



Germany: Facts & Figures July 2007

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

Politics

If Bundestag elections would be held August 5, 2007, the CDU/CSU would receive 39% of the vote, the SPD 27%, the Green Party 10%, the FDP 9%, the Left Party 11%, and all other parties combined 4%. (GMS-Gesellschaft für Markt- und Sozialforschung. 07/30/07)

40% of Germans are satisfied with the performance of the grand coalition, up 2% from June. 75% (up 6%) are satisfied with Chancellor Merkel' work, while Foreign Minister Steinmeier again reached his top rating from January with 69%. SPD leader Kurt Beck dropped 2% to 35%. 24% of those interviewed backed participation of the Left Party in a future government. (Deutschland Trend. Die Welt, 07/06/07)

Economy

In July, the unemployment rate increased to 8.9%, up from 8.8% in June. The number of unemployed increased to 3,715,000. (Federal Employment Agency. 07/31/07)

The economic recovery has reached the long-term unemployed. Over the past six months, 400,000 recipients of the Hartz IV unemployment benefits were able to find new jobs. In addition 350,000 long-term unemployed have begun qualification programs. Because of this development, the number of social welfare recipients has dropped by 12% compared to the same period last year. (Federal Labor Agency. Major papers, 07/26/07)

36% of Germans are financially worse off than a year ago. 51% said they did not notice any changes compared to the situation a year ago, and only 12% said they are better off this year than last year. 27% expect a further deterioration of their situation. (Forsa. N-tv. 07/20/07)

China's economy rose by 11.9% in the second quarter over last year, overtaking Germany as the third-biggest economy in the world behind the United States and Japan. (Major papers, 07/20/07)

Investor and business confidence slipped to 10.4 points in July, the second straight month of decline according to the ZEW index. Reasons are a weak consumer confidence and the impact of the strong Euro on exports. (ZEW index. Major papers, 07/18/07).

The German Cabinet approved the draft budget for FY 2008 on Wednesday. Next year's plan calls for federal spending of 283.2 billion euros, up from 270.5 billion euros planned this year. New net borrowing will reach 12.9 billion compared with 19.1 billion last year. (Major papers, 07/05/07)

Society

42% of Germans consider globalization to be negative for the country, 36% believe globalization has positive implications and 22% are undecided. (Harris Opinion Poll. Financial Times, 07/24/07)

124,830 foreigners were naturalized in Germany in 2006, an increase of 7,590 (+6.5%) from 2006. When the new citizenship law was introduced in 2000, naturalizations peaked at just below 186,700 persons. In each of the subsequent years, the number decreased, reaching the lowest level in 2005. However, the decrease in 2005 (-7.8% on 2004) was much smaller than in the preceding years; in 2006, a slight increase was observed for the first time since 2001. (Federal Statistical Office. 07/23/07)

In 2006, almost every fifth German read his/her news on the Internet, up from 10% in 2002 and 15% in 2004. (Bitkom Telecommunication Ass. Handelsblatt, 07/18/07)

According to the latest circulation figures, Der Spiegel sold 1,051,000 copies (up 1.7%) in the second quarter of 2007, Stern 1,011,000 (down 0.1%), and Focus 711,000 (down 2.6%). The circulation of Die Zeit rose by 0.7% to 491,565 copies. FAZ's dropped by 0.5% to 362,000, while Sueddeutsche continues to have the biggest circulation among the national dailies with 444,000 copies (up 0.3%). Die Welt and Welt kompakt increased their circulation by 5.3% to 277,000. Handelsblatt sold 142,998 (up 1.2%) and Financial Times Deutschland 103,284 copies (up 1.3%). (Tagesspiegel, 07/17/07)

Compared to the last poll from the fall of last year, the EU's reputation among Germans increased from 42 to 52%. 65% of Germans also were of the opinion that Germany's EU membership is a good thing. 84% advocated a common European security and foreign policy (up 7%) and 91% said climate change is a challenge that requires common EU activities. (Eurobarometer. FAZ, Berliner Morgenpost, 07/13/07)

47% of Germans and 85% of Poles welcome Poland's EU membership. 88% of Germans (48% of Poles) reject Polish Premier Kaczynski's demand that the EU should show special consideration for Poland's suffering during WWII. 8% of Germans (49% of Poles) back this view. (Die Welt/ Polish issue of Newsweek, 07/09/07)