



Germany: Facts & Figures June 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 June 29th, the CDU/CSU would have received 37% of the vote, the SPD 23%, the Green Party 12%, the FDP 11%, the Left Party 12%, and all other parties combined 5%. (GMS. 05/29/08)

As of May 31, the SPD had 531,737 members, while the CDU had 531,299 members. The SPD lost 20,000 members in 2007, the CDU lost 15,000. (Sueddeutsche/Die Welt. 06/11/08)

Only 27% of Germans gave the Cabinet a good rating for its performance. The drop from 34% to 27% in one month is mostly due to the conflict over the presidential election and the debate over the government's social and tax policies. (Deutschland Trend. ARD, 06/06/08)

Economy

In June, the unemployment rate declined to 7.5% (May: 7.8%). (Federal Statistics Office. 07/01/08)

Germany's foreign trade rose by 5.7% in the first quarter of this year, driven by a strong increase in exports to Russia (up 25.4% on the quarter to 7.5 billion euros). Russian imports to Germany also saw a strong increase of 29.9% to 8.4 billion euros. In the first quarter, overall imports were up 6.3% to 201.9 billion. (Federal Statistical Office. Handelsblatt, 08/18/08)

Business confidence is at its lowest level in 15 years amid high food and fuel prices. The ZEW-Institute's monthly index, which measures investors' expectations for the economy over the next six months, dropped to minus 52.4 points from minus 41.4 points in the previous month. (Major papers, 06/18/08)

The German Chamber of Commerce and Industry increased its growth expectation from 2.0 to 2.3% for 2008, despite a strong Euro and high energy prices that are increasingly creating problems for Germany's trade and industry. (DIHK. Major papers, 06/17/08)

36% of German companies (44% at the beginning of this year) expect an increase in German exports. 10% expect a decline in exports, up from 8%. (DIHK. 06/14/08)

Wholesale prices increased 8.1% in May, mostly due to drastic increases in fuel and food prices. This is the strongest increase in 26 years. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 06/11/08)

The Bundesbank increased its annual inflation forecast for 2008 from 2.3 to 3.0%. The main reasons for the increase are rising prices for energy and food. (Bundesbank. Major papers, 06/09/08)

State debt increased 0.5% last year. The overall debt of the federal the Länder, and the local governments amounted to 1,553.1 billion euros. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 06/03/08)

Society

Due to high energy prices, the consumption of energy declined in Germany more than in any other country in the world. Germany reduced its consumption of oil, coal, and natural gas by 18.5 million tons or 5.6% compared to the year before. (BP Statistical Review of World Energy. Major papers, 06/19/08)

64% of Germans believe U.S. Foreign policy will improve after the election in November. (Pew Global Attitudes Project, 06/12/08)

Only 31% of Germans have a good opinion of market economy. 40% doubt that the social market economy is in keeping with the times in the era of globalization, while 38% also said they do not have a positive opinion of the German economic system. (Major papers, 06/09/08)

82% of Germans say that gas and Diesel taxes should be lowered. 51% plan to reduce their daily car travel, and 34% want to reduce their speed on the autobahn. (Forsa. Berliner Zeitung, 06/02/08)

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

