



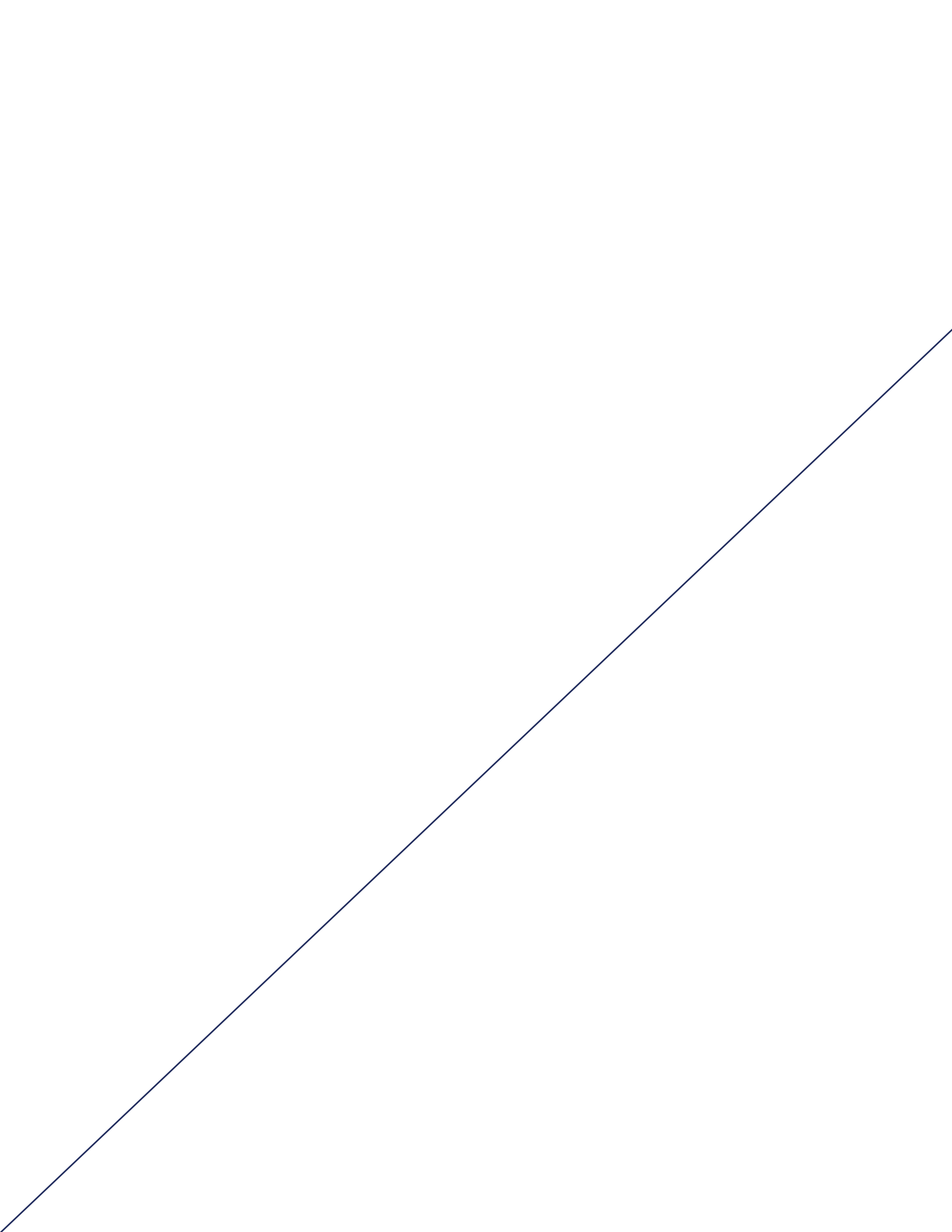
Toward a New Storyline



4 VISIONS

Reimagining the Transatlantic
Relationship in 2050





Executive Summary

The “Toward a New Storyline” (TNS) project aimed to explore the past, discuss the present, and re-envision the future of the transatlantic relationship with a group of 15 students with interdisciplinary backgrounds. In the last phase of the eight-month project, the group was divided into four sub-groups and each was tasked with developing a vision for how the transatlantic relationship could and should develop by the year 2050. This publication compiles their ideas and illustrates how similarly the younger generation views today’s challenges and tomorrow’s solutions. In the near to mid-term, all groups foresaw a period of recurrent global crises that would act as a driver of reform and positive change. To weather these crises, the groups stressed the importance of institutional reform as well as adherence to common values, especially the values of democracy, equality, inclusion, and accountability. They saw a local component to solving global challenges: states must improve democracy and governance at home at the same time as they cooperate globally. Significantly, many groups also highlighted the impact that individuals can have on policy and politics, whether they are heads of state or leaders of social movements. Lastly, there was widespread recognition that while the United States and Germany must continue to play a leading role in the world, they cannot solve the world’s problems alone. They must not only act as role models, but also support and collaborate with other countries around the globe, especially in the global south.

