

Crossing Points: UK-Germany

Common interests, shared concerns



Essays

In memory of Martin Roth, European
(1955–2017)

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FOREWORD

RACHEL LAUNAY

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This Crossing Points booklet highlights a range of connections between the UK and Germany that weave us together in multiple ways including literature, science, language, study, politics, and simple, old-fashioned friendships. However, they only represent a tiny fraction of the vast sweep of crossing points that characterise the histories and developments of our two countries.

We share crossing points all over the world, from Kyiv – where the British Council shares its home with the Goethe Institute – to the time when our monarchs were cousins. Now we are fondly characterised by our mutual love for (among more lofty tastes) beer and football. There is a British joke ‘Football is a game played by 22 men, and in the end the Germans win’, which is matched by a German one: ‘What do you call the Englishman on the pitch at the World Cup final?’ ‘The referee.’

The timing of this publication is of huge importance, as our two countries face the loss of one of our most significant crossing points, the European Union. The EU has provided a means of exchange and interaction between the UK and Europe for the last 44 years. On a personal level this fact set me on a journey of language learning at the age of 14, over thirty years ago, when I made my first visit to Germany and dipped my toe into the scary yet exhilarating feeling of trying out the German I had learnt at school, and experiencing the amazing realisation that the language I uttered actually worked! I had been understood and I could understand back. It was my first personal crossing point and one that was to shape my future life in many ways.

From where I write, in Berlin, there is a quite specific meaning to ‘crossing points’. For 28 years, when the city was divided by a wall, and crossing points were the places where the two halves of the separated city could meet; where families that had been broken could reconnect. There were a few official ones, and a larger number of unofficial ones – mainly tunnels – that will never be known. This is the beautiful thing about crossing points: people have an instinct for finding them, for making them and for using them. This is the task that we have now, to ensure that the people of our two countries maintain an evolving array of crossing points that suit all tastes, temperaments and ages.

As in Kyiv, the British Council and the Goethe Institut come together in this publication. My valued friend and colleague says in her foreword that Germany and the UK share a long and impressive tradition of good collaboration, characterised by trust and a strong cultural understanding. This is very true. Like the Goethe, the British Council is founded on the principle of building friendly knowledge between peoples, and is, in its underlying principle, a kind of crossing point in its own right. In fact, on several occasions our German partners have recently reflected to me that they see the British Council as the bridge, 'die Brücke', between our two countries.

Working from Berlin, a city once characterised by tunnels and borders, the British Council will continue to be the bridge, working with our committed partners to make crossing points possible for people in both Germany and the UK. And despite the political wrangling and uncertainty, long may the deep connections continue, through art, culture and education; and long may the crossing points be busy with conversation, exchange, dialogue and debate that lead to learning, understanding and friendship.

Berlin, October 2017

ANGELA KAYA

Director Goethe-Institut
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This booklet captures voices and impressions on British-German collaboration. The British Council invited experts in the fields of science, education and culture to reflect upon their long experience in Germany and the UK, with a view to analysing current and future developments.

While the areas of work and their specific challenges differ greatly, the accounts observe many similarities regarding overarching aspects. The long tradition of good collaboration, characterised by trust and a strong cultural understanding, is impressive. Despite dramatic historical breaks in the British-German relationship during the 20th Century, the authors describe a feeling of cohesiveness based on a stable foundation. However, there is great insecurity regarding the direction of future collaboration – and rightly so.

These worries are articulated in particular by those addressing the importance of foreign languages in the UK. For years, there has been a continuous decrease in the uptake of foreign language learning, and a stagnation in the translation of German literature into English. This not only reflects an imbalance, but illustrates that, due also to short-term and utilitarian political trends, it is less likely that a wider public can be assumed to be interested in intercultural exchange. This also conveys the uneasy question as to where the journey will lead after 2019.

Excellent scientific and institutional cooperation on the one hand, and waning interest on the other, are symptomatic, and create a number of challenges for those who are working for the continuation of bilateral and European collaboration.

Despite understandably particular interests, the overall goal must be to develop a shared understanding of the importance of exchange and collaboration beyond national and institutional borders. This can only be achieved through public dialogue. Interconnectedness – a term often over-used – is in this case a *conditio sine qua non*.

Moreover, all players must recognise that there ought not to be a contradiction between excellence and social breadth. Each necessitates the other, and they cannot grow separately. The task here is to facilitate an education system that does not view internationality only in terms of competition, but as something valuable in itself. This can be achieved by means of consistent and systematic lobbying of ministries, public authorities and organisations.

Furthermore, it is necessary to determine possible educational pathways and the opportunities that arise from them. This is successfully done, for instance, through strong local networks composed of schools, universities, businesses and civil society.

Such networks already exist and are shaped by a multitude of players. But we should ask ourselves if they are well-known and strong enough to have a real impact. We should also be asking if we are considerate enough of those whose participation in the education system cannot be taken for granted, and who might not be in favour of a well-connected, multilateral and sustainable exchange.

The Goethe-Institut London has reinforced its emphasis on these matters since summer 2016, and focused in particular on the following aspects. Together with other European cultural institutes and networks, we have enhanced our strategic collaboration. We are intensifying our work in language education lobbying and the fostering of translation, as well as strengthening our cultural cooperation with partners beyond London and throughout the UK. In addition to our longstanding partners, we are reaching out to new groups and target audiences (in particular young people).

We view ourselves increasingly as an organisation that can provide a platform for controversial debates, as a forum to discuss questions that have been perceived as resolved or irrelevant. In this way we are consciously entering on a new path. We know it will be a rocky road at times, but we are certain that our work is especially crucial now.

London, October 2017

Common Interests,
Shared Concerns...
And a Way Forward

RUPERT STRACHWITZ

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For the United Kingdom and Germany, the last few years have been crossing points indeed! For the first time since 1945, the two governments' political goals seem to be fundamentally different. After 70 years of trying to build trust and do things together, British and German citizens find themselves having to try and pick up the pieces after UK voters decided it was time to leave the European Union.

The Anglo-German Königswinter Conference, an annual top-level event since 1950, has had to face the fact that Anglo-German relations, which people had grown accustomed to improving year on year, were suddenly up for discussion. At this year's conference, efforts were made by UK cabinet ministers to suggest a future special relationship between the two countries. Unsurprisingly, the German government was not in a mood for ideas of this kind, and made it quite clear that the 27 remaining members of the European Union would stand together in negotiating the UK's exit deal.

This is all the more bitter as one looks at two facts. First, over the past 70-odd years, many people in the UK have found it more difficult than other Europeans to overcome a sceptical approach towards Germans. Even 15 years ago, there was still considerable bad feeling, epitomised by a teacher at an English school in the 1990s telling my daughter, who had probably spoken when she was not supposed to: 'You shut up! You lost the War'.

It is only quite recently, and prompted by a number of publications, a big show at the British Museum, and a few other developments, that a feeling of letting bygones be bygones has got into most people's minds. Despite continually reliving its Imperial past and wartime victories (which may go some way to explaining the outcome of the Brexit referendum) there has been a substantial shift in popular opinion that means most Britons today see Germany as a friendly and potentially valuable partner. This doesn't, however, mean they really know very much about Germany.

Second, in Germany, Britain is arguably the most popular of all her European associates. The Queen, and indeed the whole Royal Family, have an appeal that Germany's own Head of State can truly be envious of. More importantly perhaps, young people have been flocking to

In Europe as a whole, for many years, civil society organisations and networks have relied heavily on the expertise and resources of their British colleagues.

schools and universities in the United Kingdom, and hundreds of thousands of Germans have chosen to live and work in the UK permanently (and are now facing uncertainty as to their future status). English is of course spoken by more Germans than any other foreign language by far (notwithstanding the heavy

accent that prevails), and as a whole range of popular shows on TV can prove, the English – and Scottish, for that matter – way of life is more attractive to many Germans than their own native traditions. Given all this, it is hardly surprising that many Germans are familiar with British affairs, nor that they take a real and compassionate interest in Brexit.

Beside these highly important and visible human and emotional aspects, British and German interests in business matters have tended to converge. One of the most serious repercussions of Brexit for Germany is that the more protectionist-minded countries in the EU will in the future command enough votes to block any free-trade measures that others might wish to introduce. Up to now, the UK and Germany could always rely on one another in defending free trade.

Furthermore, civil society is not only fairly similarly organized in both countries (although there are some obvious and striking differences in the healthcare system). Volunteerism and civic engagement also enjoy pretty much the same degree of public recognition (and government suspicion), despite the fact that an unbroken tradition of citizenry in the UK goes back longer in history, while Germany went through a phase of state-orientation unknown to Britain. Indeed, in this field, Germany learned quite a lot from the UK; in Europe as a whole, for many years, civil society organisations and networks have relied heavily on the expertise and resources of their British colleagues.

And it may be worth remembering that in the history of ideas it was two Scotsmen, who in the 18th century first developed some thoughts that developed into what we call civil society today: Adam Smith (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 1759), and Adam Ferguson, or Adhamh MacFhearghais, if you prefer (*An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 1767). It is partly because of all this that the German-British Society, Berlin, is currently trying to get a Civil Society Königswinter going, to complement the ongoing 'Big', 'Young', 'Defence' and 'Economic' Königswinter conferences.

There is no reason why citizens of these two countries, who find it easier than most to enter into a meaningful conversation, should not be able to sit down and think together – and eventually come up with an idea that can become the blueprint for a Europe to be.

All in all, historically, the 20th Century antagonism between Britain and Germany was a very short interruption of an age-old friendship. And historically, the nation state is but a passing moment in a long sequence of different government models – and not a very successful one at that. There is no reason why citizens of these two countries, who find it easier than most to enter into a meaningful conversation, should not be able to sit down and think together – and eventually come up with an idea that can become the blueprint for a Europe to be.

