

23|24



**GOETHE
INSTITUT**

Sprache. Kultur. Deutschland.



KULTUR ENSEMBLE

German-French Cooperation
for Europe

WHY SO THEATRICAL?

Southeast European Drama
in Germany

FOR THE PLANET

Our Climate Initiative
in 2024

“The conversations with the artists present made a deep impression on me, particularly in view of the personal risks they are continually willing to take for the freedom of their work and for their ideals. It is good to see the significance that the Goethe-Institut has in the local context, as a safe place for open exchange and meeting.”

Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz upon his visit to the Goethe-Institut in Beijing, 16 April 2024 (Original quote: German)

“I often reflect on the panel... an absolute highlight for German memory culture, which otherwise tends to be somewhat defensive and melancholy at the moment...”

Mirjam Zadoff, Director of the Munich Documentation Center for the History of National Socialism, on the podium discussion, featuring international guests, on “Memorabilia – the art of memory” on 27 November 2023 at the Goethe-Institut in Tokyo (Original quote: German)

“The Tarabya Cultural Academy plays a crucial role when it comes to sustaining cultural and civic spaces. But foundations, NGOs, and the Goethe-Institut are also dependable partners and important platforms for engagement.”

Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier during his visit to Turkey in April 2024 (Original quote: German)

“It was wonderful to meet you, to listen to the fantastic presentations and have the opportunity to engage in dialogue. Talking is the only thing we have in these times...”

Doris Dörrie during the podium discussion “Memorabilia – the art of memory” on 27 November 2023 at the Goethe-Institut in Tokyo (Original quote: German)

“Dialogue needs spaces in which it can take place. And it is wonderful that the Goethe-Institut can be this space all over the world. I think it is unbelievably important to have these protected spaces and these free places, where open thinking can take place and where one can engage with others.”

Anna Henckel-Donnersmarck, Head of the Berlinale Shorts Department, following on from the event series “Berlinale Shorts & FIRST International Film Festival” at the Goethe-Institut in China (Original quote: German)

“I love coming to the Goethe-Institut’s library in Jakarta, primarily to study. It is a truly peaceful place, very beautifully furnished and pleasantly cool. There are so many books, I primarily read the ones on German as a foreign language. There are lots more wonderful things on offer too, such as games that I can play or music.

Dealfa Zealita, User of the Goethe-Institut library in Jakarta (Original quote: Indonesian)

THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

We connect people all over the world. As the cultural institution of the Federal Republic of Germany, we promote cultural exchange, education and societal discourse in an international context, and support the teaching and learning of the German language. Together with our partners, we focus on global opportunities and challenges, bringing different perspectives into a dialogue that is based in trust. We regard the ability to listen and to reflect as the key to understanding. We are bound by principles of transparency, diversity and sustainability. These principles characterise our services and our way of working. ●

151

Goethe-Instituts are active in **98 countries.**

12

of the institutes are in **Germany.**

4.396

employees are at work worldwide.

1.100

points of contact are part of our network based on its collaboration with partner institutions in many other places.

1952

the first **Goethe-Institut** opened in Athens.

Title: As part of the residency of the “Halaqat” project in Brussels, the Tunisian artist Rym Hayouni developed together with the sound artist Oussema Gaidi the performance “Frame of Resonance” on the central theme “Politics of Spaces and Bodies”, which premiered in 2022 and was newly presented in 2023 as part of the Jordanian IDEA Festival.



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CULTURAL EXCHANGE REQUIRES SAFE SPACES AND FREEDOM

The “Goethe-Institut in Exile”, says the Sudanese curator Rahiem Shadad, who fled his homeland, “is one of the very few spaces where you [...] can still work and you can still produce and you can still speak about what you are going through.” As a response to the increasing number of refugees and displaced persons worldwide, the Goethe-Institut founded this event and meeting space in Berlin almost two years ago. Many exiled authors and artists, explains the journalist and writer Dima Albitar Kalaji, “come [to Germany] and what they know from the cultural institutions is Goethe-Institut, so it’s the first place they may go”.

These statements reveal how important the “Goethe-Institut in Exile” is for cultural workers as a safe space and first port of call in Germany. Here, they can continue their creative work, connect with others who have fled their countries as well as with established exile communities, and speak in a safe space about their experiences as refugees, the situation in their homelands, and their hopes and plans for the future. Since its inception, the “Goethe-Institut in Exile” has organised cultural programmes focusing on Ukraine, Iran, Afghanistan, Belarus and Sudan – countries in which cultural exchange is now close to impossible.

Looking at the current global situation does not inspire much hope of a change in the near future regarding the growing number of people seeking refuge. The brutal terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel on 7 October 2023 has exacerbated the Israel-Palestine conflict, causing death and immeasurable suffering amongst the civilian population, and dramatically worsening the humanitarian situation for the people of Gaza. The war in Ukraine continues. Violence in Sudan, in Syria, and in many other parts of the world has also led to people being forced to leave their homelands. Here in Germany, the conflicts in the Middle East are reflected in an increasingly intolerant climate of debate. And it goes beyond debates: antisemitic attacks are also on the rise. At the same time, right-wing populists use this as an opportunity to blame migrants for antisemitism and stir up anti-immigration and anti-Islam sentiments.

Promoting cultural exchange, including that which takes place within Germany, and upholding spaces for open and trusting communication, as well as those for difficult and sometimes charged discussions, is therefore more important than ever. This is the Goethe-Institut’s mission, not only with the programme of the “Goethe-Institut in Exile”, but globally at its 151 locations. Through their decades of perseverance with the work of listening and providing a forum for diverse conversations, alongside the exploration of new artistic formats together with their partners in the host countries, the Institutes have created networks of trust all over the world. For foreign cultural and education policy, these networks constitute a core foundation, precisely in these times. Part of this is the learning of the German language, which deepens international dialogue between young people and enables urgently needed skilled workers from abroad to begin their studies or forge a career in Germany. The power of language and of cultural exchange cannot be overestimated.

In order to secure the Goethe-Institut’s ability to make an impact in these times of crisis, and in view of narrowing financial margins, it has also initiated an extensive process of transformation. The implemented changes will doubtless be with us for some time, but I am confident they will open new pathways and yield creative energy that promotes peace.

Professor Carola Lentz
President



TRANSFORMATION FOR THE FUTURE

A rapidly transforming world demands action. The Goethe-Institut finds itself in the midst of a phase of change: Russia’s attack on Ukraine and its consequences, as well as the situation in the Middle East and in other parts of the world, require us to reassess our global positioning and refine our modes of working. Simultaneously, financial margins are narrowing and costs in the Goethe-Institut’s worldwide network are increasing.

As the executive board of the Goethe-Institut, we – in consultation with the Bundestag and the Foreign Office – therefore set out a future strategy in autumn 2023, based on the transformation process begun at the start of 2022. It was approved by the board of trustees in October. With this strategy, we ensure that the Goethe-Institut is equipped for the future and has sufficient resources to carry out its central work.

The aim of this transformation is to lower structural costs and thereby prioritise funding for cultural, language and informational programmes, and to reduce fixed outgoings in order to strengthen the Goethe-Institut’s ability to make an impact through its work. This is a challenge many organisations are facing given the current conditions, and we have thus made a swift start along this uphill path.

Transformation always brings something new, too: in 2023 we laid the groundwork for a new Goethe-Institut in Armenia, which is scheduled to open this autumn. In Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, plans are underway for a branch of the Franco-German cultural institute Kultur Ensemble, and the established Franco-German cooperation in Glasgow will also become part of Kultur Ensemble. Some countries with multiple Goethe-Institut locations, however – including France, Italy, the Netherlands, Japan, the USA and Brazil – have seen and will see a number of closures. This is a painful loss, but we are making sure that the work of the existing Goethe-Institutes and their extensive partner networks will be continued, and in some cases even expanded.

Fortunately, our language courses and examination centres abroad have recovered well after a dip due to the pandemic. They

play a crucial role politically and culturally. From skilled workers to students, anyone learning German with the Goethe-Institut enters into meaningful engagement with our country. Through the revenue they generate, moreover, the language courses and examinations also contribute to bolstering the cultural, language and informational work of the Goethe-Institut.

The twelve Goethe-Institutes in Germany, which we operate without state funding, have also come through a tough period: during the COVID-19 crisis very few people came from abroad to learn German, and so the financial situation was particularly difficult. Thanks to an elaborate restructuring plan, an upturn in the numbers of language-course and examination participants, and the dedicated efforts of our employees, the Goethe-Institutes in Germany are, for the first time since the COVID-19 crisis, once again in the black. This achievement is just one example of how we take a forward-thinking approach to tackling challenges and succeed in bringing change to a positive conclusion.

Managing transformation entails considerable work and uncertainty. Therefore, our thanks go to all Goethe-Institut staff around the world, and, of course, to everyone who supports our work of international cultural exchange, promoting the German language, and encouraging engagement with our country. Transformation is vital for the Goethe-Institut to successfully continue this work, now and in the future. In dialogue with the world. For diversity, understanding and trust. Today, this is more important than ever!

Johannes Ebert
Secretary General

Rainer Pollack
Business Director

CULTURE AND SECURITY

Culture and education shape how societies see themselves. They create free spaces and can strengthen and support social cohesion. In international politics, they thus have a role to play in security policy.

An editorial by Johannes Ebert.

Munich, February 2024. Accompanied by Olesia Ostrovska-Liuta, the director general of the Ukrainian cultural institution Mysteretskyi Arsenal, I pass through the police checks early in the morning on my way into the Hotel Bayerischer Hof. The first day of the Munich Security Conference. We meet Scott McDonald, chief executive of the British Council. Together we're organising a breakfast as a side event at the conference. The topic: "A War on Identity: How to Build Post-War Society in Ukraine." Scott and I are nervous about whether everyone will turn up at this early hour. But at 7:30 a.m., the twenty guests are there right on time: elected members of the Ukrainian and the European parliaments and representatives of the Munich Security Conference, the Foreign Office and the Bundeswehr, as well as of supporting organisations. Alicia Kearns, the chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the British House of Commons, is moderating. The topic strikes a nerve at this time.

The Goethe-Institut at the Munich Security Conference? In recent years, Goethe-Institutes have increasingly been reporting that rifts in society are deepening, that illiberalism is on the rise, and that new centres of power are emerging which call into question values of freedom and tolerance. Simultaneously, populist currents and their political representatives are inciting dangerous nationalist – one could say regressive – divisions. There is a pull in an entirely different direction, meanwhile, from emancipatory movements that call for a reckoning with colonialism and with established power structures that impede diversity and justice – an important concern.

Our work arises also from these areas of tension. Goethe-Institutes create free spaces and meeting places where those active in the cultural scene and civil society can work creatively and without censorship, while also networking with their German and international counterparts. As in the projects "New

Stages Southeast" and "Geschichten vom Schwarzen Meer – Black Sea Lit", the Institutes offer platforms for dialogue, where what connects us and what divides us can be reflected on and trust can be developed. They engage in the processing of colonialism, for example with the German-African comic project "Africomics". Through the new pan-African German textbook "Und jetzt WIR" (And now WE), they present young people with a view of African-German relations that focuses on partnership and is not rooted in stereotypes. There are countless illustrations of how the Goethe-Institutes handle these issues. But culture and education as part of security policy?

Actually, yes: foreign cultural and education policy has an important security policy component. "The first thing the Russian troops do when they take over a Ukrainian locality is to remove the Ukrainian sign and replace it with a Russian-language one," reports a participant in Munich. This war of aggression is about language, about identity, about a Russian imperialism that does not want to allow a forward-thinking Ukrainian culture any space in Europe. It is vital we secure Ukraine's defence capability. But it is also essential to support the cultural and educational sectors and civil society. "Culture is the domain in which a society shapes its self-conception and envisages its future. And in this regard, it is crucial for this society's survival," says Olesia Ostrovska-Liuta.

On 7 October, Hamas murders 1,200 people – residents of the kibbutzim and attendees of a music festival taking place nearby. The brutal attack on Israel shakes the country to its core and leads to a rupture in the Middle East. The shock runs deep. In the days following the attack, as well as feeling empathy for the victims, we are also dealing with practical crisis management: the Goethe-Institut has branches in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Ramallah and employs three German-language teachers in Gaza. These Institutes are initially closed, but have since resumed operations. The

Cultural dialogue isn't only for fair weather – it's precisely when things are as difficult as they are today that we must listen and talk, and then listen and talk some more.

Johannes Ebert



Under the title "A War on Identity: How to Build Post-War Society in Ukraine", hosts Johannes Ebert (left side of the table, third from the left), secretary general of the Goethe-Institut, and Scott McDonald (right side of the table, third from the right), chief executive of the British Council, discussed the roles of culture and education in tackling the immediate challenges of the war and in rebuilding Ukraine. This side event of the Munich Security Conference at the Hotel Bayerischer Hof was attended by elected members of the European Parliament and representatives of the Foreign Office and the Bundeswehr, as well as Ukrainian parliamentarians and Olesia Ostrovska-Liuta (head of the table, second from the right), director general of the Mysteretskyi Arsenal in Kyiv.

The result absolutely cannot be that we stop talking to one another!

Navid Kermani

Foreign Office provides fast and professional assistance, enabling two of the three employees in Gaza to be brought to safety. One wishes to remain. The Goethe-Institut publishes a message of solidarity with Israel, condemns the attack by Hamas and calls for the release of the Israeli hostages and the protection of the civilian populations on both sides. Reacting to the terrorist attack, the Israeli government orders a tightening of the blockade of the Gaza Strip. During the night of 27 October, the ground offensive in the north of Gaza begins, and it has since caused the deaths of more than 35,000 people. Israeli hostages are still being held captive. The war is claiming too many lives. None of this is acceptable. The primary objective must be a ceasefire. And there needs to be a vision for Gaza's future, for a permanent peace in the Middle East.

The war is tearing deep rifts throughout the world. Germany has become a focus of criticism because of its support for Israel, in particular the supply of arms. Our Institutes report that this has harmed its reputation in many countries. The Strike Germany initiative is campaigning for a boycott of German cultural institutions. The South African writer Zukiswa Wanner and the Egyptian artist Mohamed Abla have returned their Goethe Medals, the official decoration of the Federal Republic of Germany. Cases in Germany of intellectuals being disinvited due to accusations of antisemitism are being closely observed abroad. That is because what is at stake here is nothing less than the negotiation of freedom of expression, academic freedom and artistic freedom.

For the Goethe-Institut, now, it is about building bridges. Cultural dialogue isn't only for fair weather – it's precisely when things are as difficult as they are today that we must listen and talk, and then listen and talk some more. And we must do so in both directions: abroad, we need to explain that Germany's special solidarity with Israel is a consequence of the crimes of the Holocaust. That Israel's right to exist is inviolable and that antisemitism cannot be tolerated. And also to stress that in Germany, positions diverging from the official government stance can of course be held and voiced in open debate. Here, conversely, we must learn to listen to opinions that sound jarring and unfamiliar to our ears. "It has become clear to me how isolated we now are in terms of our perspective on the Middle East conflict," says Navid Kermani, the recipient of the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, in an interview with Deutschlandfunk. At the Goethe-Institut Johannesburg, he discussed the situation in Gaza with the South African

Booker Prize winner Damon Galgut and the audience, and found it a good, and controversial, conversation. Some speakers expressed positions that would meet with strong criticism in the current debate in Germany, notes Kermani. "But what right do we have", he asks, "to not let these people speak? The result absolutely cannot be that we stop talking to one another!"

Eastern Europe and the Middle East. These are just two examples of how acute global conditions have become. The volatile international situation and the federal government's budget cuts necessitate changes and bold steps into the future. Back at the start of 2022, the Goethe-Institut initiated a transformation process, and in autumn 2023 we therefore – in consultation with the Bundestag and the Foreign Office – presented a future strategy. The goal is to reduce structural costs and secure the operational resources needed for furthering international cultural and educational exchange and the promotion of the German language.

Transformation always brings something new, too: this year will see the founding of a Goethe-Institut in Yerevan, Armenia, and a branch of the Franco-German institute Kultur Ensemble in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, in some countries with multiple Goethe-Institutes, among them France, Italy and Brazil, a number of sites have had to close their doors. A painful process. In the coming months, further stages of the transformation are planned: the regional formation of the Goethe-Institutes will be altered, the head office restructured and the efficiency of the language courses and examination centres improved. All this serves the purpose of continuing, despite financial constraints, to promote meaningful international cultural exchange and the German language, and doing so more effectively than ever.

Another look at Ukraine demonstrates how important this is: in April, I travelled to Kyiv. As always, I am struck by the beauty and the pride of this city. There are 700,000 pupils in Ukraine currently learning German, a very high number. I meet pupils and teachers from Kyiv, Bucha and Mariupol. Some of them fled to Germany upon the outbreak of war and have since returned. Many fathers are fighting in the war. It takes three minutes, according to headteacher Iryna Stashevskya, to get the 900 pupils into the shelters when the alarm sounds. The teachers are extremely dedicated and see delivering excellent German lessons and good education as their contribution to the country's future. I have enormous respect for these children, women, and men.



During his trip to Kyiv, Johannes Ebert visited the exhibition "Alla Horska. Boryviter" in the Ukrainian House, which displayed work by the artist and human rights activist Alla Horska. He was accompanied by Olga Vieru (right), director of the Ukrainian House, as well as Mariia Shubchuk (left) and Yelyzaveta Sirenko, staff of the Goethe-Institut in Ukraine.

Culture, in these times, holds society together. There are long queues for theatre tickets, confirms Dima Bogomasov, the artistic director of the Ivan Franko Theatre. At the Ukrainian House, a well-attended exhibition is displaying work by the painter Alla Horska, who professed her allegiance to Ukraine early on and died in 1970 under mysterious circumstances. "Engagement with one's own culture creates an invisible but highly effective shield against ignorance and Russian propaganda", says the former Ukrainian education minister Anna Novosad, who we meet in Kyiv.

At the Khanenko Museum, we speak to director Yulia Vaganova. The museum, with its eminent collection, is almost empty. Yulia tells of her efforts to move the works to safety and to attract visitors with special events. They have been coming in droves. At the start of the war, a missile hit Shevchenko Park beside the museum. Security footage shows the impact of the blast, the shattering windows, the dust in the building's rooms.

In the morning, I'm asked whether I was afraid to travel to Ukraine by Yura, a pupil of Lyceum No. 5 in Bucha. "A little, yes", I admit. That evening, while having dinner with friends, the Warn-App suddenly flashes: Air Alert! The friends dismiss the notification. Apparently it's not dangerous yet. Life seems normal, but an element of risk remains; there are moments when bombs fall and shelters provide refuge.

This trip strengthens my resolve: not only in Kyiv, but all over the world, culture and education are a crucial glue for binding societies together. Dialogue in these spheres makes it possible to create understanding across borders and to attain rapprochement between contentious positions. This dialogue, this rapprochement, however difficult it may be, is today needed more than ever. This is what we, as the Goethe-Institut, work towards with all our strength. ●



Johannes Ebert has been Secretary General and Chair of the Executive Board of the Goethe-Institut since 2012.

NEWS FROM THE GOETHE-INSTITUT



ACTIVITIES OF THE GOETHE-INSTITUT IN SUDAN

Since the outbreak of fighting in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum in April 2023, the Goethe-Institut in Sudan has ceased to operate. Language courses and examinations were offered there for 60 years and cultural artists in Sudan were brought together thanks to cultural programmes, most recently on an intensive basis alongside democratic change after the 2019 revolution. The activities of the Goethe-Institut in Sudan have been coordinated on a decentralised, hybrid basis from Cairo since 2024. They reach the dispersed community of Sudanese cultural artists in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Egypt, Europe and Sudan itself. In 2023, the Martin Roth Initiative's Sudan Hub was able to award scholarships to 50 cultural artists.

WORK BY THE CENTRES FOR INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL EDUCATION SUSPENDED

The centres for international cultural education acted as a bridge to the world at Goethe-Institut locations in Germany. They made international prospects of cultural education in Germany accessible and promoted cohesion in society in a diverse Germany. They served to fight right-wing extremism, racism and antisemitism. At the end of 2023, they unfortunately had to cease operations.



DEVELOPMENT OF "LANGUAGE HUBS"

20 years ago, foreign languages became subjects which were no longer mandatory at British schools. Since then, the number of pupils learning German has declined, which is a development that the Goethe-Institut aims to counteract. Working together with University College London (UCL) and the British Council, the development of new "Language Hubs" aims to offer high-quality language tuition in the United Kingdom and therefore boost interest in learning German. The programme also involves setting up a national consortium for language teaching. The British Department of Education is set to spend 14.9 million pounds on the creation of "Language Hubs" in the United Kingdom, thus supporting the plan by the Goethe-Institut to inspire young people to learn German.

83,000

Teachers of German as a foreign language have participated in the further education and training programme "Deutsch Lehren Lernen (DLL)" since it was established in 2010. DLL is aimed at German teachers with or without teaching experience.

NEW MEMBERS ELECTED

In 2023, the Goethe-Institut welcomed four new members to its General Assembly: Dr Inke Arns, Director of Hartware MedienKunstVerein e. V. (HMKV), Professor Manuel Hartung, Chair of the Board of ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin and Gerd Bucerius, Dr Annkathrin Kohout, cultural historian and media scholar, as well as Dr Nicolas Peter, Chair of the Board of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt by the BMW Group. Dr Thomas Oberender and Professor Sandra Richter were re-elected for a second term of office.



STAFFING REDUCTION IN RUSSIA

At the end of May 2023, the Goethe-Institut in Russia had to drastically reduce its number of employees. The reason for this is the upper limit on staff issued by the Russian Foreign Office for German foreign delegations and administrative organisations in Russia. President Carola Lentz and Secretary General Johannes Ebert provided assurance that the Goethe-Institut aimed to remain a place of contact for people who are interested in German despite its reduced presence in Russia. For example, the libraries in Moscow and Saint Petersburg remain open on a regular basis.



2,000

Skilled workers and individuals interested in training from Latin America – from Mexico, Brazil and Colombia – will be supported by the Goethe-Institut in cooperation with the Federal Employment Agency to prepare them for the German labour market over the next three years. This not only involves organisational support and contacts, but also offers free language courses, which are primarily aimed at skilled workers in the sectors of food and catering, health, electrics, construction, education and pedagogy.

ON THE VALUE OF DIALOGUE

In view of the high number of civilian victims in the war in Gaza, which broke out after the terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel on 7 October, there are an increasing number of calls to boycott cultural organisations like the Goethe-Institut. Creating space for dialogue is hugely challenging due to the breakdown in ties. We spoke to three of our programme managers in the regions of North Africa and the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia about our global work against the backdrop of the war in Gaza.

How is the war in Gaza, which broke out after the attack on Israel by Hamas on 7 October, affecting your work locally?



