



# Aspen Institute | Germany

Annual Report 2019/2020





*Michael Müller, Governing Mayor of Berlin  
Berlin Transatlantic Forum 2019  
November 06, 2019*

# PREFACE

For the Aspen Institute Germany, the years 2019 and 2020 were years of dramatic events which challenged our institution on all fronts: The deterioration of transatlantic relations under President Trump, the danger of a breakup of the EU ignited by the Brexit vote of Great Britain, and on top of it, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 – all these developments fundamentally influenced and changed our institution and work.

As an institution with limited financial and personal resources dedicated to fostering transatlantic relations, liberal democracies, and values-based leadership, the last two years tested our capabilities, efficiencies, and resilience in an unprecedented way.

But let us assure you that we successfully lived up to these challenges: We not only steered the Institute relatively unscathed through the turbulent waters of transatlantic relations, but we also successfully navigated the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic by developing new formats and using new tools, resulting in an even larger program outreach.

Having prioritized digitalization, we were well prepared when the pandemic forced us to quickly adapt. But all this would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of our team and the expertise and knowledge Aspen Germany gained in the digital arena with its artificial intelligence conferences and series of digital revolution workshops.

Looking back on 2019, we would like to share two very special highlights:

1. For the first time in over 30 years, the Aspen Institute Germany welcomed the presidents and chairmen of all Aspen Institutes from 13 countries around the globe for the annual international committee meeting in Berlin from March 27 to 29. Highlights included an exclusive dinner discussion with Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, Chairwoman of the CDU party at the time, as well as the reception at the Rote Rathaus, the governing seat of Berlin, co-hosted by Berlin Mayor

Michael Müller. This committee meeting and the adjacent Aspen Germany events underlined our common mission and our solidarity in times of global crises and challenges for liberal democracies.

2. On November 6, 2019, Aspen Germany hosted its 6th annual Berlin Transatlantic Forum, entitled “Fit for purpose? The Transatlantic Relationship in the World of Tomorrow.” 30 years after the fall of the wall, Aspen Germany took the opportunity to discuss the lessons learned since 1989 and the road to the future with former U.S. Secretary of State Dr. Madeleine Albright and the former President of the World Bank Bob Zoellick. It was followed by the 4th Aspen Gala, where Madeleine Albright and Bob Zoellick were presented with the 2019 Shepard Stone Award for dedicating their lives to promoting democratic values and the transatlantic partnership. The laudatory speech for both recipients was given by Wolfgang Schäuble, President of the German Bundestag.

Building transatlantic bridges and promoting East-West dialogue was one of the hallmarks of Aspen Germany in the 1970s and 80s. This Aspen tradition was revived in May 2016 by inviting Russian, American, and German legislators to discuss conflicting issues. Then in July 2019, Aspen Germany organized the trilateral conference with members of the Russian Duma and the Russian Federation Council, U.S. Congress, and members of the Bundestag “Addressing Mutual Foreign Policy Challenges.” The topics ranged from issues of arms control and the European security architecture to international trade and the future role of China. All sides found the format to be very enriching and an important step toward keeping the discussion channels between the United States, Germany, and Russia open.

Watching transatlantic relations deteriorate under President Trump, Aspen Germany enhanced its efforts to restore German-American relations through open dialogue and exchange by creating new cooperation projects. Funded by the European Recovery Program, Aspen Germany launched

a new initiative called the “Laboratories of Democracy Initiative,” which brings together German and American state legislators to facilitate values-based discussions on a subnational level. Although COVID-19 forced us to hold the planned personal exchange series virtually, the program started successfully in 2020 and will be continued until 2023.

Besides the continuation of its transatlantic agenda, the Aspen Institute Germany continued with its Western Balkan programs promoting the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans. With its two-pillar program, “the Western Balkans Regional Dialogue” and the “Berlin Policy Hub” for think tanks from the Western Balkans, both initiatives helped us bridge differences, develop solutions, and facilitate regular exchanges between German and Western Balkans experts and decision-makers. In 2020, Aspen Germany together with Southeast Europe Association also had the pleasure to organize an international conference for the German Foreign Office as part of the German EU Council Presidency on “Young People, Migration and the Demographic Challenge in the Western Balkans”, hosted by Foreign Minister Heiko Maas.

Our signature Aspen Leadership Seminar, bringing together high-level decision-makers and leaders from many different professional sectors to discuss challenging political and social topics, added several creative alumni workshops in 2019. The workshops enhanced the draw of the program by strengthening the diversity of its participants. Although its content and appeal have made this very unique seminar an indispensable part of our leadership mission, we were forced to pause the program in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We had to acknowledge that this format needs in-person meetings and could not be substituted for virtual formats. We will let all of you, our members and the alumni of the Leadership Seminar, know when we will resume this program format, hopefully in 2022!

Another unprecedented series of events stands out among the many programs Aspen Germany hosted over the past two

years: the “Road to Election Night and Beyond,” which Aspen Germany initiated in 2020. Jointly organized with a high-level group of German transatlantic institutions and political foundations, it focused on the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election and its impact on a wide range of topics and conflict areas from trade and multilateralism to security and migration. The series was concluded on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2021, with 15 experts from the transatlantic community who shared their views on Joe Biden’s inaugural address and the future of U.S. relations.

This series, which attracted more than 6,000 viewers over six months, was complemented by a new podcast series in cooperation with the Atlantik-Brücke, called “America’s Choice.” Because of its success and outreach, the cooperation will be continued in 2021.

All of these successful conferences, seminars, brown-bag luncheons, background briefings, and our quick and professional reaction to the pandemic have not gone unnoticed. They are one of the reasons why the financial support of the German Bundestag for our mission and future work was honored with an institutional grant of 400,000 Euros in 2019 and 2020. This financial support will help us to continue with our work, develop new programs, and cope with future challenges.

Another highlight should also not go unnoticed: The publishing of a joint proposal paper to reach a new consensus with the then incoming U.S. administration under President Biden. With the title “More Ambition Please! For a New Agreement between Germany and the United States,” this proposal combined the intellectual powers of transatlantic pundits from several Berlin-based think tanks and institutions, among them our new director and myself. If you want to find out more about this proposal, which will serve as a blueprint for our future relations with our U.S. partners, please go to: [www.anewagreement.org](http://www.anewagreement.org).

Finally, let me express my gratitude to all of our members and supporters especially among our board of trustees and

the friends of Aspen Germany in Berlin and the United States, who stayed with us in these difficult times of COVID-19 and who helped us survive and continue our mission and work.

The last two years have proved that we can cope with current and future challenges if we stay on course and keep promoting our values and principles. The outcome of the U.S. Presidential Election and the promise of the 46th U.S. President Joe Biden that “America is back, the transatlantic alliance is back, and we are not looking back, we are looking forward – together” will open up new windows of opportunities and dialogue, which Aspen will build onto in its future events and activities.

2020 was also the final year of my tenure at Aspen Germany. I have enjoyed every moment of being at the helm of this extraordinary institution, which I had the honor and pleasure to serve for over seven years. Together with my dedicated team and their stellar performance, we managed to bring Aspen Germany back and make it a respected and politically important player in the field of transatlantic relations, a promoter of liberal values, and an unbiased convening platform for dialogue about critical issues again.

After handing over the baton to my successor Dr. Stormy-Annika Mildner on December 31, 2020, I am very optimistic about the future of our Institute knowing that she is well-versed to take the helm of Aspen Germany. Many of you know her already: She has served for more than three years on the Managing Board of the Institute, is a staunch transatlanticist, and is highly acclaimed for her academic and business achievements in the think tank arena as well as with the BDI – the voice of German industry.

I am sure that she will bring fresh ideas, continue building bridges, and fight side-by-side our family of Aspen Institutes around the world for the well-use of our open, liberal societies. For me, it is time to say goodbye and for Stormy, it is a warm welcome to the Aspen family, friends, and partners. I am sure she will be awarded the same support I have enjoyed over the years, so thank you again and I am sure that we can count on your continuous support and commitment under the new Aspen Germany leadership.

Goodbye from me and good luck to you, Stormy!

*Rüdiger Lentz, Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany (2013-2020)*



*Rüdiger Lentz, then Executive Director, Aspen Institute Germany  
The Future of Work: How Digitalization is Revolutionizing the Workplace  
April 24, 2019*

# LOOKING AHEAD

The election of Joe Biden as 46th President of the United States in November 2020 has opened up a window of opportunity for a reset of the transatlantic relationship. As we look ahead to a new year full of opportunities, 2021 still holds many uncertainties due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, we learned to digitize our programs and events. For 2021, we anticipate a digital first half of the year. Depending on how the pandemic develops, we very much hope to reconvene in person in the second half of the year. We are planning hybrid events with smaller face-to-face meetings and digital components.

In 2020, the work of our Digital Program was based on three key pillars. In our Zoom-based conversations on “COVID-19 and Technology,” we discussed how the tech industry handled the COVID-19 crisis. As part of its “Values-Driven AI Initiative,” the Digital Program hosted a workshop series on the economic dimensions of Artificial Intelligence and its impact on labor and productivity. These topics also stood at the center of the Aspen Berlin AI Week. In 2021, we are launching a new project on the role of influencers in the German information ecosystem in the run-up to the federal elections. Other topics in 2021 and 2022 include challenges and opportunities for transatlantic digital policy under the U.S. administration, European efforts in tech regulation, and a continuation of last year’s COVID-19 & Tech series. We are also planning another Aspen Berlin AI conference: AI’s contribution to resilient societies.

Our Europe Program has managed to continue the activities of previous years in 2020 with slight adjustments and expanded them with new elements, despite the challenges that the COVID-19 crisis brought to our team. In 2021, the Europe Program will continue to highlight developments in the Western Balkans through established formats such as our Western Balkans Regional Dialogue and Aspen Germany’s Berlin Policy Hub. We will also organize the Civil Society Forum of this year’s Berlin Process Summit in cooperation

with the Southeast Europe Association. In addition, we are starting a new discussion series on European Strategic Autonomy, putting the spotlight on trade policy, the EU’s climate ambitions, digital policies, and foreign and security policy – accounting for the different perspectives of EU member states.

As part of the Transatlantic Program, Aspen Germany launched a new transatlantic exchange program in 2020. The Laboratories of Democracy Initiative brings together members of U.S. state legislatures and German state parliaments in order to promote values-based dialogue and exchange of ideas on common policy challenges at the subnational level. Due to the pandemic, we initially hosted a series of webinars. Depending on the further development of the pandemic in 2021, we will either transition to face-to-face meetings or continue the exchange virtually. Together with our partner, the American Council on Germany, we will accompany the “Laboratories of Democracy Initiative” with a virtual series of talks open to a wider public. In cooperation with Atlantik-Brücke, we will also continue our podcast “America’s Choice” in 2021.

We are looking forward to an active Public Program in 2021. Led by Aspen Germany, we hosted the virtual event series “Road to Election Night & Beyond” in 2020 together with a high-profile group of transatlantic partner institutions and political foundations. After covering Joe Biden’s inauguration together in a hybrid event, we are continuing the cooperation with the publication series “Transatlantic Impulses”. We will continue to host events on “Leadership in Times of Crisis” focused on classic Aspen topics such as values-based leadership and the interplay between politics and science, the role of the media, and ethical issues. In 2021, we would like to revive the brown-bag luncheons, a format exclusively for the Friends of the Aspen Institute Germany, to discuss current issues interactively and under Chatham House Rule. As part of this, we are also planning exclusive



*Dr. Stormy-Annika Mildner,  
Executive Director, Aspen Institute Germany  
“Conference on Artificial Intelligence – Humanity Enabled: Artificial  
Intelligence and the Great Economic Acceleration”  
December 7, 2020*

events for our young members as well as our corporate members. We are convinced that with these programs and event formats we can trigger sustainable thought processes and contribute to the search for cross-border solutions.

We also want to venture into new topic areas in 2021, placing a stronger focus on geoeconomics and global economic governance. As such, we will establish G7 think tank and business dialogues, accompanying the British G7 presidency as well as preparing for the 2022 German G7 chairmanship. Aspen Germany will also take part in the think tank T20 process of the G20. Aiming at establishing a new policy program, we will cast a particular spotlight at the triangular relationship between the EU, the United States, and China.

For 2021, we envision to give our social media presence a new look. A new design of Aspen Germany sharepics as well as specific program images should ensure greater recognition and expand our outreach. By intensifying our social media initiatives, we not only want to promote events or publications, but also provide helpful information for readers and initiate discussions. Currently, our initiative “What’s new in Washington?” is underway. In another initiative, we are introducing the Institute’s staff and programs. We would be delighted if you followed us on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram.

The Aspen Institute Germany is an important platform for a trustful exchange. The Institute is also a think tank with an impressive network of expertise on a wide range of topics. In the future, we want to give this expertise more space through publication formats. Three publication formats are planned for brief opinion pieces, short analyses, and longer, in-depth studies.

The Aspen Institute Germany is much more than the sum of its programs, events, staff, and committees. It is a family – and families thrive on togetherness and exchange. Families are also allowed to argue about critical issues. Accordingly,

with our new format Aspen Boards Policy Talk, we would like to give our Board of Trustees and Management Board a space to exchange views on critical issues among themselves and with high-ranking political decision-makers in exclusive events.

Over the course of the past seven years, Rüdiger Lentz has re-built an Institute which is internationally renowned for its leadership initiatives, its expertise on transatlantic and European affairs, and its trustful exchange on pressing issues of global concern. He has put together a team that puts heart and soul into the Institute. He has also played a pivotal role in strengthening cooperation among the international Aspen Institutes. Rüdiger, you will be missed. And we thank you for all you have done for the Institute!

I am delighted to be part of the Aspen family. The challenges facing the Institute are great – but so are the opportunities. I would like to seize these together with you, our members and partners. All the more reason for me to look forward to working with you in the future.

*Dr. Stormy-Annika Mildner, Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany*

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*Summer Party 2019 of the Aspen Institute Germany and the "Verein der Freunde"  
June 05, 2019*

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# MISSION AND PROGRAMS

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## THE ASPEN IDEA

The Aspen Institute Germany promotes values-based leadership, constructive dialogue among conflicting parties, and euro-atlantic cooperation to support and enhance a strong, open society.

To fulfil its mission, Aspen Germany convenes decision-makers and experts from the fields of politics, business, academia, media, culture, and civil society in three programs:

The **Policy Programs** (Transatlantic, Europe & Digital) offer a non-partisan, confidential platform for dialogue and analysis to address regional and global challenges and to develop mutually acceptable solutions.

The **Leadership Program** reflects on values and ideas using the Socratic method to deepen knowledge, broaden perspectives, and enhance participants' ability to solve the problems they face.

The **Public Program** provides a forum for open and constructive dialogue between decision-makers and a broader audience on a wide range of current issues.

The Aspen Institute Germany was founded in Berlin in 1974 and has since then actively promoted the idea of a transatlantic community and of a free and open society. It serves as a non-partisan, non-profit convening platform and is part of the global Aspen network, with partners in the United States, France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Romania, Spain, Japan, India, Mexico, and Ukraine. Together, the Institutes are committed to addressing the challenges of the 21st century.

The **Aspen Idea** goes back to 1945 when Chicago businessman and philanthropist Walter Paepcke (1896-1960), son of German immigrants from Mecklenburg, arrived in Aspen, a then sleepy town in the mountains of Colorado. Struck by the human and moral catastrophe of World War II, Paepcke dreamed of "a place where the human spirit can flourish."

Paepcke was a trustee of the University of Chicago and close friends with its president Robert Hutchins as well as with the philosopher Mortimer Adler. Together, they shared one vision: To create a platform for dialogue between leaders, thinkers, and artists from around the globe where they could step away from their daily routines and reflect on what makes good leaders and a good society.

Their dream came true in 1949, when Paepcke made Aspen the site for the 200th birthday celebration of German poet and philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe commemorating the historic and abiding philosophical ties that America and the rest of the world had with Germany, despite the atrocities of the Hitler regime and World War II. The 20-day gathering attracted such prominent intellectuals and artists as Albert Schweitzer, Jose Ortega y Gasset, Thornton Wilder, and Arthur Rubinstein, along with members of the international press and more than 2,000 attendees. That year, Paepcke created what is now the Aspen Institute.

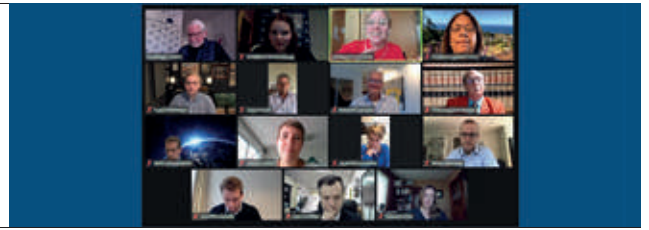
Today, the Institute's vision and reach extend far beyond its original roots. In policy programs, seminars, public events, and global leadership initiatives, its form and force have grown to confront contemporary challenges and matters of collective concern.

The Aspen Institute is based in Washington, D.C. and has campuses in Aspen, Colorado, and on the Wye River on Maryland's eastern shore. It also maintains offices in New York City and has an international network of partners in Germany, France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Great Britain, New Zealand, Romania, Ukraine, Spain, Japan, India, and Mexico.

As the first Institute abroad, Aspen Germany was founded in 1974 in the midst of the Cold War. Its founding members included former Chancellor Willy Brandt, former High Commissioner for Germany John J. McCloy, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, the Governing Mayor of Berlin Klaus Schütz, historian Lord Alan Bullock, the future President of West Germany Richard von Weizsäcker, sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf, and publicist Marion Countess Dönhoff among others. Together they envisioned creating a symbol of transatlantic community.

Under the leadership of Shepard Stone, its first Executive Director, Aspen Germany established a unique track record of building German-U.S. cooperation and dialogue with the former Soviet Union. Stone's successors extended this tradition and also focused on issues facing the Balkans and the Middle East.

To this day, the Aspen Institute Germany enables constructive dialogue amongst conflicting parties and promotes Euro-Atlantic cooperation to support and enhance a strong open society.



## TRANSATLANTIC PROGRAM

The Aspen Institute Germany is dedicated to strengthening the transatlantic partnership and holds mutual understanding at the core of its mission. The Transatlantic Program facilitates open, values-based dialogue on key challenges facing the transatlantic relationship. It covers a wide range of topics including foreign and security policy, global order and multilateralism, trade, climate and energy, and—in cooperation with the Digital Program—the rising influence of technology on the international system. The Program's initiatives provide a platform for both public and off-the-record discussions. The Berlin Transatlantic Forum, workshops, and virtual formats bring together leading experts and decision-makers to discuss Euro-Atlantic cooperation and common challenges. In off-the-record meetings, Aspen Germany facilitates an open exchange of ideas on innovative policy solutions and helps to create personal networks across the Atlantic.

## Laboratories of Democracy Initiative

The Laboratories of Democracy Initiative brings together representatives from the U.S. state legislatures and German *Landtage* to facilitate a values-based discussion and an exchange of ideas about how to tackle current international policy challenges on a subnational level. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis once wrote about the power of states as the “laboratory of democracy,” where new and innovative policy approaches can be tested. This project draws on that notion, focusing on the role of state legislators in creating policy solutions and fostering transatlantic relations in times when national governments are dominated by political polarization and crisis management.

The program consists of two off-the-record gatherings per year—one in Germany and one in the United States. At these meetings, participants identify important policy topics at sub-national level, explore ideas of values-based leadership, exchange best practices, discuss potential cooperation, and address broader issues in the transatlantic relationship. Each exchange also focuses on a core topic that is relevant on both sides of the Atlantic, including technological transformation, structural change and post-industrial transition, and climate and energy. The program provides on-the-ground experiences of best practices and encourages peer-learning.

In 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19, Aspen Germany holds a series of webinars as part of a “Virtual Road to the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative” providing a virtual platform for exchange for the 2020 cohort. The webinar series explored subnational governance in the United States and Germany amid COVID-19, leadership in times of crisis, the role of tech in the COVID-19 response, and prospects for German-American cooperation. The project is supported by the Transatlantic Program of the Federal Republic of Germany, funded by the European Recovery Program (ERP) of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy (BMWi).



## America's Choice Podcast

“America's Choice” is a German-language podcast on U.S. politics, co-produced by the Aspen Institute Germany and the Atlantik-Brücke. In 2020, the podcast addressed the milestones of the 2020 presidential election, the candidates and their campaigns, and the American electoral system. It was co-hosted by Tyson Barker, then Deputy Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, and David Deißner, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke. As of 2021, Aspen Germany's Executive Director Dr. Stormy-Annika Milder took over Tyson Barker's position as co-host. The podcast continues to address U.S. politics, the Biden administration's domestic and foreign policy priorities, and the implications for transatlantic relations.

## Berlin Transatlantic Forum

Kicked-off in 2014 on the occasion of Aspen Germany's 40th anniversary, the Berlin Transatlantic Forum addressed the most pressing challenges jointly facing Europe and the United States. The conference brought together renowned experts and decision-makers from both sides of the Atlantic to exchange ideas and seek answers to important questions in the fields of security, energy, technology, democracy, and trade, and also to discuss issues pertaining to the shared foundation of Western values. The annual conference was preceded by a workshop, during which experts from Germany, Europe, and the United States gathered for an in-depth discussion of key topics of transatlantic concern.

The 2019 conference – entitled “Fit for Purpose? The Transatlantic Relationship and the World of Tomorrow” – looked at the future of the partnership thirty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It examined the transatlantic relationship, how it has evolved and where its greatest operational strengths can lie in a world of rising technological, political and democratic disruption. As part of the Berlin Transatlantic Forum 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany held an Aspen NEXT seminar aimed at engaging the coming generation of Atlanticists and facilitating an exchange of ideas for the future of the transatlantic relationship.

The Berlin Transatlantic Forum marked a continuation of the Institute's close ties to the city of Berlin. In 1974, in the midst of the Cold War, the Institute was founded as a symbol of transatlantic solidarity. Since then, Aspen Germany has attracted high-level guests to Berlin to strengthen Euro-Atlantic cooperation. The project was made possible by a generous grant of the foundation “Lotto Stiftung Berlin,” as well as our partners Volkswagen AG, Lockheed Martin, and the Governing Mayor of Berlin – Senate Chancellery.



### **Trilateral Dialogue with Parliamentarians from Germany, Russia, and the United States**

In 2016 and 2019, Aspen Germany's Trilateral Dialogue brought together legislators and expert scholars from the Federal Republic of Germany, the Russian Federation, and the United States in a confidential, off-the-record setting. The format was intended to provide a neutral platform for an open exchange on contested issues between the three countries' legislators and senior experts. Closely organized in cooperation with the Robert Bosch Foundation of Germany, the 2019 gathering of Members from the U.S. Congress, the Russian Duma and Federation Council, and the German Bundestag was the second of its kind after the successful launch of the format in 2016. Topics discussed ranged from issues of arms control and the European security architecture to the Middle East and international trade.

The moderated discussion between the delegations focused on exploring the scope for action and possible solutions regarding these pressing issues. Acclaimed academics from the participating countries, specially selected for this purpose, helped to find appropriate entry points and to stimulate the necessary discussion between the parliamentarians.



*Dr. Cristina Stanca-Mustea, then Flagship Programs and Events Coordinator, Sarthak Educational Trust; Member of the "Verein der Freunde"  
Berlin Transatlantic Forum 2019  
November 06, 2019*

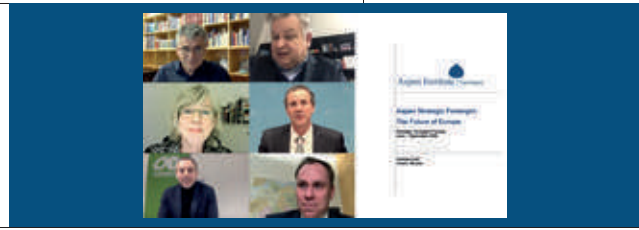


## EUROPE PROGRAM

In May 1989, President George H. W. Bush spoke in Mainz, Germany about the dream of a “Europe whole and free” just months before the fall of the Berlin Wall and the first moves to extend the reach of a democratic, pluralistic, united Europe. Today, the vision of a “Europe whole and free” continues to guide Aspen Germany’s Europe Program in pursuing the completion of a Europe based on democracy, freedom, and human dignity. First and foremost, this includes supporting the path to Europeanization and Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans; anticipating and addressing the EU’s challenges as it strives to increase its role as a global actor; and defending the European Union as a community of values even as it faces new threats from outside and inside. In this spirit, Aspen Germany’s Europe Program hosts closed-door meetings to facilitate for open and honest exchange between decision-makers and experts, and public debates on priority issues. The Western Balkans, for example, have been a focal point of Aspen Germany since the early 1990s. Here, Aspen Germany has been facilitating a comprehensive dialogue to support regional cooperation and the transformation processes necessary on the path to Euro-Atlantic integration.

## Western Balkans Regional Dialog

Since 2009, Aspen Germany’s Regional Dialog brings together high-level decision-makers, politicians, diplomats, and civil society experts from the Western Balkans, but also from the United States, Germany, the EU, NATO, and other international and regional organizations to discuss the region’s current and future challenges. At exclusive closed-door conferences, selected participants can exchange views and discuss differences and commonalities in an off-the-record setting. Supported by expert policy papers, discussions aim at bridging differences that still exist, identifying common challenges and ideas, and developing mutually acceptable solutions and recommendations. Topics discussed include: Euro-Atlantic integration and the reform processes, non-traditional security threats, the fight against organized crime and corruption, the role of external actors in the region, economic development, energy security, regional cooperation, rule of law, and democratization.



## Berlin Policy Hub for Think Tanks from the Western Balkans

One of the challenges for policy organizations from the Western Balkans is a disconnect from the European Union. All too often, pro-European voices interacting with their EU counterparts struggle to step beyond local paradigms. This deepens the perception in the EU that the Western Balkans is a problematic neighbor who, in the future, might become a free-rider on EU financial assistance without contributing to solutions for wider European problems. Genuine Europeanization cannot take hold if the EU and the regions are not speaking constructively about common goals. In order to bridge this gap, Aspen's Berlin Policy Hub seeks to establish closer, targeted, and more regular contact between Western Balkan think tanks and their EU member states' counterparts. Supported by the Open Society Foundations and the German Federal Press Agency, the Aspen Institute Germany functions as a policy hub in Berlin for select policy research organizations from the Western Balkans. Aspen Germany supports these organizations in identifying potential local partners in Berlin, facilitates advocacy visits, and assists with their preparation and optimization. The idea is to help Western Balkan policy organizations to better understand the Berlin policy scene, identify opportunities for collaboration with local organizations, and improve effectiveness of their political outreach and advocacy. Throughout its first two years of operation, Aspen's Berlin Policy Hub organized and facilitated a total of 19 visits, hosting more than twenty think tanks from all of the Western Balkan countries, connecting them with leading policy-makers at the Federal Chancellery, the Foreign Office, other federal ministries, the German Bundestag, Berlin-based think tanks and research organizations, as well as individual experts and renowned journalists. Because of the great interest in and appreciation for the Aspen's Berlin Policy Hub, the project was renewed in 2020, guaranteeing another two years of support for Western Balkan policy organizations in this framework.

## The Future of Europe: Strategic Foresight

Against the backdrop of uncertainties and insecurities that currently define our world, the Aspen Institute Germany has conducted a strategic foresight process with the goal of anticipating challenges and opportunities for the future of Europe. In the format of individual workshops, Aspen Germany has brought together European experts to conceptualize, develop, and evaluate different scenarios that could define our future in order to track where we are heading and develop policy that will steer us into the right direction. The results listed below are published and distributed among policy-makers throughout Europe in order to enrich their strategic foresight in today's policy-making.

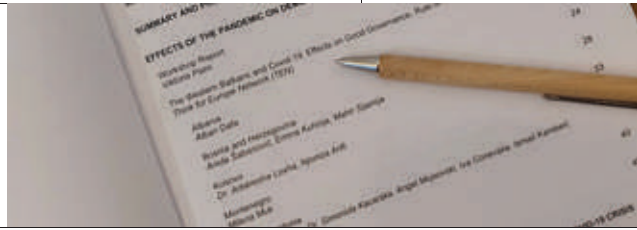


## Western Balkans Background Discussions

Complementing the aforementioned core events of its Western Balkans Program, Aspen Germany facilitates background discussions and increases exchange among members of parliament, political advisors from the Bundestag, and select experts from government and civil society such as Berlin based think tanks, political foundations, and journalists. Topics of discussion vary from summit evaluations, current regional developments, and exclusive conversations with select politicians, including heads of states and government.

## Visegrad 4 – Germany Forum

The Visegrad 4 – Germany Forum is a joint project of the Aspen Institute Germany and the Aspen Institute Central Europe launched in 2017. In Germany, the V4 is often perceived through the perspective of political differences such as on migration or European values, while the strong economic ties that link Germany with all four countries seem to be taken for granted or go unnoticed by the public. At the same time, the V4 countries strive to extend their relationships with Germany economically, by gradually moving from serving as low added value production space to include more research and development, and politically in particular within the EU. This forum has therefore focused on identifying common interests for strengthening V4-German cooperation and has developed recommendations.



## Aspen Initiative for Europe

The Aspen Initiative for Europe (AlfE) is a joint endeavor of the seven European Aspen Institutes that aims to pool the national resources and strengths of each partner to promote common values and shared ideas. Recognizing the growing divisions within Europe, this initiative is an effort to address Europe's challenges together and to increase cooperation among the seven European partners to facilitate debates on the future of Europe and to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of Europeans who share a commitment to a better functioning EU based on the principles of liberal democracy and open dialogue. Core projects of this initiative include the Aspen European Strategy Group, a seminar for young European leaders as well as increased collaboration in the fields of good governance, European cohesion, the future of the EU, and the challenges of digital transformation for Europe.

## Europe Program Publications

2020 – Aspen Strategic Foresight – The Future of Europe

2020 – Emigration from the Western Balkans

2020 – The Covid-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans – Consequences and Policy Approaches

2019 – Economic Development and Democratization in the Western Balkans



## DIGITAL PROGRAM

Digital transformation is causing some of the most profound societal challenges of the 21st century. Artificial intelligence, cloud computing, cross-border supply chains, the Internet of Things (IOT), e-commerce, and the sharing economy are changing the fabric of society at a rate never experienced in history. The COVID-19 crisis has accelerated the move toward digitization, drawing out aspects of inequality even as it enables new forms of economic and social resilience. Against this backdrop of opportunities and challenges, the Aspen Institute Germany is working on the most pressing questions of technology as they impact the lives of Germans, Europeans, and the global community. From 2019 to 2020, the program was based on five pillars:

### I. Values-Driven AI Initiative

The AI innovation race is on. Bigger data sets, stronger algorithms, and faster computers are bringing breakthroughs in voice and visual recognition, language analysis, sensors, robotics, and data processing. This confluence of AI-enabled emerging technologies is transforming all corners of life from insurance underwriting to notaries, sports refereeing, loan offerings, advertising, policing, and even national security. The Aspen Values-Driven AI Initiative aims to make sure that this process is accompanied by discussion and debate about how this general-purpose technology can be used to advanced good, just societies.



## **I. I Aspen Berlin Annual AI Conference**

As part of its work, the Aspen Institute Germany launched its annual Aspen Berlin Artificial Intelligence Conference in 2018 to bring together citizens, policy-makers, business leaders, innovators, economists, philosophers, religious leaders, union organizers, civil society, and security experts to discuss the possibilities and pitfalls of AI.

In 2019, Aspen Germany held its second annual conference entitled “Conference on Artificial Intelligence – Humanity Defined: Politics and Ethics in the AI Age” which told the beginning of a story of how European, American, and East Asian societies are grappling with the impacts of AI and addressed some of the ethical questions facing good societies in the face of AI’s transformative potential.

In December 2020, the third conference: “Humanity Enabled: Artificial Intelligence and the Great Economic Acceleration” examined the economic dimensions of AI and its impact on labor, productivity, global competition, education, and social benefits. The conference looked at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on technology, how it is altering economic prospects across sectors and professions. It also looked at the German EU Presidency and aspirations to pursue Europe’s digital sovereignty and preserve fundamental rights within the EU even as Europe attempts to promote innovation and tech usage.

## **I. II High-Level Workshops on AI and Society**

Within the framework of this initiative, Aspen Germany organized regular off-the-record workshops on artificial intelligence. These workshops focused on diverse themes including national security, the future of work, and bias in algorithms. Aspen Germany has also participated in workshops and research as part of a broader “Aspen NextGen Network” bringing together Germany’s future leaders and examining the opportunities provided by AI, as well as the ethical challenges digital technologies pose in light of a dignity-based social contract. The goal of this exercise was to break down barriers between siloed communities and explore scenarios that will provide a better sense of the ethics of AI in Germany and Europe.



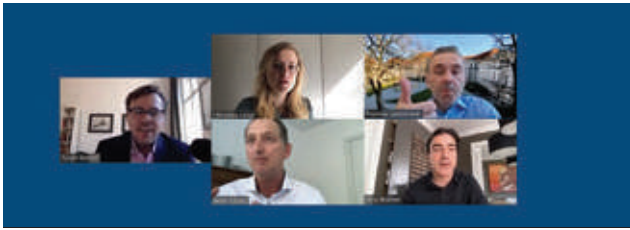
## II. Tech and the Worker: Overcoming the Conundrums of the “Great Decoupling”

Over the past two decades, a great decoupling of productivity from wages and jobs has begun rewiring economies, pushing out labor as the central factor in economic life. The reason is simple: Productivity gains are now principally technology-driven, benefiting the rise of the Internet, automation, behavioral analytics and social media, and increasingly robotics, artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML), and the internet of things. As productivity increasingly decouples from labor and becomes a function of technology, the effects are being felt throughout economies, labor markets, and communities. Productivity gains have accumulated disproportionately at the upper end of the wealth spectrum as income inequality grows and social mobility becomes more difficult. At the same time, this pushes labor into gig jobs as work becomes more tenuous. It is not a question of jobs per se, but of the quality of jobs.

The Aspen Institute Germany hosted a four-part workshop series together with Microsoft consisting of the following sessions: 1) Lessons from Past Industrial Revolutions; 2) Rethinking the Social Contract; 3) Automation and the Education Cycle; and 4) Opening Up the Policy Maker’s Toolbox. These discussions ultimately aimed to tackle the questions: How can Europe, the United States, and other industrial powers thrive in the face of the great decoupling? How can public policy efforts work to preserve and deepen the dignity of work and meaningful economic participation in the deep digital age?

## III. Cybersecurity

The Aspen Institute Germany has focused on cybersecurity since 2017. In 2019, Aspen Germany and the Ministry of the Interior, Digitization and Migration of Baden-Württemberg hosted their high-level conference “Berlin CyberSecurityForum”. The forum brought together more than 250 European, American, and international top policy makers, legislators, engineers, hackers, civil society, academics, and representatives of the business, privacy, and security communities as well as media representatives. In keynotes, panel discussions, and seminar-style breakout sessions, speakers and participants explored the challenges of today and tomorrow in keeping the digital space secure. Additionally, Aspen Germany is an intellectual partner with the 2020 Munich Cyber Security Conference – providing program shaping and authoring the report of this once-a-year Cyber Conference on the margins of the Munich Security Conference (MSC).