So, where are we heading? With or without Donald Trump in the White House, and even with or without Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin, Europe has no option but to get its act together if it wishes to continue to be respected as a global player. The European Union may or may not be the appropriate European conglomerate to do so, but there can be no doubt whatsoever that the citizens of the UK and Germany – and of course the other Europeans – share the gravest possible concerns over their common defence policy and their common geopolitical strategies.

No European today wishes to be dictated to by Washington, and one may suppose the days are over when some Europeans would allow themselves to be drawn into a military adventure in the interest of the United States. So, with or without Brexit, there exists a common security and overall political agenda, for which European instruments and solutions must urgently be found. That these must necessarily include Britain, is, I would assume, in everybody's interest.

It is still possible that Brexit is not the only policy option available to a UK government in the near future. At the June 2016 referendum, the majority was slim in terms of votes; and non-existent in terms of the total number of UK citizens.

As it is becoming increasingly clear that the political implications had not been thought through, it is not inconceivable that a government, before or after 2019, might reconsider. It would certainly be in Germany's very best interest to keep that door open.

A remaining or readmitted UK could probably no longer demand to receive the special treatment negotiated by Prime Ministers from Margaret Thatcher to David Cameron. And it might find it difficult to be granted special privileges, despite its status as a former world and current (albeit minor) atomic power, or as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. But it would mean that the UK could end up as one of perhaps six European powers that actually run Europe (the others being France, Germany, Italy, Poland and Spain), which surely looks more promising than being 'Little England' all on one's own. It would be in the best interests of both the UK and Germany to work towards such an arrangement.

Secondly, however, both countries have a long, albeit different tradition of not being one nation in the sense that French theorists, in particular, saw it from the 16th to the 20th Century. Neither country has ever taken on the notion of a nation state in the full sense of the word, as adopted by France and sanctified internationally as the model for world governance. Germany has always maintained a strong tradition of regionalism, and has successfully operated as a federal country throughout the European process of coming closer together. That the states (the 'Länder') insist on their constitutional rights, may occasionally unsettle German federal politicians and cause comments in the media. In real terms, it has never seriously stopped Germany from taking the next step in pursuing the great European project and has at the same time balanced and enriched political life in Germany.

The UK in a sense has always been more diverse than any other European country. Where else could two fundamentally different legal systems have been sustained for centuries within the same political system? Today, since devolution began in the 1990s, England, Scotland, and Wales (not to speak of Northern Ireland) are arguably far more independent than, say, Bavaria, Saxony, and Hamburg, and certainly more than Burgundy and Provence. Thus, both countries may indeed teach others that a uniform state is by no means the only road to political happiness.

The point is, it seems inconceivable that the Europe to come will or should be organized as a United States of Europe after the 18th Century American model. A new 21st Century model of governance is called for, and may well include strong regional elements designed to satisfy Scottish, Bavarian, Catalan and Flemish citizens. And this is just one of the reasons why it seems highly unlikely that Europe will resemble the present-day European Union, whether in governance or size.

Thirdly, a new system of governance might well incorporate civil society – and quite possibly local governments for that matter – in a checks-and-balances system destined to surpass the present one, that has recently shown such blatant failings in almost all 'Western' democracies.

As much as the stewards of the state like to believe they are in the driver's seat, the reality of most people's lives is strikingly different. Loyalties are to families, local and religious communities, civil society organisations, regions, nations, Europe, and the global village in a highly individualistic mix.

In both the UK and Germany, there exist academic institutions and independent think tanks galore, that are already producing ideas – and could well be encouraged and empowered to produce more – about the way Europe could look in the future. Sadly, as yet in both countries, political leaders do not seem equipped and prepared to listen, let alone to seriously tackle such a task.

But again, as history has shown, more often than not new ideas have come out of civil society. It was civil society in Poland, Hungary,

Czechoslovakia and East Germany that in the years preceding 1989 pushed forward the idea of freedom to a point of no return. Care for the environment, sustainability, and gender equality, not to mention human and civil rights have gained universal recognition through civil society activism. Parliaments and governments have been persuaded and indeed sometimes forced to follow suit.

When activists and volunteers from Britain, Germany and elsewhere meet – be it on the fringes of a G20 conference, as rescue teams when disaster has struck, as singers in an amateur choir festival, in a European cultural heritage organisation, a youth camp, or wherever, no-one really cares about nationalities, nor about politicians. What they do care about is common causes and shared interests. As much as the stewards of the state like to believe they are in the driver's seat, the reality of most people's lives is strikingly different. Loyalties are to families, local and religious communities, civil society organisations, regions, nations, Europe, and the global village in a highly individualistic mix.

Or, to put it more bluntly, governments do not matter to people as much as they might wish to believe. True, in both Germany and the UK popular nationalism has followers. But the plain truth is, those people are looking backwards. As we cross the threshold to the world of tomorrow, we see global and European networks of people shaping the future, for better or for worse – and there are lots of Brits and Germans among them. It is them we trust.

Cheek-by-Jowl Beneath
the Oceans: UK-German
Marine Research Collaboration

NEIL C MITCHELL

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A good measure of the level of scientific cooperation between two countries is the number of jointly authored papers published in a given year. Joint publications between marine scientists based in the UK and Germany have been growing since 1990.

The chart below is a record of articles in mainly oceanographic journals with both Germany- and UK-based authors. From a low base before 1990, when cooperation was rather limited, the number of jointly authored articles has doubled on average every seven years.

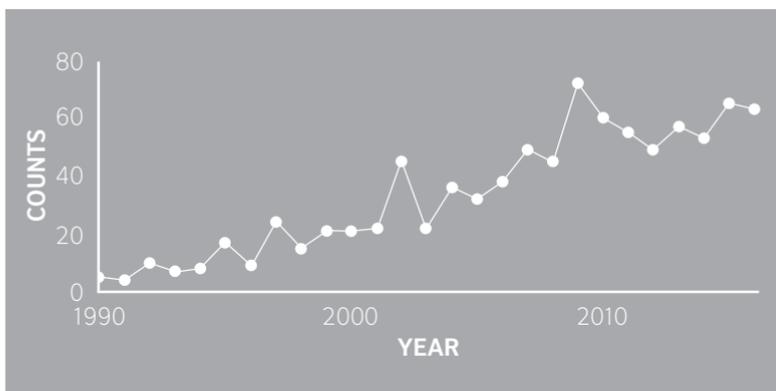


Figure 1: Numbers of oceanographic articles with both Germany- and UK-based researchers as co-authors (1037 articles), derived from Web of Science™ (<http://wok.mimas.ac.uk/>). The search of articles included all scientific journal titles starting 'Journal of Marine', 'Marine' or 'Ocean' and the journals Deep Sea Research, Geo-Marine Letters, Journal of Physical Oceanography, Paleoceanography, and Progress in Oceanography.

This increase can partly be explained by the increasing availability of European funding, though cooperation in the marine sciences might be expected to be strong for a variety of other reasons as well.

Modern research vessels have become complex, each typically hosting a wide variety of sophisticated equipment to allow a diverse range of operations. To be cost-effective, research activities on these vessels need to be done on a 24-hour basis, requiring large teams of technicians and scientists to keep the instruments working. The chief scientist of a cruise may often therefore ask for help from outside his or her institute in running these expeditions.

Many of us have had years of experience as postdoctoral researchers when we made friends with others working in internationally diverse oceanographic institutions, at conferences, workshops and participating in marine expeditions; experience we then draw upon as more senior researchers when planning our work at sea. In my case, as a young scientist I worked on the FS Meteor on two cruises to the Mid-Atlantic Ridge near Ascension Island, where I helped collect data with the vessel's sonars and processed them into maps of the seabed.

Cooperation is essential for larger experiments that are too expensive for one country, or draw too heavily on the physical resources or personnel of a single research institute.

Cooperation is essential for larger experiments that are too expensive for one country, or draw too heavily on the physical resources or personnel of a single research institute. For example, researchers in both the UK and Germany are interested in working out the Earth's structure beneath parts of the oceans, using seismometers

placed on the seabed. These instruments are expensive and take many hours to deploy and recover. A number of projects have therefore involved both UK and German groups sharing equipment and effort to achieve large-scale experiments.

Many activities involve instruments that are left on the seabed, floating in the oceans beneath buoys, or free-floating. Often it makes more sense for scientists from a collaborating country to pick up the instrument, if their ship is scheduled to pass by the deployment site, than for the owners of the instrument to make an additional journey. The cost of moving ships to remote ocean locations is high in terms of fuel and time (research vessels can typically only travel at up to 12 knots or so, in contrast with a ferry's 20 knots), so cooperation between nations can save considerable expense. This is particularly true of the Arctic and Antarctic seas, where ice and weather also complicate access.

Cooperation has proven essential at an even larger scale, in space-based science involving satellites, and in the International Ocean Discovery Program, which drills and recovers samples from the ocean bed. Both Germany and the UK are financial contributors to this programme, and both nations' scientists are very active in working on the drilling vessels themselves, on the panels evaluating proposals for drilling particular seabed sites, and in analyzing the collected samples.

One of the main repositories for cores collected by the programme is based in Bremen, Germany. In the UK, the British Geological Survey has had a prominent role in commissioning drilling rigs for sampling in unusual locations, and the Borehole Group of the University of Leicester has supplied expertise in carrying out geophysical measurements using the holes created by drilling. Our drilling-based scientists therefore work very closely together.

As well as the practical benefits of collaboration, working with German scientists often feels culturally comfortable, as we have similar ways of working.

