A Multilateralism for the People
Federal Government
White Paper
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White Paper
Dear Readers,

The COVID-19 pandemic has the world firmly in its grasp. Its impacts are many and varied – human suffering on a huge scale, far-reaching restrictions to daily life in our societies and as-yet unforeseeable political, economic and social upheaval are just some examples. Yet this crisis is also giving rise to countless success stories of solidarity, compassion and cooperation. For example, governments, health organisations, businesses, foundations and private individuals are coordinating their efforts in endeavours such as the COVAX initiative in order to give people in the poorest countries access to vaccines. In its recovery plan for Europe, the EU has come together to launch the largest stimulus package in its history to tackle the economic impact of the crisis. Moreover, were it not for cross-border support and cooperation on healthcare provision, the impacts of the pandemic would be far worse still in many regions of the world.

Isolationism and egotism are never going to help any country overcome crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The same also applies to the major structural challenges of our era, globalisation, the digital transformation, migration and human-induced climate change. These issues call for deepened and renewed international cooperation – a multilateralism for the 21st century. International law and the fundamental principles of the United Nations continue to be the foundation for dependable and fair international cooperation and provide the framework for Germany’s actions in the world. This conviction has guided Germany’s foreign policy since the Federal Republic was founded. To this day, our active engagement for multilateralism continues to shape our country’s image in the wider world. The member states of the United Nations have entrusted Germany with a seat on the UN Security Council for six terms in the past, and we are firmly established in all major multilateral institutions as an advocate of
the rule of law, human rights and democratic freedoms. The initiatives of the Alliance for Multilateralism, which was co-founded by Germany, enjoy widespread support from all continents.

At the same time, multilateral institutions and regulatory frameworks are coming under a great deal of pressure today. It can no longer be taken for granted that all countries share the conviction that compromise, trade-offs and focusing on the common good will ultimately yield better results for everyone as opposed to countries going it alone, economic coercion and even military force at times. At the same time, many people have lost trust in the benefits of international cooperation and adherence to common rules. This is because these benefits are often taken for granted, or because there has been too much hesitancy in remedying certain negative developments. Nationalists and populists are exploiting this and gathering political supporters by preaching nationalist approaches and self-interests as an absolute priority.

This White Paper on Multilateralism aims to counteract scepticism about the multilateral order and show just how diverse and indispensable multilateral cooperation is on a practical level. This document sets out for the first time the scope of Germany’s multilateral engagement and its importance for the international order. This white paper also describes ways in which the multilateral order can be revitalised and adapted to the conditions of the 21st century. The task of strengthening multilateralism is a multifaceted and global challenge – and Germany is ready to get to work.

Our world is changing at an unprecedented rate. Anyone who wants to preserve the multilateral order with its institutions and rules therefore cannot do so by simply preserving the status quo. To dispel doubts about its efficiency and legitimacy, truly modern multilateralism must be shaped to suit the needs of people in two key respects. Firstly, it should be a policy that improves the lives of individuals in a tangible way and, secondly, it should be an invitation for all countries, regions and civil society stakeholders that want to play a constructive part in shaping this policy. This white paper highlights a whole range of examples and new initiatives that demonstrate how Germany is working to promote a proactive multilateralism of this kind and how it will continue to develop it moving forward. It is an invitation to engage in an open dialogue and actively participate in creating a just international order that is rooted in solidarity. Whether this vision can become a reality will depend not on the scale of the challenges, but on our determination and commitment.

Heiko Maas  
Federal Foreign Minister
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Germany ...  

... has strong support for multilateralism from within its population.

... is the second-largest donor to the UN development system.

... is a member or observer of more than 80 international organisations and a contracting party to several hundred multilateral agreements.

... invests in arms control both politically and financially.

... lends its political and financial support to the work of courts and multilateral institutions in protecting human rights and provides assistance in terms of personnel.

... is part of the EU/E3+3 pursuing negotiations with Iran on the Iranian nuclear programme.

... is a driving force for norms and rules on issues such as lethal autonomous weapon systems, cyberspace and space.

... is, thanks to contributions of over 2 billion euro in 2021, the second-largest donor of humanitarian assistance and the largest donor to the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund.

... is the fourth-largest contributor to UN peacekeeping activities.

... has almost 4800 soldiers on multilateral missions and operations (April 2021).
Germany ... is assuming the command of NATO’s Spearhead Force (VJTF) in 2023, for the third time.

... sponsored Resolution 2467, which was adopted by the UN Security Council with the aim of ending conflict-related sexual violence as the next step in the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

... is the largest donor country to the WHO and by far the biggest contributor to the WHO’s Contingency Fund for Emergencies.

... is working to accelerate the development, production and fair global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and diagnostics.

... is the second-largest contributor to the ACT Accelerator and has so far supported the organisations that are involved (such as the WHO, Gavi and the Global Fund) with 2.1 billion euro in 2020 and 2021.

... is the second-largest contributor to the UN World Food Programme.

... is the fourth-largest contributor to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

... contributed approximately 7.58 billion euro to international climate financing in 2019.

... has, through the International Climate Initiative (IKI), funded more than 730 projects on protecting the climate and promoting biodiversity in more than 60 developing and newly industrialised countries over the past 12 years, providing 4 billion euro in funding.

... initiated the European Digital4Development hub, a forum that brings together 11 EU member states, the European Commission, the private sector and partners from the Global South to promote a sustainable digital economy.
1.1
A White Paper on Multilateralism

1.2
The fundamental principles of multilateralism

1.3
The importance of the EU for Germany’s multilateral actions
Active multilateralism for the 21st century
1.1

A White Paper on Multilateralism
In publishing this white paper, Germany is declaring its commitment to proactive multilateralism. Since the Federal Republic was founded, Germany has consistently played an active role in shaping the rules-based international order and working to ensure that multilateral institutions can fulfil their purpose effectively. In view of the global challenges of the 21st century, multilateral cooperation is more crucial now than ever before. However, there has also been a marked decline in the willingness to work together in a spirit of cooperation. In the words of Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) António Guterres, the COVID-19 pandemic is only the most recent “wake-up call” in a whole series of events that highlight just how indispensable joint action is when seeking to tackle the global and regional challenges of our time. The pandemic has shown how weak the international order’s capacity to act can be. While the international community was able to take decisive, coordinated action during the 2008–2010 financial crisis, collective action during the COVID-19 pandemic initially proved to be disproportionately more difficult, due to a lack of solidarity and some countries choosing to go their own way.

In this white paper, the Federal Government aims to take a stand, declare its position and justify why and how Germany is more prepared than ever before to invest, both politically and materially, in multilateral cooperation and the mechanisms and institutions that facilitate this collaboration. It will also specify the priorities that Germany is setting, shed light on current focuses and identify specific steps that Germany and its partners in Europe and around the world intend to take over the next few years in various policy areas with a view to strengthening multilateralism.

This White Paper on Multilateralism is the result of intensive dialogue within the Federal Government, with Members of the German Bundestag and with German and international scientists, academics and experts from civil society. In no way does the publication of this white paper signal a conclusion to these discussions on multilateralism. After all, “Working together for humanity” also means continuously working with all stakeholders on a form of multilateralism that will stand the test of time.
Why multilateralism is important for Germany

Since the foundation of the Federal Republic, Germany's prosperity, security and its ability to exert influence and act on the international stage have depended on its involvement in alliances, multilateral organisations and international agreements. By the same token, only an economically and financially strong Germany can do justice to its responsibility to maintain multilateralism, the stability of the international order and the capacity of its primary institutions to act. The European Union (EU), as a place of freedom, security and law with a common market, a common currency with the euro and a foundation of common values is the central framework for Germany's activities on the continent of Europe and worldwide. For over 65 years, the Federal Republic has closely coordinated its security with its allies in Europe and North America as a NATO member.

International law is the collective rulebook for the world order, and the UN – with its almost universal membership and many forums, bodies and organisations dedicated to a wide range of issues – is its institutional backbone. Geared towards stability and predictability, this international order also comprises trade and the economy, and is thus an essential prerequisite for Germany's success as an exporter.
On 26 September 1973, Willy Brandt became the first German Chancellor to address the United Nations General Assembly. Both German states had joined the UN on 18 September 1973.

