



INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**IOWA**<sup>®</sup>  
economic development



# GLOBAL FOCUS

Marketing managers of the Iowa Economic Development Authority's (IEDA) International Trade Office can assist Iowa companies in developing and expanding export markets by offering:

**Individual Consultation** - Marketing managers are a valuable resource for export questions. From cultural etiquette to international documentation or market research to closing the deal, the International Trade Office can provide solutions and resources to exporting needs.

**In-house Training** - Training sessions designed specifically for your company. These training sessions include information on marketing, documentation, transportation, finance and other areas of the international transaction specific to your company and products.

**Educational Seminars** - Seminars and workshops are held throughout the year at various locations around the state. Topic suggestions by companies are always welcome.

**Trade Shows** - Trade shows are a great opportunity to meet potential buyers, test market interest and evaluate the competition. We can help select appropriate international trade fairs and assist with logistical support, show planning and follow-up.

**Trade Missions** - Trade missions are an efficient and cost effective means to meet potential distributors, end-users and collaborative partners. The International Trade Office arranges trade missions throughout the year to various countries. A complete itinerary including individual, pre-qualified appointments is arranged for each company. Current trade missions open for participation are available at [iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/intlevents](http://iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/intlevents)

**Targeted Market Research and Support** - Iowa companies have access to individualized assistance and support from Iowa's network of foreign offices and representatives in Asia, Europe and the Americas.

IN 2015,  
**IOWA EXPORTED**  
**\$13.1 BILLION**  
IN MANUFACTURED GOODS  
AND VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS

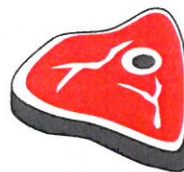
## IOWA'S TOP EXPORT CATEGORIES FOR MANUFACTURED AND VALUE-ADDED GOODS



**MACHINERY**  
\$2.29  
BILLION



**TRACTORS**  
\$1.40  
BILLION



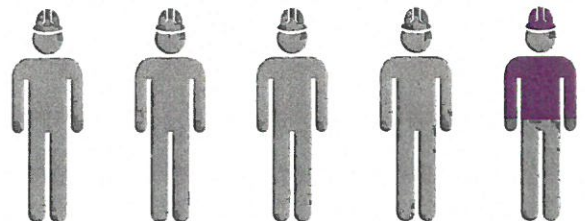
**MEAT**  
\$1.37  
BILLION



**CEREALS**  
\$1.20  
BILLION

SOURCE: Global Trade Information Service, 2015

IOWA'S EXPORTS  
**HAVE GROWN MORE THAN**  
**2X FASTER**  
**THAN STATE GDP SINCE 2003**



**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**  
SUPPORTS OVER  
**1 IN 5 JOBS**  
IN IOWA

SOURCE: Business Roundtable, 2014



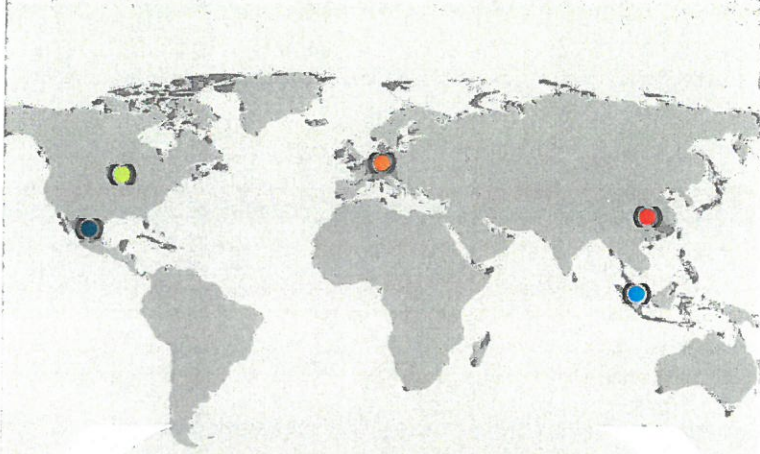
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Singapore



# GLOBAL REACH

The International Trade Office collaborates with Iowa's global offices and representatives to provide these individualized services to Iowa companies:

**General market information** - Preliminary market research to help identify market entry or market expansion opportunities.

**Industry/Market Analysis** - More in-depth market information to determine market potential, competitors, distribution, requirements and advertising channels.

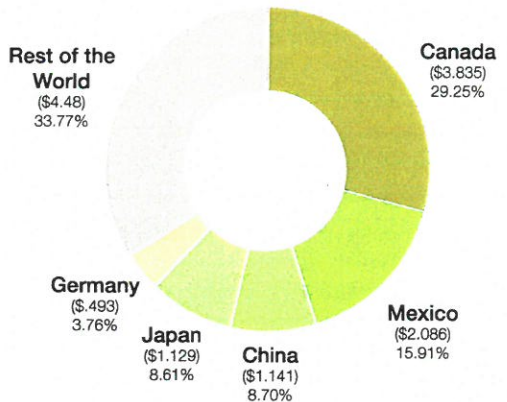
**Agent/Distributor/Sales Associate Search** - Designed to help Iowa companies secure a list of potential collaborative partners.

**Trade Show Marketing and Support** - Assist Iowa companies identify trade show opportunities abroad, facilitate pre-show promotion and arrange meetings during or outside show times.

**Customized Business Appointments** - One-on-one appointments and site visits can be arranged with prospects or local professional service providers for legal, financial, logistics and other business consulting services.

**Follow up Services** - Assistance with prospect follow up after an event or meeting.

CUSTOMERS IN  
**181**  
COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES PURCHASE IOWA-MADE GOODS AND SERVICES



SOURCE: Global Trade Information Service, 2015

More detailed information can be found at [iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/exports](http://iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/exports)





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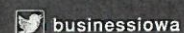
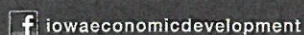
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Boundary representations are not necessarily authoritative.

## BACKGROUND

### Land and Climate

Germany is slightly smaller than Japan. It is close in size to the U.S. state of Montana but has more than 80 times as many people. There are four main geographic regions: the broad lowlands, in the north; the central uplands, which include various small mountain ranges; the wide valley and gorge of the Rhine River, in the southwest; and the forested mountains and plateaus of the south. The Rhine, Danube, and Elbe rivers flow through Germany, as do the Weser and Oder, all of which are important trade and transportation routes. About one-third of Germany is forested. Germany's tallest mountain is the Zugspitze, at 9,721 feet (2,963 meters).

The climate is generally temperate, with mild summers and wet winters. In the winter, average temperatures range between 35°F (2°C) in the lowland areas and 21°F (-6°C) in the mountains. In July, average temperatures are between 64°F (18°C) in low-lying regions and 68°F (20°C) in the southern valleys. Rain amounts are heavier in the north, although snowfall is greater in the south.

### History

#### Unification

Prior to becoming part of the Holy Roman Empire, Germany was a patchwork of small, separate principalities. Although officially a nation-state in 1871, Germany passed through three wars (1864–70) before Prussian leader Otto von Bismarck finally united the country into a powerful, industrialized nation.

### World Wars

In 1914, Germany allied with Austria and Turkey in World War I after the assassination of an Austrian official. In 1917, the United States joined Britain, France, Russia, Italy, and Japan to defeat Germany and its allies. Germany was made to pay huge reparations, admit guilt for the war, and cede about one-tenth of its territory. A democratic state, known as the Weimar Republic, was established in 1918.

The country's humiliation was worsened by the economic depression of the 1920s. In addition, the newly elected legislature proved to be fragmented and ineffective, leading many Germans to believe that democracy was an inefficient way to organize society. Germany's distress gave rise to Austrian-born Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist (Nazi) Party. In 1933, President Hindenburg named Hitler chancellor after the Nazi Party dominated the elections. In 1934, the day after Hindenburg died, the posts of president and chancellor were combined, and Hitler declared himself *Führer* (leader) of the Third Reich.

Hitler soon embroiled Germany and the world in World War II. Before being defeated by the Allied forces in 1945, the Nazis occupied much of the continent, killing huge numbers of people, including six million Jews and many gypsies, homosexuals, and mentally disabled people, whom they considered unworthy to live.

#### Western and Eastern Germany

After the war, Germany was split into occupation zones to facilitate disarmament and organize a democracy. Berlin, which was in the zone occupied by the Soviet Union, was also divided into four separate areas controlled by France, Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union. Eventually, the zones



occupied by the Western Allies became the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), a democratic nation. However, the Soviets created the German Democratic Republic (GDR) out of the eastern zone. The GDR followed the Soviet model of development and created its own communist party.

Because they were so close to West Germany, citizens of the GDR could easily observe life without communist rule and see that communist claims of superiority were not so clear cut. The GDR clearly lagged behind the FRG economically, as well as in individual freedoms. Many East Germans worked as informers for the *Stasi* (short for *Staatssicherheit*, or state security), spying on and denouncing colleagues, friends, and family. East Germans could be turned in for any criticism of the communist government, even in the form of jokes. Because of this experience, Germans continue to this day to be extremely sensitive about government monitoring and privacy.

Because of the difficult living conditions in East Germany, thousands of people fled to the west. Many crossed from the Soviet-controlled part of Berlin to West Berlin; from there, they could find ways to sneak through the rest of East Germany into West Germany. In 1961, the GDR built the Berlin Wall to shut off access to West Berlin. The wall remained a symbol of the Cold War until late 1989, when it was opened to traffic on both sides. The wall was eventually torn down, and the two nations became the reunified Federal Republic of Germany on 3 October 1990. Although Berlin regained its status as the country's capital, the actual transition from Bonn (West Germany's capital) lasted nearly a decade.

#### **International Relations**

In 1957, West Germany was a founding member of the European Community, which is now known as the European Union (EU). It had joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1955, but the German constitution restricted the military to German soil. In 1993, policy changes allowed troops to participate in UN peacekeeping and relief operations in Somalia, Bosnia, and Yugoslavia.

#### **Political Transitions and Economic Policy**

Helmut Kohl, who was a driving force behind German reunification, failed to be reelected in 1998 after serving as chancellor for 16 years, the longest term of any democratically elected German leader. A year later, a party finance scandal involving him became public, damaging both his and his party's reputation. Angela Merkel was elected to be the first female chancellor in 2005 and became one of the most dominant leaders in Europe.

Germany has prioritized reforming immigration policy and defining the country's relationship with the West and Europe. As the largest economic power in Europe, Germany became a leader in the eurozone crisis of 2011. Even though the country now cooperates with struggling economies like those of Greece and Spain, bailing out other European economies was initially an unpopular strategy within Germany. Merkel has been arguing for greater European integration, which would allow closer monitoring of the eurozone, though Germany is also wary of giving up more power to the European Union.

#### **Recent Events and Trends**

• **Reception of refugees:** In September 2015, Angela Merkel announced that Germany would build extra housing and

quicken the asylum process for the Syrian refugees who have been arriving in record numbers. Public sentiment changed toward these refugees after photos surfaced of young Syrian children who drowned in the Aegean Sea, and local Germans have recently been greeting the refugees at train stations with food, donated clothing, and cheers to congratulate them on completing such a long and dangerous journey. The government has allotted 6 billion euros to handle the influx of refugees, but Chancellor Merkel has also encouraged other European countries to accept refugees.

• **Volkswagen scandal:** In September 2015, Volkswagen admitted that 11 million of its diesel cars sold worldwide were rigged with software designed to help them falsely pass environmental emissions tests. The scandal is a huge blow to the reputation of the German-based company, and it is setting aside \$7.3 billion to address the issue.

• **Increase in violent attacks:** In July 2016, southern Germany experienced four violent attacks within a week of each other. German authorities say the attacks were unconnected and not all politically motivated. However, three out of the four attacks were committed by refugees, sparking debate over the country's immigration policy and security.

## **THE PEOPLE**

### **Population**

Germany's population is primarily ethnic German (91.5 percent). Minority groups include those from Turkey (2.4 percent), the former Yugoslavia, Italy, Greece, and Poland. The country is highly urbanized.

In recent years, immigration has sharply increased. Immigrants, especially non-citizen guest workers, comprise a significant percentage of some metropolitan populations. Children of legal guest workers are granted German citizenship if one parent has legally lived in Germany for at least eight years prior to the child's birth and has a permanent resident permit. In western states, numerous political refugees from the Middle East, India, Africa, and Asia receive room and board until their applications for asylum are processed. Also, many ethnic Germans have emigrated from eastern European nations in search of work. However, the government has been looking into ways of stemming the flow of "economic" refugees. New laws restrict the definition of a valid asylum seeker and limit other forms of immigration. Though there have been incidents of violence against immigrant groups, these events reflect the feelings of only a small minority of Germans.

### **Language**

German is the official language, but the German taught in school and used in the media may differ slightly from the language used in daily conversation if dialects are spoken. Regional dialects vary greatly: the dialect from Bonn or Hannover is distinct from that of Munich (München), where Bavarian is spoken, or Halle, where Saxon is spoken. However, most people do not speak in pure dialect very often; instead, their dialects may color their accents. Dialects are mostly oral and are part of folk literature and music. In all



dialects of the written language, all nouns are capitalized.