Frederike Berje: In the North Africa and the Middle East region, there is a huge amount of uncertainty on all sides, from Arab, German and Israeli perspectives. In addition, there has been a huge loss of trust. Polarisation has increased as the war has gone on. The trust I initially place in someone when I meet them is currently being called into question. However, this trust forms the basis of cooperation and dialogue. Therefore, I believe it is our role to listen to a huge amount at the moment and to understand the reasoning behind the other person's perspective.



Katharina Görig: You sense this more indirectly in South Asia. There are cultural artists who became involved in conflicts in the cultural scene, for example the Indian writer and curator Ranjit Hoskote, who announced his resignation from the selection committee of documenta 16 in November 2023. Partners who we have worked with for many, many years are coming to us and asking us what exactly is going wrong in Germany? They see Germany as standing for freedom. They are wondering whether you can no longer share your opinion, no longer demonstrate. Solidarity with Palestinians is huge in this region.



Asma Diakité: I can primarily speak for South Africa, although there are some similar situations in Kenya and Namibia. The situation is different in Francophone Africa. In South Africa, there is largely a very critical standpoint when it comes to Israel because Israel provided a great deal of support for the apartheid regime. Therefore, lots of South Africans see parallels with their own historical experiences. They see these parallels in questions like who has access to water, who has access to land and so on. In this regard, solidarity with Palestinians is quite firmly entrenched, including to the greatest extent within the Jewish community.

How do you handle this situation?

Diakité: The Goethe-Institut in South Africa has always been seen as a cultural institution which openly tackles the colonial heritage, openly discusses questions of power in cultural work and takes its goal of creating partnership and cooperation seriously. It is always underlined that we are aware of how important our work is. Emphasis is also placed on us being an independent organisation. But there has been a rupture since the conflict.

Do you still speak to people who express criticism or distance themselves from the Goethe-Institut?

Berje: Yes, there is still dialogue there. The Goethe-Institut has been here in Cairo since the 50s. There are a huge number of very long-term relationships. Disappointment regarding the Federal

“It is a learning process to engage with people who hold different positions. That's another reason why the Goethe-Institut is represented all over the world.”

Frederike Berje

Government's current policy is also so huge because there was previously a very positive image, for example because Germany was not involved in the Iraq war or because Germany took in a large number of Syrian refugees. I think that lots of our partners are currently adopting a wait and see attitude. This means that conversations are taking place but official communication on shared projects is more difficult. We are now trying to promote long-term formats for dialogue even more than before. In the form of residences or sitting in on lectures because a longer form of dialogue is required to find common ground again. These are not just purely political reservations. In many cases, there is the feeling that people are not being listened to, that there is no space for their own stories.

What can cultural work achieve in the midst of a crisis like this?

Berje: We need to learn to look beyond the categories to see the individuals. This is what cultural work can achieve, but it's also very challenging. The willingness to work together is absolutely there. People know how we work and what we stand for. That we want to facilitate dialogue. The work we do is recognised too: for example, offering emergency programmes, such as after war broke out in Sudan, when we supported Sudanese artists in peril in Egypt and in other countries. We are also launching something like this now for Palestinians from Gaza because one of our core aims is to support artists in danger, even if we receive criticism for doing so in this polarised situation. I believe that empowering artists to tell their stories and process these experiences helps society as a whole. And I just hope that people listen to these stories, in Germany too.

Diakité: I believe that we are almost at a kind of turning point when it comes to the question of what cultural work can or should achieve. There has been such significant polarisation in artistic and cultural spheres in recent years to the extent that you really can no longer assume that 'innocent' art even exists anymore, not that it ever did exist, but the parameters have changed. So how does our work change in such a politicised cultural environment? Perhaps we need to express more loudly that, as an institution, we also have questions that we do not have the answer to.

Görig: It is important that, at this point in time, we consider what role our work can play in Germany too. We are in close dialogue with our partners abroad who provide new points of view, which we can learn from as a society. This is why it is important to create space for dialogue in Germany, which we can listen to as a society. And by listen, I really mean to listen to voices that may be challenging at first but encourage us to really keep thinking too.

Berje: Yes, seeing and listening to the world outside your own bubble and understanding what's happening there is extremely important. It is a learning process to engage with people who hold different positions. That's another reason why we at the Goethe-Institut are represented all over the world. ●



The conversation took place on 22 April 2024. The interviewer was Alexander Behrmann, Deputy Director of the Communication Department at the headquarters of the Goethe-Institut in Munich.

Frederike Berje is the Director of Programme Work with a regional focus in the North Africa/Middle East region.

Asma Diakité is the Director of Programme Work with a regional focus in the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

Katharina Görig was the Director of Programme Work with a regional focus in the South Asia region until March 2024. Since then, she has been in charge of the Department for Literature and Translation Funding at the headquarters of the Goethe-Institut in Munich.



PRESS REVIEW

TAGESSPIEGEL

KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR

From the article "Trust, but who to trust? An international cultural symposium in Weimar," 14/05/2023

The Goethe-Institut invited guests to a three-day symposium on the topic of "trust", a currency which is fluctuating more than ever before. Around 50 panels and events were held, as part of which experts from dozens of countries spoken on [...] the topic of trust. The global Goethe network was astounded again and again. Guests from Hong Kong, Indonesia, Syria and Denmark spoke on stage about future trust in protest movements in order to then be asked for advice by a nurse from Weimar who was looking for allies in the fight against the care emergency.

DIE TAGESZEITUNG

GOETHE-INSTITUT IN EXILE

From the article "Kabul is burning in them," 02/07/2023

To ensure that Afghanistan and its over 40 million inhabitants are not forgotten, a cultural festival was held in Berlin at the weekend to raise awareness of the disastrous situation in the country: The Goethe-Institut is now dedicating its third focal point of the "Goethe-Institut in Exile" project, after Ukraine and Iran, to Afghanistan. Cultural artists who had to leave the country at Hindu Kush are hosting film screenings, readings, concerts and debate sessions at the ACUD Art House until the end of the year to provide an insight into their work.

DIE ZEIT

THEATRE JOURNEY TO KYIV AT WAR

From the article "Hold your breath. Keep playing," 05/07/2023

What is happening on Ukraine's stages? Which plays are being put on? A theatre journey to Ukraine in time with the air-raid alarm. [...] In order to prepare for the local cultural scene, I contacted Fabian Mühlthaler from the Goethe-Institut in Ukraine. Unfortunately, he is not in Ukraine but he reports that Ukrainian culture is being supported to the best of people's ability. [...] Without exception, everyone I spoke to over the next few days, from the ambassador to the Off-Off Theatre, praised the key role played by the Goethe-Institut.

WALSRODER ZEITUNG

GOETHE-INSTITUT INFOHAUS IN HEIDEKREIS

From the article "Migration with 'Goethe's help'", 06/09/2023

Everyone who does a course at the Heidekreis adult education centre on Rosenstraße in Soltau will immediately notice: It's impossible to miss the Goethe-Institut's Infohaus with its illuminated green sign and its delicate open ceiling when you enter the foyer on your way to the classrooms. [...] But the Infohäuser

are not just places to gather information: They are also intended to be meeting places and spaces for dialogue for migrants who have recently arrived. That's why people have the option of writing requests on special cards and pinning them to the wall at the Infohaus. In addition, the Infohaus aims to hold regular events for migrants.

ZEIT ONLINE

TRANSFORMATION OF THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

From the article "Geopolitics is moving closer to Goethe," 27/09/2023

Where the Western-democratic-liberal way of life no longer serves as a point of orientation for other countries, where it is even rejected and treated with hostility, Germany as a political culture is going on the defensive. It is good to acknowledge that oneself and no longer try to maintain the lifelong lie of one's own irresistible attractiveness. It is therefore becoming increasingly important to understand the stories which are developing and changing more and more rapidly and which are of interest to people in countries in the East, South or Asia. There is a certain amount of reorientation happening, even in Europe. It is helpful to maintain early warning, or understanding, stations which monitor these processes. Seismography is essential The Goethe-Institut will now need to complete this task with fewer staff and fewer locations.

BOERSENBLATT.DE

SUPPORTING THE UKRAINIAN BOOK INDUSTRY

From the article "Literature is the food of life," 18/10/2023

The State Ministry for Culture and Media has written a cheque for almost a million euros and networked with additional partners, such as the German Publishers and Booksellers Association and the Goethe-Institut to support Ukrainian literature and dialogue with the industry there [...] that's how we work, together with the Ukrainian literary institute, including on bringing publishers and authors together.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

TRANSFORMATION OF THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

From the article "Cultural pruning," 18/10/2023

A second unique characteristic is that Goethe-Institut employees are as diverse as politicians, teachers or police staff all over the world. Some countries are not a good fit for the people who have been sent there; however, it is much more common for people to immerse themselves in the country of their choice and truly become unofficial ambassadors. This can turn German cultural workers abroad into boundless enthusiasts who are beneficial to everyone: the country in which they work for a few years, the home country they have left behind, which gains its best and most worthy representative in these individuals.

THE GUARDIAN

"SISI NI HAO" EXHIBITION IN NAIROBI

From the article "Change takes time: how female photographers in Africa are redefining their lives," Autumn 2023

Using visual contrasts for social commentary is a feature of her [Sarah Waiswa's] work. In her photo series on albinism, she uses dream-like images in order to highlight the persecution and exclusion that people face, whilst her photos from the ballet in Kibera show dancers from the slum in Nairobi practising an art form



Musicians Tony Overwater (front), Hogir Göregen (back left) and Theresia Philipp (back right) carry their instruments through the streets of Mosul. At the "Mosul Music Heritage Festival", artists from Europe and Iraq are working together to develop a musical festival programme.

which is generally associated with privilege and wealth. She uses this technique in a new exhibition which she has curated for the Goethe-Institut in Nairobi.

FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU

MOSUL MUSIC HERITAGE FESTIVAL

From the article "Reporting in Iraq: a music festival that has to be guarded with machine guns," 26/12/2023

Here, in what was once the blackest city in the world, musicians from all over Iraq, as well as Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland, have been rehearsing since the early hours of the morning for the Music Heritage Festival, organised by the Goethe-Institut. They will perform here for a few weeks, at the citadel in Mosul, in the cultural institute. It was not easy to organise this festival but Anais Boelicke, the Director of the Goethe-Institut in Iraq, was able to use her instincts to get closer to her goal of bringing ethnic and religious groups closer together.

TAGESSPIEGEL.DE

MIGRATION OF SKILLED WORKERS

From the article "Educated on the other side of the world. The rocky road to becoming a carer in Germany," 27/12/2023

Huu Lai Nguyen is sitting in the Goethe-Institut's library in the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi, which is a four-and-a-half hour flight away. He is 33 and understands from personal experience how it feels to be in culture shock. Lai, as he is known, is a Goethe-Institut alumnus, currently holidaying at home. He came to Germany ten years ago with almost 100 other carers as part of a project by the Federal Ministry of Finance and the Vietnamese Ministry of Labour. [...] Lai now lives in Cologne, in shared accommodation

with two Vietnamese friends, and also has close friends who are German. He enjoys his job as a teacher at a further training centre for carers and appreciates the opportunities he has for further training: He is currently studying for his Master's degree in Care alongside his work. He is happy with his life in Germany.

DEUTSCHE WELLE

MIGRATION OF SKILLED WORKERS

From the article "How the federal government is attracting skilled workers from abroad," 25/01/2024

Vietnamese leaders are very interested in a shared agreement to more effectively regulate migration of Vietnamese people to Germany for work. The Goethe-Institut is an important centre for this. 22-year-old Phuong Phan is also taking language courses to prepare her to work in the hotel and restaurant industry in Thuringia in the future. This state is one of the first to have concluded bilateral agreements with Vietnam years ago.

SPIEGEL.DE

CULTURE IN GERMANY

From the article "My recipe to prevent boredom," 25/02/2024

The cultural scene in Germany is phenomenal. It is a shame that so much has to be planned so far in advance. In a pinch, sometimes the supermarket is the only option. I read in a magazine that Germany is known as the "European paradise for theatre". I am not surprised because a great deal of value is placed on culture here. Germany is a land of education, literature and art. Abroad, the Goethe-Institut locations are the main calling cards for this wealth of culture. Such a great message is passed on, even just by the reputation of the Goethe-Institut.

KAFKA 2024



Franz Kafka is one of the most important German-language writers of the modern period and his work has long been part of the canon of world literature. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his death, the Goethe-Institut has dedicated an extensive range of events to him in 36 countries, from theatre stages to virtual formats.

Illustrations: © Nicolas Mahler



Poster exhibition "KOMPLETT KAFKA"

"I was once a great draftsman, you know," wrote Franz Kafka in 1913 to his long-standing fiancée Felice Bauer, half with pride, half ironically. Whilst he primarily dedicated himself to the art of writing, his enthusiasm for drawing was undeniable. He would have likely been pleased that he was honoured with a comic biography for example, illustrated by the Austrian comic artist and illustrator Nicolas Mahler. In his book "Komplett Kafka" (Suhrkamp), he uses a witty and pointed style to set the scene for Kafka's life and work. Inspired by this, the Goethe-Institut then cooperated with the Literature House Stuttgart to create a poster exhibition with the same name. Like in this book, Nicholas Mahler uses a minimalist drawing style here to showcase Kafka's life and makes Kafka accessible to visitors to various Goethe-Institut locations globally, including Addis Ababa, La Paz and Lisbon, through his art. In an interview with our online magazine, "Zeitgeist", Mahler said: "The aspect of Kafka that is particularly appealing (as well as the drawing aspect) is that he was perceived as a very dry author but there is clearly a comic side to him too. 'The Metamorphosis' for example is actually a funny sketch full of comic figures, even if it has a very heavy and not at all funny effect on some. Combining comic and gloomy aspects is naturally very appealing."

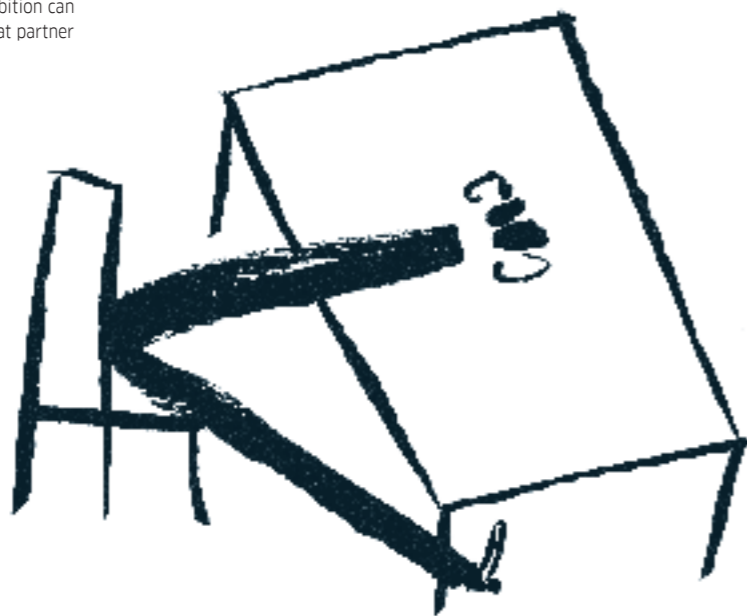
Video game "PLAYING KAFKA"

Dark rooms, bizarre figures, mystical music: "Playing Kafka" creates an ambience that is only otherwise present in the writer's works. A video game was developed in Prague, Franz Kafka's home city, together with the game studio Charles Games, which brings Kafka's literary world to life in a virtual space. Thanks to thrilling dialogues with characters and interactive puzzles, players can go on a Kafkaesque journey and immerse themselves deeply in the world of his writing. The first module of the game is based on the novel "The Trial" and has been available since June 2023 for PC (Windows) free of charge in English and Czech. The protagonist is Josef K., a role which players step into in order to be actively integrated into events. This creates space to experience and reflect on Kafka's works in the context of the time in which we live. As such, the game is also suitable as teaching material in order to familiarise school pupils with the writer's life and work in a creative and exciting manner. Comprehensive accompanying teaching material is also available. The full version of the video game will follow in May 2024 and is available free of charge on mobile devices (iOS, Android) and for PC (Windows, Mac OS) in three languages: Czech, German and English. In addition to "The Trial", there are also modules inspired by Kafka's "Letter to His Father" and "The Castle". The project received support from the National Regeneration Plan by the Cultural Ministry of the Czech Republic, which is funded by the European Union.

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articles, including those penned by Kafka's biographer Reiner Stach, shed light on the life and work of Franz Kafka in the online magazine "Zeitgeist", which is published by the Goethe-Institut. For example, it covers Kafka as a keen swimmer, as a cinema enthusiast and as a lover, as well as his influence on Indian and Latin American literature.

Nicolas Mahler does not need to make a lot of marks to make Franz Kafka immediately identifiable in his illustrations, but he uses a great deal of talent to achieve this impact. As part of the poster exhibition "Komplett Kafka", the artist uses a pointed style to highlight Kafka's life and work. The exhibition can be visited globally at Goethe-Instituts and at partner organisations.



CONSTANT COOPERATION

The African comic scene is as diverse as the continent itself. The goal of "Africomics" is to network comic artists internationally, including at a one-week gathering in Ghana. We spoke to German comic artist Mikaël Ross who delivered the workshop with the artist and activist Akosua Hanson from Ghana.

Space installation "VRWANDLUNG"

The space installation "VRwandlung" demonstrates how diversely Kafka's writing can be interpreted. In Mexico City, Brussels, Prague and other cities, it uses virtual reality to transport visitors into the room in which Gregor Samsa wakes up in a beetle's body one day in "The Metamorphosis". VR technology makes it possible to step into the protagonist's shoes, to empathise with his existence as an insect in a faithfully constructed environment and to experience Kafka's work like this in a digital space too. Thanks to director Mika Johnson, who created the themed space "VRwandlung" with his young start-up team, one of the greatest pieces of writing of the 20th century is transformed into a VR adventure which Kafka fans can experience free of charge at various Goethe-Institut locations. This is an extraordinary experience which demonstrates that the power of literature goes far beyond the written word.

Prague Book Fair GERMAN LITERATURE AS A GUEST OF HONOUR

"A book must be the axe for the frozen sea inside us." Kafka provided the motto for this year's Prague Book Fair, Svět knihy, at which the German-language literature programme "Das Buch" is a guest of honour. "Das Buch" is hosted by the Austrian Cultural Forum Prague, the Goethe-Institut Czech Republic and the Swiss Embassy. On the one hand, the goal is to present the diversity of contemporary literature in German. On the other hand, the aim is to honour Kafka's work and present it in a special way. This includes, for example, a concert by the "Kafka Band" and the Czech writer and dramatologist Jaroslav Rudiš as some of the fair's programme highlights.

Drama THEATRE ADAPTATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Theatre adaptations around the world are a focal point of the cross-border programme on Kafka. Whilst in Cairo and Jakarta the story "A Report to an Academy" is brought to the stage, the Goethe-Institut Thessaloniki brings Kafka's "Letter to His Father", which never reached its intended recipient, to the stage. More plays will be performed in Paris, Lagos and London. For his play "La Comédie de K. - Fragments en Zigzag", for example, the French writer and director Frédéric Moulin brought together fragments of stories from Kafka's work, some of which came from his diaries. ●

goethe.de/komplett-kafka
goethe.de/kafka



Sina Bahr is a volunteer in the Communication Department at the headquarters of the Goethe-Institut in Munich.



Developing ideas, implementing ideas and letting ideas take effect: The Ghanaian-Nigerian multimedia artist Amy Igeleenyah Tetteh attended the workshop in Ghana.

What role does comic art play in your life?

It has always played a very key role. This comes from being fascinated with it early in my childhood. As a teenager I then asked myself whether I could do it too and became more interested in the medium. At some point I then decided: I'll try it now and see if anything comes of it.

Do you put something of yourself into the comics?

It always finds a way in, you can't do anything about that. For example, a really gloomy story emerged at a time when I was going through a breakup. You can't keep your private life separate.

You led an international workshop in Ghana attended by artists from all over Africa: Where was the point of connection despite coming from different countries?

Enthusiasm for the medium. That was the amazing thing too. It impacted me like an intercontinental nerd event where everyone comes from totally different cultures but has similar reference points on what interested them and what they loved as a child. We had a karaoke evening and we sung anime title songs because everyone knew them. People know the "Power Rangers" in Europe and in Africa too. It was lovely to see that, although sometimes people are very different, there is a close connection because you like the same things.

How did you handle the topic "Decolonize!" in the workshop?

We once visited a former slave fortress which is now a museum. This experience was so deep for us all so we handled the topic "Decolonize!" in a special way. This meant that the focus was much more on historical aspects than contemporary aspects. We asked ourselves: How would it be if things had been different?

What kind of answers were there to this question?

There were some really clever ones. For example, one attendee, the illustrator Tala Gadir, designed a theme park where you can experience slavery live as a white person and be sent through the various stages. It was both bitter and yet created with a good sense of humour. You had to laugh but then it got you again because you know that's what actually happened. The approaches were very individual and it was fascinating for me to be able to be involved in that.

Did the participants also share personal stories on the topic?

I was amazed that the topic only plays a very small role for many. It was so long ago and it is history for them too. In some cases, it was a journey of discovery for them as well as me.

How did you come up with the ideas?

The special thing about creating comics is that there are two parts, the words and the images, which are then interlocked. We mostly used the time for perfecting the stories. It is important that the characters work, the dialogues are good and the suspense is created well. I was able to give some good ideas to and ask questions of artists who have not been doing it for very long. I didn't contribute much when it came to the graphics. That is often a matter of taste.

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Comic artists were collectively involved in the project "Africomics" and came together for creative exchange at the workshops in various countries in Africa.

Creating comics alone or in a group: What are the benefits of a community?

That was what was absolutely fantastic about this week. People from so many countries, I've never experienced that before. Everybody immediately recognised that this was something special and a unique opportunity for exchange. We were constantly talking... about ideas, references and how people came to their medium. Comics are a bit of a niche. Often, comic artists feel as if they are working alone in a vacuum. In a space that even their family and friends find difficult to understand. When comic artists then get together, you immediately have like-minded people around you. We were able to encourage each other because we knew that we weren't alone in our interest. Every day was about being together constantly.

Are you still in contact with the project participants now?

Seeing each other is obviously difficult. But I really hope that we can maintain these contacts. So we send each other messages occasionally, update and congratulate each other when something changes. For example, one participant discovered how good she is at writing at this workshop. She has now just got a contract for her first script. I still remember what I said to her: "I think you've got really good instincts for writing." She obviously took it seriously and that's now resulted in something great.

Did you learn anything personally and for your own work?

