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Creating Better Food to Make a Better Community

Germany is a country located in central Europe with the Atlantic ocean towards the west and the Alps to the south. Experiencing mild winters and cool summers with regular rainfall. This environment is rich in biodiversity and home to millions of people, plants and animals. Germany is a constitutional parliamentary democracy meaning that it's a form of government based on the fusion of powers. Citizens elect a parliament, which then elects a head of government.

Germany has a population of 83.5 million people. Approximately 77% of the population lives in urban areas, that's about 63 million people living the city life. However, the remaining 19 million, or 23% of the population live in rural areas. The average household family size is typically 3 people, usually 2 adults and one child, however other households could have 2-3 kids, which means that those families have to work twice as hard to provide money for food and other expenses. Common careers in Germany for people that live in urban areas can range from grocery store workers to people who work in the automotive industry with vehicles being one of Germany's largest export categories making 287.59 billion dollars as of 2025. Other major exports Germany has include industrial machinery, electrical equipment and pharmaceutical products. For people that live in the more rural areas common jobs usually are skilled trades and agricultural careers such as farming and forestry. The unemployment rate is 6.4 as of 2026 and the average annual wage as of 2025 being 76.3 thousand U.S.D.

Families in Germany have access to affordable schools with public schooling tuition fees being free nationwide in all districts as well as basic housing with land being more affordable in rural regions than in suburban areas. As of 2024 Germany is ranked 10th in the world for total carbon emissions being only 572 metric tonnes compared to the top 3 countries with the most carbon emissions being China with 12 thousand metric tonnes of carbon in first, the United States with 4,900 metric tonnes second and India with 3,100 metric tonnes. There is 165,134 thousand square kilometers of arable land in Germany which is not much compared to the United States with its 4.17 million acres of arable land. Most farmland in Germany that is not dedicated to livestock is used to grow major crop exports such as grains, potatoes, sugar beets and corn. Most diets in the average German household consist of bread, pork, potatoes and root vegetables. Most families get their food from supermarkets and traditionally cook by roasting, breading and frying.

I have noticed in recent years growing up that the importance of food security is slept on. This is scary because food security is not only what keeps us alive, happy and connected but it also plays an extremely vital role in all the economies across the world. Data indicates that Germany has such low food security because of the never ending rise of poverty. Germany's poverty rate has grown to a staggering 16.1% as of

2025, out of the 83 million people who live in Germany 13.3 million people live in poverty and that number will only continue to grow. Living conditions have worsened with inflation caused by Russia's war with Ukraine, the Covid 19 pandemic, and the spread of racist and disrespectful stereotypes towards women and certain marginalized populations like the Muslim and Asian communities that live in Germany.

According to recent statistics trends in poverty are only worsening with 70% of the people who suffer from poverty in Germany are still in poverty and struggle to support themselves 5 years later. Poverty in Germany primarily affects single parents, the unemployed, and the uneducated because poverty makes it hard for single parents to take care of their children and find proper education as well as other necessities for raising kids. Sometimes those kids grow up without an education and it becomes difficult for them to find jobs as adults and even more difficult to find jobs that pay well enough to keep them above the poverty line. It's also hard for other ethnicities to obtain jobs, tools and training/education required for certain careers because of disrespectful stereotypes and social bias. This is a major issue because if people can't afford to get the things they need to get a job and stay financially stable then how will people make any money?

All of these things play off each other like a twisted card game. Inflation caused by major events like the war with Russia or the pandemic can make people fall into poverty. Other sources show that people who are suffering from poverty can range from single parents to other ethnic communities making it more difficult for them to find a job to support themselves and their kids. Kids then grow up with a lack of education and training required for certain careers. Because of this issue they have to settle for a lower paying job like factories that manufacture automotive parts because it's one of Germany's largest exports increasing carbon emissions.

Not all is grim for Germany, there have been plenty of solutions that have been tried and even implemented to help combat poverty rates and make healthcare, education, food and housing for people who are suffering from poverty more affordable. One possible solution to combat poverty rates in Germany is to find a more efficient way to distribute money, resources and food to those who really need it most. This is important because if people can get even a little extra money and some food they don't have to worry about feeding their family that much.

