

Press Release

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More than one out of three Germans lives alone

Germany's percentage of single-person households continues to rise. Berlin leads the country with more than half of its households registered as single-person; Ludwigshafen am Rhein has the highest proportion of senior-citizen households; Southern Germany has a particularly large share of high-earning households with monthly incomes of €7,500 and higher. These are but a few of the results of the 2008 GfK Demographics study for Germany carried out by GfK GeoMarketing.

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Berlin: Number 1 for singles

Berlin has an above-average proportion of single-person households – 52.4 percent compared to only 38 percent for Germany as a whole. Berlin is closely followed by Hamburg with almost 50 percent and then Bremen with 48 percent. The top-ten list of cities and counties with the greatest concentrations of single-person households includes Aachen, Bremerhaven, Munich, Braunschweig, Leipzig, Trier and Regensburg.

Cities and counties with the highest share of single-person households

Rank	City/county	Single-person households as a %
1	Berlin	52.4
2	Hamburg	49.6
3	Bremen	48.3
4	Aachen	47.7
5	Bremerhaven	47.3
6	Munich	47.3
7	Braunschweig	46.7
8	Leipzig	46.7
9	Trier	45.9
10	Regensburg	45.1

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Single-person households are much less common in rural areas. For example, the county of Borken has the country's lowest share of single-person households – 23 percent below the national average. Other counties with low numbers of single-person households include Landshut, Straubing-Bogen, Kelheim and Coesfeld.

Youthful Greifswald, aging Ludwigshafen

The average age of Germany's household heads continues to increase gradually from year-to-year and currently stands at 48.4. "The rise of the average age of Germany's household heads reflects a nationwide change in demographics," explains Simone Baecker-Neuchl, head of GfK GeoMarketing's Market Data & Research division. "The number of senior citizens has risen slowly but steadily for years now. This trend affects the nation's average household profile. All signs suggest that this trend will continue. Households with children already constitute a mere 31.2 percent of German households. By way of comparison, multiple-person households without children amount to 30.6 percent."

As in previous years, the county of Landshut has the highest share (44.4 percent) of households with children. The percentage of households with children is generally greater in rural regions. By contrast, the proportion of households with children in large cities such as Berlin and Hamburg is more than 23 percent below the national average.

As of 2008, more than a third of all household heads have already reached senior citizen status (i.e., 60). Ludwigshafen near Mannheim, has the highest share of senior citizen households at 53.4 percent, followed by Würzburg and Frankenthal (Palatinate) at 52.4 and 52.1 percent respectively. Schweinfurt – the city with the highest share of senior citizen households in 2007 – slips to the fourth position in the 2008 rankings.

Cities and counties with the highest share of senior citizens (i.e., household heads 60 and older)

Rank	City/county	Senior households as a %
1	Ludwigshafen am Rhein	53.4
2	Würzburg	52.4
3	Frankenthal (Palatinate)	52.1
4	Schweinfurt	52.0
5	Bamberg	51.7
6	Wilhelmshaven	50.4

7	Koblenz	50.0
8	Augsburg	49.7
9	Mainz	49.5
10	Passau	49.3

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Eleven-and-a-half percent of Germany's household heads have not yet completed their third decade. This group is the country's smallest, followed by the 50-59 year-olds (16.7%), 30-39 year-olds (17.5%), 40-49 year-olds (21.3%) and senior citizens (33.1%). The youngest household heads can be found in Greifswald, where 25.1 percent of them are under 30. Also youthful are the cities of Rostock and Jena, with 22.5 and 21.8 percent respectively.

Income distribution: High number of top-earners in southern Germany

The income bracket distinction included as part of the GfK Demographics dataset divides all households of a given region into seven categories according to disposable monthly net income (incl. state subsidies such as child support, retirement benefits, etc). In contrast to GfK Purchasing Power, which reveals the average disposable income of a given region, the income bracket figures show how many poor and wealthy households can be found at a particular location. This provides valuable information regarding the regional distribution of income.

An above-average number of affluent households can be found in the southern federal states of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, the large cities of Bonn, Cologne and Düsseldorf in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia and in Hamburg and the surrounding area. The largest share of top-earners is located in the high purchasing power regions around Munich (Starnberg and Munich counties) and Frankfurt (Hochtaunuskreis, Main-Taunus-Kreis). Up to 15 percent of all households in these areas fall into the top-earning category, compared to only 2.6 percent nationwide.