Introduction to the TNS Project

The “Toward a New Storyline” (TNS) project aimed to put the future of the transatlantic relationship back on the map for young people. Fifteen university students between the ages of 20 and 29 from Berlin, Potsdam, Leipzig, Erfurt, and Munich with interdisciplinary backgrounds were brought together fourteen times between August 2021 and March 2022 by the Berlin chapter of GMF’s Young Transatlantic Network of Future Leaders (YTN) in partnership with the US Embassy in Berlin. Fourteen participants were German and one was American.

Younger generations have no direct, lived experience of the Cold War and the historical conditions and dynamics which led to the close US-German relationship we know today. Older generations still remember the existential stakes of the post-war period, dominated by questions of war and peace, but today’s young people are less interested in the “traditional” topics of security and defense.¹ Rather, they increasingly lend more weight to “newer” issues such as climate change, economic inequality, digitalization, and diversity and inclusion. The TNS project was designed to bridge this gap by having participants engage with both “old” and “new” policy areas and prompting them to re-envision the transatlantic relationship for the future. To meet these criteria, the three thematic pillars of the project were security, diversity and inclusion, and climate.

For each topic, the aim was to explore the past through field trips to historical sites and discuss the present through policy dialogues with government officials and policymakers. At the end of the project, participants were asked to look toward and shape the future at a workshop re-envisioning the transatlantic relationship. The present booklet represents the results of that workshop, compiling the participants’ ideas on how the transatlantic relationship could and should develop by 2050 to remain strong and help solve urgent global challenges.

¹ With Russia’s war in Ukraine, this has almost certainly changed. However, the bulk of the project was completed before the outbreak of the war, and it remains the case that younger people tend to value policy topics other than security. They also have new ways of conceptualizing it to encompass, for example, environmental and human security.



Reimagining Transatlantic Relations in 2050

At the workshop held on January 19, 2022, the group reflected on what they had learned throughout the project about the past and present of transatlantic relations. After this “sense-making” exercise, the group was asked to look toward the future. Specifically, they were asked to come up with the most promising avenues for strengthening transatlantic cooperation and rewriting the transatlantic “storyline.” The result of the group’s deliberations were several ideas clustered around the project’s three thematic pillars and an additional pillar of “society.” Under security, the principal idea was to work toward strengthening multilateralism; under climate, it was to utilize the unique and complementary strengths of Europe and the United States to fight climate change; under diversity and inclusion, it was to recognize that ignoring diversity and inclusion principles is a security risk itself; and under society, it was to promote policies that increase equality and preserve open societies, especially those related to democracy and social inclusion.

Participants then divided up into four sub-groups to work on developing each of these ideas further. Their task was to come up with a written product depicting their vision of how the transatlantic relationship could and should develop by the year 2050. The prompt to guide their work consisted of the following four questions:

Imagine we are in the year 2050, 30 years from now.

- 1. What has happened?**
- 2. How did we get there?**
- 3. Who were the key actors and what motivated them?**
- 4. How does this contribute to creating a new storyline for the transatlantic partnership?**

What follows are the written products of each group, representing their creativity and vision alone. They are not meant as fully fleshed-out strategies or policy recommendations, but rather as valuable impulses and working ideas for reimagining the transatlantic relationship of the future, one which speaks to older and younger generations alike.

1

The first group's vision is dedicated to the topic that perhaps concerns and interests the younger generation most of all: the climate crisis. Britta and Melisa created a presentation to demonstrate how the world, and transatlantic partners in particular, came to make great progress in the fight against climate change by 2050. They highlight the importance of innovation as well as the integration of and support to developing countries in international climate policy.

FUTURE 1:

Climate

slideshow presentation

Welcome to COP54 in Berlin: We Made It!

