



Germany

Assessment: Good

Trend: ⇔

Capital: Berlin

Type of Government: Federal Republic

Head of Government: Chancellor Gerard

Schroeder (since 27 October 1998)

Minister of Foreign Affairs: Joschka Fischer

Population: 83,029,536

Human Development Index Ranking 2002: 17

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Germany has a **good** record of support for democracy abroad, and has taken increasingly assertive steps to become an honest broker in international conflicts and a benevolent promoter and financier of democratic principles and governance. Such efforts are driven by Germany's dual quests for sovereign consolidation following reunification and for more active international engagement. Germany has conducted its democracy support policy through bilateral assistance to grassroots activities and intense involvement in multilateral organizations, particularly the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU). Unilateral responses to democratic threats in Africa, Latin America or Asia, however, are chosen carefully. Economic sanctions, in particular, have gained German support only if imposed by multilateral bodies. Germany has publicly supported democratic opposition movements to dislodge entrenched dictatorships, granted asylum to many democratic activists and been the main driving force for the promotion of democratic principles in the EU and the accession countries as well as in the EU's international policy.¹

Germany's commitment to the promotion of democracy is subject to some criticism, however, in light of its close ties to non-democratic regimes, including continued weapons exports.² The team of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, while reducing the primacy of shorter-term economic interests in the conduct of Germany's international relations, has still made such self-serving considerations an important dimension of foreign policy, sometimes at the expense of democratic principles.³

FOREIGN RELATIONS BACKGROUND

Following reunification, Germany took its place in the international system as a more "normal" country, less constrained to change in world affairs. Under the Social Democratic/Green coalition of Chancellor Schroeder and Foreign Minister Fischer, Germany has participated in military operations outside the NATO area (Kosovo, Afghanistan) for the first time since World War II. Especially since 1998, Germany has pursued a more active role in Europe and the rest of the world.⁴

Since the defeat of the Nazi regime in 1945, German foreign policy has sought to balance national self-restraint with staunch support for multilateralism. For historical reasons, this approach has been manifested in the promotion of collective solutions rather than isolationism, and in preventive action rather than full-fledged interventionism. Germany's most important foreign policy platforms are the EU, NATO, OSCE, the Council of Europe (CoE), and the UN, where Germany has been pushing for a permanent seat on the Security Council. Through these institutions and in its bilateral relations, Germany's support for democracy abroad has been quite strong.

Germany's vision for a greater international role has been widely supported by the international community. Germany hosted the UN conference for an interim government for Afghanistan in December 2001 at the explicit request of the UN, the Afghan leadership and the governments of the neighboring states. Even among non-democratic regimes, such as China, Germany is less likely to be perceived as pursuing a



political-cultural quest for geo-strategic advantage than are many other Western powers. These regimes thus look to Germany to mediate democracy-related issues for them in the international arena.

Relations with neighbors are largely friendly, inclusive and cooperative, apart from occasional tensions such as those arising from democratic failings in Slovakia under the Meciar government and in Belarus under President Lukashenko. Germany also faced a tricky challenge with regard to troubling political trends in Austria, ultimately supporting the EU-sponsored diplomatic isolation of the country's right wing government.

Russia is the single most important case where German foreign policy has been guided by traditional conceptions of national interest, rather than by a desire to promote democratic practices and values. Despite indiscriminate use of force against civilians in Russia's would-be breakaway republic of Chechnya, and increasing levels of state repression across Russia, Germany has consistently opted for cooperation while downplaying or ignoring democratic shortcomings with governments in Moscow. Official relations have never been as good as during the Schroeder-Putin era, yet within Germany, criticism towards what some view as the political leadership's excessively accommodationist policy has been mounting.⁵

RESPONSE TO OVERTHROW OF DEMOCRATICALLY-ELECTED GOVERNMENTS

Germany rarely remains passive in the face of an overthrow of a democratically elected government. German responses have included rhetorical condemnation, the freezing of diplomatic relations, reductions in cultural exchanges and carefully calibrated suspensions of either trade or development aid. Germany has voted consistently on the pro-democracy side in the UN Security Council and General Assembly following coups or other disruptions in the democratic order.⁶

Germany joined the UN oil and trade embargo against Yugoslavia in 1992, and supported subsequent efforts by the UN and EU to expand and toughen sanctions. German governments publicly and financially supported the democratic opposition in Serbia and deployed election monitors in 2000.

