



Germany PR Country Landscape 2007

Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management

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Public Relations Industry

Public Relations Practitioners

The total number of full-time public relations practitioners in Germany is estimated to be at least 20,000. Around 40 per cent work with a company, 20 per cent in organisations such as associations, unions, churches, etc., and another 20-30 per cent in different social and political institutions (such as political and municipal administration and courts). Approximately 20 per cent of the public relations practitioners work in public relations agencies. The number of public relations practitioners is increasing more quickly than the number of journalists.

It is difficult to give a detailed overview of the entire public relations counseling market in Germany. This applies both to the produced turnover and to the actual number of consultancy firms and employed PR consultants. Many agencies and individual consultants offer public relations services, yet they act under the name of other professions (such as advertising agencies, management consultants, free-lance journalist.) In addition, the open access to the profession and the high fluctuation rate make an exact count of PR consultants and agencies even more difficult.

As to the level of organisation, only an estimated 10 per cent of all public relations professionals (around 1,800) are members of the **DPRG** (German Public Relations Association), which was founded in Bonn in 1958 (www.dprg.de). The number of organised public relations practitioners in the **German Journalists Association** – most of who work in press departments – is estimated to be 4,000 (www.djv.de). In 1973, the leading public relations agencies founded their own association (Gesellschaft PR-Agenturen, **GPRA**; 'Association of Public Relations Agencies'). At present it counts as members about thirty public relations agencies, representing nearly 1,500 employees (www.pr-guide.de).

Degree of Professionalisation

The degree of professionalisation of this branch, which is strongly interconnected with the training facilities, has been increasing since the beginning of the 1990s. In general, the profession is academically institutionalised: 70-80 per cent of the practitioners have a degree (from a university or a polytechnic) or even a PH.D.. Though these data show an increasing general education level of PR practitioners, they do not say anything about the actual degree of professionalisation – that is, the existence of a PR-related academic education. Only 15 per cent of public relations practitioners have a public relations-related education and training (such as public relations courses or majors).

Where do Public Relations practitioners come from?

Public relations is still very much an 'open' field, a profession for practitioners with backgrounds in such diverse professions as journalism, law, and engineering. This is shown by a 1989 survey of DPRG members as well as by a more recent study. Both studies showed that a third of all interviewed persons originally came from journalism, another third came from business or administration, and about 15 per cent had previously worked in advertising and market research. Interestingly, about 20 per cent had had no other occupation before entering public relations.

'Feminisation'

'Feminisation' is a feature that developed into a distinct characteristic of the German public relations field. Whereas in the late 1980s less than 15 per cent of the people working in PR in businesses, administration, and associations were female showed that by 1996, women accounted for 42 per cent of the work force. This is confirmed not only by the present proportion of females among the members of the professional association DPRG (43 per cent in 2001), but also the proportion of female students of public relations reached more than 60 per cent.

History and Development of Public Relations

The development of public relations in Germany has always been shaped by political, economic and social conditions. In this context, the changing types of state had a decisive impact on the history of German public relations: the German Alliance (1815-1866) as an alliance of states of German princes and free cities was succeeded by the German Reich (1871-1918) and the Weimar Republic (1918-1933), followed by the national-socialist dictatorship of the Third Reich, and eventually the establishment of two German states, which reunited in 1990. These turning points in the history of Germany are reflected in the attempts to structure the history of German public relations into periods.

Bentele distinguishes **six periods of German public relations history**:

- **The first period** is called 'development of the profession'. It starts in the middle of the nineteenth century and ends at the close of the first World War in 1918. The first political press department was established in 1841 in Prussia; it was called *Ministerial-Zeitungsbüro* ('governmental bureau of newspapers'). Alfred Krupp, founder of the steel company Krupp, established the first press department in a private company in 1870 – Krupp had been aware of the necessity to hire a 'literate' since 1866. It was probably in this period that the first standard tools of press relations emerged, such as media relations, arranged interviews, press conferences and press reviews. A characteristic feature of this first period is that public relations was used both to inform and to manipulate.
- **The second period**, which covers Weimar Republic (1918-1933), can be described as a phase of consolidation and growth. It is characterized by new social conditions: the parliamentary-democratic of state and an economically independent and active press, no longer directed or controlled by the state. This new freedom led public relations to experience an immense growth in different social realms (e.g. many communal press departments were established). Due to the economic boom of the 'Golden Twenties', more and more firms recognised the necessity and the use of public relations. After the national-socialists came to power, the conditions of public relations changed abruptly. In sharp contrast with the Weimar period, the media were now controlled and manipulated by the party. This period lasted about twelve years, from the end of the Weimar Republic to the end of the Second World War (1933-1945).
- **The fourth period** in the history of German public relations can be called "revival", and starts with the end of the Second World War. Not only did public relations had to redefine itself under the new conditions of a parliamentary democracy, it also had to dissociate itself from (Nazi) propaganda. The US influence on West German society was widely felt in the development of post-war public relations: besides new German advertising and public relations agencies, branches of US agencies started to settle in Germany.

