

OFFICIAL NAME: Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)

CAPITAL: Berlin

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Federal Multiparty Republic

AREA: 357,020 Sq Km (137,846 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 81,025,000



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY: Germany is located in North Central Europe, on the Great North European Plain. It is bound by Poland and the Czech Republic to the east, the Baltic Sea to the northeast, Denmark to the north, the North Sea to the northwest, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and France to the west, Switzerland to the south and Austria to the south and southeast. The country can be divided into three topographical regions. (1.) The Northern German Plain which includes the northern low lying plains and the moraine covered hills and lakes of the Baltic Sea country. (2.) The Central German Uplands which includes the Rhenish Slate Mountains (Rheinisches Schiefergebirge), the rolling uplands and low mountains of Hessen. The Horst Massifs of the Schwarzwald (Black Forest), the Harz Mountains, the Odenwald, the Spessart, the Lausitzer Bergland and the Elbsandsteingebirge, which is a sandy region on both sides of the Elbe River. This region also includes the Erzgebirge, which is a high tablelands. (3.) The southern uplands which include the ranges of the Central Alps and other uplands such as the Bayerische Alpen. The former East Germany was made up largely of the Northern German Plain but also included a small part of the Central German Upland while the former West Germany included parts of all three regions. The principal rivers are the Danube, Ems, Weser, Moselle and the Elbe with its tributaries, as well as the most important commercial waterway in Europe, the Rhine River. Major Cities (pop. est.); Berlin 3,471,000, Hamburg 1,706,000, Munich 1,216,300, Cologne 961,600, Frankfurt 663,600, Essen 624,600, Dortmund 602,400, Stuttgart 598,000, Dusseldorf 577,600, Bremen 552,700 (1992). Land Use; forested 30%, pastures 15%, agricultural-cultivated 34%, other 21% (1993).

CLIMATE: Germany has a continental climate in the western regions of the country with strong Atlantic influences in the northwest causing the winters to be mild but stormy. Further inland the winter temperatures are lower and the summers are warm with slightly higher temperatures in the southwest. A temperate climate is experienced in the eastern regions with an Atlantic influence giving rise to mild winters and cool summers. Due to a stronger Alpine influence rather than the Atlantic in the interior, conditions are generally wetter and colder at higher altitudes with snow lying in the mountains for some time. Average annual precipitation in Berlin is 592 mm (23 inches) and average annual temperature ranges are from 0.5 degrees Celsius (31 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 19 degrees Celsius (66 degrees Fahrenheit) in July.

PEOPLE: The population is almost entirely Germanic with Germans accounting for 94.4% of the population. Other ethnic minorities include the Danes, Turks, Italians, Greeks, Spanish, Slovaks and Serbs.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 222 persons per sq km (574 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 85.3% urban, 14.7% rural (1990). Sex Distribution; 48.1% male, 51.9% female (1989). Life Expectancy at Birth; 70.9 years male, 77.2 years female (1988). Age Breakdown; 15% under 15, 21% 15 to 29, 22% 30 to 44, 20% 45 to 59, 15% 60 to 74, 7% 75 and over (1992). Birth Rate; 10.4 per 1,000 (1991). Death Rate; 11.4 per 1,000 (1991). Increase Rate; -1.0 per 1,000 (1991). Infant Mortality Rate; 6.8 per 1,000 live births (1992).

RELIGIONS: Mostly Christians with around 50% of the population Protestant, predominantly Lutheran while 45% are Roman Catholic. Other religious minorities include Muslims.

LANGUAGES: The official language is German with the standard German known as High German (Hochdeutsch) which is used in the national media and for educational purposes. Most Germans have their own dialect depending on the region.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained (former West Germany): less than primary education 0.9%, primary and lower secondary 67.2%, primary and upper secondary 17.7%, higher 14.2% (1989). Literacy; N/A.

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: On May 23, 1949 the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG or West Germany) was formed out of the occupied US, British and French allied zones. On Oct. 7, 1949 the Soviet controlled eastern half became the Germany Democratic Republic (GDR or East Germany).