English, widely understood, is a required school subject, and many employees continue taking extra English classes after being hired by a company. Many Germans in eastern states understand and speak Russian.

### Religion

About a third of the population belongs to the Roman Catholic Church, while another third is Protestant (mostly Lutheran). Historically, entire towns and regions belonged to one faith, according to the local ruler's choice. These divisions are still visible today, as Catholics reside mostly in the south and west and Protestants in the north and east.

Today, a number of other Christian denominations are also active, and almost 4 percent of German residents are Muslim. Although most Germans are Christian, society is highly secular and about 28 percent of the people claim no religious affiliation.

### General Attitudes

Germans are industrious, honest, thrifty, and orderly. They appreciate traits such as punctuality, privacy, intelligence, and skill. They have a strong sense of regional pride, a fact the federal system of government recognizes and accommodates. World War II broke down class distinctions because most people lost their possessions and had to start over again. Germany emerged as a land of freedom and opportunity after the war.

Germans appreciate intelligent conversation but may be wary of unfamiliar or different ideas. Many are prone to skepticism. A typical German attitude is reflected in the phrases *Das geht mich nichts an* (That's not my business) or *Ich will meine Ruhe* (I want my peace of mind), both of which suggest an aloofness that some non-Germans might find confusing.

Most Germans have a strong classical education because of the nation's rich heritage in music, history, science, and art, and they expect others to appreciate that background. Former East Germans have also nurtured their cultural heritage, but after four decades of life under communism, it is not surprising that they have somewhat different attitudes toward daily life and work.

During the 1990s, tensions existed between people in the west and east over matters relating to reunification. Some easterners felt they were treated as second-class citizens, receiving lower salaries, getting blamed for tax hikes, and being ridiculed by their western counterparts. Some easterners said that they were better off under communism. Westerners resented the economic burden of rebuilding the east; some believed easterners were less capable and unrefined. Such tensions have largely waned today, though unemployment in the east remains a problem.

### Personal Appearance

Germans follow European fashion trends and take care to be well dressed in public. Sloppy or overly casual attire is inappropriate. Shorts and sandals are common leisure wear in summer but are considered to be quite casual. Women, particularly older women, wear cosmetics sparingly.

Hints of traditional culture may be part of one's modern daily wardrobe. In southern Germany (mostly southern Bavaria), some people wear full traditional attire during festivals and celebrations. Traditional costumes include *Lederhosen* (leather pants), *Dirndlkleider* (dresses with gathered waists and full skirts, worn with an apron), Bavarian suits, and alpine hats.

## CUSTOMS AND COURTESIES

### Greetings

The most common form of greeting is a handshake. A man waits for a woman to extend her hand before shaking it; in mixed company he shakes a woman's hand before a man's. In groups, several people do not shake hands at once; crossing someone else's handshake is inappropriate.

Germans generally do not greet strangers on the street, although sincere smiles are appreciated. The most common verbal greeting is *Guten Tag* (Good day). Some may use a simple *Hallo* (Hello). Southern Germans may use *Griß Gott* ("Greetings," or literally, "Greet God").

By tradition, only family members and close friends address each other by first name. Others use titles and surnames. However, this is changing among the younger generation. When Germans address a stranger, acquaintance, or colleague, one combines *Herr* (Mr.), *Frau* (Mrs. or Miss), or other titles with the person's professional title and last name. These titles can also be used without the name. For example, a male professor is addressed as *Herr Professor*; a female head of a department in business or government could be addressed as *Frau Direktor*.

### Gestures

Chewing gum while speaking with someone else is inappropriate, and it is unusual for adults older than around age thirty to chew gum in public. Talking with one's hands in the pockets is disrespectful. People cross the legs with one knee over the other and do not place feet on furniture. Pointing the index finger to one's own head is an insult indicating the other person is crazy. To wish luck, Germans "squeeze the thumb" instead of crossing fingers. That is, they fold the thumb in and close the fingers on it.

### Visiting

Germans appreciate punctuality, but hosts are not insulted if guests arrive a few minutes late. Dinner guests often bring an odd number of flowers, avoiding roses (symbolizing romantic love). They unwrap flowers before giving them to the hostess.

Guests usually stand when the host enters the room and remain standing until offered a seat again. It is also courteous to stand when a woman enters the room. Not everyone adheres to these rules of etiquette, but it is polite to do so.

Hosts almost always serve refreshments to guests, even during short visits. Spontaneous visits, even between neighbors, are not very common, but this is changing among young people. Because arrangements generally are made in advance, unannounced visitors are sometimes not invited to come in but talk standing at the door, which is sometimes



considered ill-mannered by non-Germans.

Germans enjoy gathering for conversation and social events, although Germans in the south tend to be more reserved than those in the north. While dinner parties may last well into the night, daytime visits are usually short, except in the case of afternoon teatime, called *Kaffee-trinken*, where tea or coffee and cakes or cookies are served.

### Eating

Germans eat in the continental style, with the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. Eating with one's hands is permissible for some dry foods. They keep their hands above the table, with wrists resting on the edge. Traditionally, when potatoes and fish were served, Germans did not cut them with a knife because this indicated to the cook that they were not fully cooked. However, most Germans no longer follow this practice. Leaving food on the plate is considered wasteful.

Most Germans prefer beer, wine, or mineral water with their meals; they rarely drink tap water. Soft drinks and fruit juices are also popular. Germans prefer drinks without ice. Because of the tradition of bottled water, drinking fountains are extremely rare in Germany.

In restaurants, the bill usually includes a service charge and is paid at the table. Customers often round up the total, giving the server the difference as an extra tip (*Trinkgeld*). When friends eat out together, it is acceptable for each one to pay for his or her own meal.

## LIFESTYLE

### Family

#### Structure

Large families are uncommon, even in rural areas. The average family has only one or two children. In many cases, younger couples are choosing not to start a family due to the cost of time and money that having children requires, even though the government provides monthly payments to those with children.

Order, responsibility, and achievement are traditional family values. People today, especially in the west, practice a greater variety of lifestyles than in the past. Most young adults prefer to live away from home once they become wage earners or go on to a university.

Because of the emancipation of German women, there are a large number of single mothers in the country. There are two main reasons for this: When a divorce occurs, women usually obtain custody of any children. And German society is tolerant of children born to single women, so single women who get pregnant are becoming more likely to keep the child rather than have an abortion.

#### Parents and Children

Because in many German families both parents work, time for their children is often scarce. It is not uncommon for children to go to and from school by themselves starting at the age of six or seven. As most German households are equipped with microwave ovens, working mothers often prepare lunch for their children before leaving the house. Children can then easily heat up the meal and feed themselves.

Children of working parents often go to tutoring centers, where they receive help in doing their homework. These centers are relatively affordable and are used by many middle- and working-class families. Children from wealthier families usually get help from nannies or private tutors if they need help with school or daily life.

### Gender Roles

Traditionally, the father is head of the family. Both parents often work, more so in the east than in the west. The role of wives has changed significantly in the past few decades. Nevertheless, in the case where both partners work, the woman still takes the lead in managing the household, making sure the cleaning, washing, and cooking is done. This imbalance is the subject of much public debate, and many couples work hard to find a fairer division of labor. Still, German women spend an average of two more hours daily on household work than men do.

Expectant mothers can take 14 weeks of paid maternal leave: six weeks before the birth and eight weeks after. After birth, the parents share up to 14 months of partially paid parental leave, which they can divide between each parent as they wish. These parental leave policies are intended in part to encourage Germans to have more children, though they do not seem to have had much of an effect. They have seen more success in creating greater gender equality in the rearing of children.

German women are considered very emancipated. They enjoy the same rights as men. Almost equal numbers of girls and boys attend schools and universities in both east and west Germany, which provides both sexes with an equal chance to educate themselves in a chosen field and pursue a professional career.

### Housing

#### Urban

Most people, whether single or part of a family, live in apartments, especially in larger cities. The size of these apartments ranges from very small studio (single room) apartments to larger units with several rooms. Single-family homes are by no means rare, but tend to be very expensive.

In urban areas, people often own or rent small garden plots (*Schrebergärten*) located in or near the city. In the countryside and in more expensive neighborhoods, private gardens are more numerous.

Although cars, office buildings, and some trains have air-conditioning, it is rare for houses to have air-conditioning due to Germany's moderate climate and cultural emphasis on not wasting energy. Additionally, most buildings use thick insulation to regulate inside temperatures.

#### Rural

Houses in smaller cities or rural areas tend to have pointed, tiled roofs. Traditional thatched-roof houses can still be found in the northern part of Germany. Cement, bricks, and (in the south) wood are common construction materials. Except in northern Germany, where the water table is much higher, most German homes contain a cellar. Air-conditioning is also rare in rural homes.

#### Ownership

Germany has one of the lowest home-ownership rates in



Europe. Nearly half of the population does not own their home; renting is particularly common in big cities. However, home ownership is becoming more popular, in part because of low mortgage rates and rising rent costs. The rate of home ownership is lower in the east than in the west.

## Dating and Marriage

### Dating and Courtship

Young men and women tend to socialize on a very casual basis. Groups of friends meet in clubs, restaurants, and pubs for conversation, eating, and drinking. Online dating services are becoming more popular among those whose schedules make traditional socializing difficult.

If a person wants to go out with someone in particular, either sex can suggest a *Verabredung* (appointment). They each pay for their own food and entertainment (unless one offers to pay for a special occasion). Germans prefer substantive conversations about current events, philosophy, or politics, rather than superficial "small talk" when they meet someone. They usually try to make respectful, honest comments, rather than avoiding disagreement.

German society is fairly open about sexuality, and it is not uncommon for German teenagers to engage in sexual activity as early as 15 or 16. Girls generally begin seeing a gynecologist as early as 12 or 13.

### Engagement

The tradition of the man asking a woman's father for his approval of the marriage is still practiced among some Germans. Engagements generally last one to two years. The family of the bride—particularly among conservative, wealthy, or rural Germans—pays for the cost of the wedding.

### Marriage in Society

Couples usually marry in their late twenties, but they often wait until they have some financial security. Although many Germans see marriage as a desirable option, it is increasingly common for young people to live together before or instead of marrying. The government offers tax advantages to couples who are legally married. Legal marriages are performed at the city hall; religious ceremonies are optional. Divorce is common.

## Life Cycle

### Birth

Prenatal care is taken very seriously in Germany. Pregnant women and their partners are encouraged to attend courses to prepare them for the birth of the child. It is common to keep a pregnancy to oneself until the third month, when it is less likely to lose the child. Most babies are born in hospitals.

When a child is born, parents usually send out a photograph of the newborn to close friends and family, who in return congratulate the couple with a greeting card. Sometimes money and gifts are included. Once the mother and baby return home and have had time to adjust, family and friends come to visit and take photographs of the baby.

Traditionally, children were named after parents or grandparents, but this practice is fading. Today, children may be given traditional German names, Norse or Latin names, or names from the Bible. In Christian families, babies are baptized when they are a few weeks old. Godparents are

chosen and given the responsibility to raise the child should something happen to the parents. After the baptism, families gather for a meal.

### Milestones

When Catholic children turn nine, they have their First Communion. Protestant children are confirmed at age 15. Both events are marked by large gifts of money.

The 18th birthday brings formal adulthood, including a driver's license and the right to drink alcohol and gamble. The 30th birthday is also considered an important milestone because it marks when a young adult has reached the age of full maturity and responsibility.

Married couples celebrate 25th and 50th wedding anniversaries with family and close friends. These gatherings are usually held in a restaurant or in the home of the couple. Gifts are often presented to the couple but are not always necessary. Birthdays beyond the 50th are also celebrated quite elaborately, often bringing the entire extended family together.

### Death

When a person dies, funeral cards containing a picture of the deceased, the birth and death dates, and a saying or proverb are distributed. At the funeral, people dress in black and shake hands with the deceased's family.

After the funeral, attendees often share a meal and tell friendly and humorous stories about the deceased; however, if the person died as a child or experienced an unexpectedly sudden death, there is generally no meal served. Friends and relatives send cards with money to the family of the deceased to defray the cost of the funeral and graveside decorations.

Throughout Germany, it is common for people to plant flowers in addition to placing other plants at the grave sites of their loved ones. If they can afford it, they may hire gardeners to maintain the graves. Relatives and close friends visit the grave regularly.

### Diet

While regional dishes vary, potatoes, noodles, dumplings, sauces, vegetables, and pastries are common in Germany. Pork is popular, as are beef and chicken. Pork is prepared according to regional tradition; it may be boiled with cabbage in Frankfurt, roasted with dumplings in Munich (München), or prepared as ham in Westphalia. Lamb is widely available in the north. Fish is popular in North Sea areas such as Hamburg but also in Bavaria, where trout is plentiful. In the southwest, a couple of specialty items—*Maultaschen* (dough filled with meat or vegetables) and *Käsespätzle* (noodles with cheese)—are very popular. Every region has its own type of *Wurst* (sausage). Sweets, chocolate, and cakes are enjoyed throughout the country.