AUTHORS:

*Melisa Özcelik and
Britta Sprank*



WELCOME TO COP54
IN BERLIN

We Made It!

It's 2050 - What has happened?

We are using **renewable energies only!**

- › **no coal**
- › **no nuclear energy**
- › **no oil or gas**

Instead: wind, solar, and hydrogen as reliable renewable energy sources

Reflection

Fridays for Future, the Sunrise Movement, political intentions, court rulings, and technological progress were all not enough to trigger a change.

- › So it came down to one driver:

Shocking **natural disasters**, and that was just the beginning:

- Nearly 90% of the Amazon rainforest burned down in 2029
- Dramatic security leaks in former coal plants
- A nuclear catastrophe in Belgium (Tihange) in 2036

We had to act immediately!



Political Situations on Both Sides of the Atlantic

USA

Climate Governance

- **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** started her second term as the president of the United States

An integrated **Energy and Climate Ministry** including an expert council led by **Jamie Margolin**

Annual transatlantic climate/energy summits

R&D cooperations

Initiated the Liège Energy Agreement (COP30)

GERMANY (AND THE EU)

Climate Governance

- **Greta Thunberg** as new European Commission president
 - **Luisa Neubauer** as chancellor of Germany
- Energy and Climate Council of experts and decision-makers** (analogous to Germany's expert council on the coronavirus)

International Order

RUSSIA:

- profited from the change toward renewable hydrogen power stations, as transition solution was gas
- changed old gas power stations into hydrogen power stations and sold excess energy
- defended its old role as an energy exporter, but R&D developments in US/EU and their partnerships with other renewable energy suppliers led to less dependency on Russia



DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- pursued climate-friendly policies with help of the Western-funded Green Climate Fund
- established renewable energy partnerships with the US and Germany

EMERGING ECONOMIES

- increased their NDCs and climate pledges

CHINA:

- after 2030, China finally reduced its carbon emissions and began working toward a sustainable economy
- now China is working together with the US and Germany to combat climate change

Mechanisms of Change

- **Liège Energy Agreement (COP30):** Included national binding targets
- **Global energy partnerships** with developing countries and mutual partnerships with renewable energy suppliers
- **Green Climate Fund:** Agreeing with other responsible states to contribute significantly to the fundraising for climate efforts in developing countries
- **NDCs were significantly increased** by each country (especially by emerging economies)
- **Increased investment in R&D**, especially in Europe and the US
 - Example: renewable hydrogen power stations

A New Transatlantic Storyline

- From old security focus between US and Germany/EU toward **new security sub topics:** e.g., energy security, environmental security, etc.
- Increasing climate and energy focus on **institutional levels** (think tank research, events organized by transatlantic associations, etc.)
- From previous more fragile climate relations to acting as **one ambitious party**
- Raising **awareness** about fatal consequences of climate change all over the world

Only if we work together will we be able to deal with climate change!

2

Complementing the vision of climate cooperation, the second group of Felix, Henrik, and Sören also addressed the crucial issue of cooperation by drafting a joint statement in 2050 by the leaders of the United States and Germany on multilateralism. They not only connect multilateralism to security, a pillar of the TNS project, but to a variety of other issues such as environmental protection, social equality, and economic development. In 2050, the US and Germany are still leading proponents of an open, rules-based order and are more convinced than today of the need for genuine and effective institutions of global governance.

FUTURE 2:

Multilateralism

joint statement

Joint Statement of the President of the United States and the Chancellor of Germany at the 2050 German- American Future Forum

AUTHORS:

*Henrik Hansen,
Felix Neumann,
and Sören Lennart
Wehrheim*





Joint Statement of the President of the United States and the Chancellor of Germany at the 2050 German-American Future Forum

The United States and Germany reaffirm their commitment to promoting peace, security, and cooperation in the world. The foundation of our relationship is our shared belief in democratic principles, universal values, and multilateral institutions. Over the last few days, we, the President of the United States and the Chancellor of Germany, have held discussions about the major challenges facing the world and our shared vision for the global agenda on security, equality, and climate change. We recognize our responsibility as leading economies and century-long allies to lead in the development of global solutions.

Following the years of crises in the mid-2020s, we now look back at a decade in which important steps were made to renew the multilateral system and re-establish an open, rule-based world order. As advocates for such an international order, we have made tremendous steps toward global security and global justice.