West Germany; The FRG with its capital at Bonn developed into a strong parliamentary democracy under its first post war Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer and in May 1955 the FRG gained full independence. In the same year it joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) while during the 1950's and 1960's there was rapid and sustained economic growth which was enhanced by the FRG's membership to the European Community (EC) in 1958. In 1954 Heinrich Lübke of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) became the country's President and was reelected in 1964. In Jan. 1963 Germany and France signed a Friendship Treaty. In Oct. 1963 Chancellor Adenauer retired and was succeeded by Ludwig Erhard, designer of the "economic miracle". During the late 1960's and 1970's there were

widespread demonstrations in protest to socioeconomic events and policies which resulted in the passing of new security laws. In 1972 during the Munich Olympic Games eight Arab "Black September" terrorists seized the Israeli athletes' residence killing two and taking nine hostages which resulted in the death of the hostages as well as four of the kidnappers after security forces attempted to rescue the hostages. In Sept. 1973 the FRG joined the United Nations (UN) and in Dec. 1979 Helmut Schmidt's government approved the controversial installation of US intermediate range nuclear missiles. In Sept. 1982 Helmut Kohl formed a coalition government which was reelected in Mar. 1983. In Dec. 1987 the FRG and USSR signed a treaty for the dismantling of the US intermediate range nuclear missiles.

East Germany; In the German Democratic Republic (GDR) the control of the East German Communist Party was absolute under the Stalinist, Walter Ulbricht until 1971. In May 1955 the GDR joined the Warsaw Pact and under a Warsaw Pact initiative constructed the Berlin Wall in Aug. 1961. In 1968 the GDR forces assisted in the Soviet led invasion of Czechoslovakia and in the same year the GDR was constitutionally declared a socialist state. In May 1971 Ulbricht resigned and was succeeded by Eric Honecker. In Dec. 1972 both the FRG and GDR signed a treaty which guaranteed the inviolability of the Berlin Wall and in Sept. 1973 the GDR joined the UN. In Sept. 1987 Honecker became the first GDR head of state to visit the FRG.

Unified Germany; With the collapse of communism across Eastern Europe in 1989, the impact was quickly felt in East Germany. Popular demonstrations marked the 40th anniversary of East Germany and Erich Honecker was ousted. The Berlin Wall, a symbol since Aug. 13, 1961 of the division of Germany, was torn down in late 1989 and at midnight on Oct. 3, 1990 the two nations were formally reunified to create one German nation with Dr Richard von Weizsacker as President and Dr Helmut Kohl as Chancellor. In Dec. 1990 the leading center-right coalition of the Christian Democrats (CDU), Christian Social Union (CSU) and the Free Democrats (FDP) won general elections under Chancellor Kohl who formed new cabinet in mid-January. On Jan. 20, 1991 the CDU lost control of the Hesse in State elections to the Social Democrats (SPD) which formed a coalition with the Greens. In early 1991 Chancellor Kohl's new cabinet announced a 7.5% surcharge on income taxes and increases the prices of tobacco and oil products to raise a further DM 46 billion to develop the east and fund increasing unemployment benefits there. On Mar. 14, 1991 the Soviet authorities smuggled Honecker to the Soviet Union, although in 1992 after the collapse of the Soviet Union, he surrendered and returned to Germany to stand trial on charges of manslaughter for the order to shoot escapees. On June 20, 1991 a Bundestag vote decided that the seat of government be shifted as soon as possible from Bonn to Berlin that further assisted in lifting moral in the east. In 1991 there were also increases in the activity of small groups of neo-Nazi skin heads, especially in the east, who systematically harassed foreigners which they blamed for increasing unemployment in both parts of the country. In Sept. 1991 an African was burnt to death in a hostel fire and later that month in Saxony in the east racial tensions erupted as large groups of neo-Nazi youths jeered by onlookers repeatedly attacked the hostels of displaced European refugees seeking asylum. On Oct. 3, 1991 the first anniversary of unification, right-wing youth groups in many parts of the country attacked refugee hostels violently. In response the CDU announced plans to amend the