- **The fifth period** began in the year 1958, when the German Public Relations Association (DPRG) was founded ('consolidation of the field'). Conferences, discussion groups and the foundation of the DPRG further encouraged the discourse about the self-understanding of the occupational field and enabled a systematic dialogue about relevant questions of PR as well as about training activities. At the same time, a 'socialist public relations' developed in (then) East Germany from the mid-1960s. There was an occupational field of public relations, which according to practitioners involved about 3,000 people. As in (then) West Germany, public relations was conducted in all social fields, but socialist public relations in East Germany was constrained by strong political-propagandistic regulations.

- The **sixth period** started in the mid-1980s and continues until today. This time can be seen as a boom in public relations and as the beginning of its professionalisation. Public relations agencies developed very fast and gained more and more relevance, especially when compared with advertising agencies. The public relations departments in private companies and other organisations grew in size and relevance, and research in public relations established itself in several universities.

Source: Bentele, Günter and Ivonne Junghänel (2004). Germany. In: van Ruler, Betteke, Dejan Vercic, *Public Relations and Communication Management in Europe: A Nation-by-Nation Introduction to Public Relations Theory and Practice*, p. 153-168. Berlin: de Gruyter.

ALBERT OECKL

Albert Oeckl (1909–2001) was the most important figure of the post–World War II era of public relations in Germany. The obituaries on his death (April 23, 2001) reflected the mythically idealized position that Oeckl held. He became a living legend primarily through his national as well as international professional activities, but he is also widely known for his writings, public speeches, and teaching activities. Oeckl was born December 27, 1909, in Nuremberg and studied law and national economy in Munich and Berlin. In 1934 he earned his doctorate with a dissertation, *German Employees and Their Living Conditions*, and worked initially as a junior lawyer. Although written under the national socialist government, his dissertation can, from our contemporary viewpoint, be regarded as a profound scientific work with no recognizable kowtowing to national socialist ideology. Following his internship as a junior lawyer (1934–1935, in the Reichspropagandaministerium in the Munich state office), he began his vocational career in 1936 at IG Farben in Berlin, where he was later to be employed in the head office and the newly founded press office. As he pointed out himself, this was where and when he gained his first journalistic experience and where he learned about the basics of then-current public relations of an international company. During the war he worked, among other positions, in the news service for the supreme command of the Wehrmacht (OKW, or German Armed Forces) and in the Reichsamt (the German "empire office") for economic development under Carl Krauch.

A recent dissertation at Leipzig University (by Christian Mattke) has shed light on Oeckl's career until 1945. Press relations and monitoring as well as support service for visitors were Oeckl's first duties at IG Farben. He was also responsible for an address card index, which might have triggered the idea for his *Taschenbuch des öffentlichen Lebens* ("Pocket Book of Public Life," published in 1950).

On May 1, 1933, he joined the NSDAP (Hitler's ruling national socialist party until 1945); however, he never held a ranking office in the party, nor did he have any national socialist grade. After the

war, in 1947, an allied committee classified Oeckl as a *Mitläufer* (nominal member), a designation given to former members of the Nazi party who were considered not to pose a threat to the emerging democratic, capitalist society. With this classification Oeckl did not have to fear legal consequences stemming from his role during the war. However, he concealed his party membership publicly throughout his life.