In both Germany and the UK, the scientific method developed over centuries has instilled a strong intellectual discipline in our work. So as well as the practical benefits of collaboration, working with German scientists often feels culturally comfortable, as we have similar ways of working. In my own work I have published seven

articles jointly with German scientists, and currently have a project with scientists from GEOMAR (the Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research, in Kiel) to study an area of the northern Red Sea where ancient salt deposits have made the seabed mobile. I am also collaborating with German scientists in studying the Azores volcanic islands and the seabed around them. This kind of collaboration is not unusual in modern ocean science, particularly in Europe.

Whereas the community of marine scientists in the USA is large enough that there is rarely any gap in expertise to carry out a project, this is sometimes less true of the UK and Germany. It may make sense to collaborate because we have complementary expertise needed for inter-disciplinary research: we are increasingly finding that working in narrow fields is not possible. A paleoceanographer, for example, may need to know what range of temperature and salinity an organism may tolerate in order to interpret the presence of their skeletons in sediment samples from the seabed. Multi-disciplinary research is likely to become increasingly important, particularly, when we attempt to simulate complex systems through computer modelling, where the models require information from physicists, geochemists, biologists and geologists.

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Science is a highly competitive activity. In describing the work we do in applying the scientific method, we commonly use words like 'testing'. In peer reviewing, we critically examine drafts of research articles submitted to journals, or proposals submitted to funding agencies or organizations running infrastructure. The process can be combative at times. But despite this human tendency to compete, the

advantages of collaboration mean that German and British scientists work together effectively, to mutual advantage.

Cooperation continues in the commercial world, as our PhD students leave academia and take on roles in companies or start their own businesses. Notably, at last year's Oceanology International, a prominent trade fair of the marine sector held in London biannually, 26 German companies had stands in the exhibition hall.

The marine business sector grew substantially following the discovery of North Sea oil and gas, itself a response to the 1970s oil crisis, with research by academic groups providing much of the early knowledge to bring that about. Although the offshore oil and gas sector in the North Sea is now mature, there is still considerable activity. Sectors such as fisheries, military, offshore wind and tidal power, gas pipelines and power and telecommunications cables are all areas of significant activity both in Germany and the UK, and are likely to continue in the future. UK-German cooperation by academic researchers training PhD and postdoctoral students is one way to help ensure that continued cooperation also occurs in commercial activities.

I began this essay by saying that UK-Germany collaborative working, as reflected in jointly published scientific papers, was increasing.

However, the chart below, which uses a logarithmic scale, suggest a decrease in the rate at which joint articles were increasing after the year 2002. This is perhaps an early warning.

With the UK poised to leave the European Union, ways need to be found to enable continued working between academic groups based in the UK and Germany, if our valuable joint working in marine science is to continue.

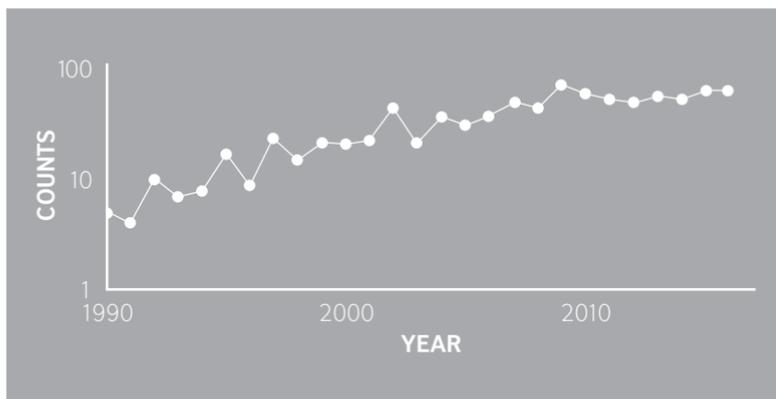


Figure 2: The counts of Figure 1 plotted logarithmically. A continuous exponential increase would be a straight line in such a graph. The graph has two straighter segments with different gradients before and after the early 2000s, suggesting that the exponential rate of increase in joint publications actually slowed somewhat. For 1990–2002 joint publications doubled every 5 years but this time increased to 12 years in 2003–2016. This trend change may not necessarily appear if a broader set of journal titles were included, though is potentially troubling nevertheless.

<http://www.sees.manchester.ac.uk>

Learning German in the Age of Global English

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Globalisation has created the illusion in English-speaking countries that other languages are becoming irrelevant in the modern world. In Britain this perception is underpinned by the country's island status and divided stance on Europe. The impact on German – once second to French in UK schools – has been particularly stark: the number of pupils in England now taking the language to A level (university entrance exams) has dropped below 3,500 and some of these are native or near-native speakers. Universities have been closing their German departments because of a lack of applicants, and this has in turn critically diminished the supply of German teachers. While appreciation of German is still common among many members of the older generation, the vast majority of school leavers now have no sense of familiarity with the language.

Spanish has long overtaken German, and briefly bucked a more general trend of decline in language learning in schools. However, numbers in Spanish are now falling as well, along with those in French. A small increase in non-European languages such as Mandarin and Arabic is attributable in part to native speakers and does not significantly change the picture. At GCSE level (age 15/16) numbers superficially appear more encouraging; but here, too, there is a trend of decline.

The current challenges are by no means new, though the effects have become more marked. Modern languages were already under pressure in 1992, when the UK entered the European Single Market, and efforts to promote German as the language of Britain's key European export partner proved ineffectual even then. This suggests that the economic arguments are not in themselves persuasive enough to motivate significant investment in the subject. Neither has the promise of a potential career advantage proved effective in strengthening take-up among young learners. Overall, it has become plausible to argue that language learning is indeed irrelevant in a context where English is established as the global lingua franca and main language of the internet, and translation into and from other languages is available – albeit in rough and ready form – at the touch of a button.

This argument is gaining sway in the UK, and it is the flip-side of the exclusively pragmatic and functional approach to language learning that has prevailed since the 1980s. Paradoxically, during the very period in which knowledge of non-English languages has become less obviously useful, school syllabuses, methodologies and arguments advocating the benefits of language learning in the UK have converged on the principle

that their chief benefit lies in their usefulness. The methodologies developed for teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in language schools have been adopted uncritically for teaching non-English languages to UK learners in more academically oriented contexts, notably the assumption that only 'pure' target-language teaching will deliver the desired competence.

The exclusive focus on practical benefits has drained the subject of cognitive interest, cultural richness and emotional appeal. Meanwhile insufficient curriculum time is available, especially in state-maintained schools, to give learners the sense of fast progress and tangibly increasing linguistic facility that can make up for content-related stimulus. Moreover, opportunities for learners to gain inspiration from live contact with the language in a native setting are diminishing, as financially hard-pressed schools do without language assistants, while school exchanges are dying out because of safeguarding regulations, costs, and a lack of teacher time.

While non-English-speaking countries invest at least in English, there is no single language that clearly stands out as deserving investment for the UK. Equally good arguments can be found for teaching French, Spanish, German, Russian, Mandarin, Arabic...

The focus on the skills aspect of languages, and especially speaking skills, has had consequences for examining the subject, which have in turn impacted negatively on its popularity. Expectations concerning progress in the available curriculum time tend to be over-optimistic, which means that exam boards set over-ambitious targets, teachers are under pressure to spoon-feed set phrases, and learners become discouraged because they underperform and believe they are bad at languages.

While languages, and especially German, have long been notorious in the UK for being 'difficult', the exam boards and the national exam regulator Ofqual system have perversely raised the bar even further: it is statistically harder for English-speaking learners to get the top marks in languages than in other comparable subjects. One reason for this is the participation of native speakers of the language in every exam cohort. The English exam regulator Ofqual has only now identified this as problematic – especially for German. It should not therefore come as a surprise that pupils choose other subjects instead.

The UK's young generation, then, is growing up with the advantage of speaking the global lingua franca and the handicap of becoming locked into an English-speaking world without acquiring the ability to learn new languages.

As numbers fall, loss of critical mass cripples teaching provision: in schools and universities alike, Modern Languages is an expensive subject because of its fragmentation. While non-English-speaking countries invest at least in English, there is no single language that clearly stands out as deserving investment for the UK. Equally good arguments can be found for teaching French, Spanish, German, Russian, Mandarin, Arabic ...

The difficulties caused by fragmentation and inadequate curriculum time are evident in an initiative introduced by the UK government in 2014 to establish language learning at primary level. It is now compulsory for all children in state-maintained schools to learn a language between age 7 and 11. However, primary schools are free to decide which language or languages they teach, around 60 minutes a week are considered sufficient, and many schools lack trained language teachers. The initiative is better than nothing – but it fails to lay an effective foundation for language learning in secondary schools, where a teacher will be faced with a class that includes some children with competence in the language taught, while others are total beginners.

The UK's young generation, then, is growing up with the advantage of speaking the global lingua franca and the handicap of becoming locked into an English-speaking world without acquiring the ability to learn new languages. Meanwhile young people in Germany, or China, are learning at least a second language from an early age, often spending time in an English-speaking country, and not only becoming highly competent in a second language but also growing more globally aware, and able to appreciate the significance of cultural diversity.

So what is the way out of this vicious circle? And how can German serve as a case study for breathing new life into Modern Languages in the UK? There are no magic solutions, and it would be unrealistic to expect a sudden government enthusiasm for investing in languages given the current focus on maths and sciences. But there are opportunities. There's a willingness to look afresh at teaching methodology, and a

new set of exam syllabuses has increased the role of cultural content. The worsening crisis in schools has created a greater awareness of the need for all parts of the education system to work together and for national bodies such as the British Council to play a prominent part. New initiatives are essential if the shortage of teachers is to be addressed and an infrastructure created that makes language provision sustainable beyond the private sector. Equally important is ongoing work with Ofqual and the exam boards to ensure that grading is fair.