1.1 A White Paper on Multilateralism

In the 2016 Federal Government White Paper on Security Policy and the Future of the German Armed Forces and in the 2017 Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace, Germany acknowledged its responsibility to help shape the global order in line with its resources and capabilities. This applies even more so today, which is why Germany is taking steps at an early stage to counter any efforts to dismantle the international order. It is not doing so alone, but rather in cooperation with its partners — primarily with the EU and its member states, but also with like-minded actors all around the world.
MULTILATERALISM being put to the test

The international order based on multilateral principles is under massive pressure. Some countries openly violate international law and agreements they have entered into of their own accord, and even go so far as undertaking violent annexations or contravening arms control treaties. They flout the rulings of international courts and violate agreements designed to protect fundamental human rights that they themselves have undertaken to follow as members of the UN, the Council of Europe or other multilateral organisations and agreements. As a result, these countries, which are predominantly ruled by authoritarian governments, are endangering the general acceptance of established norms and undermining the regulatory capacity of the international system.

The biggest threat to the international order comes from attempts to change tried-and-tested rules in multilateral forums to benefit one or just a few countries or to reinterpret fundamental norms of international law such as human rights. Such moves seek to elicit support from other countries by creating incentives and applying pressure, particularly through the use of economic power and infrastructure policy, and usually without any recourse to international standards regarding human rights, the environment or labour regulations. Military and security policy ties and interdependencies are also starting to play an increasing role in this context.

Multilateralism

Multilateralism literally means “many-sided” and is composed of the Latin words multus, meaning many, and latus, meaning sides. In the context of international politics, the term multilateralism traditionally describes cooperation between three or more countries, in contrast to bilateral cooperation, which takes place between two countries, and unilateral action, which is taken by a single country acting alone. Today, the term multilateralism also encompasses cooperation between countries and non-state actors. The more closely aligned all the relevant parties are in terms of fundamental principles and their own interests, the more dependable and successful multilateral cooperation will be. With the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rules of international humanitarian law, the international community has agreed a set of fundamental common rules and norms and thus established a cornerstone of multilateral cooperation.
It has been clear for a long time that global power relations are shifting. It is likely that, sometime in the coming decade, Germany will be the only EU country that still ranks amongst the ten biggest global economies. As China, India, Japan and Indonesia forge ahead, four of the five largest economies could then be in Asia. Meanwhile, an ever-increasing number of countries in Africa and Latin America will be able to contribute their own political ideas to the organisations of the international order. This is a positive development.

In many societies, including some in the West, there is growing criticism of international cooperation that appears to be ineffective and is therefore considered to be too costly. Criticism of the multilateral system is legitimate and essential when it helps to bring about improvements and reform. Just like any national political system, the international system also needs to be continuously adjusted and improved to ensure that it can meet diverse and changing challenges.

However, criticism is misleading and dangerous when it suggests that global challenges such as climate change, demographic development, displacement and irregular migration, and cybersecurity can be tackled solely within national borders and without engaging in collective negotiation processes. The end result would be a world that is fractured along political, economic and social lines, without any shared order or rules. This harbours considerable risks to the peaceful coexistence of peoples.

The aim must be to equip the international order so it can resist attempts to dismantle it and withstand global and regional shocks such as pandemics and economic crises. That means having efficient international institutions that are capable of taking action as well as improved mechanisms for promoting transparency, participation and cooperation.
Multilateralism is challenging but worthwhile

In view of the many and varied interests that exist in a world made up of nation states, the path to coordination, agreement and collective action is often long and difficult. It is a path that is worth taking, however, because persistence and a clear compass can lead to sustainable achievements, even when dealing with global challenges. This has been demonstrated by landmark agreements such as the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change signed by 195 parties. It is also borne out by the establishment of new institutions such as the World Trade Organization in 1995 and the International Criminal Court in 2002, which can prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and, since 2018, interstate aggression. The agreement reached in 2015 on the 17 internationally applicable Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda is further evidence that the international community can agree shared objectives on a global scale, despite its differing interests.

In fact, all countries need to be aware that, without multilateral cooperation that is as comprehensive and inclusive as possible, it would not be possible to maintain global public goods and shape a clearly regulated framework.
for their consumption. Germany and the EU must also work with partners that do not have the same outlook on the world as Europe or do not fully share its underlying liberal democratic system of values particularly when it comes to protecting peace and security, safeguarding our natural resources and cultural heritage, establishing standards of conduct in cyberspace and in outer space, regulating global financial markets, ensuring that international trade is organised fairly for the benefit of all and establishing global healthcare. When it comes to individual aspects, difficult decisions will need to be taken.

Germany’s perspective on international cooperation

Peace and security cannot be achieved by pursuing unilateral and short-term benefits. Solidarity, fairness and sustainable development prospects are all crucial prerequisites for achieving an inclusive system of order between countries of all sizes and political standings that is also recognised as legitimate. Dependability and predictability make it possible to solve problems and achieve objectives together. If its citizens are to prosper in the long term, Germany needs dependable cooperation and a world with rules that are far-sighted, widely accepted and rooted in solidarity. Crises, conflicts, poverty, hunger, irregular migration, health risks, the impacts of global warming and marine pollution all have a tangible impact on people also in Germany. The reality of national, regional and global interdependencies fundamentally calls into question distinctions between national, European and international politics. The COVID-19 pandemic has made this abundantly clear.

The vast majority of the German population supports multilateral cooperation and collective problem-solving, even if the term “multilateralism” might be unfamiliar to many people. Many state and non-state actors are helping to shape German foreign policy and are contributing their knowledge and commitment to international solutions. Indeed, Germany and Europe are home to fervent supporters of proactive multilateralism in their active civil society, with diverse non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and a close-knit scientific and academic community.
Figure 1

**Germany should help to tackle challenges**

“How should Germany best approach international politics? Should Germany... generally help to tackle problems, crises and conflicts or rather keep out of problems, crises and conflicts?”

![Graph showing percentages of responses from 2010 to 2020.](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Germany should help</th>
<th>Germany should keep out</th>
<th>Don’t know/no answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: Due to the rounding of individual percentage values, some results may not total 100 percent.

Source: Population surveys conducted by the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Science, 2010 – 2020. This question was not asked in 2011.

Based on this broad social consensus, Germany will continue to do its part to maintain, adapt and reform multilateral institutions and organisations. Germany sets particularly great store by the defence and active development of international law. The Federal Government will continue to advocate new multilateral approaches to tackling any challenges that are not yet covered by international systems of rules. These include, for example, the digital domain, which has been largely created by private enterprises and has, to a great extent, been dominated by them to date. So far, there has been virtually no global or even regional system of rules governing the rights of users to their data, the protection of personal rights and the fair taxation of profits that companies generate online. Similarly, the Federal Government is strongly advocating generally recognised norms, principles and codes of conduct for state activities in cyberspace.
Germany is also taking new approaches to cooperation with diverse partners to this end. The Alliance for Multilateralism, for example, launched by France and Germany is a supra-regional, flexible network in which countries and institutions from Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Oceania work together in different configurations on various issues and develop concrete initiatives that help solve global problems. In its policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific region, the Federal Government also attaches great importance to multilateral cooperation with its partners in this up-and-coming part of the world in political and economic terms.

**Multilateralism as an opportunity**

Recent years have been a wake-up call, highlighting the dangerous gaps that can open up in international cooperation if key actors are absent – and how important it is for multilateral commitment to be supported as widely as possible. The US Government under President Biden has declared its support for a proactive and values-based multilateral approach and is demonstrating a great appreciation for partnerships and alliances. This sends an important signal for reinforcing multilateralism as a whole and offers enormous opportunities for a transatlantic sea change in favour of proactive multilateralism.

**Figure 2**

*Germany still has a high level of responsibility*

“What do you think? Has Germany’s level of responsibility on the international stage increased or decreased over recent years?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
<th>Neither increased nor decreased</th>
<th>Don’t know/no answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: Due to the rounding of individual percentage values, some results may not total 100 percent.
Source: Population surveys conducted by the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Science, 2015–2020.
The Alliance for Multilateralism was set up following an initiative from Germany to establish a flexible network of committed countries and organisations that will work together on specific issues in order to defend, shape and, where necessary, reform the rules-based international order. On 26 September 2019, at the initiative of Germany, France, Canada, Mexico, Chile, Singapore and Ghana, the Foreign Ministers of the Alliance met as a group for the first time on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York. Since then, the network has grown to include more than 70 participants. The value of multilateral cooperation and the rules-based international order has been accorded political weight and brought to a wider audience. The alliance has also created a platform that generates impetus and forms coalitions to drive forward multilateral work, which is often long-term in nature.