Oeckl started his postwar career as the assistant of Dr. Rudolf Vogel, a member of the German Bundestag (German parliament) and of the Christian Democratic Party (CDU). From 1950 to 1959 Oeckl was director of the Public Relations Department of the *Deutscher Industrie- und Handelstag* (DIHT), the German Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry. From 1959 on he was head of the public relations department of BASF, also a multinational corporation. From 1961 to 1967, Oeckl held the title of deputy director; from 1967 to 1974 his title was director. In 1974 he retired from his active career. Oeckl had early ambitions regarding an academic career. He accepted the invitation to teach as a lecturer at the University of Heidelberg, where he gave lectures and seminars from 1960 until 1969. Later on he also taught at Augsburg University. From 1974 until 1978, after his retirement, he taught social psychology and public relations at the International University in Rome in the position of an extraordinary professorship. From this lectureship he earned the title of an honorary professor. This title strengthened his reputation in a discipline in which only few representatives held doctoral degrees. Hence, Oeckl was considered the academically legitimized voice to speak up for the majority of practitioners, to represent the whole professional field of public relations.

From 1950 onward, Oeckl annually published the *Taschenbuch des öffentlichen Lebens* ("Pocketbook of Public Life") and quickly became well known from it. It contains a systematic collection of addresses and can be found even today on nearly every editorial or public relations desk. In 1964 he published his first major book, *Das Handbuch der Public relations. Theorie und Praxis der Öffentlichkeitsarbeit in Deutschland und der Welt* (Handbook of Public Relations: Theory and Practice of Öffentlichkeitsarbeit [Public Relations] in Germany and the World). A revised version of this handbook was published in 1976, under the title *PR-Praxis. Der Schlüssel zur Öffentlichkeitsarbeit* (PR Practice: The Key to Öffentlichkeitsarbeit).

At that time, these books – as well as Oeckl's various lectures and articles – played an important role in the professional field. Even today, they are important historical sources for academic public relations research. Oeckl defined *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit* (the German equivalent of public relations) as "working with the public, working for the public and working in the public (sphere)" (1976, p. 34). Another definition he gave was "*Öffentlichkeitsarbeit* is the conscious, planned and continuous endeavor . . . to build and maintain mutual understanding in public" (1964, p. 43). This definition, which is very similar to the definition crafted by the British Institute of Public Relations during the 1960s, contains a society-oriented understanding of public relations with symmetrical presuppositions. This understanding also underlies the formula Oeckl coined later: "PR = Information + Adaptation + Integration" (Oeckl, 1976, p. 19).

Although Oeckl – due to demands on his time – never developed a scientific theory that was empirically testable, he created a kind of normative practitioner theory. This theory, based on many years of professional experience, is aligned to relevant scientific literature, particularly writings of communication research. It not only provides definitive dividing lines between public relations and other concepts of public communication such as advertising, propaganda, and publicity, but one of the core elements of this practitioner theory is a set of normative guidelines (how-to rules) that

express ways to act, to behave as a public relations practitioner. For Oeckl, primary requirements in public relations are “truth, clarity (lucidity), as well as the unity of word and deed” (1964, p. 47). Alongside these demands, sociability, open behavior, integrity, and modesty are characteristics that he considers important professional values. During the 1960s, Oeckl informed younger professionals about the basic management method, the Four-Phase Model of PR Management: (a) analyses, (b) programming/strategy building, (c) taking action/communicating, and (d) evaluation (1964, pp. 343ff.). Most important for Oeckl’s understanding of public relations was his regard for it as a separate and high-level management (staff) function in all kinds of organizations, not as a subdiscipline of marketing, or as pure publicity or propaganda.

Oeckl assumed and informed the profession that he had coined the German equivalent of the term public relations, *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*, in 1950 by translating the American term public relations. New research has shown, however, that this term had been used much earlier in a discussion of the press organizations of the Protestant Church (*Evangelische Pressverbände*) as early as 1917. Presumably, by 1950 the term had fallen into oblivion. But during the 1950s and 1960s the German term made an excellent resurgence.

Today, notably, state institutions (ministries, municipal press departments) and nonprofit organizations use the term *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*, whereas private companies and public relations agencies widely prefer the English term public relations or PR. In recent years, the term communication management is used more and more. Predominantly due to his political organization activities, in which he drew upon his – for that time – profound number of publications and lectures, Oeckl acquired the reputation of Germany’s “PR-Nestor.” He was a co-founder of the *Deutsche Public Relations Gesellschaft (DPRG)* (German Public Relations Association) in 1958 and officiated as second president between 1961 and 1967, following Carl Hundhausen. In 1986 the DPRG awarded him the honorary president title, and a junior award for academic theses has his name. Also important were Oeckl’s international organization activities: Since 1965 he served as *Confédération Européenne des Relations Publiques (CERP)* vice president, and in 1967 the *International Public Relations Association (IPRA)* voted Oeckl its first German president. Through his activities in these functions, an important early impetus was given to the academization of the vocational public relations field, from which came ideas for an academically based public relations education at universities and standards for ethical codes.