Overall, the teaching and learning of Modern Languages in the UK needs to be made fit for the 21st century, and this will entail a cultural shift. It means recognising that Britain never was, and is now even less than in the past, a monoglot country. It also entails teaching languages in imaginative ways that enhance understanding of language as such while fostering systematic knowledge, deep understanding, and effective use of a particular language.

A distinction needs to be drawn between the arguments that are designed to promote investment in the subject, and the means of enthusing learners sufficiently to keep them engaged. The benefits of learning languages include cognitive enhancement, delay of dementia, improved communicative flexibility, and enhanced cultural imagination. Fields where the benefits are tangible include diplomacy and business, especially export. German in particular can bring tangible career advantages. Above all, learning languages puts learners in touch with people from another culture, and it will tend to make them more open-minded. However, none of these promised benefits will in themselves be sufficient to attract young learners, or keep them motivated over the years it takes to learn a language properly.

To some extent, at least, the benefits of learning a language need to arise out of the business of learning itself, and the teacher will usually be best placed to know what is likely to work for their pupils. Aspects such as the following could help to build a broadly based understanding of what makes languages valuable – and what makes German special:

1. Everyone is a linguist – The interplay between group-specific languages and a lingua franca that is used for communication between groups is an age-old phenomenon that appears to be fundamental to the human condition. Not everyone in the Roman world conversed only in Latin any more than everyone in India or the UK converses only in standard English. Most UK schools now constitute a microcosm of this principle. One language in the richly polyglot mix may be German.

2. Languages help to forge new relationships – We are social beings, and language is our chief means of communicating with each other. In love, socialising or business transactions, we forge a subtly

new relationship with each person we talk to. Adjusting our language is part of that process – we'll often use different words, grammar and pronunciation depending on whether we're talking to a child, our boss, or a close friend. Even the ability to say a couple of simple words or phrases in another language can open doors, and be the start of great things. Trying out those words and phrases so they really sound German is not at all easy – enhancing appreciation of what makes it sound interestingly and even excitingly different from English.

3. Languages mingle and develop along with the people who speak them – The heritage of the British Isles is embedded in modern English. And it doesn't take long to discover Germanic roots, or imports from German like *zeitgeist* and *schadenfreude*.

4. Linguistic diversity interacts with cultural diversity – Languages are inseparable from the people that speak them – or are they? What about lingua francas? And is there any connection between German national stereotypes and the German language?

5. Language learning builds bridges into the unknown – Translation and comparative work on idioms and 'false friends' open one's eyes to similarities between languages and give an appreciation of differences, both in language and culture. Why would *Gift* be an unwelcome present? What makes English fidgets have 'ants in their pants' while German ones suffer from a bumble bee ('Hummel in der Hose')? And is there a deep connection between the enviable German work ethic and the imaginative concept of *Feierabend* (literally 'celebratory evening') for the end of the day's work?

6. Languages aren't just what you say but also how you think – What does German word order do to your pathways of thought? Does language have anything to do with the fact that Germany and Austria have brought forth so many scientists, philosophers and psychologists? What is the connection between Nietzsche's *Übermensch* and Freud's *Über-Ich* – and where do Uber taxis fit in?

7. Grammar isn't everything – While German genders and cases are a nightmare, German words are like a voyage of discovery – and they take you a long way. English speakers can often guess the meaning, and learning one word usually brings lots of others for free – *springen* (to jump) gives you not just the quirky *Springinsfeld* (madcap, literally 'hop into the field') but also *Sprung* and of course *Vorsprung*. No amount of grammar will explain why *ein Schwein haben* means to have a pig while *Schwein haben* means to be lucky. Moreover, you can have fun adding them together or taking them apart, as with this well-worn captain employed by the Danube steam ship company: *Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaftskapitän*.

8. Languages are a matter of the heart as well as the mind –

Involving the imagination and emotions through stories, poems and games carries learners over difficulties and brings a foreign language to life. Grimm's fairy tales are both familiar and often very strange – and they lend themselves to infinite fresh adaptations.

9. Languages create and express identities –

Learning languages is not just about regurgitating ready-made chunks. Drama, music and creative writing draw out unexpected talents that can reinvent themselves in German – and enable learners to experience first-hand how important languages are for expressing personal identity. It is then but a short step to Goethe and Brecht, Bach and Kraftwerk.

10. Language matters – You don't need to look far to find German history that connects with UK history, and raises far-reaching questions concerning the relationship between past and present. Recordings can bring language and history to life interactively – and demonstrate the far-reaching effect of words like *Gleichschaltung* with chilling effect. Alternatively, you can relax into speculating how British culture has benefited from German royals.

Whether any of the above captures the learner's interest will depend above all on the teacher. And which aspect might turn the learner on will depend on their personality. Like languages themselves, language learning thrives on diversity – and human relationships.

Beyond Bratwurst:
Observations on a Decade
of Translated German
Fiction in the UK
(2005 to 2015)

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Both Germany and the UK have a rich literary and publishing history, and are dynamic contributors to the global cultural economy. The German and British publishing industries are two of the largest, most active, and best established in Europe.

The London and Frankfurt book fairs are two of the biggest book fairs in the world and are both very important in the international trade in rights. In various ways, the UK and German publishing industries are committed to participating in the international publishing industry, and thus to communicating on a global scale.

Sometimes, the dearth of translations in the English-speaking world is called the 'Three Percent Problem', in recognition of the fact that only approximately 3% of published literature is fiction in translation.

Despite a general consensus and awareness that translations can mediate between cultures in an increasingly globalized world, the UK bestseller market is relatively hostile to translated literature. Sometimes, the dearth of translations in the English-speaking world is called the 'Three Percent Problem', in recognition of the fact that only approximately 3% of published literature is fiction in translation. A 2012

study confirmed this symbolic number as a ballpark figure, finding that around 2.5% of all publications in the United Kingdom and 4.5% of published literature (that is, fiction, poetry and drama) from 2008 to 2010 were translations.

Over the past years, the popularity of genre-specific titles (such as Swedish crime fiction); and specific authors (such as Elena Ferrante) have boosted sales for other, similar, translated titles. A newer study, based on numbers from 2014 to 2016, shows numbers continually rising, although it raises questions about bibliodiversity. Research has shown that independent presses in the UK are very engaged in publishing translated literature, and that social media, book blogs, online book reviews and reading group sites have much improved the status of translated literature in the UK. Of greater concern, according to the study, is the lack of diversity of translated titles – for example the focus on genre fiction and male authors – and the limited audience for translations, which the study described as above-average-educated middle class readers living in urban centres, particularly London. This touches on an important and tricky point: publishing statistics do not tell us anything about the buyers and readers of published books.

Nonetheless, the numbers are still significantly lower than in Germany, where approximately 25% of fiction titles are translations – and roughly 70% of literary translations in Germany come from English (whether American, British, or other variants). Unfortunately, we do not have comparable annual figures for the proportion of German-language books among literary translations published in the UK and Ireland. What we do know is that as far as source languages of translated fiction in the UK go, German is the second most translated language, lagging far behind French.

CATEGORIES OF TRANSLATED GERMAN FICTION

In order to better understand which types of books are able to cross the channel from Germany to the UK, we established a corpus of relevant titles on the basis of the British Library's British National Bibliography (BNB) database. The research corpus includes all works of fiction that fall under BIC classification 'F: Fiction and Related Items', irrespective of genre. The BNB database was searched for German fiction published by or in the UK (or by a publisher with an office in the UK). This ongoing collection of titles provides an overview of the key titles, trends, publishers, and translators involved in the transfer of German fiction into the UK market. The categorisation here is based on German books published in the UK between 2005 and 2015. So far, we have identified these different main categories of translated German fiction:

1. Steadysellers and classics

Esther Allen, the executive director of Columbia University's Centre for Literary Translation, has said of the crisis of translation in English 'The number of novels being published in translation is ridiculously small [...] If you sort out the authors who are already globally validated – Nobel winners and so on – and the retranslations of the classics, then it's absurd'. The first group of translated titles are exactly these steadysellers and classics which have been canonized and are thus made available over and over again, republished on the occasion of anniversaries, birthdays, and the like. For German fiction in translation, this applies to modern classics like Siegfried Lenz as well as 20th and 21st Century Nobel Prize winners Heinrich Böll, Günter Grass, and Herta Müller. Classics naturally include Schiller and Goethe. Since these texts are often out of copyright, there are multiple editions by a variety of publishers.

2. Bestsellers

Often – and more surprisingly – German fantasy and thriller authors make their way across the channel. In our database, names such as Markus Heitz with his Dwarf novels (German publisher: Piper, Orbit; UK publisher: Little, Brown Book Group) or Sebastian Fitzek (German publishers: Lübbe and DroemerKnaur; UK publisher: Atlantic Books) and Frank Schätzing (German publisher: Kiepenheuer & Witsch; UK publisher: Quercus) with their highly readable but probably rather short-lived bestselling thrillers pop up regularly.

Crossover authors, whose writing appeals to young adults and not-so-young adults, are also well-represented in the list, one of the most notable examples being Cornelia Funke. Funke (e.g. *Inkworld* trilogy; German publisher: Oetinger; UK publisher: ChickenHouse Scholastic) has successfully tapped into English markets and even into Hollywood. Another author who falls into this category – though of an earlier vintage – is Michael Ende with his book *The Neverending Story*. Contemporary authors who also belong to this category are Walter Moers with his *Zamonia* books (German publisher: Knaus; UK publisher: Harvill Secker/Penguin Random House) and Kai Meyer with his fantasy trilogies (German publishers: Carlsen, Heyne, Loewe and Fischer Jugendbuch/FJB; UK publisher: Egmont).

