

# World Press Views on Unification

Below are opinions from selected newspapers around the world expressing a variety of views about the prospects of German unification. As you read these keep in mind that these views do not represent official government policy (an exception is *Izvestia*) and may not even reflect the views of large numbers of people in the countries where the papers are published. They do, however, illustrate the sharply different views that thoughtful people hold. As you read the comments consider the following questions:

- What benefits or positive outcomes of unification do some of the writers see?
- What concerns or worries some of them?
- How important an event is unification for Germany? for Europe? for the world?

**SYDNEY** *Sydney Morning Herald (moderate)*: [A united Germany] will be a massive beast, invincible at the summer Olympics and an unmatched economy that shadows all of its neighbors, single-handedly wedging Central Europe back onto the map between the once-unchangeable notions of West and East. – Robert Whitehead

**LONDON** *Financial Times (independent)*: The addition of East to West Germany would not make as much of a difference as is supposed; nor would a united Germany be as overwhelming in European affairs as some people believe. ...Modern Germany is a trading power. It is improbable that it would turn its back on the huge markets of the West to pursue a will-o'-the-wisp in the East. – Martin Wolf

**BUENOS AIRES** *La Prensa (conservative)*: The Soviet leaders are resignedly presiding over the inevitable liquidation of the empire they inherited... There is every reason for the German nation to achieve full independence and union, what could be one of the most transcendent and beneficial accomplishments of our time.

**TEL AVIV** *Yediot Achronot (independent)*: The slogan, "One nation, one land," that more and more West German personalities have been reciting in recent days has a discordant and terrifying ring. To those who remember history, it is reminiscent of the bestial battle cry, "One nation, one people, one leader," that expressed the goals of expansion harbored by Nazi Germany and led to World War II.

**STANBUL** *Milliyet (liberal-reformist)*: The merging of the Germanies would create a new superpower in Western Europe. All balances and areas of influence designed at Yalta would change. It is unclear how this process of stupefying speed will end. These are the possibilities that terrify the West.

**TURIN** *La Stampa (liberal)*: History, that great joker, is laughing at all of those who so boldly announced its end. German reunification, a theme that seemed to have been mummified and buried, is resurfacing. Those in the West are least prepared for this, because they have always talked about unification, but rarely thought about it. The Soviet leaders are better prepared, having thought about it a lot without saying much. But all have been caught off-guard by the accelerating events . . . No, history has not ended. – Barbara Spinelli

**MANILA** *Philippine Daily Globe (independent)*: Fewer scholars will henceforth speak with total confidence of a Pacific Century. There is no question that we are not finished with Eurocentric world order. – Blas F. Opie

**PARIS** *Le Monde (liberal)*: We must insure that the unification of Germany and that of Europe move forward in parallel, so that the specter of hegemony does not again loom on the horizon... The cold war, waged in the name of ideological sympathies, has weakened the thrust of nationalisms. It is the duty of us all to make sure that the end of the cold war does not lead to their revival. – Andre Fontaine

**MOSCOW** *Izvestia (government daily)*: The allies' position is of considerable importance here. Bonn evidently realizes that their theoretical readiness to support the idea of unification... and practise this direction are two different things... We intend to build together a common European home in which the various "domestic arrangements" will obviously be preserved. Whether its tenants will feel at ease and safe and the need for locked cellars and attics will disappear . . . that depends on working out joint agreements. The key point is that the balance of interests of other Europeans must not be disturbed; and that the political, economic, and social structures of postwar Europe, which took decades to erect and now serve as the only guarantee of its future security, must not be destroyed. – Yevgeny Bovkun

**HAMBURG** *Die Zeit (liberal weekly)*: Even those who find themselves unable to accept two Germanies know perfectly well that, even in the best of all possible worlds, unity will come at the end of a long, long development that has only just begun; that it must not be allowed to occur under conditions that would tear us from the chains that have anchored us in the Atlantic and European communities from which, in past decades, we have found protection and support. It is also clear that unification will probably occur far more loosely than was the case with the German Reich that existed from 1871 to 1945 . . . And it is even clearer that the German question does not belong to Germans alone. – Theo Sommer

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