On the occasion of his 90th birthday, in 1999, CERP president Thomas Achelis presented a festschrift (“PR Builds Bridges”) to Oeckl, with essays contributed by well-known German, European, and American public relations practitioners, scientists, and organizational representatives that mirror the reputation Albert Oeckl had reached in the international public relations community. Oeckl played a similar role for Germany to that of Edward L. Bernays for the professional field of American public relations: founding father, influential and symbolic figure for the whole professional field, and representative of a modern concept of the practice. Preconditions for Bernays’s and Oeckl’s reputations as founding fathers were their outstanding professional achievements and the capability to present themselves and to produce their own images in an outstanding way. In Germany Oeckl represents the highest standard of the public relations practitioner, carefully considering and reflecting the practice of his profession with a high – and academically based – reputation due to his teaching, his writings, and his positions. In the history of public relations in German speaking areas, Oeckl can be considered the most important figure next to Carl Hundhausen. Although Hundhausen achieved more solid and greater academic recognition, he was not as outstanding in the practical field as Oeckl. Both of these giants in the profession represent a kind of professional continuity from the 1930s, the national socialist time, on to the Federal Republic of the 1950s and 1960s. Both credibly represent, on the other hand, the

restart of postwar public relations in Germany, a profession that had to distinguish itself clearly from the propaganda of Nazi politics. For many years, until the end of the 1980s, Oeckl embodied German Öffentlichkeitsarbeit worldwide.

See also Bernays, Edward; Promotion; Publicity; Symmetry

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Research Traditions and Development of Education

Research

While public relations can draw on a gradually evolved history, good education in public relations and research in public relations are in their infancy. Though young, research can be divided into two main areas: basic research and applied research. Basic research is mostly pure or purpose-free research conducted in university settings. Examples are theory-building, historiography and meta-research – that is, the generation, testing, and perfection of general basic findings about a specific field. There are two different types of theory within the field of theory-generation: middle-range PR theories and general theories. Most theoretical approaches to PR belong to the group of middle-range theories. For example, Baerns (1985) conceived the Determination Hypothesis, and Bentele, Liebert and Seeling (1997) developed their intereffication approach. Both mark the beginning of a theoretical research tradition with many empirical studies (Bentele 2002). To this group of theories can be added Burkart's (1992) consensus-oriented public relations approach and Bentele's (1994) theory of public trust and his Discrepancy Hypothesis. On the other hand, so far there is only one systematic and comprehensive German general public relations theory – it goes back to Ronneberger and Rühl (1992).

Education

For a long time, public relations training in Germany was 'training on the job'. In the 1960s and 1970s, the DPRG and some private institutions offered the only training and advanced courses. These courses took one or several weeks. Only since the early 1980s was public relations institutionalised at universities and polytechnics (*Fachhochschulen*) as a marginal field of communication studies programs. In the early 1990s, a development boom started to improve significantly the situation of public relations and public relations training. By now several German universities established public relations courses, within their communication-studies programs (e.g. Berlin and Leipzig). Furthermore, there have been some PR degree schemes at polytechnics and universities since 1999 (e.g. Hannover, Osnabrück, Leipzig). Several universities plan to establish public relations courses, too. Equally important, the professional associations established a training and examination academy (*Deutsche Akademie für Public Relations* [German Academy of Public Relations], DAPR) in 1991, and there are some forty other private academies and institutes which offer PR training courses as well as further education courses of different character (evening schools, distance-learning courses, etc.). In the near future public relations training will shift more and more to the traditional education institutions (polytechnics and universities).

The content of academic training programs and of many general courses offered by private institutions is very diverse. They cover the entire spectrum of the profession: the basics of communications and public relations, history of public relations, public relations theories, methods and tools of practical public relations, and several aspects of communication management (such as media relations, investor relations, event management, internal communication, crisis public relations, methods of evaluation, methods of empirical communication research and social research). Economic, legal and ethical topics are included in most courses at universities and sometimes also at private academies. The body of scientific literature has been growing since the beginning of the 1990s; it often deals with problems of the occupational field, to public relations techniques, public relations tools and problems of organisational communication. Both types of research are brought together in the journal *PR-Forum* and on the internet at www.pr-guide.de.