3. 'Do mention the war!'

A clearly identifiable theme is what we like to call 'Do mention the war!' books, a tongue-in-cheek reference to the famous line from the classic BBC comedy *Fawlty Towers*: 'Don't mention the war!' There is an obvious preference of British readers for fiction dealing with the World Wars and Nazi Germany. Anthea Bell OBE, one of the most prominent translators from German into English, has repeatedly shared her impressions on British readers' tastes. 'If you translate from German, you get a lot of material to do with the Nazi period and the Holocaust'.

A recent and particularly interesting example is the better-late-than-never translation of Hans Fallada's book *Everyman Dies Alone/Alone in Berlin*, which depicts the everyday working-class life in Nazi Germany and incorporates the true story of Otto and Elise Hempel, who wrote and distributed dissident postcards and were eventually caught, tried and beheaded for their resistance to the regime. The book was published in Germany in 1947, and not translated into English until 2009. Michael Hofmann's translation was well-received, and the book's status as a rediscovery from the past made it a surprising runaway bestseller in the UK and even in the USA with hundreds of thousands of copies sold. In the *Guardian*, Sam Jordison wrote, 'It's an important book that no English writer could have written – and so another resounding argument for the importance of taking in translations. It makes me wonder what else we've been missing'.

Timur Vermes' satirical novel *Er ist wieder da/Look Who's Back* (German publisher: Eichborn; UK publisher: MacLehose Press) is a premier example of this category. In the novel, Adolf Hitler wakes up in 2011 in Berlin and becomes a comedian and YouTube star with a reputation for never breaking character as a Hitler impersonator. The book has been translated into roughly 40 languages and even recently appeared in Israel. The translation by Jamie Bulloch appeared in 2014, following much international media attention. For instance, even before the English translation was available, the BBC reviewed the original German version in 2013, asking, 'Can the Führer be funny?' *Guardian* writer Philip Oltermann stated, 'There's no question that the novel has hit upon the key paradox of our modern obsession with Hitler'. In the meantime, the book has sold over two million copies in Germany alone and been made into a successful film, snapped up by Netflix for international distribution.

Contemporary German fiction can offer UK readers insight into contemporary, post-reunification German society, helping readers to surpass the popular stereotypes: past WWII, beyond bratwurst, Christkindelmarkt, Oktoberfest, and Angela Merkel.

4. Contemporary German fiction – Germany beyond bratwurst and beer

Contemporary German fiction can offer UK readers insight into contemporary, post-reunification German society, helping readers to surpass the popular stereotypes: past WWII, beyond bratwurst, Christkindelmarkt, Oktoberfest, and Angela Merkel. In this way, contemporary German fiction can be an important puzzle piece towards understanding in a changing Europe and world. Names that come to mind are, for instance, Clemens Mayer, who was born in the German

Democratic Republic in 1977, or Jakob Arjouni, with his crime novels featuring a second-generation immigrant from Turkey as a detective.

But what sorts of German fiction make it across the channel besides the aforementioned classics, steadysellers, bestselling thrillers, fantasy novels, and fiction about Nazi Germany? Contemporary novels translated from the German were mostly highbrow literary novels, often (incorrectly) associated mainly with male authors. Over the past few years, more commercial and accessible writing has crossed the language barrier, for instance Sven Regener or Daniel Kehlmann's novels. Patrick Süskind and Bernhard Schlink are earlier representatives of this phenomenon. Which brings us back to the issue of bibliodiversity. While contemporary German female writers such as Monika Held, Karen Duve or Julia Franck have crossed the channel, our preliminary findings show that female writers are few and far between.

The fact that we are seeing new, more accessible fiction in translation in the UK, can be considered a breakthrough in a certain sense. There are a number of actors involved in this process.

THE TRANSLATIONS ECOSYSTEM: GERMANY TO THE UK

German authors themselves have become active players in the translation market, looking for marketing and translation opportunities. Translators are advocates for books in translations, out of idealism and, naturally, out of good business sense. Besides Anthea Bell, other renowned British translators of German fiction are Sally-Jane Spencer, Michael Hofmann, John Maxwell Brownjohn, Jamie Bulloch, and Katy Derbyshire, who has a blog dedicated to translation and German fiction called 'Love German Books' (<http://lovegermanbooks.blogspot.de/>).

As indicated earlier, independent publishers have proven to be safe havens for novels in translations from all sorts of languages. In the past decade or so, British indie publishers have welcomed literature from a variety of backgrounds into their programs. In regard to German fiction, there are some publishers that have a special connection, such as Haus Publishing, founded in 2003 by Barbara Schwepcke, a German-born journalist. So far, however, no UK indie publisher has been founded that only specializes in German-language fiction, whereas there are specialized UK publishers for French books (Gallic Books), Italian crime fiction (Hersilia Press), Dutch authors (Holland Park Press), and new writing from Central and Eastern Europe (Stork Press).

Whether conglomerate or indie, both types of publishers are happy to accept translations subsidies from the Goethe Institute and the London-based initiative *New Books in German* (NBG; <http://www.new-books-in-german.com/>).

NBG, founded in 1996, functions as an independent intermediary addressing publishers in the UK and the US to encourage them to commission more translations of books written in German, by providing an overview of the thousands of new titles published in Germany, Austria and Switzerland each year. Consisting of a periodical and a website, NBG offers impartial orientation for readers of English, not only focusing on private consumers or editors from publishing houses, but also trying to generate attention for the selected titles among participants from every branch of the book trade, such as translators, literary critics and journalists, booksellers, German departments in universities, and libraries.

In addition to actual translations funding, literary prizes function as symbolic capital, which make books more marketable and attractive for translation. The German Book Prize, founded in 2005, is explicitly marketed as a promotional tool to boost translations. A number of factors influence the decision for the purchase of translation rights, including the popularity of a book in the original language. While the German Book Prize guarantees media attention and the books normally sell quite well, not all of them become immediate bestsellers. Krechel's cerebral and very long novel *Landgericht* (2012), for instance, has not been translated into any language, whereas Franck's *Die Mittagsfrau / The Blind Side of the Heart* (2007, transl. 2009) has been translated into over two dozen languages in a multitude of editions. Analysis of the current translation statistics for the German Book Prize (2005 to 2016) showed that roughly 60% of the prizewinners have been translated into English, or the English-language rights have been sold. Considering the low percentage of translations into English in general, this is an impressive quota which demonstrates the marketing power of the award.

CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

Every spring and every autumn, new German books – and thus new translation opportunities – flood the market, looking for potential UK publishers (and readers). So it is important to keep abreast of trends in the market. It will also be interesting to track changes in connection with the Brexit process.

As the British publishing industry becomes increasingly concentrated in the hands of fewer, large conglomerates, more niche (and unprofitable) areas of publishing, such as translation, tend to be overlooked. Translation in the book publishing industry is an interesting and evolving area of research, despite its comparatively marginal economic significance in the UK market.

While the economic significance may remain marginal, the cultural significance of making fiction in translation available to UK readers is great. Books in translation can teach readers about foreign countries, cities, and people, and encourage them to empathise with protagonists from different linguistic and national backgrounds. It is imperative that UK readers, especially post-Brexit, have access to a vibrant and diverse range of books in translation. Our research is one stepping-stone towards a more comprehensive understanding, and hopefully a greater appreciation, of the culture of translation in the UK.

An extended, fully-referenced version of this essay can be found here: 'Crossing the Channel. Publishing Translated German Fiction in the UK' *Publishing Research Quarterly*. 32 (2016) 2, pp. 125–138.

Bristol and Hannover:
The Past and Future
of City Twins

ANN KENNARD

Chair, Bristol-Hannover Council

Bristol and Hannover recently celebrated the 70th anniversary of their relationship, begun in the dark years following World War Two, when there was no general expectation of friendship between the two nations – quite the opposite, in fact. However, due to the imagination and far-sightedness of a small number of people so recently at war, a new start was made, which came to involve people of all ages and from all sectors of society. The relationship has had its ups and downs over the years, and there is evidence these days that officialdom in the UK is less enthusiastic about these links than their German counterparts. But the links are still there, and the enthusiasm with which this latest anniversary has been greeted on both sides of the Channel indicates that there is much to hope for, even in the context of Britain drawing back from its previous close relationship with Europe.

Early in 1947, when Europe was struggling through the worst winter in living memory, two men in Bristol were thinking the unthinkable: that Bristol should consider a friendship with a city in Germany. Alderman St John Reade and August Closs, Professor of German at the University of Bristol, had a shared vision of a better future, and were aided in this by Katharina Petersen, who had emigrated to Britain but later returned to work in the Education Ministry of Lower Saxony. She suggested Hannover, a city of similar size and importance to Bristol and conveniently located in the British occupation zone of partitioned Germany. Brigadier Maude, the British Educational Officer for the area, wrote to St John Reade, proposing a programme for a visit, and at the same time mentioned that the children of Hannover would be unable to go to school in the winter, as there was an acute shortage of children's shoes: could Bristol's schools possibly collect 'cast-offs'?

The rest, as they say, is history, for a goodwill mission set out on 30th August, consisting of St John Reade, Professor Closs, Edward Seath (Secretary of the city's Youth Committee), Crofton Gane of the Chamber of Commerce, and Donald Hughes, an artist of private means, and was received with amazement in Hannover. In return for the shoes, toys and sweets (on ration) which the children of Hannover received, teachers and students visited Bristol to give concerts and folk-song evenings (many years later, for the 50th anniversary, a musical 'Musik for Shoes' was written and performed in both Bristol and Hannover).

The fact that we have been able to celebrate our 70th anniversary – jubilee as the Germans call it – on such a grand scale, shows that there is still a very solid background of mutual interest, awareness and friendship.