Through its activities in the Alliance, the Federal Government is working with its partners to counter violations of international humanitarian law and attacks on humanitarian workers, support efforts to strengthen human rights and promote arms control and disarmament regimes, for example. Partners in the Alliance cooperate on issues where new challenges necessitate new rules, for instance with regard to developments in weapons technology and cyberspace, the impacts of climate change for our security, cyber attacks and disinformation. To ensure that the global political order can continue to function properly and to make it more representative and inclusive, existing institutions must be reformed where necessary in order to take changed circumstances into account and involve new stakeholders. It is for this reason that the network is pursuing an integrative approach and working with non-state actors in multi-stakeholder formats.

Find out more at: www.multilateralism.org
Last but not least, the Alliance for Multilateralism has devoted particular attention to the fair distribution of vaccines, dealing with disinformation during pandemics and strengthening the multilateral health architecture. Some 62 foreign ministers have signed declarations by the Alliance for Multilateralism to this end on the multilateral response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On the fringes of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on 24 February 2021, the Alliance focused on human rights protection on the internet, human rights and climate change, and global health.

Find out more at: www.multilateralism.org
1.2
The fundamental principles of multilateralism
Germany’s constitution, the Basic Law clearly expresses the country’s determination to promote world peace as an equal partner in a united Europe. This, coupled with the acknowledgement of inviolable and inalienable human rights as the basis of every community, of peace and of justice in the world and the recognition of international law, constitutes the values that guide Germany’s international politics. The Federal Government is therefore pursuing a proactive multilateral approach that is based on four interrelated principles, namely compatibility with the values set out in the Basic Law, legitimacy, inclusivity and effectiveness. Bringing these principles into alignment as far as is possible is a constant challenge in many areas of international politics.

Based on values

An international order can only endure in the long term if successful collective cooperation is based on shared convictions. That is the only way for resilient relations in a spirit of trust to develop between countries beyond short-sighted policies centred on vested interests. Germany is engaged in this type of values-based multilateralism in the form of the universally recognised principles and norms of the UN and other international organisations in which it is a member – the EU, NATO, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Figure 3
Confidence in democracy is high
“Which do you believe are better placed to overcome the international challenges of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-democratic countries</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic countries</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Berlin Pulse 2020/21, representative survey conducted in Germany by KANTAR PUBLIC Deutschland on behalf of the Körber-Stiftung. Survey of 1005 people aged over 18, September 2020 (www.theberlinpulse.org).
Germany’s commitment as part of the G7 also reflects these values and the human rights-based approach taken by the Federal Government and its partners in the organisation. New institutions in international politics must be measured against these standards. The fundamental principles of democracy, the rule of law and the protection of human rights are the yardstick by which values-based multilateral cooperation must be judged. The broader the backing for these principles is, the more resilient the international order will be.

In the long term, an inclusive approach can help share responsibility for the international order among many stakeholders. Germany cooperates with as many states and actors as possible precisely because it advocates the kind of stable international order that provides a framework within which the coexistence of peoples can be successfully shaped on the basis of universal values and human rights. The UN is the central global framework for Germany’s policies.

Legitimacy through inclusivity ...

The legitimacy of multilateral action depends on its connection to the rules-based international order. However, legitimacy is also founded on representation and participation. For that reason, involving additional states and non-state actors such as NGOs and expert communities lends extra legitimacy to multilateral decision-making and agreements. Agreements that are made out of conviction after intensive consultations are more enduring than those that result from coercion and short-sighted calculations. Beyond their specific substance, they have a stabilising impact on the international order.

At the same time, the legitimacy of multilateral policy also depends on the results and successes that this action yields. As the preferred form of global governance, multilateralism must be measured by what it can achieve for the benefit of people. It must be effective if it is to hold its own in a world order that is driven by cost-benefit calculations, which is why the performance of an institution is also a source of its legitimacy.

Multilateralism takes on many different forms in order to achieve maximum effectiveness and develop concrete solutions for existing challenges. It can be global and all-encompassing, as in the case of the UN and its numerous subsidiary organisations. Alternatively, it may confine its scope primarily to a regional level and focus on specific objectives and tasks, as in the case of NATO. Some forums of multilateralism are institutionalised as international organisations, have head offices, branch offices and thousands of staff members. By contrast, other multilateral forums in which Germany is a member have very restricted permanent structures of their own, or even none at all.
Examples of these forums include the G7, which comprises the biggest democratic industrialised countries, the G20, which additionally includes the biggest newly industrialised countries, and contact groups, which are often set up for negotiations on specific conflict situations. The work of these forums and their methods are based on informal discussions about shared objectives, norms and rules.

As part of Groups of Friends, which are formed primarily in the context of the UN and OSCE, Germany also works with like-minded countries and organisations to promote political initiatives within a particular organisation. In other multilateral forums, Germany cooperates closely with public, private and civil society actors to develop joint solutions to collective challenges as part of a multi-stakeholder approach. The Alliance for Multilateralism pools and reinforces such initiatives.

The Federal Government believes that all these forums of multilateralism have their own specific justification and value because their format and spirit support the objectives of the UN. They contribute to a legitimate and stable international order. For Germany, this is the vital criterion for evaluating multilateral institutions and groupings of countries that are established outside the UN system.
The importance of the EU for Germany’s multilateral actions
1.3 The importance of the EU for Germany’s multilateral actions

The EU is hugely important for Germany’s multilateral activities. As a union of 27 member states with a shared foundation of values and a level of political, economic and social ties that is unparalleled in the world, the EU is an institution sui generis and an influential proponent of values-based multilateralism. The EU represents its member states in multilateral organisations and multilateral negotiations in two ways – it either operates as an independent actor in its own right or the EU member states closely coordinate their actions and statements in multilateral organisations, thereby enhancing Europe’s multilateral influence. The Commission and – when it comes to issues of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) – the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European External Action Service play a leading role in determining the positions the EU takes in international forums. The EU works intensively to help shape the international order through its network of 140 EU delegations, close worldwide cooperation with the embassies of its member states and the EU special representatives, and its role in numerous informal multilateral forums. It must act as one if it is to harness its capacities effectively and maximise its influence.

It is only with the combined strength of the EU and the commitment and conviction of its citizens that Germany can effectively advocate its values, interests and priorities on the world stage and assert them in a changing international order that is under pressure. Many other partner countries and organisations also see the EU as a model for proactive multilateralism and a driving force for efforts centred on regional alliances that aim to promote freedom, justice and security. To ensure that the EU retains its appeal as a partner and model of multilateral cooperation, it must further improve its capacity to act both at home and abroad in the future and respond effectively to challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Bolstering Europe’s capacity to act is a priority of Germany’s policy also for this reason. This includes strengthening the foundation of values and particularly the rule of law within the EU, which together form the basis for successful, values-based European policies on the world stage.
2.1 Multilateralism that sets and follows rules

2.2 Multilateralism in the service of peace and security

2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people

2.4 Multilateralism for sustainable prosperity
Strengthening multilateralism
Germany’s commitment to multilateralism is exceptionally diverse. This aim of this white paper is not to describe this commitment in full – that would be impossible. Instead, its purpose is to demonstrate the benefits of multilateral action, outline the biggest challenges currently facing multilateralism and present concrete political initiatives through which Germany will help preserve, adapt and reform the multilateral order over the next few years.

To help navigate the broad field of multilateral institutions and fields of action, this paper focuses on four key topics:

1. International law and the guiding principles of a peaceful, rules-based international order in which human rights in particular play an important role

2. The preservation of peace and security through multilateral institutions and legislative frameworks

3. International cooperation on humanitarian assistance, crisis preparedness and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

4. Multilateral cooperation for sustainable prosperity and ensuring that global economic, energy and financial systems are structured fairly
Multilateralism that sets and follows rules

Binding rules and guiding principles are a prerequisite for effective multilateral cooperation. However, the establishment of international law is itself dependent on states cooperating with each other and sharing similar aspirations. As a result of this mutual dependence, the past 75 years have seen two processes develop concurrently – the comprehensive juridification of international relations and the formation of the multilateral system. The establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945 was the starting point for both these processes. The UN was founded with a multilateral treaty based on pre-existing international organisations such as the League of Nations, the Universal Postal Union and the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine. However, it was the establishment of the UN that first created a comprehensive and enduring institutional framework for international cooperation.
on a global level. Since then, the responsibilities of the UN have included maintaining peace and security, developing peaceful relations between states and promoting international cooperation to solve economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems.