Typification of current public relations

Public relations associations and academics claim for themselves the highest possible hierarchical ranking of public relations practitioners within the organisation they work for. Becher (1996) found that 41 per cent of her interviewees worked in independent departments, which were rated as below the management department. Another 22 per cent worked in departments that were part of the organisation's management (for example, the head of public relations is a member of the board). In Merten's (1997a, b) survey, 68 per cent of the interviewees said they held a 'leading position'. In his representative survey among businesses from 1993, Haedrich found that 26 per cent of all companies ranked PR as a line position, 71 per cent as a staff position. Of these companies, 33 per cent graded public relations as top level in the corporate hierarchy, 54 per cent into the second highest level – that is directly under the executive level – 12 per cent into the third level, and 1 per cent graded public relations even lower (Haedrich, et al. 1994). The same study also found that the bigger a business was the more independent the PR departments were, in some cases they were even higher in the hierarchy than the marketing department. At the same time it is evident that the subordination of public relations under marketing or at least the mixing of these two is more apparent in small and medium-sized firms. A follow-up survey in 1997 carried out by the wbpr agency interviewed 3.000 businesses and showed that the rating of PR within businesses has improved since the first study of 1990. Public relations had a 'very high' rank for 16 per cent of the interviewees and a 'high' rank for 56 per cent (wbpr 1997). A recent representative survey among companies (Zühlsdorf 2002) indicated that 80 per cent of the heads of communication departments work on the top hierarchical level. These results show that public relations departments in German businesses are rated relatively highly.

Public relations roles

The differentiation of public relations roles – investigated in American studies and in the Delphi study does not play a big role in Germany. Argues that the managerial and technician public relations roles do not easily carry over to the German situation. Based on our own knowledge of the field, we assume that in larger organisations both the managerial and the technician roles exist. The heads of public relations departments and the senior consultants in the public relations agencies have managerial roles whereas the employees of the public relations departments have technician roles. Getting ahead in an organisation is normally combined with a change of role. The 'reflective' and 'educational' dimensions should be understood as dimensions of the managerial role. But there are other concepts, which refer to the different ways public relations practitioners, see themselves. An empirical study conducted by Böckelmann differentiates the following three

professional roles: representative (of the organisation), journalist (oriented to the public sphere) and mediator (between organisations and publics)

Image of the public relations field

The image of the public relations field varies considerably. The wider public has a rather diffuse image – if at all – of public relations and can hardly perceive it directly. Media representatives and journalists often have an ambivalent image of public relations: they recognize that public relations is indispensable as a source of information, but at the same time they often use such characterizations as ‘PR gags’, ‘PR pretence’, ‘typical PR’. These expressions refer to events which are considered overstated and lacking content. In contrast, communication experts are treated by journalists as partners, colleagues ‘on the other side of the desk’. Especially in company boardrooms, the image of the communication expert has significantly improved over the last two decades.

Conclusions: State of the Art and Future of Public Relations in Germany

As with social, technical and media-related developments, the requirements for the occupational field of public relations change continuously. New trends and practices of public relations emerge all the time, of which we name only these: about five years ago, numerous businesses (amongst those were young start-up firms, but also slowly developed corporations) entered the stock market, which led to a boom. As a result, investor relations especially, as part of financial relations, experienced an immense upturn. Additionally, ‘issues management’, ‘crisis communication’, ‘employee relations’ and ‘event public relations’ gained more and more relevance for practical PR activities (and PR research). New trends at bigger public relations agencies are, for example, ‘change communication’, ‘sustainability communication’, ‘brand PR’, ‘corporate citizen-ship’ and ‘impression management’. Another hot issue is ‘corporate communication’ (and public relations as its part), understood as an element of the process of corporate value creation.

Some characteristics of public relations are typical for Germany. Among these we can mention the process of professionalisation – including scientifically based PR education and an emerging PR science – and the on-going feminisation. Ethical problems are discussed in the scientific community – much more seldom in the practical field.