#### **IV. COVID-19 and Tech Virtual Conversation Series**

With the onset of the global pandemic, the Aspen Institute Germany launched a virtual conversation series on “COVID-19 and Technology”. This Zoom-based series gave participants the opportunity to engage with leading researchers, entrepreneurs, policy-makers, thinkers, and civil society in interactive discussions looking at how tech is dealing with the COVID-19 crisis in Germany, Europe, the transatlantic space, and the world. Talks addressed how technology such as AI, 3D printing, and big data are supporting diagnostics, medical production, resilience, and analytics of infection spreading. They dealt with issues around the geo-politics of tech in the pandemic, the race for a vaccine, cybersecurity, disinformation, fake news, as well as the use and misuse of data. This eight-part series ran from March to June 2020 and included 20 speakers and over 700 guests. It was made possible by Aspen Germany’s partner, Google.

#### **V. Digital Dish Series**

The Aspen Institute Germany occasionally organizes “Digital Dishes” that feature provocative thinkers for an intimate, off-the-record lunch or dinner in Berlin to discuss an issue related to the most pressing tech policy debates. The Dish brings together a mix of frontier thinkers on tech policy and specialists focusing on the U.S.-European relationship. By bringing together both communities, the Digital Dish Series addresses trends, frictions, and successes in the transatlantic tech policy space and contextualizes issues in the broader U.S.-European relationship.



## Outlook to 2021

Aspen Germany will continue the story arc in 2021 under the heading **“Humanity Empowered: Building Resilience with AI.”** With some hindsight, COVID-19 has catalyzed political discussions on key issues ranging from technological sovereignty and communication infrastructures to the faster digitalizing of public services, businesses, work, and education. As many countries are still working to transition out of this pandemic, one of the key questions is, how well prepared will they be for the next crisis, and the ones after that? Can the current political momentum, built on painful and costly lessons learned, be sustained five, ten, or 15 years down the road?

## Partners

The Digital Program would like to thank its partners who have generously supported our initiatives: the State Representation of Baden-Württemberg, the Ministry of the Interior, Digitization and Migration of Baden-Württemberg, the Heinz und Heide Dürr Stiftung, Microsoft, the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, Google, Dell, DNVGL, the German AI Association, Brunswick, the Internet Economy Foundation, the Atlantic Council, Deutsche Telekom, Telefonica, DXC Technology, Schnittger Möllmann Partners, the Italian Embassy in Berlin, the Estonian Embassy in Berlin, and Pfizer.

The Digital Program would also like to thank its media partners Der Tagesspiegel, Sicherheitshalber, IP Quarterly, Internationale Politik, RBB, KCRW Berlin, and Deutschlandfunk Nova.



## LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The leadership program continues to be one of Aspen Germany's flagship programs, promoting the idea of values-based leadership. After some restructuring, the leadership team had a fresh start with a new Senior Program Officer and a Program Assistant after the positions had been vacant for several months during the summer of 2019. Alumni activities, informal meetings, and networking events came to a halt in early March 2020 and the in-person seminars "Philosophy and Practice" scheduled to be held at Gut Klostermühle for June and November 2020 had to be cancelled due to the pandemic.

### Aspen Germany's Leadership Seminar "Philosophy and Practice"

The idea of Aspen Germany's Leadership Seminar "Philosophy and Practice" is to bring together high-ranking leaders from politics, business, media, culture, and NGOs. Participants are invited to explore and reflect on values-driven leadership against an unusual backdrop. It is a unique format dedicated to discussing leadership questions and the responsibilities arising out of leadership roles within a philosophical context. "Philosophy and Practice" has been Aspen Germany's flagship program since 2011. It was modelled on the Aspen Institute's leadership seminar developed in the 1950s at the Aspen Institute in Aspen, Colorado, and embraces the core of the "Aspen Idea": the promotion of values-based leadership. Seminar participants join an alumni network numbering in the hundreds, linked by their experiences in the seminar and their engagement in advancing themselves and their societies.

The seminar format serves as a platform for one's own leadership qualities, decisions, and responsibilities, a concept deeply rooted in the Aspen spirit. By immersing themselves in excerpts from major philosophical works ranging from antiquity to modernity, participants explore the most universal facets of the human existence, such as the relationship of individual freedom and the order of leadership.

The seminar is meant to enable the participants to develop their own style of ethical leadership. It is not a traditional leadership seminar. Rather, it not only aspires to improve leaders' skillsets with professional and societal responsibilities. It aims at broadening their horizons regarding their behavior toward subordinates and peers as well as their ability to lead.

In the light of the pandemic, Aspen Germany's Leadership Seminar "Philosophy and Practice" was transformed into a virtual format and offered an online platform from November 12 to 14. The virtual format captured the essence and spirit of the original: In a reflective space, the participants embarked



## Aspen Leadership Alumni Program

on a journey for pause and consideration on leadership behavior in response to current global challenges. Guided by experienced moderators Carol Gluck and Ruth Girardet, the participants discussed texts written by traditional and modern philosophers and writers and contemplated on their implications for society. The seminar encouraged the participants to interpret the readings spanning more than two millennia from their own perspective. The purpose of the seminar was not to identify similar responses or to build consensus, but to encourage the participants to think more deeply about their own beliefs and values, enhance their understanding of competing viewpoints, and highlight the complexity of modern societies. While the seminar was not intended to offer ready-made solutions, it created a space for dialogue and exchange, which is vital in a world of conflicting interests, opposing views, and cultural frictions.

The Aspen Germany Leadership Seminar has been put on hold due to the pandemic.

Aspen Germany's leadership alumni community consists of roughly 300 individuals dedicated to furthering the conversation and keeping alive the spark that was ignited during the Seminar. To continue the journey of mind and friendship made possible by the unique and often life-changing experience, our alumni strive to keep connected with one another through a series of workshops, debates, lunches, and reunions throughout the year. The rich and diverse Leadership Alumni Program ensures follow-up to the Seminar and the formation of a community of leaders committed to the ideal of values-based leadership. The Leadership Alumni Program is an excellent platform to share and discuss ideas, build relationships, and foster lifelong friendships.

The ongoing pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns called for the launch of a new series of alumni events, hosted on Zoom, and moderated by leadership alumni using the Socratic method. Four sessions allowed for inspiring and insightful discussions on well-known texts as well as new ones, geared to the current situation and focused on the challenges of the pandemic and leadership in times of crises. This new virtual format brought together alumni of different cohorts, backgrounds, and countries who otherwise would not likely have convened on site.



## Aspen Young European Leaders Seminar

In 2019, the third Aspen Seminar for Young European Leaders took place in Annecy, France, jointly organized by the Aspen Initiative for Europe, the Aspen Institute France and the Aspen Institute Germany. The seminar brought together 26 participants, aged 25-35, from Europe and other regions around the world. On the basis of classical and modern texts of renowned European and non-European philosophers and thinkers, the participants reflected on timeless ideas and their own beliefs and values as well as on European ideals and their continued relevance in today's world. The seminar was moderated by Leigh Hafrey, Senior Lecturer in the Behavioral and Policy Sciences at MIT's Sloan School of Management, and Miguel Herrero, Professor of Classics at Madrid's Complutense University.

The 2020 Aspen Young European Leaders Seminar was the fourth in line after the first editions in Italy, Spain, and France. It was planned to be held under the title "Fractured Europe" in early September 2020 at Schloss Pillnitz just outside Dresden. The seminar was hosted by Aspen Germany in cooperation with Aspen Central Europe, under the umbrella of the Aspen Initiative for Europe. Given the circumstances due to the pandemic, the in-person seminar had to be converted into an online format that took place from September 3 to 5, 2020.

In line with the original curriculum, 22 participants from all over Europe and diverse sectors such as think tanks, politics, trade and commerce, the media and human rights, history and urban planning, as well as tech and artificial intelligence convened on Zoom to discuss the present state of the continent and its future. The seminar group was welcomed by Erik Kurzweil, Head of International Relations at the State Chancellery of Saxony. In a nutshell, he gave an overview of the region's key characteristics and major social tensions that impact the work of politics and

business alike: a plunge into many topics that recurred throughout the seminar. A panel discussion with Elmar Brok, former member of the European Parliament (CDU), and Franziska Brantner, former member of the European Parliament, member of the German Parliament (Alliance 90/The Greens), focused on the future of a united Europe.

Skillfully moderated by long-time Aspen Germany moderators Leigh Hafrey, Senior Lecturer at MIT's Sloan School of Management, and Ruth Girardet, Member of the Council of The Open University, the consequent debate was based on texts as fundamental as the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the German Basic Law, and Immanuel Kant's Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, included contemporary authors like Olga Tokarczuk, Peter Schneider, and Vaclav Havel, and touched on timely topics like surveillance capitalism and "stabilocracies" in Central and Eastern Europe.



## PUBLIC PROGRAM

The Aspen Institute Germany's Public Program serves as a forum for open discourse and exchange between decision-makers and a broader audience of interested individuals who wish to discuss fresh ideas and look at issues from new perspectives. Topics reflect the Institute's key issues as a whole and include a wide range of current political, economic, and social matters as well as questions of values-based leadership.

The Public Program consists of several different formats. The evening event series features renowned speakers who share their ideas in interviews, panels, or presentations followed by discussions. While the interview portion of the event is sometimes broadcasted by one of the Institute's media partners, the subsequent discussion is off-the-record to enable a frank and open exchange. The Aspen Brown Bag Lunch series takes place several times a year and convenes experts, members of the "Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts e.V." (Association of Friends of the Aspen Institute), and representatives from politics, business, and civil society for a working lunch to discuss current topics under Chatham House Rule. Finally, the Public Program occasionally hosts stand-alone events such as exclusive breakfasts and dinners, the annual Aspen Summer Party, and the Aspen Gala. Some of these are hosted in cooperation with partner organizations. The Public Program is open to members and invited guests. Members of the "Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts e.V." enjoy preferred access to major Public Program events.

The Public Program is made possible by the generous support of the Shepard Stone Foundation. All Public Program events (expert roundtables, fireside chats, public panel discussions, brown bag lunches) are currently conducted virtually or in a hybrid format, respectively.

## Road to Election Night & Beyond

The 2020 U.S. Presidential Election and its outcome heavily shaped public debate on both sides of the Atlantic. The ongoing health crisis of unknown dimensions as well as an unprecedented presidential transition further pushed this consequential election to the center of attention. United in their commitment to sending a strong signal for transatlantic solidarity, several transatlantic institutions and German political foundations joined forces for the Road to Election Night & Beyond event series.

Kicking off in September 2020, Aspen Germany and its partners hosted ten virtual and hybrid events on various topics ranging from transatlantic trade to electoral demographics, social media on the campaign trail to geostrategic implications of the election.

The series facilitated in-depth discussion amongst leading researchers, policy-makers, think tanks, and civil society in the run-up to the election and beyond. In line with Aspen Germany's mission, all partners were able to foster debate on a healthy and strong Euro-American partnership and pave the way for the concluding Inauguration Day event on January 20, 2021. Altogether, 50 speakers from both sides of the Atlantic reached more than 6000 live viewers representing 25 countries.



## Selection of Speakers in 2019 and 2020

**Dr. Madeleine K. Albright**, former U.S. Secretary of State & U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations

**Peter Baker**, Chief White House Correspondent, New York Times

**Katarina Barley**, Member of the European Parliament (SPD)

**Dr. Franziska Brantner**, Member of the German Bundestag & Parliamentary Executive Officer (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen)

**Vinton G. Cerf**, Vice President & Chief Internet Evangelist at Google

**H.E. Srđan Darmanović**, then Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Montenegro

**Dr. Karen Donfried**, President of the German Marshall Fund of the United States

**Ambassador John B. Emerson**, former U.S. Ambassador to Germany

**Ambassador Dr. Emily Haber**, German Ambassador to the United States

**Tina Hassel**, Head & TV Editor-in-Chief of ARD-Hauptstadtstudio in Berlin

**Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer**, Federal Minister of Defence

**Heiko Maas**, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany

**Michael Müller**, Governing Mayor of Berlin

**H.E. Stevo Pendarovski**, President of the Republic of North Macedonia

**Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble**, President of the German Bundestag

**Robert B. Zoellick**, former President of the World Bank, U.S. Trade Representative & U.S. Deputy Secretary of State

# FIVE REASONS TO SUPPORT ASPEN

## 1. Strengthen Transatlantic Cooperation

Strengthening the transatlantic partnership is the core of the Institute's mission. We believe that a strong relationship between Germany, Europe, and the United States is vital to the world as it strives for stability, peace, and prosperity. Our programs bring together leaders from policy and business on both sides of the Atlantic to address major challenges and find joint solutions.

## 2. Engage in Expert Conversation on the World's Most Pressing Issues

Aspen Germany convenes thought leaders from across society and creates a space for serious dialogue to address national and global challenges. Ranging from informal, off the record conversations to intellectual exchanges at expert workshops and conferences, the Institute facilitates discussions on today's most pressing issues, e.g. artificial intelligence, international trade conflicts, global health, climate change, geopolitical shifts, the crisis of multilateralism and the rise of populist movements.

## 3. Access Aspen's Global Network

Aspen Germany is part of a global network with partners in the United States, France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Romania, Spain, Ukraine, Great Britain, Japan, India, Mexico, and New Zealand. As part of this network, Aspen Germany has access to and works with some of the most talented, like-minded individuals around the world to address today's toughest questions.

## 4. Foster a Culture of Leadership Based on Enduring Values

The idea that good leaders are a key to a good society is a core part of Aspen's mission. Becoming an effective leader is an inside-out process. Leading a life congruent with one's personal beliefs and values, gives leaders the authenticity and credibility that their constituents desire. When leaders live their values, they project a greater sense of stability and confidence and are seen as consistent, trustworthy, and likely to be willingly followed. Through its values-based leadership events, Aspen Germany strengthens leaders from business, politics, and civil society for the good of their organizations and society.

## 5. Invest in Constructive Dialogue and Mutual Understanding

In times of diminishing public confidence in politics and the media, growing snap judgement, and polarization, opportunities to have a constructive and civil discourse about difficult issues are not easy to find. Aspen Germany enables respectful conversations amongst conflicting parties, brings together opposing views, and works toward finding common ground and mutually acceptable solutions – at home and abroad.

### For further information contact:

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*Eckart von Klaeden, Vice President and Head of External Affairs, Daimler AG;  
Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Aspen Institute Germany  
Alliance ou Mésalliance? Europe Waits for Macron & Merkel  
January 15, 2019*

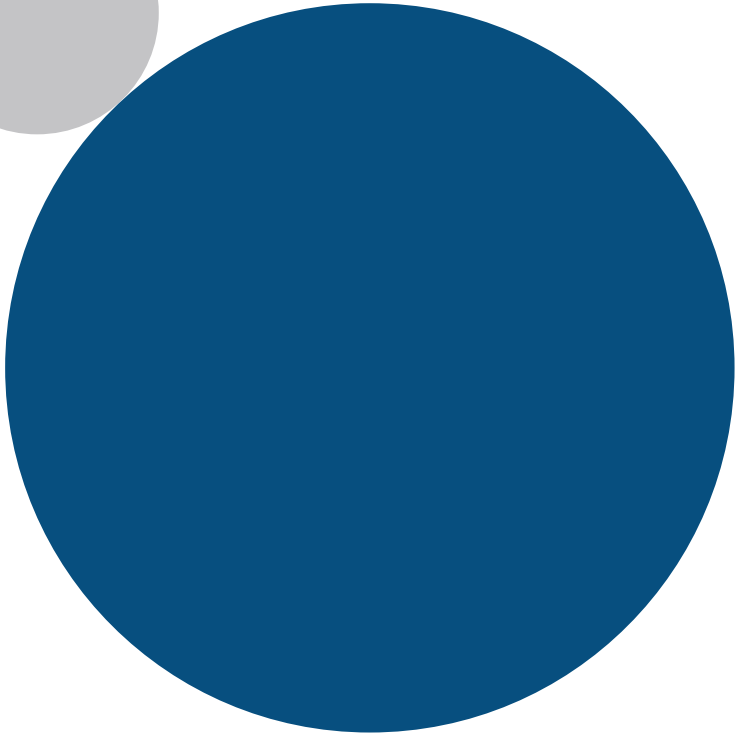
# FACTS AND FIGURES

2019 ● 2020 ●

Number of  
Participants 3.437



10.817



Number of  
Events

61

105



Number of  
Employees

18

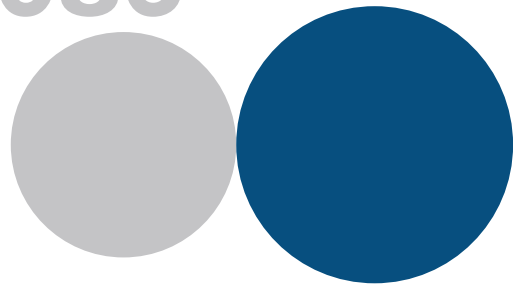
18



Number of  
**Followers**

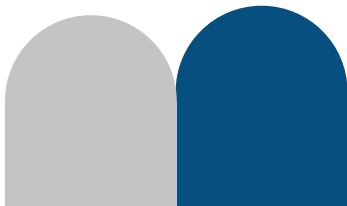
3.086

4.539



Number of  
**Members VdF**

135 148



Number of  
**Interviews**

16 24



Number of  
**Speakers**

311

538

101  
Female

234  
Female



2019 ●

2020 ●

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The Board of Trustees of the Aspen Institute Germany consists of a chairperson and members who are elected by the General Meeting of Members for a term of three years. It supervises the Management Board of the Aspen Institute Germany, elects Management Board members and the Executive Director, and advises on program planning. Many trustees not only support the Institute through their counsel but also through major donations.

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# ABOUT THE TRUSTEES



## **Prof. Dr. Volker Berghahn**

Prof. Dr. Volker Berghahn is the Seth Low Emeritus Professor of History at Columbia University. He received an M.A. from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and his PhD from the University of London. He completed his habilitation at the University of

Mannheim, but subsequently returned to the UK where he taught at the Universities of East Anglia and Warwick before moving to Brown University in 1988 and to Columbia in 1998. He has published widely on the field of modern German History, European-American economic and cultural relations, and historiography. His books include: *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914* (1973); *Modern Germany. Society, Economy and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge 1982); *Militarism. The History of an International Debate, 1861- 1979* (New York 1982); *The Americanization of West German Industry, 1945-1973* (New York 1986); *Otto A. Friedrich. Ein politischer Unternehmer* (Frankfurt 1993); *Imperial Germany, 1871-1914* (New York 1994); *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe* (Princeton 2001); *Sarajewo 1914. Der Untergang des alten Europa* (München 2001); *Der Erste Weltkrieg* (München 2003); *Europe in the Era of Two World Wars* (Princeton 2005); *Industriegesellschaft und Kulturtransfer* (Göttingen 2010); *American Big Business in Britain and Germany. A Comparative Study of Two 'Special Relationships' in the 20th Century* (Princeton 2014); *Journalists between Hitler and Adenauer. From Inner Emigration to the Moral Reconstruction of West Germany* (Princeton 2018).



## **Catherine von Fürstenberg-Dussmann**

Catherine von Fürstenberg-Dussmann was born on January 26, 1951, in St. Louis, Missouri. She holds a degree in Psychology and English Literature from the University of Denver, Colorado. Moreover, she is a trained actress who attended the Drama

Studio of the Royal Academy of London. Catherine worked as an actress in the Screen Actors Guild in the United States and also became self-employed by starting a business for interior design. In 1980, she married Peter Dussmann, Chairman of the Dussmann Group, and moved to Germany with him. Catherine was appointed Member of the Supervisory Board of Dussmann Group when her husband suffered a severe stroke after 30 years of marriage. In April 2009, she assumed the position as Chairperson of the Supervisory Board. Since 2011, Catherine has been Head of the Peter Dussmann Foundation's Board of Trustees.



**Elliot Gerson** | Elliot Gerson (Ex-Officio Trustee) is an Executive Vice President at the Aspen Institute (US), responsible for its Policy Programs, its Public Programs, and its relations with international partners. The Institute's more than 30 policy programs focus on both domestic and international issues.

They provide neutral venues, do nonpartisan analysis, foster candid dialogue among leaders, advocate new policy and promote best practices. The Institute's public programs – including the Aspen Ideas Festival and many smaller programs across the country – open the Institute's doors to a broader audience and further both its educational goals and its hopes that thought will lead to action. The Institute has international partners in Central Europe, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Romania, Ukraine, and Spain. Elliot also

administers the U.S. Rhodes Scholarships. He was a Rhodes scholar, a U.S. Supreme Court clerk, practiced law in government and privately, held executive positions in state and federal government and on a presidential campaign, and was president of startups in health care and education, and of two leading national insurance and health-care companies. He has served on many non-profit boards, especially in the arts.



**Werner Hein** | Werner Hein is Senior Counsel at the international law firm Mayer Brown LLP and lives in Washington, D.C. Now a German-American, he spent his formative years in Germany studying law in Berlin and Bonn. After a stint at the legal adviser's office at the Federal Economics

Ministry, Bonn, he studied US law at Columbia Law School, New York, and started his legal career in the U.S. as legal and trade adviser at the German Embassy in Washington, D.C. Switching to the private practice of law, he ultimately joined Mayer Brown LLP as partner where he has advised telecommunications and technology companies on corporate transactions mainly in the transatlantic marketplace. Outside his professional career, Werner started early on promoting the German-American relations by helping establish the Deutsch-Amerikanische Juristenvereinigung. Werner also set up the U.S. entity "Friends of Aspen Germany." He is the co-founder of the American Writers Museum, which, after eight years in the making, opened in Chicago last year as a national museum. Werner engages in initiatives at Georgetown University that promote intercultural dialogue.



#### **Dr. Roland Hoffmann-Theinert**

Dr. Roland Hoffmann-Theinert is the founding partner of GÖRG's Berlin Office and served as a long-standing member of the firm's management board and as Head of the firm's Corporate Service Line. GÖRG, with more than 300 lawyers, is one of the

leading independent law firms in Germany. Since 2013, he has shared his time between Berlin and Frankfurt where he headed the Frankfurt office of the firm until the end of 2017. Roland studied in Passau and Freiburg i.Br., where he obtained his doctorate degree in law. His doctoral dissertation was awarded the Georg F. Roessler Prize of the Federal Supreme Court Bar in Karlsruhe. Early on, the restructuring and sale of companies in financial difficulties was a central focus. He was a lead advisor in the 2009/2010 sales process of Karstadt Warenhaus GmbH and the European Quelle business and served as Chair of the Supervisory Board of Karstadt during the insolvency proceeding. He is one of the well-known corporate practitioners with specializations in the areas of complex corporate transactions and restructuring projects. Roland was admitted to start practicing as a notary in Berlin in 2000. He has been teaching as an Associate Lecturer at Berlin's Free University since 2000 and is the author of numerous academic publications. Since 2015, he has been a member of the Supervisory Board of gut.org AG, a non-profit company which runs the biggest online donation platform in Germany called "betterplace".



**August von Joest** | August von Joest looks back on over 45 years of experience in different industries, both national and international. August's career covers general trading and contracting, experience in the aviation and defense industry, the privatization of national industry, corporate finance, M&A,

and private equity. He now holds a number of non-executive positions and runs his family office taking care of a number of investments. August is married, has three children, and enjoys classic motorsport and golf.



**Eckart von Klaeden** | Eckart von Klaeden was born in Hanover, Germany, on November 18, 1965, and is a lawyer by training. He started his professional career as a spokesman of the CDU in Lower Saxony before he became a member of the German Federal Parliament in 1994. There he held a number of

posts: from 2000 to 2005 as parliamentary secretary, from 2005 to 2009 as foreign policy spokesman of the CDU/CSU faction in the German Federal Parliament, and from 2006 to 2010 as treasurer of the CDU. From 2004 until 2013, he was a member of the federal board of the CDU and since 2006 has been a member of the executive committee. In 2009, he assumed office as Minister of State of the Federal Chancellor. On November 1, 2013, Eckart joined Daimler AG as Vice President, External Affairs where he is responsible for external relations and Daimler's political dialogue worldwide. In this position, he reports directly to the Chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler AG, Ola Källenius.



**David Knowler** | David Knowler has been the General Manager of Cerberus Deutschland Beteiligungsberatung GmbH since 2003. Before starting his own international consulting company (1997-2002), David worked for Procter & Gamble for eleven years, where he started his professional

career in Germany in 1986. After nine years in Finance and Controlling positions, David spent two years managing the Procter & Gamble Germany Fine Fragrance business in Asia Pacific. He received two undergraduate degrees from the University of Massachusetts (Economics, German) in 1983, as well as being named a Commonwealth Scholar. David spent the academic year 1981/82 studying in Freiburg, Germany. He received his MBA from the American Graduate School of International Management (Thunderbird) in 1985. David is board member of the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany, Global Board Member of the Republicans Overseas, Vice President of the Steuben-Schurz Gesellschaft, member of the board of trustees of "The English Theatre" in Frankfurt, and serves on various supervisory and advisory boards in Germany. David, born in May of 1961, is an American Citizen and a resident of Germany. He is married and has three children.



**Dr. Friedrich Kuhn** | Based in Berlin, Friedrich Kuhn plays a key role in Egon Zehnder's Health and CEO practices. He developed the Egon Zehnder Transformational Leadership framework and now leads the global practice, which helps CEOs, top teams, and entire organizations become more

responsive, proactive, and competitive. Drawing on his deep experience as a health-care consultant, Friedrich also helps organizations recruit and integrate top external talent as well

as develop internal leadership. Before working for Egon Zehnder, Friedrich served on the board of Blueorbit E-Business AG, a business consulting and implementation provider with a strong focus on the health-care market. Before that, he was a consultant for McKinsey & Company in Munich, starting as an Associate and quickly advancing to the role of Engagement Manager. His projects included post-merger integrations, reshaping global value chains, and redesigning organizations after a fundamental market transformation. Friedrich earned an MA in mathematics from the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich as well as a PhD in philosophy. Music is important in his life: He plays cello in an orchestra of managers, and his wife is a professional harpist. Friedrich is very devoted to his two sons, who also have an artistic bend, and enjoys traveling and spending weekends with his family on a houseboat in the lakes around Berlin.



**Helmut Meier** | Helmut Meier, born on April 29, 1951, is a German citizen and lives in Krefeld (family residence) and in Vienna. He has been married for over 40 years and has three adult daughters and five grandchildren. After attaining his Abitur at the secondary school at Moltke-Platz in Krefeld, he

volunteered for two years in the Bundeswehr and reached the rank of lieutenant of artillery. He studied mathematics and computer science in Bonn and graduated with a master's degree. For his continued education, he chose INSEAD in Fontainebleau, where he successfully passed the international MBA (Master of Business Administration). Professionally, he worked for 30 years as a project planner (Siemens) and consultant (Booz Allen & Hamilton) in the telecommunications, media, and information industries worldwide. In 2009, he completed his active consulting career as a senior partner and member of Booz Allen & Hamilton's worldwide board of directors. He is very active philanthropically by founding an ecclesiastical foundation in his hometown and through

targeted donations in the education of talented young people (Donor INSEAD). He is involved in culture and literature in the German-speaking area (he is a Patron and Donor of the Honorary Konzerthaus-Gesellschaft, the Alternativer Büchner Literaturpreis, Maecenas winner Vienna). He is a member of CONVOCO and has been a board member of Aspen Germany for over a decade. He has been dedicated to the Aspen idea since the mid-1990s through his commitment to Aspen's parent organization in the United States.



**Fred Reinke** | Fred W. Reinke, a partner in Dentons' Washington, D.C. office, is the head of insurance litigation for the firm's Global Litigation and Dispute Resolution practice. Fred handles complex international commercial and class action litigation, particularly on behalf of major European

insurance/reinsurance companies and financial institutions. He counsels clients on insurance and reinsurance coverage disputes, governmental and internal corporate investigations, class action defense, banking and other financial transaction-related litigation, civil antitrust litigation, personal jurisdiction defense and appellate matters. He has also conducted numerous internal corporate investigations and guided directors of public and private companies on corporate governance matters and investigations involving various governmental entities, including the SEC, the Department of Justice, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Commerce. Fred has extensive experience in advising and representing German and French companies and banks on a wide array of legal issues in the United States. He was a Robert Bosch Fellow in Germany and is a member of the American Council on Germany, a Young Leader at the American Council on Germany/Atlantik Brücke, and is on the Board of Trustees of the American Institute for Contemporary Germany Studies (AICGS). He received his B.A. from St. Olaf College (MN) and his J.D. from Columbia University

(NY). Fred also studied as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Hamburg and is fluent in German.



**Cecilie Rohwedder** | Cecilie Rohwedder is a contributor to the Wall Street Journal, based in Washington, D.C. She writes for various parts of the publication, including Life & Arts, Careers, Weekend and Mansion. A native of Germany, she spent nearly two decades as a Journal reporter in

Europe, where she was based in Brussels, Bonn, Berlin, and London and covered areas ranging from European politics to media, retail and fashion industries. Cecilie is a graduate of Georgetown University and holds a master's degree from Columbia. She has been a Fulbright Foundation Scholar and Knight Wallace Journalism Fellow at the University of Michigan. She is on the Board of Visitors at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, an active member of Atlantik-Brücke, a non-profit group furthering transatlantic relations, and on the Board of American Secondary Schools for International Students and Teachers (ASSIST), a youth exchange organization. Cecilie also serves in various capacities at the National Cathedral School in Washington. In her free time, she likes to read, play tennis or travel the world with her husband and three daughters.



**Dr. Kurt Schwarz** | Dr. Kurt Schwarz was born on June 19, 1951, near Düsseldorf and now lives in Munich and Berlin. After finishing high school in Düsseldorf, he studied medicine and law at the University of Heidelberg and obtained his MD degree in 1979. After his doctoral thesis in Experimental Pharmacology,

he joined the Department of Internal Medicine of the University Hospital in Heidelberg. In 1982, he was awarded a visiting fellowship by the German Research Foundation at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. In 1986, he joined Merck & Co. (New Jersey) and returned to Germany to work for the German subsidiary in Product Management and Medical Affairs. In 1990, Kurt founded his investment company Leifina GmbH in Munich and joined the Supervisory Board of Schwarz Pharma AG, representing the Schwarz family as a major shareholder. He holds several board seats and is actively involved in several cultural, philanthropic, and political institutions.



**Frank Sportolari** | Frank Sportolari, a native of Chicago, held a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Illinois. Before joining UPS in 1986, he worked 6 years as a logistics manager for the US Department of Defense in Germany. Frank joined UPS in Munich, Germany, in 1986 and held

various positions of increasing responsibility within the Finance and Accounting function, including working as a Controller in Munich, Cologne, and Neuss for UPS in Germany before moving to Madrid in 1996 where he was the Controller for UPS Spain & Portugal. This was followed by Controller assignments at UPS Italy and in the UPS European Coordination Center in Brussels, where Frank coordinated the activities of the UPS Controllers across the Europe Region. He has had

extensive experience in Italy where he held the position of controller from 1998 to 1999 and of managing director from 2002 to 2004. From 2004 to 2007, he took on the role of Vice President of European Strategy, based in Brussels, Belgium, where he was responsible for developing strategies for the EMEA markets. In 2007, Frank returned to Italy as managing director, a position which he held until September 2011. During this time, he served as a board member of the American Chamber of Commerce in Italy. In September of 2011, Frank was appointed as President of UPS Germany. He is was the President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany, vice chairman of the CDU Business Council International Commission and on the boards of several industry and charitable organizations. Frank lived in Düsseldorf with his wife and 4 of his 6 children. He held American and Italian citizenship. Frank passed away on July 12, 2021.



**Till Staffeldt** | Till Staffeldt was Global COO Regulation, Compliance und Anti-Financial Crime (CRegO) and Vice Chair of the Regulation, Compliance und Anti-Financial Crime Executive Committee at Deutsche Bank. Till started his career at Deutsche Bank in 1997 after having completed his

studies in Law at the Universities of Berlin, Heidelberg, Konstanz, and London. Following several roles in Frankfurt, Till was appointed as Regional Head of Corporate Development in 2006. Two years later, he became Global Head of Business Management & Development Private and Business Clients (PBC). In 2009, he took over the responsibility as Head of PBC in Berlin. Till was appointed as Head of Private Banking Germany in 2011. In 2013, he became PBC's Global Head of HR and PBC's Global Head of CAO. Three years later, he was appointed as Head of HR for Regulation, Compliance und Anti-Financial Crime and Legal.



### **Dr. h.c. Karsten D. Voigt**

Dr. h.c. Karsten D. Voigt was the Coordinator of German-North American Cooperation at the German Federal Foreign Office from 1999 to 2009. He majored in history and in German and Scandinavian studies at the universities of Hamburg,

Copenhagen, and Frankfurt. Kartsen became actively engaged in politics at an early age. He accompanied witnesses during the Auschwitz trial proceedings and took part in Anti-Vietnam war demonstrations. From 1969 until 1973, he served as Chairman of the German Young Socialists Organization. From 1984 until 1995, he was a member of the Executive Committee of the German Social Democratic Party and from 1985 to 1994, member of the Executive Committee of the Party of European Socialists. From 1976 to 1998, he served as a Member of the German Parliament (Bundestag) for the Social Democrats (SPD). From 1977 to 1998, he also served as a Member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, of which he was President between 1994 and 1996. Karsten's expertise is in the fields of foreign policy and security. From 1983 to 1998, he was foreign policy spokesman of the SPD parliamentary group. He also serves on the Steering Committee of the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP).

# MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Management Board (Vorstand) of the Aspen Institute Germany consists of a chairperson and up to five additional members who are elected by the Board of Trustees for a term of three years. The Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany is chair(woman) and member of the Management Board. The Management Board represents the Institute legally and advises the Executive Director on legal matters, fundraising, the program, finance and accounting as well as strategic communication.



**Rüdiger Lentz** | Rüdiger Lentz was the Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany until December 2020. From 2009 until 2013, he served as the Executive Director of the German-American Heritage Foundation and Museum in Washington, D.C. Prior to that, he worked as a TV correspondent and

magazine journalist for Der Spiegel, ARD Television, Rias Berlin, and Deutsche Welle for over three decades. During his time as Bureau Chief for Deutsche Welle in Washington, D.C., he was a Visiting Lecturer at Harvard University, the School of Foreign Service in Washington, and a regular guest on CNN and C-Span. Rüdiger has been a long-time member of the Atlantik-Brücke and a founding member of the German American Business Council (GABC) in Washington, D.C.



**Britt S. Eckelmann** | Britt S. Eckelmann is managing shareholder of Silver Construction Engineering in Berlin. After her studies in architecture at the Technical University Berlin, University of Brighton, and University of Manitoba, she focused her architectural practice cpm Architekten on new work design

and listed buildings. Since completing her Executive MBA at

ESCP in Paris in 2008, she has been active in investment management in the real estate sector including the innovative workflow berlin group. Britt serves on the advisory board of the chair for entrepreneurship and innovation at the Technical University Berlin. Since 2018 she has been a member of the advisory board of the auditing company Domus AG. She became a member of the Management Board of the Aspen Institute Germany in 2017 and was a member of the Management Board of the Friends of the Aspen Institute from 2010 until 2018.