For the first time, we have a functioning international court system to resolve disputes under international law and whose jurisdiction is recognized by all nations. International aid is now tied to compliance with rulings of the International Court of Justice, and the court may now even impose sanctions in exceptional circumstances.

Second, through the reform of voting rights in all principal organs of the United Nations, the world has moved closer to a true system of global governance. Decisions can now be made more easily, and stronger enforcement mechanisms are in place.

Third, the “Buxtehude Climate Accords” of 2037 have by now become the first international climate agreement to be sufficiently implemented. The accords have put us on a path toward net-zero emissions to combat human-driven global climate change.

Fourth, new trading rules by the World Trade Organization (WTO) with a focus on equality have revived global trade to almost pre-crisis levels. Barriers to the flow of goods raised as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine have been lifted. For the first time, basic social rights and environmental protection are enshrined in the WTO’s General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Many of these ideas have long been championed by the United States and Germany; much of this is the result of our engagement with all nations and our unrelenting conviction that open, sustainable, and accountable economies lead to the best outcomes for all. We commit ourselves to defending these achievements.

Meanwhile, the United States and Germany understand that fundamental challenges remain. We will therefore continue to work together to ensure that the whole world can embark on the path to prosperity, and that the conditions for sustainable development are not only realized in certain regions but established in all countries. Now, as then, we are convinced that multilateral solutions and common adherence to international rule of law are the essential ingredients for success.

We are concerned that in some places in the world, people are still unable to exercise their inalienable human rights. Fundamental rights are an essential part of international law and our common humanity. We believe the time has come for the establishment of a court system that addresses grave human rights violations and has the jurisdiction to investigate and put on trial perpetrators of any nationality.

Persistent armed conflicts and insurgencies based on asymmetric warfare and terrorism show that it is not enough to create peace between nation-states. We must introduce global arms-control regimes that specifically target non-state actors and develop effective detection and sanctioning systems. Citizens at home and abroad should be able to trust in the rule of law, not fear the rule of terror.

The economic damage done by climate change has triggered many of the conflicts we are still trying to resolve. It is insufficient to reach emission targets and prevent further deterioration of the environment; we need to actively work on rebuilding ecosystems and restoring the basis of human existence in every place where it has been lost.

Following previous decades' stagnating living standards, disruptions to the global economy and ever more people not having their basic needs met, we are optimistic that global poverty is finally on the decline. However, it remains the greatest source of human suffering in the world and an important obstacle to human development. We must create international agreements and sustainable economic programs that eliminate the scourge of hunger not just in our countries, but everywhere.

We are convinced that these topics will be at the top of the international agenda for the coming years and express our strongest support for solutions that emphasize global rules, cooperation and, most importantly, accountability. By providing a forum for negotiations, offering financial aid, and leading by example, the United States and Germany will demonstrate that democracy does not only deliver at home, but democratic leadership delivers for the world.

3

The third group returns to a key pillar of the TNS project with their focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). In their future vision in the form of an Instagram account, Anna, Foelke, Johannes, Konstantin, and Milad emphasize that DEI principles are essential to solving all other challenges. Furthermore, they view the lack of adherence to DEI principles as a security risk itself. To demonstrate the importance of DEI, they vividly depict two scenarios for humanity on the path to 2050, from the local to the global level—one utopian and one dystopian—depending on whether it chooses to embrace or reject DEI principles. With two possibilities for humanity compared side-by-side, it is clear the stakes could not be higher.

FUTURE 3:

Diversity and Inclusion

Instagram account

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion First

AUTHORS:

*Johannes Gereons,
Konstantin Groß,
Anna Pflügler,
Foelke Redlich, and
Milad Tabesch*



When we dedicated ourselves to this project, we agreed that the transatlantic alliance needed an update, one that complements the former military/security narrative. Today, however, we are witnessing a relentless Russian war of aggression in Ukraine. This anachronistic invasion not only revitalizes transatlantic relations; in this conflict, the free, democratic, and constitutional world is on one side facing a chauvinistic superpower. Today, while fighting continues in Ukraine, we should remember that our freedom, our values, and our understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion are also being defended.

Our narrative starts by taking a trip to the year 2050. By looking back into the past from this vantage point in the future, two scenarios become visible: one utopian and one dystopian. In the utopian scenario, policymaking in Germany and the United States focuses on principles of diversity, equity, and social inclusion. In the dystopian scenario, these ideals were disregarded, and, instead, policies were influenced by monoculturalist, unequal, and exclusive worldviews.