Source: Bentele, Günter and Ivonne Junghänel (2004). Germany. In: van Ruler, Betteke, Dejan Vercic, Public Relations and Communication Management in Europe: A Nation-by-Nation Introduction to Public Relations Theory and Practice, p. 153-168. Berlin: de Gruyter.

The Role of Media

Germany has one of the vastest and most prolific media industries in the world. German-based print, radio and television deliver high-quality journalism that is widely respected by both the German public and international media experts.

The media system is divided into the privately owned print market and the broadcasting market (**dual market**), consisting of private and public sectors. The basic types of print medium are daily newspapers, weekly newspapers, magazines and free newspapers.

In the 1980s private broadcasting was introduced. Public and private broadcasting are subject to different legal regulations. Public broadcasting has to serve public welfare and guarantee the basic programs (information, sports, entertainment, culture). It has a central integrating function since it articulates the interests of minorities and encourages interaction between different interest

spheres. For that reason, public broadcasting carries out a strict internal pluralistic concept: every program has to reflect the actual diversity of the society. Private broadcasting, on the other hand, since it depends on income from advertising, faces less high constitutional demands. As an indirect consequence of economic competition, the concession of private broadcasting activities is expected to result in an increasing diversity of offerings and thus in more choices for the radio and television user.

Besides the dual broadcasting system, and as compensation for the concession of large private providers, some provisions for 'citizens' broadcasting' have been made. Citizens are allowed to produce their own radio and television programs for these 'open channels', and they can also publish printed products.

In 2001, there were 136 'media units' in Germany – a media unit is an independent complete editorial office, with a politics department and all the other editorial departments. This amounts to 386 daily newspapers with 28.4 million copies sold. Adding local and regional editions the number rises up to nearly 1,600 newspapers. On top of that, there are 23 weeklies (circulation 1.9 million), 845 popular magazines (circulation 129.7), and 1,094 professional journals (circulation 18 million).

Source: Bentele, Günter and Ivonne Junghänel (2004). Germany. In: van Ruler, Betteke, Dejan Vercic, Public Relations and Communication Management in Europe: A Nation-by-Nation Introduction to Public Relations Theory and Practice, p. 153-168. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Selection of links:

Newspapers:

Bild – www.bild.t-online.de

Die Welt – www.welt.de

Die Zeit – www.zeit.de

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung – www.faz.net

Frankfurter Rundschau – <http://www.sj.de>

Handelsblatt – www.handelsblatt.de

Paperball (search engine through 200 German dailies) – www.paperball.de

Süddeutsche Zeitung – www.sueddeutsche.de

News magazines:

Der Spiegel – www.spiegel.de

Focus – www.focus.msn.de

Stern – www.stern.de

Press agencies:

DFA Deutsche Fernsichtungsagentur – www.dfa.de

ddp Nachrichtenagentur – www.ddp.de

Deutsche Presse-Agentur – www.dpa.de

Deutsche Presse-Agentur (business news) – www.dpa-afx.de

Additional information on German media:

Goethe Institute's introduction to the German Press

(in English and German) – www.goethe.de

Medien-Aktuell (current circulation figures) – www.medien-aktuell.de

Media Perspectives (media research and analysis) – www.ard-werbung.de/mp

TV broadcasting stations (most in German only):

under public law:

ARD TV – www.ard.de

Arte (in German and French) – www.arte.de

Deutsche Welle (also in English) – www.dw-world.de

German TV (in English and German) – www.germantv.info

ZDF – www.zdf.de

3 Sat – www.3sat.de

private:

N24 – www.n24.de

RTL – www.rtl.de

SAT1 – www.sat1.de

ProSieben – www.prosieben.de

Country Profile

Area: 357,031 sq. km

Population: With nearly 82 million inhabitants, the Federal Republic of Germany is the country with the largest population in Central Europe. There live about 7.3 million foreigners, which is nine per cent of the total population.