**Prof. Dr. Gunther Hellmann**

Prof. Dr. Gunther Hellmann specializes in international relations, German foreign policy, European and transatlantic security relations, and the theory of international relations. Before assuming his position at the Goethe University in 1999, Gunther taught

at the Free University of Berlin and Darmstadt University of Technology. Between 2007 and 2019 he was a Principal Investigator in Goethe University's Center of Excellence "Normative Orders." From 2008 to 2009, he held the Steven Muller Chair in German Studies at the SAIS Bologna Center of Johns Hopkins University. In 2012, he was the Harris Distinguished Visiting Professor at Dartmouth College, Hanover. From 2012 to 2013, he was Senior Fellow at the Transatlantic Academy, GMF, Washington, D.C. Between 2014 and 2020, he also served as Executive Secretary, resp. President of the World International Studies Committee.



**Peter Lennartz** | Peter Lennartz was a Partner with Ernst & Young. He started his career in 1985 with EY in Hamburg and transferred to EY Boston from 1999 to 2002 to serve German clients in the U.S. in his role as the German Audit Desk Partner. Peter joined EY Berlin in 2002 and until recently headed EY's

assurance practice in Berlin and EY's start-up initiative in Berlin as well as in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. As business coach, Peter currently serves national and international clients in the start-up, technology as well as healthcare sector and is an author, speaker, and moderator in the field of start-ups.



**Dr. Stormy-Annika Mildner** | In January 2014, Dr. Stormy-Annika Mildner (M.Sc.) became head of the department "Foreign Economic Policy" at the Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie (BDI), Federation of German Industries. From 2016 to 2017 she was B20 Sherpa, responsible for the G20

Outreach process with the Business Community of the German G20. Until December 2013, she was a member of the Executive Board of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), a policy-oriented think-tank based in Berlin. Her fields of interest include international trade and finance as well as commodity markets. Before joining the SWP, she worked for the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), where she headed the program "Globalization and the World Economy" (2000-2002). From 2005 to 2006, Stormy was a lecturer at the John F. Kennedy Institute of the Free University of Berlin. In spring 2010, she was a visiting fellow at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies in Washington, where she is still a non-resident Senior Fellow. In fall 2011, she was a visiting fellow at the German Marshall Fund's Transatlantic Academy in Washington. Stormy

conducted her Bachelor studies in economics and North American studies at the Free University of Berlin and earned a Master of Science in international political economy from the London School of Economics (2000). She wrote her PhD thesis at the Free University of Berlin on the economic and political rationale of export credit finance in the United States. During her PhD studies, she attended the Yale Center for International and Area Studies (YCIAS) of Yale University (2002-2003).



**Ulrich Plett** | Ulrich Plett runs his own business as auditor and consultant at UPW7 GmbH Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft, Berlin. He is a board member of Axel Springer SE, of KIRON Open Higher Education gGmbH, and of other NGOs. Until summer 2015, he was Office Managing Partner of

Ernst & Young Berlin. He studied business administration in Münster and Munich and started his career in 1980 in the Chicago Office of Arthur Andersen. After further years in the AA Offices in Hamburg and Barcelona, he transferred back to Germany in 1993 to build up the EY Office in Berlin. His clients included media & entertainment, internet, technology and real estate companies.

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# “VEREIN DER FREUNDE”

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The “Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts e.V.” (Association of Friends of the Aspen Institute) is a German non-profit organization founded in 1989. It counts among its founders and members representatives from politics, business, academia, diplomacy, and arts and culture. Their support is crucial for the Institute and Aspen Germany’s efforts to fulfill its mission and to conduct its programs independently. Membership is open to anyone who shares Aspen Germany’s vision and supports the work of the Institute through an annual membership fee. Membership fees are tax-deductible as permitted under German and EU law.

Membership in the “Verein der Freunde” comes with a range of exclusive benefits. Members enjoy access to Public Program events and special occasions such as the Institute’s annual summer party, the Berlin Transatlantic Forum, the Aspen Berlin AI Conference and the public portion of Aspen’s Southeast Europe Foreign Ministers’ conferences. Public Program events take place in an exclusive, familiar atmosphere that allows for both dialogue and networking. All members receive the Institute’s newsletter “Aspen Inside” periodically, in which new members are introduced, upcoming events are announced, and past events reviewed. Aspen Germany publications, such as the annual report and official conference papers, can be requested from the Institute for free.



*Dr. Roland Hoffmann-Theinert, Lawyer, Notary and Partner, GÖRG Partnerschaft  
von Rechtsanwälten mbB; Chairman of the "Verein der Freunde";  
Member of the Board of Trustees, Aspen Institute Germany  
Summer Party 2019 of the Aspen Institute Germany and the "Verein der Freunde"  
June 05, 2019*

# MANAGEMENT BOARD “VEREIN DER FREUNDE”

The Management Board of the “Verein der Freunde” consists of a chair, a deputy chair, a treasurer, and three additional members, who are elected by the General Assembly of Members for a term of three years. They are responsible for winning and retaining members in the “Verein der Freunde.” Since 2011, the Management Board of the “Verein der Freunde” and the Management Board of the Aspen Institute Germany have met in joint session.



**Dr. Roland Hoffmann-Theinert** | Dr. Roland Hoffmann-Theinert is the founding partner of GÖRG’s Berlin Office and served as a long-standing member of the firm’s management board and as Head of the firm’s Corporate Service Line. GÖRG, with more than 300 lawyers, is one of the

leading independent law firms in Germany. Since 2013, he has shared his time between Berlin and Frankfurt where he headed the Frankfurt office of the firm until the end of 2017. Roland studied in Passau and Freiburg i.Br., where he obtained his doctorate degree in law. His doctoral dissertation was awarded the Georg F. Roessler Prize of the Federal Supreme Court Bar in Karlsruhe. Early on, the restructuring and sale of companies in financial difficulties was a central focus. He was a lead advisor in the 2009/2010 sales process of Karstadt Warenhaus GmbH and the European Quelle business and served as Chair of the Supervisory Board of Karstadt during the insolvency proceeding. He is one of the well-known corporate practitioners with specializations in the areas of complex corporate transactions and restructuring projects. Roland was admitted to start practicing as a notary in Berlin in 2000. He has been teaching as an Associate Lecturer at Berlin’s Free University since 2000 and is the author of numerous academic publications. Since 2015, he has been a member of the Supervisory Board of gut.org AG, a non-profit company which runs the biggest online donation platform in Germany called “betterplace”.



**Jan Losemann** | Jan Losemann is founder and CEO of Losemann Legal Tax, a firm providing business process outsourcing and controlling for law, tax/finance, and HR. He is trusted advisor and outsourced in-house counsel for a number of medium sized international enterprises. Jan has

a generalist, integral approach; his firm embraces and advises regarding the use of legal technology, digital accounting, and other innovative solutions. As a self-employed lawyer since 2001, he has served a wide range of industries including hospitality, medical, technology, food, construction, and real estate. He is furthermore member of several German-Spanish organizations and has a specific focus on Spanish-speaking countries.



**Ulrich Misgeld** | Ulrich Misgeld is a qualified banker and business economist. In 1967, he started his apprentice training at Deutsche Bank, studied parallel to his work and worked, until he left the company in 1992, for Deutsche Bank in corporate banking, most recently as manager for the Berlin

and Brandenburg branch. In 1992, he became a member of the board of directors of the Berliner Volksbank. At the beginning of 2000, Ulrich left the banking world and was appointed as a member of the board for Finances, IT, and HR at Selux AG, a leading company of the lighting industry with plants in Germany, France, and the U.S. After 15 years in this position and various voluntary activities in industrial associations and the Berlin Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK), he went into planned retirement at the age of 65 in September 2015. Today, he currently has Executive Board responsibilities in charities, e.g., he has been member of the board of the APRIL Stiftung since 2010 and takes on

supervisory board work. Since October 2015, he has been council member at the Below Tippmann & Compagnie Personalberatung GmbH. Ulrich is an enthusiastic marathon runner and has successfully participated in over 50 runs.

**Eva Katharina Deininger**

Eva Katharina Deininger works as an independent management consultant. She has specialized in strategic development, digital transformation, finance, and performance management. In current consulting mandates, she advises companies on digital

transformation, platform economy and big data. After studying International Business Administration at ESB Reutlingen and Ecole Supérieure de Commerce Reims in France, Eva started her professional career in the Corporate Finance and Strategy practice at Arthur D. Little. She continued at Axel Springer SE, where she held various leading positions, most recently as Managing Director of several group companies and shareholder representative of national and international affiliated companies. Eva participated in Aspen Germany's Leadership Seminar "Philosophy and Practice" in 2011 and has been a member of the "Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts" since then. She believes in transforming organizations by value-based leadership and the activation of resources through appreciation and trust. In her spare time, she plays the violin and piano, is interested in arts and architecture, and enjoys sailing.

**Arno Heuermann** | Arno

Heuermann is a Founder and the Managing Director of Catenion, a life science management consultancy firm focused on the bio-pharma industry worldwide. While studying for his degrees, Arno founded a technical engineering office in 1994. He

continued to follow the entrepreneurial path in 1998 by founding Biopsytec, a DNA diagnostics company focused on agriculture, heading the company for more than five years. In 1999, he co-founded Epigenomics AG, a DAX listed biotech company, for which he later continued to act as an advisor and member of the firm's supervisory board. Since then, Arno has been involved in several other projects like the Phorms schools, several pharma and biotech start-ups, and others.

**Helmut Kranzmaier** | Helmut

Kranzmaier is an Entrepreneur, Advisor, and the Managing Partner of HELUMA Ventures. He is a senior executive with over 20 years of experience in banking, the professional service industry, and company building. Helmut has held senior positions at Deutsche Bank,

KekstCNC, and has co-founded several start-ups. He studied business administration and holds an EMBA from the City University London. He is a CIRO through the German Investor Relations Society.





*Dr. Heinz Dürr, Chairman of the Supervisory Board, Heinz and Heide Dürr Foundation;  
Member of the "Verein der Freunde"  
Conference on Artificial Intelligence – "Humanity Defined: Politics and Ethics in the AI Age"  
March 28-29, 2019*

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# FRIENDS OF ASPEN GERMANY

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The Friends of Aspen Germany are located in Washington, D.C., and were founded in 2014 by enthusiastic American supporters of Aspen Germany together with the pro bono support of Mayer Brown LLP. The friends help the Institute with their advice and support on the Institute's U.S. programs and fundraising activities.

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*Cecilie Rohwedder, Contributor, Wall Street Journal;  
Member of the Board of Trustees, Aspen Institute Germany  
Aspen Gala 2019  
November 06, 2019*

# FINANCE OVERVIEW

## Financial Key Figures (in TEUR)

<b>Income</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Governmental Grants	648	537
Corporations and Foundations	404	103
Individuals	484	510
<b>Expenses</b>		
Personnel Expenses without project expenses	487	404
Operational Expenses	164	179
Project Expenses*	905	586
*thereof direct personnel	408	460
<b>* Project Expenses</b> (excluding personnel) thereof	497	126
<b>Digital Agenda</b>	86	34
Digital Dishes, Workshops, Conferences		
<b>Leadership Program</b>	25	27
Leadership Seminars, Alumni Events		
Young European Leaders Seminar		
<b>Policy Program</b>	209	27
Bundestag and Congress Staffers Exchange Program		
Western Balkans Conferences, Background Briefings		
Transatlantic Conference		
<b>Public Program</b>	177	38
PP-Lectures, -Interviews, -Discussions		
Annual Gala, Brown Bag Lunches		
Trilateral Dialogue		
Road to Election Night and Beyond		



*Ulrich Misgeld, Member of the Advisory Board, Below Tippmann & Compagnie  
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Exclusive Dinner with Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer  
March 27, 2019*

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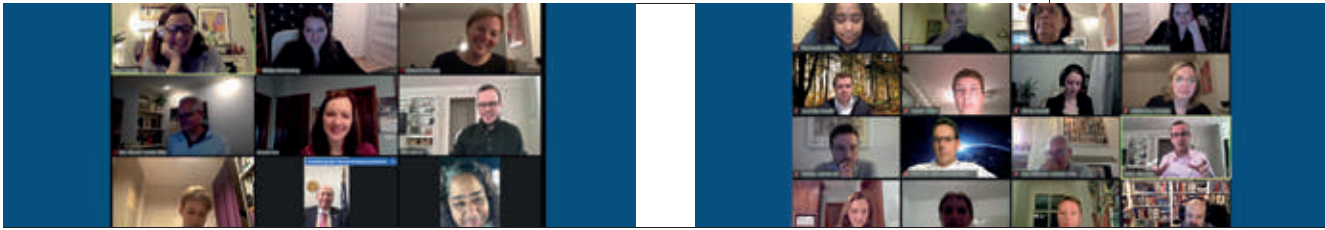
*Dr. Madeleine Albright, former U.S. Secretary of State and U.S. Ambassador to the UN  
Berlin Transatlantic Forum 2019  
November 06, 2019*

# TRANSATLANTIC PROGRAM



## America's Choice: Transition with Obstacles, December 10, 2020

President Donald Trump continues to cast doubt on the election results, further fuelling conspiracy theories despite the fact that his lawyers have suffered defeat after defeat in the courts with their numerous lawsuits. What does Trump hope for at this point? In the meantime, Joe Biden's preparations to take office on January 20, 2021, are under way despite the disruptive efforts of his predecessor. How is he preparing for his presidency during the transition period? What is at the top of his agenda and will Biden keep his promise to reflect America's diversity in his cabinet? The America's Choice hosts David Deißner and Rüdiger Lentz are joined by **Dr. Anna Sauerbrey**, then Member of the Editorial Board and Head of Opinion Department at Tagesspiegel, and **Dr. David Sirakov**, Director of the Atlantic Academy Rheinland-Pfalz, to discuss these and other questions on the transition.

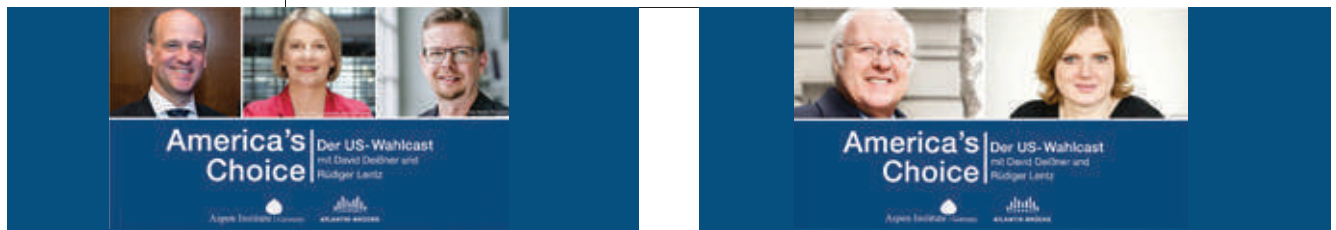


### Virtual Road to Laboratories of Democracy: Leadership in Times of Crisis, December 8, 2020

On December 8, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted the fifth event of its series “Virtual Road to the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative” to discuss leadership in times of crisis. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, our world faces a time of crisis unparalleled in most of our lifetimes. In times of global crisis, good leadership is essential in finding an adequate response, and society looks to its leaders for guidance. In that sense, the current COVID-19 situation is a true test of leadership. In a conversation with the experienced Aspen Leadership Seminar moderator **Ruth Girardet**, the German and American state legislators discussed what constitutes good crisis leadership. What are the attributes of good crisis leadership and how can they be assessed? What challenges do leaders face during the current global health crisis and other situations? What lessons can be learned through it? How can leaders find the right balance between the constitutional right to life and physical integrity as an absolute priority and other fundamental rights, such as personal and occupational freedom? How can short-term emergency measures be weighed against the long-term consequences of such decisions?

### Virtual Road to Laboratories of Democracy: The Role of Tech in the COVID-19 Response, November 20, 2020

On November 20, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted the fourth event of its series “Virtual Road to the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative” to discuss the role of tech in the COVID-19 response. Breakout sessions addressed opportunities for technological innovation in combating the health crisis, cybersecurity threats, and privacy concerns amid COVID-19. How can technological innovations like AI, 3D printing, and big data support the COVID-19 response and recovery efforts? How has telemedicine evolved during the pandemic and will it permanently alter how medical practitioners provide care to patients? How are cybercriminals taking advantage of the current health crisis and how are governments, states, and the industry dealing with increased cyber vulnerabilities and risks? How can governments, companies, and users guarantee that contact tracing apps, symptom monitoring technology, and other technologies are safeguarding hard-won data protections? For this webinar, participants were joined by three experts from Baden-Württemberg and California, the featured states in this exchange round. Following opening remarks by **Steffen Braun**, Head of Urban Systems Engineering at the Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering in Stuttgart; **Peter Liebert**, Chief Information Security Officer at Cerner Government Services and Commander for California State Guard Cyber Operations; and **Maria Wilhelm**, Head of the Europe Department, State Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information in Baden-Württemberg, the group identified best practices in Germany and the United States and discussed how these efforts can be advanced by state laws and policies.

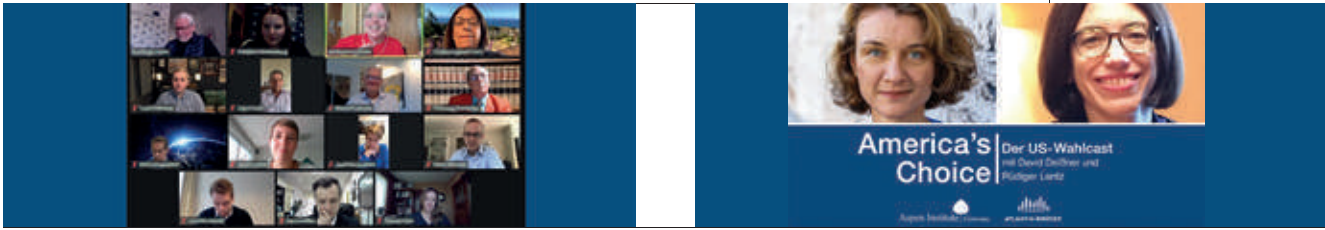


### **America's Choice: A Historic Election, November 10, 2020**

America has elected a new president. The U.S. election will not only shape the social climate and political course of the United States for the coming years, but also America's role in the world. The greatest task facing President-elect Joe Biden will be to reunite a divided nation. Even though election day is behind us, many challenges remain. This applies both to the social tensions within the United States and to questions surrounding international cooperation. So, what happens next? What will be the domestic priorities for a Biden administration? And what will be the impact on U.S. global leadership and the future of transatlantic relations? The America's Choice hosts **David Deißner** and **Rüdiger Lentz** discuss these and other questions with **Christiane Meier**, ARD Correspondent in New York; **Steven Sokol**, President of the American Council on Germany; and **Prof. Dr. Christian Lammert**, Professor at the John F. Kennedy Institute.

### **America's Choice: Blue, Red, Purple – The Role of Swing States in the Outcome of the U.S. Elections, October 21, 2020**

Just two weeks before the presidential election, the campaigns of President Trump and his challenger Joe Biden are focusing on the swing states that will decide the race to the White House. While some states are traditionally blue or red states that vote consistently for the Democrat or Republican party, the swing states are the real battlegrounds in presidential elections. What are the important swing states in 2020 and why? How has the political landscape of swing states developed over recent years? What do the current polls suggest and which voter groups will be decisive in these states? **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, are joined by **Rieke Havertz**, U.S. correspondent at ZEIT Online, and **Dr. Jackson Janes**, President Emeritus at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies and Senior Fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, to discuss these questions surrounding the 2020 U.S. election.

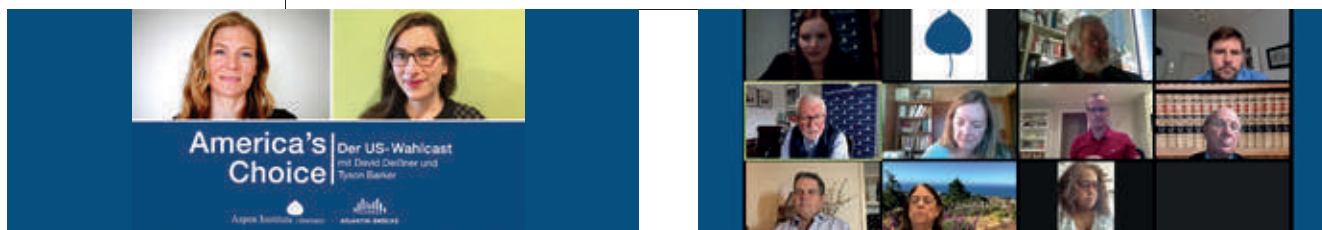


### **Virtual Road to Laboratories of Democracy: German and American Subnational Governance and COVID-19, October 2, 2020**

On October 2, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted the third event of its series “Virtual Road to the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative.” During the COVID-19 pandemic, German and American subnational governments are at the frontline of tackling the virus and its economic and social impact. They have a key role to play in tracking and testing, supplying personal protective equipment, implementing and lifting lockdown measures, and delivering long-term recovery. At the same time, a successful response to the virus also depends on a coordinated effort on all levels of government and among all government branches. This webinar addressed how subnational governments and state legislators in particular shape the COVID-19 response in the United States and Germany. What is the role of U.S. states and German Länder in the COVID-19 crisis? How are responsibilities and powers with regard to addressing the pandemic divided among the state and federal level? How have state legislatures been involved? How have U.S. states and German Länder responded to the pandemic and what are some best practices on state level? How are the different levels of government (local, state, federal level) and neighboring states working together to tackle the virus? How has partisanship played a role? Has the federal system facilitated or complicated the COVID-19 response?

### **America’s Choice: Playing Hardball – The First 2020 Presidential Debate, September 30, 2020**

Presidential debates are major events in the U.S. election campaign. With only a few weeks left before the elections, the debates give candidates the opportunity to position themselves on the core topics, outline their presidential agenda, and dissociate themselves from their opponent. The first debate between Donald Trump and Joe Biden on September 29, 2020, was a frantic verbal exchange that mostly lacked a civilized discourse on the core issues in this year’s election. How did Donald Trump and Joe Biden perform? What arguments did they bring forward? And what effect will this debate have on the U.S. election and undecided voters? In a conversation with **David Deißner** and **Rüdiger Lentz**, **Prof. Lora Anne Viola**, Professor at the John F. Kennedy Institute in Berlin, and **Dr. Daniela Schwarzer**, then Director of the German Council on Foreign Relations, share their assessments on the first debate in the America’s Choice podcast.

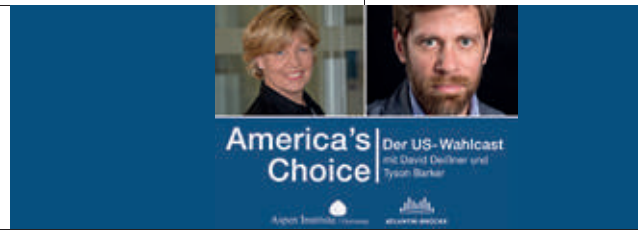
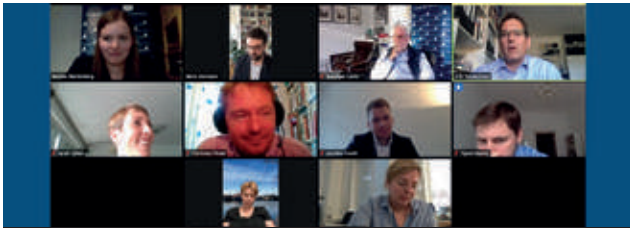


### **America's Choice: Mysterious Powers, Viral Delusion, and Social Media, September 16, 2020**

The QAnon conspiracy theories are a mixture of substitute religion, right-wing pseudo- mysticism, social event, and fake news entertainment. The movement is gaining more and more followers around the world, not only in the United States. How can this phenomenon be explained and how dangerous is it for democracy? How do tech companies regulate content associated with such conspiracy theories on their social media platforms? And what role do social media platforms play in the 2020 election? America's Choice hosts **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, and **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, are joined by **Marie-Astrid Langer**, Silicon Valley correspondent at Neue Zürcher Zeitung, and **Julia Friedlander**, C. Boyden Gray Senior Fellow and Deputy Director of the GeoEconomics Center at the Atlantic Council, to discuss these and other questions.

### **Virtual Road to Laboratories of Democracy: Germany 101 – Exploring Subnational Governance in Germany, September 10, 2020**

On September 10, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted the second event of its series “Virtual Road to the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative.” The webinar series brings together German and American state legislators as part of the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative. The second webinar addressed governance in Germany at the federal, state, and local level. It gave all American participants the opportunity to learn more about the German government system as well as the distribution of power and responsibilities. What are the origins of federalism in Germany and how has it developed until today? How are federal, state and local governments structured? What are the roles and responsibilities of federal, state and local governments and their respective government branches? How does the Grundgesetz (the German Constitution) allocate power among the Länder and national government? What are the concurrent powers and how are they exercised in the federal system? How do all three levels of government work together? Which control mechanisms exist? What does the German party system look like? How are coalitions formed? What are political differences between regions – North, South, East, and West? How do these compare with the situation in the United States?



### **Virtual Road to Laboratories of Democracy: America 101 – Exploring Subnational Governance in the United States, September 9, 2020**

On September 9, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted the first event of its series “Virtual Road to the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative.” The webinar series brings together German and American state legislators as part of the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative. The first session addressed governance in the United States at the federal, state and local level. It gave all German participants the opportunity to learn more about the U.S. government system as well as the distribution of power and responsibilities. What are the origins of federalism in the United States and how has it developed until today? How are federal, state and local governments structured? What are the roles and responsibilities of federal, state and local governments and their respective government branches? How do the U.S. Constitution and state constitutions allocate power among the state and national governments? What are the concurrent powers and how are they exercised in the federal system? How do all three levels of government work together? Which control mechanisms exist? How are parties as institutions? What are the similarities and differences in how elections are conducted, direct elections, districting and campaign finance? What geographical elements are present in the U.S. election system?

### **America's Choice: Make America Great Again, Again – The Republican National Convention, August 28, 2020**

The Republican National Convention was held under the motto “Make America Great Again, Again.” President Donald Trump and the invited speakers – many of them members of the Trump family – campaigned for Trump’s reelection, painting a dire picture of a United States under Joe Biden. Who were the key speakers and what topics did they talk about? What does this say about the Republican Party? And did the convention succeed in swaying voters? **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, and **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, as well as podcast guests **Andrea Römmele**, Professor of Communication in Politics and Civil Society and Dean of Executive Education at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, and **Matthew Karnitschnig**, Chief Europe Correspondent at Politico’s Berlin office, discuss the key messages of the convention, the Republicans’ strategy, and what this means for the presidential election.

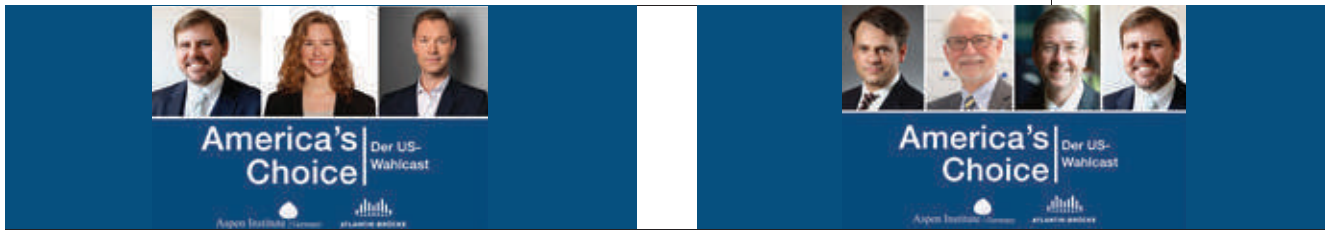


### **America's Choice: Convention without a Live Audience – The Virtual Democratic National Convention, August 21, 2020**

This year the Democrats will have to do without speeches in front of a cheering audience and a big balloon drop. For the first time in history, the nominating convention takes place virtually. But can virtual and recorded speeches inspire viewers and help mobilize voters? How did speakers address the triple crisis of a pandemic, an economic recession, and social protests throughout the country? What were the highlights and core messages of the Democratic National Convention (DNC)? **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, and **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, are joined by **Sarah Wagner**, Education Manager at the Atlantic Academy, and **Dr. Danyal Bayaz**, then Member of the Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens), to discuss all things DNC.

### **America's Choice: Harris, Housewives, and the American Dream, August 13, 2020**

Joe Biden's search for a running mate has been underway for several months, prompting speculations about who might be the leading contender. Now Biden has announced Senator Kamala Harris as his running mate. What does the 55-year-old politician from California stand for? How will Biden's decision affect his campaign and the election? In this episode we also look at America's suburbs. How have the suburbs changed over the past decades? Why are they relevant to the election campaigns? **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, talks to **Kerstin Kohlenberg**, U.S. correspondent at the weekly newspaper DIE ZEIT, to discuss both the historic Biden-Harris ticket as well as the role of suburbs in the 2020 election.



### America's Choice: Strategy and Tactics – A Look at the Trump and Biden Campaign, July 22, 2020

There are just over 100 days left until the U.S. elections on November 3. The campaign teams behind President Donald Trump and Joe Biden are working on the best strategies to reach the public in times of COVID-19 and win over undecided voters. What are the strategies of the Trump and Biden campaigns and how effective are they? What aspects and topics are emphasized in the election campaigns? What communication channels do President Trump and Joe Biden use to reach the American public? What influence does the pandemic have on the two candidates' communication strategies? How are the campaigns financed? In a conversation with **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, **Constance Chucholowski**, political communications consultant and then director at the Berlin office of 365 Sherpas – Corporate Affairs & Policy Advice, and **Julius van de Laar**, political strategist, communications consultant and expert in digital media, address these and other questions in the newest episode of America's Choice.

### America's Choice: Trouble Behind, Trouble Ahead? The U.S. Presidential Election and Transatlantic Relations, July 8, 2020

American foreign policy is not a preeminent issue in the U.S. presidential election. But the next U.S. president's foreign policy priorities and stance on international cooperation will shape world affairs and redefine relations to allies and rivals alike. This is particularly true for the European Union as rifts between Europe and the United States have become deeper during the Trump presidency. How would four more years of "America First" affect the transatlantic partnership? What is the foreign policy agenda of the Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden? Will any conflicts of interest between Europe and the United States outlast the Trump presidency? **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, and **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, talk with **Daniel S. Hamilton**, Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation Distinguished Fellow and Director of the Global Europe Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Senior Fellow at Johns Hopkins University SAIS, and **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director at Aspen Germany, to address these questions on the future of the transatlantic partnership.

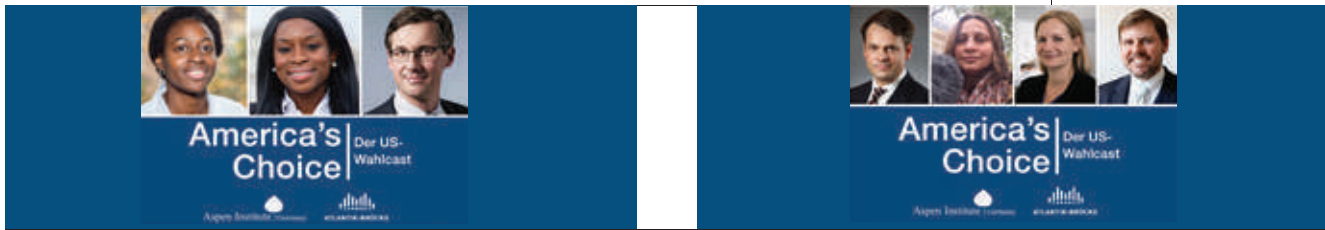


### **America's Choice: What Do Women Want? The Female Vote in the U.S. Elections, June 24, 2020**

Fifty-one percent of the people in the United States are women. How will they influence the November election results? What issues are particularly important to women? Do the two genders differ in their preferences at the ballot box with regard to party affiliation? And what are President Trump and Joe Biden, the presumptive Democratic presidential candidate, doing to win over female voters? Podcast guest **Annett Meiritz**, U.S. correspondent at Handelsblatt, discusses all questions around the female vote in the U.S. elections with **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke.

### **Virtual Discussion: A Conversation on Trump's Washington, June 11, 2020**

On June 11, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a virtual book presentation and discussion entitled "A Conversation on Trump's Washington" with **Susan B. Glasser**, staff writer at The New Yorker and author of the weekly column "Letter from Trump's Washington." Her column has become essential reading on the Trump White House. A selection of the best articles has been published as a German-language book by Weltkiosk under the title "Briefe aus Trumps Washington" in May 2020. In a conversation with **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, Susan Glasser shared her views on the U.S. administration, the changing political culture in Washington and the United States in the world. Among the topics discussed were the current protests against racism and police brutality, Trump's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, the upcoming presidential election and Trump's announcement of the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Germany.

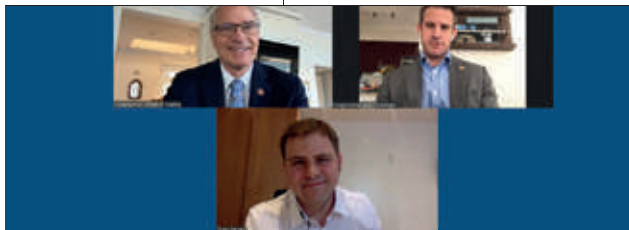


### **America's Choice: America in Turmoil – Protests against Racism and Police Brutality in the United States, June 10, 2020**

The United States are in turmoil following the fatal arrest of the African-American George Floyd. Floyd's death sparked nationwide outcry and massive protests against racial injustice and police brutality. President Donald Trump, who has been criticized across party lines for his remarks about the protests, has been accused of contributing to further polarization and division. It remains to be seen whether the latest protests will produce real, long-term change in the fight against racism and inequality. **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, and **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, discuss the protests and their impact on the U.S. elections with **Laura Kupe**, then Counsel on the Committee on Homeland Security at the U.S. House of Representatives; **Priscilla Layne**, Professor of German Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and **Daniel-Friedrich Sturm**, U.S. correspondent of WELT.

### **America's Choice: An Astronaut, a Football Coach, and a Kennedy – The U.S. Senate Elections, May 26, 2020**

This year Americans will not only elect the next president, but a vote is also held to fill one third of the Senate seats. Currently, Republicans have a narrow majority in the Senate. Will they be able to hold control of the chamber? What are the battleground states in the Senate race? Are there any potential Senators that might get knocked out in the primary process? In this podcast episode, **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, and **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, talk with **Juliane Schäuble**, U.S. correspondent at Tagesspiegel, and **Soraya Sarhaddi Nelson**, then KCRW Berlin's Program Director, about the Senate races, the candidates, and underlying dynamics. They will also discuss how the Senate races play into the presidential election and Biden's selection of a running mate.



### **Virtual Discussion: Transatlantic Solidarity in Times of COVID-19 – A Bipartisan Congressional Perspective, May 19, 2020**

On May 19, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany together with the Aspen Institute Central Europe, the Aspen Institute France, the Aspen Institute Italia, the Aspen Institute Kyiv and the Aspen Institute Romania hosted a virtual discussion on “Transatlantic Solidarity in Times of COVID-19 – A Bipartisan Congressional Perspective” with Congressman **William R. Keating** (D-MA) and Congressman **Adam Kinzinger** (R-IL), the Chairman and then Ranking Member of the Europe, Eurasia, Energy and Environment Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the United States House of Representatives. This virtual conversation with the two leading Euro-Watchers in the U.S. House of Representatives and a pan-European audience focused on how COVID-19 has affected transatlantic relations and solidarity. It addressed issues around U.S. leadership, transatlantic trade, NATO’s role in the COVID-19 crisis, and China.