Breakfast consists of rolls and various combinations of jam, honey, meat, cheese, and hard-boiled eggs served with coffee, tea, or milk. Hot and cold cereals are increasingly popular. The principal meal, traditionally served at midday, includes soup, a main dish, and dessert. For the lighter evening meal (*Abendbrot*), open-faced sandwiches (cheese, meats, and spreads) are common, although full meals are the norm in restaurants. Two-income families rarely have a big midday meal, saving the main meal for evening.



Germans buy groceries often and prefer fresh foods for cooking. Ethnic dishes (especially Italian, Greek, Chinese, and Turkish) and fast foods are popular. Germans are known for their beer making and drinking. They also enjoy domestic and imported wines. However, the younger generation of Germans consumes less alcohol overall than the older generation.

## Recreation

### Sports

Germans enjoy hiking, skiing, swimming, cycling, and playing tennis, among other things. Wealthy Germans enjoy playing golf, and numerous business deals are made on golf courses. Participation in organized sports has changed as a result of reunification, emphasizing a uniform club system.

Soccer (*Fußball*) is the most popular sport, and millions of Germans have become devoted, lifelong fans to their favorite soccer club. Soccer stadiums are full on weekends, as millions of spectators flock to see their favorite teams play. Bayern München is an especially popular team. Germany's team traditionally participates in World Cup competitions, which it hosted in 2006.

### Leisure

People enjoy watching television or getting together with friends. Germans, especially younger Germans, also enjoy movies. New films are released on Thursdays, and many people go to the movie theaters after work. Young Germans often congregate at movie theaters to meet each other. Dancing is also gaining in popularity among youth. Recently, young people have taken up learning dances from other regions, such as South America and India. Internationally-themed dance schools have opened in many areas, and during the summer these schools put on programs featuring dancing and food from different countries.

Garden plots and public grilling places offer space for barbecues and relaxation on summer evenings. Because meat is a part of many of Germany's popular dishes, grilling is a popular recreational activity. For those who are vegetarian, there are also vegetarian sausages that can be grilled. Beer usually accompanies these activities. Grilling equipment is sold even in gas stations during the summertime because most supermarkets are closed on Sundays.

Spending time with pets is another popular German pastime. Most families have a dog or a cat, and many have rabbits or guinea pigs. Pet shops abound, and Germans spend many thousands of dollars registering and providing health care for their animals. Data chips are inserted under a dog's skin so that the owner's name and address can be located if the animal escapes or gets lost.

### Vacation

Germans consider themselves *Weltmeisters* (world champions) at taking vacations. Schools are closed for a total of 13 weeks every year, and employees get at least 24 days of paid leave each year. However, most companies give employees six weeks of leave and several public holidays off during the year. Germans in the west have long relished travel. Favorite travel destinations are typically warmer spots, such as the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Greece, Spain, and Turkey. Those in the east have been able to travel since 1989,

when communist travel restrictions were lifted.

## The Arts

Cultural arts, especially music and theater, are well supported in Germany. Numerous world-renowned composers, artists, philosophers, and writers are German, including the artist Albrecht Dürer, the composer Ludwig van Beethoven, and the philosopher Karl Marx. Private support and government subsidies allow even the smallest cities to have professional orchestras, opera companies, and at least one museum. Expressionism continues to be a hallmark of German fine art. Festivals and performances draw large audiences throughout the country. Local arts might include weaving, wood carving, and wood-block printing.

## Holidays

Public holidays vary from state to state in Germany, but the main holidays include New Year's Day (1 Jan.), Labor Day or May Day (1 May), and German Unification Day (3 Oct.) Various religious holidays (Catholic and Protestant) are celebrated, such as Easter (March or April), Ascension (39 days after Easter), Pentecost (50 days after Easter), All Saints' Day (1 Nov.), Christmas (25 Dec.), and Boxing Day (26 Dec.).

### Sylvester

New Year's celebrations begin on Sylvester (31 Dec.) with midnight fireworks and parties, which are followed by a public holiday on 1 January. *Sylvester* is often celebrated by traveling abroad; popular destinations are Switzerland, Austria, and France. Germans like to go skiing and hiking in the snow during this season.

At the end of the year, people reflect on the past months and analyze their vices. They often express a desire to change their lives for the coming year. Some of the more common changes are to stop smoking, get more exercise, and drink less alcohol, all of which reflect a German trend toward a healthier lifestyle.

### Fasching

Another important holiday in Germany is *Fasching* (Carnival), which officially starts on 11 November but is mainly celebrated in late January or early February and lasts until the end of February or the beginning of March, depending on when Easter falls. Celebrations begin at the 11th minute of the 11th hour and are meant to mark a farewell to winter and a welcoming of spring. Carnival is often called the "fifth season." Schools close for a week, and both children and adults dress up in costumes. Parades with music and dancing are especially common in central and southern Germany.

### Easter

Easter is celebrated with Sunday worship services and Monday family gatherings. On Easter Sunday, parents hide little gifts around the house or outside in the yard for their children to find. The Easter Bunny is said to have left these gifts. Children search for the gifts and then show them to the adults once they have found them. Easter gifts are typically smaller than Christmas gifts and often include sweets, such as chocolate Easter bunnies.

### Christmas



Beginning in early December, outdoor Christmas markets attract large crowds of shoppers, who enjoy drinking *Glühwein* (spiced red wine) and perusing the handicrafts, art, and food on sale. Although Christmas is widely celebrated in Germany, its religious roots are becoming less obvious. Older, more traditional Germans usually visit a church on Christmas Eve (*Heiliger Abend*). Christmas Eve is also when people exchange gifts, which are said to be brought by the *Christkind* (Christ child).

Families relax on Christmas Day. On 25 or 26 December, a goose (*Weihnachtsgans*) is cooked or grilled. Sweet cookies, such as gingerbread or almond biscuits, often flavored with cinnamon, are a popular treat during the Christmas season. Germans enjoy visiting on 26 December, also a legal holiday. Most families put up a traditional *Weihnachtsbaum* (Christmas tree) in their homes. These are typically decorated with glass balls and candles. Traditional colors of red and gold are often used, but modern decorations are available in many colors.

Young couples often find it difficult to choose which family they will spend Christmas with. They often compromise by commuting between both households. Once they have children, young couples tend to celebrate Christmas Eve in their own homes.

## SOCIETY

### Government

#### Structure

Germany is a federal parliamentary republic. The country has 16 states (*Länder*), each of which has its own legislature and autonomy over issues that are not specifically reserved for the federal government in the constitution. The country's president is elected as head of state by members of the federal and state legislatures to serve for up to two five-year terms. The president's duties are mostly ceremonial.

The chancellor is the head of government and is elected by a majority of the lower house of Parliament, or the Federal Diet (*Bundestag*), to a four-year term. The upper house is called the Federal Council (*Bundesrat*). State governments select the 69 members of the *Bundesrat*. The 631 members of the *Bundestag* are elected by popular vote, some through majoritarian systems and others through proportional representation. Members of Parliament serve four-year terms.

#### Political Landscape

Major political parties include the center-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Free Democratic Party (FDP); the center-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) and Green Party; and the left-wing *Die Linke* (The Left). Power generally alternates between a center-left coalition (usually the SPD and the Green Party) and a center-right coalition (usually the CDU and the FDP).

Angela Merkel is chairperson of the CDU, which leads Germany's current ruling grand coalition of the CDU and SPD parties. Germany's major political parties have adopted candidate quotas to ensure that women are appropriately represented in politics. In order to limit the influence of extremist parties, there is a minimum threshold of 5 percent

of the national vote or three directly elected seats to be represented in the *Bundestag*.

Major political issues facing Germany include reforming immigration policy and defining the country's relationship with the West and Europe. The CDU traditionally favors greater European integration, though many Germans are wary of giving up more power to the European Union (EU), especially following the eurozone crisis of 2011. Anti-EU parties gained more representation in regional parliaments in 2014.

#### Government and the People

Germany's constitution secures for its citizens a wide variety of rights, which are generally respected. The freedoms of groups associated with Nazism are sometimes limited. Corruption is very low in Germany. In addition to being transparent, elections are also free and fair. The voting age is 18. Voter turnout in Germany regularly exceeds 70 percent for national elections; for EU, state, or municipal elections, voter turnout is closer to 50 percent.

### Economy

Germany is one of the top economic powers in the world and provides leadership and generous financial support to the European Union (EU). As a whole, the country has a high gross domestic product (GDP) per capita; however, the east's economy is far weaker than the west's. East German prices typically are as high as those in the west, but salaries, rents, and overall living conditions remain lower.

The east has made substantial progress in its shift toward a market economy; however, the region still relies heavily on subsidies (around US\$85 billion a year) from the economically powerful western states. The government has undertaken huge projects to retrain workers and rebuild roads, railways, public transportation, and communications facilities. More private investment is required to revitalize eastern industries and relieve the west of heavy tax burdens.

Inflation is low. Generous social benefits, rigid work rules, and high labor costs have been obstacles to reviving the economy and reestablishing the country's global competitiveness. Germany fell into recession in 2008 after responding to the global financial crisis with a US\$675 billion rescue package and a guarantee on personal bank deposits. The economy began growing again in 2010 as manufacturing exports rebounded, primarily exports for countries outside of the EU. However, Germany continues to carry much of the financial burden for the eurozone, and many Germans are critical of the EU's bailout policy, particularly with regard to Greece. Nevertheless, because Germany has profited in the long term from its role in the EU, many Germans continue to support the union or remain neutral about EU membership.

Germany is traditionally one of the world's largest exporters. Main exports include cars, televisions and other manufactured goods, steel, and aluminum. Construction, manufacturing, and service industries are important components of the domestic economy. In 2002, the euro replaced the *Deutsche Mark* as Germany's currency.

### Transportation and Communications

Most German families have cars; owning one is more



important to Germans than to many other Europeans. They especially favor cars for touring or traveling long distances. Drivers carefully obey traffic rules. One must attend expensive and rigorous driver-training classes and pass exams to qualify for a driver's license. Public transportation and bike riding are more efficient for daily travel in major cities because of the heavy traffic and limited parking. Subways, buses, streetcars, and trains form the main transportation network. Trains connect nearly every town and city.

The communications system is modern and fully developed. Telephone and postal services have been privatized since the mid-1990s and are efficient. There are more cellular phones in use than landlines. About 90 percent of German households have a television with cable or satellite. Many Germans own computers, and most have access to the internet.

Because Holocaust denial and promotion of neo-Nazi propaganda are illegal in Germany, related offensive remarks are censored from all media and violators may be imprisoned. In 2012, the social networking site Twitter enacted a local censorship policy for the first time, blocking German access to a neo-Nazi account. German authorities work with domestic and international web hosts to shut down German websites containing content related to Nazis.

## Education

### Structure and Access

Education is a source of pride, especially in the areas of technology and craftsmanship. The states administer public education. A few boarding schools are available, but the cost to attend is prohibitive for most families. Preschool begins around age four. Full-time schooling is mandatory for students between ages 6 and 15, and part- or full-time schooling continues on a chosen track until age 18 or 19.

*Grundschule* (primary school) begins at age six and lasts four years in most states. After *Grundschule*, children are divided into three groups according to their academic performance: students may study to enter a university, train for specific professional careers, or enter a job-training program, depending on their achievement. Those with the highest grades go on to an academic high school called a *Gymnasium*, which lasts between eight and nine years (until grade 12 or 13). Those in the middle group attend a high school known as *Realschule*, which is two years shorter than *Gymnasium* and leads to an apprenticeship in a company afterward. The third group goes to a high school called *Hauptschule*, which lasts a total of nine years. Graduates of this program usually proceed to apprenticeships in the manual or technical fields. Children with learning difficulties or language barriers can go to special institutions called *Sonderschule*, where they learn German, among other things.

Nearly every occupation, from mechanic to waiter to accountant, has a school or program designed specifically for it. For example, waiters and waitresses might attend school for up to three years before certifying as servers. Because of this training, their salaries are much higher than one might expect in other countries.

### School Life

In primary school, students study German, math, geography,

music, sports, age-appropriate sexual education, and religion. Many primary schools also teach English or French starting around age eight. In secondary school, subjects include German, English, French, history, religion, ethics, economics, sports, biology, chemistry, physics, sexual education, and art. Some schools teach additional foreign languages.

Because of their association with the Nazi era and elitism, uniforms are very rare at public schools, and they are referred to as a "school garment" rather than a uniform. Uniforms are more common at private schools but not required at all such institutions.

In general, the student-teacher relationship is fairly relaxed. Still, at most schools, students are expected to stand when their teacher enters the room, to address the teacher by his or her last name, and to use German's formal form of "you" when speaking to teachers. Some teachers may invite students into their homes or host barbecues.

Most school days begin at 8 a.m. and end around 1 p.m. Extracurricular activities, such as sports and chess clubs, are not organized by schools but by parents and community groups. Other community organizations, like political parties, religious groups, and fire brigades, have youth groups that children and teenagers can join. However, Germans feel that children's time outside of school should not be too structured with extracurricular activities. Many Germans believe that free time to play with minimal adult intervention allows children to develop important values like respect and empathy. Allowing children to spend time with family and friends is another important value.