Instagram is one of the most popular apps among young people on both sides of the Atlantic. We are convinced that we can reach our peer group better through this medium than through publications or policy memos. We are interested in providing impulses that help young people broaden their horizons and reassure them that the transatlantic alliance has far broader potential to counteract supposedly regional problems. By exploring our account, one can view the concrete results and policies of the utopian and dystopian scenarios, thus giving insight into possible futures.



In the utopian scenario, societies were able to deal with the challenges we examined during the TNS project, such as those related to national security and climate change. For example, there was a stable security situation because there was a genuine attempt to include every nation in every aspect. We thought of multiple reasons why people decided to base their actions on the principles of diversity, equality, and social inclusion. For one, we believe that people have a certain innate feeling of fairness which leads them to help and care for one another. Secondly, it is proven that policies which are made according to diversity, equity, and inclusion principles are more effective.

A prime example of existing inequality and social exclusion is in our education systems. According to the Pew Research Center, only 26% of American bachelor's degree graduates come from non-academic households. In Germany, the pattern is similar. Just 21 out of 100 children from working-class families/households go to university, according to the Bildungsreport 2020, whereas from academic families, the figure is 74 out of 100. Access to education cannot be elitist, and it certainly should not be a privilege. It must be made accessible to everyone, not only financially but also through the necessary face-to-face and mental support.


A second example is youth mobility among nations, which urgently needs to be rethought. Studies confirm that overseas mobility is highly socially selective. In Germany, a US exchange is still perceived as a privilege and opportunity that seems only accessible to certain social groups. A transatlantic approach and alliance for more diversity, equality, and inclusion first needs bright leaders for change. For this, we need lighthouse projects that actively counteract these inequalities. The German Fulbright Commission's Diversity Initiative is one such project which should be scaled up. Other existing initiatives such as the Parliamentary Sponsorship Program should also be further opened to broad groups of society with the help of quotas, active advertising among disadvantaged groups, and simpler application procedures. In our utopian scenario, new and diverse policymakers, some of whom were members


of existing initiatives such as “Diplomats of Color” or “Meet a Jew,” started making diversity, equity, and inclusion a cornerstone in transatlantic and international policymaking in the decades before 2050.

Our vision shows how important transatlantic organizations and initiatives are for helping us to approach the utopian scenario. One can clearly see that the future is unwritten and that it can lead to either utopia or dystopia. It is up to us.

Below is a series of excerpts from our Instagram account. Go to the main account to explore more on your own!



 **diversityequityinclusionfirst** Follow
Utopia

 **diversityequityinclusionfirst** What does diversity, equity, and inclusion mean?

This account emerged out of a program from the German Marshall Fund called “Toward a New Storyline.” This program was set up to explore how transatlantic relations can be adapted to the values of a new generation. It focused on security, diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as climate change.

On this account, we take a trip to the year 2050 and explore the possibilities for positive change if politics focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as the negative consequences if these topics continue to be neglected.

So get ready to time travel together!

#diversity #equity #inclusion #utopia #dystopia
#germany #america #transatlantic #timetravel #gmf
#storyline #designthinking

 **josh___golden** tolle Idee @german_marshall_fund

Definitions

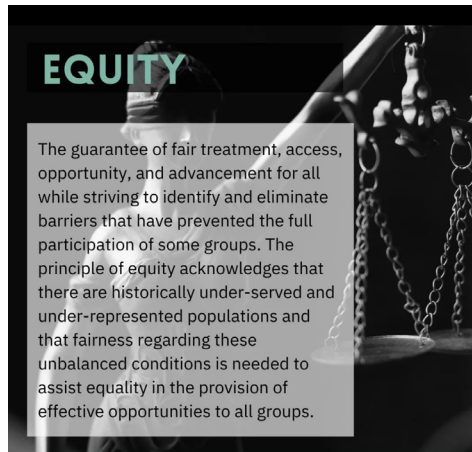
INCLUSION

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power and ensures equal access to opportunities and resources.