Cities and counties with the highest share of top-earners:

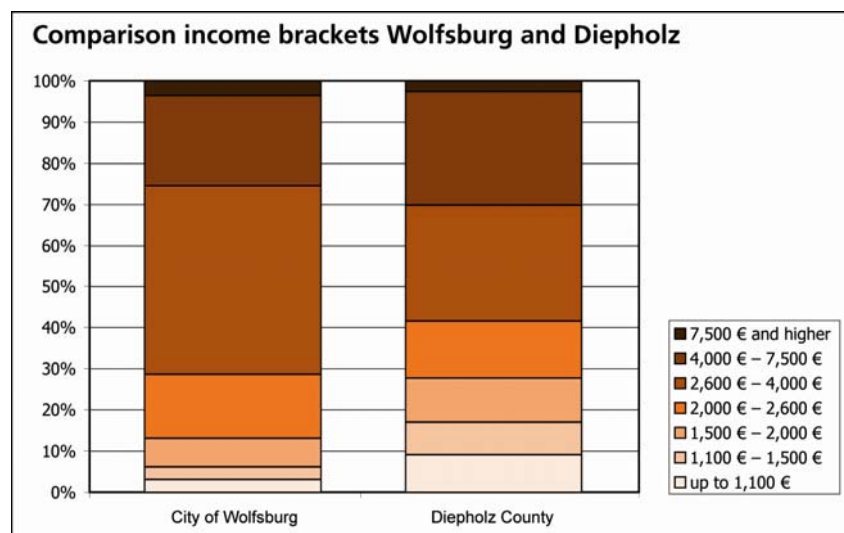
Rank	City/county	Top-earning households as a %
1	Starnberg County	15.2
2	Hochtaunuskreis County	14.7
3	Main-Taunus-Kreis County	14.0
4	Munich County	12.7

5	Ebersberg County	12.6
6	Rheinisch-Bergischer Kreis County	9.3
7	Erlangen-Höchstadt County	9.2
8	Rhein-Palatinat-Kreis County	9.0
9	Dachau County	8.9
10	Mainz-Bingen County	8.7

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The income distribution figures reveal many interesting details regarding regional differences in earnings. For example, in Wolfsburg – the city in which Volkswagen’s headquarters are located – there are few low-income households. There are however an above-average number of households with mid-level incomes (€2,600-4,000/month). By contrast, this income bracket is not as well represented in the county of Diepholz, where there is a stark divide between rich and poor. More than 40 percent of this county’s households have €2,000 or less of disposable monthly income, while more than 30% have €4,000 or more. These differences between Wolfsburg and Diepholz are not apparent when only the average purchasing power per household is taken into account, which is the same for both locations (index value of 109).

The GfK income brackets calculated as part of the GfK Demographics dataset include the following nationwide categories:



Income bracket	Monthly net household income in euros	Percentage share
1	0 – 1,100	14.1
2	1,100 – 1,500	12.2
3	1,500 – 2,000	13.4
4	2,000 – 2,600	14.8
5	2,600 – 4,000	25.1
6	4,000 – 7,500	17.8
7	7,500 +	2.6

About the study

The GfK Demographics study examines socio-demographic factors and is calculated for all regional levels – from federal states to municipalities, postcodes and even street segments. It provides information on Germany's population and households according to household type (e.g., single- and multiple-person households with or without children, immigrant households, etc.), household age (i.e., age of household head), income level (divided into seven brackets), as well as residential architectural profiles (e.g., single- or dual-family house, etc.).





Marketing and sales divisions use GfK Demographics to more effectively locate target groups. The data reveal, among other things, the most favorable areas in which to advertise certain products. GfK Demographics 2008 can be ordered for all of Germany's counties, municipalities, postcodes and 2.5 million street segments.

Print-quality illustrations can be found at www.gfk-geomarketing.com/demographic_data_2008.

For additional information, visit www.gfk-geomarketing.com/demographic_data.

About GfK GeoMarketing

GfK GeoMarketing is one of the largest providers of geomarketing services in Europe for customers and users from all branches of trade. Services include:

-  Consultancy
-  Market data
-  Digital maps
-  Geomarketing software solutions RegioGraph and DISTRICT

GfK GeoMarketing is a subsidiary of the globally active GfK Group. The GfK is represented by approximately 10,000 employees belonging to more than 115 subsidiaries located in 100 countries. The GfK is ranked fourth among the world's market research institutes.