

DEUTSCH-BRITISCHE GESELLSCHAFT

KÖNIGSWINTER CONFERENCE



The Königswinter Conference was established in 1950 with the aim of improving the troubled relationship between Germany and the United Kingdom by restoring relations to the former enemy and re-entering into democratic discourse. The main intention was to work towards reconstructing friendly ties with Great Britain whilst helping to rebuild German civil society in order to enable its return to the fold of Western democracies after the war. Thus, the conference reflects the history of the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and the European Union.

For over sixty years the Conference has convened once a year, bringing together around 65 to 70 German and British politicians, high-ranking diplomats, business managers, academics and journalists, for a profound exchange of ideas. Königswinter has created bonds and friendships, helping to improve the understanding of policy differences on topical issues and to work towards common approaches. The issues discussed over the years have ranked from security policy, the Atlantic alliance, the desirable degree of European integration, societal changes and upheavals in an increasingly globalised world, to the future of the welfare state, education policy, the integration of ethnic minorities and international economic policy.

The Königswinter Conference is organised jointly by the Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft and its British counterpart, the British Königswinter Steering Committee, and is alternately held in Germany and Britain. It commonly takes place in spring or early summer of each year.

The central theme is always a broad one in nature to allow for exchange between participants of different backgrounds. The conference lasts for two days, beginning with a plenary discussion. Afterwards, participants break up into working groups devoted to in-depth discussion of a specific topic, such as security issues or economic questions. Results of these working group meetings are presented in a closing session.

Several generations of decision-makers from both countries have met to engage in a frank and open debate. Thus, "Königswinter" has become an outstanding forum which provides opportunities for German and British elites to educate themselves and to shape and exchange their opinions.

- ▶ **Duration** 1.5 days
- ▶ **Number of Participants** 65-70
- ▶ **Time of the Year** Spring
- ▶ **Location** annually alternating between GER/UK

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