



## Germany: Facts & Figures December 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 December 28, the CDU/CSU would have received 37% of the vote, the SPD 24%, the Green Party 10%, the FDP 12%, the Left Party 12%, and all other parties combined 5%. (Forsa. 12/22/08)

### Economy

Germany's inflation rate reached an average of 2.6% this year, the highest since 1994. The inflation rate in December was 1.1%, the lowest in two years, due to the decline in oil prices. (Federal Statistical Office. 12/31/08)

Germany's GDP is predicted to shrink 2.2 % next year as the global financial crisis will worsen. (ifo. Major papers, 12/12/08)

Tax revenues in November increased by 6.1% compared to the same month last year. That is an even higher increase than in September and October of this year. The Finance Ministry, however, remains cautious with its predictions in view of the financial crisis. (FAZ, 12/12/08)

Economic expectations improved slightly in December as a result of interest rate cuts and government action to fight the economic slowdown. The ZEW index measuring the expectations of 400 analysts for the future of the economy rose by 8.3 points to minus 45.2 points. (Frankfurter Rundschau). (ZEW. Major papers, 12/10/08)

### Society

Thirty-four percent of Germans are optimistic about the future. Twenty-eight percent expressed concerns and 30% are skeptical. In last year's poll, 50% were optimistic. (Allensbach. Major papers, 12/30/08)

Forty-one percent of Germans do not drink alcohol at all or very seldom, 23% drink beer or wine twice a week. Seven percent drink alcohol daily. (Infas. Major papers, 12/29/08)

Forty-eight percent of Germans believe that the economic stimulus package that was approved last week will not suffice to boost the economy. Twenty-six percent said the measures are generally right, and 10% consider them to be excessive. Given the recession, 93% of Germans said it is right to make additional state investments. (ZDF Politbarometer. Major papers, 12/13/08)

Eighty-seven percent of those in Germany with a migration background approve the phrase: "All in all, it was right that I and my family have come to Germany." One quarter said that they felt marginalized. This remark affected primarily members of the working class. (Ministry of Family Affairs. Major papers, 12/10/08)

Following the introduction of naturalization tests, 98% of applicants passed the test. Approximately 9,000 people took the test between September 1 and October 30, 2008. The Federal Agency for Migration expects another 16,000 people to take the test in November and December. (Federal Agency for Migration. Major papers, 12/09/08)

In 2025, 50% percent of the population in Germany will be older than 47. In 2006, 50% of the population was older than 42. The number of people above 80 will increase by 70% by 2025. (Major papers, 12/09/08)

Seventy-three percent of Germans believe that the worst of the economic crisis is still to come. Fifty-one percent are concerned about the economic future and every fifth employee is worried about losing his or her job because of the financial and economic crisis. (FAZ, 12/05/08)

According to provisional results, a total of about 385,500 first semester students have entered higher education in Germany in the academic year 2008. The ratio of first semester students, that is the share of new entrants in the population of the same age, amounts to 39% in the academic year 2008. The goal of education policy to win 40% of an age cohort to study at an institution of higher education has thus been almost achieved. (Federal Statistical Office, 12/01/08)

Germans between the age of 25 and 34 use the Internet 14.4 hours per week. Sixty percent of this group are online on a daily basis, up from 38% in 2006. (FAZ. 12/01/08)

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