In the case of the Pakistani coup in 1999, the German government summoned Pakistan's ambassador on the very evening of the coup to express public concern over the military's ousting of the Sharif Administration and to urge a non-

violent resolution. Swift, but less commendable, action followed the unsuccessful April 2002 coup in Venezuela, when President Hugo Chavez was forced to resign before the coup plot disintegrated. The German government called for the crisis to be resolved without more violence, but did not explicitly invoke democratic principles or concerns.⁷ With regard to Haiti, Germany fully endorsed the EU common policy of 1994 to restore democratic rule. The EU Commission viewed democratic restoration as a prerequisite for normalization of relations between the EU countries and Haiti. In a statement in 1999, the EU urged the Haitian leadership to hold democratic elections and offered its support for preparing and conducting them.

The creation of a coalition government in Austria that included Haider's right-wing party set off alarm bells around Europe. In several capitals, officials feared that Haider's disturbing anti-immigrant rhetoric would be translated into policy and thereby erode Austrian democracy. Germany supported the EU-led diplomatic isolation of the incoming government, touching off some controversy at home in the process.⁸ The conservative German opposition criticized the government, stating, "Germany has a responsibility to act as a mediator rather than stir up differences."⁹ When the sanctions were lifted in September 2000, Schroeder said he would neither travel to Austria that year nor receive any official visits from Vienna. The Austrian precedent led to a German-backed initiative in the EU's Treaty of Nice, which introduced a process for monitoring states viewed as at risk of violating EU principles of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

RESPONSE TO MANIPULATION OF ELECTORAL PROCESSES

Over the past decade, Germany has demonstrated a strong commitment to democratic electoral processes abroad. Throughout the 1990s, Germany deployed election monitors worldwide under the auspices of a number of multilateral organizations, publicly condemned electoral malfeasance, and supported imposition of sanctions in some cases.¹⁰

In response to flawed elections in Africa, the former Soviet Union and elsewhere, Germany supported EU recommended actions, which included strong public criticism, collective sanctions, and the monitoring of elections. Germany has contributed observers to all relevant election



monitoring missions over the past decade, from Namibia and Kenya to Belarus and countries of the former Soviet Union where OSCE missions frequently found sitting governments guilty of electoral manipulation. Most recently, in February 2002, the German government condemned the flawed electoral process in Zimbabwe, charging that an irresponsible regime was driving Zimbabwe into the ecological, social and political abyss. Germany joined the EU in imposing sanctions against Zimbabwean government, including denying President Mugabe and some twenty of his cronies entry into all member countries of the EU and freezing their assets were frozen. Development Minister Heidi Wieczorek-Zeul reiterated, "there will be no cooperation with the Mugabe regime."¹¹ Aid was halted, except for HIV/AIDS and anti-poverty projects. In Namibia, Germany remained silent with regard to President Nujoma's 1999 bid to change the constitution in order to stay in power for a third term.

PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRACY

Germany's active promotion of democracy through foreign policy reached a turning point in 1998 with the change of government from Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Kinkel to the Schroeder-Fischer team. Development cooperation was elevated both in institutional and financial terms. A range of policy areas with democracy agendas, such as the Central and Eastern Europe program *Transform* and the *Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe*, were transferred to the Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (*Bundesministerium fuer Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit, BMZ*), which acquired a seat on Germany's national security council. In 2001, the agency's budget was 7.2 billion DEM, of which a relatively modest percentage went to the UN and international NGOs. Sponsored projects and programs concern mostly conflict prevention, building democratic structures, and strengthening civil society.