My most important discovery was how huge our world is and how painfully little you sometimes know about it as a European person. Going on this journey was truly overwhelming. Since then, I have been wanting to visit these countries and people again. From a personal perspective, that is unfortunately more complicated. Therefore, it was amazing that the Goethe-Institut organised everything and you just had to go along. The collaboration with the local workshop leader was also really fun. It meant that I not only learnt how African comic artists draw but also how people teach in Africa. That was a workshop in a workshop for me. ●



The interviewer was Sina Bahr, volunteer in the Communication Department at the Goethe-Institut.



The comic artist Mikael Ross was able to create new inspiration as a workshop leader in Ghana, which also gave him new ideas for his work in Germany.



"Unchained" is the title of Amy Tetteh's comic.

In collaboration with 14 Goethe-Institut locations in various countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the region brought to life the project "Africomics" under the direction of the Goethe-Institut in Ghana in 2021. The goal was to give comic artists opportunities for international networking, for example through workshops in the guest countries. The Centre for International Cultural Education at the Goethe-Institut in Bonn brought the 82 comics that were created in the project to Germany in Autumn 2023 for the first time for an exhibition as part of the Africa Film Festival in Cologne. "Africomics" was also exhibited in 2024 at the International Comic-Salon Erlangen and at Lakes International Comic Art Festival in Great Britain. The artists' works engage with political and social themes such as colonialism, discrimination and racism. In 2023, a 200-page book in three languages (German, French and English) was also published from the project with the publishing house Schiler & Mücke: "AfriComics. Eine Anthologie", available from booksellers. goethe.de/africomics

SOMETHING LASTING

Europe is a complex mosaic nowadays with war and crisis, cracks and cohesion. In recent years, young authors from Southeastern Europe have written texts for a theatre of the future as part of the project “New Stages South East”. In early 2023, Theater Oberhausen presented eleven of these texts at a festival. We spoke to Laura Mangels, dramatologist and artistic director of the festival at Theater Oberhausen.

What was the motivation for your theatre organisation of bringing the project “New Stages South East” from Southeastern Europe to Oberhausen?

At Theater Oberhausen, under the directorship of Kathrin Mädler, we place a strong emphasis on contemporary drama. What interested us about “New Stages South East” was that the political impact of theatre was taken seriously and that linguistic and cultural barriers were overcome in the field of drama. The writing workshops, which lasted several months, led to the creation of texts which engage with the existential questions of our time. These texts somewhat counteract the complex web of crises and use very different approaches in terms of content and form. And they are texts which demand to be on stage! Oberhausen is also a very diverse city in the Ruhr region. There are lots of people living here whose story is closely connected with Southeastern Europe. We immediately decided that we wanted to give visibility to the texts created as part of “New Stages South East” in the context of a festival and to discover new authors who have previously not been seen in the German-language theatre landscape together with our audience.

What was your experience of the cooperation like?

A total of 33 texts were created as part of the writing workshops in the region, which lasted several months and were led by international and German mentors. In Oberhausen, following the workshops hosted by the Goethe-Institut, we created a panel session to give a total of five texts particular visibility. Since the texts were so different and so good, during the festival we presented a total of eleven texts as workshop performances, scenic readings or installations. The presentation of the works was enhanced by guest performances from Serbia, Romania and Germany. There was a concert by Bulgarian Cartrader, various discourse formats

on the theatre landscape in Southeastern Europe, on the relationship between theatre and politics and, of course, parties. Lots of the authors attended the festival in Oberhausen as guests, artists in the guest performances, students at the Folkwang University of the Arts, who expanded our ensemble, and directors such as Magdalena Schönfeld, Katerina Giannopoulou or Niko Eleftheriadis, who were involved in the artistic interpretation of the texts.

The festival days were very different and I got the impression that something long-lasting was created over those four days. New connections that will continue to shape the theatre landscape. We are particularly pleased that our cooperation with the authors is continuing. Our theatre is performing “Sauer” by Asja Krsmanović, directed by Niko Eleftheriadis, for the first time. At the same time, the Nationaltheater Mannheim is home to the first German-language production of “Generation Lost” by Greg Liakopoulos. Then our artistic director, Kathrin Mädler is bringing to life Dario Bevanda’s text “Darkness on the Edge of Town” at the National Theatre in Sofia. And this means the texts will keep spreading, hopefully all over Europe.

To what extent do artists’ origin and background affect their work and theatre productions?

Naturally, an author’s individual background and perspectives influence their texts. However, if you try to manifest what topic will come up in a text on the basis of a specific background, you are quite likely to reach the limits of your own imagination. However, there are threads which link multiple texts together: the deconstruction of gender roles or queer empowerment moments which process a patriarchal society often shaped by Orthodox traditions; family in general as a core place and breeding ground of pain and cohesion and, naturally, memories of war and ethnic



conflicts in the region which are still present and which have become part of a brutally changing present again due to the war caused by Russia’s attack on Ukraine.

To what extent can German theatres benefit from cooperation with artists from other countries and cultures?

Art is always an exchange of thoughts, ideas, signs. Therefore, I believe that theatre does not just benefit from cooperation with arts from other countries but that it is precisely this collaboration that has always kept theatre alive. In this regard, the work of the Goethe-Institut is unbelievably important for the landscape of German-language theatre and festivals, both for mobility to other countries and for inviting artists from all over the world or initiating projects such as “New Stages South East”. If opportunities for international collaboration disappear, this will be damaging to the art and its democratic and participative power. In theatre, there is also often a language barrier associated with the focused work on language in an international context. Here too, the Goethe-Institut is an important partner for facilitating fruitful collaboration. ●



SDG 8



The interviewer was Alexander Behrmann, Deputy Director of the Communication Department at the headquarters of the Goethe-Institut in Munich.

“Art is always an exchange of thoughts, ideas, signs. Therefore, I believe that theatre does not just benefit from cooperation with arts from other countries but that it is precisely this collaboration that has always kept theatre alive. In this regard, the work of the Goethe-Institut is unbelievably important for the landscape of German-language theatre and festivals.”

Laura Mangels

“New Stages South East” is a multi-year international project by the Goethe-Institut which supports the creation of new theatre and brings together young authors and theatregoers from Southeastern Europe and Germany to share experiences of current issues and continue to develop together. Participating countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Romania, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Cyprus. In the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 seasons, premieres and first night performances took place at Theater Oberhausen, Theater Essen and Nationaltheater Mannheim.

Top: The Serbian duo of directors, Vladimir Aleksic and Olga Dimitrijevic, sensitively create a piece of contemporary history with the “Lepa Brena Project”. Five actors explore the show business phenomenon Lepa Brena with theatre and music and recall Yugoslavia’s history.

TELLING THAT PLACE ABOUT THIS PLACE

From shore to shore, talking to the West. We asked the Armenian writer, culture journalist and art manager Anush Kocharyan to tell us about “Geschichten vom Schwarzen Meer – Black Sea Lit”. Her story in the shadow of the war and past wars is about the power of storytelling.

On that bank of the Danube, there is a wicker chair and it seems to me that it would be suitable for all times of year although I am not sure if someone would sit there in the winter too. You can see Bulgaria and Serbia from this bank. The wicker chair makes it possible to shrink this bit of the world and be transported into a trilateral reality which covers Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia. From here, the world seems a bit closed off for a moment because there is a horizon. The “Garden of Angels” spans several hectares, an alternative world to the legend of the Romanian Count Dracula.

It seems to me that this wicker chair is the only thing in the world to be so protected: In front of it is the huge river and behind it are “the angels”, which protect it on this side. From here, you can also imagine how the world creates dividing lines and separates one bank from another. However, the bank here is not a naive, poetic word but a permanent border that has separated me from you, us and everyone from each other. Have the people who wanted a new coastline thought about that?

I am in Romania, in the southwest part of the country. It is burning hot, the middle of July. And although our accommodation for the authors of the “Geschichten vom Schwarzen Meer - Black Sea Lit” is actually supposed to be right on the Black Sea, plans changed and we are now on the bank of the Danube.

I was born in a country where the sea is a dream and a slogan. The phrase “Armenia from coast to coast”, which is a reference to our historic homeland for us Armenians, has been with me since

the earliest point in my childhood. As a short summary: I represent the first generation from post-Soviet Armenia. I was born in an Armenia that was striving for independence and wrote letters to the sea. The sea was somewhere there, far away. “Behind seven mountains, seven stones and guarded by seven demons...” that’s what my grandmother told me. She was born just after the Second World War, lived in Soviet Armenia and her first granddaughter was born in independent Armenia. Now, as an author from independent Armenia, a landlocked country, I am involved in the project “Geschichten vom Schwarzen Meer - Black Sea Lit”.

In 2023, in the middle of July, on a bank in the southwest part of Romania. The world is changing. The world is altering every day. And everybody is noticing that.

Halyna, who comes from Ukraine, a land with access to the Black Sea, has travelled a long way to the “Garden of Angels”. It is somehow possible to physically get away from the war by crossing the border, crossing countries and reaching the West but you cannot escape thinking about the war, regardless of where you are. Ukraine is at war. Russia started the war. Halyna comes from a country at war: we, the others, come from countries that have seen war, with healed and open wounds.

Authors from countries that have experienced war and are experiencing war are sitting at the table. Archil from Georgia, Bogdan from Romania, Halyna from Ukraine and Lisa from the Netherlands, who originally comes from Ukraine, are sitting at the table.

In a few days, we will openly speak about the reality of the Black Sea region as a cultural space. We will talk about narratives and about what connects us, the countries in Eastern Europe, more specifically the Black Sea countries. Authors from various countries who have experienced similarly painful stories in different ways will talk. Authors from countries which know very little about the parallel stories that belong to me, to Bogdan, Halyna, Lisa, Archil, and millions of other people who do not write but have had and are having painful experiences, will talk.

What has happened to this world to mean that it has such huge division within it? Why have some people become so far away from others? The past is not the past until its story has been told. The past is not the past until it has been translated. And the present is not the present until we have got to know each other through a written and translated story and until one person understands another’s story as it is and as it was.

Halyna reads the latest news from Ukraine, we follow it silently but we cry again and again, we try to give her strength again and again. This bank of the Danube, which was transformed into a military camp in the Second World War, embraces us with its restored glory and gives us hope. The Port Cultural Cetate, which is temporary home to us five authors, has become the stage of a festival because we are finally talking to one another through the stories that our countries have had to bear and are still having to bear. We have finally got to this point: WE ARE TALKING. I “see” Bogdan’s childhood in Romania which has just become independent, Lisa “sees” my country in its latest war, Archil hears Halyna and is silent because we all “see” Halyna in the war in Ukraine... we all “see” the war.

Every morning I point the wicker chair in the direction of the angels, I want to be “visible” and “audible”, want to talk in a language that is translated. I think that Halyna’s pain is untranslatable. Lisa understands it because she has Ukrainian roots. The rest of us imagine it because we read the news. But you can’t understand this pain from the news: The news, with its daily statistics, only increases the fear and terror of the next wars which are to be expected. We need some kind of common language to tell the world about it... and as part of the world to truly be part of the world. We need to tell each other as quickly and as much as possible about our stories.

It is the last long night before the event in Bucharest. Lisa’s telephone beeps, it’s a weather alarm. It is saying that a storm is approaching our cultural port. We all laugh. “Dracula has woken up.” Minutes later, one of the giant trees falls down and the whole forest erupts into noise. The storm really has come. We hurry into the building and I take a pepper chain from an angel’s neck and crown myself with it... for fun and to distract the storm. This funny “crowning” full of self-criticism happens on the last night before the event in Bucharest.

We all sit on the podium at the Bucharest Goethe-Institut: Archil from Georgia, Bogdan from Romania, Halyna from Ukraine and Lisa from the Netherlands (who originally comes from Ukraine) and me from Armenia. It creates the impression that we had all been living in the same place for long enough for us to know

everything about one another. It creates the impression that we had found a text that guides our languages and enables us to cross borders and not become a victim of this border, a victim of a little language, a victim of the big profiteers. It is as if it were possible to compress the ocean, pour it into a story and use simple words to tell the story of what we have all experienced and are experiencing.

The storm has turned the garden entirely on its head but the angels are intact. The chair is in the same place. The surveillance of the big eye might not be something you can escape but the thing that can really bring us together is this story, that has seen big brother against the backdrop of the divisions, the major catastrophes, the existence of our untranslatable languages. At a time when language still opened up possibilities and nothing was divisive... In case that time ever existed. ●

“Geschichten vom Schwarzen Meer – Black Sea Lit” was designed as a two-year regional project by the Goethe centre in Yerevan. The Goethe-Institut locations in Georgia, Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria are involved in cooperation with the Georgian-German author and project curator Nino Haratischwili. Since 2024, the German author and journalist Laura Cwiertniadas has been supporting the project as a curator. It reopens dialogue with the Black Sea region. Authors from the region are coming together in order to overcome the powerlessness of being speechless in conversation with one another. The literature and talent agency ARI, Armenia, is involved, as is the Literature Initiative Georgia. The supporters include the International Literature Festival Berlin at the home of the Berliner Festspiele, the Literarische Colloquium Berlin, the International Literature Festival Odessa (in Bucharest) and the International Literature Festival Uppsala. The ten authors (in order by country): Armen Ohanyan, Anush Kocharyan (Armenia), Ina Vultchanova (Bulgaria), Archil Kikodze and Eka Kevanishvili (Georgia), Lisa Weeda (Netherlands, Ukraine), Bogdan Cosa and Lavinia Braniște (Romania), Halyna Kruk and Ostap Slyvynsky (Ukraine).



Anush Kocharyan is a writer, cultural journalist and art manager from Armenia. She published her first book, “Wild Grass”, in 2022.

Translated from the Armenian by Anahit Avagyan and Wiebke Zollmann.

PROJECTS FOR UKRAINE: OUR COMMITMENT CONTINUES

How can Ukrainian society be strengthened and the rebuilding of the country driven forwards? In 2023 and 2024 too, the Goethe-Institut focused on the identity-shaping role of culture and education, which are two key pillars for internal stability and a resilient civil society. In order to be a helpful partner to these sectors and also provide protection and emergency aid, existing projects were continued and new programmes brought to life.

STABILISATION FUND FOR CULTURAL PROMOTION

In order to provide structural support for the Ukrainian cultural sector, the stabilisation fund was introduced as a key instrument back in 2022. Funded by the Goethe-Institut and the Federal Foreign Office, support was provided in the same year for around 70 organisations with an average sum of EUR 18,000, which constitutes important support to facilitate the continuation of cultural work, even under difficult conditions. Almost 300 applications were received in 2023, the second funding year, which shows the high level of demand. To date, funding has been provided for Ukrainian cultural institutions and festivals, including new initiatives and organisations which are important to modern Ukraine's cultural self-understanding, such as the National Art Museum Odessa. After this building suffered significant damage again in a rocket attack in November, funding from the stabilisation fund contributed to ensuring the safe storage of the museum objects.

 SDG 16

BOOK FAIRS FOR LITERARY EXCHANGE

The Frankfurt Book Fair in 2023 highlighted once again that literature can create bridges between countries, languages and cultures: More than 500 book titles were presented, co-financed and organised at the Ukrainian stand by the Goethe-Institut in cooperation with the Ukrainian Book Institute. With project funding from the Federal Foreign Office, the Goethe-Institut Ukraine hosted the discourse programme "Fragility of Freedom" and the literary programme "Fragility of Creators" was created thanks to funding by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media. This gave visitors a comprehensive insight into the social and political situation, as well as Ukrainian culture, book design and book art. In March 2024, the Leipzig Book Fair also provided space to explore the country's literary and artistic diversity. The

17 MILLION

euros are available to the project "House of Europe" up to the end of 2024 as a total budget for supporting the Ukrainian cultural and educational sector.

programme, designed by the Goethe-Institut in Ukraine together with Mystetskyi Arsenal and in partnership with the Ukrainian Book Institute and the Ukrainian Institute, focused on stories of resistance, loss and identity in Ukraine. We also met Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the Ukraine stand.

A BOX FULL OF BOOKS

As numerous Ukrainian families arrived in Germany as refugees in 2022, the Goethe-Institut presented the project "A box full of books" to make literature accessible to young people in a country which was still new to them. As such, more than 600 children's libraries in Germany were provided with children's and youth literature in Ukrainian. In 2023, the focus of the project shifted to Ukraine itself: The suitcases full of books, which were in demand, were specially tailored to conditions in the country and reached around 350 libraries there. In cooperation with experts, the package was designed for children and young people directly affected by the war. As well as 22 books, it also contains a guide for parents and a sensory toy which can make it easier to talk about the war to process experiences. The project received funding from the Goethe-Institut and the Federal Foreign Office.

  SDGs 4, 16



Top: As part of the project "House of Europe", in February 2024 an alumni meetup was hosted in Kyiv in person again for the first time since the pandemic and the outbreak of war. Bottom: As part of the project "A box full of books", young readers enjoyed borrowing and reading Ukrainian books for children and young people from the mobile library in the district of Cuxhaven.

HOUSE OF EUROPE

Since April 2019, the Goethe-Institut has been supporting Ukraine with "House of Europe". This project, which will have received around 17 million euros in funding from the European Union by the end of 2024, primarily serves to increase the capacity of the Ukrainian cultural and educational sector. Thanks to a range of programmes, Ukrainian actors from the fields of culture, media, education and creative economy are in contact with colleagues from the EU and Great Britain and are encouraged to talk in workshops, conferences and further training. In addition, "House of Europe" provides scholarships and mentoring to cultural creators from various sectors. For example, in 2023 to 2024, it supported filmmakers and provided funding for translation. Since the large-scale attack on Ukraine by Russia in February 2022, the focus is also on emergency aid. As such, some cultural organisations were reliant on support, particularly in the winter months. Further areas of focus have been strengthening the resilience of Ukrainian cultural creators and protecting Ukrainian cultural heritage since 2022. For example, in 2023 a hackathon took place on the topic of the digitalisation of cultural objects with a total of 1300 participants from the cultural sector and the tech scene. houseofeurope.org.ua/en

  SDGs 8, 16

"Culture is also the space in which a society shapes its self-understanding and projects its future. And, in this regard, it is vital for the continuation of this society."

Olesia Ostrovska-Liuta, General Director of the culture and museum complex Mystetskyi Arsenal in Kyiv at the Munich Security Conference

MEDIENGEIST – AGAINST MISINFORMATION IN DIGITAL SPACES

Digital spaces are easy to exploit to spread misinformation in a targeted way, particularly in times of war and crisis. To counteract this danger in Ukraine, the Goethe-Institut has created the mentoring programme "Mediengeister", aimed at actors in digital civil society. Activists, bloggers, journalists, artists and tech start-ups gathered ideas in order to protect the digital public from disinformation campaigns and propaganda with the help of digital technology. During the project work in 2023, 30 teams were supported in developing their ideas by 14 international and Ukrainian experts. From the total of 350 ideas which were submitted, the following projects received funding: the video format "Briefly" reporting on world events and current news, the AI platform "Mantis" for analysing risks posed by certain information spaces and an initiative for uncovering misinformation about Ukrainian culture. The funding for these projects was made possible by special funding from the Federal Foreign Office for sustainable strengthening of resilience of Ukrainian cultural and educational partners. mediengeist.org

 SDG 16

CULTURE AND SECURITY: DISCUSSION AT THE MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE

The importance of culture for strengthening Ukrainian society was discussed by the Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut, Johannes Ebert, with Olesia Ostrovska-Liuta, the General Director of the National Cultural and Art and Museum Complex, Mystetskyi Arsenal, and Scott McDonald, the CEO of the British Council. The discussion involved, for example, representatives of the Ukrainian and British Parliament, the European Parliament, the Federal Armed Forces and the Federal Foreign Office, as part of a side event at the Munich Security Conference. The focal point of the discussion was on strengthening Ukrainian civil society and the cultural and educational scene in times of the ongoing war. Security is not just created using military means and willingness to defend a country. It is also about strengthening society's resilience and readiness for the future and strengthening a shared identity and vision. ●

 SDG 16

WELCOME TO GERMANY

Both skilled workers and individuals who wish to migrate to Germany from a third country face a few challenges. The Welcome Coaches from the Goethe-Institut help people overcome these challenges. Here they explain to us how they work and how the principle of the “bridge of trust” is so important to what they do.



The Welcome Coaches (from left to right) provide support at the initial orientation in Germany Tobias Brockhorst, Christine Hahn, Lisa Beck, Isabel Demer, Dayanne Cecilia Begarie and Stefanie Harbig.

What exactly does a Welcome Coach do?

As a Welcome Coach, we see ourselves as personal supporters. In cooperation with project colleagues in pre-integration at the Goethe-Institut locations abroad, we provide new migrants with in-depth preparation in their home country and, once they have arrived, we make things easier for them with regard to getting started in Germany with a seamless transition between pre-integration and initial integration. Pre-integration includes qualified preparation for everyday life and working life in Germany, even in their home country. Our services include a wide range of free information and advice events, both digital ones and in person, on topics which are important for getting off to a good start in Germany: Learning German, work life, accommodation, health, social aspects and networks.

What makes this role so unique?

When it comes to Welcome Coaches, this role is based on a concept which has never previously existed in the German integration landscape because it is based on the concept of a “bridge of trust”: The individuals we support receive advice from our project colleagues in pre-integration in their home countries and can find similar structures when they arrive here in Germany, which they can trust. This bridge only works thanks to the years of excellent work which our colleagues have already put in abroad. We believe the concept of “the bridge of trust” is worthy of funding as we are able to understand questions and worries that our participants may have due to our own experiences of being abroad and of migration and provide a service we would have personally liked to have received.

Expert and specialist knowledge or empathy: what skills do you need?

Naturally, we endeavour to be as empathetic as possible when exploring the specific challenges and questions our target group has at different times in the migration process in order to develop a suitable portfolio of services. This also requires close collaboration with our international colleagues who provide global support with pre-integration, as well as with cooperation partners in Germany. Expert and specialist knowledge is required because we host a lot of our events ourselves. We work with various specialist speakers on events which require specific expertise.

What are the most significant hurdles that people from third

The project “Pre-integration and transition management - ensuring a successful migration process” is co-financed by the EU’s Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and has been providing citizens of third countries who wish to migrate to Germany for professional or personal resources with preparation for everyday life and working life since May 2023. The services start in the individual’s home country and in the initial period in Germany and form a supportive bridge during the migration process.



50

Infohäuser (infohouses) throughout Germany provide migrants with the opportunity to network and get support with orientation.

countries experience when wanting to migrate to Germany?

According to the latest OECD report, lots of new migrants are concerned about how best to get settled in Germany. In order to achieve this, they need information about work opportunities, including for partners who are coming with them, about visa requirements and relevant knowledge of German. At this point in the migration process, our project colleagues at Goethe-Institut locations abroad provide information and advice. Shortly before migration, as Welcome Coaches we can get started with initial orientation events which make the first weeks in Germany and the arrival process easier.