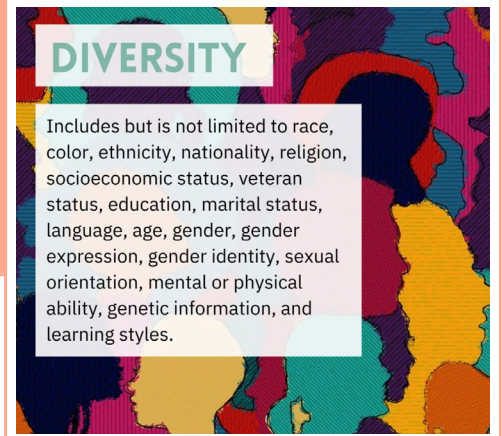
EQUITY

The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically under-served and under-represented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.



DIVERSITY

Includes but is not limited to race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, genetic information, and learning styles.



Global Level

GLOBAL LEVEL - UTOPIAN VERSION

50% of diplomats are non-male and non-white due to the program "Diplomats of Color."



diversityequityinclusionfirst Follow
Utopia

diversityequityinclusionfirst "Diplomats of Color" becomes a part of hiring policies in the US and Germany, leading to at least 50% of diplomats being non-male and non-white, transforming international relations by making negotiations more effective and peace more sustainable.

#diplomacy #diplomats of color #diversity #equity
#inclusion #peace #transatlantic #usa #germany
#negotiation #effective

savingdobby

GLOBAL LEVEL - DYSTOPIAN VERSION

People in need are seen as an economic burden.



diversityequityinclusionfirst Follow

Dystopia

diversityequityinclusionfirst People in dire situations are forgotten because they are seen as an economic burden. Eventually, the situation had to be dealt with because people were seeking refuge in Europe and North America. Only at this state do they matter again and only in the way that they have to be kept out, through the “protection of the external frontiers” (Frontex, ICE), nationalism and racism lead to the building of a wall around Europe and the US.

#inequality #diversity #equity #inclusion #burden
#wall #economy #refugees

State Level

STATE LEVEL - UTOPIAN VERSION

Giving minority groups rights does not mean taking away rights from others.



diversityequityinclusionfirst Follow

Utopia

diversityequityinclusionfirst Revolution in thinking about minority rights and diversity—diversity is seen as a way to improve society; giving minority groups rights does not mean taking away rights from others.

#diversity #equity #inclusion #minority
#minorityrights #representation

STATE LEVEL - DYSTOPIAN VERSION

The EU is nothing more
than a trade union.



diversityequityinclusionfirst Follow

Dystopia

diversityequityinclusionfirst The European Union has gone back to being nothing but a trade union, increasing the wealth of those Europeans who were already wealthy. Because differences between states could not be solved due to a lack of recognition for diversity, equity, and inclusion, European integration stopped and finally dissolved. There are no common European standards for working conditions and basic income and insurance, and working-class people can hardly make a living.

#eu #diversity #equity #tradeunion #inclusion
#seperation

Local Level

LOCAL LEVEL - UTOPIAN VERSION

Cities cooperate on how
to tackle important issues
constructively.



diversityequityinclusionfirst Follow

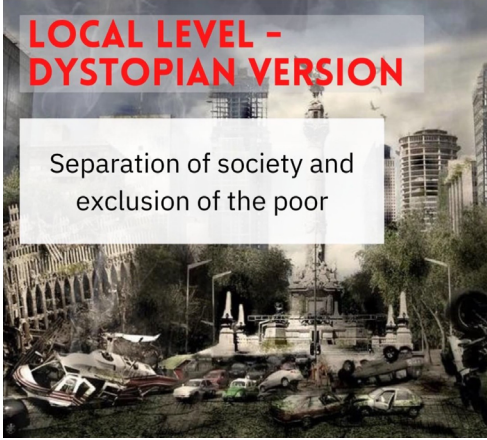
Utopia

diversityequityinclusionfirst Local communities cooperate (e.g., transatlantic city partnerships), negative climate change effects became visible this way and exchange on how to mitigate and adapt was happening (e.g., how to do local farming).

#community #cooperation #partnerships
#climatechange #localfarm #inclusion #diversity
#equity

LOCAL LEVEL - DYSTOPIAN VERSION

Separation of society and
exclusion of the poor



diversityequityinclusionfirst Follow

Dystopia



diversityequityinclusionfirst Separation and competition happened locally in two ways: The local partnerships between cities came to an end, while the exclusion of poor people advanced. Hence, poorer communities are further excluded from public social life. Districts are now gated communities separating people by social status and ethnicity.

