

Together or Alone?

Results of a representative survey on multilateralism and international co-operation conducted for Körber-Stiftung



According to **47%** of Germans, globalisation has caused Germany to lose control over its own policy-making

67% of Germans do not know what the term multilateralism means
42% claim that they have never heard of the term

96% of Germans and **92%** of people in France agree that their country should co-operate with other countries to solve global challenges

46% of Germans, yet only **23%** of people in France believe their country benefits from European Union membership

From among five global challenges **53%** of Germans and **52%** of French people consider climate change to be the most urgent field of action for international politics

79% of Germans believe Germany should contribute more towards solving global problems than economically weaker countries

Together or Alone? German Views on Multilateralism

Climate change, terrorism, digitalisation and migration – many of the challenges we face today know no borders. Solutions will depend on a world working in concert, yet our multilateral order is under fire. Re-nationalisation has become a global tendency, nations are withdrawing from international agreements, populist and anti-globalisation movements are on the upswing and international organisations are seeing their budgets cut. Collective action appears to be on the retreat.

As a globally connected middle power, Germany disproportionately benefits from a cooperative and rules-based international order. Not least because of this, the German government aims to strengthen multilateral structures and to counter the erosion of the international system. As a non-permanent member of the United Nations (UN) Security Council in 2019 and 2020, Germany has the opportunity to influence the major topics of international affairs and to achieve its goal of assuming more international responsibility.

But which topics do citizens deem important? Which frameworks are preferred for working on these issues? Do Germans consider globalisation to have mainly positive or negative effects? And how much support is there for multilateral, i.e. co-operative approaches in general?

To answer these and other questions a representative survey has been conducted in Germany on behalf of Körber-Stiftung. Together with the Institut Montaigne a select number of questions were also surveyed in France, a close partner of Germany in international affairs.

The key findings:

- **An overwhelming majority supports international co-operation**, even if this implies initially putting national interests second. However, many Germans neither know the term multilateralism nor the corresponding international organisations.
- **Germans in their majority view globalisation in a positive light**. Many point to the positive outcomes for Germany and for themselves. Still, nearly half of all interviewees believe that Germany has lost control over its policy-making.
- **German and French interviewees agree on many issues, yet not on all**. One important difference is the support of the European Union (EU), which is significantly greater in Germany than in France.
- **Both the German and the French population see climate change as the most pressing challenge**. Terrorism, armed conflicts, cyber threats, but also migration play a far less important role.

Detailed results including the entire set of tables are available here: www.koerber-stiftung.de/survey-multilateralism

DATA BASIS:

1000 interviewees in Germany; 1020 interviewees in France, eligible to vote and aged over 18, between 1 and 15 April 2019
Sample / surveying procedure: representative random selection, dual frame / telephone interviews (CATI)
Interviews in Germany: KANTAR PUBLIC Deutschland;
Interviews in France: KANTAR PUBLIC France on behalf of the Institut Montaigne

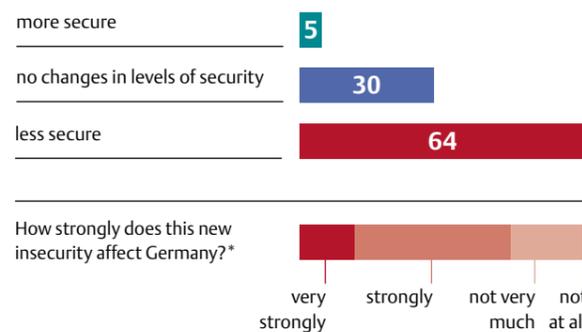
Turn of the Tide: New Insecurity

The metaphor of a world that has been stood on its head has firmly established itself in the German foreign policy debate of recent years. Germans feel that times are changing: nearly two thirds of Germans believe that the world is less safe in 2019 than it was in 2014. Only 5 per cent think their security has increased. Three quarters of interviewees who observe growing insecurity also diagnose great or very great consequences for Germany.

(Perceived) insecurity thereby increases with age. Seven out of ten in the group of over-65-year-olds believe the world is less stable today, compared to only half of 18- to 34-year-olds. People who are generally sceptical of multilateral co-operation (86%), who have suffered under globalisation (84%) or people who identify with the Alternative for Germany (AfD, 84%) in particular perceive greater global insecurity.