### **America's Choice: Corona in the White House, May 17, 2020**

The corona virus has reached the White House. At the same time, the president is weighing the state of the country’s economy, which is expected to be a decisive factor in the November election, against the health concerns of scientists. His approval ratings among the American public are dropping. Can Joe Biden benefit from President Trump’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic? **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, and **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, are joined by **Christiane Hoffmann**, editor at Spiegel’s Berlin office, to discuss the COVID-19 response and its impact on the election, the likelihood of a potential election postponement due to the pandemic, and the candidates’ stance on China ahead of the elections.



### **America's Choice: Podcasts, Protests, and Pick-ups – The 2020 Election and Media in Times of COVID-19, May 1, 2020**

The country is slowly opening up again. Against the backdrop of anti-quarantine protests and mounting economic pressure, U.S. states are trying to return to a “new normal” with different timelines and exit strategies. But despite the ever-increasing longing for normalcy, the U.S. election campaigns are still very much conditioned by corona restrictions. **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, are joined by **Prof. Dr. Curd Knüpfer**, junior professor at the John F. Kennedy Institute, to address these latest developments, their impact on the election campaigns, and the American media landscape. How are anti-quarantine protests and the state's exit strategies perceived by the American public? How do U.S. states coordinate re-openings? What does the media coverage of the election campaign look like? What role do talk radios play in the conservative movement? And why has Joe Biden launched a podcast?

### **America's Choice: Who Elects Whom? Black People, Evangelicals and the Disappointed Youth, April 17, 2020**

Barack Obama and Senator Bernie Sanders both officially endorsed Joe Biden as the Democratic nominee for president. How important is their support for Biden's campaign? Can Joe Biden, who is considered a moderate Democrat, court left-wing Sanders supporters? Will he succeed in mobilizing African-Americans to vote for him in November? Who do Christian conservative voters support, especially the influential Evangelicals? And who is expected to remain a loyal Trump voter? This week's podcast episode takes a look at key voter groups in the presidential election. America's Choice hosts **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, talk with **Martin Klingst**, then political correspondent at DIE ZEIT and author of the book “Trumps Amerika: Reise in ein weißes Land”, about who is expected to vote for whom and why.



### **America's Choice: Cuomo for President?, April 3, 2020**

The American economy is in an induced coma, unemployment figures are rising to dizzying heights, and the estimates for the COVID-19 death toll in the United States are alarming. The President is currently commenting on the corona virus situation daily in his press briefings. In this podcast episode, **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, are joined by **Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook**, then Executive Director of the Future of Diplomacy Project and the Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship at the Harvard Kennedy School, and **Peter Rough**, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, to discuss Donald Trump's crisis management, the role of the states in coping with the pandemic, and whether there could still be a surprise candidate in the field of potential Democratic presidential nominees.



### **America's Choice: 2020 Election Campaigns amid Coronavirus Shutdown, March 27, 2020**

Until recently, the Democratic primaries have dominated the news, but it has gone quite around the election campaigns. The coronavirus and the Trump administration's crisis management have seized the headlines. In this episode of America's Choice, **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, speak with **Astrid Dörner**, U.S. correspondent at Handelsblatt, and **Sudha David-Wilp**, Deputy Director of the Berlin Office and Senior Transatlantic Fellow at the German Marshall Fund, about Donald Trump's handling of the coronavirus situation, the expected economic consequences of the pandemic, and its impact on the U.S. election campaigns. They also discuss how the pandemic plays into Trump's chances of re-election and how Joe Biden, the frontrunner in the Democratic presidential race, responds to the COVID-19 situation.



### **America's Choice: COVID-19, the Economic Consequences, and the U.S. Elections, March 20, 2020**

The corona crisis is keeping the world in suspense and will also determine the further course of the American election campaign. In this America's Choice episode, **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director at Atlantik-Brücke, analyze the results of the Democratic primaries in Florida, Illinois, and Arizona. In what way were the primaries affected by COVID-19? How will the pandemic impact future primaries and election campaign events? In the second part of this podcast, David Deißner talks to the Deputy Chairman of the Atlantik-Brücke, **Prof. Dr. Michael Hütter**, Director of the German Economic Institute and member of the Presidium, about the economic dimension of the corona crisis. He explains the economic impact of the pandemic on both sides of the Atlantic, the effectiveness of aid packages, and the social dimension of the expected economic crisis.

### **America's Choice: Super Tuesday Edition, March 5, 2020**

Super Tuesday is over. The cards in the democratic primary race have been reshuffled. Senator Bernie Sanders and former vice president Joe Biden became the leading candidates for the Democratic nomination for President. At the same time, Biden succeeded in regaining his status as a frontrunner and made major steps toward his nomination. **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, are joined by **Sigmar Gabriel**, Chairman of the Board of Directors at Atlantik-Brücke, to discuss the results of Super Tuesday, the remaining Democratic field, and what a Democrat in the White House would mean for transatlantic relations.



### **America's Choice: Ready to Rumble – U.S. Primary Elections Enter Crunch Time, February 21, 2020**

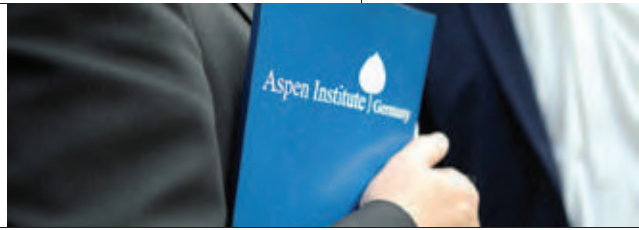
The first episode of America's Choice takes a look at the primary elections in the United States. For the Democratic Party, the crucial phase of the primary campaign is underway. In the upcoming months, all U.S. states, Washington D.C., and the U.S. territories will vote on who will run against President Donald Trump as the Democratic presidential nominee on November 3, 2020. How exactly does the primary process work? What is the difference between primaries and caucuses? Which Democratic candidate has the best chance of being nominated? America's Choice hosts **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany, and **David Deißner**, Executive Director of Atlantik-Brücke, discuss these and other questions about the primary elections with **Sumi Somaskanda**, American journalist and senior news anchor at DW News.

### **Berlin Transatlantic Forum 2019 "Fit for Purpose? The Transatlantic Relationship and the World of Tomorrow", November 6, 2019**

On November 6, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted its sixth annual Berlin Transatlantic Forum entitled "Fit for Purpose? The Transatlantic Relationship and the World of Tomorrow." Thirty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, this conference took stock of the transatlantic relationship and discussed lessons learned for the future. One-on-one conversations with former U.S. Secretary of State **Dr. Madeleine K. Albright**; former President of the World Bank **Robert Zoellick**; and Minister of State **Niels Annen** offered a retrospect in the 1989's historic events and an analysis of today's challenges for the transatlantic partnership.

In his welcome remarks **Michael Müller**, Governing Mayor of Berlin, highlighted the importance of the transatlantic bond not only for German unification, but especially for the city of Berlin.

The conference also featured TED-style pitches on the future of Atlanticism from Member of the Bundestag **Franziska Brantner**; Estonian Foreign Minister **Urmas Reinsalu**; Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook from Harvard; **Henry Farrell** from George Washington University; **Michael Anton** from Hillsdale College; and **Yu Jie** from Chatham House. Putting the focus on the next generation of transatlantic decision-makers, Member of the European Parliament **Robert Biedron**; CSIS's **Rachel Ellehuus**; **Andras Fekete-Györ** from Momentum Movement in Hungary; Member of the Bundestag **Metin Hakverdi**; and **Annabelle Chapman**, Correspondent for The Economist, discussed the differences in priorities and outlook for the European-U.S. relationship in the post-Cold War generation.



### **Second Trilateral Conference with Members of U.S. Congress, the Russian Duma and Federation Council, and Bundestag “Addressing Mutual Foreign Policy Challenges”, June 29, 2019**

Finally, exploring the influence of digitalization on national security, **Katrin Suder**, Chair of the Digital Council to the German Chancellor and the Cabinet, and former NATO SACEUR **Philip M. Breedlove** talked about how new actors and cyber warfare challenge the conventional set-up of national defense and military alliances.

The Berlin Transatlantic Forum was made possible by partners including the Lotto Stiftung Berlin, Volkswagen AG, and Lockheed Martin.

The conversation with **Dr. Madeleine K. Albright** was recorded and aired by Deutschlandfunk Kultur on November 9, 2019 and can be found on its website.

A transcription of **Robert Zoellick**’s speech can be found online on Aspen Germany’s website. The TED-style talks highlighted different aspects of the transatlantic relationship and its future development.

In June, the Aspen Institute Germany, in cooperation with the Robert Bosch Foundation of Germany, organized its second trilateral conference with Members from the U.S. Congress, the Russian Duma and Federation Council, and the German Bundestag. After a successful launch of the format in 2016, this year the focus was again on picking up threads of discussion and discussing current problems in a trusting and non-public dialogue. Topics ranged from issues of arms control and the European security architecture to the Middle East, and international trade. The moderated discussion between the delegations focused on exploring the scope for action and possible solutions regarding these pressing issues. A round of competent academics from the participating countries, specially selected for this purpose, helped to find appropriate entry points and to stimulate the necessary discussion between the parliamentarians. The format was judged by all sides to be very enriching, and it was advocated to keep the discussion channels open and to strengthen them.



### **Aspen NEXT Transatlantic Workshop, June 12-14, 2019**

On June 12-14, 2019, Aspen Germany hosted the first group of Aspen NEXT Fellows as part of its fifth Transatlantic Workshop. Looking back at the historic events of 1989, the participants explored values hierarchies then and today, their translation into institutions and how events since have shaped the values sets that underlie our societies and political systems. The group compiled rankings of the most important values of 1989 and today to compare changes in values systems over the last thirty years, developed scenarios of what the world might look like in 2029 in the fields of foreign policy, technology, economy, climate and energy, or regarding the future of NATO and discussed the changes in values systems today, their adaptation in order to overcome today's challenges and how this should reflect in the future of the transatlantic partnership. Conversations with **Pawel Swieboda**, then Deputy Head, European Political Strategy Center; **Christopher Rendo**, Policy Planning, U.S. State Department; and **Niels Annen**, State Minister, German Federal Foreign Office, offered a practitioner's view of how debates around values and current challenges are mirrored in European, U.S. and German foreign policy. The two-day workshop brought 32 participants aged 25 to 35 from the United States, Europe, and Germany to Berlin, kicking off the Aspen NEXT Initiative which aims at engaging the next generation of Atlanticists.



*Rüdiger Lentz, then Executive Director, Aspen Institute Germany  
Niels Annen, State Minister, German Federal Foreign Office,  
Aspen NEXT Transatlantic Workshop, June 12-14, 2019*

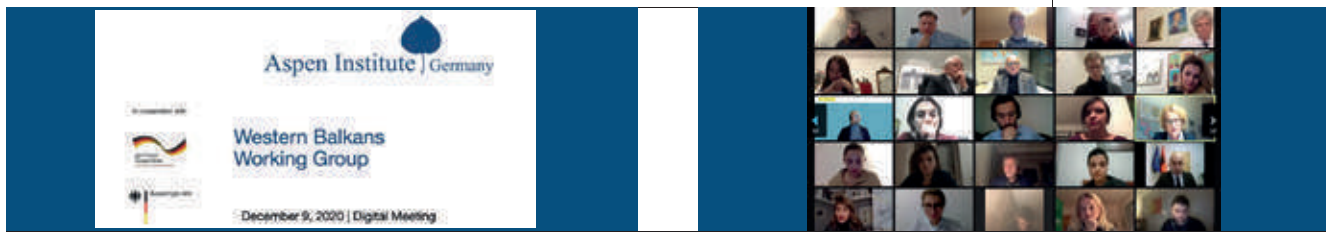
# EUROPE PROGRAM



## Online Discussion “Between the German Council Presidency and the Bundestag Elections: Ideas for the Future of Europe”, December 16, 2020

On December 16, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an online discussion on “Between the German Council Presidency and the Bundestag Elections: Ideas the Future of Europe.” After a short presentation of the results of a Strategic Foresight Process on “The Future of Europe” organized by Aspen Germany over the summer, **State Secretary Miguel Berger**, German Federal Foreign Office, addressed the audience and panelists with a keynote, assessing the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union and outlining his vision for the future of Europe. Afterwards, **Dr. Volker Ullrich**, Member of the German Parliament and of the European Affairs Committee for the CDU/CSU parliamentary group; **Christian Petry**, Member of the German Parliament and spokesman on European Affairs for the SPD parliamentary group; **Michael Link**, Member of the German Parliament and spokesman on European Affairs for the FDP parliamentary group; and **Dr. Sergey Lagodinsky**, Member of the European Parliament for the Greens, discussed their assessments and visions for the future of Europe. The discussion was moderated by **Annette Riedel**, Editor for Current Politics and Culture, Deutschlandradio.

In light of an increasingly volatile security environment, the panelists discussed whether the EU needs to expand its own defense capabilities and how this could look like. Among other issues, the panel further discussed what impact the economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic will have on achieving climate neutrality, sustainable agriculture, and other ambitions. Common themes throughout the discussion were financial solidarity and inequality among EU member states, opportunities to strengthen a coherent European identity, and the state of relations with the United States, China, and other global superpowers.



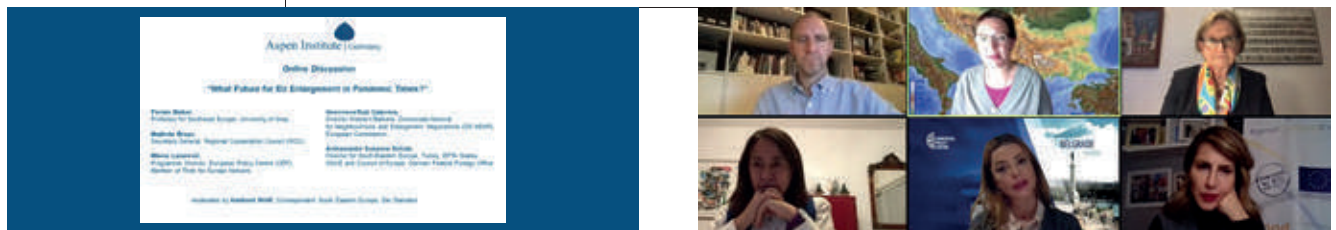
## Western Balkans Working Group, December 9, 2020

On December 9, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted its digital Western Balkans Working Group. The working group offered a closed-door and confidential platform for a select group of high-level decision-makers and experts from the Western Balkans, Germany, the EU, and the United States to discuss in an informal setting the current state and key challenges of the EU enlargement process. The discussion was based on and informed by the results of Aspen Germany's Western Balkan conferences and expert workshops which were organized throughout the year. Key issues addressed included the recent veto by Bulgaria against the negotiating framework with North Macedonia and its consequences for the EU's credibility, the new enlargement methodology, progress in regional cooperation as well as the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Western Balkans. Expressing disappointment with the Bulgarian veto, decision-makers from the EU and its member states emphasized the strategic importance of the region and reaffirmed their commitment to the enlargement process. However, many participants warned about long-term implications of the veto for the credibility of a merit-based accession process in the eyes of governments and citizens in the Western Balkans, which in turn lowers the incentives to implement reforms and decreases public support for EU integration. Better communication with citizens to explain the benefits of EU integration combined with clear messages by the EU on lacking reform progress were described as crucial to uphold public support in the region. Furthermore, the need for stronger EU visibility in the region (including high-level visits of member states), particularly in the light of growing influence of other international actors such as China and Russia, was underscored.

All participants agreed that EU accession presented the only valuable long-term plan. Yet, the question arose whether it was necessary to elaborate interim steps to provide more tangible rewards on the long way to full membership. The new Common Regional Market was collectively regarded as an important achievement with participants underlining its importance as an instrument to promote EU integration rather than being an alternative to the enlargement process. However, experts called to a realistic assessment of its economic potential.

The discussion also touched upon the various effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region. On the one hand, positive effects on joint regional agency and solidarity as well as economic windows of opportunity were mentioned. On the other hand, serious concerns were voiced concerning the pandemic's impact on economic development in the region, resulting in calls for more EU engagement to prevent the development gap between the Western Balkans and the EU from growing. This was deemed as particularly relevant considering the ongoing emigration from the region toward the EU, including many highly skilled young people.

The Western Balkans Working Group was part of Aspen Germany's Western Balkans Regional Dialog 2020 Program, which was kindly supported by the German Federal Foreign Office.



### Online Discussion “What Future for EU Enlargement in Pandemic Times?”, December 9, 2020

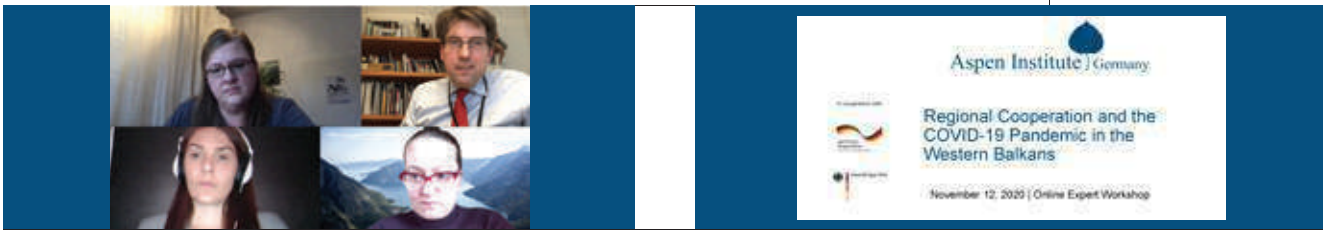
On December 9, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an online discussion on the topic “What Future for EU Enlargement in Pandemic Times?” with **Florian Bieber**, Professor for Southeast Europe at the University of Graz; **Majlinda Bregu**, Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council; **Milena Lazarević**, Program Director at the European Policy Centre (CEP) and a member of the Think for Europe Network; **Genoveva Ruiz Calavera**, then Director Western Balkans, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), European Commission; and **Ambassador Susanne Schütz**, Director for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey, OSCE, and Council of Europe at the German Federal Foreign Office. The discussion was moderated by **Adelheid Wölfl**, Correspondent for South-Eastern Europe at Der Standard, and focused on the credibility of the EU enlargement process, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region and its repercussions for the reform processes, as well as the efficacy of the EU’s available instruments to support economic recovery and democratization under the current circumstances.

Several speakers expressed regret that no considerable progress was reached in the accession process with Albania and North Macedonia in 2020. The veto by Bulgaria against the accession framework for North Macedonia was described as yet another example of an undue bilateralization of the enlargement process by an EU member state, which undermines its merit-based character. The resulting credibility problem significantly weakens the EU’s transformative power as incentives for reforms are lacking in the eyes of both governments and citizens from the region. To counter growing EU-skepticism in the region, the importance of improved communication with citizens was highlighted, as well as the need for honest and

critical public statements by the EU regarding shortcomings in the areas of rule of law and democratization. In this context the hope for a potential competitive pressure in the reform and accession process between countries but also between political parties within the countries was expressed.

As economic performance is expected to drop throughout the region as a consequence of the pandemic, assistance provided by the EU including through the Economic and Investment Plan (worth around 9 billion EUR) was deemed highly important. Yet, some panelists questioned if funds would suffice to allow for substantive economic recovery and to prevent the development gap between the region and the EU from growing. In this context, the risk of third actors providing loans with less strings attached to a financially weakened Western Balkans region and thereby undermining EU conditionality was highlighted.

Furthermore, the recent progress concerning regional cooperation with the Common Regional Market (CRM) adopted at the Sofia Summit in November was addressed. Arguments were made that the CRM – if fully implemented – will decrease costs for the business sector and could attract foreign direct investment. Additionally, it was underscored that the CRM can and will by no means substitute EU integration but constitutes an instrument to promote the necessary reform processes. Finally, the EU was called upon to utilize its leverage as the Western Balkans’ largest development and trading partner to support the region’s governments in implementing reforms under aggravated circumstances while at the same time insisting on the rule of law criteria. Hopes for a new Biden presidency to cooperate closely with the EU in this regard concluded the discussion.



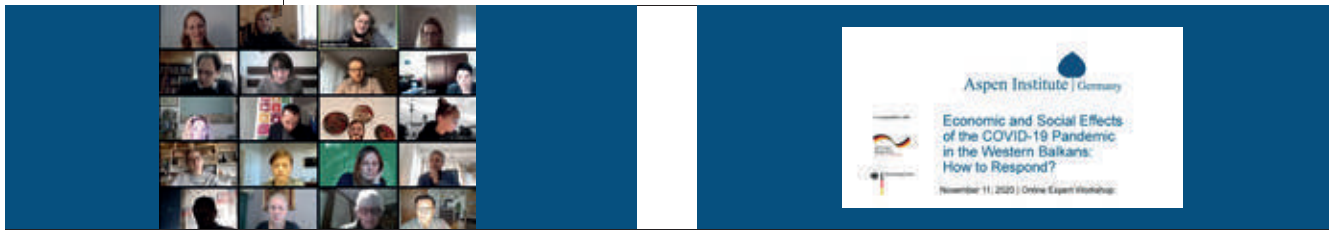
### Online Discussion “Montenegro After the Elections – A Shift in the Political Landscape?”, November 26, 2020

On November 26, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted an online discussion called “Montenegro After the Elections – A Shift in the Political Landscape”. **Milica Kovačević**, President of the Center for Democratic Transition (CDT); **Biljana Papović**, Deputy Executive Director at the Center for Democratic Transition (CDT); and **Matthias Lüttenberg**, then Head of Division 212 Bilateral Relations to the Countries of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia at the German Federal Chancellery, shared their assessments of the situation in Montenegro after the elections in August of this year. After the representatives of CDT presented their policy brief, which is available on our website, the panelists discussed whether there is indeed a shift in Montenegro’s political landscape and if so, what we can make of it. Among topics such as the composition and form of the new government or the expectations that its electorates have, the roles of Russia, China, Serbia, and the Serbian Orthodox Church were highlighted. The stance that Germany takes as well as the hopes and expectations it holds with a view to the reform processes connected to Montenegro’s path to EU membership were also discussed. This event was open to the interested public.

### Online Expert Workshop: “Regional Cooperation and the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans”, November 12, 2020

On November 12, 2020, Aspen Germany concluded its series of expert workshops on the effects of the pandemic in the region with a discussion on “Regional Cooperation and the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans.” The event gathered a select group of experts and decision-makers from the countries of the Western Balkans, the European Union as well as from international and regional organizations. Main topics of discussion were the impact of the pandemic on regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, the role of regional initiatives in mitigating the economic repercussions, and the future of regional cooperation in the aftermath of the crisis.

Experts reported that the pandemic – similar to previous natural disasters – resulted in increased solidarity within the region and accelerated joint initiatives, for instance the opening of Green Lanes at border crossings or the joint advocacy for EU assistance and inclusion in the EU’s procurement efforts of medical equipment. Furthermore, regional initiatives in different sectors increased their efforts to coordinate and streamline activities in the wake of the pandemic, which is to be maintained even after the crisis. Another issue discussed was the Common Regional Market in the Western Balkans, agreed upon at the Sofia Summit of the Berlin Process on November 10, its various dimensions as well as its potential to support economic recovery after the crisis. Participants called for a fast and full implementation for the initiative to yield fruits, which in turn depends on strong political commitment both within the region and on the EU’s side. At the same time, several experts called for a more realistic assessment of the economic growth potential of increased regional cooperation and stressed the importance of a strategic, targeted, and common approach in FDI

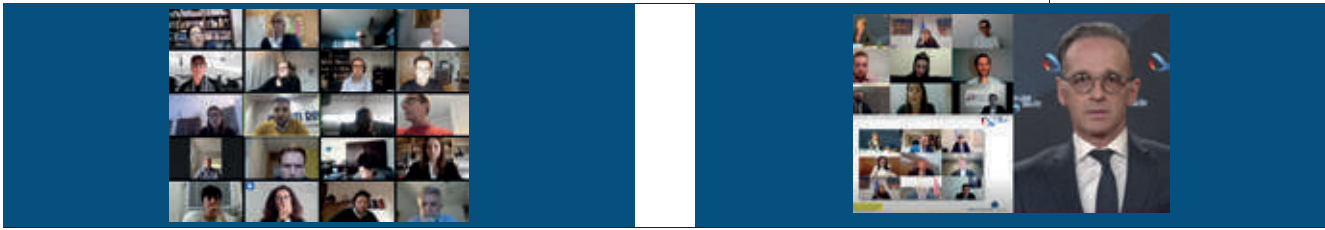


### **Online Expert Workshop: “Economic and Social Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans: How to Respond?”, November 11, 2020**

attraction and the overall development of the economies in the region. Also, the need for more harmonization and coordination of policies within the region was underlined. Participants also addressed the potential of bilateral disputes to disrupt progress in regional cooperation and suggested for instance to introduce dispute settlement mechanisms. The expert workshop series on “The COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans: Consequences and Policy Approaches” was part of Aspen’s Regional Dialog on the Western Balkans, which was kindly supported by the German Federal Foreign Office. Previous expert discussions of the series have dealt with the political effects of the crisis, the impact on the influence of international actors, as well as economic and social repercussions.

On November 11, 2020, the third issue of Aspen Germany’s digital expert workshop series on “The COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans: Consequences and Policy Approaches” took place. The topic of the workshop was “Economic and Social Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans: How to Respond?”. Regional and international experts as well as decision-makers from the Western Balkans, the European Union, and international organizations were gathered to discuss the measures taken by the governments of the Western Balkans to fight the pandemic and how to prioritize further actions. The workshop also evaluated which long-term economic and social transformations are to be anticipated in the wake of the crisis and to what extent the pandemic could offer windows of opportunity for the region.

Participants agreed that the region largely lacks economic resilience and is not well prepared to weather the pandemic and its consequences. Pre-existing structural weaknesses are and will be further aggravated by the crisis, such as weak health sectors, high unemployment, poverty, a large informal labor market, and high public debt. Only Serbia seems to be an exception with a less bleak economic outlook. Furthermore, the politicization of the crisis in some countries of the region was mentioned as a factor hampering an adequate reaction to the crisis. In terms of prioritizing government actions, participants mentioned the protection of jobs and support to businesses affected by the lockdown measures as well as protection of vulnerable sections of the population. As potentially promising effects of the crisis, experts mentioned the push for digitalization, the opportunity to attract more foreign direct investment based on potential near-shoring of production and services



### International Conference “Young People, Migration, and the Demographic Challenge in the Western Balkans”, October 28-30, 2020

by EU businesses, as well as a potential momentum for restructuring the economy. However, further convergence with the EU remains a challenge.

The Expert Workshop Series was organized in the framework of Aspen’s Regional Dialog on the Western Balkans, kindly supported by the Federal Foreign Office. The first and second workshop of the series dealt with the political effects of the crisis and the impact on the influence of international actors in the region, respectively.

The German Federal Foreign Office, the Southeast Europe Association, and the Aspen Institute Germany organized an international conference entitled “Young People, Migration, and the Demographic Challenge in the Western Balkans”, on October 28-30, 2020. The three-day online event was part of the official program of the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Hosted by **Federal Foreign Minister Heiko Maas and Minister of State Michael Roth**, the first conference day included Ministers from the Western Balkans, representatives from the European Commission, as well as youth representatives. Throughout the second and third conference days, experts and stakeholders from civil society and international organizations shed light on both the phenomenon of emigration from the Western Balkans and the challenges and opportunities this entails. The goal was to offer more insight into why people decide to leave and the effects this exodus has on countries of origin, as well as to develop recommendations for policy responses. These issues were also discussed with an eye on the burden that the COVID-19 pandemic has been placing on the region.



### Online Discussion “Prospects for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue”, October 8, 2020

On October 8, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an online discussion on the topic “Prospects for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue” with **Miroslav Lajčák**, EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue and Other Western Balkan Regional Issues; **Sonja Licht**, President, Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE); **Naim Rashiti**, Executive Director, Balkans Policy Research Group (BPRG); and **Ambassador Susanne Schütz**, Director for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey, OSCE and Council of Europe, German Federal Foreign Office.

In 2011, three years after Kosovo declared its independence, the EU started to facilitate a dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia. Since then, several agreements on technical issues have been reached but little progress has been made in the normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo. During the discussion, panel members collectively reflected on challenges of past attempts at normalization and formulated requirements to make future negotiations more successful.

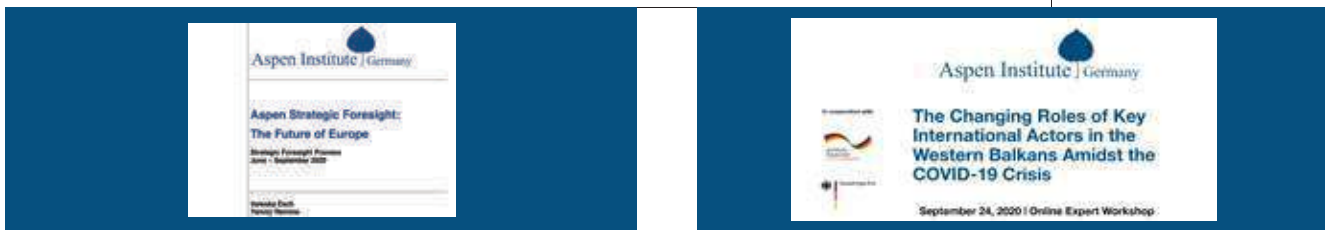
As panel members explained, the stagnation in negotiations over the last years contributed to an erosion of trust in a mediated resolution. Referencing a number of achievements such as the roaming agreement or the recognition of diplomas, however, they also highlighted the need for governments to more comprehensively inform the public of both progress and grievances in regard to ongoing negotiations as to facilitate public discourse and secure their constituencies’ support for reconciliation. In line with this point, the discussion focused on options to open secondary tracks and involve additional actors from civil society and academia as mediating actors. As the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue had picked up again recently, panelists voiced their hopes that

this development could possibly permit reaching a comprehensive normalization agreement.

However, while disagreement remained regarding the specific time required to make further advances in reconciling Kosovo and Serbia, panel members generally agreed that no alternative to the EU-mediated dialogue and a comprehensive and legally binding agreement is available given that both countries seek to join the European Union.

The virtual discussion was part of the Aspen Berlin Policy Hub for think tanks from the Western Balkans, a project funded by the Open Society Foundations and the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government.

A policy paper from Naim Rashiti, Founder and Executive Director of the Balkans Policy Research Group (BPRG) can be found on Aspen Germany’s website. The paper addresses in more detail the question of how the acceptance of the dialogue can be strengthened in both populations.



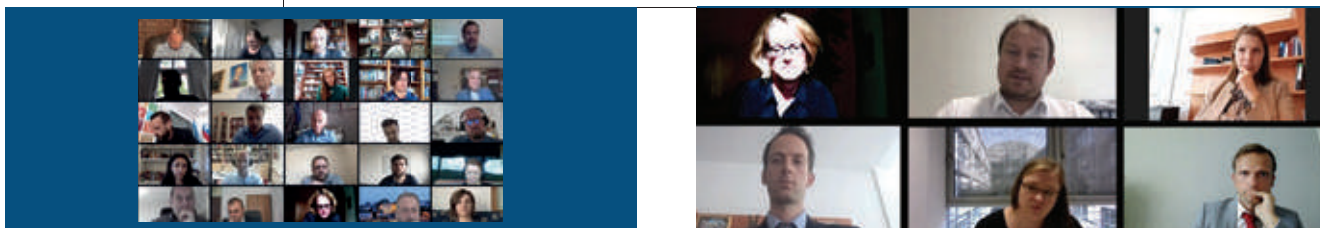
### **Strategic Foresight Workshop: The Future of Europe (4/4) September 29, 2020**

On September 29, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted the fourth and final component of its strategic foresight process on the future of Europe. During this online workshop, the group consisting of 16 European policy experts reviewed their work from the first three workshops. After evaluating the developed scenarios in the three policy fields of security, trade, and green recovery, the participants turned to the last substantive component of Aspen Germany's strategic foresight process: the development of an early warning system. To this end, the group identified a number of hard indicators that would make it possible to track and trace real world developments and compare them to the developed scenarios, in order to take stock of what is happening, make an assessment of where we are heading, and how we could change directions in order to reach the best-case scenario of the future of Europe.

### **Online Expert Workshop "The Changing Roles of Key International Actors in the Western Balkans Amidst the COVID-19 Crisis", September 24, 2020**

On September 24, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted the second issue of its Online Expert Workshop Series "The COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans: Consequences and Policy Approaches." The closed-door workshop focused on "The Changing Roles of Key International Actors in the Western Balkans Amidst the COVID-19 Crisis" and gathered a select group of regional and international experts, high-level representatives of the United States and EU member states as well as from EU institutions to assess the situation and jointly develop recommendations on how to respond to the current dynamics. The workshop dealt specifically with the roles of China, Russia, and Turkey in the Western Balkans.

While participants agreed that China gained strong media presence in the region through its "mask diplomacy" also at the expense of other actors, the Russian involvement in the Western Balkans was marked by a continued utilization of its crisis-relief infrastructure already in place. Turkey, in turn, seemed to have used its pandemic-related assistance to the region also for domestic political purposes. At the same time, it was stated that the EU had difficulties to be present with its support in local communication channels due to a lack of independent media in some countries of the region. Participants also noted that disinformation and conspiracy theories further spread throughout the region, especially concerning health-related topics. Regarding the question of how the United States and the EU should react to these tendencies, the importance of cooperation and coordination between the two actors was highlighted. Furthermore, the need to fight disinformation, to increase resilience, and to strengthen independent media was emphasized.

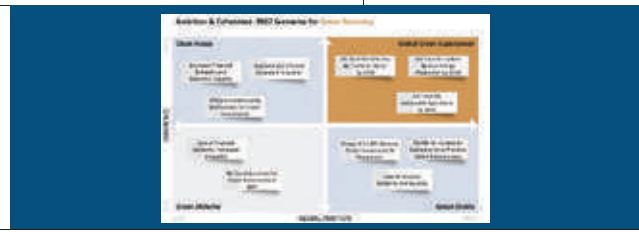


### Background Discussion on the Current Situation in the Western Balkans, September 22, 2020

Additionally, the EU (along with its member states) was encouraged to act faster, to be more blunt in messaging, and to show a stronger personal presence in the region to increase its visibility and credibility.

The Expert Workshop Series was organized in the framework of Aspen's Regional Dialog on the Western Balkans, kindly supported by the German Federal Foreign Office.

On September 22, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a background discussion on the current situation in the Western Balkans between representatives of the German Government and staffers of the German Bundestag. **Claudia Brinkmann**, European Relations with EU Member States, EU Enlargement, External Relations at the German Federal Chancellery; **Sascha Fuzul**, Division EC4 – EU-Enlargement, Southeastern Europe, Turkey at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy; **Alexander Jung**, Deputy Head of Division 212 Bilateral Relations to the Countries of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia at the German Federal Chancellery; **Christiane Hullmann**, Head of Division 209 Western Balkans at the German Federal Foreign Office; and **Thomas Motak**, Deputy Head of Division E12, EU External Affairs (EU Enlargement, European Neighbourhood Policy, EU External Financing Instruments) at the German Federal Foreign Office, shared their assessments of the situation in the region from the perspective of their respective divisions and presented the initiatives and challenges for the next months. The discussion focused on the priorities of Germany's Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the EU accession processes, in particular regarding the negotiating framework with Albania and North Macedonia. Another topic were the recent elections in the Western Balkans and their impact on the EU accession processes of the respective countries as well as the overall political and economic situation in the region. The event is part of a series of regular background discussions to enable regular exchanges on current priorities and challenges in the Western Balkans.