constitution to restrict the categories in which refugees are able to claim asylum. However, the CDU's coalition partner the FDP refused to support the bill, causing further signs of problems within the ruling coalition government. Towards the end of the year the FDP's policies on issues such as abortion were closer to the SDPs while the CDU's woes improved due to their harder line on refugees and the improvement in the east's economy and unemployment. In Dec. 1991 Germany agreed during the EU summit in Maastricht, the Netherlands, to form a more unified political and economic-monetary union. Also in 1991 Germany contributed some US\$5.5 billion towards the United States costs in the Gulf War as it was unable to send troops outside of the NATO area due to the country's constitution, while other military aid was donated to other alliance partners. On Jan. 1, 1992 a new law enabled citizens to examine their Stazi (former East German secret police) files, with some 10,000 people applying in the first week. In Jan. and Feb. 1992 economic tensions rose as the western German pay round got underway, with steelworkers demanding a 10.5% wage increase although settling for a 6.4% increase and narrowly averting a national steelworkers strike. In Mar. 1992 the CDU defense minister Gerhard Stoltenberg was forced to resign over revelations that tanks had been illegally shipped to Turkey and that German armaments had been used by Turkish forces against the Kurds. In April 1992 the government had a showdown with the public-sector trade unions who were prepared to accept an independent arbitrator's compromise of a 5.4% wage increase, although Kohl wanted to keep the deal below the psychological 5% barrier claiming that Germans were living beyond their means. On Apr. 27, 1992 the unions initiated their first industrial action in 18 years hitting the transport, postal and refuse sectors. Also on the same day Germany's most consistently popular politician, foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, announced his planned retirement for May 17, 1992 exactly 18 years after gaining the post. Genscher was succeeded by the justice minister Klaus Kinkel, known for his plain discourse. The public-sector strikes were further increased eventually forcing the government to settle the wage increase demand for a deal just above the 5.4% after eleven days. On May 18, 1992 another strike by IG Metall, the country's largest union was averted for a 5.4% wage increase deal. On June 26, 1992 the Bundestag voted to extend the former East Germany's liberal abortion rules, allowing for on demand abortion within the first 3 months of pregnancy, to the whole of Germany. However, following an appeal by conservative MPs the Constitutional Court suspended the new legislation pending a ruling on its constitutional standing. In Aug. 1992 racial tensions erupted in the eastern port city of Rostock where hundreds of extreme right youths attacked a Romanian and Vietnamese hostel for five days cheered by thousands of local onlookers. After fierce battles between the youths and police the hostel was burnt after police had bused away the residents. As a result of a marked increase in violence against foreigners the coalition government ended its internal argument over amendments to the constitution on restricting asylum regulations and in Oct. 1992 jointly presented its proposals to the Bundestag. Along with the banning of several neo-Nazi groups it was hoped that these amendments based on the Geneva Convention for Refugees would ease the situation. In Sept. 1992 the European currency system was marked by unprecedented turbulence which resulted in intense criticism of Germany particularly by Britain and Italy which felt that the Bundesbank's high-interest-rate policy had contributed to their own domestic economic problems and forced them to pull out of the exchange-rate mechanism. On Oct. 8, 1992 at the Maastricht ratification debate in Bonn, Germany was forced to make

heavy concessions to the European Union skeptics to ensure the passage of the treaty. On Oct. 19, 1992 police found the decomposed body of the German Greens founder Petra Kelly who had been shot three times by her companion and fellow campaigner, Gert Bastian, before killing himself. In Nov. 1992 two neo-Nazi youths were charged with murder and arson after they confessed to the firebombing of a house where three Turkish women lost their lives. On Jan. 3, 1993 Economic Minister Jurgen Mollemann resigned of a scandal involving the promotion of a relation's product to several supermarket chains and resulted in Klaus Kinkel becoming leader of the FDP. On Jan. 12, 1993 a Berlin court dropped manslaughter charges against Erich Honecker in connection with his shoot-to-kill policy in the former East Germany. On Feb. 18, 1993 east German engineering-sector employers tore up a 1991 wage increase contract which was to see east German workers salaries increased to that of their west German counterparts during 1994, however with productivity running at one-third the west German workers east German employers complained that they would go out of business if they were to offer the wage increases. In March 1993 the government announced the Solidarity Pact over the rising cost of unification and lack of confidence. The pact delayed the much needed austerity measures and allowed for the reintroduction of a special income tax surcharge to take effect in 1995, however with announcement by the finance minister that the federal deficit in 1993 would be closer to DM 70 billion versus the DM 43 billion originally forecast combined with increasing unemployment payments the government faced a spending crisis. As a result Germany's independent central bank, the Bundesbank, called for strict control of public finances and announced that as a result of the governments failure to cut spending that there would be no lowering of Germany's high interest rates. On May 3, 1993 the leader of the SDP, Bjorn Engholm resign from his office after admitting he had lied to a parliamentary investigating committee while Gunther Krause of the CDU also resigned on May 6, 1993 following a series of scandal allegations involving the misuse of public funds. On May 12, 1993 Max Streibl the prime minister of Bavaria announced his resignation after it was alleged he had accepted free holidays and flights from a Bavarian aircraft manufacturer. In early May 1993 the IG Metall workers union began strikes over the 9% engineering-sector wage increase offer and by May 14, 1993 a deal had been struck that allayed the equalization of east-west wages until 1996 although provided an immediate increase settlement of just less than the original 26%. On May 26, 1993 Bundestag deputies were jeered by thousands of protesters as the government parties finally ended years of arguments and agreed to amendments to the constitution that tightened Germany's open-door policy on foreign asylum seekers. On May 29, 1993 five Turks, two women and three children, died after their house in Solingen was set on fire and by the end of the year four youths were arrested in connection with the attack. In mid-June 1993 the SDP members elected Rudolf Scharping to replace Engholm as party leader. In August 1993 currency speculation developed over the battle between the government and the Bundesbank that lead to the widening of the European exchange rate mechanism (ERM) from 2.5% to 15%. In mid-August 1993 the government announced a DM 22 billion savings package that formed its second attempt to control public spending. In Sept. 1993 Kohl presented his "Report on Safeguarding Germany's Economic Future" that called for a new flexibility and dynamism in the society. In mid-Sept. 1993 Chancellor Kohl announced his support of Steffen Heitmann, an east German and CDU justice minister, for presidential elections to be held in Feb. 1994. On Sept. 16, 1993 three former East German minister were