Once they have arrived in Germany, the next steps can be taken.

What topics do migrants ask about or worry about the most?

It depends on the context. Are they moving in existing family structures? Is the employer providing accommodation? Are they still looking for a place on a course or looking for work? The aspect that is shared by everyone is the necessity of improving their communication in German in order to make it possible to manage everyday life and working life as efficiently and pleasantly as possible. For this purpose, we provide learning advice and small German courses on selected topics.

How do you manage to alleviate their concerns?

Our participants already trust our project colleagues from pre-integration at the Goethe-Instituts abroad. We utilise this trust in order to provide them with further targeted information and advice. With our in-person work as Welcome Coaches, we aim to make our services inspire trust and to therefore make getting started in Germany easier for new migrants. With a good basis of information, our participants can concentrate on the most important aspect, which is arriving in their new home country.

Are there any moments that you will remember?

When participants at our courses and events express how thankful they are for our help and say that it’s fun spending time with us. ●

goethe.de/willkommenscoaches



The interviewer was Sina Bahr a volunteer in the Communication Department at the Goethe-Institut.

COMING TO GERMANY FOR QUALIFICATION

18-year-old Alberto Gámez from Venezuela is at the start of his working life but already knows that he wants his career to take him to Germany. He told us what he likes about the working world in Germany and how the programme “Dual education mobility South America” (DAMOS) supported him on his journey to Germany.



Alberto, would you like to briefly introduce yourself?

My name is Alberto Gámez, I am 18 years old and I am from Venezuela. I studied at the Esperanza School for nine years until 2022. This is a PASCH/FIT school in Venezuela.

How did you find out about DAMOS?

In 2022, I saw a post on the Instagram channel “PASCH-Andina”. It was about a language course with a focus on vocational German, so it was designed to prepare you for working life in Germany. I was immediately interested, applied successfully and attended both modules, A2 and B1, of the language course. I then completed the B1 Goethe certificate and passed the examination.

Which DAMOS projects did you participate in?

I received the scholarship “Deutsch plus Beruf” the following year. This scholarship includes a two-week German course in Germany, at the Goethe-Institut in Schwäbisch Hall, and a week when you can visit German companies in the Heilbronn region. I travelled to Germany with this scholarship and completed a B2 German course which covered vocational topics. I also visited various companies in the region, including Audi. In my free time, I was able to visit other cities with other scholarship holders too, such as Heidelberg and Stuttgart. That was an amazing experience!

And did you like Germany?

Yes, of course! I immediately liked everything: the people I met there, the Germans I spoke to. Everyone was really nice and friendly. It was a wonderful experience. It was my first time visiting Germany. The previous PASCH projects and services always took place online due to the pandemic.

“The more I learn, the more there is to learn!”

Who did you meet whilst you were there?

Firstly, I met other scholarship holders from Latin America, from Brazil, Argentina and Mexico. I also had a lot of contact with people from Europe, Asia and Africa. Some of these people became good friends of mine.

During which stages did you really need support from DAMOS?

During the journey for “Deutsch plus Beruf”, Diego Santana de Freitas, an employee at the Goethe-Institut in Porto Alegre and a DAMOS project assistant, was particularly helpful. At that time, I was still a minor and did not know how to apply for travel documents in my country. The Goethe-Institut also provided flight tickets, insurance and all the documents which were required. Diego was always there when I had questions. This support was very helpful for me. I felt safe and well looked after.

What plans do you have for the future that you wish to achieve with help from DAMOS?

I would like to work or study in Germany. The experience with “Deutsch plus Beruf” helped me to organise these plans. It also helped me to realise that I need to prepare for the future. In this regard, travelling to Germany was a big step for me and my self-development.



What exactly do you find interesting about the sector you want to work in?

I am particularly interested in computer science. Since childhood, I have been fascinated by computers... playing on them, working on them or solving problems. That was my huge passion. Two or three years ago, I realised that the sector is also interesting and wanted to learn more about it. I find it great that you are never done learning in IT. There is always something new. The more I learn, the more there is to learn! That is very motivating and is a good fit with my life philosophy. Therefore, I can imagine enjoying working in the IT sector.

What do you think makes Germany such an appealing place to work?

I started studying at a PASCH school when I was seven years old so I have been pretty heavily influenced by German culture since my childhood. After a certain period of time, I noticed that there are unique aspects of working in Germany that I personally like. For example, when I was in Germany, I saw how important teamwork is. You work better and more efficiently in a team than you can alone and you can achieve more goals when working with others. I think that, unlike in other countries, I would have the opportunity to develop professionally and as a person in Germany. I understand that culture and society are different in Latin America but I firmly believe that Germany is a great destination for people from other countries who want to study or work. ●



Top: The DAMOS Programme supports students at PASCH schools with planning their future in the German working world and in developing a network here at the educational campus of the Dieter Schwarz Foundation in Heilbronn.

The programme “Dual education mobility South America” (DAMOS) is aimed at PASCH/FIT schools in South America. The partner school initiative “Schools: partners of the future” (PASCH) was created by the Federal Foreign Office and represents schools that place particular value on German. FIT schools are a special type of PASCH schools which receive support from the Goethe-Institut. Since 2021, DAMOS has been providing school pupils there with a wide range of services and qualified support in preparation for a dual education in Germany, for example language training or advice sessions. The offer is particularly aimed at pupils who are interested in trades, technical or commercial fields.



The interviewer was Marina Schutze, Assistant for DAMOS and the PASCH initiative in Brazil.

THAT'S A CLASS



More and more people in Sub-Saharan Africa want to learn German with African-European textbooks which are not full of clichés and are up to date from a methodology and didactic point of view. “Und jetzt WIR” makes that possible.

German is booming. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 1.1 million school pupils are currently learning German. On the one hand, Germany enjoys a very good reputation despite its colonial history which still needs to be processed and, on the other hand, lots of people see opportunities for themselves in Germany due to the shortage of skilled workers. In West and Central Africa, German is firmly anchored in curricula as a subject.

The German as a Foreign Language teaching at the region is supported by 8000 teachers, which is a low number in a global comparison. Like almost everywhere in the world, there is a shortage of German teachers. In order to counteract this shortage, we have implemented a one-year talent programme, which has already enabled us to train over 100 teachers in the last five years. This is nowhere near enough, however, to keep up with growing demand for German courses and examinations. Accordingly, teachers often have very large class sizes, sometimes with up to 100 students. The textbooks which are used therefore also need to be designed for teaching large groups.

Specifically for German teaching in West Africa, in 1999, the Goethe-Institut developed the textbook series “Ihr und Wir”, which was most recently updated by Hueber Verlag about ten years ago. The textbook is no longer up to date as it no longer adequately reflects international social and political change. Thanks to special funding from the Federal Foreign Office in the amount of one million euros, the textbook can now be completely overhauled in terms of content and brought up to the latest professional standards in teaching. It will be published with the title “Und jetzt WIR”.

African and European authors are working closely together on the project. Not least, a modern design and digital additional offerings are intended to create enthusiasm for learning. This is because lots of schools in Africa too switched to digital lessons during the pandemic, which led to a real innovation boost that we need to make the most of.

“Und jetzt WIR” sensitively deals with the realities of life for learners in over 15 African countries, promotes multilingual skills and covers current social and environmental developments. The series encourages controversial engagement with critical topics, strengthens communication skills and primarily takes into account the latest findings in the methodology and teaching of German as a foreign language as a subject. In terms of content, the textbook covers current local issues in the individual countries, as well as global questions relating to sustainability. Particular importance is also given to the topics of diversity, feminism, migration, anti-racism and empowerment.



Arthur Rapp is Director of Language Work in the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

FOR A MODERN VIEW OF AFRICA

We spoke to two teachers of German as a foreign language from the region about the new textbook “Und jetzt WIR”: Serge-Calvin Eke from Cameroon and Verohanitra Razanakolona from Madagascar.



Mr Eke, what is different about this textbook compared to the previous one?

The aspect that makes the textbook “Und jetzt WIR” different from previous works is its focus on intercultural

learning and development of communication skills. It places great value on learners not just learning the language itself but also learning a bit about the culture and way of life in German-speaking countries. The textbook covers current topics and provides authentic materials and situations to make it possible for learners to use language practically in a context that is close to reality. In addition, it also provides more interactive exercises, role plays and discussions to promote practical language use. “Und jetzt WIR” also provides comprehensive glossaries in French, English and Portuguese. With the app “Hueber interaktiv”, learners can also use “Und jetzt WIR” offline and access all the audio files and interactive exercises on the go from their smartphone.

What is the textbook like from a didactic point of view?

It follows a communication-focused approach which empowers pupils to actively take part in the lessons and continuously improve their language skills. The textbook also promotes independent learning, which enables the learners to integrate their own interests, needs and experiences. The lessons are clearly structured and provide a balanced blend of listening, reading, writing and speaking exercises.

Which aspects are particularly valued when it comes to training teachers?

Firstly, teachers are shown how best to implement the communicative approach of the textbook. They find out how to empower learners to actively take part in the lesson and use their language skills in authentic situations. Secondly, teachers are shown how they can effectively integrate the

1.1 MILLION

school pupils and students are currently learning German in Sub-Saharan Africa.



intercultural components and sensitivity of the textbook into their teaching in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of German-language culture.

What do teachers think about the textbook?

Lots of teachers in Cameroon value the innovative and contemporary approach of the textbook. They also value the diversity of the materials and the current topics which reflect reality.



Ms Razanakolona, how is the textbook being received by teachers?

I am a textbook author from Madagascar and I work here as a teacher of German as a foreign language at the Goethe centre in Antananarivo. I also work at a state grammar

school where I teach secondary pupils. From the perspective of a teacher, I can say that we welcome "Und jetzt WIR". I personally started teaching German in 1997. This new textbook is encouraging us to undergo a transformation process as teachers.

What is different about this textbook compared to the previous one?

Compared to the previous textbooks, there are lots of positives about "Und jetzt WIR": It looks much nicer. The illustrations are authentic. The topics meet our African learners where they are with regard to their age and the realities of their lives. The book also contains a lot of current geographical information about neighbouring countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and

German-speaking countries. And perhaps most importantly: There are no clichés and, instead, it presents a more modern view of Africa.

What do you think the significance of "Und jetzt WIR" is?

I believe that this textbook becoming established will strengthen African-European cooperation. More and more Africans are interested in the German language. ●

"Und jetzt WIR" is a cooperation with the Hueber Verlag publishing house, and received funding from the Federal Foreign Office. The following individuals were instrumental in reworking the textbook: Dr Léonel Nanga-Me-Abengmoni, Project Coordinator for the Goethe-Institut, Arthur Rapp, Director of Language Work for the Sub-Saharan Africa region, Ilka Seltmann, Director of Language Work at the Goethe-Institut in Yaoundé (Cameroon), Sylvia Tobias, Director of Sales, Marketing and PR at the Hueber Verlag, and Nina Seidel-Apelt, International Sales Manager at the Hueber Verlag.



The interviewer was Alexander Behrmann.



THE VIRTUAL TEACHERS' ROOM

Teaching materials, further training, academic articles and conversations with teachers of German as a foreign language and German as a second language all over the world: This is what is on offer in the virtual "Deutschstunde" by the Goethe-Institut. We spoke to both project managers, Karin Kühnel and Juliane Kramer, about how the online portal works.



Karin Kühnel

What exactly is "Deutschstunde"?

"Deutschstunde" is a free online offering by the Goethe-Institut which is aimed at teachers and students of German as a foreign language and German as a second language. Users can find everything in one place here: Teaching materials, further training, academic articles and opportunities to talk to each other... like a virtual staff room for teachers.



Juliane Kramer

Who is "Deutschstunde" aimed at?

"Deutschstunde" is aimed at teachers of German as a foreign language and teachers of German as a second language in Germany and abroad, as well as teachers and teaching staff in adult or early years education. Students and teaching staff on relevant courses at universities and higher education institutions can also benefit from what is on offer.

What can teachers expect from "Deutschstunde"?

The portal offers teaching materials from all over the world, which you can find quickly and easily using filters. Teachers can also publish their own materials. In addition, further training and events are on offer, such as interactive workshops, online conferences, discussion formats or readings. Our online magazine, "Sprache", regularly publishes academic articles on language teaching research.

Do you have to register?

No. The content is freely available to anyone who is interested. Registration is planned for the future to enable users to store teaching materials in a saved list and comment on materials. The standard view which is available without registration will remain available.

Can teachers get involved?

Of course. We are delighted to receive new teaching materials and offers of events. There is an individual responsible for

"Deutschstunde" in all regions and at all Goethe-Institut locations and they can upload new teaching materials. We are also happy to receive suggestions, compliments and criticism.

What are the main things the portal is used for?

The most popular page is the database of teaching materials. Users from all over the world browse it to plan their lessons. The top 3 are: "Hans Hase", which has over 500,000 downloads, "Feste und Feiertage: Lernvideos" by the Goethe-Institut Slovenia, which has over 300,000 downloads, and the "Wortschatzposter: ,Zo dichtbij'" by the Goethe-Institut in the Netherlands, which has over 100,000 downloads.

Users are also interested in our events. A discussion format that is very well received is "Deutschland hautnah erleben". Every two months, 200 to 300 people get together to talk about geographical topics, often linked with a short live view, for example of the East Side Gallery. Another digital event that enjoyed a lot of interest was the first "Digitale Deutschstunde-Konferenz". Almost 1000 teachers or students took part in workshops, presentations and discussions sessions.

What are you planning for the future of "Deutschstunde"?

On the one hand, we want to get local German teacher associations onto the "Deutschstunde" platform. They will be represented with a brief profile and their activities. On the one hand, we are planning some exciting topics. However, it is the teachers that decide which of these will be implemented. It is about the teachers and we have included them in the development of "Deutschstunde" from the very start. ●



The interviewer was Katharina Kindsmüller, a volunteer in the Communication Department at the Goethe-Institut until January 2024.

SCHOOL IN TIMES OF WAR

Radomir Astaikin, a ten-year-old school pupil from Odessa, knows exactly what to do when he hears the sirens: immediately stop his online lessons and run to the bomb shelter. The Russian attacks make it impossible to have an everyday school experience. But he will not let them take away his love of learning, particularly learning German thanks to the online lessons from the Goethe-Institut.



Ten-year-old Radomir Astaikin only has German lessons online with Fro, the green alien, who guides him through the digital lessons.

Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, the state education platform “**All-Ukrainian Online School**” was created in Ukraine and it was expanded as quickly as possible by the educational authorities. It is also intended to ensure that secure and high-quality teaching can still take place during the attacks by Russia. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the Goethe-Institut is providing teaching materials for German as a foreign language. The interactive teaching sessions with the green hero Fro can be used free of charge all over the world.

FROM THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF A UKRAINIAN SCHOOL PUPIL

Early in the morning, when I have got up, I have a wash, brush my teeth and put on a jumper and trousers as if I were going to school. I get a cup of hot chocolate with cinnamon and sit down at my desk and log into my school platform.

There is at least one benefit to my school in Odessa currently only having online lessons for safety reasons: I don't have to travel to school and can sleep in in the mornings. But it's a shame that I can't meet the other children to learn together with them. Unfortunately, that is too dangerous. We still talk every day in the breaks though, but just online.

So I start the school day by myself sat at my desk. Instead of a classroom, I enter the online classroom. The technology and internet generally work well. So I don't need any help but because of the war there always needs to be an adult around in case there is an air raid alarm. I now know exactly what I have to do if there is. The lesson stops immediately, I have to go to my Mum or another relative and we quickly run into the bomb shelter basement. There are also repeatedly power cuts due to the Russian bombardment.

Learning German with Fro's help

When there aren't any interruptions, I really enjoy lessons, especially learning languages. My first foreign language is English

“I like talking to other children in German. I like how the language sounds.”

and my second is German: it's one of my favourite subjects. I am really interested in German culture, literature and music. I like talking to other children in German. I like how the language sounds.

I don't know whether it would be easier to learn German in lessons in person. I find online school absolutely fine for grammar and vocabulary. I have some difficulties with understanding listening exercises. Therefore, I find it great that we have lessons with Alien Fro. When my school day finishes between 2 and 3 pm, I eat lunch and when it's safe to do so, I go outside. My parents and I like taking a walk on the beach by the sea.

THREE QUESTIONS FOR VIKTORIIA MARYNIUK, RADOMIR'S GERMAN TEACHER

Ms Maryniuk, how important are online lessons for school pupils?

Nowadays, good online lessons are very important because the children learn a lot independently and have to repeat material that they have missed due to the war-related disruptions. In order to guarantee an effective learning experience, a good online lesson should take into account factors such as quality (teaching plan, interactivity, adaptivity) and reliability of technology.

Do the German learning offerings from the Goethe-Institut meet these standards?

All Goethe German learning options fully meet these standards because they are a good fit for the curriculum and age. I would like to recommend them wholeheartedly because they provide excellent support for teachers, pupils and their parents. The services are available globally and at any time.

How would you evaluate the school pupils' motivation?

Despite sirens wailing at night, sleepless nights, constant fear and tiredness, the children are astonishingly still very motivated and ready to learn. They have learned to be strong. They understand that, by learning, they are making their own contribution to Ukraine's future. Yesterday, a school pupil actually told me: “There

were several explosions at two o'clock in the morning and the windows were shaking. Although I was tired, I had to get up and go into the bomb shelter basement. When I got back to the flat at five o'clock, I couldn't get back to sleep.” After nights like those, I don't continue with my teaching but I talk to the children instead. Nevertheless, we want to prove that teaching can continue thanks to the support of the Goethe-Institut, the Ministry of Education and the dedication of all the teachers. I firmly believe that our Ukrainian school pupils will be capable and motivated experts in the future. ●



The conversation was guided by Dr Katharina Buck and Tatiana Pavlova. Dr Katharina Buck manages language work at the Goethe-Institut in Kyiv. Tatiana Pavlova is responsible for German educational partnerships there.



NOT FOR NOTHING

Regardless of where you live, what your language level is and what your budget is: Thanks to free online teaching, German learners all over the world can improve their knowledge in a really easy and fun way. The Goethe-Institut has developed various creative media for this which go beyond the scope of traditional textbook exercises, from apps with teaching materials and videos, podcasts and games to social media and community offerings. This makes learning German not just fun but also an opportunity to connect with others.



Online community DEUTSCH FÜR DICH

Our online community "Deutsch für dich" has been providing around 2000 free German exercises for all language levels for over ten years. Members also meet lots of other people they can practice with here. This creates a digital meeting point where people can get to know each other, chat and improve together in accordance with the motto "Most things are easier together". With around four million page views in the past year and around 570,000 members, "Deutsch für dich" is a successful format which is used all over the world, in particular by learners of German in Turkey, India, Russia, Egypt and Germany. goethe.de/deutschfuerdich

Social media LEARNING GERMAN WITH TIKTOK, INSTAGRAM AND YOUTUBE

Learning via social media is more current than ever before and is revitalising German lessons. Our YouTube channel "24h Deutsch" and our TikTok and Instagram channels "Goetheinstitut.Deutsch" familiarise users with the German language using expert knowledge and humour. Lots of tips, tricks and explanations are provided there for learners of German. This not only enables them to constantly improve their language skills but they are also exposed to Germany-specific everyday topics in an entertaining way. More than 555,000 subscribers in total on the three channels benefit from this approachable and low-threshold form of learning German. youtube.com/24hdeutsch

App with augmented reality DEUTSCHLAND. KENNEN. LERNEN.

"Deutschland. Kennen. Lernen." is a free app by the Goethe-Institut and offers young learners of German and anyone interested in Germany fascinating access to Germany and the German language from A2 level. The app contains lots of interactive exercises, information on geography and a poster with augmented reality features. The poster and the free resources for use in lessons are available to download from the website. The app is also available in other languages for users who do not speak any German. goethe.de/dkl

BUT FREE



Songs with a didactic purpose DEINE BAND

Learn German with music: This is the concept behind "Deine Band", a cooperation project with Deutsche Welle with funding from the Federal Foreign Office. This is centred around ten songs and the associated music videos by the Mannheim-based band ok.danke.tschüss. With lyrics on a wide range of topics, the songs, written for young learners of German at language level A2/B1, provide authentic access to the German language and culture. The online platform "Deutsch für dich" also offers interactive exercises on all the music videos. Worksheets are also available free of charge. goethe.de/deineband

Podcast SUPERFRAUEN

Our podcast "Superfrauen" tells stories from the lives of inspiring women from all over the world. In all their differences, they have one thing in common: They are role models. Their paths and journeys are exciting, sporty, clever or courageous. The listening texts are in German and are suitable for learners of German at various language levels. With the help of transcripts and worksheets on every podcast episode, as well as a colouring-in sheet with vocabulary, learners can repeat and go into more depth on what they have listened to. Previously, the figures who have featured in the texts have included science journalist Mai Thi Nguyen-Kim and Steffi Jones, the national football player and previous DFB Director for women's and girls football and coach for the national women's team. goethe.de/superfrauen

App LIRICA

In cooperation between the Goethe-Institut and Lirica, a large number of German music titles were prepared for learning German and made available on the Lirica app. Current songs by popular German artists provide an entertaining way of accessing the German language outside the context of textbooks. This allows users to learn vocabulary, improve their listening skills, practice grammar and enjoy music at the same time. With the help of the platform "Lirica für Lehrkräfte", German teachers have the option of integrating the app into their teaching and maintaining an overview of their pupils' learning progress. goethe.de/lirica

Online platform DIE KINDERUNI

"Why? What's that? How does that work?" - Children ask a lot of questions. They can find answers at the digital children's university "Kinderuni". The online platform is a free educational project by the Goethe-Institut and is primarily aimed at children between the ages of eight and twelve. Via "Kinderuni", they learn about various fields of science and familiarise themselves with the German language through play, whilst parents can track their child's learning progress via their own account. You do not need to speak any German to use the service: "Kinderuni" has already been translated into more than 30 languages and can therefore be used globally by beginners from various countries. goethe.de/kinderuni

OUR CLIMATE INITIATIVE IN 2024



Our aim is to become climate-neutral as an institution in Germany by 2030 and to reduce our international CO₂ footprint by at least one third in comparison to 2019. The Goethe-Institut's climate initiative is the first important step.



“The Goethe-Institut aims to work in a climate-neutral way by 2030 in Germany and internationally to reduce CO₂ emissions by one third compared to 2019. In the climate initiative, the focus was therefore on projects that support the Goethe-Institut's climate goals, which verifiably and directly reduce CO₂ emissions. The climate initiative is a fund that supports projects for more climate protection in the Goethe-Instituts worldwide. Climate protection and sustainability are key topics for the future of our work which we aim to drive forwards together. A total of 25 proposals from ten regions were submitted. Four funded projects will be implemented this year.”