## Online Discussion “Albania’s EU Integration: A Reform Laden Path”, September 17, 2020

On September 17, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an online discussion on “Albania’s EU Integration: A Reform Laden Path”. **Lutfi Dervishi**, Member of the Board, Institute for Political Studies (ISP); **Christiane Hullmann**, Head of Division 209 Western Balkans, German Federal Foreign Office; **Afrim Krasniqi**, Executive Director, Institute for Political Studies (ISP); and **Christian Schmidt**, Member of the German Bundestag, Federal Minister (ret.), discussed the opening of EU accession negotiations with Albania and the related conditions of the European Council. Albania is urged to make further progress in electoral and judicial reforms as well as the fight against organized crime and corruption. Therefore, the online discussion focused on the reform processes in Albania, in particular on the implementation of the judicial reform and the current developments regarding the electoral reform. Albania has made progress in both fields. However, the functioning of the highest courts remains a challenge: due to a lack of qualified applicants it has so far not been possible to fill all positions. Regarding the electoral reform, progress was made as well.

However, questions remain with regard to the impact of a controversial constitutional change, which will influence the elections and was passed without the biggest opposition party which decided to return their parliamentary mandates last year. Another topic was the ongoing debate on a new media law and the internal political situation in Albania. The virtual discussion was part of the Aspen Berlin Policy Hub for think tanks from the Western Balkans, a project funded by the Open Society Foundation and the Federal Press Agency.

**Strategic Foresight Workshop:  
The Future of Europe (3/4)  
September 15, 2020**

The third component to Aspen Germany's strategic foresight process on the future of Europe took place on September 15, 2020. During this workshop, the group of 16 experts identified and sketched out the high-priority policies and measures that need to be implemented in order to arrive at the best-case scenario, which was discussed during the second workshop on July 22, 2020. In addition, the most relevant actors, stakeholders as well as the potential tradeoffs such policies would require were mapped out. The expert group then split up in working groups to further discuss which resources and capabilities would be most essential to achieve the best-case scenario in the policy fields security, trade, and green recovery.



### **Digital Conference: Emigration from the Western Balkans – Addressing the Challenge, September 10-11, 2020**

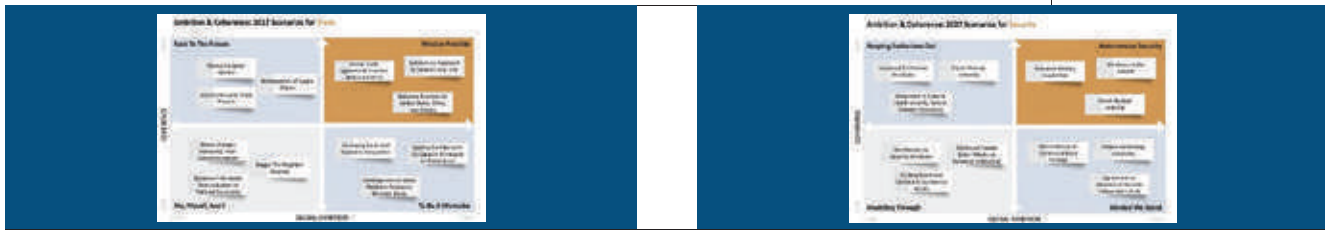
On September 10-11, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a digital conference on the topic of “Emigration from the Western Balkans – Addressing the Challenge.” The conference offered a closed-door and confidential platform for a select group of high-level decision-makers from the Western Balkans, Germany, the EU as well as international organizations to identify and discuss the key challenges the Western Balkan countries and their partners are facing due to emigration.

In the course of the two-day conference, the discussion focused on the key areas in which reforms are needed to reduce push factors for emigration and to promote the return of emigrants, namely reforms concerning the rule of law, democracy, and anti-corruption, but also in the areas of education and labor market policy. Another topic of the conference was the process of policymaking in the field of emigration with regard to the necessary involvement of relevant state and non-state actors at various levels of governance. The multifaceted role of the diaspora was another point of discussion. Participants formulated ideas on how the financial contribution through remittances could be used more effectively for the economic development of the countries, but also how potential returnees could be successfully integrated into the domestic labor market. Finally, the potential of regional cooperation in addressing the challenge was highlighted, including through coordination of national policies, cooperation in data collection, as well as through the continued implementation of the Regional Economic Area (REA) that was agreed upon at the Berlin Process Summit in Trieste in 2017.

The conference was organized in the framework of Aspen’s Regional Dialog on the Western Balkans, which is kindly supported by the German Federal Foreign Office.

### **Virtual Roundtable “North Macedonia After the Elections – A Clear Path to EU Accession Negotiations?”, September 3, 2020**

On September 3, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a public virtual discussion called “North Macedonia After the Elections – A Clear Path to EU Accession Negotiations?”. **Simonida Kacarska**, Director of the European Policy Institute; **Matthias Lüttenberg**, then Head of Division 212 Bilateral Relations to the Countries of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, German Federal Chancellery; **Thomas Motak**, Deputy Head of Division E12, EU External Affairs (EU Enlargement, European Neighbourhood Policy, EU External Financing Instruments) at the German Federal Foreign Office; and **Malinka Ristevska Jordanova**, Member of the Managing Board of the European Policy Institute, shared their assessments of the situation in North Macedonia after the elections. Given the special spotlight the country currently enjoys as a consequence of the opening of EU accession negotiations, the panelists addressed the preparation and commencement of the negotiations as well as the question of how quickly the country will be able to advance reform processes in the fields of rule of law and democracy. The role of Bulgaria in these processes was discussed, and topics such as the internationally celebrated Prespa Agreement of 2018 and 2015’s wiretap scandal were also touched upon. The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic consequences for North Macedonia and the wider region were another focus of the discussion. This event was open to the interested public.



### **Strategic Foresight Workshop: The Future of Europe (2/4) July 22, 2020**

On July 22, 2020 Aspen Germany hosted the second part of its strategic foresight process, in which the group of experts continued to develop the results of the first workshop on July 7, 2020. Based on the four alternative future scenarios in the fields of security, trade, and green recovery, the participants focused on an ambitious, yet realistic vision for the EU in 2027. At this stage of the process, an in-depth analysis and discussion of the key actors, policies, and measures to implement this vision in each of the three policy fields was the core assignment to be completed in this workshop.

### **Strategic Foresight Workshop: The Future of Europe (1/4) July 7, 2020**

Against the backdrop of uncertainties and insecurities that currently define our world, Aspen Germany developed a strategic foresight process over the course of three months. In the format of individual online workshop sessions between July and September 2020, Aspen Germany brought together 16 European experts to conceptualize, develop, and evaluate different scenarios that could define the future of Europe. On July 7, 2020 Aspen Germany hosted the first of four online workshops, in which the group was introduced to foresight analysis and scenario planning. The framework for the development of four alternative future scenarios in the fields of security, trade, and green recovery was developed based on the results of an online survey the participants had filled out before the workshops started. The outcome of the process were four alternative scenario narratives which varied on degrees of global ambition as an actor and internal coherence within the EU as well as the identification of key drivers that will likely have the highest systemic impact on the EU over the next 5 to 7 years and at the same time are highly uncertain in regard to their future trajectory.



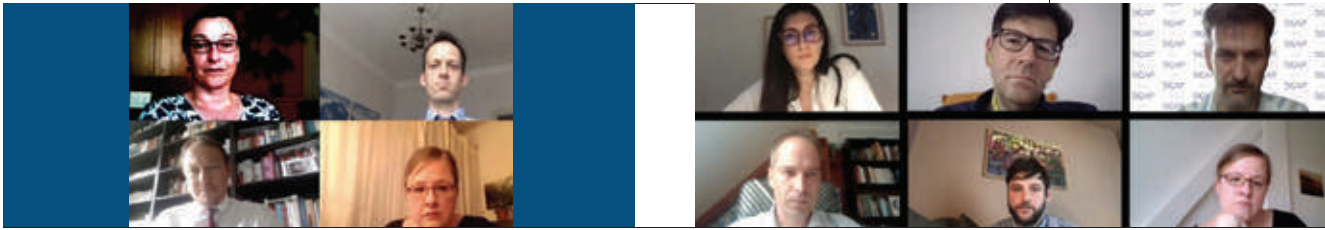
### **Expert Online Workshop Series: “Causes, Effects, and Policy Approaches – Addressing Emigration from the Western Balkans”, June 23-25, 2020**

On June 23-25, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany together with the Southeast Europe Association hosted a digital expert workshop series on “Causes, Effects, and Policy Approaches – Addressing Emigration from the Western Balkans.” The event provided a forum for more than 30 experts from the Western Balkans and the EU in the field of migration and also included representatives of international organizations, regional business associations, and youth organizations.

Short input papers by selected researchers provided the basis for the respective expert discussions. Workshop 1 analyzed the trends, motives, and effects of emigration from the Western Balkan region based on insights by **Miran Lavrić**, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Maribor, and **Nenad Jevtović**, Director of the Institute for Development and Innovation in Serbia. The focus of Workshop 2 was on concrete measures and strategies to cope with the challenge of emigration, departing from suggestions by **Mirna Jusić**, Charles University Prague, and **Jelena Predojević-Despić**, Institute of Social Sciences in Belgrade. Best-practice examples and lessons learned from Romania in the field of brain gain policies were added to the discussion by **Remus Anghel**, Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities, and **Monica Roman**, Bucharest University of Economics. Workshop 3 covered the role of the diaspora with contributions by **Nermin Oruč**, Director of the Centre for Development Evaluation and Social Science Research (CREDI) in Sarajevo, and **Lumnije Jusufi** from Humboldt-University in Berlin. Furthermore, participants discussed the potential of regional approaches in addressing the challenge departing from ideas put forward by **Silvana**

**Mojsovska**, University “Ss.Cyril and Methodius” North Macedonia, and **Dafina Peci**, then Governing Board member of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO). Following the presentations, the participants were divided into small working groups to jointly elaborate specific policy recommendations for the respective topics.

The event was supported by the German Federal Foreign Office. The topics and results discussed fed into a high-level conference on emigration from the Western Balkans, which was jointly organized by Southeast Europe Association and Aspen Germany in October 2020 in the framework of the German EU Council Presidency.

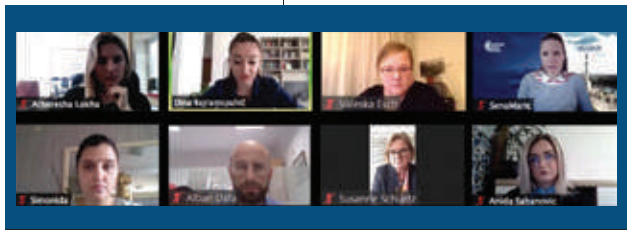


### Background Discussion on the Current Situation in the Western Balkans, June 22, 2020

On June 22, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a background discussion on the current situation in the Western Balkans between representatives of the German Government and staffers of the German Bundestag. **Alexander Jung**, Deputy Head of Division 212 Bilateral Relations to the Countries of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia at the German Federal Chancellery; **Thomas Motak**, Deputy Head of Division E12, EU External Affairs (EU Enlargement, European Neighbourhood Policy, EU External Financing Instruments) at the German Federal Foreign Office; and **Sabine Stöhr**, then Head of Division 209 Western Balkans at the German Federal Foreign Office, shared their assessments of the situation in the region from the perspective of their respective divisions and presented the priorities, initiatives and challenges for the next months. The discussion focused on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region, the current political situation with regard to past and upcoming elections in the region, and the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue. Another topic was the upcoming German Council Presidency and the latest developments in the EU accession processes of the Western Balkan countries. The event was part of a series of regular background discussions to enable regular exchanges on current priorities and challenges in the Western Balkans.

### Online Discussion “Viktor Orbán’s Growing Interest in the Western Balkans”, June 17, 2020

On June 17, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany and the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) hosted an online discussion on the topic “Viktor Orbán’s Growing Interest in the Western Balkans” with **Goran Buldioski**, Director of the Berlin Office of Open Society Foundations and Director of the Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE); **Adnan Ćerimagić**, Analyst at European Stability Initiative (ESI); **Ivana Jeremić**, Editor at Balkan Insight; and **Péter Krekó**, Director at Political Capital Institute and Europe’s Future Fellow, IWM/Erste Stiftung. Together with the other participants of the event, they discussed the influence of Hungary in the Western Balkans, more specifically in Serbia and North Macedonia. The focus was on the economic ties between Hungary, Serbia, and North Macedonia, the relationship and common interests of Viktor Orbán and Aleksandar Vučić, and the role of civil society. The effects on the EU enlargement process and rule of law as well as the relevance of other external actors in the region were also discussed. The event was jointly moderated by **Valeska Esch**, Deputy Executive Director and Program Director Europe, Aspen Institute Germany, and **Milan Nič**, Head, Robert Bosch Center for Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and Central Asia, German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP).



### Online Expert Workshop: “The COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans: Effects on Democracy, Rule of Law, and Civil Society”, June 9, 2020

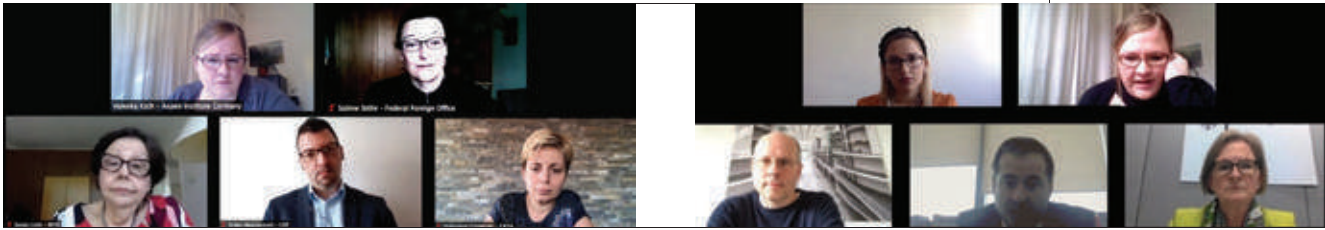
On June 9, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted the first issue of its online Expert Workshop Series „The COVID-19 Pandemic in the Western Balkans: Consequences and Policy Approaches.“ The closed-door workshop focused on “Effects on Democracy, Rule of Law, and Civil Society” in the wake of the public health crisis and gathered more than 30 experts from the Western Balkan countries, representatives of EU member states as well as from EU institutions.

After welcoming remarks by **Ambassador Susanne Schütz**, Director for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey, OSCE and Council of Europe at the German Federal Foreign Office, members of the **Think for Europe Network (TEN)**, a network of six Western Balkan think tanks, presented their working paper on the recent developments in the region concerning the independence of institutions, the respect for citizens’ rights, the political and societal climate, as well as the situation of critical voices and vulnerable groups. The ensuing breakout sessions focused on discussing ideas on how to prevent negative effects in these areas and how to seize potential windows of opportunity. Some of the ideas voiced included supporting independent media and civil society in their function as watchdogs, and strictly linking additional EU support for the region to the criteria of good governance. Further results of this workshop will be published in the upcoming weeks.

The Expert Workshop Series was organized in the framework of Aspen’s Regional Dialog on the Western Balkans, kindly supported by the German Federal Foreign Office.

### Online Expert Discussion about the Current Economic Situation in North Macedonia, May 27, 2020

On May 27, 2020, the German Eastern Business Association supported by the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an online expert discussion about the current economic situation in North Macedonia. **Dr. Blagica Petreski**, Chief Economist and CEO of Finance Think, and **Marjan Nikolov**, President of the Center for Economic Analysis, discussed the current government measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the following economic crisis, the role of the skills shortage and the strengthening of the economy after the crisis. The upcoming elections and the current political situation as well as the investment climate were also discussed. The event was moderated by Anja Quiring, Regional Director South Eastern Europe, German Eastern Business Association.



### Online Discussion: “Political Developments in Serbia and Their Implications”, May 12, 2020

On May 12, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an online discussion on the topic “Political Developments in Serbia and Their Implications” with **Vukosava Crnjanski**, Founder and Director, Centre for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA); **Sonja Licht**, President, Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE); **Srdan Majstorović**, Chairman of the Governing Board, European Policy Centre (CEP); and **Sabine Stöhr**, then Head of Division 209 Western Balkans, German Federal Foreign Office. The online discussion focused on the latest political developments in Serbia. Despite a state of emergency and the strictest lockdown measures in the region, Serbia was hit harder by the COVID-19 pandemic than neighboring states. At the same time, criticism has been getting louder that President Aleksandar Vučić is using the crisis to further undermine the Serbian democracy and strengthen his rule and that he is even turning his back on the EU relying more and more on China. The discussion therefore reviewed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Serbian democracy, the role of the civil society and the influence of Russia and China. Another topic that was also discussed was the Serbian parliamentary elections which had to be postponed due to the pandemic as well as the current developments with regard to the EU accession process of Serbia and the dialogue with Kosovo. The event was moderated by **Valeska Esch**, Deputy Executive Director and Program Director Europe at the Aspen Institute Germany.

### Online Discussion “The Political Crisis in Kosovo and the Consequences for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue”, April 2, 2020

The Aspen Institute Germany together with the Group for Legal and Political Studies hosted an online discussion on the topic “The Political Crisis in Kosovo and the Consequences for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue” with **Taulant Kryeziu**, then Acting Deputy Minister for European Integration of the Republic of Kosovo; **Dr. Arbëresha Loxha**, Executive Director at Group for Legal and Political Studies; **Peter Beyer**, Member of the German Bundestag and Coordinator of Transatlantic Cooperation at the German Federal Foreign Office; and **Ambassador Susanne Schütz**, Director for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey, OSCE and Council of Europe at the German Federal Foreign Office. The event was moderated by **Valeska Esch**, Deputy Executive Director and Program Director Europe at the Aspen Institute Germany. The online discussion focused on the current political developments in Kosovo. The government led by Prime Minister Albin Kurti recently fell as a consequence of a no-confidence motion initiated by their coalition partner. Disagreements between the political parties in Kosovo include adequate responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, the tariffs on goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the future of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The participants discussed the next steps, the consequences for Kosovo’s European and transatlantic relations, visa liberalization, the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue and how to adequately response to COVID-19 pandemic amid the political crisis. Another topic that caused some debate was the relationship between the EU and the United States, in particular regarding the differences vis-à-vis the vote of no confidence as well as the future interaction of the EU and U.S. Envoys for the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue.



### **Background Discussion on the Current Situation in the Western Balkans, February 20, 2020**

On February 20, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a background discussion on the current situation in the Western Balkans between representatives of the German Government and staffers of the German Bundestag. **Alexander Jung**, Deputy Head of Division 212 Bilateral Relations to the Countries of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia at the German Federal Chancellery; **Sabine Stöhr**, then Head of Division 209 Western Balkans at the German Federal Foreign Office; **Thomas Motak**, Deputy Head of Division E12, EU External Affairs (EU Enlargement, European Neighbourhood Policy, EU External Financing Instruments) at the German Federal Foreign Office; **Helge Tolktsdorf**, then Head of Division EU-Enlargement, Southeastern Europe, Turkey at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy; and **Daniela Bergelt**, Political Advisor for Serbia and Belarus, Division 302 “Eastern Europe, Southeast Europe and Caucasus” at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, shared the priorities and assessments of the situation in the region from the perspective of their respective divisions and presented an outlook for this year. The discussion focused on the current reform processes and domestic political developments within the countries of the Western Balkans, the new proposal of the European Commission on the enlargement of the European Union, and the discussions regarding the accession negotiations within the EU. The event was part of a series of regular background discussions to enable regular exchanges on current priorities and challenges in the Western Balkans.



### **Panel Discussion “Between Slow Reforms in the Western Balkans and the EU’s Absorption Capacity – Quo Vadis EU Enlargement?”, December 12, 2019**

To round up the annual Working Group Western Balkans, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a public evening event on “Between Slow Reforms in the Western Balkans and the EU’s Absorption Capacity – Quo Vadis EU Enlargement?” The failure of the European Council (October 2020) to agree to the opening of accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia despite substantial progress in both countries has come as a deep shock to the Western Balkans, leading to an overall questioning of the credibility of the membership perspective. Some even say that this was a historical mistake through which the EU has lost its credibility in the region. In addition, issues regarding the rule of law, governance, democracy, and economic development, which have been the target of reform processes, continue to stand in the way of progress in the countries’ further EU integration. The conditionality approach, which has been seen as a key EU tool to initiate and accompany reform processes in countries looking to join the European Union, seems damaged. At the same time, all 28 EU member states explicitly reaffirmed the membership perspective for countries in the region and France has put forward suggestions how to reform the accession process. The panel therefore discussed how to move forward from here, both in the EU, its member states, but also in the WB6, and what this means for the situation in the region in particular. **Ambassador Thomas Ossowski**, then Director for EU Policies (Enlargement, Neighborhood, Sanctions, Internal Market, Justice and Home Affairs, Economic and Monetary Union), Special Representative for the Negotiations on the EU Multiannual Financial Framework at the German Federal Foreign Office, and **Prof. Dr. Tanja Mišćević**, Deputy Secretary General at the Regional Cooperation Council, discussed



### **Working Group Western Balkans, December 11-12, 2019**

this with high-level government representatives from the Western Balkans Six. The discussion was moderated by **Hedvig Morvai**, Director of Strategy and Europe at ERSTE Foundation and introduced by a short video in which young people from the Western Balkans formulate what they expect from their politicians vis-à-vis the EU accession process. The Aspen Institute Germany would like to thank Deutsche Welle, which produced the video as part of the Balkan Boosters project, for their contribution.

The Aspen Institute Germany hosted its annual Working Group Western Balkans on December 11-12, 2019 in Berlin to conclude its Western Balkans Program 2019. The goal of this working group was to develop concrete policy recommendations as a result of the issues discussed throughout the Aspen Western Balkans conferences this year and to identify the next steps that should be taken by Western Balkans, German, and EU decision-makers. The key topics during the Aspen conferences in 2019 included economic development and emigration as well as strengthening parliaments and their role in the Western Balkans. Moreover, the working group took stock of the current situation in the EU integration process of the Western Balkan countries and discussed ways of reinvigorating this process. The working group consisted of one high-level government representative from the Western Balkans Six, select experts as well as representatives from the EU, the German Government, and Bundestag.



### **Background Briefing on EU Accession Negotiations with Countries in the Western Balkans, December 4, 2019**

On December 04, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a background discussion on the EU accession negotiations with the Western Balkan countries. **Sabine Stöhr**, then Head of the Western Balkans Division at the Federal Foreign Office, and **Thomas Motak**, Deputy Head of Division E12, EU External Relations (EU Enlargement, European Neighborhood Policy), discussed the EU accession process and latest developments in the region with staffers of the German Bundestag. The discussion focused especially on the failure of the European Council to agree on opening EU accession talks with Albania and North Macedonia, the consequences for both countries, the membership perspective for the Western Balkan region overall, as well as the next steps that are to be expected at the European level.



### **Western Balkans Conference on “The Western Balkans Between Economic Development and Emigration”, October 29-November 1, 2019**

From October 29 to November 1, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a closed conference in Budva with the support of the German Federal Foreign Office and in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry of Montenegro on “The Western Balkans Between Economic Development and Emigration”. Among the conference participants were government representatives, Members of Parliament, mayors from the Western Balkans as well as experts from civil society from the region, Germany, and the EU. The aim of this conference was to offer a platform for these high-level participants to discuss central challenges the Western Balkans countries and their partners are facing. The following questions were in the focus of the discussions: Why are people leaving the WB6? How can economic activity and growth be fostered in the Western Balkans? How can attractive jobs be created in a sustainable way? What role can the digital economy play for economic development? How can entrepreneurs and start-ups be better supported? To what extent do underdeveloped networks of critical infrastructure constitute an additional obstacle to regional economic development? What role can the Regional Economic Area play and how can its creation be sped up? Besides these questions, the recent failure to come to an agreement about the opening of accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia at the last European Council meeting and how this will impact the future of the WB6 and EU relations was discussed during the event.



### Roundtable Discussion “Resolving the Enlargement Deadlock: Between Rule of Law Deficiencies in the WB6 and the EU’s Absorption Capacity“, October 24, 2019

On October 24, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a roundtable discussion entitled “Resolving the Enlargement Deadlock: Between Rule of Law Deficiencies in the WB6 and the EU’s Absorption Capacity“. **Ardita Abazi Imeri**, Head of Programs, European Policy Institute (EPI); **Milena Lazarević**, Programme Director, European Policy Centre (CEP); **Arbëresha Loxha**, Executive Director, Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS); **Dina Bajramspahić**, Researcher, Institut Alternativa (IA); and **Thomas Motak**, Deputy Head of Division E12, EU External Relations (EU Enlargement, European Neighborhood Policy), German Federal Foreign Office, discussed the rule of law in the region, its integration processes and related reforms as well as the EU’s absorption capacity with staffers of the German Bundestag, experts from civil society, and the interested public. The focus of the discussion was on the methodology of the EU enlargement process and its shortcomings, especially in terms of regional democratization processes and rule of law reforms. After the failure of the European Council to agree on opening EU accession talks with Albania and North Macedonia, experts from the Think for Europe Network (TEN) took this opportunity to point out some methodological shortcomings in the process, which especially France had offered concerns about, and proposed potential solutions. These were discussed with Mr. Motak, who emphasized that the German government is in favor of opening accession negotiations with both countries as soon as possible.

### Roundtable Discussion on the topic “Current Political Developments in Kosovo and the Role of the Opposition“, September 11, 2019

While most international attention about the Republic of Kosovo goes to the Belgrade- Pristina dialogue , the roundtable discussion focused on the domestic political situation in the country and in particular the role of the opposition. **Albin Kurti**, President of Vetëvendosje! and at the time candidate for Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, and **Josip Juratović**, Member of the German Bundestag, discussed the following questions: What is the current political situation? What do obvious divisions within the government mean for the country? What would be likely coalitions and what will this mean for the future of the country? What is the status of much-needed reforms? What does the dominance of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue mean for the internal development of democracy in the country? How can the Serbian community be better integrated in political decision-making?



### **Debrief on the 2019 Western Balkans Summit in Poznań, July 9, 2019**

On July 09, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany organized an informal debrief on the 2019 Berlin Process Summit in Poznań. **Christiane Hullmann**, then Deputy Head of Division 209 Western Balkans at the German Federal Foreign Office; **Matthias Lüttenberg**, then Head of Division 212 Bilateral Relations to the Countries of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia at the Federal Chancellery; **Helge Tolksdorf**, then Head of Division EU-Enlargement, Southeastern Europe, Turkey in the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy; and **Valeska Esch**, Program Director with the Aspen Institute Germany shared their experiences and elaborated on their perspectives on the summit's outcomes. With representatives from the German Foreign Office, the Federal Chancellery, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, and civil society, the summit was analyzed in depth and with respect to all of its parallel events. The participants consisted of representatives from the Bundestag and civil society, such as journalists, think tanks or political foundations.



### **Exclusive Dinner with the President of the Republic of North Macedonia, H.E. Stevo Pendarovski, June 24, 2019**

On June 24, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an exclusive dinner with the President of the Republic of North Macedonia, **H.E. Stevo Pendarovski**, and his delegation at the China Club in Berlin. The dinner, on the occasion of the inaugural visit of the newly elected President of the Republic of North Macedonia, offered the opportunity for an open exchange in a small, exclusive setting with members of the German Bundestag, and government, journalists, and experts. The following discussion focused on the EU integration process and NATO membership of the Republic of North Macedonia, recent political developments in the country, the region, as well as in the EU.



### **Background Briefing on the Current Situation in the Western Balkans, June 13, 2019**

On June 13, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a background discussion on the current situation in Albania and North Macedonia with regard to the possible opening of EU accession negotiations with both countries this year. **Sabine Stöhr**, Head of the Western Balkans Division at the Federal Foreign Office, and **Alexander Jung**, Deputy Head of Division 212 Bilateral Relations to the Countries of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia at the German Federal Chancellery, discussed the EU accession process and latest developments in the two countries with staffers of the German Bundestag.

### **Visegrád 4-Germany Forum 2019 “New Avenues of Cooperation and Enhanced Consultation”, June 3-4, 2019**

On June 3-4, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany, in cooperation with the Aspen Institute Central Europe, hosted a workshop on “New Avenues of Cooperation and Enhanced Consultation” in Berlin. The participants from Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and Germany engaged in discussions on the political economy of Central Europe, focusing on common interests and key challenges of the Visegrád countries and Germany. During the workshop in Berlin, the key findings and recommendations that were developed during the two previous workshops were presented and discussed with German experts and decision-makers. Moreover, the meeting discussed conclusions of Visegrád 4-Germany Forum aimed at joint development of new ideas to further strengthen cooperation through unleashing innovative potential and jointly exploring new opportunities. Finally, participants had the opportunity to meet **State Minister for Europe Michael Roth** and to discuss with members of the Parliamentary friendship groups Germany-Poland and Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, and Hungary in the German Bundestag.



### **Panel Discussion “Visegrad Countries and Germany – New Avenues of Cooperation and Enhanced Consultation”, June 3, 2019**

On June 3, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany, the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Berlin, and the Aspen Institute Central Europe hosted a panel discussion on the topic “Visegrad Countries and Germany – New Avenues of Cooperation and Enhanced Consultation”. Beyond robust economic relations between Visegrád 4 countries and Germany, there is still space for closer political ties. State Secretary **Claudia Dörr-Voß**, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy of the Federal Republic of Germany; then State Secretary **František Ružička**, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic; **Jiří Nantl**, Director, Central European Institute of Technology and Chairman of Alliance4Life; and **Olaf Osica**, Director of International Affairs, European Economic Congress Katowice, discussed conclusions of two years of V4-Germany Forum aimed at the joint development of new ideas to further strengthen cooperation through unleashing innovative potential and jointly exploring new opportunities. How can economic relations be further developed beyond a supply chain for large German companies? Which sectors should be considered in order to remain competitive in a changing global economy? How can economic cooperation better translate into closer political cooperation? The discussion was moderated by **Jiří Schneider**, then Executive Director, Aspen Institute Central Europe.



### **Parliamentary Conference on “Strengthening Regional Parliamentary Cooperation in Support for RYCO and Parliaments’ Engagement in the Berlin Process and Beyond”, May 20-21, 2019**

On May 20-21, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a conference on “Strengthening Regional Parliamentary Cooperation in Support For RYCO and Parliaments’ Engagement in the Berlin Process and Beyond” in cooperation with the Franco-German Youth Office. The conference was supported by the German Foreign Office, RYCO, and Crossborder Factory. The aim of the conference was to support the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) as engine of regional cooperation and as the voice of the young generation, as well as to develop and discuss concrete ideas for regional cooperation among parliamentarians of the Western Balkans. During the conference the participants furthermore reflected on how the parliaments could be involved in the Berlin process more closely. The conference brought together Parliamentarians from the Western Balkans, Members of the German Bundestag and the French Assemblée Nationale, and youth representatives from across the Western Balkans. Building on experiences of parliamentary cooperation between Germany and France, the conference discussed furthermore thematic areas and potential frameworks of regional cooperation and support for RYCO for Members of Parliament in the Western Balkans.



### **Roundtable Discussion on “Shaping the Path to Montenegro’s EU Integration – Key Challenges and Current Political Developments”, May 17, 2019**

On May 17, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a roundtable discussion on the topic “Shaping the Path to Montenegro’s EU Integration – Key Challenges and Current Political Developments” in cooperation with the Centre for Monitoring and Research (CeMI) and the Institute Alternative (IA) in Podgorica, Montenegro. **Zlatko Vujović**, President of CeMI’s Governing Board; **Nikoleta Đukanović**, CeMI’s Executive Director; **Ana Đurnić**, Public Policy Researcher at the Institute Alternativa (IA); and **Ambassador Dr. Christian Hellbach**, then Director for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey and the EFTA States in the German Federal Foreign Office, discussed the state of reforms in Montenegro as well as the country’s EU integration process against the background of recent political developments in the region.

### **Western Balkans Conference on “Strengthening Parliaments and Their Role in the Western Balkans Reform Processes”, May 7-10, 2019**

On May 7-10, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a conference on “Strengthening Parliaments and Their Role in the Western Balkans Reform Processes” with the support of the Federal Foreign Office. The aim of this conference was to offer a platform for high-level participants from the Western Balkans, Germany, as well as international organizations to discuss central challenges the Western Balkan countries and their partners are facing. Over the course of two days, the participants discussed the role of parliaments in the WB reform processes: Is the EU’s quid pro quo principle of conditionality still working as a reform engine? How can parliaments play a bigger role in encouraging the reform processes? How can the oversight function of parliaments be strengthened as a core role in the political systems of parliamentary democracies? Which role does party financing play in the Western Balkans and how can the parliament become more transparent and accountable?

Meetings and discussions with then State Secretary **Prof. Dr. Risse**, Director of the German Bundestag; **Patrick Sensburg**, Member of the Parliamentary Oversight Panel for the Intelligence Services; **Reinhold Robbe**, Former Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces, and a presentation on the platform [abgeordnetenwatch.de](http://abgeordnetenwatch.de) by **Léa Briand** complemented this event.



**Roundtable Discussion on “Albania and EU Accession Talks – Partnering with the Citizens’ Quest for Democracy”, April 11, 2019**

On April 11, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a roundtable discussion on the topic “Albania and EU Accession Talks – Partnering with the Citizens’ Quest for Democracy” in cooperation with the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) from Tirana, Albania. **Sotirag Hroni**, Executive Director at the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM); **Mr. Gjergji Vurmo**, Program Director at the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM); and Ambassador **Thomas Ossowski**, then Special Representative for the Negotiations on the EU Multiannual Financial Framework and Deputy Director General for European Affairs of the German Federal Foreign Office, discussed the upcoming EC Progress Report and the subsequent June 2019 European Council decision on the opening of EU accession talks with Albania, as well as recent developments in the country.



**Panel Discussion: “Is Illiberalism Epidemic? Lessons from Europe”, March 19, 2019**

On March 19, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a roundtable discussion on the topic “Is Illiberalism Epidemic? Lessons from Europe” in cooperation with the Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities in Skopje. **Prof. Dr. Tanja Börzel**, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Cluster of Excellence “Contestations of the Liberal Script”, Chair for European Integration at the Otto-Suhr-Institute for Political Science of the Freie Universität Berlin; **Prof. Dr. Katerina Kolozova**, Executive Director at the Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities in Skopje; and **Dr. Anton Shekhovtsov**, Research Associate at the Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation in Kiev, discussed the rise in popularity of the anti-liberal discourse among the far right and far left parties in Europe as well as populism as rhetorical-ideological orientation.