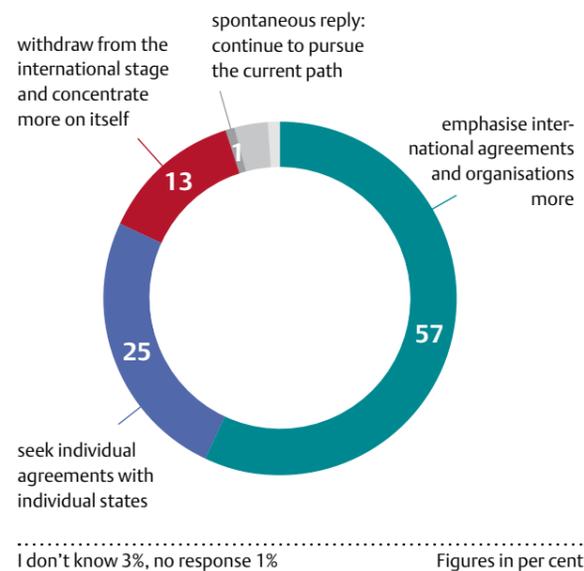
Germans are divided on the question on how we should react to this new insecurity. More than half would support greater emphasis on international organisations and agreements (57%), one quarter prefers bilateral agreements with individual states and nearly one in six Germans believes Germany should concentrate first and foremost on itself. Noteworthy are the differences regarding levels of education and party preferences: three quarters of interviewees who have completed upper secondary education (Abitur or Fachhochschulreife) say they wish to see greater efforts in international co-operation, whereas this applies to only 45% of those with lower secondary education (Volks-/Hauptschulabschluss). In turn, only 4% of those with upper secondary education demand that Germany should concentrate on itself, while for those with low secondary education the figure is 24%. Among people who identify with the Green Party (B'90 / DIE GRÜNEN), the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Left Party (DIE LINKE) support for international involvement is particularly high (76%, 66% and 63%, respectively). An exceptionally high percentage of AfD supporters backs bilateral agreements (41%) or Germany's withdrawal from the international stage (33%).

How do you see the global situation today compared to five years ago?



*Only people who answered 'less secure' to the previous question were asked this question
I don't know 1%
Figures in per cent

We are always hearing and reading that the international order is crumbling. How should Germany react? Should Germany ...



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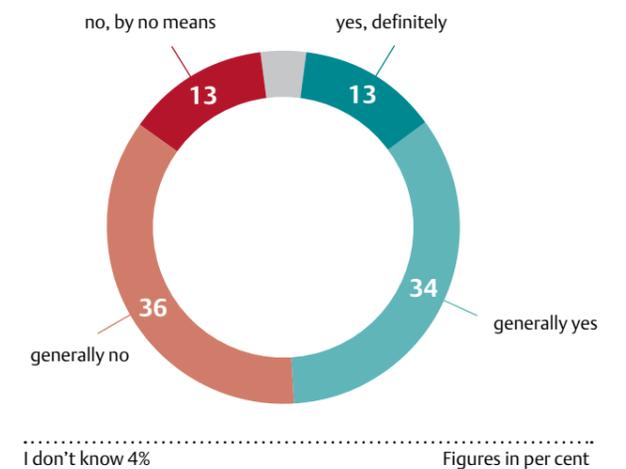
Globalisation? Good. Loss of Control? Maybe.

In these times of global upheaval the majority of Germans believe that globalisation has been mostly beneficial to Germany (57%), only three out of ten interviewees see more drawbacks. Noteworthy are the differences by party preferences: only 9 per cent of AfD supporters see positive effects (supporters of all other parties 62–74%). A larger proportion (60%) of the population of West German federal states sees advantages compared to the East German states (48%). No important differences between age groups or between urban and rural populations are evident.

Germans are more sceptical of the effects of international ties on their personal lives. Only 46 per cent see positive effects. One out of six says there are no consequences. Here too differences between East and West are evident: whereas in the West German states one fifth of interviewees believes that globalisation has entailed personal drawbacks, in Eastern Germany the figure is one third. The figure for those who believe they have profited from globalisation is highest among Green Party voters (68%). Support among the affiliates of the Christian Democratic and Christian Social Union (CDU / CSU), the SPD, the Free Democratic Party (FDP) and the Left Party is in the range of 50 per cent. Only 8 per cent of AfD voters see mainly advantages from globalisation.