Rainer Pollack, Executive Director of the Goethe-Institut

THE FOUR PROJECT CORNERSTONES OF THE 2024 CLIMATE INITIATIVE

SOLAR CELLS FOR THE ROOF AND CAR PORT

Solar cells for the roof and car port of the Goethe-Institut in Mexico: With an output of 85 kWp the institute will almost entirely be able to meet its own energy consumption needs and would be, as it already has living walls with plants and a composting facility, a completely green institute.

“SLOW TOURING”

“Slow Touring 2024” is a resource-saving concert tour by the Goethe-Institut locations in Dublin, Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris and London which enables sustainable cultural exchange between German and European musicians, explores alternative touring practices and connects local perspectives on climate change.

RENOVATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

At the Goethe-Institut in Rio de Janeiro, the renovation process is fully aligned with sustainability. Every measure needs to be implemented as sustainably as possible on site. The project is acting as an example of sustainable building in Brazil.

SOLAR PANELS AND WATER/WASTE WATER SYSTEM

“Sun and water”: With solar panels on the institute's roof and a new water/waste water system, the Goethe-Institut is implementing two sustainable infrastructure measures at the same time. In Lagos it is particularly important to build sustainably due to the high pressure on the environment, the effects of climate change with rising sea levels, water scarcity and unreliable electricity supply.



Miriam Gröning is a volunteer in the Communication Department at the headquarters of the Goethe-Institut in Munich.



The light installation "More Light" by Hans Peter Kuhn on the facade of the Goethe-Institut in Mexico is set to be operated with solar power produced in-house in the future.



PARTNER OF THE ACTION NETWORK FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN CULTURE AND MEDIA

As a new partner in the action network for sustainability, the Goethe-Institut aims to further improve its environmental actions. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide the framework for the long-standing dedication of the Goethe-Institut in the area of sustainability. With our locations in Germany and abroad, we are taking on global challenges and working at each location to develop new solutions. We are therefore making a contribution to effective foreign policy on the climate.

In 2022, we produced our first official sustainability report following the standards of the German Sustainability Code (DNK) and received the test seal. Johannes Ebert, Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut: "Sustainability requires worldwide social change. We can only learn from one another by engaging in dialogue between cultures. In this regard, culture and education open up new perspectives on sustainability and provide inspiration for society and politics. At the same time, we need to review and improve our own actions, for example with regard to our impact on the climate. The Action Network for Sustainability is an important platform for sharing experiences in the field of culture and media. We are delighted to be currently strengthening international perspectives in the network."

Jacob Sylvester Bilabel, Director of the Action Network for Sustainability: "If we want to prepare our culture to face the challenges of the future, we need to think outside the box now. That is because there is no such thing as a culture that can be

restricted to just Germany. Therefore, exchange, cooperation and learning from each other will be the focal points of our work in the coming years. On a national, international, European and ideally global basis. We are therefore really looking forward to our partnership with the Goethe-Institut to be able to address these goals together."

There are already concepts for more sustainable institutes in the following locations for example: Abidjan, Amman, Bangalore, Chennai, Dakar, New-Delhi, Mexico, Ouagadougou, Santiago de Chile, São Paulo and Seoul. In these locations, the Goethe-Institutes produce electricity from renewable sources, undergo renovations focused on energy, design institute gardens as spaces for art projects which promote biodiversity or build accessible libraries for use by the public.●

The **Action Network for Sustainability in Culture and Media** is a cross-sector point of contact for the topic of business ecology in the field of culture and media in Germany. Together with its 53 cross-sector partners, it is initiating partner projects which it provides support, evaluation and communication for. Having received funding from the German Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, for example, the Network is focusing on the topics of climate balance, energy efficiency and adapting to the consequences of climate change in culture in 2024.

BORROW INSTEAD OF BUY

Do you need musical instruments or tools? For eight years, the concept of the "Library of Things" has been proving that loaning out practical objects not only helps the environment but is also beneficial for visitors.

An ice cream machine, a record and tape digitalisation system and a sewing machine: 50 objects like these are available at the Goethe-Institut Bratislava under the categories "A journey into nature", "Do it yourself!" or "Experimenting and discovery". In 2016, the library there expanded its media offering to include the possibility of borrowing practical things. This is about the shared use of objects which are used rarely or just once. Therefore, Bratislava, as the first Goethe-Institut with a "Library of Things", is focused on increasing its sustainability and has started a movement which has even spread beyond other Goethe locations. Furthermore, those responsible for the projects have made themselves available as experts in implementing similar offerings and have advised libraries from Germany and experts from Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia in an Erasmus+ project.

After the launch in 2016, Goethe-Institut locations all over the world then followed this example from the sharing economy. The second "Library of Things" opened in Prague in 2017. In 2018, Bangkok and Bucharest followed suit, as did Tashkent a year later and then the institute in Riga after its relocation in 2021. There were more new openings of libraries of things in Santiago de Chile, Budapest, Almaty and Athens. Buenos Aires, Jakarta, Casa Blanca, Kolkata, Rabat and Warsaw also implemented the concept.

Some of the objects are as diverse as the locations themselves. In Bangkok, there is a focus on kitchen utensils such as

cake moulds, a hand mixer, kitchen scales or pancake pan available for use. The institute's Facebook page provided accompanying instructions and recipes to encourage people who do not have the relevant equipment at home to bake and visitors in Bangkok loved this idea.

Other items are also well received and some have become true "bestsellers". The popular items vary from institute to institute but some trends can be seen across the board. This includes utensils like toolboxes, sewing machines, electric drills, waffle irons and projectors. In terms of musical instruments, guitars, keyboards and ukuleles are often favourites. There is a high level of demand at lots of libraries for items such as cameras, headphones, VR goggles, bicycles, suitcases or popcorn machines too.

Despite the differences in preferences, visitors to all "Libraries of Things" seem to agree on one thing: The concept of loaning is not only beneficial for the environment and for people's personal finances but can also be motivational for trying something new.●

The text is a collection of posts from library directors at the Goethe-Institut locations mentioned in the text.

 SDGs 11, 12



At the "Library of Things" in Bratislava, visitors are not only able to borrow 50 practical everyday items but they can also attend workshops.

By bringing together audio and video art, this duo of artists in Palermo created an artistic walk that guides you past various locations in Sicily.



EUROPEAN COOPERATION

Kultur Ensembles, Franco-German cultural institutes, set an example internationally with regard to strengthening European cooperation. In the autumn of 2023, a German-French duo of artists took place in the residence programme “Atelier Panormos” by the Kultur Ensemble in Palermo. We spoke to Annika Katja Boll and Renaud Mundabi Muyanunu about their experiences there.



Renaud Mundabi Muyanunu and Annika Katja Boll at the public presentation of the work they do together in Palermo.

Can you still remember the first day of your residence in Palermo?

Annika Katja Boll: Palermo is a very active, dynamic and loud city. It drew us in from our first glance into a fascinating blend of fireworks every evening, vibrant markets and overwhelming traffic. However, for me as a visual artist who mainly works with her eyes, the hybrid architecture in Palermo quickly captured my imagination: As well as spectacular moments, it was mainly simple house facades which seemed to store their long and colourful history in their patchwork pattern of different stones and layers of materials that captured my imagination. These initial impressions shifted my previous focus from botanical research to a more archaeological interest in material constructions and stone formations, which significantly shaped the work which we created.

Renaud Mundabi Muyanunu: I remember the mountains and the old palm trees in a really bright landscape.

What impression did you get when you heard about Renaud Mundabi Muyanunu's sound art for the first time?

Boll: Renaud and I studied together at Villa Arson in Nice. We already understood each other's artistic work and the personal evolution that had led to it but we had not yet found an opportunity to bring a project to life together. At first glance, his musical work with its spherical, heavy or even threatening sounds is at odds with the aesthetics of my playful and colourful landscapes. At the same time, Renaud's work contains a stronger narrative component and my work leaves more room for interpretation. It was these contrasts that made a cooperation so interesting for us.

How were both of your styles of art able to benefit from each other?

Muyanunu: I was inspired by the conversations we had. We spoke a lot about our interpretations, impressions and personal perspectives.

Boll: The cooperation with Renaud helped me to add precision to my more abstract work on landscapes and visual systems: This led to the creation of specific places to provide a home for his compositions. At the same time his musical narrations were broken up, opened up and influenced by being embedded in my spacious, extended scenes.

When the public gets to view the end result of your work together: What exactly will they experience, see or hear?

Boll: The result of our cooperation is an interactive game. Viewers can move freely using a joystick at five different levels. Every level is inspired by a region or a precise location in Sicily, such as Etna, the sandy beach at Mondello or the Botanical Gardens in Palermo. Multiple sound landscapes are placed within each scene, which are a mixture of field recordings, recordings of traditional instruments and minimalist electronic sounds which colour the scenes with their ambience and sometimes abruptly alter the scenes. The locations create déjà vu moments for the local public and at the same time offer a visual and acoustic journey in an abstraction of the Sicilian landscape. The game aims at providing an experience of liminality, a state between confusing disorientation and pleasant aimlessness.

Muyanunu: This varies a lot from person to person, primarily because the project is intended to ask the viewer to make a

The **Atelier Panormos** - La Bottega in Palermo is the first German-French-Italian residence programme. The artists' residence provides time and space to research and work and for artistic research within the framework of German-French projects in the capital of Sicily. The residence programme was founded in 2021 and received support with curation from Chiara Parisi, Director of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, and Andrea Lissoni, Artistic Director at Haus der Kunst in Munich.



In Bishkek, the January concert in 2024 celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Aachen Treaty. The soloists Florian Schmidt-Bartha from Germany and Mathis Rochat from France played together with the State Academic Symphony Orchestra and performed pieces by European composers as well as pieces by the Kyrgyz composer Nargiza Kurmanova, who was also the conductor.

decision. They can move around the virtual space and discover the music through the landscape or vice versa.

How has the audience reacted?

Boll: Our presentation at the festival "Walls of Sound" was the first real opportunity to showcase our work outside the context of our art university. The heterogeneity of the audience was very refreshing: from children who wanted to explore the landscapes with the joystick straight after the performance and an older audience who became fascinated with new media and its computer game aesthetics to the residents of Palermo who were able to rediscover familiar places in Sicily in a digitalised world.

To what extent did the residence influence your work?

Muyanunu: It strengthened my relationship with sound recordings and my love of travel. It was an extremely interesting experience and had lots of different impressions and we met really great artists who were also connected to the residence programme.

Boll: I think it is extremely important to change the context in which you studied and in which you work from time to time. I already had this experience because I studied in Germany and France. It is amazing how different discussions and approaches to understanding art are, even within neighbouring European countries. The exchange opens up different perspectives and new opportunities, opens doors and creates lasting contacts. Primarily as a young artist, I can say that the residence period helped me to make my approach more professional.●

In 2019, the Chancellor at the time, Angela Merkel, and French President Emmanuel Macron signed a new bilateral cooperation agreement, the Aachen Treaty. One of the aspects it covered was the creation of Franco-German cultural institutes. The development of the **Kultur Ensembles** in the network of the Goethe-Institut was organised by the Goethe-Institut, the Federal Foreign Office and the French Foreign Ministry in partnership. The first Kultur Ensembles started their work in Palermo, Ramallah and Atlanta. The network was expanded in 2024 with locations in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, and Glasgow. In addition, plans for 2025 include openings in Erbil (autonomous region of Kurdistan in Iraq), with the celebratory cornerstone ceremony having already taken place, and in Córdoba in Argentina.



The interviewer was Alexander Behrmann, Print and Online Publications Officer and Deputy Head of the Communications Division.

GOETHE-INSTITUT IN EXILE

In the countries in which the Goethe-Institut has had to close its sites because of wars or censorship, spaces in which to raise objections, enter into dialogue and engage in intercultural exchange are being lost for many artists. The “Goethe-Institut in Exile” is a meeting place, a protected space and a platform for creative artists who are no longer able to work in their home countries. After focusing on Ukraine, Iran and Afghanistan, a festival for cultural creators from Belarus took place at Kunsthaus ACUD in Berlin in early 2024.

goethe.de/exil



Artistic performance by the collective #KeepMinskWeird
On 23 March 2024, the collective #KeepMinskWeird presented the musical/performance production “Смoк! Цмoк! Танzen!” at Kunsthaus ACUD in Berlin. The interactive performance, which lasted several hours, combined Belarusian mythology with queer and feminist themes.



Concert by the band KOOB

At the opening of the Belarus-Festival on 22 March 2024, singer Valeria Dele and her band KOOB performed a concert at the ACUD Club and she performed her current programme “Muravoi Travoi”. Celebrated as being a “Soul Princess” in her homeland of Belarus, her music switches up between jazz, avantgarde and soul.



Opening night at the Belarus-Festival

Guests and visitors were invited to the inner courtyard at Kunsthaus ACUD to enjoy Eastern European food and drinks and to talk to other guests.



Works exhibited at ACUD Studio

Within the framework of the interdisciplinary performance “Смoк! Цмoк! Танzen!”, visitors were able to experience selected works by the collective #KeepMinskWeird at ACUD Studio.

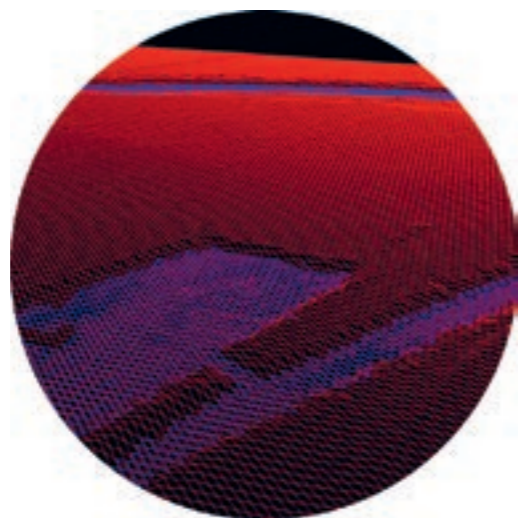
SDG 16

MAKING DIGITAL SPACES INCLUSIVE

How can digital spaces be made more inclusive? How do you ensure that new technologies promote diversity and trust in the cultural sector and do not have the opposite effect? The teams at the “C/Change” development laboratory have been working on these questions and strengthening dialogue on these issues with their vision.

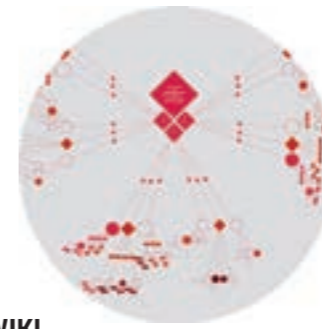
As part of the second process of the research and development laboratory “C/Change Creative R&D Lab”, five interdisciplinary project teams from all over the world who had responded to a public tender developed a vision of how cultural exchange could be made more accessible with new technologies. As a consequence, interactive digital prototypes were created from these ideas.

The 2023 intake, made up of 16 software developers, artists, researchers etc. from nine countries, took part in a six-month development phase and were supported by German experts on an advisory basis. Each of the final projects engages with a critical problem in existing digital spaces. It explores tangible alternatives for dialogue, cooperation and creativity. These ideas are becoming more and more necessary in view of the increase in global challenges in the cultural sector.



ALL POSSIBLE RIVERS

Federico Pérez Villoro, an artist and researcher who lives in Mexico City, developed “All Possible Rivers”. The computer simulation of the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo brings to life the complex interactions between water, land and politics in the border region between the USA and Mexico. On the basis of data by the US Geological Survey and scientific models of water currents, this project offers an invitation to explore possible morphologies of the river, as well as its environmental and social impacts. By creating speculative landscapes, the simulation highlights the paradox of maintaining a moving natural system as a fixed political border.



OFFLINE.WIKI

Sometimes, when transferring cultural exchange experiences into digital contexts, the various accessibility issues associated with online activities are not taken into account. “Offline.Wiki” is based on its team members’ experiences with online censorship and blocking of the internet and demonstrates a clear need for offline and hybrid systems which can support digital cultural exchange. The team from Taiwan, the Philippines and Israel (Lee Tzu-Tung, Czyka Tumaliuan and Or Zubalsky etc.) developed a wearable library on a USB stick to collect and swap practices relating to digital encryption and fundamental democratic strategies for protecting information.



MISSING OBJECTS LIBRARY

Virtual environments are increasingly being used as work, gaming and community spaces. Large 3D object platforms play an important role in the question of who is represented in digital worlds and which identities are excluded. In order to close gaps in representation, the project “Missing Objects Library” (MOL) offers an open platform with downloadable models to break through the barrier of historical gatekeeping. Jill Miller, Asma Kazmi and Kathy Wang, artists and creative technology experts from the UC Berkeley Center for New Media in the USA, are the directors of the project. The 3D model objects contained in the MOL present a critical view of existing 3D model marketplaces and cover a wide spectrum of identities, abilities and preferences.



DRAGON'S DELUSION

Rapid technological developments provide new opportunities for designing virtual spaces for cultural exchange but they also require critical engagements and a responsible approach. “Dragon's Delusion”, a prototype developed by an interdisciplinary team from the machine learning sector with participants from the USA, Great Britain and Hong Kong (Cheng Xu, KongKee, Lawman, Hanjun Dai and Yixin Wang), aims to make storytelling more democratic. In order to do so, it investigated the latest breakthroughs in generative artificial intelligence and their potential impact on how we write and share stories. The group was advised by community members and experts from the sector to find out how generative AI can make it easier for historically underrepresented communities to create stories which reflect their actual experiences.



DIGITAL RIGHTS MONOPOLY

“Digital Rights Monopoly” explores the necessity of inclusive digital spaces from another perspective. It seeks to anchor the voices and experiences of those often excluded from decision-making processes on internet policy and AI transparency. The project is led by a collective of activists for digital rights and takes the form of an interactive simulation game. Gamified elements are used to familiarise users with the challenges of digital integration. The creators of the project, Esther Mwema, Uffa Modey, Rachad Sanoussi and Hanna Pischyk, created the personas in the game in dialogue with their communities in order to anchor the simulation stories in the experiences of individuals who are normally excluded from conversations on internet policy. The developers come from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Belarus and Benin.



Noémie Njangiru is Director of the Goethe-Institut in San Francisco.

“C/Change”, a shared initiative by the Goethe-Institut in San Francisco and the community cultural incubator Gray Area, which is funded by the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, develops new visions for cultural exchange in digital spaces. The project researches the potential of new technologies for a more inclusive way of designing cultural exchange and new forms of learning. Since its launch in 2021, C/Change has, for example, started a creative research and development laboratory, the digital magazine for inclusive technology and design “Signals” and lots of community workshops. Via the network of the Goethe-Institut, German tech experts were connected with experts globally thanks to hybrid programmes and local workshops. cchange.xyz

FOR EVERYONE TO BENEFIT

Lots of AI-based applications are developed by teams that are not very diverse. As a result, the needs of small or marginalized groups are often not taken into account. The two winning teams of “AI2Amplify” present the ideas they have come up with to counteract these issues.



Maryanne Emomeri (Kenya) and Ankit Tripathi (Czechia/India) from the winning team “Masiko” developed a hearing aid for deaf people.

MASIKO

(Maryanne Emomeri and team)

How did you feel when you found out that “Masiko” was selected to be developed into a prototype?

At first we couldn't believe it. We hadn't even dared to dream about being one of two winning teams out of 800 applicants.

What problem does “Masiko” aim to solve?

“Masiko” is an aid which is intended to improve the independence of deaf people. It makes users aware of dangerous situations using tactile and visual warnings. The application can reduce mental stress that people with disabilities currently still have to experience, improve their self-worth and make them more independent.

How did you become aware of this problem?

Maryanne once lived with someone deaf. Suddenly a fire alarm

went off and everyone that heard it evacuated the building. However, the deaf individual was on the phone and didn't hear it. Luckily, they were able to warn her. But what would have happened if she had been alone in her room?

How does your prototype work?

The core aspect of the prototype is artificial intelligence. It is a sound classifier that can distinguish between everyday sounds like doorbells, traffic noise or sirens. But there is also a chatbot that can generate emergency calls. We are working on a further personalisation function to allow users to record sounds and assign them to categories they have created themselves.

How does “Masiko” differ from previous aids for deaf people?

The model's larger dataset was further expanded using the latest developments from LLM-driven bots. LLM stands for large language models. This function did not exist in the past and, thanks to scientific progress, we are now able to offer it in an

increasingly efficient format. In addition, previous aids, for example in Ghana, Kenya and most Asian countries in which supportive technology is not covered by insurance, costed a lot of money. Our product is intended to provide the functions via a relatively cost-effective subscription model.

AI4GOOD

(Armir Celiku and Sadhli Roomy)

What problem does “AI4Good” aim to solve?

Roomy: We wanted to tackle the stigma of menstruation in Bangladesh. It is the result of the cultural and religious dogmas of patriarchal societies. In lots of countries, menstruating women and girls are considered unclean. In rural areas, there have even been cases where families have locked their daughters away in sheds.

Celiku: Our “Menstrual Health” chatbot is intended to support non-governmental organisations in providing clean water, sanitary facilities and hygiene products, as WaterAid already does, and in increasing the awareness amongst the 54 million menstruating women in the country of how to tackle this topic properly.

How did you become aware of this problem?

Celiku: A team colleague who already had experience with WaterAid told us about the challenges that women face due to the stigmatisation of menstruation and lack of information in Bangladesh.

How does your prototype work?

Roomy: On the basis of a language model, the chatbot answers questions about menstruation health and hygiene in Bengali. It is designed for adolescent girls aged 12 to 17 years. When testing and disseminating this solution, WaterAid Bangladesh was an important partner.

Celiku: Our chatbot is used on WhatsApp which means that no installation or additional technical capabilities are required. Anyone who needs reliable and specific information about menstrual health can access it in just a few clicks.

What are the benefits of “AI4Good” compared to in-person or telephone advice?

Celiku: Artificial intelligence, in this case the large language model.

Roomy: Our product is significantly better in terms of scalability than in-person and telephone advice. The main reason for this is that these systems are based on people who have limited capacity. In addition, implementation in low-income countries where our product needs to be used is very expensive. Therefore, our chatbot is the better option and international development and governmental organisations can use it.

Do you have a different perspective on artificial intelligence now?

Celiku: For me, the “AI2Amplify” fellowship demonstrated the potential of AI. AI is not just a theoretical concept but a tool which promotes cooperation between like-minded people. I realised that I can do good by dedicating my time to it.