The increasing juridification and institutionalisation of international relations in their various political, economic, cultural, humanitarian, environmental and other dimensions is both a consequence of, and a prerequisite for, ever closer cooperation between states. The need for shared rules, standards and collectively agreed problem-solving and conflict-resolution strategies has grown rapidly in recent decades. This is a direct response to advancing globalisation, particularly in the flow of goods, capital and information, but also with respect to travel, diseases and criminality. Rules create predictability, increase trust and facilitate cooperation. This applies to fundamental basic norms of international cooperation – such as the general prohibition of the use of force by states enshrined in the UN Charter – and to environmental protection agreements, regulations on protecting foreign investments and quality standards for imported products.
2.1 Multilateralism that sets and follows rules

2.1.1 The importance of norms, rules and law

Establishing an international rule of law

The beginnings of an international rule of law have taken shape over recent decades as areas of international relations that were previously barely taken into account have become enshrined in law. International courts and other decision-making authorities have grown considerably in both number and importance since 1945, and play a key role in enforcing rules and obligations under international law. For example, besides the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, which is enshrined in the UN Charter, there are now also courts with authority over special issues or regions, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in Hamburg and
the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in Luxembourg. Quasi-judicial roles and competencies are also exercised by courts of arbitration that convene on an ad-hoc basis and institutions such as the dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO, which is at the heart of the rules-based multilateral system of trade. Furthermore, almost all modern bilateral trade agreements contain provisions on dispute settlement mechanisms.

In the years after 1945, an international legal system for protecting human rights began to emerge as a response to the persecution and annihilation of European Jews by National Socialist Germany and the mass atrocities of the Second World War. This system plays a key role in terms of gearing international relations to fundamental values and legal principles. Since the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, a tight-knit network of multilateral agreements and institutions has taken shape that enshrines the obligation of states to comply with and enforce universal human rights in international law.

To ensure that human rights are protected as effectively and widely as possible under international law, a large number of institutions and mechanisms has evolved for the purpose of international reviews and consultations in the event of human rights violations and for specific complaints from victims. At a global level, these include the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC), the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, which is responsible for social, humanitarian and cultural issues, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the procedures and additional bodies for monitoring and enforcing international human rights conventions, which are enshrined in numerous agreements. Protection against breaches of regional human rights agreements is provided by institutions such as the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in Strasbourg, which is part of the Council of Europe, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in San José (Costa Rica) and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), which is part of the OSCE.
2.1 Multilateralism that sets and follows rules

This comprehensive system of regulations and institutions ensures that the actions of states are subject to legal standards on an international level. Today, if cooperation between states is to qualify as fully fledged multilateralism, it must measure up to universal values, principles and shared aims.

International law is at the heart of Germany’s multilateral commitment

The strength of international law counter-balances the law of the strong and restricts the arbitrary use of that power by states. This is why Germany supports the further juridification of international relations. The Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (Art. 25) stipulates that the general rules of international law shall be an integral part of federal law and that they shall take precedence over the laws and directly create rights and duties for the inhabitants of the federal territory. Germany is a member or observer of more than 80 international organisations and a contracting party to several hundred multilateral agreements.

The Federal Republic of Germany has ratified the most important human rights agreements of the UN, the UN Genocide Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights and it recognises the competence of the International Court of Justice. Germany supports the principle of the international responsibility to protect, which stipulates that serious crimes against humanity are not domestic affairs protected by state sovereignty. By introducing a dedicated Code of Crimes against International Law, Germany has incorporated into its national law international rules from the Rome Statute on the criminalisation of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and aggression between states.

Germany lends its political and financial support to the work of international courts, their constituent bodies and multilateral institutions in protecting human rights and provides assistance in terms of personnel. German judges sit on international courts on a regular basis and work to enforce and to continue to develop international law.
2.1.2 Challenges facing the rules-based multilateral order

Violations of international law

Germany resolutely opposes any attempts to weaken international law and international jurisdiction. The open violation of international legal principles such as the general prohibition of the use of force by states and the prohibition of annexation is a particular cause for concern. Germany has therefore repeatedly and firmly condemned Russia’s violation of Ukraine’s territorial integrity. The annexation of Crimea by Russia is a contravention of international law that cannot be rectified by staging referenda, nor by maintaining this state of affairs, which was brought about by the use of force.

The violations of fundamental obligations and guarantees in the field of human rights and international humanitarian law that are currently being witnessed in armed conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan and Yemen, for example, are just as objectionable. The same applies to the repeated use of chemical weapons both by the Syrian regime against its own people and by Russia against individuals. If violations such as these are not met with consequences, there is a risk that others may imitate them, thus undermining the legitimacy of international law, including in other contexts. This then once again throws into doubt the legal restriction achieved to date that limits states’ internal and external actions under international law. Contraventions of international law, primarily those committed by major powers, destroy trust and make it harder for parties to work together and reach compromises.

Selective use and weakening of the institutions that enforce international law

Besides clear violations of international law, there is also a growing tendency toward the selective use and reinterpretation of international law, which is equally harmful to the law’s role as a guarantor of the peaceful settlement of disputes and cooperation in a spirit of trust. The same applies to the disregard for relevant judgements and decisions issued by international courts as well as attempts to weaken the same. For example, China continues to make wide-ranging claims to territories in the South China Sea, even though the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) ruled against these claims in 2016.
2.1 Multilateralism that sets and follows rules

Even within the EU, which has considered itself to be a community of laws and values since it was first established, compliance with legal standards and relevant judgements by the Court of Justice of the European Union is not always a given. This has been demonstrated by conflicts with individual EU member states on issues relating to the independence of the judiciary and the freedom of the media, for example.

The Convention on the Law of the Sea

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) was signed in 1982 and comprises a total of 320 articles, making it the most extensive multilateral agreement developed by the UN. It entered into force in 1994. The vast majority of the international community has joined the convention.

Negotiations on a common codification of international maritime law were first instigated by calls in the 1960s for the sea bed and ocean floor to be declared the common heritage of mankind. In response to this, the UN General Assembly formed the Seabed Committee and subsequently established the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which convened in 1973 and ended in 1982 with the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Convention regulates virtually all aspects of international maritime law, such as the division of the sea into different legal zones, the use of zones by shipping and fishing fleets, and the protection of the maritime environment. The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in Hamburg was established as a central element of a comprehensive system designed to settle disputes regarding how the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea is interpreted and applied.
The willingness to commit foreign policy to the principles of international law is declining. The third challenge facing international law as a pillar of the multilateral order is the recent decline in willingness among a series of states to accept new commitments and obligations that would make it possible to adapt the international legal system to current challenges. If these commitments and obligations are to open up new avenues for tackling global problems, they must enjoy the widest possible approval by and involvement of the international community. Without the participation of major actors in the international order, it will be more difficult to use multilateral agreements, institutions and processes as an effective means of responding to global challenges such as climate change, the spread of weapons of mass destruction and epidemics.

Maintaining the international legal system and clearly calling out violations of international law

Germany is resolutely committed to upholding the modern international legal order and its institutions. The basic norms of this order, such as the prohibition of the use of force between states and the protection of human rights, are universal. Within the EU and in its dealings with international partners, the Federal Republic therefore acts to clearly condemn violations of international law, call out the states and individuals responsible for these violations and, where possible, hold them to account.

Germany has been working for years to ensure that war crimes in Syria do not go unpunished. From the outset, the Federal Republic has lent political and financial support to the UN’s International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes under International Law committed in the Syrian Arab Republic (IIIM). It has also successfully lobbied for the IIIM to be included in the regular budget of the UN.
Supporting the International Criminal Court

Germany supports international criminal jurisdiction across the board. One particular priority is the creation and ongoing development of effective mechanisms and institutions for punishing war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. The International Criminal Court (ICC), which was created by the Rome Statute in 1998, is a key instrument for the international prosecution of crimes under international law and a fundamental part of the rules-based world order. When the ICC was established, it was the first time a permanent international court had been created to prosecute crimes under international law.