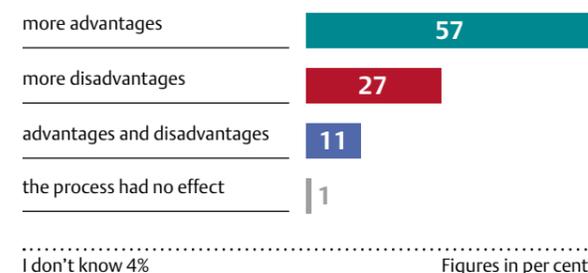
While the majority of Germans believe that globalisation has had mainly positive effects, the population

In the process of globalisation, has Germany effectively lost freedom to develop its own policies?

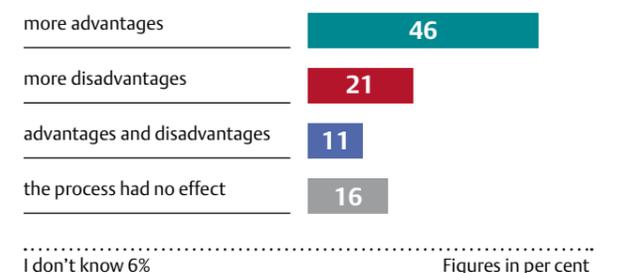


is divided on the question whether Germany has thereby lost control over its own policy-making. While there are no differences between urban and rural areas regarding this question, there are however disparities between West and East: in the West German states 43 per cent see a loss of control, in Eastern Germany the figure is even higher, namely 60 per cent. Opinions greatly diverge depending on the party that respondents support. Nine out of ten AfD supporters see a loss of control, yet only 31 per cent of FDP and 35 per cent of Green Party supporters.

Did the ongoing process of globalisation bring mainly advantages or disadvantages for Germany?



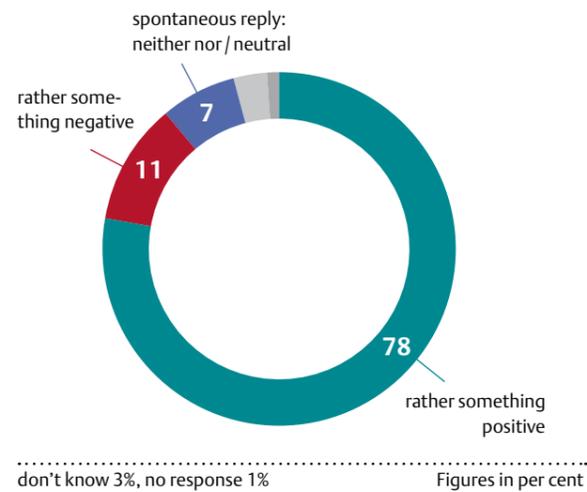
Did the ongoing process of globalisation bring mainly advantages or disadvantages for you personally?



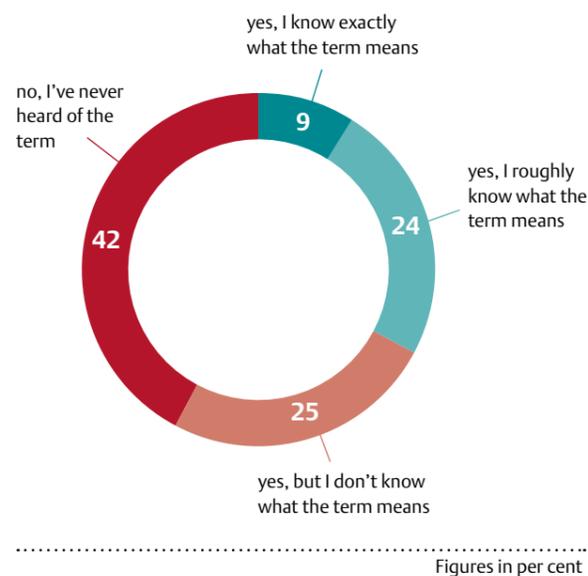
Multilateralism: Any Clue?

The debate on the erosion and the revival of the multilateral order is of concern to foreign policy actors. The results of the present survey clearly indicate that so far the population has not been part of the discussion: Two thirds of interviewees either state to never have heard of the term *multilateralism* or to not know what it means. Important differences between the age groups have been detected: 45 per cent of people aged 65 and older say that they know the term's meaning, in contrast to 23 per cent of 18- to 34-year-olds. When asked what they associate with the word *multilateralism*, few respondents can provide correct answers – in spite of one third of interviewees stating they are familiar with the concept. Only around ten per cent of answers are related to the essence of multilateralism, i. e. joint action by several states.