### Higher Education

Institutions of higher education are highly subsidized, but entrance to universities is difficult. Access to public universities is determined by a student's score on the *Abitur* exam (taken at the end of *Gymnasium*), grade point average, and time since graduation from *Gymnasium*. Those who have been waiting longer for university entrance are given priority. Private schools and medical schools require additional testing.

Private universities have appeared, particularly in the western part of Germany, over the past ten years. Some of these offer a very rigorous level of education, but tuition is often very expensive. Many German medical students study in Austria because admission requirements there are less restrictive than in Germany.

Lifelong learning is important in Germany. Adult education centers (*Volkshochschule*) offer a variety of courses that can be taken in the evening. The subjects offered include languages, cooking, business, computers, culture, and many more. These courses are generally affordable and accessible to nearly everyone. Recently, online courses have evolved in Germany. Languages and other subjects can be studied at home, while course materials are provided via e-mail. Tests can be taken at various regional offices throughout the country. These courses are most popular with those under the age of 40.

## Health

Germany has a good healthcare system. The government controls fees, but some co-payments are required, and for the past several years, most dental and visual care has been paid



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for out of pocket. In addition, fees on prescriptions have risen recently, and elective treatments are often delayed. Private doctors also practice, but most people have access to care in hospitals and clinics. Both government and private health insurance are available, and immediate family members are covered under an employee's insurance. When workers become ill, they receive up to six weeks of full pay while they recover. People in eastern states suffer more often from illnesses related to pollution.

**AT A GLANCE****Contact Information**

Embassy of Germany, 4645 Reservoir Road NW, Washington, DC 20007; phone (202) 298-4000; web site [www.germany.info](http://www.germany.info). German National Tourist Office, phone (212) 661-7200; web site [www.germany.travel](http://www.germany.travel).

**Country and Development Data**

Capital	Berlin
Population	80,722,792 (rank=18)
Area (sq. mi.)	137,847 (rank=62)
Area (sq. km.)	357,022
Human Development Index	6 of 188 countries
Gender Inequality Index	6 of 188 countries
GDP (PPP) per capita	\$46,900
Adult Literacy	99%
Infant Mortality	3 per 1,000 births
Life Expectancy	79 (male); 83 (female)
Currency	Euro

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**U.S. State Export to Germany (Transport Mode: All Transport Modes) Via State: Iowa**

Commodity: \_Total, All Commodity Chapters

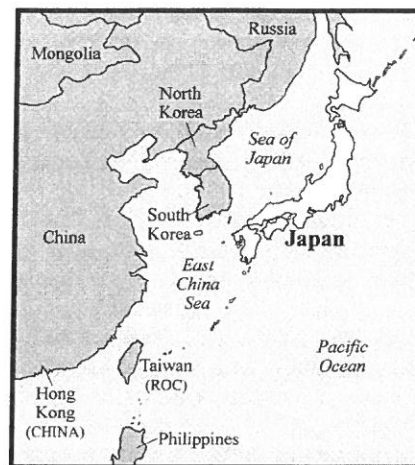
Year To Date: January - November

Commodity	Description	United States Dollars			% Share			%Δ 16/15
		2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	
_Total	All Commodity Chapters	464149497	447155022	404433668	100	100	100	-9.55
87	Vehicles, Other Than Railway Or Tramway Rolling Stock, And Parts And Accessories Thereof	114406428	94119222	72789637	24.65	21.05	18	-22.66
84	Nuclear Reactors, Boilers, Machinery And Mechanical Appliances; Parts Thereof	69099051	56688501	56620845	14.89	12.68	14	-0.12
90	Optical, Photographic, Cinematographic, Measuring, Checking, Precision, Medical Or Surgical Instruments And Apparatus; Parts And Accessories Thereof	47776873	50842674	51054626	10.29	11.37	12.62	0.42
85	Electrical Machinery And Equipment And Parts Thereof; Sound Recorders And Reproducers, Television Recorders And Reproducers, Parts And Accessories	24585655	26265240	44754290	5.3	5.87	11.07	70.39
30	Pharmaceutical Products	40370627	44130036	34894506	8.7	9.87	8.63	-20.93
33	Essential Oils And Resinoids; Perfumery, Cosmetic Or Toilet Preparations	3023788	21184287	23839325	0.65	4.74	5.89	12.53
39	Plastics And Articles Thereof	21992878	22057015	21091292	4.74	4.93	5.22	-4.38
76	Aluminum And Articles Thereof	20354955	25075420	13598317	4.39	5.61	3.36	-45.77
23	Residues And Waste From The Food Industries; Prepared Animal Feed	8934901	6030276	11612604	1.93	1.35	2.87	92.57
63	Made-Up Textile Articles Nesoi; Needlecraft Sets; Worn Clothing And Worn Textile Articles; Rags	19086384	17455002	10002593	4.11	3.9	2.47	-42.69
88	Aircraft, Spacecraft, And Parts Thereof	6831844	7261652	8838181	1.47	1.62	2.19	21.71
56	Wadding, Felt And Nonwovens; Special Yarns; Twine, Cordage, Ropes And Cables And Articles Thereof	8238788	9256090	8270376	1.78	2.07	2.04	-10.65
38	Miscellaneous Chemical Products	3597249	5956426	7131474	0.78	1.33	1.76	19.73
21	Miscellaneous Edible Preparations	13759644	4503865	5674217	2.96	1.01	1.4	25.99
73	Articles Of Iron Or Steel	6803421	5535562	4300454	1.47	1.24	1.06	-22.31
35	Albuminoidal Substances; Modified Starches; Glues; Enzymes	4303902	8097830	4114284	0.93	1.81	1.02	-49.19
95	Toys, Games And Sports Equipment; Parts And Accessories Thereof	5282502	4430368	3712408	1.14	0.99	0.92	-16.21
98	Special Classification Provisions, Nesoi	1834064	2241965	2936523	0.4	0.5	0.73	30.98
32	Tanning Or Dyeing Extracts; Tannins And Derivatives; Dyes, Pigments And Other Coloring Matter; Paints And Varnishes; Putty And Other Mastics; Inks	2317443	2886210	2787691	0.5	0.65	0.69	-3.41
29	Organic Chemicals	10047359	3257775	2301826	2.16	0.73	0.57	-29.34
44	Wood And Articles Of Wood; Wood Charcoal	1417097	2268775	2281916	0.31	0.51	0.56	0.58
40	Rubber And Articles Thereof	1131375	3821634	1919212	0.24	0.85	0.47	-49.78
48	Paper And Paperboard; Articles Of Paper Pulp, Paper Or Paperboard	2367410	2290030	1567831	0.51	0.51	0.39	-31.54

93	Arms And Ammunition; Parts And Accessories Thereof	186632	324647	1390068	0.04	0.07	0.34	328.18
16	Edible Preparations Of Meat, Fish, Crustaceans, Molluscs Or Other Aquatic Invertebrates	7222390	7634752	1191923	1.56	1.71	0.29	-84.39
04	Dairy Produce; Birds' Eggs; Natural Honey; Edible Products Of Animal Origin, Nesoi	1540858	1198175	955158	0.33	0.27	0.24	-20.28
17	Sugars And Sugar Confectionary	620137	232280	788891	0.13	0.05	0.2	239.63
74	Copper And Articles Thereof	918358	782291	645484	0.2	0.17	0.16	-17.49
82	Tools, Implements, Cutlery, Spoons And Forks, Of Base Metal; Parts Thereof Of Base Metal	1926297	1108724	432249	0.42	0.25	0.11	-61.01
94	Furniture; Bedding, Cushions Etc.; Lamps And Lighting Fittings Nesoi; Illuminated Signs, Nameplates And The Like; Prefabricated Buildings	1053333	1465548	429534	0.23	0.33	0.11	-70.69
12	Oil Seeds And Oleaginous Fruits; Miscellaneous Grains, Seeds And Fruits; Industrial Or Medicinal Plants; Straw And Fodder	460827	386657	384120	0.1	0.09	0.09	-0.66
28	Inorganic Chemicals; Organic Or Inorganic Compounds Of Precious Metals, Of Rare-Earth Metals, Of Radioactive Elements Or Of Isotopes	168566	1583817	361193	0.04	0.35	0.09	-77.19
83	Miscellaneous Articles Of Base Metal	182761	182280	226650	0.04	0.04	0.06	24.34
81	Base Metals Nesoi; Cermets; Articles Thereof	96449	48204	198602	0.02	0.01	0.05	312
10	Cereals	358185	354125	166732	0.08	0.08	0.04	-52.92
68	Articles Of Stone, Plaster, Cement, Asbestos, Mica Or Similar Materials	138935	152462	160538	0.03	0.03	0.04	5.3
05	Products Of Animal Origin, Nesoi	303011	297485	155059	0.07	0.07	0.04	-47.88
20	Preparations Of Vegetables, Fruit, Nuts, Or Other Parts Of Plants	282034	235685	140426	0.06	0.05	0.03	-40.42
49	Printed Books, Newspapers, Pictures And Other Printed Products; Manuscripts, Typescripts And Plans	30959	81379	131752	0.01	0.02	0.03	61.9
25	Salt; Sulfur; Earths And Stone; Plastering Materials, Lime And Cement	0	0	126400	0	0	0.03	n/a
70	Glass And Glassware	50853	86977	78406	0.01	0.02	0.02	-9.85
41	Raw Hides And Skins (Other Than Furskins) And Leather	6321492	3475133	75369	1.36	0.78	0.02	-97.83
97	Works Of Art, Collectors' Pieces And Antiques	33902	72055	51475	0.01	0.02	0.01	-28.56
86	Railway Or Tramway Locomotives, Rolling Stock, Track Fixtures And Fittings, And Parts Thereof; Mechanical Etc. Traffic Signal Equipment Of All Kinds	0	10001	39664	0	0	0.01	296.6
07	Edible Vegetables And Certain Roots And Tubers	0	6606	34029	0	0	0.01	415.12
09	Coffee, Tea, Mate And Spices	0	527969	26176	0	0.12	0.01	-95.04
01	Live Animals	5250	3900	23610	0	0	0.01	505.38
19	Preparations Of Cereals, Flour, Starch Or Milk; Bakers' Wares	0	0	20697	0	0	0.01	n/a



59	Impregnated, Coated, Covered Or Laminated Textile Fabrics; Textile Articles Suitable For Industrial Use	3382696	579874	19748	0.73	0.13	0	-96.59
65	Headgear And Parts Thereof	0	7061	11768	0	0	0	66.66
96	Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	34429	119616	11068	0.01	0.03	0	-90.75
92	Musical Instruments; Parts And Accessories Thereof	6351	0	9000	0	0	0	n/a
11	Milling Industry Products; Malt; Starches; Inulin; Wheat Gluten	22565	0	8321	0	0	0	n/a
57	Carpets And Other Textile Floor Coverings	0	0	7772	0	0	0	n/a
69	Ceramic Products	2520	2587	6796	0	0	0	162.7
42	Articles Of Leather; Saddlery And Harness; Travel Goods, Handbags And Similar Containers; Articles Of Gut (Other Than Silkworm Gut)	188919	18442	6362	0.04	0	0	-65.5
72	Iron And Steel	46084	51929	5578	0.01	0.01	0	-89.26
13	Lac; Gums; Resins And Other Vegetable Saps And Extracts	10500	107085	5466	0	0.02	0	-94.9
34	Soap Etc.; Lubricating Products; Waxes, Polishing Or Scouring Products; Candles Etc., Modeling Pastes; Dental Waxes And Dental Plaster Preparations	15330	13994	3723	0	0	0	-73.4
61	Articles Of Apparel And Clothing Accessories, Knitted Or Crocheted	31946	12806	3483	0.01	0	0	-72.8
62	Articles Of Apparel And Clothing Accessories, Not Knitted Or Crocheted	2768	0	3210	0	0	0	n/a
03	Fish And Crustaceans, Molluscs And Other Aquatic Invertebrates	0	0	2740	0	0	0	n/a
43	Furskins And Artificial Fur; Manufactures Thereof	3240	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
27	Mineral Fuels, Mineral Oils And Products Of Their Distillation; Bituminous Substances; Mineral Waxes	18085	8103	0	0	0	0	-100
02	Meat And Edible Meat Offal	784820	129214	0	0.17	0.03	0	-100
15	Animal Or Vegetable Fats And Oils And Their Cleavage Products; Prepared Edible Fats; Animal Or Vegetable Waxes	90000	0	0	0.02	0	0	n/a
91	Clocks And Watches And Parts Thereof	2800	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
89	Ships, Boats And Floating Structures	0	116244	0	0	0.03	0	-100
71	Natural Or Cultured Pearls, Precious Or Semiprecious Stones, Precious Metals; Precious Metal Clad Metals, Articles Thereof; Imitation Jewelry; Coin	23793	9035	0	0.01	0	0	-100
75	Nickel And Articles Thereof	0	12715	0	0	0	0	-100
37	Photographic Or Cinematographic Goods	0	59310	0	0	0.01	0	-100
47	Pulp Of Wood Or Other Fibrous Cellulosic Material; Recovered (Waste And Scrap) Paper And Paperboard	17784	0	0	0	0	0	n/a



Boundary representations are not necessarily authoritative.