Germany was among the first state parties to the Rome Statute and also took the statute further by incorporating the crime of aggression, in the sense of a war of aggression, into national law. The Federal Republic is the biggest contributor to the ICC budget after Japan. Germany supports the day-to-day work of the ICC and other specialist international courts by providing judicial assistance, particularly in terms of detaining in German prisons people who have been sentenced, and is thus making an important contribution to the practical functioning of these courts. To make the work of the ICC even more effective,

“The only way to ensure that minimum humanitarian standards are applied in armed conflicts on a lasting basis is to work with the parties to the conflict. In my experience, that requires patience, empathy, courage and creativity. Good offices and efficiently conducted enquiries are the contribution that multilateralism in practice can make to the realisation of these standards.”

Prof. Dr. Thilo Marauhn, President of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission
particularly given the complexity of the cases it deals with, a group of experts headed by South African judge Richard Goldstone submitted a comprehensive set of recommendations for reform. Germany is closely supporting and overseeing these reform discussions. The Federal Government is providing funding for an investigation into the effectiveness of procedures at the ICC, which is being conducted by the International Nuremberg Principles Academy and Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg.
Advancing international law as a basis for the multilateral order

International law and its effective enforcement are also a key priority of the Alliance for Multilateralism. Responding to an initiative from Germany and France, 47 countries and the EU launched a Humanitarian Call for Action that aims to strengthen and improve the enforcement of international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles worldwide. In specific terms, the aim is for as many countries as possible to enforce and comply with the humanitarian obligations that are already in place, such as UN Security Council Resolution 2286 on the protection of medical and humanitarian personnel in conflict situations. Another objective is to raise awareness of the substance and obligations of international humanitarian law among members of state security forces and members of non-state armed groups with a view to improving compliance with humanitarian norms in specific risk situations. In addition, humanitarian organisations are to be supported in their work to ensure, as far as possible, that anti-terror regulations and sanctions do not restrict impartial humanitarian aid.

Another international law initiative by the Alliance for Multilateralism is the Alliance against Impunity. This initiative seeks to ensure that perpetrators of crimes under international law are actually brought to justice. The Alliance members are also promoting a separate convention on the prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity under international law. This could close regulatory loopholes, particularly for states that have not as yet ratified the Rome Statute and are, for various reasons, unlikely to ratify it in the foreseeable future. The UN International Law Commission adopted a draft for a separate convention on crimes against humanity in 2019. Germany is fervently committed to ensuring that discussions be commenced on the adoption of the convention.
in the bodies of the UN and has taken steps to form a Group of Friends with like-minded states that will pursue this aim.

Germany is also involved in the initiative on concluding a Convention on International Cooperation in the Investigation and Prosecution of the Crime of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes. This initiative is intended to culminate in a convention in 2022 and is already supported by 76 states (as of March 2021).

Germany as an advocate for human rights in the United Nations

In addition to its membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 2019/20, Germany will also be a member of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) until 2022. Germany is continuing to bring its capacities to bear as a member of the HRC and UNSC to further develop key issues of the future in the area of human rights protection.

Germany invited a record number of civil society representatives to brief the council as a member of the UNSC from 2019 to 2020. The role of civil society and the promotion of dialogue between the UN institutions and civil society representatives is also a priority of the Federal Government’s work in the UN Human Rights Council.
Germany is continuing to work to ensure that the Human Rights Council addresses not just the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, but also challenges and issues such as human rights to health, clean drinking water and sanitation, as well as the human right to adequate food, the protection of privacy in the digital age, and the impacts of climate change on human rights. This also encompasses a dialogue with the International Labour Organization (ILO), which has created a canon of social human rights in the form of its core labour standards and also has expertise in dealing with the social impacts of climate change. The Federal Government firmly believes that, even in times of crisis, the protection of human rights must be a top priority in order to protect those who have been particularly badly affected by COVID-19 and reinforce social cohesion for tackling the pandemic.

In addition to its work in the central bodies of the UN human rights system, Germany is also strengthening the financial basis for this system. For example, it is increasing its voluntary contributions in 2021 considerably and strongly advocating an adequate regular budget for the Human Rights Council and the other UN instruments of human rights protection in the UN Budgetary Committee. This is the only way to continue to safeguard their independence and greatest possible effectiveness in the future.

Honing EU instruments for enforcing human rights worldwide

Europe has an especially closely interconnected network of agreements and institutions that safeguard the protection of its citizens’ human rights, the rule of law and democratic processes. Europe is a role model around the world in terms of its level of human rights protection. The fact that, after the devastating catastrophes of two world wars, people in the EU have lived in peace for more than 75 years highlights the close correlation between international security and the effective multilateral protection of human rights.
Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union sets out the values on which the Union is founded, namely respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. In line with the EU treaties, the institutions and member states of the EU must uphold the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. In its relations with the wider world, the EU has also undertaken to contribute to the “eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law” (Art. 3 TEU).

In its Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020–2024, which was adopted in November 2020, the EU set out a road map for its global human rights policies over a five-year period. The action plan puts efforts to strengthen fundamental values such as gender equality centre-stage and places issues that are relevant to the future of human rights protection on the EU agenda, such as the challenges posed by high-risk artificial intelligence (AI) applications. Through its Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), the EU helps partner countries around the world to protect human rights and safeguard democratic standards. Germany has also advocated the adoption of an EU Action Plan for corporate social responsibility that will drive forward implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

To promote and defend democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law worldwide, the EU needs capacities to respond effectively and in a targeted manner to human rights violations and other breaches of norms and bring those responsible to justice, wherever they are in the world. In the second half of 2020, under Germany’s Presidency of the Council of the EU, the Federal Government reached agreement on a new horizontal EU sanctions regime that can be used to impose sanctions on those individuals or institutions worldwide that are responsible for the most serious human rights violations.

Putting issues relevant to the future of human rights protection on the agenda of the Council of Europe

Today, 70 years after it was established, the Council of Europe numbers 47 countries with more than 830 million inhabitants. It helps its members to establish and maintain democratic and legal structures. Working in partnership with the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the Council of Europe monitors compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which is binding in all member states. The European Social Charter (ESC) adds essential social and economic fundamental rights to this framework. The Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, meanwhile, issues opinions relating to the development of the rule of law in its member states and beyond, and also advises governments on issues of constitutional law.
From November 2020 to May 2021, Germany held the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, which is the decision-making body of the Council of Europe. The Federal Government’s aim, which stretches beyond the term of its chairmanship, is to strengthen the Council of Europe as a central pillar of multilateral cooperation in Europe and make European human rights protection even more effective. In particular, the more than 800 judgements issued by the ECtHR each year must be consistently implemented by the member states. To achieve this goal, Germany intends to help improve the court’s cooperation with the national courts of its member states and strengthen the role of the member states’ representatives in the court.

Germany aims to advance the negotiations on the EU’s accession to the European Convention on Human Rights. Bringing together the two human rights systems of the EU and the Council of Europe could close gaps in protection, create legal certainty and further increase the level of human rights protection in Europe. Furthermore, Germany ratified the Revised European Social Charter (RESC) during its chairmanship, thus sending a strong signal of support for the implementation of European labour and social standards.
Germany is encouraging the Council of Europe to put the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on human rights on its agenda. The restrictions and burdens brought about by the pandemic have, among other consequences, led to a shocking increase in violence against women and children. In some countries, the demand for support and advice services aimed at tackling domestic violence has increased five-fold since the outbreak of the pandemic. The Council of Europe has an effective tool for countering this development in the form of the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Germany is working to encourage all member states of the Council of Europe and the EU to ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention as a matter of urgency.

Within the Council of Europe, Germany will also advance debates on issues that are relevant to the future of human rights protection, which include the fight against hate speech on the internet and the human rights impacts associated with high-risk artificial intelligence (AI) applications. Both challenges raise urgent questions about how digital progress and innovation impact human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Specific issues include reconciling the right to freedom of opinion and the protection of rights of personality in the digital sphere, as well as the protection of privacy from AI-supported surveillance technologies, and the risk of discrimination associated with the use of digital identification systems. Balanced rules that are geared towards upholding human rights in these contexts could strengthen the pioneering role played by Europe in shaping norms.
2.1 Multilateralism that sets and follows rules

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Strengthening the OSCE as a multilateral platform for cooperation between East and West

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which addresses the three dimensions of security, economic affairs and human rights protection, is a unique forum for dialogue amongst its 57 participating States “from Vancouver to Vladivostok”. Its aims also include promoting the rule of law and democratic institutions.