In politics the term *multilateralism* describes co-operative and in principle equal action by three or more states. In your view, is such joint action something positive or negative?



Have you heard of the term *multilateralism* before?



50% of Germans say they do not associate anything with the word *multilateralism*

Given a definition of the term, Germans proved to be great supporters of multilateralism. 4 out of 5 Germans see 'co-operative and in principle equal action by three or more nations' in a positive light – across all age groups. Approval was greatest amongst Green Party voters (91%), and the lowest rates were found among AfD supporters (50%). Furthermore, while the great majority of people who have profited from globalisation view multilateral action positively (91%), a third of those who have not saw multilateralism negatively.

Mixed Feelings: Germany and France in the EU and UN

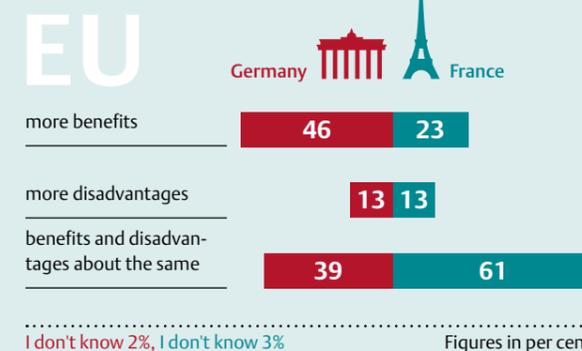
The EU and the UN represent two models of multilateral co-operation. To different degrees, both institutions enjoy approval in Germany and France. Nearly half of all German interviewees confirm that Germany in principle profits from EU membership.* In France only one quarter does. Conversely, only 28 per cent of Germans see that Germany primarily benefits from UN membership, whereas in France this figure is 35 per cent. In both countries there is a large camp of undecided people, who see advantages as well as disadvantages in EU and UN membership. For the EU such a position is upheld by 39 per cent of German and 61 per cent of French interviewees, for the UN by 54 and 53 per cent respectively.

56% of SPD voters demand greater involvement in the EU, yet only **42%** of CDU/CSU voters

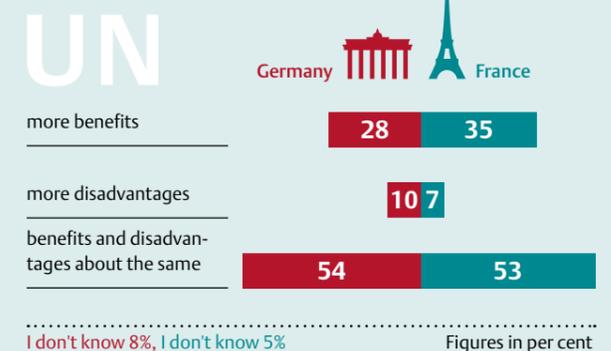
42 per cent of Germans demand a greater involvement of their country in the EU and the UN, roughly the same proportion thinks the levels of participation of their country are sufficient. Although French interviewees see less advantages in the EU membership of their country on average, figures are still comparable (42% 'greater involvement', 37% 'maintain involvement at current level'). Regarding the UN the picture is different: only 36 per cent of interviewees in France want to see greater involvement, around half want to keep the current level of involvement.

42% of La République en Marche supporters see the benefits from EU membership, yet only **9%** of Rassemblement National voters

Does **Germany** / **France** have more benefits from EU membership, more disadvantages, or are there equally benefits and disadvantages?



Does **Germany** / **France** have more benefits from UN membership, more disadvantages, or are there equally benefits and disadvantages?



* This is a significant increase as compared to 2016, when only 39 per cent of Germans saw more benefits from EU membership. See survey "Doubt or Confidence?", available from www.koerber-stiftung.de/europe-survey

Global Challenges: #FridaysForFuture Play Out

For a couple of months (not only) pupils have been demonstrating for a more stringent climate policy. They can rely on the support of the German and French population – irrespective of age group. More than half of all interviewees in both countries consider climate change to be the currently most pressing challenge for international politics. Regarding other global challenges the need for action is perceived as significantly less urgent. Cyber threats are last on the list in both countries (5% and 4% respectively).