## BACKGROUND

### Land and Climate

Japan is slightly larger than Germany, or just smaller than the U.S. state of Montana. It consists of four main islands: Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, and Shikoku. These are surrounded by more than four thousand smaller islands. Japan's terrain is largely mountainous, and most large cities are positioned along the coasts. The nation has a few active and many dormant volcanoes. Mount Fuji, located west of Tokyo, on Honshu Island, is Japan's highest point, with an elevation of 12,388 feet (3,776 meters). Mild earthquakes are fairly common, and more destructive earthquakes hit every few years. Volcanic eruptions are also fairly common in Japan.

The nation experiences all four seasons. On Hokkaido and in northern Honshu, winters can be bitterly cold. To the south, a more tropical climate prevails. Otherwise, the climate is temperate with warm, humid summers and mild winters. The western side of the islands is usually colder than the eastern side. Japan is subject to typhoons in August and September.

### History

#### *Imperial Origins and Feudal Period*

Japan is known historically as the Land of the Rising Sun, as symbolized by its flag. Beginning with Emperor Jimmu in 600 BC (according to legend), Japan has had a line of emperors that continues to the present. From the 12th century until the late 19th century, however, feudal lords (or *shoguns*) held political control. Japan adopted a policy of strict

isolation and remained closed to nearly all foreign trade until 1853, when Matthew Perry of the U.S. Navy sailed into the harbor of Edo (now Tokyo) to demand a treaty. The shoguns lost power in the 1860s, and the emperor again took control.

The current emperor, Akihito, took the throne in 1989. Akihito's father, Hirohito, was emperor from 1926 to 1989. His reign was called *Shōwa*, which means "enlightened peace," and the deceased Hirohito is now properly referred to as Emperor Shōwa. Akihito's reign is called *Heisei*, meaning "achievement of universal peace." Recently, concern has risen over the future succession of the emperor, as there are few males in the Japanese imperial family.

#### *Japanese Expansion and World War II*

Japan established itself as a regional power through military victories against China (1895) and Russia (1905). Involvement in World War I brought Japan enhanced global influence, and the Treaty of Versailles expanded its land holdings. The postwar years brought prosperity to the rapidly changing nation. It soon began to exercise considerable influence in Asia and subsequently invaded Manchuria and much of China.

On 7 December 1941, Japan launched a successful air attack on U.S. naval forces at Pearl Harbor. Its military machine swiftly encircled most of Southeast Asia. But in 1943, the tide of the war turned against Japan. The United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the summer of 1945; complete collapse of the empire and surrender ensued. A military occupation, chiefly by U.S. forces, lasted from 1945 to 1952. In 1947, Japan adopted a new constitution under U.S. direction, renouncing war, granting basic human rights, and declaring Japan a



democracy. The United States and Japan have since maintained close political and military ties.

#### **Liberal Democratic Party Dominance**

Japan's postwar focus was on economic development, and the country experienced rapid change and modernization. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) generally controlled politics after World War II, although scandals in the 1980s and 1990s led to high-level resignations and splinter parties. The LDP was briefly the opposition party in 1995, but it regained power in 1996. Facing severe economic woes in 1998, the nation slid into recession. Japan's currency nearly collapsed under the strain of bad bank loans and in conjunction with a wider Asian economic crisis. By 1999, the LDP had to form a coalition government to have the votes necessary to pass legislation.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of the LDP came to office in April 2001. The popular leader forced through major economic reforms and helped restore Japanese confidence in the political system. When Koizumi stepped down in September 2006, Shinzō Abe won the LDP's leadership election to succeed him as prime minister, but scandals and the party's loss of the legislature's upper house forced Abe to resign. The LDP chose Yasuo Fukuda to replace him in September 2007. Less than a year later, Fukuda resigned in the wake of political deadlock and persistently low approval ratings.

In September 2008, Taro Aso became Japan's fourth prime minister in two years. In September 2009 elections, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) won a majority of seats in parliament, ending 50 years of near-total LDP rule. Three separate prime ministers served during the DPJ's time in power. Shinzō Abe became prime minister again in December 2012, as the LDP regained control of the legislature. The LDP gains were seen as a reflection of early success for Abe's new set of economic policies, including fiscal stimulus and structural reforms, popularly known as "Abenomics."

#### **2011 Earthquake and Tsunami**

In March 2011, a massive 9.0 magnitude earthquake occurred roughly 70 miles from the coast of Japan, triggering a massive tsunami that washed as far as 6 miles inland. Waves from the tsunami reached heights of nearly 128 feet (39 meters). Nearly 16,000 people died, and thousands more were injured. The earthquake was one of the most powerful recorded earthquakes in the world. Extensive damage to several nuclear power reactors resulted in radiation leaks, the most notable of which was the power plant in Fukushima. Japan restarted its first nuclear reactor in 2015, following new safety procedures.

#### **Recent Events and Trends**

- **Parliament approves military bill:** In September 2015, Japan's parliament passed legislation on a bill that would allow the country's military troops to fight overseas. Following World War II, Japan's constitution, which was written by the United States, only gave permission to use force for "self-defense." Prime Minister Abe believes that a strong military force will help the country defend itself from growing threats from China and North Korea.
- **Kyushu earthquakes:** In April 2016, two destructive earthquakes hit the island of Kyushu in southern Japan,

injuring thousands and leaving 44 people dead. The 6.2-magnitude and 7.3-magnitude quakes toppled many homes and buildings and caused landslides. Japan is one of the most seismically active countries in the world.

- **Parliamentary election:** In July 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's LDP won over two-thirds of seats in parliament. The LDP has controlled the government for many years and was expected to win, which accounts for the low voter turnout. With its majority, the ruling party may amend parts of the constitution, including the clause that restricts Japan's military power.

## **THE PEOPLE**

### **Population**

The majority of the population lives in urban areas. Almost half are concentrated in three major metropolitan areas: Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya. As a result, Japan suffers from a high cost of living and a lack of affordable urban housing. Japan is 98.5 percent ethnic Japanese, with a small number of Koreans (0.5 percent) and Chinese (0.4 percent). The Ainu (an indigenous ethnic group whose habitation of Japan predates the migration of ethnic Japanese) live mostly on Hokkaido.

### **Language**

Japanese is the official language. Although spoken Japanese is not closely related to spoken Chinese, the written language (*kanji*) is related to Chinese characters. Each *kanji* has at least two "readings," or ways of pronouncing the word; one based on the ancient Chinese pronunciation, and the other based on the Japanese pronunciation. The Japanese also use two phonetic alphabets (*hiragana* and *katakana*) simplified from these characters. A third phonetic alphabet (*romaji*) uses Roman letters. People are losing their ability to write the complex *kanji* as they rely more on computers. Japanese can be written vertically from right to left, or horizontally from left to right. In 2011, English language instruction became mandatory for elementary school grades five and six; English is also taught in all secondary schools and is often used in business.

### **Religion**

Most Japanese practice a combination of Buddhism and Shinto. Shinto has no recognized founder or central scripture but is based on ancient mythology. It stresses a person's relationship to nature and its many gods. All Japanese emperors are considered literal descendants of the sun goddess, Amaterasu. Shinto was important historically in ordering social values, as illustrated by the Code of the Warrior (*Bushido*), which stressed honor, courage, politeness, and reserve. Shinto principles of ancestor veneration, ritual purity, and a respect for nature's beauty are all obvious in Japanese culture.

Many households continue to integrate aspects of Shinto and Buddhism into their lives. For example, marriages often follow Shinto traditions, and funerals, Buddhist ones. Additionally, *butsudan* (Buddhist altars used to pay respects

to deceased family members) are common in homes, and *kamidana* (small Shinto shrines) are common in homes as well as some shops. For most, however, this is done more out of respect for social tradition than out of religious conviction. About 2 percent of the population is Christian.

### General Attitudes

Japanese society is group oriented. Loyalty to the group (business, club, etc.) and to one's superiors is essential and takes precedence over personal feelings. In business, loyalty, devotion, and cooperation are valued over aggressiveness. Companies traditionally provide lifetime employment to the "salary-man" (full-time male professional) who devotes long hours of work to the company. Devotion to the group is central to the Japanese lifestyle. For example, someone with a cold will voluntarily wear a face mask to help ensure nobody else catches their cold. Japanese tend to avoid conversation topics that can be divisive, especially topics such as politics and religion. It is uncommon for people to discuss their personal lives with coworkers, except among those they consider to be close friends.

Customarily, the Japanese feel an obligation to return favors and gifts. They honor age and tradition. "Losing face," or being shamed in public, is very undesirable. *Gaman* (enduring patience) is a commonly respected trait that carries one through personal hardship. Politeness is extremely important. A direct "no" is seldom given, but a phrase like "I will think about it" can mean "no." Also out of politeness, a "yes" may be given quickly, even though it only means the person is listening or understands the speaker's request. One is often expected to sense another person's feelings on a subject by picking up on the person's tone of voice, even if what is being said only hints at the truth (or is the opposite of the truth). Some Westerners misinterpret this as a desire to be vague or incomplete. The Japanese may consider a person's inability to interpret feelings as insensitivity.

Many Japanese feel that consumerism, periods of economic insecurity, less filial piety (devotion to ancestors), and lower moral standards have all damaged social cohesion, and they question the country's future course. Even as many traditions remain strong, Japan's rising generation is revising society's views of family relations, politics, and male and female roles.

### Personal Appearance

Conformity, even in appearance, is a common characteristic of the Japanese. The general rule is to act similar to, or in harmony with, the crowd. For youth this includes wearing the latest fashions (U.S. and European) and colors.

Businessmen wear suits and ties in public. Businesswomen generally wear pantsuits or blazers with skirts; bare legs are not acceptable, and stockings or knee-high socks are commonly worn.

Proper dress is necessary for certain occasions. Traditional Japanese clothing, or *wafuku*, can be worn for social events or special occasions, but it is equally common for people to wear suits and formal dresses. Traditional clothing includes the *kimono*, a long robe with long sleeves that is wrapped with a special sash (*obi*). The *kimono* is worn by women and men,

though most commonly by women. The designs in the fabric can be simple or elaborate. The *yukata* is similar to the *kimono*; it is made of lighter fabric and worn in summer, particularly to summer festivals and parties.

For celebrations, women wear dresses or *kimono*; married women wear muted colors with short sleeves, while unmarried women wear brighter colors with long sleeves. For weddings, men wear dark suits and white ties or, less commonly, *kimono*. To funerals, women wear black *kimono* or, alternatively, simple black dresses with strings of pearls. Men wear black suits with black ties to funerals.

Outside work or formal occasions, Japanese tend to dress casually and conservatively; jeans and T-shirts, button-down shirts worn with slacks or skirts, and dresses are common. Plunging necklines or bare arms are usually avoided, and baring the midriff (even on accident) is taboo. Dressing in multiple layers is very common as well.

## CUSTOMS AND COURTESIES

### Greetings

A bow is the traditional greeting between Japanese. A bow is correctly performed by standing with the feet together and arms straight at one's side (women may fold their arms in front of them) and bending at 45 degrees from the waist. While performing a bow, people do not look directly in the other person's eyes. Workers in the service industry may bow with one palm on the stomach and the other on their back, with elbows extending straight out. Persons wishing to show respect or humility bow lower than the other person. The Japanese shake hands with Westerners. While some appreciate it when Westerners bow, others do not, especially when the two people are not acquainted. Therefore, a handshake is most appropriate for foreign visitors.

The Japanese usually greet strangers and superiors formally, and titles are important in introductions. A family name is used with the suffix *-san*. For example, members of the Ogushi family would individually be called *Ogushi-san* in Japan. The use of first names is reserved for family and friends; however, a suffix is still generally used. Close friends and family of children will call them by their first name with a different suffix: *-chan* is used for girls and *-kun* for boys.

The greetings Japanese use depend on the relationship. A worker might greet a superior with *Ohayougozaimasu* (Good morning), but he or she would greet a customer with *Irasshaimase* (Welcome). When business representatives meet for the first time, they may tell each other *Hajimemashite* (Nice to meet you). Between business representatives, the exchange of business cards (offered and accepted with both hands) most often accompanies a greeting. *Yoroshiku onegaishimasu* (Please consider me favorably) is a common phrase said at the outset of group activities such as a sports match or the beginning of a work project. *Konnichiwa* ("Hello" or "Good day") is a standard greeting. *Ohayou* (an informal "Good morning") and *Genki?* (How's it going?) are common casual greetings among youth.

### Gestures



The Japanese regard yawning in public as impolite. A person should sit up straight with both feet on the floor. Legs may be crossed at the knee or ankle, but placing an ankle over a knee is considered improper. One beckons by waving all fingers with the palm down. It is polite to point with the entire hand rather than the index finger. Shaking one hand from side to side with the palm forward means "no." A slight bow accompanied by a chopping motion of the hand in front of the face while walking down an aisle of seats signifies "Please excuse me, coming through."

Making an X with the index fingers at chin level or with forearms in front of the chest indicates "no" or "not allowed." For example, a waiter might make the X sign at closing time, indicating to incoming customers that no more service will be provided that evening. Alternatively, the sign indicating "yes" is made by forming an O with the hands and placing them in front of the face or raising the arms high above the head. These gestures are used somewhat like the "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" sign is used in the West. People refer to themselves by pointing an index finger at their nose. Laughter does not necessarily signify joy or amusement; it can also be a sign of embarrassment. Chewing gum in public is generally considered ill-mannered.