The subsequent decades saw an enormous expansion of exchanges from all sectors of society: trades unions, university and school exchanges, as well as partnerships between choirs, instrumentalists, drama groups, youth groups, churches, commercial groups such as insurance workers, public sector groups such as the fire services, and a very active and long-lived sporting exchange. This latter still takes place today, though no longer

under the aegis of the City Council, but through the efforts of particular clubs and societies, such as rowing, badminton and gymnastics, and latterly a new recruit: roller derby!

There is no question that the city partnership has had its ups and downs, with changes in personnel and policy, both locally and nationally. However, the fact that we have been able to celebrate our 70th anniversary – jubilee as the Germans call it – on such a grand scale, shows that there is still a very solid background of mutual interest, awareness and friendship. Bristol and Hannover are bound together over a wide spectrum of activities, regardless of whether some of them are temporarily out of action, or indeed have given way to new ways of working together.

In February 2016, a group of interested people met – representatives of the Bristol-Hannover and Bristol-Bordeaux committees, Bristol City Council, the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor, Master Elect of the Guild of Guardians (linked to the Mansion House) and the Director of Bristol Zoo – to discuss how we could best celebrate the 70th anniversary of the links with Hannover and Bordeaux in 2017. It was also in February, just after that first meeting, that David Cameron announced that there would be a referendum on EU membership on June 23rd of that year, though few of us thought there was any real fear of the UK leaving the EU at that point. We were of one mind that the celebrations in Bristol were to be for the citizens as a whole, and we would have a launch in January 2017 at the city's M-Shed museum, with children from Bristol's primary and secondary schools singing and acting in French

and German. The British-German Association had offered to co-host a national twinning conference in Bristol, and this was fixed for May, with a massive party at Bristol Zoo in July. Invitations would go out to the mayors of Hannover and Bordeaux, as well as the citizens of those cities. After a summer break, there would be a Business Summit, to include business persons from all three cities, and a final Gala Dinner in November. These were the key events, but many others emerged along the way: a project recalling Bristol-Hannover's beginnings with children's shoes, a concert with French and German music, Jazz musicians and street artists from Bordeaux taking part in festivals in Bristol, sporting exchanges, and much more.

The city partnership conference attracted 120 delegates and showed that there is the drive and intention to move twinings forward, in spite of difficulties, for instance in funding, and – in some cases – declining membership, due often to the difficulty in attracting young people. One clear conclusion from the conference was the need to use social media much more in order to reach today's young people, as well as contacting sports and other youth organisations, and intensifying efforts to boost German language take-up with the help of the German Embassy, via Think German Networks and the UK-German Connection. All agreed that good relations between the twinning association and its local authority are key, although the Bürgermeister of Hannover noted that, 'unusually, it was citizens of the two cities rather than the city councils themselves who initiated the partnership with Bristol. There is no doubt that it contributed enormously to peace and mutual understanding. With Brexit looming and conflicts in Europe, twinning should be strongly supported'. The Mayor of Bristol also underlined his support for the partnership and committed to using the link to boost the local economy as part of his international strategy. There was a concluding feeling that there is a need for a UK-wide umbrella organisation to ensure regular contact between the partnership associations, and this is under active consideration by the British-German Association.

The 'block-buster' events of the anniversary year have been the civic exchanges between the cities: a smaller visit to Bordeaux in May, which included a reception by the Mayor, former PM Alain Juppé; then on the fateful date of June 23rd, the anniversary of the Brexit vote, Bristol welcomed the mayors of Hannover and Bordeaux with both their council entourages and citizen groups, to a great event at Bristol Zoo. 2,500 Bristol citizens came to enjoy entertainment from all three

cities, and impassioned statements by all three mayors, that underlined their commitment to the partnerships regardless of what was decided in Westminster and Brussels. Unusually, Bristol's media were present, but the report on the local TV news very much emphasised the Brexit anniversary, rather than the rich panoply of links between citizens. Incidentally, the BBC had failed to turn up for the twinning conference in May to do promised interviews, and these were ultimately covered only by a small local media company.

A very different scenario met the large group of citizens who visited Hannover in August to celebrate the jubilee. There the city council had prepared a Memorandum on the Continuation of Friendly Relations, which was signed in a formal ceremony at Hannover's Rathaus by both mayors and the two Chairs of the twinning associations. The Memorandum affirmed the continuation of the link and 'to renew our promise to further promote the exchange in ... numerous areas. In view of the many global conflicts, we will, in the spirit of the founding agreement of our city's partnership, contribute to a deepening of the respect, trust and mutual understanding between our two cities and to promote peace and tolerance in Europe and the world'. This and other events during our stay, such as an international fireworks display by a British firm, were richly covered by Hannover's media, including an interview with two ladies in their 80s who had last met in 1952, when they could be said to have been leading the way in the post-war reconciliation efforts.

The fact that it has been possible to engage so many people in three partner cities to celebrate 70 years of friendship demonstrates that there is still plenty of enthusiasm for these links, both at citizen level and also that of local authorities. Indeed it has been striking that the mayors of Bristol, Hannover and Bordeaux have been very forthright in their commitment to continuing to develop the city links, in spite of Brexit. There have also been invitations to other events and seminars on international topics, where the voice of twinning is actively sought and documented. This is a new development after many years of twinning being widely seen as a bunch of retirees visiting their pals; and it indicates a sea-change and a definite raising of the profile of twinning. The traditional exchanges of cultural and sporting groups have taken place and will continue to do so, unaffected by the wider political agenda – our anniversary has only intensified this process. Why would friends across the water cease to be friends because of political decisions over which they have little or no control? Local authorities in

*Why would friends
across the water cease
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and generally exchange expertise for the good of citizens on either side. The twinning associations can help in this: they can provide a wide range of contacts, and are an experienced – and free – source of information, as well as keeping the cultural links alive. Memo to all: get into social media and involve the citizens of the future!

the UK are being squeezed financially, which does affect the extent to which they can, for instance, finance visits to their partner cities (often still today seen by local media as ‘jollies’), but today’s electronic communications make it possible to set up mutual projects, make investments,

A Scientific Journey in Europe

RAY DOLAN FRS

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Over the past 15 years I have spent an awful lot of time walking the streets of Berlin. Its flatness makes it a most forgiving city for the walker, and it is no surprise that the world's fastest marathons are often recorded here. It is after all a city constructed on sandy waterlogged soil, and where each new construction project sprouts an impressive profusion of colourful drainage pipework. It is hard to make a convincing case that Berlin is physically beautiful, but its attraction rests in it oozing a beguiling unpretentious charm, a product of a deep and tragic history, its relatively uncluttered pavements and its endless architectural surprises. Over 15 years I have also witnessed a city transformed by ambitious, sometimes controversial, construction projects. These are invariably attentive to the value of their immediate public spaces, unlike similar projects in London which too often ignore their immediate social context. I have felt comfortably at home in Berlin, more so than in any other city outside my home city, London. It is odd to reflect that up to 2002 I had never visited Berlin. In this instance familiarity has bred a deep respect.

My affiliation with Berlin, and Germany, over a decade and a half is down to a high degree of serendipity. In 2004, I received an Alexander von Humboldt Award, and in 2007 the Max Planck Research Award. Both awards provided me with resources to engage in collaborative work with German scientists. Both included resources that enabled extended research stays. These stays facilitated the face to face interactions that are the foundation stone for enduring scientific collaborations. In particular, I struck up a strong and successful working relationship with Professor Hans-Jochen Heinze and his colleagues at the University of Magdeburg. This seeded subsequent rich scientific exchanges. Most importantly it enabled many of our brightest post-doctoral scientists to spend extended working periods in laboratories in London or in Magdeburg; exchanges and collaborations that continue to this day. Despite advances in communication technologies, such as the ubiquitous Skype, pressing the flesh is the lubricant of choice when it comes to engendering enduring and creative collaborations.

Extended periods spent in Berlin provided an opportunity to nurture young scientists as well as get to know a wide range of scientific peers.

My research stays in Germany have not been confined to Magdeburg, and I have been fortunate to have had other opportunities for engagement with German colleagues. Prominent among these are successful collaborations with colleagues in Berlin, both at the Charité Hospital and Humboldt University. These collaborations benefited from a Visiting Einstein Fellowship, awarded to me by the State of Berlin, an award that spanned the years 2010 to 2014. This Fellowship allowed me an opportunity to set up a research group at the Berlin School of Mind and Brain, based at the Humboldt University. As I was in Berlin every month this meant I could invest heavily in my Berlin walks, enduring its cold and grey winters with a degree of melancholic pleasure. Extended periods spent in Berlin provided an opportunity to nurture young scientists as well as get to know a wide range of scientific peers. One of these was Ulman Lindenberger, a Director at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, in Dahlem. Our shared interests in the computational underpinnings of cognition laid the groundwork for the formation of the Max Planck-UCL Centre, which we now co-direct.

The Max Planck-UCL Centre for Computational Psychiatry and Ageing was launched in 2014 at an event at the Royal Society, London. The Centre, co-located in Berlin and London, was a new initiative funded jointly by the Max Planck Society and University College London (UCL). Its scientific mission is to pursue discovery-based research into the neurobiology of psychiatric disorders and the causes of individual differences in cognitive development, with an emphasis on adulthood and old age. As suggested by its name, the work carried out in the Centre takes its inspiration from a highly influential and growing field of computational neuroscience.