In multilateral bodies such as the UN, EU, NATO, OSCE and the CoE, Germany has been a steadfast supporter and perennial initiator of international democracy efforts.¹² The Schroeder/Fischer government increased the German staff in the civilian missions of the UN and the OSCE. Germany lobbied for a stronger mandate for the OSCE and its related Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Currently,

Germans account for some 10 percent of all the OSCE field mission international staff, and Berlin finances about the same share of the cost of the largest OSCE missions (Kosovo, Bosnia, Croatia). In 1999, the Foreign Ministry introduced a training program for UN and OSCE field missions (*Aktion Ziviles Friedenspersonal*), which trains about 250 people annually.¹³

Within Europe, Germany is the key advocate for incorporating the European Charter of Basic Rights into EU treaties so as to "strengthen the democratic principle within the EU."¹⁴ With regard to the EU accession states, Germany has been a strong voice insisting that would-be members meet the 1993 Copenhagen criteria.¹⁵ Under these criteria, countries are eligible for EU accession only if they meet specific standards governing democratic governance, the rule of law, and the protection of human and minority rights. For example, German officials made clear that under the Meciar government, Slovakia fell well short of meeting the requisite democracy-related standards for EU as well as NATO membership.

In 1999, Germany proposed the *European Stability Pact* for the political and economic consolidation of Southeastern Europe,¹⁶ which epitomizes German democratization efforts over the past decade. Within the Pact, the bulk of German aid is devoted to democracy-promotion programs such as strengthening independent media and civil society, institution building, and education.¹⁷ Germany has also participated militarily in all UN missions in the Balkan region, assisted with civil policing, provided electoral-related assistance, and supported mediation stabilization efforts in Montenegro and Macedonia.

German development policy overseas rests on the principles of "human rights, democratic structures, rule of law and good governance."¹⁸ Beginning under Chancellor Kohl, Development Minister Carl-Dieter Spranger pioneered efforts to ensure that German development assistance was conditioned on a country's ability to meet these principles.¹⁹ On the basis of these criteria, Germany suspended aid to Togo and Zaire in the 1990s, and supported Nicaragua only after the defeat of the Sandinistas. In 1999, the Schroeder government urged its colleagues in the G-8 to condition debt relief on "responsible governance and poverty relief."²⁰

Germany's policy towards Africa has undergone three phases over the past decade. During the Kohl years, some 40 percent of Official



Development Assistance (ODA) was directed towards Africa. Under the 1993 *Ten Guidelines of Accra*, a document designed to stimulate political reform, aid was conditioned on political stability and the protection of human rights. In the late 1990s, Germany's involvement in Africa was much diminished politically and financially. Embassies and cultural institutes were closed, and few politicians continued to lobby for assistance for Africa. Over the last two years, there has been renewed involvement in Africa. Berlin has stated its commitment to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the New Economic Plan for African Development (NEPAD), which hopes to attract external investment in exchange for political and economic reforms.²¹

German assistance to developing countries fell to a historic low of 0.26 percent of GNP in 1998, a constant level of about 5.5 billion Euros. A little less than one-half was devoted to social infrastructure and services, which includes support for state and civil society, basic education, and demographic and health programs. Support for democracy programs is still a relatively small proportion of total development aid. Consistent with an EU resolution, however, ODA, including the share dedicated to democracy programs, is scheduled to rise in the coming years.

