

May 2005

Good News: New Jobs in Industry

Following years of recession, Berlin's economy is now slowly showing signs of growth.

This is partly due to the fact that exports have greatly increased. As a result, the sales figures in metal and electrical industry in Berlin in 2004 rose nearly seven percent. Medical technology is another of the prominent branches of industry, which is growing and is creating new jobs in existing firms and also in new companies.

28% of the employees in Berlin's industry work in companies that are less than 10 years old. This shows how important it is for companies to relocate to the city as well as for new companies to be formed. The present economic growth rate of 0.4 % is too small however to have a felt impact on the job market. A more closely-knit network and more cooperation between universities and scientific institutions and the business world are necessary in order to provide a long-lasting improvement in the economy, resulting in more employment opportunities.

This is the only way it will be possible for the production of new scientific developments to take place in Berlin and the surrounding area. One danger to the slow growth in Berlin's economy would be if the EU cuts the current subsidies from 216 to 1.5 Million Euros. [Berliner Zeitung, March 05]

Prayer Requests:

- **Thank God for the good news about the economy**
- **Pray that the subsidies for Berlin will be maintained**
- **Pray for more new companies and that existing companies can be preserved**

Senator Harald Wolf

The senator for the economy, Harald Wolf, born in 1956, married, with a degree in political science, became a member of the Alternative Liste party in 1986 and remained a member until 1990. Today he is a member of the PDS. In January, 1991 he was elected to the Parliament. In August 2002, he became the Senator for Economy, Labor, and Women.

The Berlin economy is not healthy. Some areas are experiencing hesitant growth, (see above Good News), but the high rate of unemployment in Berlin clearly shows the state of affairs in Senator Wolf's areas of responsibility.

To his credit, one must say that it's not any better in other large cities – but Berlin is quite far away from the goals Senator Wolf has repeatedly expressed. For instance, in April he said in an interview with the Tagesspiegel, "I am not interested having Berlin be a metropolis which ren-

ders service without industry. My approach is to generate growth through innovation, above all, innovation in manufacturing." He has not yet answered the question of how to finance this goal. He doesn't seem to have a concept of how to do this.

And yet, Harold Wolf has shown in other areas that we as Christians can be happy for his political voice: "We are proud of the newly-blossomed Jewish life in Berlin. Nevertheless, it remains our duty to combat all forms of anti-Semitism and racism and to do everything in our power to help Jewish people feel at home and secure in our city. This is an obligation to the Jews, as well as to the entire society, whose foundation is built on mutual acceptance, on the brotherhood of mankind, and on respect for the dignity of the individual."

[Source: www.berlin.de/senwiarbfrau/wolf.html - Reden und Interviews]

Prayer Requests:

- **God's blessings for Mr. Wolf**
- **Practicable concepts, so the goals can be reached**
- **Advisors and coworkers with positive influence**

May 8th Memorial Service and Demos

The Berlin Senate and the national government have been actively attempting to prevent the demonstration at the Brandenburg Gate planned by the NPD (right-wing party) to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II in Germany. Nevertheless, the NPD has made every attempt to at least carry out their demonstration somewhere near the Brandenburg Gate, also on May 7th. And now left-wing extremists have mobilized their followers against the NPD demo. According to police information, among those followers are groups which are inclined to violence. These groups want to prevent the NPD demo at all costs. We need intense prayer to prevent street battles from happening on that day.

On May 8th, there will be a commemorative event for Berliners at the Brandenburg Gate during which President Köhler's speech in front of the parliament will be broadcasted to video screens.

Pray:

- **for confusion among the right-wing and left-wing extremists, so that their plans will not succeed**
- **for clear insights for the police, so that they can take preventative measures up front**
- **for a peaceful memorial service and for peace in the city on this day**

The Holocaust-Monument

On May 10, 2005, two days after the 60th anniversary of the deliverance from the Nazi regime, the monument for the murdered Jews of Europe will be dedicated. Located right in the heart of Berlin, near the Reichstag and many government buildings, its purpose is to bear remembrance to the horrors of the Nazi regime, so that the next generations can learn from history.

