

## GERMAN CULTURE

### I Culture and political system in Germany - by Ines Huibens

- For us German it is not so easy to say what is “German culture”
  - First it depends on what you consider as “culture”
  - Second: most German say that there is no “specific German culture
  - Different reasons
    - 1) the administration of Germany
    - 2) Germany as member of the European Union
    - 3) Refugees
- 1) Administration of Germany
- Federal Republic of Germany
    - Federalism: Germany is divided in 16 states
    - Big collaboration between the Federation and the States
    - Federalism as a historical tradition
    - Federalism as a condition for a new begin of the German State
    - Elections : 2017 election of the lower house of parliament in September → also (re)election of the Chancellor (Angela Merkel)
  - The educational system is a result of the federalism → it is not a German system but depends on the State → 16 different systems, concerning for example
    - Holidays
    - How a pupil goes to school till the final exams
    - Subjects (f.ex. religion only in Bavaria)
    - Different exams and tests, even the final ones
    - But there are agreements between the States
      1. School is an obligation → for boys and girls
      2. It is free, even books etc.
  - Federalism influences traditions and culture differences → There is not ONE German culture
    - Like in many countries there are culture differences regarding to the regions
    - When one thinks of Germany you think of Oktoberfest, beer, sausages (there are many different typical sausages), sauerkraut (Pickelt

cabbage), traditional dishes (as we had for example in Germany)

- Traditional clothes
- → These clichés (known all over the world as typical German) are Bavarian, but every region has its own and different beer
- Bavaria
  - The biggest German State
  - Breweries
    - Long tradition
    - In the middle age → water quality was not good → the drunk beer and wine
    - Beer is basic food, but it is forbidden for adolescents under 16
    - Beer purity law (only hops, malt, water and yeast are permitted to be added in the brewing process)
  - In old towns/villages: Pub/bar is next to the church
  - Wine regions in Bavaria, too.

3) One of the big subjects → refugees and how to deal the amount of refugees

- Arab Spring → above all from Syria
- Other countries with civil wars, oppression, pursuit
- Apply for asylum
- Much more than before
  - 2016: 745.000
  - 2017: Jan- July: 112.000
  - → local authorities couldn't handle it → big problem
  - Refugees had to wait too long for a decision
  - Political discussion and in the medias etc.
  - Also in the society
- → Many different cultures come together: Not only at present (arab refugees) also in former times (Italian, Turkish, Greek people came → you can see it on restaurants and shops, especially in big cities)