German party foundations (such as the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, and the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung) also play a key role in good governance capacity building abroad. They receive most of their funding from the BMZ and run a large number of overseas offices and political development and training projects, including in the Middle East. These entities cooperate with civil society actors in the target countries to strengthen oversight of government activities and defend political rights as well as civil liberties. They "have proved successful instruments in generating networks of contacts between domestic and foreign legislators, party leaders and activists, trade unionists, journalists and politically-active academics, and in particular in providing easier contact with political oppositions. (...) This has given [Germany] major influence abroad at the sub-governmental level."²² Civil society projects and academic and cultural exchange are also undertaken by the *Goethe Institute Inter Nationes* (128 institutes in 76 countries) and the *Robert Bosch Foundation*. While the German media remains a key forum for the discussion of foreign policy issues, new loci for debate have emerged

from intensified links between government, NGOs, churches and business.²³ New think tanks have been created, and traditional ones have freed themselves from domestic political forces.²⁴

POLICY TOWARDS ENTRENCHED DICTATORSHIPS

German policy towards entrenched dictatorships frequently entails open support of democratic opposition forces and the imposition of sanctions, if under the auspices of multilateral bodies. Germany supported the EU suspension of aid to Sudan, Togo, Zaire, Sierra Leone, Haiti and Malawi in the 1990s. In the case of Togo, Germany shunned the regime and publicly sided with the opposition in the run-up to the 1998 elections. In Nigeria, German companies, with the support of the German government, withdrew from the country on grounds of human rights violations under the Abacha military regime.

Although many democracy and human rights activists have complained that Germany and the EU have not taken a sufficiently strong stance against the autocratic rule of Aleksandr Lukashenko in Belarus, Germany has publicly criticized the regime and pursued a policy that combines pressure and dialogue. In 1998, the German government participated in the EU-wide action of a temporary closure of all embassies in Minsk. In the same year, following the initiative of the German delegates to the European Parliament (EP), a dialogue was established between legislators, representatives of the "Charter 97" democracy movement and the independent media in Belarus. On that occasion, a German parliamentarian reiterated that the EP continued to support the legitimate parliament that Lukashenko had dissolved in 1997. An unsuccessful effort to press for political liberalization was undertaken by the German Hans-Georg Wieck, head of the OSCE mission to Belarus from 1997 to 2001. While Wieck succeeded in persuading Lukashenko to allow for the presence of OSCE election monitors in 2001, the elections were, nonetheless, deeply flawed. In light of mounting personal threats Wieck stepped down, yet he remained adamant about retaining contacts with Belarus. "Democracy can only come through participation. Boycott does not help."²⁵ He also reiterated that the democratic opposition had to be supported despite its weakness and fragmentation. German NGOs and party foundations helped collect money to shelter the prominent, pro-democratic Belarusian writer, Wassil Bykau.²⁶



Germany has also tried to varying degrees to promote democratic political reform in North Korea and China. Germany has supported EU efforts to encourage the North Korean government to pursue reconciliation with the South and to undertake desperately needed economic and political reforms. With respect to China, German policy is driven by the view that “democratization will never work as a transfer of ideology, but solely

as a functional part of a successful economic policy.”²⁷ While this could be dismissed as nothing more than an excuse to carry on business as usual by deflecting criticism from democracy and human rights proponents, the Schroeder/Fischer government has sought to address human rights issues under the heading of a “judicial dialogue,” a mostly sub-governmental approach.

¹ Since 1998 for example, the German government devoted 300.000 Euro for the initiative “Writers in Exile,” and four cities (Berlin, Frankfurt/Main, Weimar, Hanover) are committed to become “Cities of Asylum” for persecuted artists. Koch, Walter. “Das Elend neuer Grauzonen. Zum Zustand”Europaeischer Fluchtoeffentlichkei.” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 11 April 2002, <<http://www.business.reuters.com>>.

² According to the 2001 annual report of the platform “Gemeinsame Konferenz Kirche und Entwicklung” (GKKE), the German weapon export industry has become more transparent after 1998. Yet its amount has –despite initial promises of the new government - not decreased throughout the survey period. Germany is the world’s 5th most important weapon exporter, selling military equipment of around 2.5 billion Euro abroad. While the majority goes to NATO countries (number one recipient is Turkey), still nearly 50 % of all exports are sold to developing countries as varied as Israel, Uzbekistan, South Africa and South Korea. Jung, Rainer. “Das Lob fuer die rot-gruene Ruestungsexport-Politik haelt sich in Grenzen.” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 18 Dec. 2001. <<http://www.business.reuters.com>>.