Language: German

Location: Central Europe

Currency: As of January 1, 2002: Euro (€), 1948-2001: Deutsche Mark (DM)

Borders: The national territory is bordered to the North by the North Sea, the Baltic Sea and Denmark, to the East by Poland and the Czech Republic, to the South by Austria and Switzerland, and to the West by France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

Capital city: Berlin – (3,398,800 inhabitants, national capital since Oct. 3, 1990)

Other major cities (population Jan. '99): Hamburg: 1,700,000, Munich: 1,188,900, Cologne: 962,600, Frankfurt: 643,900, Essen: 603,200, Dortmund: 591,700, Stuttgart: 582,000, Dusseldorf: 568,400, Bremen: 543,000, Duisburg: 523,300, Hanover: 516,200, Nuremberg: 487,100, Dresden: 452,800, Leipzig: 437,100

Land use: 54.1% farming, 29.4% forest, 11.8% built-up areas, roads and railways, 2.2% water, 2.5% other.

Natural resources: Iron ore, coal, timber, copper, natural gas, salt.

Religion: There is freedom of religion in Germany. In 2000, the protestant and catholic churches each counted 27 million members; the next largest religious community is the Muslims with approximately 2.8 million members.

Literacy: 95%.

Compulsory school attendance: 10 years

Elementary school 'Grundschule': ages 6 through 10

Academic high school 'Gymnasium': ages 11-19

Vocationally oriented 'Realschule': ages 11-16

The diploma from the Gymnasium is the basic requirement for admission to a university, the Realschule diploma to a commercial or technical college, or to the last three years of Gymnasium. A diploma from a Hauptschule is generally required to enter a formal three-year vocational training program for skilled technicians, craftsmen etc., combined with classroom instruction at a vocational school (dual system of vocational training).

Graduates 1999, higher education:

221,700, women: 96,400 or 43.5%,
From universities: 44.8% or 99,3000,
Specialized colleges: 31.6% or 70,100
Teacher colleges: 12.5% or 27,7000
PhDs: 11.1% or 24,500.

Source: <http://www.germany.info/relaunch/info/facts/>

Government

Form of state: Democratic, federal, multi-party republic with representatives chosen directly by the people

Head of state: [Federal President](#)

Elected for a five-year-term, may be re-elected only once for a second consecutive term. State president Prof. Dr. Horst Köhler (CDU).

Head of government: [Federal Chancellor](#)

Elected for a four-year term, no limitation on re-election. Federal Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel (www.bundestag.de)

Federal states: Baden-Wuerttemberg (population in millions: 10.37, capital: Stuttgart; www.baden-wuerttemberg.de), Bavaria (12.04, Munich; www.bayern.de), Berlin (3.45, www.berlin.de), Brandenburg (2.55, Potsdam; www.brandenburg.de), Bremen (0.68; www.bremen.de), Hamburg (1.71; www.hamburg.de), Hessen (6.03, Wiesbaden; www.hessen.de), Lower Saxony (7.82, Hanover; www.niedersachsen.de), Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (1.82, Schwerin; www.landtag-mv.de), North Rhine-Westphalia (17.95, Duesseldorf; www.nrw.de), Rhineland-Palatinate (4, Mainz; www.rlp.de), Saarland (1.08, Saarbruecken; www.saarland.de), Saxony (4.55, Dresden; www.sachsen.de), Saxony-Anhalt (2.72, Magdeburg; www.sachsen-anhalt.de), Schleswig-Holstein

(2.74, Kiel; www.schleswig-holstein.de), Thuringia (2.49, Erfurt; www.thueringen.de).
(www.bundesrat.de)

→ **Source:** <http://www.germany.info/relaunch/politics/politics.html>

Economy

Ranking third in terms of total economic output, Germany is one of the world's leading nations. In terms of exports, Germany takes first place worldwide. The country continues to be an attractive market for foreign investors, offering a superbly developed infrastructure and a highly motivated, well-qualified work force. Top-notch research and development projects are additional hallmarks of the country.

The social partnership between trade unions and employers ensures a high degree of social harmony. Reforms to the social security system and structural reforms to the labor market are intended to reduce ancillary labor costs and rejuvenating economic growth, which, in comparison with other EU countries, is on a low level.

Compared with other industrial nation, the German economy has an almost unprecedented international focus. Companies generate almost a third of their profits through exports, and almost one in four jobs are dependent on foreign trade. The high level of international competitiveness is most evident where companies vie with others in the international arena. Despite the slump in world trade, the share of exports expanded at a higher than average rate. In addition, the continuous rise in direct investments by international companies in Germany and by German companies abroad underscores the strong position of the German economy in comparison with its international competitors. It is buttressed at the national level by a favorable inflation rate and unit labor costs as well as by a stable society.