#dystopia #seperation #society #poor #exclusion
#inclusion #diversity #equity #politics

4

The fourth and final group departed from the main pillars of the project to create their own category under the broader label of society. Specifically, Björn, Dan, Sonja, and Vreni focused on social inclusion, economic equality, democratic reforms, and civil society participation. To highlight these themes, they wrote a newspaper article from 2050 explaining the success of the fictional character Frieda Dubois, who first leads a transnational social movement dedicated to fighting inequality and then goes on to become a three-term chancellor of Germany. They explore how Dubois and her movement “IntersEq!” shake up the political landscape and deepen democracy, enhance equality, and revitalize transatlantic cooperation on both the political and the societal levels.

FUTURE 4:

Society

newspaper article

Mobilizing for Democracy: How a Movement Changed the Core of the Transatlantic Relationship

AUTHORS:

Vreni Feldmann,
Sonja Kutzner, Dan
Muncaster, and
Björn Scheffler



Mobilizing for Democracy:

How a Movement Changed the Core of the Transatlantic Relationship

21 January 2050

After 2020, the core priorities of the transatlantic partnership changed. In addition to international security, the fight for more truly equal societies and inclusive politics became a substantial part of the new transatlantic narrative. Internationally, the overriding goal became to strengthen the world's democracies. As head of the IntersEq! movement and subsequently as German chancellor, Frieda Dubois was a key actor in these developments. But who is she, what made IntersEq! so successful, and why was her time in office so important for European cooperation and the transatlantic partnership?

Dubois's last term as the chancellor of Germany just ended. As head of the German government and one of the transnational social movement IntersEq!'s key figures, Dubois embodied a new type of politician and symbolized a new generation of transatlantic activists. Her path is extraordinary for the last decades' shift in German, European, and transatlantic politics.

FRIEDA DUBOIS: WHO IS SHE?

Frieda Dubois was raised by her French mother in Berlin. She and her mother relied for a time on welfare, during which she became uniquely aware of both inequality and the importance of compassionate government. Dubois decided to study social work after graduating from high school and soon put her energy into political activism. As Dubois puts it, she wanted to "actively help those most affected by permanently reproduced inequalities and those

most excluded from our society." Along with activists from the United States and Europe, she started to organize demonstrations demanding higher wages in the increasingly precarious service sector. At the beginning, only a few hundred people showed up. But as the social and economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic and years of trickle-down economics worsened, their movement grew. In their fight for Intersectional Equality, the movement IntersEq! was born.

LOOKING BACK: IN WHICH CONTEXT DID INTERSEQ! EMERGE AND ESTABLISH ITSELF?

In the 20s and 30s, Europe and the United States faced two big challenges: growing socioeconomic inequality and the war in Ukraine.

The coronavirus pandemic had deepened socioeconomic inequality around the world, while the Ukrainian War

sparked food shortages and massive inflation. These economic disruptions destabilized people's view of the future and caused a general sense of injustice. This feeling of injustice was toward authoritarians abroad and economic systems at home.

These external events worsened the trajectories of people who were already struggling in an inequitable economic system. Higher education ceased to be a pathway to stable employment and income. Younger generations were earning less than their parents. Multinational corporations prevented any worker unionization, and wages were deliberately kept low.

Moreover, these developments did not impact all groups equally. In particular, women, migrants, religious minorities, and people of color were most disadvantaged. Additionally, the gap between the richest and the poorest increased drastically, since the lower classes and other marginalized groups were most affected by inflation.

INTERSEQ!'S SUCCESS: HOW CAN IT BE EXPLAINED?

Amidst the threat of the authoritarian right and the deteriorating economic environment—this is exactly where InterSeq! started. Dubois and her comrades-in-arms managed to bundle the existing senses of injustice and dissatisfaction. With slogans like “Nobody is free until we are equal!” and social media campaigns that told transatlantic stories of socially and economically marginalized individuals—but always addressing their structural causes—the movement was able to de-individualize debates about inequalities and push these debates into the center of public discourse on both sides of the Atlantic.

The movement was transatlantic in nature, as both Europeans and Americans were able to relate to the other's stories, and this helped build strong bonds among activists and the public at large. The simplified ways of communicating digitally helped this process

along and also made it possible to collectively coordinate campaigns and demonstrations on an international scale.

POLITICS: WHAT CHANGED WITHIN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM?

However, even though social movements can have a relevant impact on public opinion, they cannot change policies or institutions if they are not included in decision making procedures. This is where the key factor for InterSeq!'s transformative success comes into play.