Roomy: We realised that there is still a lot to do in order to tailor various artificial intelligence solutions to the circumstances in

the global south. We still have a long journey ahead of us and we hope that our project will be a source of inspiration for cross-border cooperation to develop useful AI products for the good of the community as a whole. ●

“AI2Amplify” was a project funded by the Federal Foreign Office and implemented and coordinated by the Goethe-Institut with the aim of expanding discourse about artificial intelligence with diverse voices. In particular, actors from the global south and participation of a diverse range of marginalised groups were strengthened. As such, various coders entered into dialogue and developed new ideas for inclusive AI applications in teams. A panel selected “Masiko” and “AI4Good” as the two projects to be developed into prototypes. The panel was made up of various German partner organisations, such as the German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence, either as speakers or advisors. goethe.de/ai2amplify



The interviewer was Sina Bahr, a volunteer in the Communication Department at the headquarters of the Goethe-Institut in Munich.

Sadhli Roomy (Bangladesh) and Armir Celiku (North Macedonia) from the winning team “AI4Good” developed a chatbot for education about menstruation in Bangladesh.



CULTURAL EXCHANGE IS A STRENGTH

Working together and learning from one another. In 2023, film manager Gaga Chkheidze from Georgia, curator and dramatic adviser Yi-Wei Keng from Taiwan and the curator collective from OFF-Biennale Budapest were awarded the Goethe medal.



“In April 1991, Georgia declared its independence from the Soviet Union. At that time, I never could have imagined that, 32 years later, we would once again be at risk of the country being occupied by Russia. But, in Georgia, a new generation is currently being heard, which has grown up in the pluralist, democratic society. They will not accept suppression of freedom of opinion and repression in the cultural sphere.”

Gaga Chkheidze



Art and science are characterised by ambiguity. They can't do a great deal with unambiguousness on the other hand, especially in times of crisis. "The goal is to defend artists' and intellectuals' individual rights to freedom from state attacks as well as against overpowering moral exploitation by society," said Carola Lentz, President of the Goethe-Institut, in her speech at the celebration event for the award of the Goethe medals in Weimar. Film manager Gaga Chkheidze from Georgia, curator and dramatic adviser Yi-Wei Keng from Taiwan and the curator collective from OFF-Biennale Budapest from Hungary were awarded this official badge of honour from the Federal Republic of Germany.

Left: The prize-winners of the Goethe Medal 2023 after it was awarded (from left to right): Gaga Chkheidze, Yi-Wei Keng and Nikolett Eröss and Hajnalka Somogyi from the curator collective of the OFF-Biennale Budapest with the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, Tobias Lindner, the Mayor of the City of Weimar, Peter Kleine, and Carola Lentz, President of the Goethe-Institut, Johannes Ebert, Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut and Rainer Pollack, Commercial Director of the Goethe-Institut.

Ulrich Gregor, film historian and founder of Kino Arsenal also praised Gaga Chkheidze and spoke highly of his dedication to Georgian cinema: "Gaga Chkheidze has made groundbreaking achievements in forging relationships between Georgia and Germany, in developing Georgian cinema and film culture in Georgia." Chkheidze was born in Georgia in 1957. After studying German at Tbilisi State University, he completed his degree at the Faculty of Literature and Art at the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena. In 2000, Chkheidze founded the Tbilisi International Film Festival in Georgia to show the Georgian audiences films which had been made in Georgia as well as all over the world.

The dramaturg and professor of dramaturgy, Christoph Lepschy, described the prize-winner Yi-Wei Keng as follows in his laudatory speech: "With deep roots locally and with an excellent network, open to the world and interested in the world, dedicated to helping society, with an extraordinarily diverse range of interests and yet a pragmatic approach, with a confident view of what is possible [...] Under his leadership, the Taipei Arts Festival is becoming a place of global dialogue." Yi-Wei Keng, born

in 1969 in Taiwan, moved to Prague to study non-verbal theatre after completing his studies in philosophy. In 1999, he returned to Taiwan and became the artistic director of the Taipei Arts Festival in 2012. Since 2018, Yi-Wei Keng has also worked as a dramatic adviser at the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts in South Taiwan. Since 2023, he has been responsible for the Taiwan Arts Festival and uses this to create access to German and international culture, even beyond the capital.

In her laudatory speech, art historian and curator Susanne Pfeffer praised the curator collective of OFF-Biennale Budapest for their unique approach as an independent organisation, acting without any state funding, because a “civil society that lives up to this name remains reliant on the independence of its institutions, as well as its sciences and arts.” The OFF-Biennale Budapest started as a “garage biennial” to provide a platform for artists in

exchange with civil society. Back in its first year, this art exhibit drew in a great deal of international attention. The collective behind the OFF-Biennale is made up of a total of six curators.

During the festival, state minister Tobias Lindner said: “Cultural exchange is a strength. Firstly, because it brings people together and, secondly, because it makes constructive dialogue possible when people work together and learn from one another.” That is exactly why we need art and science to be free.●



Alexander Behrmann is the Deputy Director of the Communication Department at the headquarters of the Goethe-Institut in Munich.



“I was born in a small town from which you could see the Pacific Ocean. I loved watching the water and imagined how it might look on the other side. Germany is the ocean for me, the other side. It gives me the freedom to create an image myself. Freedom is independence of thought. I like German culture but not because I want to be German. I am Taiwanese. I like Germany because it gives me the opportunity to think about who I am. That is where freedom starts. Freedom means having the courage to encounter others.”

Yi-Wei Keng



“Friendship enables an open and attentive dialogue, even on difficult issues that affect Europe and beyond. The difficulty of being honest with ourselves can only go hand in hand with the challenge of adopting new points of view and perspectives. We want to use this time to celebrate this honesty, this openness and vulnerability because it lays the foundation for empathy, trust, care and, actually, friendship, a solid basis for our hard-won democracy.”

Hajnalka Somogyi and Nikolett Eröss

Since 1955, the Goethe-Institut has been awarding the **Goethe Medal** once a year as an official award from the Federal Republic of Germany. The Goethe Medal is awarded to individuals from all over the world who have done outstanding work to promote the German language and international cultural exchange. The Goethe Medal is the most important award in the foreign cultural policy of the Federal Republic of Germany. Those honoured, of whom there are over 300, include: Daniel Barenboim, David Cornwell alias John le Carré, Ágnes Heller, Jorge Semprún, Robert Wilson, Neil MacGregor, Helen Wolff, Juri Andruchowytsh, Irina Scherbakowa, Shirin Neshat, Ariane Mnouchkine, Yoko Tawada, Dogan Akhanli and Tali Nates. The festival’s music programme was developed in cooperation with the University of Music Franz Liszt Weimar. The film portraits were produced by Deutsche Welle in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut. goethe.de/goethe-medaille

DISTINGUISHED: KLAUS-VON-BISMARCK PRIZE-WINNERS

Every year, the Klaus von Bismarck Award is given to outstanding employees of the Goethe-Institut who promote its mission and purpose through their professional and personal commitment. In 2023, the award was won by two long-standing colleagues from programme and language work in Cairo and Nairobi.



Ghada El-Sherbiny has been working at the Goethe-Institut in Cairo for 34 years, initially in the library and then in cultural programme work. Egypt has undergone a huge amount of change in this period of time. Under the framework conditions, which have fluctuated a great deal, Ghada El-Sherbiny has stood up for relations between Germany and Egypt time and time again and has used a high level of intercultural sensitivity to do so. Whenever a rapid and comprehensive assessment was required, she remained composed, focused on dialogue and was able to reduce pressure in difficult situations. Thanks to her many years of experience, she was able to provide trustworthy recommendations on opportunities and limitations with regard to cultural work in Egypt. As such, she makes an invaluable contribution to designing and implementing large projects such as “Media and Science” or “Un|controlled Gestures”.



Meshack Muendo Mulundi has been working at the Goethe-Institut in Nairobi in the department for language courses and examinations for 30 years. As a professional in the field of education and further education, he has contributed to the professionalisation of teaching activities at Goethe-Institut sites in the Sub-Saharan Africa region and has developed a network of local contacts. He has been the regional contact for digital learning since 2005. His contribution to the regional implementation of the Goethe-Institut's digital strategy is noteworthy: Before the coronavirus pandemic, there were only two Goethe-Institut locations in the region which offered digital language courses and only around 200 digital course attendees. Thanks to Meshack Muendo Mulundi's work, all 13 Goethe-Institut locations in the region became able to offer digital language courses within the space of a few weeks.

The **Klaus von Bismarck Award** is given in recognition of local employees who have promoted the purposes of the Goethe-Institut through their outstanding professional work over many years or have served it particularly well in unusual situations. The award was set up in 1991 by the President of the Goethe-Institut at the time, Klaus von Bismarck. Since then, the board has honoured two employees from the worldwide network of the Goethe-Institut every year.

A SELECTION OF JUST FOUR

Listening to the Goethe-Institut. Globally, the Goethe-Institut locations produce podcasts on a variety of topics and in many languages. We are pleased to showcase four of them for you.



POPCAST

People who want to get to know the German music scene better outside of the charts, should listen to “Popcast”, a cooperation with Zündfunk, the scene magazine by the Bayerischer Rundfunk. Various new pieces of music are presented every month from the areas of rock, pop, hip hop or electro.



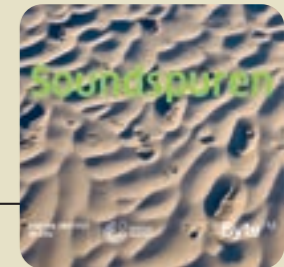
RISCA FACA

“Risca faca” by the Goethe-Institut in Brazil is aimed at art lovers who wish to find out more about contemporary art in the global South. Music, literature, dance or circus: The podcast offers up a panoramic view of Brazilian artistic production. Artists from various regions talk to each other and cover their views on decolonial, feminist or social/environmental perspectives on justice.



PRESS START!

How do you develop a game with a social message? What are things like for women in the gaming industry? How can games with serious topics be successfully marketed too? The “PRESS START!” podcast by the Goethe-Institut in Indonesia invites listeners to discover various aspects of the world of game development with experts from Germany and Indonesia.



SOUNDSPUREN

The “Soundspuren” series, created in cooperation with ByteFM, is all about cultural artists in exile. It is about daily life, culture and music in regions in which cultural centres like the Goethe-Institut have had to close due to precarious security situations or censorship. Creative artists and cultural professionals from Sudan, Syria, Belarus and other countries tell stories from their home countries and from their current lives in Germany.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Meetings between people create trust. They make it possible to develop common positions or reflect different attitudes to build mutual understanding and trust. Sometimes we also come across individuals whom you might know.



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- 1 Federal Chancellor **Olaf Scholz** in conversation with the artist **Tetiana Malinovska** (right), who produced the "Lacuna" exhibition in Potsdam as part of her Martin Roth Scholarship.
- 2 Carola Lentz, President of the Goethe-Institut, meets **Charlotte Knobloch** (left), President of the Jewish Cultural Community in Munich.
- 3 Johannes Ebert, Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut, with the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office **Tobias Lindner** (left) and the Chair of the Sub-Committee for Foreign Cultural and Educational Policy **Michelle Müntefering** at the "Goethe-Institut in Exile" with a country focus on Belarus.
- 4 The author **Judith Schalansky** (second from the left) at her "Future Library" manuscript handover in Oslo, with initiator **Katie Paterson** (left), the Crown Princess of Norway **Mette-Marit** and the author of the "Future Library" manuscript in 2020 **Ocean Vuong** (right).
- 5 **Svenja Schulze** (centre), Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, visits the German-Jordanian Centre for Labour Mobility with **Nadia Abdel Ra'ouf Rawabdeh** (left), Minister for Labour from Jordan, and Christian Diemer (right), Director of the Goethe-Institut in Jordan.
- 6 Foreign Minister **Annalena Baerbock** with the Deputy Director of the Goethe-Institut in the Philippines, Jens Rösler, discussing skilled worker cooperation.
- 7 Director **Christian Petzold** (centre) at the premiere of his film "Roter Himmel" in Seoul, with the Director of the Goethe-Institut in Korea, Clemens Treter (left), and the German Ambassador in Korea, **Georg Schmidt** (right).
- 8 President of the Federal Republic of Germany **Frank-Walter Steinmeier** (second from left), Federal Minister of Labour **Hubertus Heil** (right) and **Jochen Flasbarth**, State Secretary in the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, at the Goethe-Institut in Hanoi at an event on the topic of skilled worker qualification, together with Oliver Brandt, Director of the Goethe-Institut in Hanoi.
- 9 Writer **Robert Menasse** at the presentation of his novel "Die Erweiterung" at the Representative Office of the State of Hesse in Brussels to which the Goethe-Institut in Brussels invited guests together with the Ministry of State for Federal and European Affairs for Hesse and the Austrian Cultural Forum in Brussels.
- 10 Film discussion with the actress **Isabelle Huppert** (left) about Werner Schroeter's "Malina" as part of the "Kopfkino" series by the Goethe-Institut in Paris.

GERMANY



12
institutes



57,172
language course participants



100,207
examination entrants



60
cultural events



3,865,684
visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally?

Lack of skilled workers is a topic on everybody's lips in Germany and lots of people are hopeful that the skilled worker immigration law will be an important turning point. The Goethe-Institut locations in Germany are working, with a focus on corporate customers, on tailoring qualification programmes to international skilled workers in the knowledge that acquiring good language skills is one of the keys to participation in society. However, the upcoming state elections in Germany are cause for concern that the open environment could change.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

Projects such as "APAL" exchange partnerships with schools in Latin America have a positive tone. After a year of intense negotiations between the Goethe-Institut locations in Brazil and Göttingen with University Medical Center Göttingen and the Federal Employment Agency, the first trainees from Brazil have now arrived. At the Goethe-Institut in Göttingen, they are completing their B2 language course to examination stage whilst spending practical days at the clinic before their training period starts.

What areas has the region focused on?

We have reached the first milestone of our plan of measures for achieving a more sustainable way of doing business. We have implemented the minimum standards for environmental sustainability, which were agreed together and are binding for all institutes in Germany, and we have carried out numerous activities over the year, from energy-saving measures to organising events in a way which minimises our use of resources.

What moments were particularly memorable?

Fighting right-wing extremism, antisemitism, racism and antiziganism in Germany was the most important goal of the centres for international cultural education between 2021 and 2023. The centre in Schwäbisch Hall had to deal with the developments and impacts of racism and right-wing extremism in a rural context in October 2023. During the project "Land.schaf(f)t.Vielfalt?", various formats for dialogue on the topics of discrimination and violence from the far right focused on the region of Hohenlohe. The project was completed in December 2023 with a moderated excursion dedicated to the question of where colonialist, antisemitic and nationalist thought was visible architecturally and in terms of urban planning. At the end of 2023, the five centres in Hamburg, Mannheim, Schwäbisch Hall, Bonn and Dresden unfortunately had to cease operations as their funding ran out.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

In 2024, the central customer service department for the Goethe-Institut locations in Germany will start its operations. The establishment of this department marks the end of one of the largest transformation projects in the region. In future, the employees working at this service department will take responsibility for providing information and advice on language courses and examinations, as well as administration for course and examination participants, for all the institutes in Germany. Again, at the Goethe-Institut in Dresden, restructuring is planned for the period from 2024 to 2026 with the goal of implementing modernisation alongside measures to reduce CO₂ emissions.



Constanze Michel has been Regional Director Germany since 2018. From 2015 to 2018 she was Director of the Language Department with a regional focus in Germany.



top: With "Land.schaf(f)t.Vielfalt?", the Goethe-Institut Schwäbisch Hall provided various opportunities for discussion on the topics of discrimination, racism and right-wing violence in rural communities, including workshops, open debates and a podium session with experts.

bottom: Together with the participants of the "APAL" programme from Brazil, a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut in Göttingen was held. Rainer Pollack (right), Commercial Director of the Goethe-Institut, and Constanze Michel, Regional Director Germany (not shown), attended the anniversary event.

CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE



9 institutes



10,725 language course participants



15,496 examination entrants



1,367 cultural events



60,012 library visits



1,754,394 visits to country portals



Sonja Griegaschewski has been Director Central Eastern Europe since November 2021.

What are people currently concerned about locally?

As borders are shared with Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus, the ongoing war sparked by Russia's attack on Ukraine continues to overshadow everyday life. European security policy remains a crucial topic and economic difficulties and high inflation are affecting the majority of the population. After the pandemic, the cultural and educational sectors have recovered, despite significant financial challenges. Festivals, cultural centres, and educational institutions are well attended, and the desire to gather in person is clear.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

Media literacy, diversity, sustainability, and literature remain important topics and were highlighted in our EU projects such as "Debate not Argue," "Perspectives," "Cycle Up!" (Prague), the "Grüne Bibliothek" (Warsaw), "Art as Evidence" (Bratislava), and the regional networking trip on "Contemporary Jewish Culture(s) in Germany" (Vilnius). With around three million people learning German in this region, another focus was to strengthen learning opportunities. This included initiatives such as the Poland-wide image campaign "#deutschbewegt," the scholarship program "Dr. Inez Lember" for Estonian language course attendees in Germany, and the expansion of "Deutsch Plus" to 24 schools in Czechia.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The final event in the "GDR Stories" series at the Goethe-Institut Prague featured the 93-year-old German-Czech diplomat and bridge-builder František Černý, just three months before his passing. In an era of rising illiberal tendencies, the recent election results in Poland sent a positive signal, greatly revitalizing the potential of our partnerships. The 25th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut in Vilnius and the 30th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut in Riga were celebrated, highlighting our successful and close partnerships with both Baltic countries. Slovenia was the guest of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair and was supported by a comprehensive programme of events in both countries. At the end of the year, the Spanish Instituto Cervantes became a co-tenant at the Goethe-Institut in Slovenia, marking the second shared space of its kind globally.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

Through "filmED", an EU-funded education programme, several thousand school children in Central and Southeastern Europe will be able to expand their knowledge of European film. The regional project "Digital Remembrance" strengthens the role of digital media in the context of cultural memory work. In 2024, German-language literature was the Guest of Honour at the Prague Book Fair. On the 100th anniversary of Franz Kafka's death, a range of activities took place, including the launch of the video game "Playing Kafka". In 2024, the Goethe-Institut in Estonia celebrates its 25th anniversary, alongside activities with the European Capital of Culture in Tartu.



top: At the oral history conversation, "Die schönste Aufgabe" at the Goethe-Institut in Prague, moderator Zuzana Lizcová guided the audience through an evening full of memories together with guests, Jochen Bloss (right), Founding Director of the Goethe-Institut in Prague, and František Černý (left), former Czech Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.

bottom: The conference, "Debate not Argue: How to make it happen?" in Dresden was part of the European project "Debate not Argue", which aims to create an environment in which opinions and experiences can be exchanged and discussed without arguments. Under the leadership of the Goethe-Institut, participants from six countries, including Poland, Lithuania, and Czechia, were part of the discussion.

NORTH AFRICA / MIDDLE EAST



16
institutes



23,256
language course participants



103,642
examination entrants



1,730
cultural events



124,305
library visits



3,180,987
visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally?

Economic crises and ongoing armed conflicts are leading to a great deal of uncertainty and migration of refugees. Since war broke out, around 8.2 million Sudanese refugees are on the move inside and outside the country. The brutal attack by Hamas on 7 October 2023 is still troubling the world; more than 1.9 million Palestinians inside the Gaza strip are refugees now, 35,000 have lost their lives and the humanitarian catastrophe is indescribable; over 100 Israeli hostages are still believed to be held by Hamas. There is a sense of shock, not only in the Israeli and Palestinian populations but throughout the region. The political and social atmosphere remains tense and our employees and partners have also been affected by this. However, as well as frustration and disappointment, there is also a feeling of hope that one's own work can contribute to improving the situation.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

Due to the war and its impact, it is not been possible for us to implement projects as planned and projects have had to be rethought in lots of locations in the region. With projects in Libya and Yemen, we also work in countries in which we do not have a physical institute. For example, with both projects "Cultural Networks Yemen" and "Yemen Creative Hubs", funded by the Federal Foreign Office and the European Union, we are supporting the Yemeni cultural scene. Together with the Martin Roth Initiative, we have also been able to create the "Sudan Hub for Artists", which, as well as providing scholarships for 50 Sudanese cultural artists in Sudan, Egypt and East Africa, has also organised exhibitions and concerts in Cairo and Berlin with Sudanese creatives. We have been able to continue this in 2024 and add an additional hub for refugee artists from Gaza in Cairo and for Yemeni artists in Amman.

What are the biggest challenges?

It is not an easy task but it is more important than ever before that we keep talking to each other, to our partners locally and remain in dialogue with Germany, even if opinions differ.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The arrival of employees from Sudan and from Gaza, who had been forced to flee the violence - these were really moving moments on a human level.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

We are really looking forward to the third edition of our dance project "Un|controlled Gestures", which will be taking place in the summer at the Hebbel am Ufer theatre in Berlin. As part of the regional project "Diversity in Children's Books", we aim to promote diversity in children's literature and raise the cultural awareness of young readers. In addition, in 2024, the project "Media Labs" will receive funding from the Federal Foreign Office and the platform "Sikka" will go online to document social and political transformation processes in Sudan. In Egypt, we are looking forward to a milestone in bilateral cooperation on education: The Egyptian president has asked for 100 Egyptian-German schools to be set up. Germany and Egypt agreed on the plans on 7 March 2024.



Lilli Kobler has been managing the North Africa/Middle East region since September 2023.



top: The "Global Project Culture and Creative Economy", funded by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, is, in particular, aimed at strengthening cultural scenes in countries such as South Africa, Senegal or Lebanon. It is divided up into lots of local projects. As such, in Iraq, the "Design Academy Iraq" was launched as a study opportunity and support was provided for setting up a creative studio.

bottom: At the concert "Beethoven under the stars" in Tunis, young musicians performed works by German composers to the Les Solists group under the night sky in the Goethe-Institut's garden.

NORTH AMERICA



11
institutes



10,096
language course participants



21,516
examination entrants



1,196
cultural events



9,893
library visits



1,294,232
visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally?

Some consider the 2024 elections in the USA to be a debate on questions of culture and cultures. Naturally, it is about the economy and security but also topics that the Goethe-Institut focuses on: diversity, gender equality and social cohesion. These aspects are all extremely tense in the USA at the moment. In Canada, the debates appear to be more relaxed, whereas in Mexico and Central America, questions of social justice are focal points and Cuba is battling major economic issues, which are also impacting the cultural scene.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

In view of funding being limited, the region is concentrating on the focal points of fairness in society, migration and social change, as well as memory cultures: The region not only tackles these subjects in the new online magazine "gegenüber" but also at events, for example the Rosenstrasse protest, in the context of the film festivals Berlin and Beyond in San Francisco, German Currents in Los Angeles and Semana de Cine in Mexico, as well as part of the "Transatlantic Outreach Program", which has been running for over 20 years, for history and social studies teachers or as part of the "German American Partnership Program", which networks schools across the USA with Germany. The initiative "Ready for the German labour market" was launched very successfully in Mexico.