Population (2004, in 1,000 persons): 82,501

of which:

Economically active : 42,713

Unemployed persons: 3,931

Employees: 34,564

Self employed: 4,218

Employment by economic sectors (2004, in 1,000 persons)

Employed persons (employees and self): 38,868

of which in:

Agriculture, forestry and fishing: 873

Industry, incl. energy: 8,018

of which in:

Manufacturing: 7,632

Construction: 2,251

Other service activities: 27,726

Foreign trade 2004 (in billion Euros)

Balance of export and imports 2004: 109.46

Exports (goods + services): 842.84

Imports (goods + services): 733.38

Main exports (goods) in 2004

Product	billion Euros
Motor vehicles + parts	135
Machinery and equipment, not individually itemized	102.5
Chemicals + chemical products	94.7
Radio,TV + communication equipment + components	36.2
Electrical machinery + apparatus, not individually itemized	36
Basic metals	35.6
Medical, precision + optical instruments, watches + clocks	29.5
Food products and beverages	26
Fabricated metal products, except machinery + equipment	22
Pulp, paper + products	14.6

Main imports (goods) 2004

Products	billion Euros
Chemicals + chemical products	63.5
Motor vehicles + parts	59.6
Crude oil and natural gas	39.2
Machinery and equipment, not individually itemized	38.8
Radio,TV + communication equipment + components	37.7
Basic metals	31.4
Office machinery and computer	27.8
Food products and beverages	27
Clothing and textiles	27.8
Agricultural products	14.5

Ranking of Germany's main trading partners in 2004

Nr	Import from	billion Euros	Export to	billion Euros
1	France	52.2	France	75.3
2	The Netherlands	47.8	U.S.	64.8
3	U.S.	40.3	United Kingdom	61
4	Italy	35	Italy	52.4
5	United Kingdom	34.3		
6	China	32.5	The Netherlands	45.5
7	Belgium	28.5	Belgium	41.1
8	Austria	24.2	Austria	39.4
9	Switzerland	21.4	Spain	36.8
10	Japan	21	Switzerland	28

→ **Source:** http://www.destatis.de/e_home.htm

Brief History

As a result of World War II, Germany was divided. In 1949, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) developed out of the Soviet zone of occupation, and the Federal Republic of Germany out of the U.S., British and French zones. Divided Berlin became a special area under joint administration by the Four Powers. The German Democratic Republic claimed East Berlin as its capital, while the capital of the Federal Republic of Germany was located in Bonn. On August 13, 1961, the East German government built the Berlin Wall, sealing off Berlin East from Berlin West. Twenty-eight years later, on November 9, 1989, the exodus of thousands of East Germans via Hungary and Austria to West Germany, and mass demonstrations in a number of East German cities, led to the opening of the [Berlin Wall](#). On October 3, 1990, East Germany acceded to the Federal Republic of Germany. Germany was united again. In June 1991, the German Parliament decided to move the seat of government and parliament to the capital Berlin.

→ **Source:** <http://www.germany.info>

Additional Useful Links

German Information Source by [the German Embassy](#), the [German Information Center](#) and the [Consulates General](#) in the US.

<http://www.germany.info/relaunch/info/facts>

Facts about Germany provides comprehensive articles on all facets of German life. It includes an overview of German history and profiles of Germany's 16 states as well as sections on politics, the economy, social institutions and cultural life. <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de>

A weekly newsletter in English

<http://www.germany.info/relaunch/info/publications/week.html>

A close look at a topic of current interest (monthly)

<http://www.germany.info/relaunch/info/publications/infocus.html>

Facts and current news about Germany

www.deutschland.de

DPRG (German PR Association)

www.dprg.de

GPRA (Association of PR Agencies)

www.pr-guide.de

PR-News

www.prportal.de/www.pr-journal.de

Federal Statistics Office: http://www.destatis.de/e_home.htm

www.destatis.de

Information about the German Bundestag, the German national parliament

www.bundestag.de

Information about the Bundesrat, one of the five permanent constitutional organs of the Federal Republic of Germany

www.bundesrat.de

Official website of The Federal Foreign Office

www.auswaertiges-amt.de

Wikipedia

<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oeckl>

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Contact information

The Global Alliance is always interested in cooperating with local institutions and associations to provide profiles of the social, economic and media context of member countries, along with details on the local public relations industry, its main activities and tips on successful local practice.

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