Progressive political parties realized that they could develop more effective solutions for social and political problems and increase the legitimacy of political decisions by working much closer with civil society and by including actors with different occupational backgrounds into party and government structures. With this strategy they were able to speak to a much broader range of voters. This new understanding of what good governance looks and works like were fundamental in defending the democratic norms that were drastically undermined by authoritarian governments.

However, institutional changes did not only occur within party and government structures. New forms of citizen participation like citizens' assemblies were key innovations in the political systems of the United States and Europe that helped to overcome the political mistrust of citizens. In these deliberative institutions, randomly selected citizens from diverse backgrounds met to discuss current or fundamental political issues and then wrote and voted collectively on specific recommendations. Politicians then had to take these recommendations as a basis for their policy discussions and they were obligated to provide a formal justification if they rejected the citizens' proposals.

By now there have been many citizens' assemblies on

different societal issues, including the coronavirus pandemic, the climate crisis, and the relations between politicians and economic actors. The assemblies helped to detect which topics were particularly prone to conflict and they improved politicians' understanding of the people's wishes and needs. But most importantly, the assemblies showed that the public was in large parts more progressive than many political actors thought. This led to more courage on the part of political leaders to take important actions that were uncomfortable in the short run but necessary and in the public interest in the long run. This was especially important for the transition toward fossil fuel-free industries.

DUBOIS IN OFFICE: WHAT DID SHE PROMOTE?

After successfully fighting for change as a civil society actor, Dubois became the chancellor of Germany in 2037 and had twelve years in which she reshaped German and European politics. During her three terms in office, she focused on the topic that she stood for since the beginning of her activist career. On the German level, she took important steps to reduce inequalities, which included improving access to good education, expanding workers' rights, increasing the minimum wage, and limiting the income of the rich.

On the European and international level, Dubois had three key accomplishments. First, since her position from the beginning was that Europe and Germany should lead by example when it came to strengthening democratic principles, she engaged in building

an international alliance of democracies aimed at facilitating closer cooperation between democratic states. She was able to position Germany and Europe as credible advocates for safe and fair elections on the global stage.

Second, Dubois wanted to strengthen transatlantic cooperation on the societal level. By institutionalizing workers' exchange programs, transnational deliberative platforms, and by supporting civil society actors on both sides of the Atlantic, she promoted the creation of a transatlantic public sphere. She often named the transatlantic podcast and YouTube format "Transparent Bridge" as a role model that aims to build a transatlantic public sphere.

Lastly, the former chancellor advocated reducing the influence and increasing the accountability of big international companies—especially tech firms. By introducing a significant multinational tax rate and by making tech companies like Google disclose parts of their algorithms, Dubois took important steps in support of a more transparent digital economy and more democratic discourses on the internet.

Frieda Dubois and the IntersEq! movement changed the political agenda of the United States and Europe. As an activist and later as chancellor, she induced major steps—nationally and internationally—toward more democracy, more equality, and broader and deeper transatlantic cooperation on the political and the societal levels.

Conclusion

Across the various visions for the future, there is a strong belief that in the face of multiplying crises, the transatlantic relationship and its storyline must be revitalized. By 2050, the groups envisioned the United States and Germany redoubling their efforts to fight climate change, reform the multilateral rules-based order, implement DEI initiatives, and make our societies more equal, inclusive, and democratic. While the groups viewed close transatlantic cooperation on global challenges as essential, they also never lost sight of the local and global components. They viewed change as starting at home but ending in collaboration with many different and diverse states and stakeholders, including civil society. A powerful recurring theme across all groups was the adherence to common values, especially those of democracy, equality, inclusion, and accountability.

To conclude the “Toward A New Storyline” project, the groups presented their visions to GMF and US Embassy staff, as well as previous guest speakers, at a closing event where an exchange took place about how some of these ideas could, from today’s standpoint, realistically be put into practice. Far from being a clash of opposing worldviews, it was an open and fruitful encounter between young voices—tomorrow’s future leaders—on the one hand, and veterans of transatlantic policymaking on the other. It showed that different generational perspectives do not have to result in irreconcilable differences, but that the future can be charted together. At a time when the West is facing the most serious challenge to its security, prosperity, and way of life in decades, it is essential that younger voices are integrated into discussions about the future of transatlantic cooperation. They offer unique and valuable perspectives to often insular policy debates and, most importantly, they will be the stewards of the relationship in the years and decades to come.

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