### Visiting

Visits usually are arranged in advance; spontaneous visits between neighbors are uncommon in urban areas. The Japanese remove shoes before stepping into a home. There is usually a small entry area (*genkan*) between the door and living area, where one stands to remove the shoes; shoes are placed together pointing toward the outdoors, or they may be placed in a closet or on a shelf in the *genkan*. People normally take off their coats before stepping into the *genkan*. Slippers often are worn inside but not in rooms with straw-mat floors (*tatami*). Guests usually are offered the most comfortable seat. The Japanese traditionally emphasize modesty and reserve. When offered a meal, they express slight hesitation before accepting it. Light refreshments are accepted graciously. In business settings, the host generally offers either tea or coffee; it is polite to take a sip, but the drink does not have to be finished.

Out of modesty, the Japanese typically demur compliments. Guests avoid excessive compliments on items in the home because they would embarrass the hosts. Guests customarily take a gift (usually fruit or cakes) to their hosts. People give and accept gifts with both hands and a slight bow. Some, especially the elderly, may consider it impolite to open the gift right away. Gift giving is extremely important, especially in business, because a gift says a great deal about the giver's relationship to, and respect for, the recipient.

Food and drink are the most common gifts, as other kinds of gifts would quickly clutter small homes. Sweets or rice crackers are common gifts, as are seasonal fresh fruit, frying oil, or coffee. Gifts of hand towels or cleaning products are commonly given to welcome new neighbors. Gift giving reaches its peak twice a year, in midsummer and at year's end. During these seasons, giving the right-priced present (the price is considered more important than the item) to all the right people (family, friends, officials, and business contacts)

sets the tone for the rest of the year.

### Eating

Although many young Japanese eat while walking in public, it is generally considered bad manners to do so. Therefore, snack foods sold at street stands are usually eaten at the stand. In a traditional meal, people typically eat from a bowl while holding it at chest level, instead of bending down to the table. It is not impolite to drink soup directly from the bowl or to make slurping sounds. Japanese use chopsticks (called *hashi*) to eat most meals but generally eat Western-style food with Western utensils. The main meal is eaten in the evening. Because many men work late hours, they may eat dinner in office-building restaurants or on the way home. The family might also save dinner for the father and sit with him while he eats.

## LIFESTYLE

### Family

#### Structure

The family is the foundation of Japanese society and is bound together by a strong sense of reputation, obligation, and responsibility. A person's actions reflect on the family, and as people are often called by their family name, they are continually reminded of that. Affection, spending time together, and spousal compatibility are less important than in other cultures.

Japanese society's emphasis on work and career greatly affects family life. Employers have rigid expectations as to the amount of time employees devote to their jobs, making it difficult for full-time employees to spend time with their families. Parental leave is difficult to take without jeopardizing a career.

Long commutes, long work hours, and business obligations outside of working hours often make it difficult for urban fathers to spend time with their children. In rural families where fathers may not have such obligations, fathers are able to spend more time with their children. Divorce and single parenthood are rare but increasing, and there are economic pressures and social stigmas associated with both. Society, however, is becoming more accepting of single parents.

#### Parents and Children

Families generally have two children. Before children start school, they are relatively free and are disciplined only gently. As children grow, discipline usually becomes more strict, and children are taught and disciplined to be aware of the collective good. Often the school plays a primary role in disciplining a child and may not refer infractions to the child's parents. Families place great emphasis on their children's education and make it possible for children to entirely devote themselves to their studies. Children are often given only light chores because their primary responsibility is to study. Though rare, some high school students may move into a small apartment closer to their high school. Parents might pay for *juku* (cram schools) to help their children get better scores on the standardized entrance exams. Most parents pay for the

entirety of their children's college education. Children tend to move out of the parental home only upon marriage or in the event of a job transfer.

The declining birth rate, coupled with the population's high life expectancy (the longest in the world), is changing the structure of the family. Traditionally, elderly parents were cared for at home, which also enabled them to be an influence in the lives of their grandchildren. Most adult children, especially an oldest son, feel an obligation to live with and take care of their parents as they age. However, many obstacles (including time and ability) pose problems to caring for the elderly, who may live a long time with chronic diseases. The demographic changes are beginning to be a source of tension for individual families and the entire society. Nursing homes are becoming a more viable option for long-term care of the elderly.

#### **Gender Roles**

While the father is the head of the home, the mother is responsible for managing household affairs, including finances, and raising children. Traditionally, it was considered improper for a woman to have a job. Today, about half of working-age women work, though their positions are usually lower than those held by men. Young women often quit work after marrying, and those married women who do work outside the home often have part-time or temporary positions as opposed to the full-time permanent positions that men are expected to commit to.

### **Housing**

#### **Urban**

Living situations are usually cramped in cities. Many urban residents live in apartments. Apartments come in a variety of sizes and layouts, but a typical urban apartment has two bedrooms. The main room is a combination living room, dining room, and kitchen. Apartment complexes are made with concrete or wooden exteriors of varying design.

#### **Rural**

Homes are more spacious in suburban and rural settings, where there might be room for a vegetable garden or a Japanese garden (which often features water, small bridges, rocks or stones, and lanterns) with well-manicured trees. A small plot of land can produce a good deal of rice, so flat land is quite valuable. Rural homes are usually made of wood with tiled roofs and are painted white. They generally consist of an open kitchen and dining area, which is divided from bedrooms and guest rooms by *fusuma* (sliding paper doors). Older rural homes often feature a glass-enclosed veranda, which functions as a sunroom.

#### **Home Life**

Many homes feature some elements of traditional Japanese décor, such as a *tokonoma* (a wall alcove in which flowers or hanging scrolls are displayed) and *fusuma* (which can be opened to turn two small rooms into a larger one). A traditional bed, called a *futon*, lies on *tatami* (woven mat) flooring. To increase space during the day, the *futon* is folded up and kept in a closet. While many people still use a *futon*, Western-style beds are becoming increasingly popular, especially in urban areas.

Homes usually contain an entryway, where shoes are

removed and stored. Floors are slightly elevated from the entryway, so guests and residents step up when they enter a house or an apartment, after putting on slippers. Bathrooms contain a shower—usually installed close to the ground and used while sitting—and a deep bathtub. Bathtubs are used for post-shower soaking, and a whole family might use the same water. Toilets are located in a separate room, in which one wears a specific pair of slippers. Washers may be located in bathrooms, and clothes are generally hung outside to dry. Most kitchens have gas stoves and a small gas grill for cooking fish. Ovens are rare; instead, people may use toaster ovens or microwaves with an oven function for baking.

Most homes are not equipped with central heat or air conditioning. People purchase their own fans, space heaters, or air conditioners. Rooms may also be heated with a *kotatsu* (a table with an electric heating unit underneath and a duvet that wraps around the table and covers the legs of people sitting around the table). A room with a *kotatsu* is most likely decorated in traditional Japanese style—that is, having walls with a muted color and furniture that is low to the ground.

#### **Home Ownership**

In cities residents tend to be renters, and in rural areas residents tend to be owners. Roughly half the population owns a home. Many young people save money for a house while living with their parents, and parents often help children pay the large deposits banks require to secure a mortgage. Very often the eldest son inherits his parents' home. The upkeep of older homes can be expensive, and deteriorating materials that are required to meet continually improving earthquake standards make older homes undesirable. Land is worth more than houses, so people tend to either tear down old houses and rebuild or buy new homes.

Japanese companies tend to employ people for life but transfer them to new offices every three to four years. The expectation of constant relocation means that families tend to buy homes where they intend to retire, rather than homes that are close to their places of work. Mothers and children might live in such a house while fathers commute long distances or rent small apartments near the office, coming home only on weekends.

### **Dating and Marriage**

#### **Dating and Courtship**

Some Japanese youth begin dating around age 15, though most have little free time or spending money at that age. In college, people have more time and opportunity to date. Couples meet through school, clubs, and friends who set up *gokon*. A *gokon* is a group blind date in which a couple invites a small group of their friends to a restaurant for drinks and to get to know one another. Some people turn to a matchmaker (generally an older female relative or friend) to introduce them to local singles looking to marry. After a series of formal introductions in which parents and the matchmaker are present, couples who like each other continue dating on their own. In the past, people may have met using an *omiai* (introduction service), but today internet dating is becoming more popular. Most couples avoid public displays of affection.

#### **Engagement**



A wedding is a serious event that celebrates the joining of two families. A *yuino* (engagement ceremony) involving the couple's parents occurs after the groom has asked the bride to marry him. The groom and his parents visit the bride and her parents at her home or a restaurant. According to tradition, the groom's family offers *yuinomono* (gifts that are decorated with origami turtles and cranes, symbols of eternity and long life) to the bride's family. *Yuinohin* is money traditionally offered to the bride's family during the *yuino*. While some families follow these traditions, more commonly the families share a meal to get to know each other and decide on the details of the wedding. If the families live far apart, they may simply meet the day before the wedding ceremony to have a meal or drinks together.

### Weddings

Men and women usually marry in their late twenties or early thirties. Weddings can be elaborate and expensive. The cost of a wedding is usually split evenly between the groom's and bride's families, although guests also contribute cash gifts—presented in elaborately decorated envelopes to the bride—to offset the costs. Some of these cash gifts, especially those given by family members, may be returned to compensate guests for travel costs.

The bride and groom commonly give gifts such as plates or glasses to their guests. Couples navigate complex traditional wedding etiquette and the symbolism of gift giving with the help of wedding planners and etiquette guides. Wedding ceremonies generally consist of three major events: *kekkonshiki* (the wedding ceremony), attended by family and sometimes friends; *hiroen* (the reception party), attended by family, close friends, and selected coworkers; and finally, *nijikai* (the "after party" or "second party"), which includes all wedding guests plus friends and coworkers who could not attend the reception).

Although Western-style white weddings are very common in Japan, many couples are married in Shinto ceremonies, which can take place at temples or, more commonly, at hotels or wedding halls with small Shinto temples built in them. A Shinto priest officiates at the ceremony, which is attended only by close family. The couple is ritually purified, drinks *sake* (a rice-based alcoholic beverage), exchanges rings, and makes a ceremonial offering to the gods. The couple wear traditional *kimono* for the ceremony.

After the ceremony, the couple is announced at the reception, where friends, coworkers, and family have gathered. At the reception, friends and relatives give speeches, sing songs, and enjoy a formal meal. It is common also for the bride and groom to invite their bosses to give a speech about what kind of work they do and what kind of workers they are. Receptions may also include more recent additions such as slideshows of the bride and groom as children and games and prizes for guests. The bride and groom often change outfits several times, including Western wedding outfits for photographs and socializing and different clothing for an evening party. Female guests wear either *kimono* or dresses, and men wear dark suits.

Same-sex marriage is not legal in Japan. In 2015, Tokyo's Shibuya ward (municipality) issued its first certificate recognizing same-sex unions; however, these are not legally

binding.

## Life Cycle

### Birth

During the fifth month of pregnancy, a family might go to a Shinto shrine and ask the gods for a safe birth. The priest presents the mother with a *haraobi* (a long white sash with a picture of a dog on it), which represents an easy birth. The sash is wrapped around and under the pregnant woman's stomach to support her back and keep her belly warm. The sash is replaced or re-blessed every 12 days. Babies are delivered in hospitals and stay with the mother there for about a week. Traditionally, the new mother goes to her parents' house for 20 to 30 days after leaving the hospital. During this time the baby's grandmother looks after the mother.

On the seventh day after the birth, called *oshichiya*, the baby's name is announced and family and friends gather for a meal. Among more religious families, a plaque with the baby's name written in calligraphy is hung on the wall. Naming a baby in Japanese is complicated because many considerations must be weighed, such as the number of *kanji* (Chinese characters) in the name, their pronunciation (based on the different readings *kanji* can have), the number of strokes in the *kanji*, and how they sound and look with the last name. Some families consult Shinto shrines to determine the most auspicious name for their child. Girls' names tend to be taken from nature, for example, *Yukiko* (child of snow), while concepts like justice, peace, or abundance (*Noboru*) are common for boys. When a newborn is a month to one hundred days old, his or her parents bring the child to a Shinto shrine for a ceremonial blessing. The blessing, called *omiyamairi*, is performed to thank the gods for a healthy birth and to ask the local deity (associated with natural objects like trees, rivers, and mountains) to bless and accept the baby as part of the local shrine.

### Milestones

Each year on 15 November, a festival called *Shichigosan* (which literally means "seven five three") celebrates the well-being of young children. Boys take part when they are three and five years old, girls when they are three and seven. Parents dress their children in *kimono* and take them to Shinto shrines, where families pray for the children's good health. Children are given long paper bags filled with candy and decorated with turtles and cranes (which represent longevity). A family portrait is often taken at a photo studio.