³ “Germany resolves to pursue its interests.” *The Economist*, 13 July 1996, <<http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe>>. In the same article, Angelika Volle of Bonn’s Foreign Policy Institute is quoted saying that “Germany’s international agenda is driven by business, and by what business can do for employment.”

⁴ Otte, Max. *A Rising Middle Power? German Foreign Policy in Transformation, 1989 – 1999*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000. p. 200.

⁵ A highly qualified voice of criticism towards the accommodating rhetoric of the *Petersburg Dialogue*, as the German-Russian bilateral cultural relationship has been labeled, was raised by Margolina, Sonja. “Toedlicher Rettungsring. Die russische Nomenklatura simuliert die Zivilgesellschaft.” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 Aug. 2001, p. 39. Chancellor Schroeder’s rhetoric defense of Putin’s moves against freedom of the media and freedom of speech in an interview with the radiostation Echo Moskwy in April 2001 are documented in Siegl, Elfi. “Wissen Sie, dass Sie im Antiregierungssender sprechen?” Bundeskanzler Schroeder stellt sich im Rundfunk der russischen Oeffentlichkeit. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 April 2001, p. 5.

⁶ See voting patterns in the UN SC and UN General Assembly at <<http://unbisnet.un.org/webpac-1.2/index.htm>>.

⁷ “Nations deplore violence in Venezuela, urge return to democracy.” *EFE News Services* 12 April 2002 <<http://www.efenews.com>>.

⁸ Dempsey, Judy and Wolfgang Proissl. “Schroeder erinnert Berlusconi and ‘gemeinsame Werte’ Europas.” *Financial Times Deutschland* 15 May 2001.

⁹ “Stoiber: Ich habe mit Haider politisch nichts gemein.” *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 Feb. 2000.

¹⁰ Between 1996 and 1998, 400 German election observers were deployed to 48 missions, mostly in CEE, CIS, SEE and Russia. In 1999, 13 of the 100 EU-election monitors for Nigerian elections were German. In the same year, 14 Germans participated in the monitoring mission to Indonesia. In 2000, Germany deployed 172 monitors to 22 monitoring missions, among them the presidential elections in Russia (25 German monitors). In 2001, Germany sent 83 election monitors to 15 monitoring missions, among them the presidential elections in Belarus (14 German monitors). German observers were also deployed to the EU monitoring mission in East Timor. All numbers available from “5. Bericht der Bundesregierung über ihre Menschenrechtspolitik in den auswärtigen Beziehungen” <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/ausserpolitik/menschenrechte/mr_inhalte_ziele/mrb/kapitel_6_html>.

¹¹ “Deutschland ueberdenkt Entwicklungshilfe fuer Simbabwe.” *Reuters German Language News* 14 March 2002, <<http://www.business.reuters.com>>.

¹² In the UN, Germany shares the principle that “human rights, democracy and good governance need to filtrate into all political realms, most of all our peace- and development policy.” (see “5. Bericht der Bundesregierung über ihre



Menschenrechtspolitik in den auswärtigen Beziehungen.” <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/aussenpolitik/menschenrechte/mr_inhalte_ziele/mrb/kapitel_6_html>. The German government has supported the counseling services and the human rights field missions of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. During its EU Presidency, Germany lobbied intensely on behalf of the *UN Additional Protocol Against Any Discrimination of Women*, underscoring its strong support for women’s rights and the role of the UN in promoting them. In 2001, Germany lobbied in the UN commission on human rights for a Cuban text contending that economic development and fulfillment of basic human needs are the “sine qua non condition for an effective democracy,” and launched a successful initiative in the Commission to adopt its proposed text on “adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living.” See Dennis, Michael J. *The American Journal of International Law*, 01/2002. <<http://www.business.reuters.com>>.