Back in 2009, when I first mooted the idea of establishing a Max Planck Centre in the UK, its realisation seemed a very remote possibility. At an intellectual level the idea of creating such a Centre was obvious. Many in the field, including myself, had long concluded there was an urgent need to leverage a burgeoning knowledge within the neurosciences to tackle problems related to mental health and ageing, both of which represent growing societal challenges. A major barrier at the time was the stark fact that the Max Planck Society (MPS) had never funded in the UK. However, one chink of light was that the then MPS President, Peter Gruss, had begun to develop an agenda that included a greater

international presence for the society. The trust built up over years travelling to Germany meant that in pursuing the idea I had the support of influential colleagues, including individuals within the MPS who were sympathetic and supportive. I have no doubt that the realisation of a Max Planck Centre in 2014 had much to do with having built these close relationships, fostered through personal contact over extended periods. Reflecting back, I am equally certain these relationships were greatly facilitated by an ease of movement between the UK and Germany, as well as by a sense that creating transnational partnerships were a fruition of the best ideals embodied by the core ideals of the European Union.

A Centre based at two sites, Berlin and London, might appear a cumbersome arrangement. The reality is that it has enabled my colleagues and I to build on, and exploit, complementary skills present at both sites. From the outset we recognised that the challenges posed by mental illness and ageing require cooperation on an international scale. This in turn has helped to create an internationally-leading research enterprise of a type that that would be difficult to achieve at either location alone. The creation of such a centre reflects particular qualities of European partnerships. Firstly, there is the advantage provided by collaborations between geographically proximal neighbours who are likely to share a common cultural and scientific heritage. In terms of science it is impossible to lose sight of the fact that Britain and Germany have an extraordinary and unrivalled legacy. This includes a roll-call of Himalayan-stature figures, whose enduring contribution has shaped the entire face of modern science. These include intellectual giants such as Alexander von Humboldt, Darwin, Einstein, Gauss, Hertz, Max Planck, Goeppert-Mayer, Heisenberg, Maxwell, Crick, Faraday, Franklin, Priestley, Dirac, Dalton, Hodgkin among a vast and endless gallery.

In a decade and a half of travel, back and forth, to Germany what has made things easy has been the absence of any real sense of a border, beyond the symbolic cursory glance at a passport at an immigration booth. For me this provided a welcoming and comforting glow. The contrast with entering the USA is stark, and despite its 'special relationship status' the tone at immigration has an unfortunate tendency to veer towards the hostile. Borders and walls have long loomed ominously on the mental horizons of my generation, especially those of us brought up in the 1960s. This includes 'the border' between the north and south of Ireland, the Iron Curtain that divided Europe and (arguably the ultimate symbol of division) the Berlin Wall. Their absence has been akin to the feeling of relief after emitting a deep sigh. Against this backdrop the troubling reality that we are in the process of recreating borders between the UK and the rest of Europe carries the foreboding of dark storm clouds on the horizon.

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An account of my interactions with German scientific colleagues would be incomplete without acknowledging an abiding sense that had grown up – one we took for granted – that we were players in shaping a new identity.

Here I am referring to a European identity that extolled the virtues of openness, collaboration and collegiality. This personal experience is also mirrored in the fact that over two decades a whole new shared world order has opened up for European scientists, one built on foundations and principles of inclusiveness and cooperation. This has found expression in organisations such as the Federal European Neuroscience Society (FENS), the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) as well as access to common funding mechanisms, most notably the European Research Council (ERC).

Over the past decade my laboratory in London has become a multicultural melting pot, heavily populated by the brightest and best young scientists from all over Europe, and beyond. My first-hand experience is that the majority of these young scientists invariably return to their own countries, usually after stays of three to five years, setting up new laboratories and running their own research programmes. In most cases the bonds of friendship and common scientific enterprise endure and have created a fertile ground for new collaborative ventures. I have seen no evidence that support xenophobic suggestions that arrangements allowing young scientists into UK allow the creation of proverbial Trojan horses.

And then, when things seemed to be going so well, we have Brexit. The assumed world of science without borders has suddenly collapsed against a rhetorical cacophony of half-truths and downright dishonesty. How this historical decision will impact on the close scientific community that has grown up in the wider context of the European Union is a source of great and continuing anxiety, not just in the UK but also across Europe. Where we had painstakingly built harmony and collegiality we now have an unresolved discomfort of uncertainty. This is amplified by a deep frustration that few of us were willing partners in this monumental, albeit electorally marginal, decision.

Despite reassuring noises from the great and the good, European doctoral and post-doctoral scientists working in UK express a growing anxiety as to their future status. This is an anxiety I share given the

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unresolved uncertainty around the thorny question represented by the free movement of labour. A lack of resolution of this issue, as we hurtle to the cliff edge, is a source of on-going damage. Most starkly it is impacting on applications for new positions across laboratories in the UK, where the pool of applicants from European countries has collapsed.

I am asked with increasing frequency what will be the fate of the Max Planck-UCL Centre. My response remains, perhaps naively, unashamedly optimistic. I continue to hold to a view that our future is too important to leave in the hands of politicians, and that the community of scientists across Europe have the power and influence to forge arrangements that can negate what many of us perceive as an act of great folly. After all we must never forget that over the course of the UK referendum many of our politicians distinguished themselves by a special facility for propaganda, inane sound bites and untruths. Who among them now takes responsibility for the £350 million weekly sum promised to the UK National Health Service if we voted to exit? What we need to keep sight of is that the enduring pillars of European culture, embodied in the Arts and Sciences, are constructed not by politicians but by individuals who are dedicated to the ideal of Unity in Diversity. The Max Planck Centre for Computational Psychiatry and Ageing represents one example, funded not by government but by two organisations with long and proud histories of commitment to scientific discovery and excellence. Going forward it is the nurturing of these pillars that will ensure we remain open and engaged, building on our extraordinary shared heritage.

Both Sides of the Argument

SABINE BEPPLER-SPAHL

Chair of the Freiblickinstitut; organiser of the Berlin Salons and Debating Matters Berlin

Can there be learning without debating? In our age of fact-checking, it is good to remind ourselves that there is never only one way of looking at an argument. Similarly, abstract knowledge, though important, will not help us understand the world. If we really want to know why we believe what we believe, we must allow our ideas to be challenged. This is why any decent liberal academic education will encourage students to learn the art of questioning, reasoning – and debating.

School debating societies offer a good way of doing this, and can look back to a long tradition – in Britain. The Cambridge Union, founded in 1815, is the oldest debating society in the world, and the first English debating clubs enjoyed great popularity as early as 1720. But there is a taste for serious, content based debating in Germany too, as our experience with a new British-German school project seems to suggest.

In November 2015, the London based Institute of Ideas showcased its unique debating format, 'Debating Matters' for the first time in Berlin. The idea for the contest, which included around 80 German grade 11 students from six Berlin 'Gymnasien', came after I had been invited to attend a London Debating Matters competition as a judge in March 2014. Impressed by the high standards of the debates, I decided that this might be a good format for German schools too. As chair of the newly founded Freiblickinstitut, whose purpose is to organise public discussions on political and scientific issues, I felt that this was an opportunity not to be missed. In February 2017 another debate, involving a total of eight schools, took place (two more schools joined the original six).

'Debating Matters because ideas matter' is the premise of this debating format, which puts content before style. Each school's students debate in teams of two against each other. The motions at the first showcase event were:

- Doping in Sport: 'We should permit the use of performance enhancing drugs in sport'.
- Gentrification: 'Gentrification is good for neighbourhoods'.
- Repatriation of artefacts: 'Western museums should agree to repatriate cultural artefacts'.
- Nobody has the right not to be offended.

The motions at the second debate were:

- We should accept the risk inherent in contact sport.
- Humanity should fear advances in artificial intelligence.
- Technological progress will not solve society's environmental issues.
- Childhood vaccinations should be compulsory.

These are surely issues which would be a challenge even for adults with a lifetime of debating experience. The themes were distributed to the schools by lottery, and students were not allowed to choose their side of the motion. They were however given several weeks to prepare – and given an impressive selection of newspaper articles and essays in which the different positions were discussed at length. (The material was taken from British and German newspapers or magazines, such as *The Guardian*, *Der Spiegel*, *Deutsche Welle*, *Huffington Post*, *Tech World*, etc.). Each side of the motion was represented on an equal footing and was available to all. The material was collected and compiled by the team at Debating Matters UK – an important task, without which we would not have been able to carry out the competition. (Freiblick helped in choosing the topics for the debates, as only those with some German relevance could be considered; but the fact that many British motions could also be discussed in Germany shows how similar our debates in Europe are). In addition to the Institute of Ideas comprehensive topic guides, students were encouraged to find their own evidence and become engaged with the issues.

The debates are the same ones that are taking place daily in the worlds of politics, science, the arts, in the media and on television.

The debates are the same ones that are taking place daily in the worlds of politics, science, the arts, in the media and on television. Initially I had been sceptical about asking students to speak in English, but I was proved wrong. All the students were highly motivated, well prepared and able to argue their cases

convincingly. (Almost all students were taking part in advanced English classes – '11. Klasse Leistungskurs Englisch'). Some had been on an exchange year or had come from a bilingual background, but most had to rely on the skills acquired at school – which goes to show that Berlin schools work well, at least in this respect. Choosing English as our debate language not only enabled us to cooperate more closely with Debating Matters UK, but also to work towards a 'European Final'. A first international Debating Matters Competition took place at the Barbican Centre in London on October 28th between the 2017 German finalists

One of the central tenets of the Debating Matters ... is that young people are intelligent and robust enough to have their ideas held up to critical scrutiny.

students had been familiar with. There is a panel of three judges for each debate, who are asked to not consider clever rhetoric. Rather, they were told to evaluate whether students had truly managed to address the difficult questions asked of them and whether they had been able to account for their arguments. One of the central tenets of the Debating Matters – which does not operate on a points system – is that young people are intelligent and robust enough to have their ideas held up to critical scrutiny. Judges will not only give feedback but also ask questions and point to ambiguities during the debate. The team of judges in both debates consisted of specialists from a wide range of professional backgrounds and different areas of expertise. The final panel of judges in 2017 included Barbara Klimke, former UK correspondent Berliner Zeitung, Karl-Erik Norrman, founder and secretary general, European Cultural Parliament, and Paul Thomas, FE teacher from Leeds.