One solution Germany has implemented to help combat poverty is the Bürgergeld program also known as citizens allowance was created in January 2023 and is a basic subsistence benefit that replaced the Hartz IV payment. According to Elizabeth Schumacher's article titled How to curb welfare state bureaucracy the Bürgergeld program works with the federal government who has job centers oversee who qualifies for the Bürgergeld program. Out of all of its recipients 1.5 million are children, 2.2 million can't work because of training or because they are caring for relatives or small children and 1.7 million are able to work but two thirds of them have not completed any vocational training. The program gives recipients 560 euros a month alongside the state who covers health and long term care insurance, rent and heating. This could be an issue however due to the increase in living costs obtaining a part time job could reduce the benefits your receive

A second solution Germany has implemented to combat poverty rates is the Kindergeld Child benefit program. This is a program paid by the state every month. The program pays families 250 euros for each child up to the age of 18 regardless of your income. The money is given to the adult the child lives with, depending on your residential status the rules and eligibility to join the program could vary. There are a few different types of child benefits that single parents and families could apply for such as the child sickness benefit that gives parents money who have to take time off work to care for their child. Or the tax free allowance for children which is a tax free alternative version given to certain individuals who may prefer it over receiving a child benefit.

Another solution they have tried was universal child basic income which is a program that gives money to single parents in poverty with multiple children, they have also tried strengthening social security and pushing gender and racial equality. The one with the biggest impact in my opinion is universal basic child income because most German families have multiple children and this helps by providing single parents with extra cash so they can help provide food for their children. It is also not just Germany that's struggling with poverty, but their neighbor Poland also struggles with poverty. Poland was able to help reduce poverty in their country by introducing the Family 500 program where they give money to parents for each kid they have under the age of 18. I think it's appropriate to implement this into Germany because it would be a major help to struggling families.

After going through many of the solutions that can help improve poverty rates in Germany like the Universal Child Basic Income program, I believe the best solution would be to create more jobs that are healthier for the community. I believe that if we try to come up with better paying careers that are also easily accessible to people who lack stuff like education and transportation almost like a farmers market. My idea for this supermarket sounds simple but it's a little different than a typical grocery store. My idea is that this market will be owned and managed by the community so any revenue made by this business stays in the community so we can reuse that money to boost our economy and living conditions.

The farmers market would have an indoor and outdoor section where people can work and shop. In the outdoor section we would build a community garden where people can rent plots of land and grow crops, then if they wanted they could donate the food grown or they can sell it at our farmers market/at home, i think this would greatly benefit the communities because not only is it improving food security but it is also creating new jobs, helping smaller businesses, and creating a learning environment for people to learn skills for cultivating crops from the community which i believe is a skill that should be learned by everyone. This supermarket will be funded by business grants. I picked this method because it can help kickstart my business idea, business grants are not used to cover costs like rent and payroll but instead it is used to start businesses that align with specific goals in a community and my store would be used to help obtain economic stability and food security for everyone so my farmers market should be eligible for a business grant. However, sometimes business grants can backfire if the money is not used properly or requirements are not met, to receive a grant you need to have a compelling argument on why they should loan you the money because of other competition that is also trying to kickstart their own businesses, Business grants also require a lengthy description and report on how the money was used and how it impacted your business.

I picked a supermarket because I want a job that anyone can do no matter gender, race or intelligence so it only requires basic training and people won't have to pay so much for education to get hired into this job. If this business thrives we can expand it into more communities throughout Germany. The impact I'm hoping to achieve with this is I would like to make money, food and careers more accessible to people. Some problems I'm going to have to overcome to achieve this are racism, sexism, inflation and pollution. One cultural norm I would like to implement in this project is a discount for families with one parent and multiple children. Some resources or funding that could help make all this happen is donations of food or money so we can help grow the business. A policy I think is important to achieve all of this is in order for a family to receive a discount they must provide proof of existence for their children, I believe that my solution is very sustainable as long as we work as hard as we can to keep the money made in those communities

In conclusion, if there are more jobs that are healthier for the people and the environment that is easily accessible and keeps the money in the community for the people, it would greatly improve poverty and educate future generations about where our food comes from as well as improve connection amongst people within their community. Germany and its residents are great people with lots of culture and great food, however there are still problems that need to be addressed like poverty and racist/sexist stereotypes to make it an even stronger and better thriving economy. I'm sure we can do this by spreading positivity and removing stress that plagues peoples day to day lives and support those who especially need it because you receive what you give out and the more positivity you give out to the world the more positive the environment around you will be.

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