**Scenario Workshop on “How to Achieve Economic Competitiveness in the Western Balkans by 2030?”, March 6-7, 2019**

From March 6-7, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany organized a Scenario Workshop on the topic “How to Achieve Economic Competitiveness in the Western Balkans by 2030?”. The workshop started off with input statements by **Helge Tolksdorf**, then Head of the Division EU-Enlargement, Southeastern Europe, Turkey at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, and **Hendrik Bosshammer**, Economist and Project Manager “South East Europe Competitiveness Outlook” at the OECD on the current economic structure and competitiveness of the Western Balkan economies. The participants then identified key trends and drivers in European and world economies and analyzed their respective impact. The overarching aim of the workshop was to develop a best-case scenario for the Western Balkans for 2030 and have a discussion about what needs to be done to reach this normative endpoint (backcasting). The group of participants was composed of experts from economic think tanks from the Western Balkans, representatives from German Federal Ministries, the OECD and business representatives.

**Visegrád 4-Germany Forum 2019  
“Research, Innovation and Technology”,  
February 25, 2019**

On February 25, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany, in cooperation with the Aspen Institute Central Europe, hosted a workshop on “Research, Innovation and Technology” in Budapest. The participants from Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Germany engaged in discussions on the political economy of Central Europe, focusing on common interest and key challenges of the Visegrád countries and Germany. During the workshop the drivers of economic development such as small and medium-sized enterprises and opportunities and best practices of cooperation in the field of research and development were discussed. Moreover, it sought to foster mutual understanding of diverging positions of the Visegrád countries and Germany.



**Exclusive Breakfast Discussion with  
Montenegro's Minister of Foreign Affairs  
H.E. Srđan Darmanović, February 12, 2019**

On February 12, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an exclusive breakfast discussion with Montenegro's Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, H.E. **Srđan Darmanović**, on Montenegro's Euro-Atlantic Integration. Montenegro is the youngest NATO member state and considered to be one of the frontrunners in the EU integration process of the Western Balkan countries. The smallest country in the region has started its accession negotiations with the EU in 2012, and the EU has outlined 2025 as a potential but ambitious timeframe for its accession. This breakfast discussion gave the opportunity to discuss the progress of Montenegro's reform process and the major challenges on its way ahead. To start off the discussion H.E. Srđan Darmanović gave a short overview of Montenegro's progress in its Euro-Atlantic integration process and his assessment of the latest developments in the region. The following discussion focused on the cooperation between Montenegro and Germany and the role of the EU and other global actors in the region.



**Roundtable Discussion on "A European  
Future for Kosovo?", January 29, 2019**

On January 29, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a roundtable discussion on the question "A European Future for Kosovo?" with **Fisnik Korenica**, Senior Research Fellow at Group for Legal and Political Studies; **Peter Beyer**, Member of the German Bundestag, Rapporteur for Kosovo, Serbia, and Montenegro in the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Coordinator for Transatlantic Cooperation in the Federal Foreign Office; and **Sabine Stöhr**, then Head of Western Balkans Division at the Federal Foreign Office. After short input statements by the three speakers, the participants discussed Kosovo's progress on the EU integration path and the country's expectations, opportunities, and key challenges ahead. Current topics were discussed, including the latest developments in the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, the 100 percent trade tariffs imposed by Kosovo on goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as prospects for a potential decision on the visa liberalization process by the European Council. Furthermore, long-term issues were tackled, including reform processes regarding rule of law and the fight against corruption as well as the role Germany, the EU and other actors will play in Kosovo in the future.



### **Background Briefing on the Current Situation in the Western Balkans, January 21, 2019**

On January 21, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a background discussion on the current situation in the Western Balkans with **Alexander Jung**, Deputy Head of Division 212 Bilateral Relations to the Countries of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia at the German Federal Chancellery; **Thomas Motak**, Deputy Head of Division E12, EU External Relations (EU Enlargement, European Neighborhood Policy, Migration) at the Federal Foreign Office; **Dirk Schattschneider**, then Head of Division 302, Eastern Europe, Southeast Europe and Caucasus at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; **Sabine Stöhr**, then Head of Division 209 Western Balkans at the Federal Foreign Office; and **Helge Tolksdorf**, then Head of Division EU-Enlargement, Southeastern Europe, Turkey at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. Bundestag staffers with an interest in the Western Balkans were invited to this event that aimed at networking and fostering open exchange. At the beginning of the discussion, the speakers presented their work and priorities of their divisions, the challenges and priorities in the region, and an outlook for the year. Also discussed were the developments and reforms of the countries in the Western Balkans, as well as the influence of other global actors in the region.

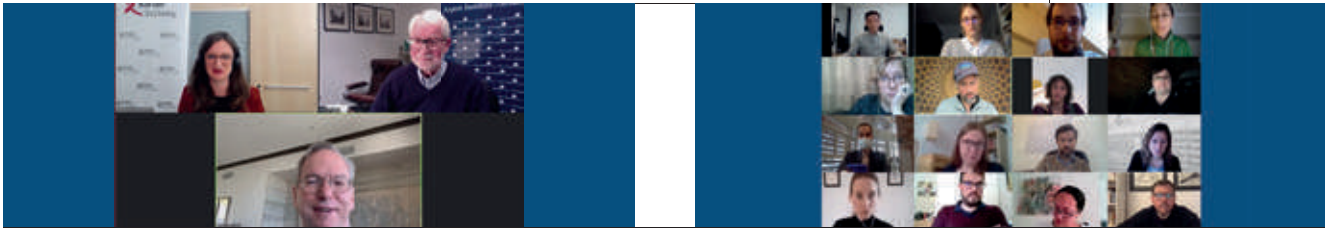
# DIGITAL PROGRAM



## **Aspen Berlin AI Week “Humanity Enabled: AI & the Great Economic Acceleration”, December 7-11, 2020**

Aspen Germany hosted its third annual AI Conference over the course of one week from December 7-11, 2020. During the Aspen Berlin AI Week, top policy-makers, innovators, philosophers, academics, and representatives from business, media, and civil society from across the world came together in a virtual setting for discussion formats including keynotes, two-on-one conversations, panel discussions, and seminars taking place in both English and German.

The triple crises in 2020 represent a stress test for societies, economies, and governments around the globe. The impact of COVID-19 is speeding-up current technological and societal trends; it is blurring the lines between home and work; highlighting income, social, racial, and inter-generational inequalities. And it is further polarizing politics. At the same time, Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning (AI/ML) tools can play an important role in helping combat not only the current crises, but also the many challenges ahead. In the midst of these developments, the EU – under the German Council Presidency – has put the issue of digital sovereignty at the top of its agenda. This conference dived deep into the debate around key policy questions and the economic risks and opportunities of AI and tackled among many others, the following questions: What lessons has the pandemic taught societies about global AI dynamics? How will companies and societies manage increased pressure amid the race for AI technologies? How have labor markets and educational institutions responded to these developments? Will massive tech-driven productivity gains require changes to prevailing social and economic programs?



### **Virtual Discussion: “Special Session: A New Global Digital Order?”, November 24, 2020**

On November 24, 2020, Aspen Germany together with the Körber Foundation hosted an online discussion entitled “Special Session: A New Global Digital Order?” in the framework of this year’s Berlin Foreign Policy Forum with **Dr. Eric Schmidt**, Chair, National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence; Former Executive Chairman and CEO at Google and Co-Founder of Schmidt-Futures.

The digital transformation is causing some of the most profound societal challenges of the 21st century. The COVID-19 crisis accelerated the move toward digitization, drawing out aspects of inequality, while enabling new forms of economic and social resilience. It has also accelerated existing power dynamics on the global stage in the digital realm. In a conversation with **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director at Aspen Germany, and **Elisabeth von Hammerstein**, Programme Director International Affairs at the Körber-Stiftung, **Dr. Eric Schmidt** shared his views on a number of issues including current tech policy dynamics on the global stage, the impact of Artificial Intelligence on geopolitics, Europe’s quest for digital sovereignty, to name a few. Among others, the following questions were addressed: What are COVID-19’s implications on foreign policy and security issues? What are the pandemic’s broader societal impacts and how does the pandemic affect tech dynamics and diplomacy between Europe, the United States, and China? What can we expect from Joe Biden’s election as the new president of the United States with regard to the big tech-challenges of our times?

### **Virtual EU-China Summit Simulation, November 17, 2020**

On November 17, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual EU-China summit simulation focusing on the political dynamics at play in the Euro-Chinese tech policy space. The European Union (EU) and its member-states are undergoing a massive rethink on technology’s impact on its economy, security, and democracy. Brussels has made its quest for “digital sovereignty” a key strategic priority for the coming years. At the same time, the list of the EU’s tech policy issues with China is long and growing, creating the need to explore the demands, challenges, and opportunities in this growing tech relationship. Under the German Council presidency, the EU’s strategic relations with China are high on the agenda.

Therefore, the simulation brought together a group of policy-makers, legislators, academics, and representatives of the business and civil society communities who are working at the intersection of international security and tech issues mostly from Germany and Europe. The simulation was generously supported by the Open Society Foundations.



### **Virtual Workshop: “Tech and the Worker: Automation and the Education Cycle”, November 2, 2020**

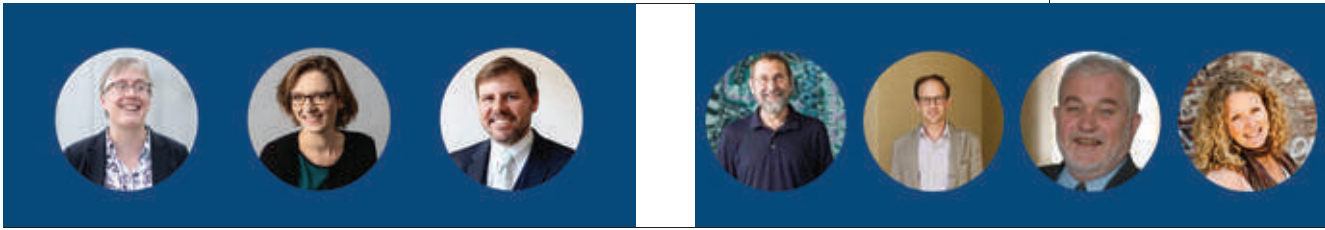
On November 2, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual workshop on “Tech and the Worker: Automation and the Education Cycle” with **Marina Gorbis**, Executive Director of the Institute for the Future (ITF), and **Dr. Max Neufeind**, Author, Speaker, and Policy Advisor on the Digital Transformation and the Future of Work.

This workshop focused on questions around professional supply, demand, and compensation. Together with the participants the main policy instruments of retraining and lifelong learning were examined and the following questions were tackled: How does automation affect on-the-job training in white collar professions? What does it mean when emotional-intelligence-centric professions like child and elder care are not well paid? How can incentives for reskilling be democratized so that they are not limited to those who are already more resilient to digital shocks and are more likely to take advantage of tax incentives and lifelong learning opportunities? How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the development of digital skills? This workshop was hosted in partnership with Microsoft and belongs to a 4-part event series exploring: 1) Lessons from past Industrial Revolutions, 2) A new Social Contract, 3) Automation and the Education Cycle, and 4) The policymaker’s Toolbox. These discussions ultimately aim to answer the questions: How can Europe, the United States, and other industrial powers thrive in the face of the Great Decoupling? How can public policy efforts work to preserve and deepen the dignity of work and meaningful economic participation in the deep digital age?



### **Virtual Book Presentation and Discussion on “How to Lose the Information War”, September 21, 2020**

On September 21, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual book presentation and discussion looking at the new publication “How to Lose the Information War” with **Nina Jankowicz**, Disinformation Fellow at The Wilson Center, and **Irene Maria Plank**, Director for Strategic Communication at the Federal Foreign Office. Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. elections was a wake-up call about a new type of information warfare. In “How to Lose the Information War” Nina Jankowicz delivers comprehensive insights into the fight against Russian disinformation across the battle lines in Central and Eastern Europe and what these laboratories can teach other democracies as they confront state-sponsored information warfare. At this event, the author presented the book’s main take-aways, and Irene Plank outlined the German Federal Foreign Office’s approach to disinformation. This conversation was moderated by **Tobias Jerzewski**, then Program Officer at Aspen Germany, where he and his guests discussed the complex topography of disinformation in 2020 and beyond, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and upcoming elections in the United States and Germany.



**Virtual Workshop: “Tech and the Worker: Rethinking the Social Contract”, September 17, 2020**

On September 17, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual workshop on “Tech and the Worker: Rethinking the Social Contract” with **Joanna Bryson**, Professor of Ethics and Technology at the Hertie School, and **Lisa Herzog**, Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy and the Center for Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Groningen.

In this discussion, the focus was on the fundamental challenges workers face today as a result of globalization, digitalization, and AI automation following decades of wage stagnation and weakening labor protections. At the same time, COVID-19 has pushed millions into precarity and is exacerbating inequalities. Are current institutions and policies adequately addressing these challenges? How can productivity gains, which are increasingly decoupling from wages, be redirected into society? Given today’s tilt toward technology, are new models of ownership including data trusts, data pricing and shared ownership necessary? What does a Social Contract fit for the 21st Century look like? This workshop took place in English and under the Chatham House Rule. It was hosted in partnership with Microsoft and belongs to a 4-part event series exploring: 1) Lessons from past Industrial Revolutions, 2) A new Social Contract, 3) Automation and the Education Cycle, and 4) The policymaker’s Toolbox. These discussions ultimately aim to answer the questions: How can Europe, the United States, and other industrial powers thrive in the face of the Great Decoupling? How can public policy efforts work to preserve and deepen the dignity of work and meaningful economic participation in the deep digital age?

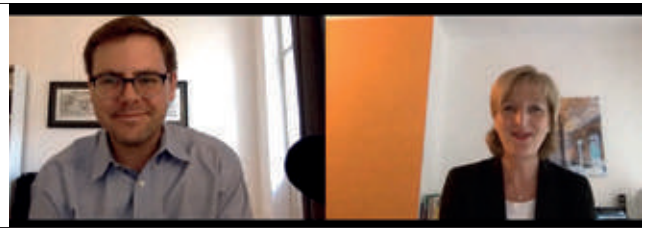
**Virtual Workshop: “Tech and the Worker: Lessons from past Industrial Revolutions”, July 14, 2020**

On July 14, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted the first event of its series on “Tech and the Worker: Overcoming the Conundrums of the Great Decoupling.” The event focused on lessons from past industrial revolutions and featured presentations from **Robert C. Allen**, Global Distinguished Professor of Economic History at New York University in Abu Dhabi and Senior Research Fellow at Nuffield College in Oxford; **Carl Benedikt Frey**, Oxford Martin Citi Fellow and Director of the Program on the Future of Work at Oxford Martin School; and **Jürgen Kocka**, Professor Emeritus of Social History and the Free University of Berlin and former President of the Social Science Research Center Berlin. The event explored parallels to past industrial revolutions, all of which have had three large effects: breakneck progress in productivity, social upheaval, and massive concentrations of wealth (and political power). The speakers considered the mid-18th and late 19th century industrial revolutions, in addition to the immediate post-Cold War economic boom. Questions that were explored by the participants include: How can lessons from the past help us understand the current technological revolution? What are the historical conditions, policy successes, failures, insights, and myths from the past that will help equip policy-makers for the deep digital age?



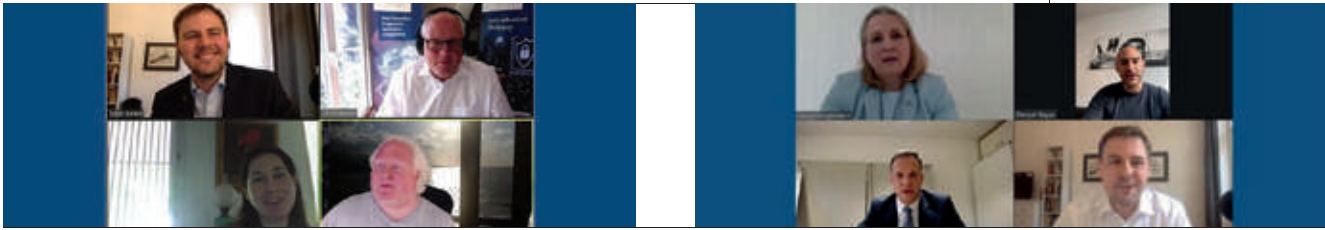
### **The Not-So-International System? Geo-Politics of Tech and COVID-19, June 18, 2020**

On June 18, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual conversation on “The Not-So- International System? Geo-Politics of Tech and COVID-19” with **Vivian Schiller**, Executive Director, Aspen Digital; **Aleksandar Stojanovic**, Executive Chairman and Co- Founder, AVA; **Jennifer Zhu Scott**, Founding Principal, Radian Partners; and **Hinrich Thölken**, Special Envoy for Digitalization and Digital Transformation, Federal Foreign Office of Germany. This final event of the “COVID-19 and Technology” series took a big picture look at how the COVID-19 pandemic played out and impacted global tech- dynamics, including its implications for international cooperation, cyber-security, global governance, and how to arrive at international norms for the use of data and technology in the fight against COVID-19. How is the interoperability of technology and data being put forward? What role are multi-stakeholder approaches playing in overcoming the current crisis? And do international actors foster collaboration in areas which have been highly competitive before the COVID-19 outbreak such as Artificial Intelligence and edge computing? The event gave participants the opportunity to engage with leading researchers, entrepreneurs, policy-makers, and civil society in interactive discussions looking at how tech is dealing with the COVID-19 crisis in Germany, Europe, the transatlantic space, and the world. Talks addressed how technology like AI, 3D printing, and big data are supporting diagnostics, medical production, resilience, and analytics of infection spreading. They furthermore addressed issues around the geo-politics of tech in the pandemic, the race for a vaccine, cybersecurity, disinformation and fake news, and the use (and misuse) of data. This virtual conversation series took place in partnership with Google.



### **Virtual Conversation: COVID-19, Tech and Ethics in Democratic Societies, June 10, 2020**

On June 10, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual conversation on “COVID-19, Tech and Ethics in Democratic Societies” together with **Christiane Woopen**, Chair, European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE) & Director, Cologne Center for Ethics, Rights, Economics, and Social Sciences of Health (CERES). We explored the ethical trade-offs the use of technology has posed for citizens, governments, health providers, developers, and businesses in the fight against COVID-19, the creeping or lingering effects on democracy, and many more questions. This conversation was part of an interactive series on “COVID-19 and Technology”, taking place in partnership with Google.

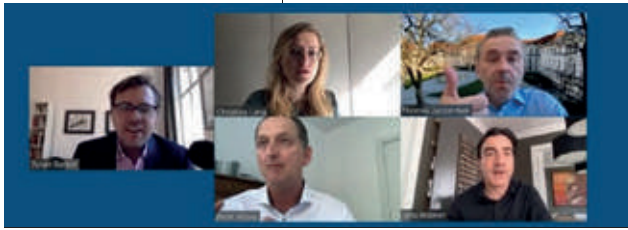


### Virtual Conversation: Data Conundrums in the Age of COVID-19, May 27, 2020

On May 27, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual conversation on “Data Conundrums in the Age of COVID-19” with **María Álvarez**, Public Policy and Government Relations Manager, Google; **Chris Boos**, Co-founder PEPP-PT Initiative; Founder and Managing Director, Arago; Member of the German Government’s Digital Council; and **Ulrich Kelber**, Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information. New digital tools have become a central part of Germany’s COVID-19 Exit Strategy. But they have also presented new questions regarding the privacy and protection of citizens’ personal data. How can governments, companies, and users guarantee that contact tracing apps, symptom monitoring technology and other technologies are safeguarding hard won data protections? Have citizen expectations regarding data protection changed? What level of data access is necessary for these tools to become effective? This discussion examined what if any, are the tradeoffs confronting society between quick deployment of COVID-19 mitigating technology and preservation of data protection and privacy.

### Virtual Conversation: Digital Sovereignty & Gaia-X in Times of Crisis, May 14, 2020

On May 14, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual conversation on “Digital Sovereignty & Gaia-X in Times of Crisis” together with **Danyal Bayaz**, then Member of the German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens) and Special Representative of Start-ups for The Greens; **Marco-Alexander Breit**, Head of Artificial Intelligence Unit, German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy; and **Ursula Morgenstern**, then CEO and Managing Director, Atos Deutschland. Participants explored how Germany’s flagship tech initiative to establish a competitive and secure data infrastructure for Europe, known as Gaia-X, is faring. Our speakers shed light on the next stages of development and the many open questions that remain, both in technical terms and in the context of this pandemic. This conversation was part of the “COVID-19 and Technology” series, taking place in partnership with Google.



### **Virtual Conversation: Germany Mobilizes Tech: Whole of Technology Responses to COVID-19, May 6, 2020**

On May 6, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual conversation on „Germany Mobilizes Tech: Whole of Technology Responses to COVID-19“ together with **Peter Albiez**, Country Manager Germany, Pfizer; **Thomas Jarzombek**, Commissioner for the Digital Industry and Start-ups and Federal Government Coordinator of German Aerospace Policy, German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy; Member of the German Bundestag (CDU/CSU); **Christina Lang**, CEO and Co-Founder, Tech4Germany; and **Jens Redmer**, Head of Product Policy, Google. This discussion examined how Germany was marshaling the power of emerging technology in the fight against COVID-19. The audience heard from the people working on the ground to support innovation from the Germany-wide Hackathon that mobilized over 42,000 participants to the latest in infection tracking technology. This conversation was part of the “COVID-19 and Technology” series, taking place in partnership with Google.



### **Virtual Conversation Series: COVID-19 and German Tech Policy, April 30, 2020**

On April 30, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual conversation on “**COVID-19 and German Tech Policy**” together with **Saskia Esken**, chairperson of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and member of the Bundestag. This on-the-record discussion focused on how German policy-makers can shape tech policy that helps Germany recover from the twin health and economic crises stemming from the Coronavirus. These included how best to deploy new technologies in areas like testing, tracking, diagnostics, and building capacity. It also included government responses to protect start-ups from the impact of COVID-19 economic crisis, encourage future R&D and prepare for tech-driven transformation that the crisis is likely to alter and, in some ways, accelerate. This conversation was part of the “COVID-19 and Technology” series, taking place in partnership with Google.



**Virtual Conversation Series: AI and the Fight Against COVID-19, April 17, 2020**

On April 17, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual conversation on “AI and the Fight Against COVID-19” together with **Anna Christmann**, Member of the German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens) and Spokeswoman for Innovation and Technology; **Nicolas Miaillhe**, Founder & President of The Future Society; and **Shannon Vallor**, Baillie Gifford Chair in the Ethics of Data and Artificial Intelligence at the University of Edinburgh. The speakers looked at problems and possibilities of using artificial intelligence in the fight against COVID-19. Topics included the prediction of spreading patterns, the detection of the virus in patients, the search for sustainable treatment methods, and the creation of movement profiles via tracing applications. This conversation was part of the “COVID-19 and Technology” series, taking place in partnership with Google.

**Virtual Conversation Series: COVID-19, Tech, and Democratic Readiness, March 31, 2020**

On March 31, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a virtual Zoom-based conversation on “**COVID-19, Tech and Democratic Readiness**” together with **Sir Julian King**, former European Commissioner for the Security Union (2016-19). This conversation looked at national and EU actions to protect democracies in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. It touched on a range of topics from disinformation to contact tracing and data usage in monitoring the infection spread. This conversation was part of the “COVID-19 and Technology” series, taking place in partnership with Google.



### Digital Dish on the Blockchain Strategies of Germany and the EU, December 2, 2019

On December 2, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Digital Dish on the “Blockchain Strategies of Germany and the EU” together with **Thomas Heilmann**, Member of the German Bundestag (CDU); **Katharina Gehra**, CEO & Co-Founder, Immutable Insight; Co-author, Block52 Podcast; Supervisory Board, Fürstlich Castell’sche Bank; and **Daniel Resas**, Associated Partner at Schnittker Möllmann Partners and Senior Fellow at the Zicklin Center (The Wharton School). In conversation with **Oliver Voß**, editor in the economic department of the publishing house Der Tagesspiegel, the planned crypto-currency Libra and aspects relating to the security as well as the economic background of blockchain-related innovations were debated. In the context of global developments in the e-finance market, the urgency of a German position, as well as the remaining technical, regulatory and ethical challenges were also discussed.



### Dinner Discussion with Vint Cerf on “AI and Global Governance”, November 25, 2019

On November 25, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an exclusive dinner discussion with Internet pioneer **Vinton G. Cerf** – who serves as Vice President & Chief Internet Evangelist at Google – in the context of the Internet Governance Forum in Berlin. The discussion revolved around the global governance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and was moderated by **Michaela Küfner**, Chief Political Editor at Deutsche Welle. Participants explored the challenges and parameters of a truly inclusive and international AI governance structure, addressing the political, legal, and ethical concerns that would need to be addressed. At the same time, the group discussed approaches to foster the innovative potential of this technology for the benefit of humanity.



### **International Security and Technology Crisis Simulation, November 21, 2019**

On November 21, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany had the pleasure of hosting a National Security and Technology Crisis simulation at the Embassy of Estonia in Berlin together with the Atlantic Council. The G7 crisis simulation brought together a group of international security experts from Germany, Europe, and the United States. Today's world is more connected than at any point in history. As the relationships of governments, institutions, private sector actors, and citizens continue to transcend borders, global governance needs to be adapted to meet those needs. The simulation raised awareness how tech impacts international security. The simulation was generously supported by our partner Microsoft.

### **Digital Dish with Member of the Bundestag Nadine Schön (CDU) on "The CDU's Digital Strategy", October 22, 2019**

On October 22, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a "Digital Dish" on the CDU digital strategy with **Nadine Schön**, deputy chairwoman of the CDU/ CSU Bundestag group and lead voice on the "Digital Agenda". The discussion focused on the digital charter, digital infrastructure, e-governance, tech-education, and data sovereignty, but also explored geopolitical issues concerning the role of Germany and the European Union in the digital age.

In conversation with **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at Aspen Germany, Nadine Schön addressed Germany's tech goals and examined how public administration and the private sector can become more digital. Participants were also interested in strategies that guarantee IT-security and a European industrial policy in areas where China and the United States are dominant players. The discussion was hosted in partnership with Telefonica Germany.



### Workshop on “AI & Bias”, June 4, 2019

The Aspen Institute Germany hosted an exclusive workshop on “AI & Bias” in cooperation with Microsoft Germany in the morning of June 4. Speakers included Professor **Ifeoma Ajunwa** (Cornell University), Professor **Corinna Bath** (University of Braunschweig), **Lorena Jaume-Palasi** (The Ethical Tech Society), **Professor Dr. Eric Hilgendorf** (Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg), **Joana Reicherts** (Microsoft Germany), and **Maximilian Poretschkin** (Fraunhofer Institute – IAIS). The workshop consisted of two sessions, the first one focusing on how policy-makers, tech companies, civil society, and industry should define the contours of automated decision-making and the second one pivoting to the responsibility of policy-makers to address the twin dangers of opacity and algorithmic/data bias. The event included 25 high-level guests and representatives from government, business, and international organizations. Among the topics discussed were bias in technologies used in hiring processes, for facial and voice recognition, and in predictive policing. The effects of digitalization and the application of machine learning systems on society and relevant policies and regulations were also discussed. The off-the-record workshop was moderated by **Tyson Barker** (then Deputy Executive Director) and **Olivia Knodt** (Program Officer) from the Aspen Institute Germany.

### Conference: Berlin CyberSecurityForum 2019, May 16-17, 2019

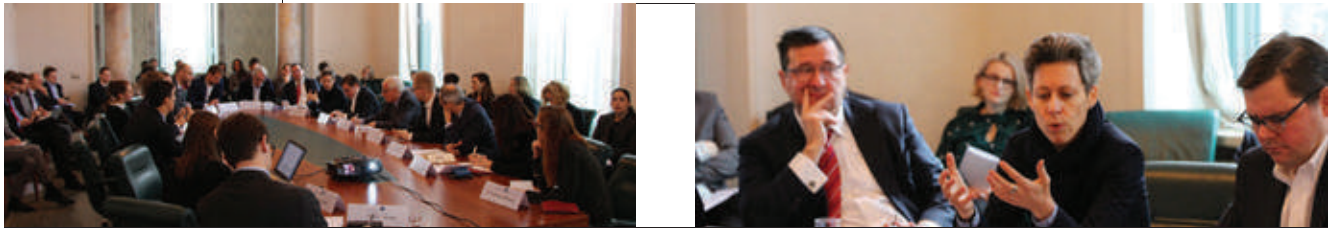
On May 16-17, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany and the Ministry of the Interior, Digitization and Migration of Baden-Württemberg hosted their high-level conference “Berlin CyberSecurityForum.” It brought together more than 250 European, American and international top policy-makers, legislators, engineers, hackers, civil society, academics, and representatives of the business, privacy, and security communities as well as media. Speakers and participants explored the challenges of today and tomorrow in keeping our digital space secure across keynotes, panel discussions, and seven seminar-style breakout sessions. Throughout the two days, discussion topics included the “Cyber Great Game”, Germany’s approach to cybersecurity, the effects of AI on the cyber landscape, Ukraine as a laboratory for cyber as a domain of attack, cyber-security & privacy as well as cyber risk management issues, “Cyber Warrior” recruitment strategies of the military, and the debate around cyber norms and internet governance. Speakers included **Sir Julian King**, then EU Commissioner for the Security Union; **Heli Tiirmaa-Klaar**, Ambassador at Large for Cyber Diplomacy at the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; **Arne Schönbohm**, President of the Federal Office for Information Security; and **Ryan Calo**, Lane Powell and D. Wayne Gittinger Associate Professor at the University of Washington School of Law. The event was supported by Microsoft, DXC Technology, Atlantic Council, Brunswick Group, Deutsche Telekom AG, Brandenburgisches Institut für Gesellschaft und Sicherheit – BIGS, Internet Economy Foundation – IE.F, Cyber-Sicherheitsrat Deutschland e.V. Media partners were Tagesspiegel Background Digitalisierung & KI and the German language podcast Sicherheitshalber.



### Conference on Artificial Intelligence – “Humanity Defined: Politics and Ethics in the AI Age”, March 28-29, 2019

The Aspen Institute Germany’s second annual Berlin AI conference – “Humanity Defined: Politics and Ethics in the AI Age” – brought together more than 350 top policy-makers, philosophers, computer scientists, academics and representatives from business as well as media at the State Representation of Baden-Württemberg in Berlin on March 28-29, 2019. We explored this year’s theme across five keynote speeches, four panel discussions, and three seminar-style breakout sessions. Aspen also introduced an Oxford-style debate to the program, bringing together teams arguing “for” or “against” the motion: “Artificial Intelligence will be a Net Positive for Humanity.” Parallel to the program the conference featured various stands and demos, including matches between the Robot-Soccer teams from Leipzig und Berlin. Throughout the two days, discussion topics included the global AI race, healthcare in the digital age, AI’s potential benefit to everyday life, humanizing AI through design principles, and Germany’s AI strategy. The audience engaged with experts over the challenges as well as the opportunities that AI offers, including questions on how to build AI to reflect civic values, ensure objectivity in innovation, and develop a model for ethical AI and ethics in warfare. Speakers included **Katarina Barley**, then German Minister of Justice and Consumer Protection; **Cathy O’Neil**, Mathematician and Author of *Weapons of Math Destruction*; **Kenneth Stanley**, Professor of Computer Science at the University of Central Florida; **Thomas Metzinger**, Professor of Theoretical Philosophy at the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz; and **Hans Peter Brondmo** from Moonshot at X. The conference was generously supported by its co-organizers the Heinz and Heide Dürr Stiftung and the State Representation of Baden-

Württemberg. Additionally, we thank our supporters and partners – the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Microsoft, Pfizer, the Aspen Initiative for Europe, KI-Bundesverband e.V. and our media partners KCRW Berlin, Berlin Policy Journal, Internationale Politik, and Deutschlandfunk Nova.



### **Workshop: “AI and the Future of Work”, March 14, 2019**

On the morning of March 14, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with Microsoft Germany, the Italian Embassy in Berlin, and the Aspen Initiative for Europe hosted an exclusive workshop on “AI and the Future of Work.” In two rounds about 40 high-level guests along with representatives and experts from government, business, and international organizations were able to discuss the effects of digitalization on politics, the economy, and society as well as concrete implications on job markets. Speakers in the workshop included **Julia Borggräfe** (Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), **Jens Brandenburg** (MP, FDP), **Alexander Britz** (Microsoft Germany), **Stijn Broecke** (OECD), and **Mario Mariniello** (European Political Strategy Centre, European Commission). In the first session the speakers dealt with the question who the winners and losers of the digital revolution will be and how governments, societies, and businesses can turn the rapid transformations into profits. The second session dealt with the expected radical changes on job markets as well as the opportunities and challenges to guarantee dignity of work and a living wage in the AI age. Additionally, the speakers and participants discussed possible strategies and options to that end, like a universal basic income (UBI) or new forms of taxation. The off-the-record discussion was moderated by **Tyson Barker** (then Deputy Executive Director) and **Olivia Knodt** (Program Officer) from the Aspen Institute Germany.



*Katarina Barley, then German Minister of Justice and Customer Protection  
Conference on Artificial Intelligence – “Humanity Defined: Politics and Ethics in the AI Age”  
March 28-29, 2019*



# LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

“The chance to think through complex philosophical topics along the everlasting themes of humanity in a calm environment, was a unique experience. What made it even more special, was the open-mindedness and humour of the other participants in the discussions. To create such an open atmosphere is a great achievement.”

*Claire Scollar,  
Founder and Manager,  
I.e.P. GmbH*

“My time at the Aspen Seminar was unique experience. Whilst being intellectually challenging the atmosphere was at the same time extremely stimulating. I can truly recommend Aspen to those interested in broadening their minds.”

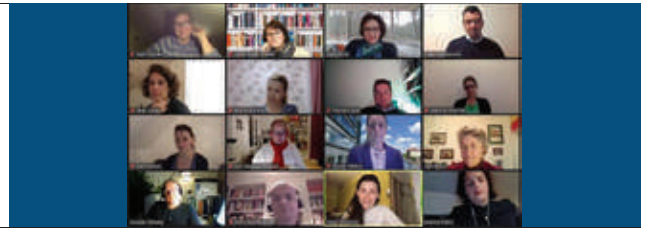
*Dr. Jan Tibor Lelley,  
Partner with Buse Heberer Fromm and member of Buse  
Heberer Fromm's Practice Group Employment*

“The Aspen Seminar has been a unique experience challenging my own understandings over philosophical writings with people I had not met before.”