Besides its political commitment to protect human rights within the framework of the OSCE, the Federal Government also works within the “human” dimension of the OSCE to promote the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human rights (ODIHR), the Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM) and the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM). Besides making the second-largest contribution of any participating State to the regular budget of the OSCE, the Federal Government also finances a range of projects aimed at, among other things, fighting antisemitism and discrimination against minorities, tackling human trafficking, and protecting victims of hate speech and hate crimes. In particular, the Federal Government promotes the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, which is one of the biggest human rights conferences in Europe with approximately 2000 participants.

“When it comes to security policy, trust is a prerequisite for multilateral action. It is possible to establish or rebuild trust between countries, and this must be our constant motivation. The OSCE brings countries together to this end so that they can discuss issues on a level playing field and build trust. My aim is to further strengthen its role for countries that would not otherwise engage with each other on a regular basis. Germany is an important partner in these efforts.”

Helga Schmid, Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
2.2

Multilateralism in the service of peace and security
2.2 Multilateralism in the service of peace and security

2.2.1 Working together to protect ourselves and others

Peace and security depend on multilateral cooperation. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Charter of the United Nations, which elevates the sovereign equality of countries and the prohibition of the use of force to basic norms of international relations. The use of force by one country to further its interests against another is prohibited as a rule. One exception to this is the right of self-defence. The primary responsibility for maintaining world peace and international security rests with the UN Security Council. The Security Council can adopt resolutions on measures to counter the use of force and reinforce the right of other countries to collectively assist a country that is exercising its right of self-defence in response to an attack. The UN uses its unique legitimacy to prevent armed conflicts or establish peace, either by conducting armed peacekeeping missions, such as in Mali (MINUSMA), or by carrying out special political missions that are primarily civilian in nature, such as the Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS).

“UNITAMS, the UN mission I am leading in the Sudan, has been mandated by the UN Security Council to support the Government and people of the Sudan as they make the difficult transition from dictatorship and civil war to peace and democratic governance. Multilateral cooperation and common objectives on the Security Council are crucial in assisting the Sudan in this historic process.”

Prof. Volker Perthes, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sudan and Head of the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS)
Over the past 73 years, more than one million soldiers and police officers from 125 countries have participated in UN missions, thereby demonstrating the inclusivity and impartiality of the UN. More than 80,000 Blue Helmets drawn from military and police forces are currently serving in 12 peacekeeping missions alongside civilian personnel from the worlds of diplomacy and development cooperation. German personnel occupy leadership positions in the maritime component of the UN peace mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and in UNITAMS. Furthermore, Germany is the fourth-largest contributor to the budget for peacekeeping missions. The Federal Government supports the UN, particularly in the areas of peace-making, post-conflict peacebuilding, training, expanding the role of women in peacekeeping, and making the transition from conflict management that is supported by a military deployment to conflict management on an entirely civilian basis.

Despite all its prohibitions and the binding effect of the UN Charter on all member states, armed conflicts have remained a reality in many parts of the world, including in Europe, even since the UN was established. Peace and security are also under threat from terrorism, transnational criminality and domestic conflicts involving mass crimes against the civilian population. The impacts of this are rarely limited to the countries directly affected.

“The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force consists of ships and personnel from five different countries and is the only naval operation under the UN flag. Our tasks are to assist the Lebanese Government in securing its maritime borders in order to prevent arms smuggling, carry out maritime reconnaissance and monitoring within UNIFIL’s area of deployment, conduct air reconnaissance over the whole of Lebanon and help the Lebanese Naval Forces build up their capacities.”

Rear Admiral Axel Schulz, Commander UNIFIL Maritime Task Force
The only way to overcome challenges such as these and guarantee peace and security is to ensure that the international community takes collective action that is rooted in solidarity. This is in everyone’s best interest since armed conflicts not only bring death and destruction to those who are immediately impacted, but also destroy trust between countries, societies and people, and prevent sustainable development.

For over 70 years, democratic countries in Europe and North America have worked together to protect their freedom and shared values in NATO. At the heart of this organisation is the principle of collective defence, which is enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and states that an armed attack against one Ally is considered as an attack against all Allies and shall be met with a correspondingly collective response. Alliance solidarity is a fundamental principle of German governance. The Federal Republic has its allies to thank for the peace and security it enjoys and for the protection of its freedom, particularly throughout its time as a frontline state during the Cold War. Today, 30 countries organise their security collectively within NATO on a political and military basis and demonstrate this collaboration daily in the collective protection of Allied territory and in international missions. Germany makes an important contribution to this, for example in NATO’s air policing operations to protect the airspace over the Baltic and Romania, in the standing NATO maritime groups, in NATO missions such as Resolute Support in Afghanistan, KFOR in Kosovo and the NATO mission in Iraq, and through the stationing of German contingents in Lithuania as part of the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence. Since 2019, Germany has also provided a new operational command for the Alliance in the form of the Joint Support and Enabling Command (JSEC) in Ulm.

NATO is more than just a defence alliance, however. It also aims to help ease tensions through partnerships and collaborations and to build and maintain good relations with other countries. To achieve these goals, the Alliance
has established partnerships with approximately 40 countries and international organisations such as the UN, the EU and the OSCE. Since the 1990s, NATO has contributed both military and civilian personnel to international crisis management efforts within the framework of a networked civil-military approach that is closely coordinated with the UN. Activities have included assisting in the fight against terrorism, building up the capacities of foreign partner governments and armed forces, and supporting international efforts to prevent and resolve armed conflicts.

The EU is becoming an increasingly influential actor in terms of security and defence policy and is assuming greater responsibility for peace and security in the world. It sees multilateralism
and strengthening the international order as fundamental principles and the most effective means of shaping relations in the international community. As a union of countries whose founding mandate includes eradicating war in Europe, the EU is an outstanding example of how economic and political cooperation can be harnessed to preserve peace. In its international activities, the EU can make use of all the policies at its disposal and its uniquely broad set of tools, which includes diplomacy, economic instruments, police resources, development and defence policies and the armed forces of its member states. It works closely around the world with the UN and numerous other international organisations and partners, for example in its 11 civilian and six military missions and operations in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. In addition to this global responsibility, the member states of the EU will also support each other in the event of an armed attack from outside.

This commitment is enshrined in the common defence policy set out in the Treaty on European Union and is in line with NATO commitments.

The EU is playing a proactive, high-profile role in peace and security in many countries and armed conflicts around the world. It is pursuing an integrated approach to conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict peacebuilding in this context. For example, EU special representatives are lending their active support to efforts to achieve peace and security in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the South Caucasus and the Middle East peace process. Around a quarter of both the UN’s regular budget and its budget for peacekeeping measures and more than 30 percent of the funds for all development cooperation, post-conflict peacebuilding and humanitarian assistance measures are provided by EU member states.
Civilian specialists from ZIF around the world

Via the Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF), Germany has seconded more than 150 civilian experts worldwide on peace operations run by international organisations. They are helping to resolve and come to terms with crises and conflicts from Colombia and the Niger to Kazakhstan.

Last updated: 11 May 2021
Source: FFO & ZIF/map: FFO PREVIEW
2.2 Multilateralism in the service of peace and security
"The many nationalities represented in the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine is multilateralism in action. In my team alone, colleagues from 38 countries are working proactively and constructively to implement our mandate, even if their home countries don’t always see eye to eye. It is a microcosm of international understanding."

Jürgen Wellner, Luhansk Monitoring Team Leader, OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM)

In terms of contributing military and civilian personnel, Germany is heavily involved in the ongoing missions and operations of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which play a decisive role in promoting stability in the European neighbourhood regions affected by crisis. The Federal Government is playing a key role in the ongoing development of various EU defence initiatives centred around Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), and is likewise involved in the extension of the civilian CSDP and the expansion of the European civil-military planning and leadership structures in Brussels. Following an initiative from the Federal Government, the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management was opened in Berlin in September 2020 to advise and support the EU and its member states.

The UN, NATO and the EU are the cornerstones of German and European security. However, the OSCE also plays an important role with respect to peace in Europe and is a unique forum for security and military policy consultations, cooperation and negotiations between participating States from Europe, North America and Central Asia. To achieve a comprehensive approach to security, the participating States work together across three dimensions – the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human dimensions. In meeting the commitments they have made within the framework of the OSCE, the participating States provide on-the-ground support for diverse field operations in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia. One particularly noteworthy mission is the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine. Almost 800 observers are monitoring the situation in Ukraine, compliance with the ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the conflict area in eastern Ukraine. They are also working on the ground to establish dialogue between the two sides. Germany has provided 40 observers, making it the biggest contributor of personnel.
Development policy approaches to peacebuilding are another cornerstone of Germany’s engagement for peace and security, particularly in the countries and regions of the Global South. Here too, the Federal Republic consistently embeds its engagement in multilateral approaches and supports multilateral partners in their development policy approaches. Another important player in this area is the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). With assistance from Germany, the OECD has developed concepts for engagement in fragile states, such as recommending improved cooperation between stakeholders in the fields of humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peacebuilding.