Underground there is a center for information, in which exemplary stories of individual European Jews are to be made known. The living quarters of Propaganda Minister Goebbels once stood on part of the premises. Relics of his private bunker still exist under the Stelenfeld.

In Psalm 83:4 the enemies of Israel, are quoted as saying, "Come," they say, "let us destroy them as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more." Through the Holocaust Monument, the Jewish people are to be remembered, and also the names of those murdered are to be kept from being forgotten. Unfortunately, there are still many enemies of the Jewish people in our country who are not pleased by this, so the monument needs our protective prayers.

Pray:

- **that angels will protect the premises**
- **that the Holy Spirit will work in the heart of every visitor to the memorial**
- **for a positive impact, especially among many young people**

Rotterdam

On May 14, 1940 German airplanes bombed Rotterdam and nearly erased the city center. This happened two hours after the Netherlands surrendered. The historical circumstances are not clear. The German guilt from the war has left deep wounds in our Dutch neighbors. This year marks the 65th anniversary of this day.

The friendly relationships which have begun between pastors and prayer partners from Rotterdam and Berlin have led to a small delegation of three "Together for Berlin" representatives being invited to Rotterdam. On May 14th, a memorial service will be held in one of the main churches, during which the Berliners can say a few words. That evening, a prayer service will take place. The request for forgiveness has already taken place. Now 65 years after it happened, these pastors and prayer partners have decided unanimously that it's time to "retire" the story of German guilt, repentance and forgiveness. A new chapter of reconciled relationships can begin, built upon the common goal of furthering of God's kingdom in our cities and in united Europe.

Pray

- **that the delegation of Berliners in Rotterdam will be sensitive**
- **that guilt and mistrust will turn into contagious reconciliation**
- **for God's reconciling grace over both cities and the ministry of Christians**

Religion Classes

The debate about the future of religion classes in Berlin schools is creating big waves. The Protestant and Lu-

theran state churches, supported by many politicians (also from the SPD), celebrities, and other Christian groups (including the board of Together for Berlin) have initiated a public campaign against the plans of the red-red Senate. The majority of the coalition between the SPD and the PDS wants to establish a mandatory "values" class which cannot be replaced by religion classes. Church-sponsored religion classes would then become electives, thus lessening their importance even more, and even possibly ending them totally. On the one hand, we are in favor of education about values, especially in view of the violence in the schools and the rise of fundamentalist Islam. But according to most Christians, "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" is an unacceptable interference on the part of national government in the freedom of religion. The Berlin constitution is more liberal in this point anyway than the other federal states of Germany, but one cannot help but see the anti-faith tendency of this proposed bill. If the law is passed, legal action against it will be taken. Irrespective of the quality of religion classes in Berlin (which is often poor), the basic rights of Christians and churches in education are being threatened, and this should be a matter of protest and prayer.

Pray:

- **For a turn-around in the mindset of the SPD-PDS coalition**
- **For a wise and convincing negotiation tactic on the part of church representatives**
- **That Berlin students will continue to have the opportunity to hear about Christianity and the Bible in a credible way through religion classes, and that they will take advantage of that opportunity**

Dates

- **Prayer Meeting for the Global Gathering / Calling All Nations**, which will be held on July 15, 2006 in the Berlin Olympic Stadium: **Monday, May 23rd, 7:30 PM** at the Gemeinde auf dem Weg (Room U5), Babelsberger Str. 37, 10715 Berlin-Wilmersdorf and **Saturday, May 28th 11:00 AM** at the Olympic Stadium Meeting place in front of the gate on the east side (Osttor) near the cash office
- May 20-21: **Conference** in the Kirche am Südsterne with Pastor **John Mulinde**, among other things to celebrate the official opening of the Ministry Base Germany. Topics: separated for God / Reconciliation Germany-Africa. Sessions begin on **Friday at 7:00 PM**, on **Saturday at 2:00 PM and at 7:00 PM**.
- **May 29th, 7:00 PM: Citywide Prayer Service** in the Ökumenischen Zentrum St. Adalbert, Torstraße 168, 10115 Berlin (Bezirk Mitte). Christians of all denominations are invited to praise God together and to ask God to bring change to Berlin.