*Christoph Stolz,  
Head of Public Affairs,  
Sto SE & Co. KGaA*



# LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

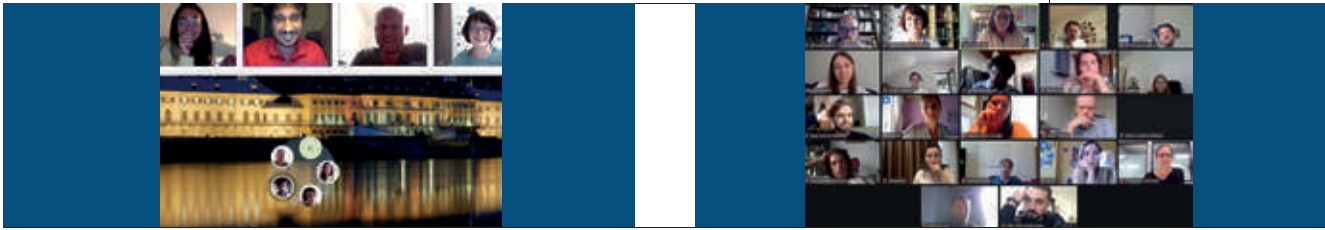


## Digital Aspen Leadership Seminar “Philosophy and Practice”, November 12-14, 2020

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Aspen Germany converted its **Leadership Seminar** “Philosophy and Practice” to a virtual format and offered an online seminar on November 12-14. The virtual format captured the essence and spirit of the original: In a reflective space, participants embarked on a journey for pause and consideration on leadership behavior in response to the challenges of the present. Guided by the experienced moderators **Carol Gluck** and **Ruth Girardet**, participants discussed texts written by traditional and modern philosophers and writers and contemplated on their implication for their lives today.

The seminar encouraged participants to interpret the readings that span more than two millennia in their own way. The purpose of the seminar was not to identify similar responses or to build consensus, but to encourage participants to think more deeply about their own beliefs and values, enhance their understanding of competing viewpoints, and highlight the complexity of our societies. While the Seminar was not intended to offer ready-made solutions, it created a space for dialogue and exchange, which is vital in a world of conflicting interests, opposing views, and cultural frictions.

Since 2011, the Aspen Germany’s Leadership Seminar has invited participants to explore and reflect on values-driven leadership, following a model developed in the 1950s at the Aspen Institute in Aspen, Colorado. Seminar participants join an alumni network numbering in the hundreds, linked by their experiences in the seminar and their engagement in bettering themselves and their societies.



### Aspen Young European Leaders Seminar, September 3-5, 2020

The 2020 “**Aspen Young European Leaders Seminar**” was the fourth in line after the first editions in Italy, Spain, and France. It was planned to be held at Schloss Pillnitz, just outside Dresden, hosted by Aspen Germany in cooperation with Aspen Central Europe, under the umbrella of the Aspen Initiative for Europe. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, however, the in-person seminar had to be converted into an online format that took place on September 3-5, 2020.

The group was welcomed by **Erik Kurzweil**, Head of International Relations at the State Chancellery of Saxony. He gave an overview of the region’s key information and also of major social tensions that impact the work of politics and business alike: a plunge into many topics that recurred throughout the seminar. In a panel discussion with **Elmar Brok**, former member of the European Parliament (CDU), and **Dr. Franziska Brantner**, former member of the European Parliament, member of the German Parliament (Alliance 90/The Greens), circled around the question where Europe was headed: towards coherence and unity or was the alliance challenged and divided in their aims and values. 22 participants from all over Europe and sectors as diverse as think tanks and politics, trade and commerce, the media and human rights, history and urban planning, as well as tech and artificial intelligence convened on Zoom to discuss the present state of the continent and its future under the title “Fractured Europe”. Skillfully moderated by long time Aspen Germany moderators **Leigh Hafrey**, Senior Lecturer at MIT’s Sloan School of Management, and **Ruth Girardet**, Member of the Council of The Open University, the debate was based on texts as fundamental as the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the German

Basic Law, Immanuel Kant’s Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals; included contemporary authors like Olga Tokarczuk, Peter Schneider, and Vaclav Havel; and touched on timely topics like surveillance capitalism and “stabilocracies” in Central and Eastern Europe.



### **Leadership “Seminar Philosophy and Practice”, February 20-23, 2020**

Aristotle set the tone for the 27th edition of Aspen Germany’s Leadership Seminar “Philosophy and Practice”, which took place on February 20-23, 2020 at Gut Klostermühle. The seminar was moderated by **Carol Gluck** and **Leigh Hafrey**. They navigated 13 participants from Germany, Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, Romania, and Montenegro through lively and sometimes controversial discussions on the fundamental questions of human existence, society, order, and leadership in many different aspects.

In a protected and confidential setting, far away from the daily strains, the debate tackled recurring leitmotifs and core questions, inspiring intense intellectual exchange and a retransfer of abstract examples to hands-on settings.

### **Book Discussion: Optimistic Foresight with Bina Venkataraman, January 30, 2020**

On January 30, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany, in partnership with Value for Good and the Harvard Alumni Club of Berlin, hosted a book discussion with **Bina Venkataraman** to discuss her latest book “The Optimist’s Telescope: Thinking Ahead in a Reckless Age”. Observing the spread of a deadly virus, the climate apocalypse, populism, increasing polarization in society as well as the threat of violent clashes dominate the news with doomsday scenarios. **Bina Venkataraman** contrasts this with a focus on optimism and forward-thinking: hands-on examples show tools and strategies for effective mechanisms to provide reliable predictions of looming threats. Optimistic leadership skills can go beyond the individual and may serve to initiate sustainable change in behavior and thinking. Thinking outside established coalitions and pattern may lead out of myopia and in connection with adequate measures and incentives, as well as lead to positive system adjustments. Looking through the optimist’s telescope entailed a vivid discussion with a full house of guests and was moderated by **Clara Péron**, Alumna of the Aspen Leadership Seminar and Founder of Value for Good, and Vice-President of the Harvard Alumni Club of Berlin, and **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany.



### **American-Style Thanksgiving Dinner, November 28, 2019**

Happy Turkey Day! On November 28, 2019, the Aspen Germany Leadership Program, the German Stanford Association, and the Harvard University Alumni Club of Berlin hosted an American-style Thanksgiving Dinner. More than 100 friends and family of the three organizations came together at Harnack Haus, the Max Planck Society's conference venue and guesthouse. The impressive building provided a festive setting to celebrate one of the most important American holidays with traditional food and the roast turkey, which is an absolute must. The good food was supplemented with great food for thought with a talk by **Lisa Witter**, Co-Founder and Executive Chairman of Apolitical, on "Thanks(giving) on the brain (and we're not talking tryptophan): Applying lessons to life, politics and policy in today's polarized world". The evening left a great crowd in thankful spirits, being amazingly aware of the dopamine-related processes thankfulness triggers in the brain, in addition to inspiring conversations with old and new friends alike.

### **Leadership Seminar "Philosophy and Practice", November 7, 2019**

Outside the city center and close to nature in Brandenburg's lake district, Aspen Germany convened the participants of the 26th edition of the Leadership Seminar "Philosophy and Practice". Using the Socratic method and under the skillful guidance of expert moderators **Leigh Hafrey** and **Ruth Girardet**, participants discussed the most fundamental questions of the human condition. The seminar offered participants the opportunity to debate their own actions in a protected and confidential atmosphere and to sharpen their definition of good and ethical leadership. Diverse perspective and inspiring controversies drew from an abundance of experience and a variety of interpretations. The Seminar offered the rare opportunity to reflect on own values and to discuss leadership with participants from across society within a confidential atmosphere.



### **Aspen Seminar for Young European Leaders 2019 in Annecy, September 5-8, 2019**

On September 5-8, 2019, the third Aspen Seminar for Young European Leaders took place in Annecy, France, jointly organized by the Aspen Initiative for Europe, the Aspen Institute France and the Aspen Institute Germany. The seminar brought together 26 participants, aged 25 to 35, from Europe and other regions around the world. On the basis of classical and modern texts of renowned European and non-European philosophers and thinkers, the participants reflected on timeless ideas and their own beliefs and values as well as on European ideals and their continued relevance in today's world. The seminar was moderated by **Leigh Hafrey**, Senior Lecturer in the Behavioral and Policy Sciences at MIT's Sloan School of Management, and **Miguel Herrero**, Professor of Classics at Madrid's Complutense University.



### **Leadership Seminar "Philosophy and Practice", February 21- 24, 2019**

Far from routine, the big city, and everyday work, 17 individuals took part in the 24th Aspen Leadership Seminar on February 21-24, 2019, contemplating topics such as human nature, the individual and society, societal order, and many more. Seeking abstraction, distance, and reflection, the Aspen Leadership Seminar offered leaders the unique opportunity to question their actions, to obtain awareness of their role within society, and to define what makes for good and ethical leadership. Guided by experienced moderators **Leigh Hafrey** and **Ruth Girardet**, participants debated on the basis of philosophical text excerpts ranging from antiquity to modernity. The Seminar united a unique group of selected decision-makers from the public, private, and economic sector with extremely diverse backgrounds and professional fields, thus bringing a broad range of experiences, viewpoints, and interpretations to the table.



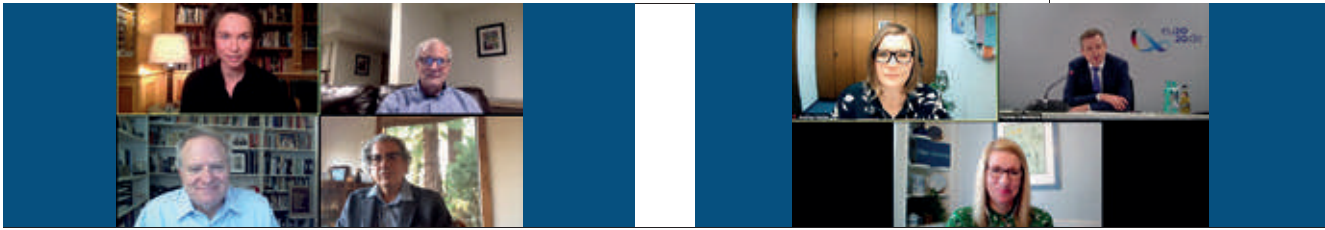
*Catherine von Fürstenberg-Dussmann, Chairwoman of the Board of Trustees, Peter Dussmann-Stiftung;  
Vice Chairwoman of the Board of Trustees, Aspen Institute Germany  
Book Presentation "Trump's America: Journey to a White Country"  
March 11, 2019*

# PUBLIC PROGRAM



## Virtual Discussion: Why Trade Matters! The Future of Transatlantic Economic Relations December 9, 2020

On December 9, 2020, Aspen Institute Germany hosted a virtual discussion on “Why Trade Matters! The Future of Transatlantic Economic Relations” with **Daniel Andrich**, General Manager, American Chamber of Commerce in Germany e.V.; **Dr. Christina Gommlich**, Deputy Head of Berlin Office, Corporate Government Relations, BASF SE; **Dr. F.-Hans Grandin**, CEO, HUESKER Synthetic GmbH and HUESKER Group; and **Peter Riehle**, President & CEO, Head of Region AMERICAS, WITTENSTEIN U.S. **Frank Sportolari**, President, American Chamber of Commerce in Germany e.V., delivered welcome remarks and **Annett Meiritz**, U.S. Correspondent in Washington DC, Handelsblatt, moderated this discussion. Businesses invested in transatlantic trade and multilateral trade relations not only create sustainable jobs and economic growth but also support the urgently needed reliability and stability within the transatlantic partnership. Against the backdrop of the election of Joe Biden, the panelists discussed whether trade barriers and tariffs between the United States and the EU would be reduced under President Biden and how the international trading system could be strengthened again to enable free and rule-based trade. The panelists further discussed a transatlantic response to the trade conflict with China and prospects for a new green economy to tackle climate change.



### Virtual Discussion: Migration, Flight, and U.S. Immigration Policy under President Biden, December 3, 2020

On December 3, 2020, the Aspen Institute hosted a virtual discussion on “Migration, Flight, and U.S. Immigration Policy under President Biden” with **T. Alexander Aleinikoff**, University Professor and Director of the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility at The New School (NYC); **Eric P. Schwartz**, President of Refugees International and former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration (2009-2011); and **Roberto Suro**, Professor of Journalism and Public Policy at the University of Southern California. **Berit Ebert**, Vice President of Programs of the American Academy in Berlin, moderated this discussion. Joe Biden inherited an immigration system that has been dramatically transformed by the Trump administration over the past four years. The panelists observed that these transformations include a new series of restrictive asylum policies, the construction of a border wall to Mexico, sweeping green-card limitations, broader deportation priorities, a decimated refugee program, and pandemic-era border restrictions. The Biden-Harris team will have much to contend with in forging pragmatic policies that both protect the U.S. border and honor legal migration to the United States. In this panel discussion, practitioners and experts from the field discussed what post- Trump immigration policy might look like and what challenges – political, bureaucratic, and cultural – the Biden administration is likely to face in the coming years.

### Virtual Discussion: The Future of Transatlantic Security, November 18, 2020

On November 18, 2020, the Aspen Institute hosted a virtual discussion on “Safeguarding Transatlantic Security: A ‘New Deal’ in Euro-American Relations?” with **Heather A. Conley**, Senior Vice President for Europe, Eurasia, and the Arctic & Director of the Europe Program at the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), and **Thomas Silberhorn**, Parliamentary State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Defence and Member of Bundestag (CSU). **Andrea Rotter**, Head of Division Foreign and Security Policy at the Hanns Seidel Foundation, moderated the discussion.

Long cherished as a cornerstone of the post-war international order, the transatlantic security architecture has come under intense scrutiny and pressure. NATO is confronted with a variety of complex security challenges, all of which require close transatlantic cooperation. While President Trump regularly points out European omissions with regard to military spending and capability gaps, his distinctive style eroded the trust of U.S. allies in America as a reliable partner. Moving forward, the panelists discussed what could be expected from the Biden administration in terms of foreign policy. Heather Conley and Thomas Silberhorn offered their take on how the United States and its allies could safeguard transatlantic security cooperation – and what Europeans should be prepared to bring to the table.



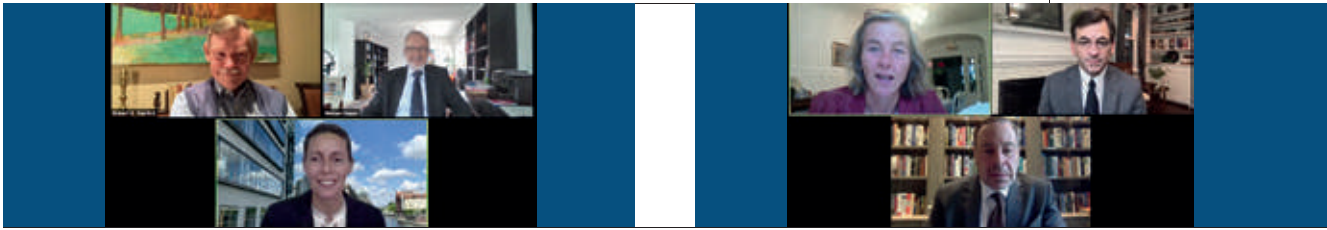
### **Beyond Election Day: Transatlantic Media De-Brief, November 13, 2020**

Ten days after Election Day, an international press club came together in Berlin to discuss the aftermath of the 2020 U.S. presidential election. Four leading journalists representing the United States, Germany, Italy, Poland, and France commented on possible repercussions on the Euro-American partnership and voiced their expectations toward a Biden-Harris administration. This session featured **Melissa Eddy**, Berlin Correspondent for The New York Times; **Tina Hassel**, Head and TV Editor-in-Chief of ARD-Hauptstadtstudio in Berlin; **Tonia Mastrobuoni**, Berlin Correspondent for La Repubblica; and **Wojciech Szymański**, Berlin Correspondent for the Polish Section of Deutsche Welle. **Terry Martin**, Senior Anchor of Deutsche Welle News, moderated the discussion. We are delighted that the **Governing Mayor of Berlin, Michael Müller**, gave opening remarks.



### **Election Day in America: A Pre-Analysis from Berlin, November 3, 2020**

On Tuesday, November 3, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a virtual discussion on “Election Day in America: A Pre-Analysis from Berlin.” Rarely has a U.S. presidential election sparked as much attention, mystification, perplexity, and concern as the 2020 race to the White House – both in the United States and abroad. On the eve of the U.S. presidential election, leading representatives of the transatlantic community came together in Berlin in order to provide an early assessment of the events unfolding across the Atlantic. Over the course of the discussion, the heads of the most important transatlantic institutions and political foundations voiced their hopes, expectations, and concerns regarding the immediate election and the future of the Euro-American bond – before the polls closed.



### Virtual Discussion: The Future of the Multilateral Order, October 16, 2020

On October 16, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a virtual discussion on “The Future of the Multilateral Order” with **Robert B. Zoellick**, Former President of the World Bank, U.S. Trade Representative & U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, and **Werner Hoyer**, President of the European Investment Bank. **Dr. Stormy-Annika Mildner**, then Head of External Policy at the Federation of German Industries (BDI), moderated the virtual panel. Over the past 75 years, globalization and global governance have been strongholds of universal peace and prosperity. More recently, multilateral institutions struggle to enable shared, fair and effective solutions for crisis phenomena such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. Our moderated discussion provided an outlook on the future of multilateralism. How can the structures of international cooperation be defended and redesigned? Which existing institutions may remodel the rules of multilateral engagement? And what role do new stakeholders such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank play?

### Virtual Discussion: Beyond the Campaign Trail – The Future of the American Presidency, October 9, 2020

On October 9, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a virtual discussion on “Beyond the Campaign Trail: The Future of the American Presidency” with **Peter Baker**, Chief White House Correspondent for The New York Times and Co-Author of “The Man Who Ran Washington: The Life and Times of James A. Baker III”, and **David Frum**, Staff Writer for The Atlantic and Author of *Trumpocalypse: Restoring American Democracy*. Roughly four weeks ahead of Election Day, the world was again focused on the U.S. electoral map. No day passed without pollsters offering their latest take on the most recent numbers and data. However, looking beyond the election on November 3, invited a larger question: No matter whether the next President is named Biden or Trump, what will the future of the American presidency look like? And what role will Democrats and Republicans play in shaping the presidency for the years to come? **Vendeline von Bredow**, European Business and Finance Correspondent for The Economist, moderated the discussion.



**Virtual Discussion: Knowing each other?  
Mutual Perceptions across the Atlantic,  
September 23, 2020**

On September 23, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Transatlantic Discussion with German Ambassador to the United States, **Dr. Emily Haber**, and former United States Ambassador to Germany, **John B. Emerson**, on the topic **“Knowing each other? Mutual Perceptions across the Atlantic”**. The two ambassadors, both renowned experts in the realms of foreign policy and transatlantic relations, shared their perception on how Americans currently perceive their German partners across the Atlantic and vice versa. What larger trends can we deduce from the current state of transatlantic relations? Are we in fact still “wunderbar together”?



**“Why the Germans Do It Better” – Exclusive  
Book Talk with award- winning author John  
Kampfner for Aspen Germany’s Verein der  
Freunde e.V., September 14, 2020**

Together with Dussmann das KulturKaufhaus, Aspen Germany hosted an exclusive book presentation of **John Kampfner’s** “Why The Germans Do It Better: Notes from a Grown- Up Country” on September 14, 2020. In his latest work, the renowned author and cultural leader presents Germany as a stronghold of political maturity and stability in the midst of a Brexit-related polycrisis and raises explosive questions. How will a united Europe work together without Great Britain? And what kind of leadership role will Germany undertake within the European Union?

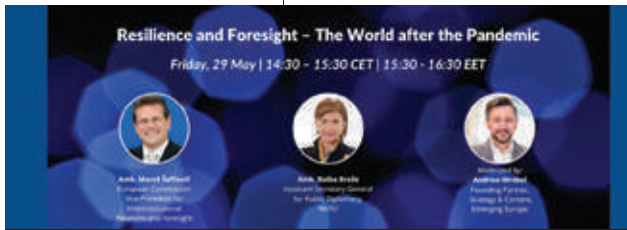


**Transatlantic Town Hall: A Bipartisan  
Congressional Perspective on the Future of  
the Euro-American Bond,  
September 1, 2020**

On September 1, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Transatlantic Town Hall with Congressman **Ami Bera** (D-CA), Chairman of the Asia, Pacific, and Nonproliferation Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Vice Chair of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and Congressman **Jim Sensenbrenner** (R-WI), then Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial and Administrative Law of the House Judiciary Committee. This event was part of the virtual **Road to Election Night & Beyond**, which the Aspen Institute Germany organized in cooperation with several Berlin-based transatlantic institutions and political foundations. The two Congressmen, both leading euro-watchers in the U.S. House of Representatives, provided a bipartisan assessment of the current state of transatlantic affairs. This session offered a platform for exchange on topics of mutual concern on both sides of the Atlantic and the future of the transatlantic bond. Recent developments focusing on this year's presidential election and possible repercussions on the Euro-American partnership were also addressed.

**Virtual Discussion on the topic  
“Germany, Europe and America – a Difficult  
Relationship in Times of Corona”,  
June 23, 2020**

On June 23, 2020, on the occasion of the general meeting of the Association of Friends and the traditional Aspen summer party, a virtual discussion on the topic “Germany, Europe and America – a difficult relationship in times of Corona” took place. Aspen Germany's then Executive Director **Rüdiger Lentz** discussed with then President of the German Marshall Fund, **Dr. Karen Donfried**, the opportunities and challenges of a future-oriented agenda for transatlantic relations. Previously, she was Senior Director for European Affairs in the U.S. National Security Council. Other posts included the National Intelligence Council, State Department and Congressional Research Service, where she worked in the European area.



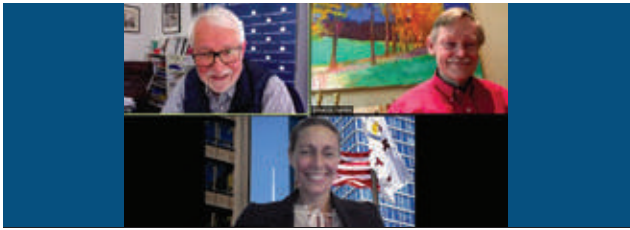
### Virtual Discussion on “Resilience and Foresight – The World after the Pandemic”, May 29, 2020

On May 29, 2020, Aspen Romania in cooperation with Aspen Germany hosted a virtual discussion on “Resilience and Foresight – The World after the Pandemic” with **Ambassador Maroš Šefčovič**, European Commission Vice-President for Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight, and **Ambassador Baiba Braže**, Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy, NATO. The webinar addressed the issues of resilience and foresight in a post-pandemic world in the context of the necessary global recovery after the crisis created by the COVID-19 outbreak. The webinar also focused on resilience to fake news. As the intensity and damage potential of the campaign against fake news has increased since the pandemic, the webinar also discussed strategies to identify and combat fake news.



### Road to Election Night | Virtual Discussion on “Politics in the New World: Presidential Approval, COVID-19, and the 2020 Election”, May 28, 2020

On May 28, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a virtual discussion on the topic “Politics in the New World: Presidential Approval, COVID-19, and the 2020 Election” with **Carroll Doherty**, Director of Political Research at Pew Research Center. In a conversation with **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, **Carroll Doherty** explained how President Trump was perceived by U.S. citizens during the current crisis. Based on ideological and geographical lines, where and by whom is he seen as an effective leader? And how might COVID-19 affect the circumstances of the upcoming presidential election? Months away from Election Day, a divisive debate on voting by mail versus growing concerns about voter fraud was already in full swing. This session of the virtual event series “Road to Election Night 2020” focused on the pandemic’s implications for trends in U.S. political values and U.S. views on policy issues and priorities.



### Virtual Discussion: China, the United States & the Global Economy post-COVID-19: An Outlook, May 15, 2020

On May 15, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual discussion on “China, the United States & the Global Economy post-COVID-19: An Outlook” with **Robert B. Zoellick**, Former President of the World Bank, U.S. Trade Representative and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, and co-commentator **Dr. Stormy-Annika Mildner**, then Head of External Economic Policy at The Federation of German Industries (BDI). The COVID-19 pandemic has brought much of the global economic activity to a halt. Together with Aspen Germany’s then Executive Director **Rüdiger Lentz**, the two experts discussed how the crisis has impacted economic and financial structures around the world as well as necessary measures for a steady recovery. Topics included the future of transatlantic trade relations and China’s unique role post-COVID-19.

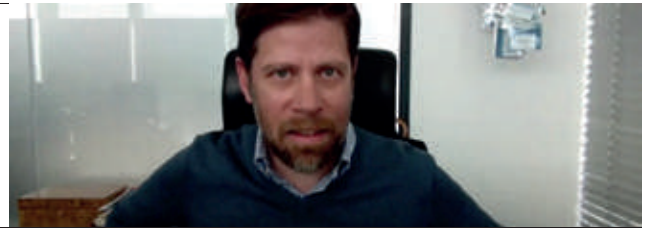
### Virtual Discussion: New Ways of Communication between Politicians and Citizens, May 5, 2020

On May 5, 2020, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual discussion on new ways of communication between politicians and citizens with **Philipp Amthor**, Member of the German Bundestag. As the youngest CDU/CSU member of the German Bundestag, Philipp Amthor stands for modern conservative policies. His social media followers know him as #Sachthemen influencer. Together with Aspen Germany’s then Executive Director **Rüdiger Lentz**, he discussed why traditional tools of communication between politicians and citizens are outdated.



**Virtual Conversation on “COVID-19: The European Union – Risk or Chance?”, April 23, 2020**

On April 23, Aspen Germany hosted a virtual conversation on “COVID-19: The European Union – Risk or Chance” with **Elmar Brok**, former member of the European Parliament, member of the board of directors of the EVP, member of the Federal board of the CDU, Vice-president of the Centrist Democrat International. He stressed that the fight against COVID-19 was not a national matter and that individual national rehabilitation programs would not be enough. Only a unified European approach would be effective in overcoming the crisis. He pleaded for more competences on a European level in order to meet common challenges in a collective and effective way.



**Virtual Discussion: Covering Trump and the 2020 Election, April 20, 2020**

On April 20, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a virtual discussion on the topic “Covering Trump and the 2020 Election: Journalists’ Challenges on the Campaign Trail” with **Matt Karnitschnig**, Chief Europe Correspondent at POLITICO. Given current restrictions in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, our event series “Road to Election Night 2020” continued virtually on Zoom. At Aspen Germany, it remains our prime concern to provide opportunities for in-depth discussion en route to the 2020 election. In a conversation with **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, **Matt Karnitschnig** discussed current developments on the campaign trail leading up to November’s consequential U.S. presidential election. The discussion touched on a range of topics, including the risks for Trump’s reelection chances given the current pandemic as well as the immediate threat of an economic crisis in the United States. Repercussion of those developments on then President Trump, then Democratic front-runner Joe Biden, their respective campaigns, and key events were further addressed.



### Road to Election Night 2020: Brown Bag Lunch “Super Tuesday Readout: Meet the Parties!”, March 4, 2020

On March 4, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Brown Bag Lunch on the topic “Super Tuesday Readout: Meet the Parties!” with **Candice Kerestan**, Chair of Democrats Abroad Germany, and **Ralph Freund**, Vice President and Spokesperson of Republicans Abroad Germany e.V. In a crowded and heavily contested field of Democratic candidates, Super Tuesday was a game changer on the road to the 2020 presidential election. 14 states held their primaries on March 3, with a total of roughly 1,350 pledged delegates awarded on the same day. 1,991 were needed to win the party’s nomination. The Leadership of Republicans and Democrats Abroad Germany helped to make sense of the results – and learn more about the parties’ positions and main issues of the 2020 election. In doing so, general developments within the two big parties were discussed as well as the broader state of American democracy.

### Munich Security Conference Read-Out with Elbridge Colby, February 17, 2020

On February 17, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy Berlin hosted a Munich Security Conference Read-Out with U.S. foreign policy and security expert **Elbridge Colby** in discussion with **Tyson Barker**, then Deputy Executive Director and Fellow at the Aspen Institute Germany. The distinguished guest shared exclusive insights and his main takeaways from that year’s conference. Topics included U.S. foreign policy challenges concerning China, Germany’s critical role in NATO and European security, as well as the importance of the Munich Security Conference for a constructive exchange despite diverging views on matters of mutual concern.

**Elbridge Colby** is the Co-Founder and Principal of the Marathon Initiative, a policy initiative focused on preparing the United States and its allies and partners for sustained great power competition. He is also a Senior Advisor at WestExec Advisors, where he supports the firm’s work on defense, technology, aerospace, and related areas. Following various positions within the U.S. government service, Colby served as Defense Program Director at the Center for a New American Security in Washington, D.C. until 2019.



### **Breakfast Briefing with Peter Berkowitz and Sebastian Groth, February 16, 2020**

On February 16, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with the American Council on Germany (ACG) hosted a breakfast briefing with **Peter Berkowitz**, then Director of Policy Planning at the U.S. Department of State, and **Sebastian Groth**, Director of Policy Planning at the German Federal Foreign Office, on “Shaping Foreign Policy in Uncertain Times: Views from Washington and Berlin.” On the periphery of the Munich Security Conference, the participants discussed current foreign policy challenges facing the United States and Germany, the state of transatlantic relations, as well as their main takeaways from MSC 2020.



### **Workshop: “Addressing the China Challenge”, February 12, 2020**

On February 12, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) hosted a workshop titled “Addressing the China Challenge” with experts from industry, academia, and politics. The workshop was moderated by **Andrea Kendall-Taylor**, Senior Fellow and Director of the Transatlantic Security Program at CNAS and **Tyson Barker**, then Fellow and Deputy Executive Director at the Aspen Institute Germany. After a brief opening input by **Theresa Fallon**, founder and director of the Brussels-based Center for Russia Europe Asia Studies (CREAS), the participants discussed joint challenges and benefits for Europe and the United States stemming from China’s rise as well as their possible impacts on the transatlantic partnership. Based on these assessments, a second workshop phase emphasized the goals that should guide a European approach toward China. **Prof. Dr. Frank N. Pieke**, former Director and CEO of the Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS) and Professor of Modern China Studies at the University of Leiden, provided another impulse for the subsequent debate of specific recommendations for United States-EU cooperation on China. The final round of discussion about specific policies and instruments identified many possible areas of cooperation, focusing on issues where European and U.S. interests align, or burden-sharing appears feasible. The session was part of an ongoing project by the CNAS Transatlantic Security Program.

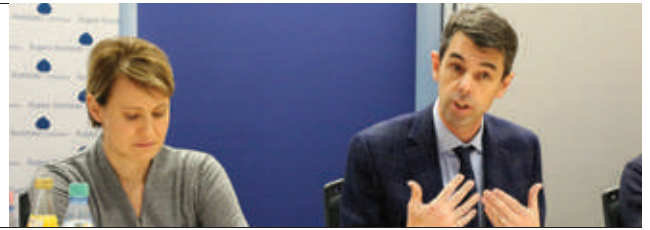


### Road to Election Night 2020: Brown Bag Lunch “Ground Rules & Outlook – Ask the Expert!”, January 30, 2020

On January 30, 2020, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Brown Bag Lunch on the topic “U.S. Election 2020: Ground Rules & Outlook – Ask the Expert!” with **Prof. Dan Hamilton**, Richard von Weizsäcker Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy and Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation Professor at Johns Hopkins University’s SAIS. This was the kick-off session of our event series “**Road to Election Night 2020**”. The focus of this first session was to familiarize participants with the basic ground rules of the U.S. election system. It helped the participants in getting a better feeling for the months and events ahead and served as an opportunity to raise individual questions. Hamilton emphasized the federal character of the United States when discussing the ground rules as well as the prospects of winning the respective party nomination and the Presidency itself.

### Brown Bag Lunch: “Does the World Need the West? Ideas for the Future of the Liberal Order”, December 18, 2019

On December 18, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Brown Bag Lunch on “Does the World Need the West? Ideas for the Future of the Liberal Order” with **Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff**, Vice President of the German Marshall Fund of the United States and Head of the Berlin Office; **Dr. Franziska Brantner**, Member of the German Bundestag and Parliamentary Executive Officer (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen); and Brigadier General (ret.) **Rainer Meyer zum Felde**, Senior Fellow, Institute for Security Policy Kiel (ISPK), Stiftung Wissenschaft & Demokratie (SWuD). In an interview with **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, **Kleine-Brockhoff** first highlighted the core theses of his recently published book “Die Welt braucht den Westen: Neustart für eine liberale Ordnung” (The World Needs the West: A New Start for a Liberal Order). With this plea for the renewal of the liberal project, **Kleine-Brockhoff** called for a “robust liberalism” that represents a contemporary interpretation of democratic liberalism: more faithful to principles and regulations, more modest and more aware of its limits, but at the same time more prepared to defend itself. In this way, the liberal international order could also be preserved in the new power-political reality of competing systems of order. After commentaries by **Dr. Franziska Brantner** and **Rainer Meyer zum Felde**, all participants discussed the military strategic feasibility of the proposed ideas.



**Discussion: “Foreign and Security Policy Challenges for the United States and Germany”, December 3, 2019**

On December 3, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an evening event on “Foreign and Security Policy Challenges for the United States and Germany” with **Ian Brzezinski**, Senior Fellow with the Transatlantic Security Initiative at the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and former Deputy Assistant State Secretary of Defense for Europe and NATO, and **Dr. Karl-Heinz Kamp**, Special Envoy for the Political Director at the Federal Ministry of Defense. The two experts discussed the current security challenges against the background of the return of great power competition, NATO’s strategic orientation and current U.S. foreign policy. The importance of transatlantic relations in coping with these global challenges was stressed, as was the need for greater European and German engagement.

**Brown Bag Lunch: “A World in Transition: From Multilateralism back to Great Power Competition?”, November 29, 2019**

On November 29, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with the Embassy of the United States of America in Berlin hosted a Brown Bag Lunch on “A World in Transition: From Multilateralism back to Great Power Competition?” with **Bradley Bowman**, Senior Director of the Center on Military and Political Power at the Foundation for Defense of Democracy, and **Dr. Jana Puglierin**, Program Director of the Oppenheim Center for European Policy Studies at the German Council on Foreign Relations. The participants discussed the extent to which the world was again characterized by great power competition and what role Europe was playing in this. In view of the increasing tensions between the United States and China, the discussion addressed how Europe should position itself politically, strategically, and economically. In addition, other security policy issues came up for discussion, such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union, the future of NATO, and how to deal with the 5G network expansion.



### Aspen Gala 2019, November 6, 2019

On November 6, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted its fourth Aspen Gala to present the 2019 Shepard Stone Award to **Dr. Madeleine Albright**, former U.S. Secretary of State and U.S. Ambassador to the UN, and **Robert Zoellick**, former President of the World Bank and U.S. Chief Negotiator during the Two-Plus-Four Negotiations. The award recognizes outstanding transatlantic leadership and achievements in politics, culture, society, and science that reflect and promote the shared values of the United States and Germany. **Dr. Madeleine Albright** and **Robert Zoellick** have dedicated their lives to promoting a free society, democratic values and transatlantic partnership. The tradition was introduced in 2014 to mark the 40th anniversary of Aspen Germany and to commemorate the exceptional achievements of Shepard Stone, founder and first Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany. Previous recipients of the Shepard Stone Award are **Wolf Biermann**, **Dr. Guido Goldman**, **Leonard Lauder** and **Dr. Mathias Döpfner**. This year, the laudatory speech was held by **Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble**, President of the German Bundestag. Elliot Gerson, Executive Vice President of The Aspen Institute, praised Aspen's extraordinary growth from a meeting in Colorado to a network of eleven institutes on four continents. The festive evening celebrating the transatlantic partnership was entitled "Building the Future. Together" and brought together over 200 guests and friends of Aspen Germany from the realms of politics, culture, diplomacy, and civil society.