Concerns regarding migration have dissipated on both sides of the river Rhine. Only one out of ten interviewees sees the greatest need for action here. The German and the French populations differ on two questions: 17% of Germans consider armed conflicts as the field with the greatest need for action, in France this is a priority for only 7%. For French people, tackling terrorism is far more crucial, with one quarter considering this the field with the greatest need for action (Germany 14%).

The awareness that transnational phenomena also require transnational solutions is anchored in the German and French populations. Multilateral approaches

In **4** of **5** of the global challenges mentioned the United Nations are the preferred framework for action

are the method of choice to tackle the mentioned challenges. In both countries interviewees perceive the UN as the primary framework to deal with climate change, armed conflicts, terrorism and cyber threats. The EU only comes first regarding migration. Here, a larger proportion of interviewees also say they would like to see more national level solutions compared to other issues. Nevertheless, a majority supports multilateral approaches to migration. Overall, French interviewees are more inclined compared to Germans to establish ad hoc coalitions with select partners. For three out of five challenges, spontaneous alliances are more popular as a framework for action than the EU. Germans are more cautious, they mostly prefer the EU over more flexible formats.

In your view, which of the following five issues should the world prioritise?



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International Co-operation (Nearly) at all Costs

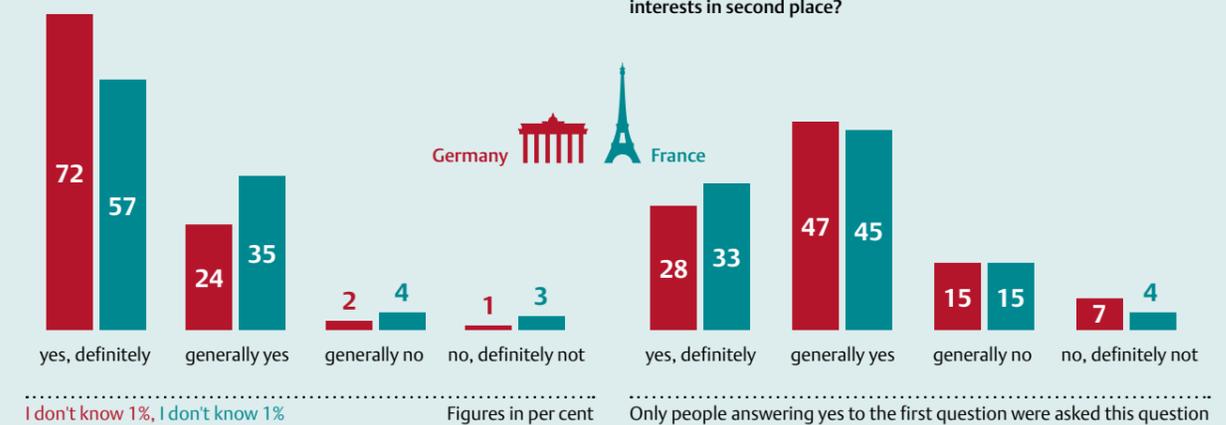
Principally people in Germany and France agree: international co-operation to solve global challenges is a good thing. In both countries over nine out of ten interviewees support co-operative approaches of their country. Germans are even a little more convinced than people in France: 72% demand that Germany should 'definitely' co-operate with other nations, in France the figure is only 57 per cent.

Co-operation involves compromises – the population is aware of this fact. Three out of four Germans and 78 per cent of French interviewees who are in favour of co-operation support international co-operation even in cases where their country has to initially put national interests in second place to the benefit of joint approaches. In Germany only a majority of AfD voters rejects co-operation under these conditions (55%; other parties 8–23%). The picture in France is less clear: opposition is greatest amongst voters of The Republicans (Les Républicains, 27%), followed by those of the National Rally (Rassemblement National, 22%; other parties 11–19%).

