



## Germany: Facts & Figures October 2008

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

### Politics

If Bundestag elections would be held on November 2, the CDU/CSU would receive 36% of the vote, the SPD 24%, the Green Party 8%, the FDP 13%, the Left Party 13%, and all other parties combined 6%. (Forsa. 10/29/08)

### Economy

In October, the unemployment rate dropped to 7.2% from 7.4% in September. The number of persons in employment whose place of residence was in Germany amounted to 40.62 million in September, an increase by 568,000 persons (+1.4%) on September 2007. (Federal Statistical Office. 10/30/08)

The beer producing and storing establishments in Germany sold 28.0 million hectoliters (hectoliter = 26.4 gallons) of beer in the third quarter of 2008. That was an increase of 0.6 million hectoliters (+2.0%) from the corresponding period of the previous year. (Federal Statistical Office. 10/29/08)

A lowering of the price of oil and cheaper food prices have pushed the inflation rate down to 2.9%. (Major papers, 10/16/08)

Germany's economic think-tanks are reporting that the economy is "on the brink of a recession" and scaled back their economic growth forecast for 2009 to 0.2%, while keeping their forecast for 2008 at 1.8%. (Major papers, 10/15/08)

For the first time in seven years there have been enough apprenticeships for youth looking for jobs. (Federal Labor Agency. Major papers, 10/14/08)

German exports dropped by 2.5% in August compared to the same period a year ago. Germany exported goods amounting to 75.7 billion and imported goods amounting to 65.1 billion euros. While German exports to all EU countries dropped by 1.4%, it dropped 4.4% to countries outside of the EU. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 10/10/08)

The IMF report on economic growth shows decreased economic growth estimates for the U.S., the eurozone, and the world economy in the future. For Germany, the IMF predicts an economic growth of 1.8% for 2008 and for next year 0.0%. In July, it had predicted 2% for 2008 and 1% for 2009 (Major papers, 10/09/08)

### Society

The number of female soldiers in the German military has tripled since 2001 to 15,200 female soldiers. Defense Minister Jung plans to increase the share of women in the Bundeswehr's medical service to 50% and in the armed forces to 15%. (Major papers, 10/09/08)

73% of Germans reject activities like the rescue of the Hypo Real Estate bank. 66% believe that, due to the finance crisis, the government will increase taxes. Almost 50% of the interviewed said there will be an economic slump as a consequence of the crisis, and more than 80% consider the events to be dangerous for Germany as a financial center. However, only 15% are afraid of losing their job as a consequence of the crisis (Süddeutsche, 10/09/08)

Contributions to the new nationwide statutory healthcare system will be 15.5% as of January 1, 2009. At the same time, the contributions to the unemployment insurance will be reduced from 3.3% to 2.8%. (Major papers. 10/06/08)

Germans' skepticism towards a privatization of public services has risen. An increasing number of Germans (70%) want the state to play a greater role in order to protect its citizens from the negative impact of globalization. But only 20% believe that the state is able to assert its views against the power of large-scale companies. 70% think the companies "do whatever they want anyway". (Forsa. Die Welt. 10/03/08)

The jobs with the highest reputation in Germany are fire fighters (91%), nurses (86%), pilots and doctors (85%) and judges (79%). The ones with the lowest reputation are insurance agents (12%), Telekom staff members (14%) staff members of advertising agencies (17%), and politicians with 21%. (Forsa. Major papers. 10/03/08)

75% of East Germans polled said war is always morally reprehensible. In the West, 63% agreed to this statement. (Berliner Zeitung. 10/01/08)

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