### Discussion: "From Juncker to von der Leyen: A New Start or More of the Same?", 28 October 2019

On 28 October 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany, in cooperation with the Embassy of Finland in the Federal Republic of Germany, hosted an evening event on the topic "From Juncker to von der Leyen: New Start or Carry on?" After an input statement by **H.E. Anne Sipiläinen**, Ambassador of Finland to the Federal Republic of Germany, and **Dr. Jörg Wojahn**, Representative of the European Commission in Germany, **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, moderated a discussion with **Judy Dempsey**, Nonresident Senior Fellow and Editor-in-Chief of Strategic Europe at Carnegie Europe; **Rebecca Harms**, Former Member of the European Parliament (Alliance 90/The Greens) and former Chairwoman of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament; **Dr. Doris Pack**, President of the EPP Women (European People's Party), President of the Robert Schuman Institute (RSI) and former Member of the European Parliament and the Bundestag (CDU/CSU); and **Dr. Jörg Wojahn**. Especially in view of current challenges, such as the threat of an unregulated Brexit and a European community that threatens to drift further apart on various core issues, the participants dared to look ahead to the next five years. To this end, the main topics of the then designated President of the European Commission's agenda were taken up and their feasibility discussed by the panel. This resulted in a wide range of topics, in which the European Green Deal was addressed as well as the future of the transatlantic relationship and the challenges of digitization. All participants also agreed that new enthusiasm for European cooperation must be generated and that it must become more tangible for individual citizens.



**Brown Bag Lunch: “Made in China? From a New Economic System to a New Global Order”, October 14, 2019**

On October 14, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Brown Bag Lunch on the topic “Made in China? From a New Economic System to a New Global Order” with **Dr. Theo Sommer**, author and former editor-in-chief and publisher DIE ZEIT, and **Hanna Katharina Müller**, Head of Division “Political models of order and militant democracy,” Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Building und Community. The discussion focused on the various implications of the People’s Republic’s increasingly confident claim to international leadership. In an interview with **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, **Dr. Theo Sommer**, and **Hanna Katharina Müller** shared their views on China’s economic, social, and military transformation in recent years and decades. Afterwards, all participants discussed the future role of China in the world as well as how to respond appropriately on a national and European level.



**Exclusive Discussion on “Can the Republican Party Survive Trump?”, September 18, 2019**

On September 18, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with the American Academy in Berlin hosted an exclusive lunch discussion on “Can the Republican Party Survive Trump?” with **David Frum**, Staff Writer at The Atlantic and former Speechwriter for President George W. Bush. With the quest for the democratic presidential nominee underway and a president piling up cash for his campaign “war room,” the ever-widening rift between Republicans and Democrats provided ample material for a fruitful discussion. Will the Republican and the Democratic Party succeed in formulating unifying messages on the campaign trail – and will the Republican Party break with its president on certain issues? David Frum, who has published widely on these questions, helped to shed light on the lasting impact Trump had and continues to have on the American presidency and the cornerstones of U.S. democracy. Further, he took a look at the current top tier of Democratic candidates and discussed the role of voter demographics in the upcoming presidential elections. The event was co-hosted by GÖRG Partnerschaft von Rechtsanwälten mbB.



### **Book Presentation and Discussion: “The 2-Hour Boss: More Time and Success with the Autonomy Principle” with Insa Klasing, September 11, 2019**

On September 11, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with Dussmann das KulturKaufhaus hosted a book presentation and discussion with **Insa Klasing**, Co-Founder and CEO of TheNextWe. **Insa Klasing** talked about her new book “The 2-Hour Boss: More Time and Success with the Autonomy Principle” (“Der 2-Stunden-Chef: Mehr Zeit und Erfolg mit dem Autonomie-Prinzip”). After a welcome by **Catherine von Fürstenberg-Dussmann**, Rüdiger Lentz, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, discussed with Insa Klasing how to achieve more with less leadership. A horseback riding accident forced the then head of KFC in the DACH region to take an unforeseen break and gave Insa Klasing the opportunity to give her employees the autonomy to make free decisions. She found that both her employees and she as CEO benefited from the 2-hour leadership. Catherine von Fürstenberg-Dussmann further provided interesting input on the feasibility of “2-hour leadership” in a large company and rounded off the lively discussion on leadership requirements in the modern workplace.

### **Brown Bag Lunch: “Populism and Its Impact on Elections: A Threat to Democracy?”, September 4, 2019**

On September 4, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Brown Bag Lunch: “Populism and Its Impact on Elections: A Threat to Democracy?” with **Maria Fiedler**, Political Correspondent, Der Tagesspiegel, and **Martin Klingst**, then Political Correspondent, DIE ZEIT. In view of the results of the state parliamentary elections in Brandenburg and Saxony, the then upcoming elections in Thuringia and the American presidential elections in 2020, the discussion focused on the effects of populism in Germany and the United States. In an interview with **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, Maria Fiedler and Martin Klingst shared impressions of their trips to the rural regions of the Eastern German states with the participants. The participants further discussed how to deal with the growing popularity of the AfD and the increasingly voiced dissatisfaction of many citizens. Concerning the United States, the participants were particularly interested in Trump’s prospects for four more years in the White House.



**Exclusive Roundtable Discussion on  
“America the Unpredictable: Do Allies and  
Partners Still Count?”, June 28, 2019**

On June 28, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an exclusive roundtable discussion on “America the Unpredictable: Do Allies and Partners Still Count?” with Ambassador **Rick Burt**, Former U.S. Ambassador to Germany, and **Prof. Daniel Hamilton**, Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation Professor at Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies. The distinguished guests discussed the need for Germany to become better in defining and pursuing its interests as well as the increasingly perceived disconnect between Berlin and the rest of Europe. Further complicating the questions on the table, the participants focused on China’s increasing engagement on a global scale and possible repercussions for the transatlantic relationship. Nevertheless, all guests agreed that U.S.-German relations remained a vital partnership that deserved all necessary efforts and the fullest support on both sides.



**Discussion: “NATO at 70: Continued  
Success or Imminent Decline?”  
June 19, 2019**

On June 19, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a debate on the topic “NATO at 70: Continued Success or Imminent Decline?” with **Christiane Hoffmann**, Diplomatic Correspondent, Der Spiegel, Ambassador **Dr. Hans-Dieter Lucas**, then Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to the North Atlantic Council, and Dr. **Andrew Michta**, Dean, College of International and Security Studies, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies. The event was opened with an input statement on multilateralism by **Hendrik Meijer**, author of “Arthur Vandenberg: The Man in the Middle of the American Century.” The subsequent discussion addressed NATO’s current and future direction beyond the two percent debate. The focus was on the commitment of Germany and the other NATO partners to the defense alliance as well as internal and external challenges facing NATO. There was also extensive discussion on how to guarantee cooperation and success in the future.



### **Summer Party of the Aspen Institute Germany and the “Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts”, June 5, 2019**

On June 5, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany and the “Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts e.V.” hosted their annual summer party in Berlin, welcoming guest of honor and speaker **Tina Hassel**, Editor in Chief and Chief Correspondent at ARD. The discussion between Tina Hassel and **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, gave an exciting insight into the currently challenging situation in German national politics. Our guest of honor addressed the status of the Grand Coalition, gave insights into her work as Editor in Chief at ARD, and talked about the challenges that established parties as well the media face, especially with regard to key issues for the future. Following the discussion, everyone came together for a wonderful summer reception in the courtyard of the Mendelssohn-Remise.

### **Annual Assembly of the “Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts”, June 5, 2019**

On June 5, 2019, the members of the “Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts e.V.” met prior to the Aspen summer party to hold their annual assembly in Berlin. The board of the “Verein der Freunde des Aspen Instituts” presented its activities and the financial report and the assembly decided on the latest resolutions. Moreover, **Dr. Roland Hoffmann-Theinert**, Chairman of the Management Board, and **Ulrich Misgeld**, Treasurer, were reelected for another three years.



### Discussion “Core & Periphery: Germany and Its Eastern Neighbors – Before Brexit and the European Elections”, May 20, 2019

On May 20, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a discussion on “Core & Periphery: Germany and Its Eastern Neighbors – Before Brexit und the European Elections”. The event began with an input statement by **H.E. Emil Hurezeanu**, Ambassador of Romania in the Federal Republic of Germany, and welcome remarks by Jiří Schneider, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Central Europe. Afterwards, **Dr. Lazăr Comănescu**, Former Ambassador and Former Foreign Minister of Romania; **Prof. Sebastian Plóciennik**, Head of the Weimar Triangle Program at the Polish Institute for International Affairs (PISM); and **Marieluise Beck**, Former Parliamentary State Secretary and Director of Central and Eastern Europe at Zentrum Liberale Moderne, discussed the EU East-West divide and Germany’s role as honest broker and neighbor – especially with regard to the Visegrad countries and the Romanian EU Council Presidency. **Bettina Vestring** moderated the discussion.



### Discussion with Janina Kugel, April 24, 2019

On April 24, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a discussion with **Janina Kugel**, then Chief Human Resources Officer and Member of the Managing Board of Siemens AG, on “The Future of Work: How Digitalization is Revolutionizing the Workplace.” The discussion at the China Club Berlin offered the opportunity for an exchange on the challenges and opportunities of digitalization as well as on strategies to actively shape the future of work. Janina Kugel provided valuable insights into the efforts of Siemens to use digital change to its advantage and to prepare different generations of employees for new work demands. The discussion also dealt with the social responsibility of companies in light of profound societal changes for example through digitalization and demographic change.



### Exclusive Discussion with Nik Gowing, April 10, 2019

### Reception Co-Hosted by the Governing Mayor of Berlin, March 28, 2019

Are we ready to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow?

– On April 10, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany and GÖRG Partnerschaft von Rechtsanwälten mbB co-hosted an exclusive discussion with guest of honor **Nik Gowing**, Founder, Director and Co- Author of “Thinking the Unthinkable.” Addressing international leaders from various personal and professional backgrounds, Nik Gowing shared his thoughts on the new challenges facing leaders across the world. The following discussion provided an opportunity for all participants to share their own experiences on global leadership challenges. It focused on new pressures on corporate and political leaders, the ‘new normal’ of destabilization, and the mindset and behavior appropriate for the new disruptions.

On March 28, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany, in cooperation with the Governing Mayor of Berlin, hosted a festive reception for the representatives of the international Aspen Institutes worldwide and the #AspenAI19 conference in the Säulensaal of the Red City Hall. On behalf of the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Finance Senator **Dr. Mathias Kollatz** welcomed the guests. He focused in his speech on digitization and the associated opportunities for the expansion of an innovative and a smart capital city. Berlin was already a leading science and research location, a creative hotspot, and one of the world’s leading start-up metropolises. More than 70,000 people worked in the digital economy, and a further 270,000 jobs could be created by 2030. The “Master Plan Industry” should secure this development and would continue to support it. The subsequent reception was used by the international guests for an exchange with the Berlin friends of the Aspen Institute.



### **Exclusive Dinner with Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, March 27, 2019**

On March 27, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with Daimler AG hosted an exclusive evening event on the occasion of the meeting of representatives of all 13 Aspen Institutes worldwide and the Board of Trustees. The Aspen International Committee met in Berlin for the first time in 30 years and this evening marked the opening of the two-day program. Guest of honor and keynote speaker was **Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer**, then Chairwoman of the CDU. In her free speech she presented to the guests her assessment of the current challenges of national and international politics and her ideas of modern conservatism with regard to the challenges of the future. She stressed that in view of the tense situation, it was important to intensify transatlantic relations at all levels. The multiple interdependencies in the fields of business, science and education, but also at the personal level, together with the shared values, were a good basis for this. In the following discussions, these ideas were further lively discussed and explained.



### **Aspen International Committee Meeting in Berlin, March 27-29, 2019**

For the first time in over 30 years, the Aspen Institute Germany welcomed the Presidents and Chairmen of all Aspen Institutes from 13 countries around the globe for the annual International Committee Meeting in Berlin on March 27-29. Highlights on the agenda were an exclusive dinner discussion with **Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer**, then Chairwoman of the CDU Germany, as well as a reception at the Rotes Rathaus co-hosted by the Governing Mayor of Berlin. Naturally, discovering Berlin's historical and political sights was also a must during a city tour guided by **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of Aspen Institute Germany. Despite the full-packed schedule, lack of sleep, and the typical "Berlin weather," the international participants thoroughly enjoyed seeing and learning about the many possibilities this city has to offer. A visit of the annual AI conference on "Humanity Defined: Politics and Ethics in the AI Age" at the Representation of the State of Baden-Württemberg was an additional and much appreciated benefit of this year's meeting.



### Discussion “Pick and Choose? The UK’s Farewell to Europe”, March 19, 2019

On March 19, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a discussion on “Pick and Choose? The UK’s Farewell to Europe” at the Permanent Representation of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg in Berlin. The event began with an input statement by Ambassador **Dr. Peter Wittig**, then Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in London. The subsequent panel discussion with Ambassador **Dr. Wittig**, **Damien McGuinness**, BBC Correspondent, and **Metin Hakverdi**, Member of the German Bundestag and Brexit rapporteur for the Social Democrats (SPD), provided an opportunity to assess the political, societal, and economic consequences of the UK’s decision to leave the EU as well as possible repercussions on the Anglo-German relationship. The discussion also targeted the question whether Brexit may either trigger a spillover of societal tensions to the rest of Europe or serve as a salutary shock. Additionally, the participants discussed possible scenarios in the Brexit process ranging from an extension of the Article 50 period to a second referendum. **Bettina Vestring**, freelance journalist and author, moderated the discussion.

### Book Presentation and Discussion: “Trumps America: Journey to a White Country” with Martin Klingst, March 11, 2019

On March 11, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with Dussmann das KulturKaufhaus hosted a book presentation and discussion with **Martin Klingst**, then Senior Political Correspondent at DIE ZEIT. Klingst spoke about his new book “Trumps Amerika: Reise in ein Weißes Land” (Trump’s America: Journey to a White Country). In an interview with **Rüdiger Lentz**, then Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany, and after words of welcome by **Catherine von Fürstenberg-Dussmann**, Klingst read key passages and discussed main theses from his trip report on the Midwest. By portraying different U.S. citizens who voted for Trump in 2016, Klingst emphasized the range of social groups in the “flyover states” Trump successfully approached over the course of his presidential campaign.



### **MSC 2019 Debrief with Jim Townsend and Peter Beyer, February 18, 2019**

On February 18, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany had the pleasure of welcoming **Peter Beyer**, Member of the Bundestag and the German government's Transatlantic Coordinator, and **Jim Townsend**, Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD), for a debrief on the 2019 Munich Security Conference. Our distinguished guests shared exclusive insights and their main takeaways from this year's conference. On the table was the state of transatlantic relations, Germany's role in a changing global order, and the importance of the MSC that allowed for constructive and open exchange despite diverging views on matters of mutual concern.



### **Breakfast Briefing with Ambassador Kurt Volker and Peter Beyer, February 17, 2019**

On February 17, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted an informal breakfast briefing on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference with Ambassador **Kurt Volker**, then Executive Director of the McCain Institute for International Leadership, and **Peter Beyer**, Member of the Bundestag and the German government's Transatlantic Coordinator. The participants discussed current U.S. foreign policy challenges, the state of transatlantic relations, as well as their main takeaways from MSC 2019.



### MSC 2019 Side Event, February 16, 2019

On February 16, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany in collaboration with Goethe University Frankfurt and Bonn University's Center for International Security and Governance (CISG) hosted an official MSC 2019 Side Event in Munich on "Embedding Leadership: German Strategy in the Making." After an introduction by **Gunther Hellmann**, Professor for Political Science at Goethe University Frankfurt, **Niels Annen**, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, offered his thoughts on the changing context of Germany's foreign and security policy. Subsequently, **Charles Kupchan**, Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and Professor of International Affairs at Georgetown University; **François Heisbourg**, Senior Advisor for Europe at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and Special Advisor at the Paris-based Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique; and **Kiron Skinner**, then Director of Policy Planning at the U.S. Department of State, discussed general questions of security policy and strategy-making and how Germany's security has changed in a European and global context. **Daniela Schwarzer**, then Director of the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), moderated the discussion.

### Brown Bag Lunch on "China's Tech Strategy: Priorities, Challenges and Ties with Europe", January 24, 2019

On January 24, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany hosted a Brown Bag Lunch with **Jennifer Zhu Scott**, Founding Principle of Radian Partners, on the topic "China's Tech Strategy: Priorities, Challenges, and Ties with Europe" in Berlin. China's tech boom is creating a new superpower of tycoons and tinkerers. Companies like Alibaba, Baidu, Tencent, and Didi are redefining what it means to be a wired society. After a short input statement by Jennifer Zhu Scott and a response by **Donata Hopfen**, the participants discussed the expectations coming with this boom and what effects this development has on social behavior and government control. Another topic was how China is thinking about Europe as a partner, a competitor, and a market for tech and what comes next when China tries to take the lead in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, blockchain and quantum computers. A particular focus was on IP security, property rights and a European digital policy.



**Discussion on “Alliance ou Mésalliance?  
Europe Waits for Macron & Merkel”,  
January 15, 2019**

On January 15, 2019, the Aspen Institute Germany in cooperation with Daimler hosted a discussion on “Alliance ou Mésalliance? Europe Waits for Macron & Merkel.” The event began with an input statement by H.E. **Anne-Marie Descôtes**, Ambassador of the French Republic in Berlin. The subsequent panel discussion with H.E. Anne-Marie Descôtes; Dr. **Almut Möller**, Head of the Berlin office of the European Council on Foreign Relations; and **Eckart von Klaeden**, Vice President and Head of External Affairs at Daimler AG, provided an opportunity to discuss the current political and economic questions, challenges, and fields of cooperation in the Franco-German partnership. The discussion focused on Macron’s reform policy, the yellow vests’ protests, and German-French cooperation in politics and industry. The panelists and participants also addressed the implications of the Brexit for the Franco-German duo and the future of the European Union.



*Dr. Jana Puglierin, Head of Berlin Office & Senior Policy Fellow, European  
Council on Foreign Relations  
Brown Bag Lunch "A World in Transition: From Multilateralism back to Great  
Power Competition?"  
November 29, 2019*





*Aspen NEXT Transatlantic Workshop  
June 12-14, 2019*

# KEY STAFF



**Tyson Barker** | Acting Deputy Executive Director (2017-2020) – Tyson joined Aspen Germany in 2017 as Program Director and Fellow. He was responsible for the institute's digital and transatlantic programs. He also served as Acting Deputy Executive Director from 2018. Prior to that, Tyson

served in numerous positions including as senior advisor in the Bureau for European and Eurasian Affairs at the U.S. State Department and director for transatlantic relations at the Bertelsmann Foundation. He has written for numerous publications on both sides of the Atlantic including Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Politico, The Atlantic, The National Interest, and Der Spiegel. Tyson was a Fulbright scholar in Austria and a Truman National Security Project Fellow. He was a recipient of the Taiwan Cultural Exchange Fellowship and a grant from the Starr Foundation to conduct research on Sino-European relations. Tyson has a bachelor's degree from Columbia University and a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). In addition to his native English, he speaks fluent German and Spanish.



**Tina Bories** | then Junior Program Officer – Tina is a Program Officer at the Aspen Institute Germany. Prior to this position, she worked as a Program Assistant at the Institute with a focus on the Aspen Berlin Transatlantic Forum from August to November 2018. She holds a B.A. in German Literature

and Media Studies from the University of Paderborn with a semester abroad at the University of Lorraine in Metz, France. During her studies she completed an internship at the local newspaper in Hamm and gained subsequent work experiences as a freelancer for the newspaper. In 2020, Tina

finished her M.A. in Media Culture Analysis, an integrated, bilingual German-French study program with semesters at the Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf, the University of Vienna, Austria, and the University of Nantes, France.



**Elmar Brok** | Elmar Brok was member of the European Parliament from 1980 to 2019, being responsible for constitutional issues as well as for foreign, security and European policy affairs. He is Co-Chairman of the Transatlantic Policy Network, Vice-Chairman of the World Christian Democratic

Alliance, and a member of the EPP Executive Committee. He completed part of his studies in law and political science at the Centre of European Governmental Studies at the University of Edinburgh. He then completed a training as radio journalist and, in addition to his political career, worked for radio outlets and newspapers. From 1991 to 2011, he was appointed Senior Vice-President Media Development at Bertelsmann AG. He has been a member of the CDU's Federal Executive Committee since 2004, was Chairman of the Social Policy Working Group from 1984 to 1987, and Social Policy Spokesman of the EPP Group from 1987 to 1994. With the increasing importance of European policy issues, the CDU created the Federal Expert Committee on European Policy in 1989, which he continues to chair until today. Since 2012, he has been Chairman of the Board European Endowment for Democracy, which aims to promote civil society engagement with a democratic, humanitarian focus in neighboring EU countries. As Co-Chair of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, he is also committed to promoting political discourse between European and American legislators. He is Honorary President of the European Union of Germany, Vice President of the Board of Trustees of the Institute for European Politics, and a member of the Board of the German Society for Foreign Policy.



**Alexandra Dinkler** | Program Officer – Alexandra joined the Aspen Institute Germany in 2016. Since June 2017, Alexandra is a Program Officer in the Public Program. Alexandra completed her master's degree at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies of the Freie

Universität Berlin, focusing her thesis on the convergence of character narratives in Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. She received her bachelor's degree from the Freie Universität Berlin in 2015. Prior to studying in Berlin, she lived in Canada and in the United States, where she worked for the German Marshall Fund of the United States. Alexandra speaks English, German, French, and Spanish. Alexandra is currently on leave.



**Valeska Esch** | Deputy Executive Director – Valeska works as Deputy Executive Director and Program Director for Europe with the Aspen Institute Germany. She is responsible for Aspen Germany's activities on the Western Balkans, the Visegrad, and Eastern Partnership countries. Valeska has

a longstanding experience working on the Western Balkans and has published on the Western Balkan policies of the EU and Germany. She joined Aspen in February 2009. She holds an M.A. in Political Science and International and European Law with a focus on European politics and Southeast Europe, for which she studied at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn and the University of Birmingham. Prior to joining Aspen, she worked for an event management firm and the United Nations University's Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNUEHS) in Bonn.



**Tobias Jerzewski** | Program Officer – Tobias is a Program Officer at the Aspen Institute Germany's Digital Program. He has been with Aspen Germany for more than three years working on tech policy, Artificial Intelligence, and cyber related issues, as well as contributing to Aspen's

Transatlantic and Leadership Programs. He studied European Affairs at SciencesPo Paris and the Free University Berlin focusing on Poland's role within the EU, the European neighborhood policy, and Franco-German Relations. He also has a particular passion for Hannah Arendt's work with a special emphasis on her case for Federalism and the challenges of modern democracy. Tobias volunteers as Vice President with The Policy Corner, a platform seeking to empower students and young professionals to raise their voices on current policy challenges.



**Martin Klingst** | Senior Fellow (2018-2020) – Martin Klingst is Chief Speechwriter and Head of Strategic Communications at the Office of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany. Before, he served as a Senior Political Correspondent with DIE ZEIT in Berlin, Germany, as the

paper's Bureau Chief in Washington D.C. (2007-2014), and as DIE ZEIT's Senior Political Editor and Managing Editor of the political section in Hamburg (1998-2007). He studied law in Freiburg, Geneva, and Hamburg and worked for the Institute of International Affairs at the University of Hamburg, where he taught German Constitutional Law. In 2006, he was a fellow at the Center for European Studies at Harvard University, where he lectured on the German reform process, transatlantic relations, terrorism, and Europe's engagement in the Middle East. Before assuming his position

with DIE ZEIT in 1996, he worked as a journalist for the North German Public Broadcasting Corporation NDR and the weekly paper Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt. He wrote on domestic topics as well as on international affairs. He covered the Balkan wars, the Israel-Palestine conflict, transatlantic relations, and lately also the refugee crisis. In 2012, he was honored with the George F. Kennan editorial award and in 2016 with the German Reporter Award. In 2016, Reclam published his book “Menschenrechte” (human rights) and in 2018 “Trumps Amerika. Reise in ein weißes Land”. In January 2021 Martin will publish his biography about Guido Goldman: “Amerikas Mr. Germany”.



**Sonja Kaufmann** | Program Officer (2018-2019) – Sonja joined the Aspen Institute in June 2018 as part of the Transatlantic Program and was responsible for the Aspen Berlin Transatlantic Forum. She holds an M.A. in Political Science from the University of Potsdam as well as a Graduate Certificate in

Foreign Policy from the American University in Washington, D.C. Before joining Aspen, she was a Research Associate at the Hertie School of Governance and Associate Editor for “The Governance Report” publication series. During her studies, Sonja has gained work experience with AICGS, the German Federal Foreign Office, and the U.S. Embassy in Berlin.



**Carina Kempf** | Senior Program Officer (2015-2019) – Carina Kempf was a Senior Program Officer at the Aspen Institute Germany where she led the Leadership Program. Prior, she worked as a program assistant for the Aspen Southeast Europe Program and the Aspen

Berlin Transatlantic Forum. Carina holds a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science and Law from the Friedrich-Schiller-University of Jena and received her Master’s degree in International Security with Distinction from the University of Leicester. She gained her second Master in Political Science from the Free University of Berlin. Carina is a doctoral candidate at the Free University of Berlin. Her dissertation is about security, migration, and social urban space. Due to her strong focus on questions regarding security, peace, conflict studies, and questions of governance, she interned with the Research and Documentation Service of the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Embassy in Helsinki, as well as with the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (HSFK). She gained working experience in international conference management as Project Assistant at the Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS). In addition, Carina is a member of the United Nations Association of Germany (DGVN) and the German Atlantic Association (DAG).



**Olivia Knodt** | Program Officer – Olivia Knodt is a Program Officer in Aspen Germany’s Digital Program. She joined Aspen Germany in 2019 and works on a range of topics including AI, tech policy, and the future of work. Prior to this, she worked as a consultant specializing in tech regulation.

Olivia previously held positions as Research Assistant and Project Manager at the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Berlin (2014-2017), and at the Hertie School, where she served as Research Associate to the President. Olivia holds a bachelor’s degree from Bucknell University, a Master of Public Policy from the Hertie School and a Master of Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.



**Monika Kreutz** | then Senior Program Officer – Monika works as Program Director Public Program. She re-joined the Aspen Institute Germany in December 2018 as Senior Program Officer and is responsible for board relations as well as fundraising activities and the Public Program. She came to

Aspen from the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany, where she managed the Chamber's signature events as well as the Board of Directors for six years. Prior to that, she worked for the American Academy in Berlin in the Development Department. After serving for ten years as Executive Assistant to the Director, Liaison to the Board of Trustees, and Program Officer at the Aspen Institute Germany, Monika supported the PR & Communication Agency Amend. Before that, she served as research assistant to the Vice President and Director of Studies at the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Boston, MA. After her studies at the Rheinische-Friedrich-Wilhelms-University Bonn, Monika worked as research assistant and speech writer for the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the German Bundestag.



**Christina Lahr** | Finance & Controlling – Christina joined the Aspen Institute as Financial Officer in September 2018. Prior to that, Christina had gained broad experience in the finance and treasury area and committee work when working for more than 20 years in an international

pharmaceutical company. Christina is a Foreign Language Correspondent and studied Business Administration (Diplom-Betriebswirtin) focussing on international business. Before joining the Aspen Institute, she worked as a controller at the American Academy in Berlin.



**Rüdiger Lentz** | Executive Director (2013-2020) – Rüdiger Lentz was the Executive Director of the Aspen Institute Germany. From 2009 until 2013, he served as the Executive Director of the German-American Heritage Foundation and Museum in Washington, D.C. Prior to that, he worked as a TV

correspondent and magazine journalist for Der Spiegel, ARD Television, Rias Berlin, and Deutsche Welle for over three decades. During his time as Bureau Chief for Deutsche Welle in Washington, D.C., he was a Visiting Lecturer at Harvard University, the School of Foreign Service in Washington and a regular guest on CNN and C-Span. Rüdiger has been a long-time member of the Atlantik-Brücke and a founding member of the German American Business Council (GABC) in Washington, D.C.



**Lukas Lorenz** | Program Assistant – Since August 2019, Lukas was responsible for Contact Management before joining the Institute's Digital Program. Prior to that, he spent three months as an intern at the Aspen Institute Germany. Since October 2019

Lukas has been studying in the master's program of political science at the University of Potsdam. Before joining the Aspen Institute, he completed a three-month internship at the Bildungswerk Berlin of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation, after which he completed his Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Public Law at the University of Regensburg at the end of 2018. During his bachelor studies he gained international experience in Washington D.C. and Florianopolis in Brazil.



**Philip Lott** | Program Assistant (2019-2020) – Philip Lott was a Program Assistant in the Aspen Institute’s Leadership Program from August 2019 until February 2020. Previously, he was an intern with the Aspen Institute Germany from March to May 2019. Philip holds a B.A. in political science

from the University of Heidelberg and was an exchange student at Sciences Po Paris. During his undergraduate studies he worked as a student assistant for the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law and interned in the Department for International Order, the UN and Arms Control of the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin. Currently, he is pursuing a master’s degree in international relations at Humboldt University, Free University and University of Potsdam.



**Charlotte Mencke** | Program Assistant (2018-2019) – Charlotte was a Program Assistant in the Aspen Institute’s Leadership Program from 2018 to 2019. Prior to that, she was active in the Institute’s Digital Program. Charlotte completed a dual B.A. in political science at Sciences Po

Paris and Freie Universität Berlin with a focus on political theory in the fall of 2018. During her studies, she gained work experience with the Hessian Education Ministry, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation’s Washington, D.C. office, and the German Foreign Ministry. She was also a board member of Model United Nations Nancy and Young Democrats Abroad Berlin and co-organizer of a student seminar on American Grand Strategy and U.S. foreign policy. In the summer of 2019, Charlotte left the Institute to pursue a Master’s degree in Political Theory at the University of Chicago.



**Ingrid Mueller-Brazell** | Senior Program Officer (2019- 2020) – Ingrid was Senior Program Officer at the Aspen Institute Germany where she headed the Leadership Program since August 2019. Prior to joining Aspen, Ingrid worked for a boutique consulting company specializing in coaching and

executive trainings. In the past, she worked as a press officer at the German Institute for Human Rights, at the American Academy in Berlin, as well as the Public Affairs Section of the Embassy of the United States in Berlin. Ingrid also has a background in journalism: she worked as a producer for TV programs, very often with an international focus, which aired on CNBC, n-tv, and Sat1, as well as for printed publications. Ingrid holds an MA in translation studies, is a certified translator for English and Russian, and has also worked for an NGO support center in the Russian Federation and several other NGOs active in human rights development in Russia.



**Marvin Nowak** | Program Officer (2018-2020) – Marvin joined Aspen as a Program Officer in the Public Program in September 2018. His exchange year in Springfield, Oregon, as part of the Congress-Bundestag-Youth-Exchange (CBYX), laid the foundation for his transatlantic profile. Following

his bachelor’s degree in English/American and Romance Studies in Aachen, he took on a master’s program in North American Studies at the University of Bonn in 2016. Over the course of the latter, he interned at the European Parliament in Brussels, the German Embassy in Washington, D.C., as well as for a member of the German Bundestag. Over the course of the latter, he interned at the European Parliament in Brussels, the German Embassy in Washington, D.C., as well as for a member of the German Bundestag.



**Viktoria Palm** | then Program Officer – Viktoria joined the Aspen Institute Germany in March 2020 as a Program Officer for the Europe Program. Before that she worked as Project Manager at the Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP) in Berlin where she was responsible for several capacity developments projects

in Ukraine, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova relating to the implementation of the Association Agreements with the European Union. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from the Humboldt-University Berlin and a Master's degree in International Relations from Free University Berlin, Humboldt-University Berlin and University Potsdam, including semesters abroad at Sapienza University in Rome and the Higher School of Economics in Moscow. During her studies she completed an internship at the German Embassy in Serbia and worked as a tutor at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). She speaks German, English, Russian, and Italian fluently.



**Yannic Remme** | Program Officer – Yannic Remme is a Program Officer in Aspen's Europe Program. He joined Aspen in January 2017, focusing predominantly on the Western Balkans. He grew up in Germany and the United States, graduating from the German School in Washington D.C. in

2012. He obtained his Bachelor's degree (LL.B.) in International and European Law from the European Law School at Maastricht University before volunteering to work on public education reform in Colombia with the Colombian Ministry of Education and the Heart for Change Foundation. Yannic later received his Master's degree in International Affairs (MIA) from the Hertie School in Berlin, where he specialized in Security and Sustainability. Yannic speaks German, English, Spanish, and has basic knowledge of French.



**Laura Senftleben** | Program Officer – Laura joined Aspen Germany in January 2020 as part of the Public Program team and point of contact for the Verein der Freunde. Prior to that, she served as Events Specialist at the American Chamber of Commerce in Berlin and Public Affairs Con-

tractor at the U.S. Consulate General in Leipzig. Laura is a trained translator and holds degrees in American studies as well as intercultural communication. During her studies, she gained work experience in the United States, Spain, and England.



**Tanja Treysse** | Office Manager – Tanja joined the Aspen Institute in March 2014. Tanja is a bilingual secretary also holding a business degree. During her studies, she worked as an assistant to the Sales and Marketing Director of Transrapid International (marketing of trains with magnetic levitation)

among other positions. Afterwards she worked for the Head of Electricity Trade of the BDEW (German Association of Energy and Water Industries) before she became Managing Assistant of IZ Klima, an association for the distribution of information about climate friendly power generation, for six years.



**Olga van Zijverden** | Program Officer (2018-2019) – Olga joined Aspen in February 2018 and worked until November 2019 as Program Officer with the Institute's Europe Program. She holds an MA in European Studies focusing on

Central and Eastern Europe from the University of Leipzig and the Kliment Ohridski University in Sofia. As her Bachelor's studies she pursued a French-German Degree on International Economics. Previous to Aspen, Olga worked at the policy research institute Rand Europe in Brussels on diverse projects for European institutions. Later she managed a European Commission's project at TÜV Rheinland Consulting in the field of digitalization. Olga left Aspen to work at the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce for a project focusing on the Western Balkans. Olga speaks German, English, and French.



**Wiebke Wartenberg** | Program Officer – Wiebke Wartenberg joined the Aspen Institute Germany in February 2017. In her current role as Program Officer in the Institute's Transatlantic Program, she is responsible for the Laboratories of Democracy Initiative, a transatlantic exchange

program for state legislators, and for implementing the podcast America's Choice. Prior to that, she worked in the Institute's Public Program and managed Aspen's membership and board relations. Before joining Aspen, she completed her master's degree in North American Studies at Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena. For her master's thesis about American public diplomacy toward West Germany during the Kennedy administration, she conducted research at the National Archives in College Park, MD. Wiebke worked as an intern for both the German Embassy in Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Consulate General in Leipzig. She further completed a bachelor's degree in psychology at Jena University and Michigan State University.



**Dr. Klaus Wittmann** | Senior Fellow (2011-2020) – Klaus retired from the Bundeswehr in 2008 after 42 years of service that included battalion and brigade command, academic phases at Hamburg University and at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, military policy

assignments in the Ministry of Defence, Bonn, and at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, as well as higher officer education at the Führungsakademie, Hamburg, and the NATO Defense College, Rome, where he concluded his career as Director Academic Planning and Policy. He is a security policy and NATO expert, has lectured and published widely on history, strategy, and arms control topics, and teaches contemporary history at Potsdam University. From 2011 to 2020, he supported Aspen Germany as a Senior Fellow.

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