Young people are considered adults at age 20. After this age, a person can legally purchase alcohol, smoke, and vote. The second Monday in January is Coming of Age Day, when those who have turned 20 within the last year are honored as becoming adults in a ceremony called *Seijinshiki*. Young women have their hair professionally styled and wear *furisode kimono* (elegant *kimono* with long sleeves). Men wear *kimono* or suits. At the *Seijinshiki*, which takes place at city hall, the new adults listen to speeches by government officials about their responsibility to be proper members of society. Afterward, the young people pose for pictures and attend parties.

One's sixtieth birthday, or *kanreki*, is cause for a special celebration. The person wears a traditional red sleeveless

*kimono* jacket and is presented with gifts by his or her children and grandchildren. It is common for a 60-year-old to take a trip or to enjoy a nice meal out with the family.

#### Death

Traditional funerals are formal affairs, though there is a trend toward more casual gatherings where people reminisce about the deceased. Funeral guests are expected to contribute money, presented in a special black-and-white envelope, to offset the cost of the funeral. The family gives guests a gift in return, usually a household item (such as a blanket or plate) that will remind them of the deceased. The body of the deceased is generally returned to its home, where it remains for one night while a Buddhist monk prays and burns incense. Bodies are cremated, not buried. After a funeral, a Buddhist monk comes to the home to pray for the deceased weekly for 49 days. After the 49th day, the ashes of the deceased are moved from the home to the graveyard. The family might also clean the grave on the anniversary of the death and on the Obon holiday, in August. White chrysanthemums are commonly used for decorations at funerals. The family generally buys a *butsudan* (altar) for their home, on which they place offerings and a photo of the deceased.

#### Diet

The Japanese diet consists largely of rice, fresh vegetables, seafood, fruit, and small portions of meat. Most dishes use soy sauce, fish broth, or sweet *sake* (alcohol made from fermented rice). Rice and tea are part of almost every meal. Western food (such as U.S. fast food) is increasingly popular, especially among the youth. Popular Japanese foods include *miso* (bean paste) soup, noodles (*ramen* egg noodles, *udon* wheat noodles, and *soba* buckwheat noodles), curry and rice, *sashimi* (uncooked fish), tofu, and pork. Sushi is made usually with a combination of fish (cooked or raw) and lightly vinegared rice. Sometimes a vegetable, such as cucumber, or an egg roll is added to the dish or used instead of fish. Sushi wrapped in dried seaweed (*nori*) is called *norimaki*. While sushi can be bought at *kaiten* sushi bars (restaurants that serve sushi from a conveyor belt) for as little as one U.S. dollar, good quality sushi and *sashimi* is expensive and usually reserved for special occasions.

#### Recreation

##### Sports

Badminton, soft tennis (a kind of tennis played with a soft white ball), table tennis, soccer, and basketball are all popular sports. Students learn how to play most sports at school. Baseball, brought to Japan in the 1870s by a professor from the United States, is the country's most popular sport. It is highly competitive at all levels. The entire country follows the annual national high school championships. Teams often bow to the field or court at the beginning and end of practice. Hiking and mallet golf (like miniature golf but played with croquet-like mallets and a hard ball slightly bigger than a tennis ball) are popular with retired couples. Golf, while expensive, is popular among men. The Japanese also enjoy traditional sports such as sumo wrestling (a popular spectator sport), judo, *kendo* (fencing with bamboo poles), and karate. Tokyo has been selected to host the 2020 Summer Olympic

Games.

##### Leisure

During their leisure time, people enjoy television, karaoke, movies, video games, and nature outings. Employees with intense jobs might use their leisure to time catch up on sleep or spend time with family. Many enjoy reading books, comics, and magazines; simply standing and reading magazines at the store is a popular pastime. Cities usually have community education centers where classes are offered, and elderly people in particular enjoy pursuing artistic hobbies such as ceramics, woodblock print making, painting, calligraphy, flower arranging, and traditional Japanese dance.

Some activities vary according to the season. In the spring, people enjoy picnics under the cherry blossoms in public parks. In the summer, there are large firework displays and festivals. In the fall, people often visit parks to see the leaves changing colors. Winter activities include skiing and snowboarding and regional festivals. During the winter, some schools flood the soccer field to turn it into a skating rink.

##### Vacation

Because annual school holidays are fairly uniform across the country, most of the country takes vacation at the same time, typically in the summer. Local destinations fill up quickly, and the price of plane tickets increases significantly at this time. Popular domestic destinations include the shrines and temples of Kyoto and package tours of theme parks, such as Tokyo Disney and Universal Studios Japan. Urban families often take trips to the beach or visit relatives.

#### The Arts

In Japan, Western arts such as symphonic music and ballets are common, but many important traditional arts exist. Older adults favor puppet theater (*bunraku*) and highly stylized drama (*noh* and *kabuki*). *Kabuki* is known for spectacular sets and costumes. Like *noh*, it blends dance, music, and acting. The Japanese also attend musical concerts. *Gagaku* is one of the oldest types of Japanese music. It is played with string and wind instruments and drums. Pop music is a major part of Japanese culture.

Calligraphy (*shodo*) is well respected. Haiku, a form of poetry developed in the 17th century, in which writers portray scenes from Japanese life and nature, is also popular. Flower arranging (*ikebana*) has been evolving since the sixth century. The tea ceremony (*sado*), prescribing precise details of the tea's preparation and serving, is an art form originating in the 16th century. Woodblock printing (*ukiyo*) is another traditional art form that has been around since the 17th century. Modern art includes *manga* (comics) and *anime* (animation), both of which are immensely popular.

#### Holidays

National holidays include New Year's, Coming of Age Day (also called Adults' Day, second Monday in January), National Foundation Day (11 Feb.), Vernal Equinox (in March), Golden Week (29 April–5 May), Maritime Day (third Monday in July), Respect for the Aged Day (third Monday in September), Autumnal Equinox (in September), Fitness Day (second Monday in October), Culture Day (3 Nov.), Labor Thanksgiving Day (23 Nov.), and Emperor Akihito's Birthday



(23 Dec.).

### **Importance of Holidays**

Japan's three major holiday seasons are the New Year, Golden Week, and the Obon festival. Golden Week (29 April–5 May) combines the holidays of Shōwa Day (29 April, honoring Emperor Hirohito), Constitution Day (3 May), Greenery Day (4 May, celebrating nature's beauty), and Children's Day (5 May). Aside from these three major holiday seasons, many national holidays are relatively modern and hold little significance for the average Japanese, besides providing a welcome day off from school or work. For example, few people celebrate Maritime Day or Respect for the Aged Day.

### **New Year's**

People generally take several days off from work surrounding New Year's. People also visit shrines and relatives during this time. Many people also send out New Year's cards to friends and family. The post office collects these cards and delivers them all on the first of January. Children receive money from their parents or grandparents. Families put up special decorations and eat special foods, such as *mochi* (pounded sticky rice).

### **Obon Festival**

The Obon festival takes place over several days in mid-August, with dates varying by region. Traditionally, Obon is the time of year when the spirits of deceased ancestors returned home. While some families have household shrines for their deceased ancestors where they can make frequent offerings, Obon is important because the family gathers to make an offering at the burial site. The family often cleans the grave and places there incense or an offering of food and drink the deceased liked. Obon is also a time to meet up with friends from childhood.

### **Other Festivals**

In addition to national holidays, hundreds of festivals are held around the country, at which stalls are set up to sell street food and house games for kids. Children's dance troupes are commonly featured as well. During spring there are festivals celebrating the cherry blossoms, and during the summer, those that celebrate the rice harvest. Some festivals include the procession of a Shinto deity in a portable shrine, carried by men wearing jackets called *happi*. Other popular festivals include *Hadaka Matsuri* (Naked Festival, where participants wear a minimum of clothing), *Onbashira* (The Log Festival, during which participants cut down a tree and erect the log near a Shinto shrine), and *Honen Matsuri* (Harvest Festival, celebrating fertility). Some are held yearly, while others (like *Onbashira*) occur only every six or seven years. Most holidays are rooted in religious tradition, but some are modern inventions. Some cities declare days off for the festivals, while other festivals are held on the weekend.

### **Other Holidays**

A growing number of Japanese celebrate Christmas, Valentine's Day, and White Day. Though few Japanese are Christian, it is not uncommon for people to celebrate Christmas by getting together with friends and eating Christmas cake (cream-filled sponge cake decorated with strawberries) and sometimes fried chicken (both of which are viewed as common Western Christmas foods). On Valentine's

Day (14 Feb.), girls give chocolates to boys in whom they are interested. Boys reciprocate their interest on White Day (14 Mar.) by giving girls chocolates or decorated boxes of cookies.

## **SOCIETY**

### **Government**

#### **Structure**

Japan is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government. Emperor Akihito is head of state but has no governing power, though the emperor is deeply respected by the Japanese people. The monarchy is hereditary. Traditionally, the emperor's line was allowed to pass only through men, but in recent years, there have been discussions about amending the succession laws to include women, because the number of men in line for the throne has drastically decreased. The prime minister is head of government. The legislature designates the prime minister, who is usually the leader of the majority party there.

Japan's legislature, called the *Diet*, consists of a 242-seat House of Councilors (the upper house) and a 475-seat House of Representatives (the lower house). Councilors are elected to six-year terms; representatives are elected to four-year terms. The *Diet* is filled through a combination of majoritarian and proportional representation elections. More than one hundred seats in the *Diet* are held by second or third generations of a family, as voter loyalty to local political families is often stronger than a desire for qualified candidates.

#### **Political Landscape**

Several political parties are active in Japan, though the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has maintained firm power in Japanese politics for all but a few years since the end of World War II. The LDP's current major rival is the center-left Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). The DPJ was formed in 1998 with the merging of several other parties.

Party ideologies in Japan are sometimes not very well defined, which means that individuals within a party may share quite different views on how to address important issues in Japanese politics. These issues include the status of Japan's nuclear energy program following the Fukushima disaster; years of slow economic growth; Japan's aging population and low birth rate; and differing interpretations of Article 9 of Japan's constitution, which prohibits Japan from engaging in war.

A major political dynamic of Japanese politics is known as the "iron triangle," which describes the relationship between the *Diet* (practically speaking, the LDP), the government bureaucracy, and Japan's business conglomerates. Close relationships among these three groups have allowed Japan to become an economic superpower but have also contributed to corruption and a lack of transparency.

#### **Government and the People**

Japan's constitution protects a variety of freedoms and prohibits many forms of discrimination. The government generally respects constitutional freedoms and combats unconstitutional discrimination. The government is able to

provide a range of goods and services to its citizens. Corruption surrounding the relationship between big business and the government in Japan has historically been a problem, though recent efforts have been made to reduce corruption. Elections are generally free, fair, and transparent. In recent years, voter turnout has ranged between 50 and 60 percent. The voting age is 18.

### Economy

Japan has one of the world's largest economies even though it has few natural resources and imports most raw materials. Also, because only about 11 percent of the land is suitable for cultivation, Japan imports nearly half of its food supply. Major local crops include rice, sugar, vegetables, tea, and fruit. Japan is a leading supplier of fish. Nearly all exports are manufactured items, including automobiles, electronic equipment, and televisions. Major industries include machinery, metals, engineering, electronics, textiles, and chemicals. The United States is Japan's biggest trading partner. An economic downturn of the 1990s badly damaged the economy, which has remained largely stagnant ever since. The 2008 global economic crisis led to a sharp decline in world demand for Japan's exports, a factor in pushing the economy into recession. Local and international economic markets were also damaged as a result of the massive earthquake in early 2011. Despite eventual economic growth after the earthquake, the economy again fell into recession in November 2014. The currency is the *yen* (JPY).

### Transportation and Communications

A highly developed, efficient mass-transit system of trains and buses is the principal mode of transportation in urban areas. Bullet trains (*Shinkansen*) provide rapid transportation between major cities. Subways are also available. Many people have private cars. Traffic is often heavy in large cities. Japan has five international airports.

Its communications system is modern and well developed. Most people have cellular phones and are regular internet users. Newspapers and magazines are widely read. The press is generally free of direct government interference, though close relationships between media, government, and business sometimes lead to self-censorship.

### Education

#### Structure and Access

Education is highly valued in Japanese society. Students are expected to try their hardest in school and take academics seriously. Primary school begins at age six and lasts six years. At age 12, students enter junior high school, which lasts three years. High school, also three years long, follows. Education is compulsory and free in public schools from ages six to fifteen. After age 15, students must pay tuition to continue their studies in high school. Parents must cover expenses such as uniforms, textbooks, school trips, and, if necessary, fees for private *juku* (cram schools, which focus on making sure individual students perform at their expected level while preparing them for difficult secondary school entrance exams).

Most children attend three years of day care (*hoikuen*)

before they enter the official school system. Because education is such a large part of childhood, beginning kindergarten (*yochien*) is a big step in a child's life. Kindergarten students walk to school by themselves and are expected to be responsible for their behavior at school. Once children have entered school, they are expected to be prepared and prompt.

Almost all children go to public schools. Some private schools focus on teaching students who did not perform well on standardized tests. Other students attend prestigious private schools, provided they pass difficult entrance exams (even at the kindergarten level). Some prestigious public or private high schools are "attached" to competitive universities, which gives graduates from these schools an advantage during the application process (for example, by allowing them to bypass standard entrance exams) and can aid in finding a job in the future.