sentenced to jail for their part in the shootings at the Berlin Wall. In October 1993 the Bundesbank's president Helmut Schlesinger was succeeded by Hans Tietmeyer and Germany became the last of the 12 EU members to complete the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty after the constitutional court had rejected several objections. In late Oct. 1993 the former head of the Stasi secret police, Erich Mielke, was sentenced to six years jail for the killing of two policemen in 1931. In Nov. 1993 unemployment in western Germany had reached a postwar high of 2,490,000 or 7.8%. Also during 1993 the UN appealed for Germany to find a way around its constitutional restrictions and play a full part in international security missions.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Euro divided into 100 cents.

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$1,908,570,000,000 (1993). National Debt; DM 651,180,000,000 (1993). Imports; DM 600,966,000,000 (1994). Exports; DM 673,121,000,000 (1994). Tourism Receipts; USD \$10,587,000,000 (1994). Balance of Trade; DM 72,160,000,000 (1994). Economically Active Population; 40,179,000 or 49.5% of total population (1993). Unemployed; 8.7% (1993).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partners are the EU, Switzerland, Japan and the USA.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Antimony, Arsenic, Barley, Bismuth, Coal, Cobalt, Fish, Fruit and Vegetables, Grapes and Wine, Iron Ore, Lead, Lignite, Livestock, Milk and Dairy Products, Oats, Oil and Natural Gas, Potash, Potatoes, Rye, Salt, Sugar Beets, Timber, Wheat, Zinc.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Aircraft, Agriculture, Cement, Chemicals, Ceramics, Computers, Electrical and Electronic Equipment, Food Processing, Forestry and Fishing, Glass, Iron and Steel, Machinery, Mining, Motor Vehicles, Non Ferrous Metals, Optical Equipment, Petroleum Products, Precision Instruments, Railway Equipment, Textiles, Tools.

MAIN EXPORTS: Chemicals, Food, Instruments, Iron and Steel, Lignite, Machinery, Motor Vehicles, Potash, Railway Equipment, Textiles, Yarns and Fabrics.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 91,432 km (56,813 mi) (1991), passenger-km 57,034,000,000 (35,439,000,000 passenger-mi) (1991), cargo ton-km 82,219,000,000 (56,312,000,000 short ton-mi) (1991). Roads (former W.Germany); length 496,652 km (308,605 mi) (1989). Vehicles; cars 32,007,000 (1991), trucks and buses 1,619,000 (1991). Merchant Marine; vessels 1,574 (1992), deadweight tonnage 5,636,000 (1992). Air Transport; passenger-km 114,312,000,000 (71,030,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 4,410,000,000 (3,020,000,000 short ton-mi) (1990).

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 355 with a total circulation of 26,425,000 (1991). Radio; receivers 36,186,000 (1994). Television; receivers 32,314,000 (1994). Telephones; units 36,899,800 (1993).

MILITARY: 339,900 (1995) total active duty personnel with 68.8% army, 8.4% navy and 22.8% air force while military expenditure accounts for 1.6% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).