

## Re: what's wrong with eastern germans?

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**From:** Volker Hetzer ([volker.hetzer\\_at\\_ieee.org](mailto:volker.hetzer_at_ieee.org))

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<royls@telus.net> schrieb im Newsbeitrag news:41068af7.2915790@news.telus.net...

> *On Tue, 27 Jul 2004 16:53:41 +0200, "Volker Hetzer"*

> *<volker.hetzer@ieee.org> wrote:*

> >> *>Short time later most east germans were fired.*

> >>

> >> *?? Completely false.*

> *>Oh, right? I know of \*NO ONE\* apart from government clerks*

> *>and some teachers who wasn't unemployed at least once after*

> *>the unification.*

>

> *You just don't know enough people, then. The German government*

> *arranged for many industrial concerns to be privatized with*

> *undertakings by the new owners not to fire workers.*

Yes. Most of which were kept for at least three months.

Also, you simply *\*can't\** force an employer to keep employees.

Because you can't force him not to close the plant. At least not for an infinite amount of time.

Synthesewerk Schwarzheide was one of the bigger examples.

Big promise not to fire people, shortly later the factory

was closed, unemployment rose from 10% to 80% in one go

in that area. (Upside, I seem to recall the factory was bought years later

by BASF and it turned out ok after all, except for the usual suicides,

broken up families and miscellaneous collateral damage.)

There were other things too going on, like in the company my mother worked. New boss from west germany, big mouthed like anything, disappeared with 5 million. Of course there was a lawsuit but the money wasn't found, end of story for this company.

Or the brewery of where I came from. Western guy got lots of east-reconstruction-subsidies, first thing he did was strip the buildings of everything valuable, after which he paid some lawyers to keep us off him while the equipment made him a fat profit working in bavaria.

Other closures came from more harmless reasons. Where

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my father worked basically had one customer, the russian government (telco equipment). After the unification the russians couldn't pay hard cash, so business dead.

> >> >Remember that literally all factories and  
> >> >industries in east germany were smashed in the first years after reunion.  
> >>  
> >> ?? False and ridiculous.  
> >Ok, it took three years. Other than that I've seen enough ruins.  
>  
> That is just false. There are ruins, of course, but also many intact  
> and still operating industrial establishments that have been and are  
> gradually upgrading their capital equipment.

I'm not going to enter a credentials fight here, nor do I claim to have rented the truth. It's a free country and anyone is invited to visit east germany and have a look at the industrial landscape today and in what ways it differs from west germany. But even if Dresden is tempting for cultural reasons you should not limit your experience to the saxon state because that's the rich one, comparatively.

Maybe we have different perceptions about closure of companies?

Maybe you go after the published numbers of insolvencies?

For me a closure is when a 5000 head company turns into a 15 people company whose job it is to keep the fence intact and the buildings from crumbling so that nobody gets hurt.

Lots of Greetings!

Volker