10/02/09)

Twenty years after the fall of the Wall, the eastern German states are suffering from an ongoing exodus of eastern Germans to the western part of the country. Last year, 136,000 people left the region, while only 85,000 Germans from the former states in the West moved to the East. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 10/02/09)

Eighty-three percent of western and 88% of eastern Germans support a unified Germany. Eight-five percent of western and 81% of eastern Germans also said that they felt closer to their compatriots in the other part of Germany than they felt ten years ago. Two-thirds of eastern Germans also said that they had profited from German unification. (Resuma Opinion Poll Institute. Die Welt, 10/01/09)

Germany: Facts & Figures, published monthly by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Consulate General, uses respected German and international media sources for its contents. The U.S. Government does not assume responsibility for the ultimate accuracy of the public opinion polls reported in the Digest. Use of these sources does not reflect official endorsement. Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyrights. To receive this product electronically, please contact: ircfrankfurt@state.gov