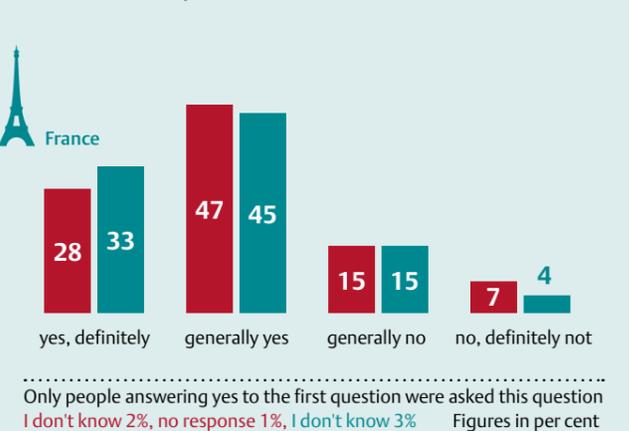
84% in Germany
and **77%** in France approve a values-based foreign policy

The German and French populations furthermore broadly agree on the fundamentals on which the foreign policy of their country should be built. In both countries a large majority supports a values-based foreign policy (Germany 84%, France 77%). In Germany, only among AfD voters is there a majority that demands more interests-based approaches (50%; supporters of all other parties 6–18%). In France support for national interests is particularly high among supporters of the National Rally (33%), The Republicans, and the Democratic Movement (Mouvement démocrate et apparentés, both 32%).

Should Germany / France co-operate with other nations to solve global challenges?



Should Germany / France co-operate with other nations to solve global challenges even if this implies initially putting national interests in second place?



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Germany on the Global Stage: Permanently in the UN Security Council?

Germany's membership in dozens of international organisations is evidence of the country's multilateral commitment and affects the lives of people in Germany to different degrees. Still, nearly one quarter of interviewees cannot immediately name a single international organisation. Among the organisations mentioned three are particularly prominent: nearly half of all Germans mentions NATO (48%), 44 per cent the UN and one third the EU, before the child aid organisation UNICEF (12%) and the world culture organisation UNESCO (10%) that come fourth and fifth. All further organisations are mentioned by less than 10 per cent of interviewees. Only a small minority of Germans mentions influential organisations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO, 3%), the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 1%) and the World Bank (1%). Remarkable is the gender difference between interviewees who chose 'I don't know': while 86% of men could name at least one international organisation, the figure was only 69% for women.

In 2019 and 2020 Germany is a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, together with nine further elected and the five permanent members

32% of the German population believes that Germany is a permanent member of the UN Security Council

(China, France, the UK, Russia and the US). However, the population seems hardly aware of this powerful position. Over half of all Germans do not know that Germany is temporarily a member of the Security Council. Around one third believes Germany's membership is permanent, every fifth person has no answer to the question. An above average percentage of correct answers are given by people who identify with the FDP (61%), the Green Party (56%) and the SPD (53%). 43 per cent of CDU/CSU voters think Germany is a permanent member of the Security Council. One third of AfD supporters respond 'I don't know'.

All in all, Germany's multilateral activities are perceived only to a limited degree by the population. The great support of Germans for international co-operation contradicts their knowledge of the bodies and institutions central to multilateralism.

Which international organisations can you spontaneously name?



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Connecting actors, advancing concrete initiatives and thereby strengthening the multilateral order – these are the objectives of the Paris Peace Forum. The forum offers an annual platform for several thousands of actors from politics, business and society who champion transnational co-operation for tackling global challenges. Initiated by French President Emmanuel Macron, the Paris Peace Forum is concerned with the mechanisms and instruments that build and sustain peace. In innovative event formats, Heads of State and Government, representatives of international organisations and members of civil society (associations, NGOs, think tanks, the media, businesses etc.) discuss concrete projects, present initiatives and jointly seek feasible solutions.

Körber-Stiftung is a Founding Member of the Paris Peace Forum, which is implemented by an association under French law (association loi de 1901). The other members are the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Institut français des relations internationales (IFRI), the Institut Montaigne, the Fondation nationale des sciences politiques (SciencesPo), the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) and México Evalúa.

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Körper-Stiftung

Social development needs dialogue and understanding. Through its operational projects, in its networks and in conjunction with cooperation partners, Körper-Stiftung takes on current social challenges in areas of activities comprising Innovation, International Dialogue and Vibrant Civil Society. At present its work focuses on three topics: Technology needs Society, The Value of Europe and New Life in Exile.

Inaugurated in 1959 by the entrepreneur Kurt A. Körper, the foundation is now actively involved in its own national and international projects and events. In particular, the foundation feels a special bond to the city of Hamburg. Furthermore, the foundation holds a site in the capital of Germany, Berlin.

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