What are the biggest challenges?

In Canada and the USA, it is about creating interest among the young generation in Germany and its language, whereas this is easier in Mexico. The programme work can also achieve a country-wide impact there. In the USA, it is possible to impact large areas, at least in the educational sector, via digital language learning opportunities, multipliers, exchange programmes and networks. The cultural events are more location-based and funding is often not sufficient to expand the reach of events.

What moments were particularly memorable?

As part of a network meet-up of the cultural societies of Central America: the energy, dedication and significant interest in Germany in the countries which are often paid less attention on the continent. During the US foreign language conference "American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)", the major value that educational institutions placed on the Goethe-Institut.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

We are looking forward to the hybrid series "Foreign Correspondent" on topics such as freedom, feminism or wokeness, to the migrant literature festival "No where - now here" and to the reopening of the institutes in San Francisco and Chicago. We are hoping for political and financial support to continue the successful lines of work in the educational sphere. And we hope that the German-French cultural institute in Atlanta, also known as the Kultur Ensemble, which is unique in this form worldwide, will become even more visible.



Klaus Krischok has been managing the North America region from the regional institute in Washington since 2023.



top: In Mexico, in 2023 the **Deutsche Filmwoche** was celebrating its 22nd anniversary. The highlights of German cinema, from classic to contemporary ones, were shown at various locations in Mexico. The musician Ximena Sariñana performed at the opening of the film week.

bottom: In order to qualify for the **Internationale Deutscholympiade 2024** in Göttingen, young people from all over Canada showcased their German knowledge at the Goethe-Institut in Montreal. One group, for example, exhibited a sketch on the topic of education for young and old.

NORTHWESTERN EUROPE



9
institutes



5,976
language course participants



10,512
examination entrants



1,065
cultural events



13,540
library visits



894,252
visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally?

In a year shaped by international crises and conflicts, the ongoing war in Ukraine prompted Finland and Sweden to join NATO. In many countries in the region, we observed a political shift to the right which also influenced cultural scenes. Although initiatives such as the reactivated UK-Germany Cultural Commission created hope for relations to improve, the consequences of Brexit made our work more difficult.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

The topic of decoloniality was given a forum with two residencies and the series "Lives of Objects: Virtual Gatherings". Together with University College London and the British Council, the Goethe-Institut in London established a consortium, tasked by the English Department for Education to promote and grow German as a foreign language in English state schools as part of the new "Gimagine" initiative. "Living in a Quantum State" evolved into "Studio Quantum", which explored the impacts of quantum technologies via artist residencies, a programme of events and a final overview at the end of 2024. The Goethe-Institut in Denmark hosted a multi-part German-French project dedicated to Copenhagen being named the "World Capital of Architecture". The "Inspire Rotterdam Residency" explored the role of art in violent conflicts and supported an emotional performance by Ukrainian artists in exile in front of the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

What are the biggest challenges?

The Israel-Hamas war represents a challenge for cultural work and divides opinions, which has led to events and cooperations being cancelled. The internal transformation process is leading to wide-reaching decisions for the region.

What moments were particularly memorable?

Interdisciplinary events on modern history, such as panel discussions on the GDR and "Kindertransport" to Great Britain shortly before the Second World War, were moving for an intergenerational audience. The Goethe-Institut locations in Helsinki and Stockholm celebrated their 60th anniversaries. In Glasgow, the 50th anniversary of the institute was celebrated with a view to the new German-French cultural collaboration with the Alliance Française.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

An authors' residence in Stavanger, a new "Curator in Residence" programme in Copenhagen and "Studio Quantum". The third year of "Cultural Bridge" will fund 20 German-British cultural cooperations. The Goethe-Institut in Stockholm and its partners are implementing the project "Your Language Counts" by Erasmus+ to provide funding for lessons in their native language as a model of inclusive school development in Europe. With "Vorzeichen. Whom, What and How We Read", we explore canonisation processes in literature. As part of "Slow Touring", musicians travel from Goethe-Institut locations in Western Europe to Ireland by train and ferry in the interest of sustainability and work together with local artists.



Dr Katharina von Ruckteschell-Katte has been Regional Director Northwest Europe since 2018. Before that, she was active in the same role in South American and Sub-Saharan Africa.



top: How unstable are promises of protection in times of crisis and catastrophes? As part of the two-day cultural programme "In Need of Protection", artists from Germany, Sweden and Ukraine endeavoured to answer this question through their art. Their work was exhibited in Stockholm for the 60th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut in Sweden.

bottom: "Studio Quantum" is an international events and residency programme at the Goethe-Institut which investigates the role of art in the context of new quantum technologies. The residency artists for 2023 were showcased at the event "Studio Quantum Launch" in Dublin. Anna Job (left), project director at the Goethe-Institut in Ireland, spoke to Kennedy+swan, an artistic team made up of Bianca Kennedy and Felix Kraus (Swan Collective), who engage with the future of evolution.

EAST ASIA



9
institutes



12,734
language course participants



56,973
examination entrants



822
cultural events



136,511
library visits



1,475,479
visits to country portals



Dr. Clemens Treter has been Regional Director East Asia since autumn 2022. Previously he worked for over six years for the Goethe-Institut in China.

What are people currently concerned about locally?

In East Asia, it is also clear that people feel we are living in a time of radical change. The large number of wars and conflicts, the economic challenges, and the perspectives on the uncertain election results in the USA are challenging people's fundamental optimism.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

The performance project "Urban Walks" brought together artists from all over East Asia. In exchange with experts from Germany, they developed analogue and digital exploration tours through the city landscapes of Tainan, Shanghai, and Ulan Bator. With "Memorabilia - The Art of Memory," the Goethe-Institut in Tokyo showcased works that demonstrate how artists process trauma and provide space for a present which allows us to be vigilant when it comes to the future. At the Goethe-Institut in Seoul, we launched the "Lucky Supper Club," which offers Korean partners an opportunity to discuss controversial topics. Once again, the communication challenges posed by social media are the subject matter of the project "Facts and Contexts Matter," which the Goethe-Institut locations in Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Taiwan are implementing together with the Federal Agency for Civic Education.

What are the biggest challenges?

How people see Germany is changing. The rise of right-wing extremism and the debate on the removal of cultural offerings in the context of the conflict in the Middle East are viewed critically in East Asia. Teaching the German language is not becoming easier, especially considering the great deal of trust placed in the technical possibilities for translation.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The director Christian Petzold visited Asia for the first time to present his film "Roter Himmel" in Seoul during a retrospective. In Taipei, the role of women as authors and producers in the gaming scene was the focal point of "Female Protagonists." Another striking event was the performance of the Mongolian-European youth jazz orchestra Blue Sky Messengers in Ulan Bator.

What significance does the Goethe-Institut's work have in China and Hong Kong?

The Goethe-Institut is one of the few actors that still provides a platform for free artists in China. For example, the long-term project "Theatertreffen@Goethe-Institut China" provides access to new material and a chance to discuss social topics. In Shanghai, the focal point is on the uncensored presentation of international video art. The residencies of German artists in China, which have been possible again since 2023, also show the huge power of inspiration that can be created with a longer-term residence in a foreign country perceived as impenetrable. In Hong Kong, we focus on events such as the art prize "Colours of Humanity" and the topics of diversity, equality, and inclusion of "Lumbung@Goethe" to provide space for a cultural scene which is under pressure.



top: As part of "Spaziergänge in der Stadt - Urban Walks", a project by the Goethe-Institut locations in East Asia, walking in urban spaces becomes an artistic/aesthetic experience thanks to digital tools. Seven art projects, including in Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo, provided an invitation to city walking tours which offered more to discover than just the physical location. At the event "Beijing City Park Strolling Project", some content was tested with the first participants.

bottom: The Blue Sky Messengers are a European-Mongolian youth jazz orchestra which brings together young musicians from five countries and was founded by EUNIC Mongolia. In 2023, the orchestra played several concerts, including at the Fat Cat Jazz Club in Ulan Bator.

EASTERN EUROPE / CENTRAL ASIA



8 institutes



18,921 language course participants



49,479 examination entrants



1,187 cultural events



90,716 library visits



2,206,935 visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally?

The war continues to define the lives of the Ukrainian people. The cultural sector is of vital importance for the social reform process in Ukraine. Partners from cultural and educational organisations are continuing to deliver their programmes despite all the obstacles they are facing. Decolonial debates are present in Kazakhstan and especially relate to questions concerning the country's linguistic identity. However, the environmental situation is also of concern for Kazakhstan, which is highly affected by environmental conditions. The cultural landscape in Russia has changed dramatically. Hundreds of artists have gone into exile, censorship and repression have worsened in Russia and contact with Western countries has been significantly reduced.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

In 2023, we continued to make a significant contribution to strengthening the resilience of the Ukrainian educational and cultural sector. As part of this, around 60 cultural organisations received support and projects were implemented to fight disinformation campaigns. In close cooperation with the Ukrainian Ministry of Education, comprehensive and innovative teaching material for digital teaching of German as a foreign language was produced for use by Ukrainian secondary schools. With "Creative Compass Georgia", a four-year project co-financed by the EU and the Goethe-Institut in Georgia was launched to support sustainable growth and employment in the Georgian cultural and creative economy. The project supports cities and communities outside Tbilisi and highlights pathways to economic activity for artists and cultural creators. The Goethe-Institut in Kazakhstan has been working together with the Goethe-Institut in Ukraine on the cross-border project "Dis-Solutions" to engage in current decolonial debates.

What moments were particularly memorable?

Seeing the delight of visitors to the ten-year anniversary of the international children's and youth film festival "Shum Bola" in Uzbekistan. The discussions as part of the project "Geschichten vom Schwarzen Meer - Black Sea Lit" with ten authors from Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania and Ukraine, for example at the International Literature Festival in Berlin. But also: The Goethe-Institute locations in Russia had to let the majority of their employees go due to a cap on the number of employees imposed by Russia. Parting from long-standing colleagues was a very painful process.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

The opening of the Goethe-Institut in Yerevan and the opening of the German-French cultural institute called "Kultur Ensemble in Bischkek". Kazakhstan, like Georgia, is celebrating its 30th anniversary of having the institute in the country with a series of events. The Goethe-Institut locations in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are strengthening an online centre for further education in Central Asia for teachers of German in 2024. This is intended to provide them with the opportunity for continuous training and to improve their teaching practice.



Dr Heike Uhlig has been Regional Director Eastern Europe and Central Asia since 2019. She was previously Head of the Language Department at the headquarters in Munich.



top: Not only Ukrainian expert Andrii Dostliev and journalist from the Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, Sasha Borgardt, have a great deal to discuss. For "(DIS)SOLUTIONS", they gathered together with other experts in Almaty for a conference on post-colonialism. The focal point of this project is researching decolonial and post-colonial discourse in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Baltic states.

bottom: For the tenth time, the Goethe-Institut in Uzbekistan hosted the German-Uzbek children's and youth film festival "Shum Bola" in Tashkent and delighted a large number of young people. The films addressed current topics in society in particular, such as social justice, diversity or questions of identity.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



15
institutes



15,328
language course participants



98,490
examination entrants



1,619
cultural events



63,069
library visits



1,340,393
visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally and how are the framework conditions in the region changing?

The problematic situations are as complex and heterogeneous as the African continent south of the Sahara: Whilst many people in the northern and western part of the region fear Islamism and military coups, a long-standing civil war is raging in the north-eastern part of the region. The western part of the region is shaped by engagement with its colonial past and a huge anti-French sentiment, with Central and Eastern Africa concerned with the increase in Chinese and Russian imperialism. The most important elections in 30 years are taking place in South Africa. Xenophobia and racism are providing a distraction from political failings. This is also related to the profiling of South Africa as an international thought leader, for example via a pointed anti-Israel stance or the expansion of BRICS. Europe is becoming even less important as a primary reference framework. The population on the continent is suffering due to increasing energy costs and high inflation. The economies of Nigeria and South Africa, the strongest, are shrinking or stagnating. Young people in particular remain relevant to the work done by the Goethe-Institut. They are demanding transformation, freedom of opinion and participation. The Goethe-Institut provides spaces for negotiation, integrates excluded groups, strengthens intra-African dialogue via mobility programmes such as "Moving Africa", residencies and workshops and promotes transcultural participation within Africa. Equality of cultures and the colonial legacy play a key role. In particular due to weak local structures or a lack of local structures, the institutes support local scenes. For example, the funding programme "GoetheInstitut Project Space" (GPS) by the institute in Johannesburg supports artistic works which were created in any part of South Africa.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

The AMIF project "Living and working in Germany – successfully managing the migration process" was launched at ten institutes in the region and in 17 neighbouring countries. It prepares people who wish to migrate to Germany for successful integration.

What moments were particularly memorable?

When two South African choirs sang music by the almost-forgotten composer Michael Mosoeu Moerane at the Goethe-Institut in Johannesburg, the former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, sat in the audience. Almost 5000 people attended a job fair at the institute on just one day.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

The redesign of the textbook series "Und jetzt WIR" with funding from the Federal Foreign Office is intended to support teaching of German as a foreign language in schools in West Africa. In addition, the introduction of German as a foreign language in Tanzania should also be underlined. Beside regional projects, the visitor journey for artists with disabilities or a dance network for African choreographers and dancers, an interdisciplinary project on quantum computing and art is also planned in the form of "Studio Quantum".



Andreas Ströhl has been responsible for the Sub-Saharan Africa region since 2023, having been Regional Director North America from 2016 to 2023.



top: At the **Career Expo** in Johannesburg, visitors were able to find out more about vacancies, education and training opportunities and make contact with potential employers in South Africa and Germany. The programme also included a podium discussion about the relevance of the German language for career opportunities in South Africa.

bottom: Oral cultures are widespread, diverse and dynamic in Burkina Faso. This also includes singing traditional songs. In order to be able to research and strengthen the specific features of oral cultures, those involved in the **"ECHO" Project** collected data in the population in various regions in the country, for example in this image by recording a local song.

SOUTH AMERICA



12
institutes



17,554
language course participants



24,807
examination entrants



1,596
cultural events



52,874
library visits



1,506,731
visits to country portals



Dr Matthias Makowski has been Regional Director South America since 2019. Previously, he had been responsible for the Southeastern Europe region since 2012.

What are people currently concerned about locally?

South America is a long way away from Europe and its crises. Accordingly, South Americans are less aware of issues which cause concern to Europeans. The attack on Ukraine by Russia is considered less important, unlike the war in the Middle East. Those involved are viewed in a much less differentiated way and sympathies are different there compared to Germany. The economic disruptions, the unresolved conflicts and the impact of the climate crisis, which can be seen everywhere here, play a larger role.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

Despite the financial restrictions, the Goethe-Institut locations have worked on important projects. We completed a regional scriptwriting project to qualify women in the creative economy and with "ARTEscénicas + digitalidad", young theatre creators were supported with their personal qualifications. In 2023, "Ready for the German labour market" was also launched, which is an EU-financed funding programme for skilled workers looking to move to Germany.

What are the biggest challenges?

South America views the major global crises, the war in Ukraine and in the Middle East differently, especially in the cultural and educational sectors. For the first time, we are seeing German views being seen as unprogressive and in some cases even inappropriate. There is currently a prevailing opinion that having different views to our partners will affect our work in the future too.

What moments were particularly memorable?

In November 2023, the Kultur Ensemble opened in Córdoba in Argentina. With keen participation from the urban community, the Alianza Francesa and the Goethe-Institut celebrated their close cooperation as part of the German-French cultural institutes. This was an important step. Cooperation in Rio de Janeiro is also making progress.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?







With the "Kosmoperzeptionen des Waldes", indigenous artists from the northern and southern hemispheres create art in dialogue between tropical rainforests and boreal coniferous forests in order to intervene at the UN Climate Conference COP 30 in 2025 in Belém do Pará, which will take place at the same time as the second Amazonas-Biennale.



top: Collecting rubbish and recycling on the beaches of Rio de Janeiro: Students from a grammar school were invited to an ocean project to help them increase their environmental awareness and sense of community. It is part of the programme "Together in Culture" by the Goethe-Institut and the French General Consulate in Rio de Janeiro in cooperation with the non-governmental organisation Canal Novo Mundo.

bottom: 100 years of radio and 100 years of radio art in Germany: On the occasion of this double anniversary, in 2023 the project "Listening to the World - 100 Jahre Radio" was launched to research the global influence of radio. This included the "Bauhaus.Listening.Workshop", which was one of the events which took place in Montevideo. A participant can be seen on the banks of the Rio de la Plata whilst practising extended listening with an amplifier.

SOUTH ASIA

	11 institutes
	21,684 language course participants
	185,907 examination entrants
	2,209 cultural events
	138,185 library visits
	3,648,449 visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally?

The war in Ukraine, the terror attack by Hamas on Israel and the counter-offensive by Israel are troubling lots of people in South Asia. 2024 is an election year in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India: Voters are demanding solutions and specific measures against high levels of youth unemployment, inflation and corruption, as well as dangerous air pollution and environmental catastrophes which occur regularly in the region and come at the cost of a high number of human lives.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

We pursued topics such as decolonisation, climate change and sustainability, new media technologies and feminism. In Bangladesh, we aimed to find out how young people view feminist perspectives and we created a space for culture in a disadvantaged part of the city of Dhaka. The projects "DigiVerse. How to Read Media" and "Alternative Futures" were aimed at improving media skills and developing alternative approaches for digital platforms which support community and democracy. With its multimedia exhibition "Spannende Stadt – Stadt unter Spannung", the Goethe-Institut Pakistan explored the dynamic cultural landscape of the metropolis of Karachi. The residence programme "Shared Tides" created a cultural bridge between the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka despite the conflict seen in the past.

What are the biggest challenges?

Cultural work is characterised by contexts which are becoming less and less liberal. The aim is to strengthen the cultural scene and provide space for discourse. Interest in Germany and the German language has increased exponentially, which has led to a huge level of demand for German courses and examinations. The Goethe-Institut locations in the region have had to quickly increase their capacity.

What moments were particularly memorable?

Around 4500 learners of German from the Goethe-Institut's partner schools from the metropolis region of New Delhi took part in "Namaste Deutschland", a lively festival of the German language and culture. This large event at a stadium was dedicated to sport and culture and spread joy with a large number of activities. In addition, an impressive new build for the Goethe-Zentrum was completed in Trivandrum.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

The regional exhibition tour "Empowerment" in cooperation with Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg covers a wide range of feminist views and understands them as methods for analysing global societies using tools provided by art and for demonstrating pathways out of global crises. In Bangalore, "Space for Freedom and Feminism" will provide inclusive spaces for dialogue, production and networking on the subjects of freedom and feminism.



Dr. Marla Stukenberg has been Regional Director South Asia since December 2022.



top: During a festival in New Delhi, the artist Nrithya Pillai, supported by M. S. Ananthashree, explored social inequalities in India and spoke out against concepts of caste with contemporary dance. The festival was part of the game laboratory "ReverseForward" and created space for game prototypes and performances which touched on the colonialism debate.

bottom: A Berlin kitchen in the centre of Bangalore: This was the outcome of the initiative "bangaloREsidency-Expanded" which provided artists with the opportunity for cultural engagement and development. This is how photographer Sanskriti Bist came to Lichtenberg Studios in Berlin as a resident in 2023 and visited a large number of Berlin kitchens. She firmly believes that food plays a key role in creating commonalities and developing understanding between different communities.

SOUTHEASTERN ASIA / AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND



12
institutes



24,947
language course participants



86,520
examination entrants



2,586
cultural events



142,356
library visits



3,522,067
visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally?

The major global political topics, such as the war caused by Russia's attack on Ukraine and the current conflict in the Middle East, have significantly less weight in local and regional discourse than in Europe. More importance is placed on questions which have a direct impact on economic development, development potential, educational opportunities or the consequences of climate change, and directly affect the majority of the population. Critical positions on the soundness of democratic obligations and on the state of civil societies, for example after the elections in Thailand and Indonesia, are expressed, but only by a minority. As previously, large parts of the region believe that "bamboo diplomacy" does take advantage of systemic competition between liberal and authoritarian narratives but avoids clear positioning.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

At all locations, there is a particular focus on projects and programmes which support local scenes in all artistic sectors and facilitate collaborative creations. Regional initiatives are dedicated to the topic of the diaspora. We are still delighted with the huge level of interest in the Science Film Festival, which hosts showings of scientific films and in 2023 generated more than 860,000 viewers on the topic of "Rebuilding ecosystems". For the first time, the region implemented a well-respected conference project on climate change and culture in Fiji, which created potential for more in-depth cooperation in the Pacific region. In the area of language, we focus on preparing skilled workers who are planning to work in Germany for a period of time in terms of language skills and knowledge of the country. In Bandung, we are developing a centre of excellence for skilled workers which provides service and coordination for our activities in South East Asia and creates synergies with other actors from Germany.

What are the biggest challenges?

In most countries in South East Asia, we are seeing a significant increase in demand for our language course and examination services and providing these services requires a high usage of resources, particularly in the area states. Long-term tasks therefore include providing education and further training for our pool of teachers and optimising our digital teaching and examination formats. In a range of guest countries, not only those shaped by Islam, the increasing polarisation of cultural and political discourse in Germany is being viewed with astonishment and some level of distancing. Therefore, it is particularly challenging to remain in dialogue with actors in civil society who stand up for human rights and democracy and currently view German perspectives critically.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The ten-year anniversary of the Goethe-Institut in Myanmar, which saw lots of attendees from civil society, which is still repressed by Junta, made it very clear how important it is to provide protected spaces which are free of censorship and physical spaces for dialogue, especially in times such as these.



Dr. Stefan Dreyer has been Regional Director Southeast Asia/Australia/New Zealand since 2019.



top: At the Specialist Conference of the Indonesian German Teachers' Association in Jakarta, German teachers and lecturers from all over the country gathered together to discuss the future of German teaching after the pandemic.

bottom: As part of an exhibition series by the Goethe-Institut in Indonesia, the installation "Jamu Ngatiyem" by Syska La Veggie showcased the manufacturing process of the traditional healing substance Jamu, and highlighted its importance for social security and transfer of knowledge, as well as looking at the complexity of the position of women. Building on this, the discussion "Caring and Healing as Resistance" explored the question of the role of women in shaping a better world.

SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE



12
institutes



38,855
language course participants



117,536
examination entrants



2,355
cultural events



91,190
library visits



3,918,526
visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally and what are the greatest challenges?