¹³ As of spring 2002, this “Aktion Ziviles Friedenspersonal” provided over a pool of 700 trained stand-by personnel. <www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/infoservice/presse/index_html?bereich_id=17&type_id=0&archiv_id=2314detail=1>.

¹⁴ <<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>>.

¹⁵ “5. Bericht der Bundesregierung über ihre Menschenrechtspolitik in den auswärtigen Beziehungen” <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/aussenpolitik/menschenrechte/mr_inhalte_ziele/mrb/kapitel_6_html>.

¹⁶ “The initiative for this regional and multi-dimensional stabilization concept came from the German Foreign Ministry.” (Nachtwei, Winfried. *Gewaltvorbeugung konkret: Unterstuetzung internationaler Massnahmen der Krisenpraevention und Friedenserhaltung durch die Bundesregierung*.

<http://www.nachtwei.de/zkb/gewaltvorbeugen_konkret.htm>.

The *European Stability Pact* was launched against the background of Slobodan Milosevic’s continuing hold on power in Belgrad. Serbia was not included as a recipient of the Pact aid flows until 2002. An important political motivation behind the Pact and its early activities was thus the need to signal to the people of Serbia that Europe was willing to help them only once the Milosevic regime was removed from power. The Pact also played a role in wider international efforts to support the democratic opposition in Serbia, which succeeded in toppling Milosevic following elections in September 2000. See Cox, Marcus, et al. “Democracy, Security and The Future of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.” 4 April 2001. <http://www.esiweb.org/pages/rep/rep_stab3.html>.

¹⁷ See exact financing in Nachtwei, Winfried. “*Gewaltvorbeugung konkret: Unterstuetzung internationaler Massnahmen der Krisenpraevention und Friedenserhaltung durch die Bundesregierung*.” <http://www.nachtwei.de/zkb/gewaltvorbeugen_konkret.htm>.

¹⁸ Government of Germany. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *Entwicklungspolitik in der 15. Legislaturperiode*. <<http://www.bmz.de/infoteh/aktuell/ausgangslage/index.html>>.

¹⁹ Schweiz, C.W., “Entwicklungshilfe Ohne Ideologischen Ballast – Gespraech mit dem deutschen Minister Spranger.” *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, 17 March 1994 <<http://www.business.reuters.com>>.

²⁰ <<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>>.

²¹ Government of Germany. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *Entwicklungspolitik in der 15. Legislaturperiode*. <<http://www.bmz.de/infoteh/aktuell/ausgangslage/index.html>>.

²² Pinto-Duschinsky, Michael. “Foreign political aid: the German political foundations and their US counterparts.” *International Affairs* 67(1)/1991, p. 33 – 63.

²³ An example is the “*Forum fuer globale Fragen*” in Berlin, which brings public and private sector actors together. See <www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/infoservice/presse/index_html?bereich_id=17&type_id=0&archiv_id=742&detail=1>.

²⁴ Examples are the Berlin-based “European Stability Initiative” monitoring progress in South-eastern Europe, or the German Institute for Human Rights, informing the government on the human rights situation in Germany and abroad.²⁴ Other key players are the EastWest Institute and the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, which also hosts a European research cell (Conflict Prevention Network).

²⁵ “Im Bann des bizarren Praesidenten.” *Der Standard*, 3 Feb. 2001 <<http://www.business.reuters.com>>.

²⁶ “Weissrusslands Praesident Alexander Lukaschenko.” *Berliner Zeitung* 24 Jan. 2000. <<http://www.business.reuters.com>>.

²⁷ Krautscheid, Andreas. “Zehn Jahre Tienanmen. Ritualisierte Empoerug – oekonomische Kurzsichtigkeit?” *Internationale Politik* June 1999, p. 49-50.