The need for a new debating competition for schools that would focus attention on the intellectual content was suggested to the Institute of Ideas by a teacher. David Perks, head of Physics and convenor of the debating society at Graveney School in South London. In an interview he said: 'I found previous competitions which had been more about style and format too stilted and wanted to get the idea of kids having to explain what they really meant back into debating'. Since its inception in 2002, more than 11,000 students and 1,500 teachers have participated in Debating Matters UK.

As in Britain, the success of Debating Matters in Germany will depend to a large extent on teachers. Without their commitment, there can be no debating.

Teachers' time is well invested, because Debating Matters can be used to engage every single student of a class. Unlike other formats, the audience is not forced to be passive, and is encouraged to participate by asking questions and making short contributions from the floor. 'I

from Nelson-Mandela School, Berlin and the UK finalists from Loreto College, Manchester. The motion for debate was: 'In a digital age we should not expect our online activities to remain private'.

Because of its emphasis on content, Debating Matters differs from the Parliamentary debating style some of the

The wish to be taken seriously and to tackle the big questions of our times unites young people all over Europe.

told all my students that I expect them to get up and make at least one comment, because there is no better way of training them to speak in public', one teacher from Berlin told me before the last debate. Formal debating follows a strict time line and

participants learn to present their thoughts in a clear and succinct way, to think on their feet and to try and sway the audience with their arguments.

The wish to be taken seriously and to tackle the big questions of our times unites young people all over Europe. At the end of the debate, the judges are asked to give a final feedback, telling students – without false flattery – where they had seen strengths and weaknesses. After they have retreated to choose the winner, the audience members can also vote by a show of hands. Though this vote is only pro-forma [?], it gives the debaters yet more feedback as to how they were perceived (interestingly, though the judges don't get to see the vote of the audience, they mostly seem to come to the same conclusion).

Debating is all the more important in our current time of uncertainty. Everywhere in Europe, societies seem to be dividing into different camps. Often, one side is unwilling to engage – or even to listen – to the other side's argument, as the debates around immigration or Brexit have shown. One judge, a physicist, asked me why students needed to defend a position they might not share. He thought it would be better to let youngsters choose the side they wanted to be on. But this misses the point of the competition. If we want students to come to an informed opinion, we will need to teach them to be open and engage with opposing views. Debating Matters sees itself as rooted in the British liberal enlightenment tradition. *'Where there is a tacit convention that principles are not to be disputed; where the discussion of the greatest humanity is considered to be closed, we cannot hope to find that generally high scale of mental activity which has made some periods of history so remarkable'*. So writes John Stuart Mill in his famous essay *On Liberty*. The worst thing is, if opinions are merely 'parroted because they are never heard controverted'. Surely this has gained special importance in our age of 'safe spaces' and 'echo chambers'?

The first showcase debate in November 2016 took place in the wake of the Paris terrorist attacks. The final motion of the day was: 'No one has the right not to be offended'. Both schools cited Charlie Hebdo and the

November attacks, saying that Europe needs to air the debate on free speech in order to shape its collective future.

Felipé-Jordi, finalist for Eckener-Gymnasium argued that:

'We need an open minded Europe where all people can say what they think. There must be an open discussion about everything'

Ihssan Mohaji, winner for Nelson-Mandela-Schule, countered that:

'Europe is admired by the world as a society where all are safe... If you are against these values we should show you the door. We have a moral duty to show people that prejudice is wrong, we have a moral duty to no-platform'

Past debates in Germany have been made possible with the help of two main sponsors (HeGo Biotec and the BiTS-Hochschule). *'It was a pleasure to hear the genuine clash of ideas backed by thorough research and, crucially, sometimes if not always, interaction, re-adjustment, truly listening to an adverse opinion, then changing tack. Or standing by one's argument, impassioned, with further evidence and debate'*, wrote communications consultant Phoebe Blackburn, a judge at the 2017 competition.

Our aim is to include more German schools in the future, and to offer international debating events on a regular basis. Because every generation needs thinkers and questioners.

<http://www.debatingmatters.com/resources/debatingmattersonfilm>

Britain and Germany: The People's Perspective

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The relationship between Britain and Germany has been close for many years: the two nations are linked together by strong ties of culture and friendship. But has this closeness been threatened by the EU referendum result, and what will it look like after Brexit? The good news for those of us who care about the Anglo-German relationship is that there is every reason to believe it will continue to flourish.

The British Council commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct a major comparative survey of the attitudes of young people across the G20 countries before and after the 2016 EU referendum (with over 1,000 18–34 year olds with a minimum of secondary education from all backgrounds surveyed in each country). The results from Germany and the UK provide a rich and fascinating picture of the state and likely future of the Anglo-German rapport, including plenty of reasons to be cheerful.

The UK was the most attractive G20 European country to young Germans, who particularly cited British people's politeness, friendliness and cultural quirkiness (although for some reason they also felt that we drank too much...).

First the bad news. The result of the EU referendum has undoubtedly had an impact in Germany, where it has formed a major topic of debate. There has been a sharp fall of 10 percentage points in the trust young Germans feel toward the UK government, from 49% – 39% (compared, for example, to 62% levels of trust in the Canadian government). The proportion of those saying that the UK Government does not work constructively with other

governments rose from 23%–35%. There was also a worrying decline in the proportion of Germans agreeing that the UK values diversity and tolerance, and that British people are open and welcoming.

However, perhaps surprisingly given that the result was the product of direct democracy and went against the preferences of much of the British political establishment, there has not been a similar effect on

attitudes towards British institutions or – most importantly – towards the UK or the British people themselves. The UK was the most attractive G20 European country to young Germans, who particularly cited British people's politeness, friendliness and cultural quiriness (although for some reason they also felt that we drank too much...), and Germany remains fairly attractive to young British people, with the German people, institutions and government trusted more than those of any other G20 European country.

Indeed, it is striking the degree to which young people in both countries continue to find each other's country attractive. The figures are similar, with roughly two thirds of young Germans continuing to find the UK attractive overall, and a third of them choosing the UK as one of the three most attractive G20 countries for people who can be trusted, and for making personal contacts and friendships. Similar proportions of young British people said the same about trusting people from Germany. Such trust and attraction have important implications for tourism and trade. So it is perhaps then less surprising that, after the referendum result, there was a rise in the number of young Germans finding the UK an attractive tourism destination, and no statistically significant decline in intention to do business or trade with the UK.

The UK and Germany regularly top international polls of attractiveness, with people drawn to their rich and influential cultures and the many things each country has to offer. In the case of the UK, that includes our education, arts and culture.

For example, the UK was the second most popular potential study destination for German young people (after the US), with 69% agreeing that the UK has world leading universities and academic research. Indeed, this is borne out in practice: students from Germany make up the 4th highest number of international students after the US, China and India. There are also 32,000 non-British EU academics in the UK university sector, and of these 5,200 are Germans. Perhaps because of the language barrier, this attraction was not fully reciprocated by the UK, with Germany coming joint fourth as a potential study destination for British students. It is unfortunate that, at a time when our survey revealed that 98% of young Germans claim to speak at least some English, only 8% of young Brits can speak conversational German – and this year there was a further decline in the number studying German at school.

In terms of culture, however, the attraction between the two countries is mutual, and has not been affected by Brexit. Indeed, the proportion of Germans reporting that they intended to experience more British culture in the future rose from 15% – 19% after the referendum. Fully

At the level of ordinary people as well as in areas of politics, international relations, business and trade, the two countries remain closely aligned.

two thirds of them said that the UK has world leading arts and cultural attractions. In 2018, the British Council will be participating in a major UK-Germany Season. Such initiatives will hopefully play an important role in continuing to celebrate and strengthen the cultural and personal ties between the two countries.

A final important point of close contact between Germany and the UK, which is further borne out by the survey results, is the degree to which the values and interests of the two countries are the same. Brexit will do little to change this. Terrorism and migration were the top two concerns in Germany (with 60% worried about migration – likely a reaction to the large influx of migrants from Syria and elsewhere welcomed to Germany in 2016, and reflected in the results of the recent German elections). In the UK terrorism was also top (at 45%), followed by poverty and then migration. The strength of these concerns should, however, be balanced by the values that those surveyed professed, which were also strikingly similar. In both countries, equality and diversity were cited as the most important values by those surveyed. All of which suggests that, at the level of ordinary people as well as in areas of politics, international relations, business and trade, the two countries remain closely aligned.

It is therefore both in the interests of, and in accordance with, the wishes of the peoples of both countries that we continue to work closely together and find ways to engage with each other and help each other to prosper. As these results have reminded us, regardless of Brexit, we are bound together by culture, values, and mutual attraction. We should be sure to remember this as we face the future together in a continued spirit of close friendship.

Technical note:

- Commissioned by the British Council, Ipsos MORI conducted an online survey across all 19 countries of the G20, interviewing 18–34 year olds with a minimum of secondary education. The first wave was conducted between 23 May – 16 June 2016 and the second wave was conducted between 8 September – 16 October 2016. Each country had a sample size of around 1,000.
- In each market, the data is weighted to be representative of the national population by age (18–24 vs. 25–34) and gender. Additionally, the sample of the second wave is weighted to match the sample profile of the first wave on the following variables: interlocking age and gender quotas, education, area of residence, and employment status.

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/from_the_outside_in.pdf

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