By 2030, it is expected that more than half of the poorest people in the world will live in fragile states. With this in mind, efforts by the World Bank to alleviate extreme poverty and generate inclusive growth will increasingly focus on these countries. Germany has been involved in drawing up the Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence, which is the first set of World Bank Group guidelines for more targeted and effective operations in fragile partner countries that are affected by conflict and violence. The 2019 replenishment negotiations for the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA) saw the first-ever financing line established specifically for crisis prevention and fragile states. As the fourth-largest

Fragility

In general, a country is classed as a fragile state when its government is either unwilling or unable to enforce state power, provide basic state services and maintain its people’s acceptance of the state’s claim to power (legitimacy).

Major shortfalls in any of these individual areas can be explosive. For example, limitations to state power can result in the loss of control over territory or exacerbate organised violence orchestrated by non-state actors. Meanwhile, inadequate capacities can impact a country’s ability to formulate, implement and enforce laws or supply the population with basic essentials such as water or services such as healthcare and education. Last but not least, if the population does not accept the state’s claim to power, the result can be state repression or even organised rebellion and civil war.
contributor to the IDA, Germany is making a crucial contribution to the World Bank’s increased engagement in fragile contexts and is a key donor for the global funding of crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

2.2.2

Countering security risks, promoting peace

The security policy landscape is constantly changing and the institutions of the international and regional order must respond to this if they are to be effective in guaranteeing peace and security on a long-term basis. In the 2016 White Paper on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr and in its Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace, Germany outlined its efforts to proactively strengthen multilateral institutions and formats at both European and broader international levels and help them to adapt to new and evolving challenges. Germany will carry this work forward over the coming years.

Intensifying crisis prevention

Crisis prevention focuses on the structural political and social causes as well as the drivers of conflicts and seeks to prevent escalation and outbreaks of violence as well as to foster peaceful coexistence in the long term. Different approaches and tools are required depending on the specific circumstances and how fragile the situation is. When internal political tensions escalate into armed conflicts, this is often because the prevailing social conditions and state structures impede the peaceful resolution of conflicts within the society. This is particularly true in countries that are classed as fragile states because they are either unable, or their governments are unwilling, to fulfil basic state functions with respect to security, the rule of law and essential social services. Poverty, violence, the unfair distribution of resources and power, corruption and political despotism are all hallmarks of fragile states.

When state structures cease to function, lawless zones emerge, and these are exploited by organised criminal gangs and terrorist networks, and sometimes regional and global stakeholders. Fragile states affected by conflicts are therefore a risk to regional and international security. The number of these fragile states is growing, which poses challenges for Germany and Europe, both in terms of security policy and, for the most part, on a humanitarian level.
International law provides an indispensable framework for international engagement in crisis prevention. However, progress in developing this framework has been virtually impossible, particularly within the UN, as two permanent members of the UN Security Council – China and Russia – frequently view approaches that are aimed at preventing crises as contraventions of the principle of non-interference.

Efforts to promote direct crisis prevention have so far proven particularly successful when they factor in the principle of voluntary action, i.e. when they have the consent of the parties to the conflict. For example, alongside its peace missions, the UN has also carried out special political missions, during which it has successfully acted as a mediator in crises and thus prevented conflicts from escalating. Germany supports this important work by providing funding, personnel and expert advice.

For this reason, the Federal Government is placing a particular emphasis on continuing to develop the EU’s crisis engagement based on the EU Global Strategy. By pooling its political and financial tools for preventing and managing crises, such as in the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and the European Peace Facility (EPF), the EU will be able to respond to crises faster, more effectively and with greater flexibility in the future. Improved coordination with the member states is another essential requirement.

Germany expects the EU to intensify the dialogue on crisis engagement as part of the Integrated Approach. The aim behind the Integrated Approach is to combine all the relevant tools and aspects of engagement that are at the disposal of the EU and its member states, such as those geared towards stabilisation or financial aid, and use them coherently and as one in response to specific crises. The COVID-19 pandemic recently brought together Team Europe in this way, for example. Team Europe consists of the EU, the EU member states and their institutions, and the European promotional banks, which are the face of joint action by the EU member states to the wider world beyond the context of COVID-19 aid.
To prevent far-reaching crises from breaking out, it can also be prudent to establish flexible alliances with other states, international organisations and NGOs. This is particularly important when multilateral organisations such as the UN Security Council or the OSCE are deadlocked as a result of vetoes on the part of individual countries.

Germany is also working closely with its multilateral partners on early-intervention and structural measures for preventing violence and conflicts. Part of this work involves dismantling structural causes such as state repression, a lack of political participation, unequal access to economic prospects, poverty, hunger and human suffering. This is why Germany is helping the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to implement the SDGs in fragile states and roll out crisis-prevention programmes and is assisting the World Bank with its activities in countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing lines of conflict in a number of crisis-hit areas. The pandemic poses major challenges for fragile states in particular, ranging from healthcare provision and economic risks to the issue of how parliamentary elections can be held safely. It has given governments with autocratic tendencies a pretext for unduly restricting political rights on the grounds of preventing infection. In October 2020, the Federal Government adopted a global health strategy that factors in the numerous correlations with foreign, security and development policy.

Resolving conflicts, building peace

The UN can respond rapidly and comprehensively to crises. In such scenarios, the UN’s special political missions and special representatives play a key role on behalf of the UN Security Council, helping to resolve armed conflicts and implement negotiated settlements. The UN has set itself the goal of systematically supporting peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding in the long term, in particular by expanding peace policy tools such as mediation, and also by expanding project work such as the promotion of dialogue within civil society.

Germany has always been one of the biggest donors to and supporters of various UN conflict resolution tools and programmes, including its special political missions. For example, the Federal Government has established a Peace Support Facility for the political process aimed at resolving the conflict in Yemen. Through the Berlin Process, the Federal Government is also supporting the work of the UN Special Representative for Libya and funding important aspects of the work that the UNSMIL mission is doing in the country. The same applies to the
Dressed in protective clothing, a worker for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) distributes medication to people with chronic diseases during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2 Multilateralism in the service of peace and security

UN special representatives for Syria, Iraq and the Sudan. Furthermore, Germany is one of the biggest contributors to the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and is thus working to ensure that the UN can respond directly, flexibly and effectively to risks of conflict on the ground.

With a view to further enhancing the multilateral dimension of its engagement in crises and conflicts, the Federal Government has also started to set up stabilisation instruments specifically as multi-donor instruments. Examples include the regional stabilisation facilities administered by the UNDP for the Lake Chad Basin region and for the Liptako-Gourma tri-border region of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, as well as the G5 Sahel Facility, which is part of the Sahel Alliance. Germany is therefore offering the EU and smaller EU member states in particular the opportunity to step up their common engagement in the area of peace and security.

Integrating climate change into security policy

The link between climate change and peacebuilding has become increasingly clear in recent years. Furthermore, the impacts of climate change are exacerbating pre-existing conflicts in many politically unstable regions. Commonly used forecasting models suggest that extreme weather events such as droughts or flooding are likely to become more frequent and more intensive. By the same token, fragility and conflicts usually amplify climate risks while also, and in particular, making societies less resilient and less able to adapt in the face of climate change impacts. This poses a threat to the peaceful balance of interests within a society, endangers sustainable development in the countries concerned and increases the risk of humanitarian disasters and armed conflicts.
The Federal Government approaches climate change as an environmental, development and security problem in equal measure and is pursuing this integrated approach also in the UN. For example, Germany has formed the Group of Friends on Climate and Security, which currently has 54 members, as well as an Informal Expert Group made up of members of the Security Council. Together with these countries, the Federal Government is taking steps to ensure that the UN systematically incorporates climate security risks into its analyses and reports. Germany is also funding the first climate and security expert in the UN’s Environment Programme with a view to supporting the UN peace mission in Somalia.