#### School Life

The public school curriculum is set at the national level and is generally uniform across the country. This uniformity can lead to inflexibility, preventing teachers from adjusting their teaching for students with different learning styles. In elementary school, much of the focus is on learning the difficult reading and writing system. At all levels, the curriculum stresses math and sciences and places heavy emphasis on standardized testing. Students must pass an exam in order to enter a public high school. Those students who do not pass usually enter a private high school instead. Parents often enroll their children in *juku* schools (which hold lessons after regular schools hours and on weekends) to help them prepare for these tests. While technically it is legal to enter the work force at the end of junior high school, it is virtually impossible to find a job, so the majority of students attend senior high school.

In junior high, students spend much of their time at school participating in clubs and activities intended to foster group spirit. It is not unusual for students to practice sports or attend activities before school, on the weekend, and in the evenings. Elementary schools do not have clubs and a student's extracurricular time during high school is dedicated to preparing for entrance exams, so junior high is the time when life-long friends are made.

#### Higher Education

University entrance exams are rigorous, and competition among students is intense. Students study for years and cram for months to take them. Getting into the most prestigious schools is more important than one's ultimate performance at that school. Once a student passes the right tests and enters a junior technical college (resulting in an associate-level degree) or university (a bachelor's and advanced degree-issuing institution), the academic expectations are less strenuous. Graduation from the nation's top universities usually guarantees students well-paying jobs.

### Health

The Japanese enjoy one of the highest standards of health in the world, with a very low infant mortality rate and a high life expectancy rate. Medical facilities are very good. Companies are generally responsible for providing insurance benefits to



employees and their families. In addition to a yearly physical offered by the employer, cities provide screening exams for people based on their age and gender. A government health insurance plan exists for the self-employed and unemployed. Pollution in urban centers ranks among the nation's major health concerns.

**AT A GLANCE**

**Contact Information**

Embassy of Japan, 2520 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008; phone (202) 238-6700; web site [www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html](http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html). Japan National Tourist Organization, phone (212) 757-5640; web site [www.jnto.go.jp](http://www.jnto.go.jp).

**Country and Development Data**

Capital	_____	Tokyo
Population	_____	126,702,133 (rank=10)
Area (sq. mi.)	_____	145,914 (rank=61)
Area (sq. km.)	_____	377,915
Human Development Index	_____	20 of 188 countries
Gender Inequality Index	_____	20 of 188 countries
GDP (PPP) per capita	_____	\$38,100
Adult Literacy	_____	99%
Infant Mortality	_____	2 per 1,000 births
Life Expectancy	_____	81 (male); 87 (female)
Currency	_____	Yen

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U.S. State Export to Japan (Transport Mode: All Transport Modes) Via State: Iowa

Commodity: \_Total, All Commodity Chapters

Year To Date: January - November

Commodity	Description	United States Dollars			% Share			%Δ 16/15
		2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	
_Total	All Commodity Chapters	1097518171	1056828701	1006868445	100	100	100	-4.73
02	Meat And Edible Meat Offal	670936663	517798143	532768529	61.13	49	52.91	2.89
10	Cereals	118664723	217576533	139620229	10.81	20.59	13.87	-35.83
12	Oil Seeds And Oleaginous Fruits; Miscellaneous Grains, Seeds And Fruits; Industrial Or Medicinal Plants; Straw And Fodder	13196670	29916005	35701249	1.2	2.83	3.55	19.34
90	Optical, Photographic, Cinematographic, Measuring, Checking, Precision, Medical Or Surgical Instruments And Apparatus; Parts And Accessories Thereof	30445164	36768256	32926567	2.77	3.48	3.27	-10.45
16	Edible Preparations Of Meat, Fish, Crustaceans, Molluscs Or Other Aquatic Invertebrates	34064083	26089808	27872037	3.1	2.47	2.77	6.83
76	Aluminum And Articles Thereof	17194600	17769181	27113132	1.57	1.68	2.69	52.59
30	Pharmaceutical Products	18224801	16259294	21710065	1.66	1.54	2.16	33.52
84	Nuclear Reactors, Boilers, Machinery And Mechanical Appliances; Parts Thereof	20179454	23761927	20744877	1.84	2.25	2.06	-12.7
23	Residues And Waste From The Food Industries; Prepared Animal Feed	23603410	26392733	19236141	2.15	2.5	1.91	-27.12
39	Plastics And Articles Thereof	4050367	13348459	17293290	0.37	1.26	1.72	29.55
85	Electrical Machinery And Equipment And Parts Thereof; Sound Recorders And Reproducers, Television Recorders And Reproducers, Parts And Accessories	17377858	17155407	15109559	1.58	1.62	1.5	-11.93
25	Salt; Sulfur; Earths And Stone; Plastering Materials, Lime And Cement	11418474	13250030	13527432	1.04	1.25	1.34	2.09
17	Sugars And Sugar Confectionary	11270856	11205368	11534729	1.03	1.06	1.15	2.94
04	Dairy Produce; Birds' Eggs; Natural Honey; Edible Products Of Animal Origin, Nesoi	9353764	8281750	10488609	0.85	0.78	1.04	26.65
38	Miscellaneous Chemical Products	8092950	9905656	10065519	0.74	0.94	1	1.61
32	Tanning Or Dyeing Extracts; Tannins And Derivatives; Dyes, Pigments And Other Coloring Matter; Paints And Varnishes; Putty And Other Mastics; Inks	9341580	10814517	8545607	0.85	1.02	0.85	-20.98
88	Aircraft, Spacecraft, And Parts Thereof	7287662	5128241	6800563	0.66	0.49	0.68	32.61
44	Wood And Articles Of Wood; Wood Charcoal	6204922	6958868	6716526	0.57	0.66	0.67	-3.48
15	Animal Or Vegetable Fats And Oils And Their Cleavage Products; Prepared Edible Fats; Animal Or Vegetable Waxes	4588110	2846459	4901562	0.42	0.27	0.49	72.2
35	Albuminoidal Substances; Modified Starches; Glues; Enzymes	19689275	9137496	4685507	1.79	0.86	0.47	-48.72
87	Vehicles, Other Than Railway Or Tramway Rolling Stock, And Parts And Accessories Thereof	2690097	2348036	4323381	0.25	0.22	0.43	84.13
80	Tin And Articles Thereof	4467334	3464825	3554152	0.41	0.33	0.35	2.58
29	Organic Chemicals	3564708	5385804	3393728	0.32	0.51	0.34	-36.99
40	Rubber And Articles Thereof	636390	3778054	3270050	0.06	0.36	0.32	-13.45



86	Railway Or Tramway Locomotives, Rolling Stock, Track Fixtures And Fittings, And Parts Thereof; Mechanical Etc. Traffic Signal Equipment Of All Kinds	110329	190932	2881644	0.01	0.02	0.29	1,409.25
68	Articles Of Stone, Plaster, Cement, Asbestos, Mica Or Similar Materials	2268632	2062787	2423330	0.21	0.2	0.24	17.48
28	Inorganic Chemicals; Organic Or Inorganic Compounds Of Precious Metals, Of Rare-Earth Metals, Of Radioactive Elements Or Of Isotopes	9946198	6068310	2205723	0.91	0.57	0.22	-63.65
94	Furniture; Bedding, Cushions Etc.; Lamps And Lighting Fittings Nesoi; Illuminated Signs, Nameplates And The Like; Prefabricated Buildings	1990987	528724	1970604	0.18	0.05	0.2	272.71
73	Articles Of Iron Or Steel	1648305	2802980	1962961	0.15	0.27	0.19	-29.97
05	Products Of Animal Origin, Nesoi	743231	492517	1955473	0.07	0.05	0.19	297.04
74	Copper And Articles Thereof	4831994	1638212	1814240	0.44	0.16	0.18	10.75
63	Made-Up Textile Articles Nesoi; Needlecraft Sets; Worn Clothing And Worn Textile Articles; Rags	2179119	1179787	1512760	0.2	0.11	0.15	28.22
82	Tools, Implements, Cutlery, Spoons And Forks, Of Base Metal; Parts Thereof Of Base Metal	253682	855992	1443299	0.02	0.08	0.14	68.61
34	Soap Etc.; Lubricating Products; Waxes, Polishing Or Scouring Products; Candles Etc., Modeling Pastes; Dental Waxes And Dental Plaster Preparations	319459	371083	1425446	0.03	0.04	0.14	284.13
19	Preparations Of Cereals, Flour, Starch Or Milk; Bakers' Wares	649428	398736	642663	0.06	0.04	0.06	61.18
95	Toys, Games And Sports Equipment; Parts And Accessories Thereof	793230	603012	642172	0.07	0.06	0.06	6.49
56	Wadding, Felt And Nonwovens; Special Yarns; Twine, Cordage, Ropes And Cables And Articles Thereof	1141040	1023945	588552	0.1	0.1	0.06	-42.52
48	Paper And Paperboard; Articles Of Paper Pulp, Paper Or Paperboard	427362	401872	544166	0.04	0.04	0.05	35.41
20	Preparations Of Vegetables, Fruit, Nuts, Or Other Parts Of Plants	67200	470530	528386	0.01	0.04	0.05	12.3
21	Miscellaneous Edible Preparations	290714	164329	405020	0.03	0.02	0.04	146.47
81	Base Metals Nesoi; Cermets; Articles Thereof	0	49924	356796	0	0	0.04	614.68
49	Printed Books, Newspapers, Pictures And Other Printed Products; Manuscripts, Typescripts And Plans	521111	142148	314542	0.05	0.01	0.03	121.28
61	Articles Of Apparel And Clothing Accessories, Knitted Or Crocheted	172613	189218	296318	0.02	0.02	0.03	56.6
98	Special Classification Provisions, Nesoi	201579	102091	164180	0.02	0.01	0.02	60.82
01	Live Animals	170632	79509	145561	0.02	0.01	0.01	83.07
33	Essential Oils And Resinoids; Perfumery, Cosmetic Or Toilet Preparations	102394	297539	139201	0.01	0.03	0.01	-53.22
83	Miscellaneous Articles Of Base Metal	169933	158362	123387	0.02	0.01	0.01	-22.09
42	Articles Of Leather; Saddlery And Harness; Travel Goods, Handbags And Similar Containers; Articles Of Gut (Other Than Silkworm Gut)	36618	12849	104667	0	0	0.01	714.59

11	Milling Industry Products; Malt; Starches; Inulin; Wheat Gluten	708321	318577	82875	0.06	0.03	0.01	-73.99
62	Articles Of Apparel And Clothing Accessories, Not Knitted Or Crocheted	16624	5343	48845	0	0	0	814.19
22	Beverages, Spirits And Vinegar	23250	9000	36000	0	0	0	300
89	Ships, Boats And Floating Structures	16420	62509	31579	0	0.01	0	-49.48
92	Musical Instruments; Parts And Accessories Thereof	94545	42720	29712	0.01	0	0	-30.45
09	Coffee, Tea, Mate And Spices	141425	113684	26259	0.01	0.01	0	-76.9
70	Glass And Glassware	559959	383905	25967	0.05	0.04	0	-93.24
31	Fertilizers	0	20182	24201	0	0	0	19.91
41	Raw Hides And Skins (Other Than Furskins) And Leather	0	0	15000	0	0	0	n/a
27	Mineral Fuels, Mineral Oils And Products Of Their Distillation; Bituminous Substances; Mineral Waxes	10130	18838	14753	0	0	0	-21.68
65	Headgear And Parts Thereof	3405	0	10000	0	0	0	n/a
58	Special Woven Fabrics; Tufted Textile Fabrics; Lace; Tapestries; Trimmings; Embroidery	0	14615	8282	0	0	0	-43.33
69	Ceramic Products	0	0	6622	0	0	0	n/a
54	Manmade Filaments, Including Yarns And Woven Fabrics Thereof	0	0	6000	0	0	0	n/a
72	Iron And Steel	3162	30000	5060	0	0	0	-83.13
91	Clocks And Watches And Parts Thereof	0	12000	3159	0	0	0	-73.68
93	Arms And Ammunition; Parts And Accessories Thereof	11888	14224	0	0	0	0	-100
60	Knitted Or Crocheted Fabrics	0	18135	0	0	0	0	-100
59	Impregnated, Coated, Covered Or Laminated Textile Fabrics; Textile Articles Suitable For Industrial Use	0	2519	0	0	0	0	-100
07	Edible Vegetables And Certain Roots And Tubers	24153	23892	0	0	0	0	-100
97	Works Of Art, Collectors' Pieces And Antiques	8800	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
71	Natural Or Cultured Pearls, Precious Or Semiprecious Stones, Precious Metals; Precious Metal Clad Metals, Articles Thereof; Imitation Jewelry; Coin	16771	81165	0	0	0.01	0	-100
75	Nickel And Articles Thereof	3006	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
96	Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	19470	31155	0	0	0	0	-100
26	Ores, Slag And Ash	158400	0	0	0.01	0	0	n/a
67	Prepared Feathers And Down And Articles Thereof; Artificial Flowers; Articles Of Human Hair	118737	0	0	0.01	0	0	n/a