



## At a glance

How is Germany perceived by people in other countries? What do they expect of or fear about Germany in light of the current global situation? What are the implications of those perceptions for Germany's work with other countries?

Thanks to GIZ's global network, we are in a position to answer these and other questions. Every three years since 2011, we have asked independent representatives from the worlds of business, research, politics and civil society to give us their impressions and views of Germany. The third and most recent of these studies was conducted in 2017 and involved 154 interviews in 24 countries.

Our findings provide food for thought and valuable pointers for key actors in the political, social and academic spheres. GIZ's goal is to further enrich the debate around international cooperation for sustainable development.

## Main findings

We compiled around 4,200 core statements from our interviewees. These show clearly that the picture of Germany remains generally positive. Compared with our previous surveys, however, the views expressed are more differentiated and include some new trends, suggesting that the picture of Germany is increasingly in a state of flux. The main findings are set out below.

**1. Constantly growing expectations:** Faced with the current global political situation, it seems that Germany is being called upon more than ever to play an active role. With the world perceived as being in turmoil, Europe and Germany are called on to act as guardians of Western values, especially as a counter-

weight to the USA, Russia and China. In 2011/2012, the general tone was one of gentle encouragement for Germany to have greater confidence in itself. In 2014/2015, the prevailing impression was that Germany needed to play a greater role in the Greek financial crisis out of a sense of duty, albeit unwillingly.

» *Germany is now in a position it never thought it would occupy – that of a leadership role, at least within Europe.* « Mexico

### 2. Respect for Germany's treatment of refugees:

Germany's response to the refugee crisis from 2015 onwards has brought it international attention and recognition. While there are many who would like Germany as a whole to be even more international in its outlook and more open towards other people and other languages, the country's treatment of refugees has added a more humanitarian side to the traditional image of Germans as hard-working and efficient.

» *Germany's response to the refugee crisis has been fantastic and honourable. The Germans should be proud of what they have done.* « Saudi Arabia

**3. Stable values, sound institutions:** Germany has remained true to itself in the face of many changes. It upholds justice and the rule of law, has stable institutions and a functioning welfare state, and overall it is regarded outside its borders as 'mature' and 'exemplary'. However, it is seen as relatively unprogressive, for example on issues such as gender equality, lesbian and gay rights and the structure of the family.

» *What impresses me most of all in Germany are the country's institutions. They are well run, and they work together efficiently.* « China

**4. A strong economy but with shortcomings:** A high-performing economy characterised by strong brands and high quality – Germany is still regarded as a leading economic hub, thanks in part to its dual system of vocational education and work-based training and its focus on applied research. Yet there are some who wonder whether Germany may be falling behind in our digital age. There is a perception that Germany has a lot of catching up to do when it comes to simply trying out new things and dealing positively with failure.

» *One wonders whether the Germans are missing the boat when it comes to the digital revolution.* « Mali

**5. Low marks for nation branding:** Once again, Germany is perceived as being weak in terms of nation branding. Why does it not market itself more vigorously and in a more varied light? Efforts to raise Germany's cultural profile have clearly proven inadequate despite all the evidence of considerable outside interest. Our interviewees question why Germany does not invest more extensively in cultural marketing as a strategic tool, a practice long since adopted by other nations.

» *Germany needs an idea and a strategy for what it wants to be, and then it needs to communicate them.* « United Kingdom

## Key elements of the survey methodology

Our findings are based on an empirical study conducted using qualitative methods. The main characteristics of the study are shown below:

- Countries with political, economic and/or historical links to Germany

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- Discerning interviewees from diverse backgrounds with a knowledge of Germany
- Flexible selection of interview topics
- Systematic documentation and evaluation of interviews

The interviewees and countries were chosen with a view to covering a variety of cultural landscapes, ethnicities and religions. We conducted between six and eight interviews per country.

## Country selection for Study III

<b>Africa</b>	Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda
<b>Americas</b>	Brazil, Canada, Mexico, USA
<b>Asia</b>	Afghanistan, China, India, Viet Nam
<b>Europe</b>	Poland, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine, United Kingdom
<b>MENA</b>	Egypt, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia

Interviewees were allowed to choose any number of topics from the list and to discuss other topics if they wished.

## Topics

- |                             |                    |            |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| • Economy                   | • Research         | • Culture  |
| • Environment               | • Health           | • Religion |
| • Security                  | • Education        | • Family   |
| • Technology                | • Migration        | • Media    |
| • International cooperation | • Political system | • Wildcard |

The findings present us with snapshots. The way we interpret them depends very much on the prevailing context at the time the interviews were conducted. The qualitative nature of the study enables GIZ to occupy its own niche in a market where quantitative methods predominate in nation brand surveys.

The study will be available from the end of April 2018 at [www.giz.de/eyes-of-others](http://www.giz.de/eyes-of-others).

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