People in Southeastern Europe are under pressure from ongoing global crises and are looking for answers. Accordingly, people expect a great deal from Goethe-Instituts. The greatest challenge was continuing to remain a reliable dialogue and programme partner despite the lack of resources.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

An example of sustainable project work was the invitation to the festival "New Stages Southeast" at Theater Oberhausen: Eleven new texts from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Romania, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Cyprus were presented in readings and workshop performances on all theatre stages. The festival programme also included panels, a concert by Bulgarian Cartrader and guest performances from Belgrade and Bucharest. The texts, produced by young dramatologists from Southeastern Europe in two years, were reflected on broadly in Germany. "Future II - or how we want to live" was the mount of a PASCH camp in Eskişehir, which also welcomed young people from Greece and Bulgaria. Young people were able to have discussions and learn together in theatre workshops on aspects of climate change, artificial intelligence and the future of democracy. The opening for international participants made it possible for young people to gain initial intercultural experiences and encounters which otherwise would be largely impossible due to the political framework conditions. In the project "Present Past", the Goethe-Institut locations engaged with the question of how history, which is sometimes shared, influences politics and society to the present day. For this purpose, two new compositions were commissioned in Bulgaria relating to the archive for traditional Bulgarian music. The cooperation between these two composers led to the creation of works with different compositional perspectives, which were performed for the first time in Sofia in December.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

In 2024, the countries of the former Yugoslavia are reflecting on cultural/political relationships and neighbourhoods which were shaped by different images of the state. The project is planned to be a discussion and workshop series for artistic responses to the topic of the past/present, aiming at mutual inspiration and connection of individuals. The "Rituals" photo project looks at contemporary rituals in Southeast European societies. The focal point of this is on the collective development of a group exhibition of new works by artists from Greece, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Turkey and Cyprus, which will be available to view in Thessaloniki in the summer of 2024.



Angela Kaya has been Regional Director Southeastern Europe since 2019. Previously, she was responsible for the Northwest Europe region from 2013.



top: Nine international artists from various disciplines travel to Corsica, Sardinia and Syros as part of the project "Communities Between Islands" between September 2023 and the end of 2024. During their residence, they work together with local communities and develop new artistic works based on the local environment, as shown in the workshop at Syros in Greece here.

bottom: The exhibition by German photographer Sven Marquardt "Nachtblende" at the Goethe-Institut in Istanbul featured a selection of his works from the past 25 years and primarily focused on Berlin sub-culture and nightclubs.

SOUTHWESTERN EUROPE



15
institutes



11,787
language course participants



55,550
examination entrants



1,458
cultural events



72,191
library visits



1,727,497
visits to country portals

What are people currently concerned about locally?

The European Parliament elections in June 2024 are setting the political pace in Brussels. In the countries in the region, the election and its effects seem relatively far away. Instead, people are worried about their futures at the moment in view of the rising cost of living and social division.

What are the biggest challenges?

The closures of the institutes in France and Italy at the end of 2023 have been very difficult for the public in both countries, as well as the partners and, of course, the employees. The focus now lies on regaining trust and setting visible signs of the commitment of the Goethe-Institut to impactful work in both countries, especially in locations where it no longer has its own presence.

What moments were particularly memorable?

To celebrate 60 years of its existence, the Goethe-Institut in Nancy opened up its gardens in October for "Discofoot" by the "Ballet de Lorraine". For the improvised match performance, the dancers were not allowed to run but they danced a game of football and everyone joined in! In Portugal, the "Kulturfest" in February made waves, including outside Lisbon, with sold-out events and new partner contacts. The appearances by German-language authors such as Jens Balzer, Esther Kinsky, Katerina Poladjian and Antje Rávik Strubel, whose books were translated into Italian as part of the Litrix Programme, were highlights.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2023?

In the field of the European cultural and creative economy, a striking effect was achieved with the France-wide project "Résonance" as a platform for sustainable innovation in German-French tandems. The EU project "Deconfining - Arts, Culture and Policies in Europe and Africa" has set itself the goal of facilitating fair cultural exchange between Africa and Europe, whilst "Halaqat" researches the cultural relationship between Europe and the Arabic world, including with residence programmes. In order to strengthen practical focus when training German teachers, we expanded on cooperation with universities in the region.

What is being planned for 2024/2025?

In the year of the European elections, the artistic/discursive debate with democracy, social openness and cohesion in Europe is at the top of the agenda, for example in our reflection on the Carnation Revolution in Portugal 50 years ago. In France and Italy, there is a focal point on new formats for country-wide activities, for example within the framework of German-Italian cultural dialogues, as well as German-French cooperation in the creative sector and strengthening German in schools. In Strasbourg, the Goethe-Institut is hosting the festival "D'une langue vers l'autre" to celebrate the UNESCO World Book Capital. In addition, we are celebrating Kafka and Kant, German-language literature at the Turin Book Fair and, naturally, the guest appearance of Italy at the Frankfurt Book Fair in the autumn.



Dr. Elke Kaschl Mohni has been Regional Director Southwestern Europe since 2019 and works as an EU Representative of the Goethe-Institut in Brussels.



top: During her residence at the Lottozero-Center in Prato, Polish textile designer Zuzanna Wójcik learned how to work on a traditional weaving loom. Her residence in Italy was funded by "Culture Moves Europe". "Culture Moves Europe" is financed by the Creative Europe Programme by the European Union and implemented by the Goethe-Institut.

bottom: Brezel or Brezen? The popular German baked pretzels were a must-have at the first edition of "KULTURfest: Festival de Culturas de Expressão Alemã", a festival of the German language, of German-language cinema, literature and music in Lisbon. It was organised by the Goethe-Institut in Lisbon together with the association Il Sorpasso and with support from the association São Bartolomeu, the German, Austrian, Luxembourg and Swiss Embassies and the German Centre for Tourism in Portugal and the German School Lisbon.

LOCATIONS OF GOETHE-INSTITUTS WORLDWIDE



- BELGIUM**
Brussels ●
- BULGARIA**
Sofia
- BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**
Sarajevo
- DENMARK**
Copenhagen
- GERMANY**
Berlin
Bonn
Bremen
Dresden
Düsseldorf
Frankfurt/Main
Freiburg
Göttingen
- Hamburg
Mannheim
Munich ●
Schwäbisch Hall
- ESTONIA**
Tallinn
- FINLAND**
Helsinki
- FRANCE**
Lyon
Marseille
Nancy
Paris
Toulouse
- GREECE**
Athens ●
Thessaloniki
- UNITED KINGDOM**
Glasgow
London ●
- IRELAND**
Dublin
- ITALY**
Milan
Naples
Palermo
Rome
- CROATIA**
Zagreb
- LATVIA**
Riga
- LITHUANIA**
Vilnius
- LUXEMBURG**
Luxemburg*
- NETHERLANDS**
Amsterdam
Rotterdam
- NORTH MACEDONIA**
Skopje
- NORWAY**
Oslo
- POLAND**
Krakau
Warsaw
- PORTUGAL**
Lisbon
Porto
- ROMANIA**
Bucharest
- SWEDEN**
Stockholm
- SERBIA**
Belgrade
- SLOVAKIA**
Bratislava
- SLOVENIA**
Ljubljana
- SPAIN**
Barcelona
Madrid
- CZECH REPUBLIC**
Prague ●
- TURKEY**
Ankara
Istanbul
Izmir
- HUNGARY**
Budapest
- CYPRUS**
Nicosia

- Regional institute
- Goethe-Institut
- Liaison office
- ◻ Franco-German Cultural Institute
- ◌ Pierre Werner European Institute
- ** in abeyance
- *** German Language Institute of the German Embassy in Teheran

The Goethe-Institut also includes:

- **Field offices:**
Busan (2014), Daegu (2012), Daejeon (1988), Gwangju (2014) – *Institute responsible: Seoul*
Dubai (2007), Maskat (2007) – *Institute responsible: Abu Dhabi*
- **Franco-German cultural institutes:**
Atlanta (2022), Palermo (2021), Ramallah (2022)

As of 31.3.2024

REGIONAL STRUCTURE

The Goethe-Institut has a presence in 98 countries worldwide with 151 institutes. In total, the Goethe-Institut network comprises around 1,100 points of contact. These also include examination cooperation partners, teaching resource centres, German reading rooms and information centres, Goethe centres, German-foreign cultural associations, language centres, residencies and project spaces.

GERMANY

Berlin (1960)
Dr. Manuela Beck

Bonn (1985)
Dr. Juana von Stein

Bremen (1981)
Gesine von Ribbeck

Dresden (1996)
Tanja Krüger

Düsseldorf (1984)
Simone Huber

Frankfurt/Main (1983)
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The Goethe-Institut also includes:

• **Field offices:**

Busan (2014), Daegu (2012),
Daejeon (1988), Gwangju (2014) –
Institute responsible: Seoul
Dubai (2007), Maskat (2007) –
Institute responsible: Abu Dhabi

• **Franco-German cultural institutes:**

Atlanta (2022), Palermo (2021),
Ramallah (2022)

Legend

Institute location (year of establishment)

Head of Institut

[R] Regional institute

[VB] Liaison office

* Pierre Werner European Institute

** in abeyance

As of 31.3.2024



On the basis of the Aachen Treaty, which has been in place since 2019 for the strengthening of the German-French cultural work, the Goethe-Institut in Ramallah has been expanded and included to the circle of the Franco-German cultural institutes. Under the name "Kultur Ensemble", the first bilateral institute of this kind was established in Palermo. Ramallah followed in 2022. Since then, a wide range of cultural events are being organised there.

LANGUAGE

WE PROMOTE
GERMAN WORLDWIDE.

269,000



Participants attended Goethe-Institut language courses. The majority are learning German via classroom courses but digital and blended learning courses are also very popular, accounting for around 30% of courses.

7,100



Teachers of German as a foreign language took part in certification programmes for teachers of German at the Goethe-Instituts abroad and in Germany. [goethe.de/dll](https://www.goethe.de/dll)

9.1

MILLION



Visits were made to the digital learning platform. It offers language courses, examination preparation and further education and youth camps. [lernen.goethe.de](https://www.lernen.goethe.de)

702



PASCH schools are supported by the Goethe-Institut out of a total of 2,085 schools in the Federal Foreign Office initiative "Schools: Partners for the Future". 260,000 school pupils are learning German at those 702 schools, which are known as FIT schools.

927,000



German examinations were taken in total at the Goethe-Instituts and cooperation partners. That is a further increase of around 20% compared to the previous year. 90% of examinations were taken abroad, 10% in Germany. Most exams were taken in Germany, India, Vietnam and Cameroon.

560,000



Members use the exercises on the platform "Deutsch für dich". It is the largest free learning platform for German as a foreign language in the world. [goethe.de/deutschfuerdich](https://www.goethe.de/deutschfuerdich)

CULTURE

WE PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL
CULTURAL EXCHANGE.

313



Translations of books into 38 languages were funded. Translations into Italian, Spanish and English were the most popular.

1

MILLION



Visitors came to the 87 Goethe-Institut libraries in 65 countries. In addition to around 800,000 digital and physical media, the libraries provide space for exchange and dialogue.

2,700



Cooperation agreements were set up with creative artists, organisations, companies and social institutions worldwide.

120



Creative professionals took part in the residence programmes worldwide, 52 of them in the largest residencies: Tarabya Cultural Academy, Villa Kamogawa, Vila Sul and bangaloREsidency.

1.5

MILLION



Visitors came to physical and hybrid exhibitions at Goethe-Institut locations worldwide.

20,000



Cultural events run by the Goethe-Instituts reached 5.3 million people worldwide. Around a third of those events took place in digital or hybrid form.

GERMANY

WE PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT GERMANY.

236,000



Followers are reached by the new TikTok channel Goetheinstitut.Deutsch. 2.2 million video views were registered in 2023. The number of followers increased by around 50% compared to the previous year.

6.4

MILLION

Fans and followers kept up with news from the Goethe-Institut on Facebook, Instagram and X (previously Twitter) worldwide.



8



Multipliers, specialists and journalists took part in around 80 information trips for foreign guests.

408,000



loans were issued via the "Onleihe" online library portal. The portal is used particularly heavily in France, Turkey and the USA. Loans of over 1,100 media items are issued via the portal every day. goethe.de/onleihe

712,000



Visitors viewed the website "Mein Weg nach Deutschland", which offers information on working and living in Germany in 30 languages. goethe.de/meinwegnachdeutschland

110

MILLION

Visits were recorded on goethe.de. This represents an increase of over 70% over the past two years.



ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2023

A. THE ASSOCIATION – CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENT*

Profit and loss account from 1 January to 31 December 2023

	ACTUAL 2023	ACTUAL 2022	CHANGE
	TEUR	TEUR	TEUR
Sales revenue	139.366	119.655	19.711
Revenue from grants	256.324	279.327	-23.003
Income from the release of special items	13.173	16.166	-2.993
Other operating income	7.249	14.326	-7.077
Changes in inventories	297	1.468	-1.171
Total revenue	416.409	430.942	-14.533
Cost of materials	-35.503	-32.572	-2.931
Employee benefit expense	-202.718	-209.938	7.220
Amortization of intangible assets and depreciation of property, plant and equipment	-10.516	-10.738	222
Other operating expenses	-164.586	-172.734	8.148
Total expenses	-413.323	-425.982	12.659
Financial result	-241	-1.439	1.198
Taxes on income	-688	-679	-9
Result after taxes	2.157	2.842	-685
Other taxes	-2.006	-841	-1.165
Annual result	151	2.001	-1.850

Due to regrouping within the account structure the presentation of the result may differ from former publications.

The consolidated financial statement of the Goethe-Institut e. V. is a consolidation of the two Segments 'Equity Capital' and 'Public Funds'. Thus the statement is not purely an additive contemplation, which is particularly evident in the sales proceeds from language work.

* Based on the auditor's report for the fiscal year and in accordance with the HGB.

B. OWN CAPITAL – EQUITY CAPITAL*

Profit and loss account from 1 January to 31 December 2023

	ACTUAL 2023	ACTUAL 2022	CHANGE
	TEUR	TEUR	TEUR
Sales revenue	60.305	50.051	10.254
Revenue from grants	2.647	2.239	408
Other operating income	1.580	6.370	-4.790
Changes in inventories	297	1.468	-1.171
Total income	64.829	60.128	4.701
Cost of materials	-11.009	-7.932	-3.077
Employee benefit expense	-25.792	-25.179	-613
Amortization of intangible assets and depreciation of property, plant and equipment	-655	-666	11
Other operating expenses	-27.325	-23.713	-3.612
Total expenses	-64.781	-57.490	-7.291
Financial result	150	-524	674
Taxes on income	-22	-110	88
Result after taxes	176	2.004	-1.828
Other taxes	-25	-3	-22
Annual result	151	2.001	-1.850

Income from sales revenue and equity capital has increased 2023 by KEUR 4.701 from KEUR 60.128 to KEUR 64.829. Total expenses increased by KEUR 7.291 from KEUR 57.490 to KEUR 64.781. The equity capital sector closes the financial year after taxes with a net result of KEUR 151.

* Based on the auditor's report for the fiscal year and in accordance with the HGB.

C. PUBLIC FUNDS*

Profit and loss account for the period 1 January to 31 December 2023

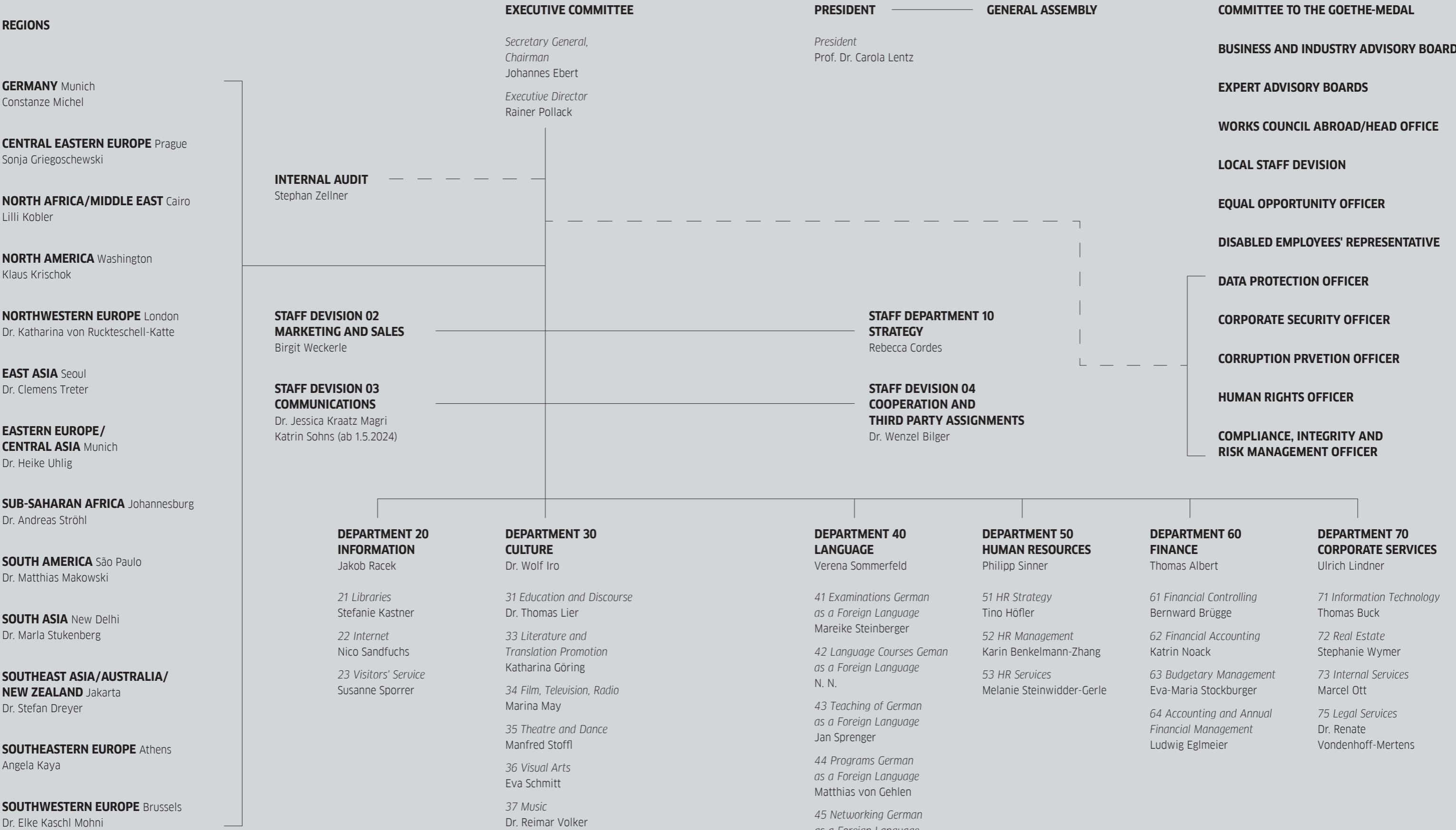
	ACTUAL 2023	ACTUAL 2022	CHANGE
	TEUR	TEUR	TEUR
Sales revenue	97.094	87.400	9.694
Grants from the German Federal Foreign Office	229.863	256.447	-26.584
Third party donations	23.829	20.685	3.144
Income from the release of special items	13.173	16.166	-2.993
Other operating income	15.115	15.746	-631
Total income	379.074	396.444	-17.370
Cost of materials	-33.709	-32.007	-1.702
Employee benefit expense	-176.926	-184.759	7.833
Amortization of intangible assets and depreciation of property, plant and equipment	-9.862	-10.072	210
Other operating expenses	-155.716	-167.440	11.724
Total expenses	-376.213	-394.278	18.065
Financial result	-214	-760	546
Taxes on income	-666	-569	-97
Result after taxes	1.981	837	1.144
Other taxes	-1.981	-837	-1.144
Annual result	0	0	0

The total budget of the public funds segment was KEUR 379.074 in the reporting year. The total revenue is essentially characterised by revenue from language courses, Grants from the German Federal Foreign Office and project funding by the Federal Foreign Office. The Goethe-Institut achieved earnings of KEUR 97.094 through its own activities as well as income from third party donations and sponsorship in the amount of KEUR 23.829. In order to present the grant on an accrual basis, passive special items are included in the Balance sheet formed. For the reporting period special items in the amount of KEUR 13.173 were released to offset non-cash expenses in the earnings. Total revenues are offset before interest and taxes by total expenditure of KEUR 376.213. The financial result is a result of interest on current accounts and the addition of accrued interest liabilities. KEUR 1.981 had to be paid as other taxes. The Public Funds segment closes due to shortfall financing the fiscal year after taxes with the annual result of KEUR 0.

* Based on the auditor's report for the fiscal year and in accordance with the HGB.

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As of 31.3.2024



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“It is really important to me to once say clearly that I believe the Goethe-Instituts really act as figureheads - also for Germany -, that are somehow still of relevance.”

Olli Schulz in the episode “Forelle ist mein Fisch” from the podcast “Fest & Flauschig” from 12/11/2023 (Original quote: German)

“Through the participation, I finally feel valued in my identity and my whole biography here in Germany.”

Samia, 27, from Iraq, attendee at the workshop “Perspectives on migration” with Siwa Plateforme and the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn (Original quote: German)

“I met Goethe Institute because of my blogger activity, and we immediately hit it off due to our similar values. We worry about our planet and respect other cultures. I love their unusual work approach, creativity, being open minded to civil societies and their support is incredibly important. The Goethe Institute sent me to Germany for an international cultural symposium last year. I couldn’t leave my one-year-old daughter behind. Then the institute provided an opportunity for me to go there with my baby. That was the first time when I saw a real gender equality.”

Mutabar Chuschwaktowa, Eco blogger on social media

“A book is a window to the world. If we want to see more of the world, if we want to learn, then visiting the Goethe-Institut library is the perfect thing to do.”

Kartini Nurdin, Director of the publishing house Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia

“The OUT-Film Festival is not just another film festival. It is a safe space for Kenya’s LGBTQI community to come together, be entertained, experience, network, socialize, meet, and find a self-chosen family. This couldn’t have been more apparent than at the 2023 Festival. It had a special vibe - a warm, friendly, and evenly homely atmosphere.”

Kevin Mwachiro, Co-founder of the OUT Film Festival

“This world is full of exploitation and oppression of marginalised groups and power structures are hardly conceivable. Resistance is painful but necessary. Thank you to ‘Seven Winters in Tehran’ for giving us courage and thank you to the Goethe-Institut.”

Feedback from the audience on the film screening of “Seven Winters in Tehran” by Steffi Niedertzoll as part of the German Film Festival at the Goethe-Institut in China (Original quote: Chinese)

“Foreign cultural institutes like the Goethe-Institut are like a last window into another world. They remind us that regimes are finite, and change is possible. They offer the opportunity to escape lies and simple-mindedness for a while through intellectual programs.”

Ece Temelkuran, Turkish journalist and writer

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