



Germany: Facts & Figures April 2008

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 May 4, the CDU/CSU would have received 38% of the vote, the SPD 23%, the Green Party 10%, the FDP 10%, the Left Party 14%, and all other parties combined 5%. (Forsa. 04/29/08)

31% of German managers believe the most urgent issue in German politics is a tax reform, followed by a reform of the healthcare system (16%), and the labor market (15%). (Handelsblatt. 04/30/08)

60% of Germans have confidence in democracy. 64% in western Germany believe in the functioning of democracy, but only 44% in eastern Germany. (Leipziger Volkszeitung. 04/22/08)

Economy

The number of Germans out of work fell to 8.1% in April (8.4 in March) with a total of 3.414 million people without a job. 94,000 fewer people were without jobs than in March. (Federal Labor Agency. Major papers, 05/02/08)

Beer producing and storing establishments in Germany sold 22.2 million hectoliters of beer in the first quarter of 2008. That was a decrease of 0.1 million hectoliters (-0.6%) from the corresponding period of the previous year. (Federal Statistical Office. 04/30/08)

Inflation in Germany reached a record high with 3.6%. Rising prices for food, fuel, diesel oil and living costs again pushed the inflation rate up. In the 15 euro states, it has now reached 1.6%, the highest level since the beginning of measurements 11 years ago. (Major papers, 04/17/08)

Germany's leading economic institutes are expecting the economy to grow 1.8% this year. They are slightly more optimistic than the government, which is expecting growth of 1.7%. The IMF predicts 1.4%. (Major papers, 04/16/08)

Germany's foreign trade balance (exports minus imports) reached a surplus of EUR 196.5 billion in 2007, which was an all-time high. The value of German exports exceeded the value of imports by 25.4% last year. (Federal Statistical Office. 04/15/08)

Society

The number of foreign students in Germany reached a record high in 2006. Since 1997, the number of international students has doubled to 197,000. In 2007, the majority of students come from China with 26,000 followed by Bulgarian and Polish students. 2,757 students came from the United States. (Handelsblatt. 04/23/08)

Germans are very skeptical about elites in Germany. 69% of Germans said managers and politicians are not concerned about the worries of ordinary people. 27% said they consider managers to be capable, while 17% considered politicians to be capable. (Allensbach. FAZ, 04/23/08)

According to the circulation figures for the first quarter of 2008, Der Spiegel sold 1.05 million copies (unchanged compared to the same quarter last year), followed by stern magazine, which dropped to 981,000 million (down 2.3%) and Focus with 705,000 (down from 725,000). The circulation of weekly Die Zeit dropped by 0.63% to 485,200 copies. FAZ increased its circulation by 4,100 to 368,700 copies, Sueddeutsche's circulation increased by 1.25% to 450,200, Die Welt and Welt kompakt increased their circulation to 278,140 copies (up 3,000 copies). Handelsblatt also increased the number of copies to 147,800 (up 1.41%), while Financial Times Deutschland dropped 2.86% to 101,700. (Major papers, 04/15/08)

The confidence Germans have in the U.S. increased to 53% (up 21%) over the last year. The French and British allies are the most popular with approval rates of 90% (up 4%) and 86% (up 17%). Only 35% of Germans trust Russia and 15% expressed confidence in China. (Deutschlandtrend. ARD. 04/04/08)

72% of Germans are opposed to Ukrainian and Georgian NATO membership. 18% are in favor of expansion. (ARD Tagesthemen. 04/04/08)