Moreover, Germany is one of four main donors that are supporting a new UN unit on climate and security in New York. Established by Sweden, the unit ensures that the impacts of climate change on stability and security are reflected in reports by the UN Secretary-General. After all, the international community must take action in places where climate change poses a threat to people’s livelihoods before political conflicts escalate into violence. The Federal Government is therefore continuing to work to ensure that the UN Security Council is able to intervene in crises at an early stage and play a proactive role in mediation, for example, when this is necessary to prevent violent conflicts.

Collective, internationally networked and interdisciplinary research is crucial to drawing the correct conclusions and developing crisis prevention tools. Germany has therefore initiated a comprehensive report on improved forecasting for security risks caused by climate change. By 2023, an international consortium of scientists and academics led by two German research institutes are to draw up the report Weathering Risk: A Climate and Security Risk and Foresight Assessment. Moreover, the Berlin Climate and Security Conference (BCSC) brings together all relevant stakeholders from politics, the scientific community and civil society each year to discuss specific, preventive options for tackling climate-induced security risks at an early stage.

The Federal Government is working with partner countries and multilateral organisations to help enhance climate adaptation and resilience, particularly in the least developed countries. Among other things, it is advocating that the World Bank systematically integrate aspects of climate change into its development policy and economic analyses.
2.2 Multilateralism in the service of peace and security

Strengthening arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation

Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation reduce the probability of armed conflicts and their impacts for countries and people. Germany therefore attaches the very greatest importance to the issue of arms control, and not only with respect to nuclear, biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction, but also as far as conventional weapon systems and those based on new technologies are concerned. Agreements aimed at establishing transparency and building confidence are essential to ensuring that arms controls and disarmament are able to function and that arms races can be avoided.

Given the destructive potential of nuclear weapons, the setbacks that have occurred in recent years with regard to international arms control could lead to particularly dangerous developments. The bilateral Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, which was particularly important for Europe, was violated by Russia and, following a six-month notice period, was terminated by the US after Russia resisted international calls – including from NATO – to reinstate compliance with it. Nonetheless, the strategic nuclear weapons of both countries are still subject to arms controls and remain limited in number after the US and Russia extended the New START treaty by five years in the first few weeks of the new US administration.

Iran is continuing to pursue its nuclear programme and has violated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in a targeted manner since the US withdrawal from the agreement and reimposed comprehensive sanctions against Iran. The change of administration in the US in January 2021 raised the possibility that the US may adopt a different approach to Iran. Germany, France and the UK (as the E3) have been working closely with the new US administration to preserve the JCPOA. Building on this, the medium- to long-term objective is to come up with a viable framework for Iran’s nuclear programme, put in place regulations for Iran’s missile programme and improve security in the region.
Germany is working with its allies for a world without nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons pose fundamental risks to humanity, and the emergence of any new nuclear state will entail additional atomic risks for humanity and potentially cause other countries to follow suit. It is therefore the responsibility of all countries to work together to prevent this scenario and promote nuclear disarmament. Nevertheless, NATO believes that the need for a nuclear deterrent will remain as long as nuclear weapons can be used as a means of military confrontation.

To ensure multilateral solutions are effective, it is therefore essential that the nuclear-weapon states themselves be involved and that agreement be reached on comprehensive verification measures. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which has been signed by 190 states, has minimised the proliferation of nuclear weapons considerably in recent decades. However, despite long-term and tightened sanctions and other measures taken by the UN Security Council, it has not been possible to prevent the nuclear arms programme in North Korea.

In order to advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Germany has once again placed these issues on the agenda of the UN Security Council and joined with 16 partner countries to present numerous specific proposals for reinvigorating nuclear disarmament as part of the Stockholm Initiative. Germany is also playing a proactive role in helping to combat proliferation financing as part of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

When it comes to creating transparency and building confidence, the Structured Dialogue process established by the OSCE in 2016 on Germany’s initiative involves all participating States and enhances understanding of risk.
reduction and security in Europe. Following the US’s withdrawal from the Open Skies Treaty in 2020 and the announcement by the Russian Federation that it intends to follow suit, Germany has lobbied extensively in Washington and Moscow for the treaty to be upheld and further developed. The treaty entitles the signatories to mutual observation flights over each other’s territories. Since it entered into force, more than 1500 such flights have helped create transparency and build confidence between the signatories. Germany has underpinned its own contribution to the treaty by procuring a special observation aircraft that is also to be made available to partners from 2022.

Thanks to its detailed verification measures, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2013, has made the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) one of the most efficient disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. Germany has been one of the most proactive advocates of the OPCW’s work from the outset and supports the organisation’s activities politically and financially, and also by providing expertise and training. Germany also worked to ensure that the organisation was tasked with investigating and attributing responsibility for the use of chemical weapons in Syria, which enable it to play an important part in ensuring that those responsible for these crimes are held to account.

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) imposes a comprehensive ban on biological weapons. Germany is advocating the establishment of a scientific advisory mechanism within the framework of the BWC that will ensure that the rapid pace of technical progress in life sciences is taken into account. It is also using specific measures such as expert training courses and workshops to support the UN Secretary-General’s Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions prohibit the use of these weapons, which are primarily a threat to civilians. These agreements have also given rise to humanitarian mine and munitions clearance measures and victim support programmes, which represent a collective approach to dealing with the impacts of contamination with mines and cluster munitions in affected countries. Both Germany and, to a particularly large extent, the EU are among the biggest financial supporters of this policy worldwide. In 2021, Germany is therefore chairing the informal Mine Action Support Group and co-hosting a UN conference on mine clearance as part of its special commitment to humanitarian mine and munitions clearance.

Germany is devoting particular attention to new technologies and their importance for arms control. Since 2015, these technologies have become an additional focus of Germany’s arms control initiatives. In 2019, the Federal Government launched the “Capturing Technology. Rethinking Arms Control initiative to develop options for containing the risks associated with the military use of new technologies in future weapon systems. This was the first time this issue had been placed on the international political agenda. One of the first outcomes of these consultation efforts is the Missile Dialogue Initiative, which is a global network of experts and government representatives that is working on responses to the risks posed by new missile technologies and proliferation trends.
It is important to ensure that these new types of weapon system are also compatible with international humanitarian law and pre-existing arms control regimes. Due to their use of artificial intelligence, it is feasible that lethal autonomous weapon systems could, in the future, be in a position to make life-and-death decisions independently, without any human input. Germany has advocated a global ban on fully autonomous weapon systems for many years and has joined with other countries – in the Alliance for Multilateralism, for example – in calling for weapon systems with autonomous functions to be used only in line with binding principles. Key criteria for these principles include adequate human controls and compatibility with international law.

Fighting terrorism together

The international dimension of terrorism continues to demand a globally coordinated and networked response from the international community. While hunting down terrorists and protecting the population is a national task for the police, it can also be a military undertaking. Another key aspect of a holistic approach to fighting terrorism involves breaking up networks in order to prevent and suppress the financing activities of terrorist actors in the long term. Societies themselves must also become more resistant to the entreaties of terrorist groups and their propaganda by putting in place preventive measures and deradicalisation.

“As the head of EUCAP Sahel Niger, I provide advice and training to help the security forces in the Niger build up their capacities. The multilateral cooperation between the approximately 120 police officers and additional civilian workers from the EU and their colleagues from the Niger is crucial if we are to be successful in tackling cross-border terrorism and organised crime in the Sahel.”

Senior police officer Antje Pittelkau, Head of the EU Capacity Building Mission in Niger (EUCAP Sahel Niger)
2.2 Multilateralism in the service of peace and security

Programmes. Countries are working ever closer together on all these initiatives in numerous multilateral organisations. Alongside the UN, the G7, the EU, NATO, the OSCE and the Council of Europe have adopted a joint and coordinated approach to tackling terrorism.

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the resolutions based on it have set a binding framework for the global fight against terrorism for many years. For example, they make it possible for Germany to freeze the financial assets of terrorist organisations. The Federal Government works closely with the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), which assists the UN Security Council, and the Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

In the Rome-Lyon Group of the G7, Germany and its partners share their experience in fighting terrorism and transnational organised crime and coordinate their joint initiatives in other institutions.

Since the terror attacks in the US on 11 September 2001, which led to the one and only time NATO has invoked its collective defence clause to date, the Alliance has played a strong role in the fight against terrorism. NATO’s activities are focused on three main areas – raising awareness of terrorist threats, developing capabilities and engagement, primarily with partner countries and international organisations including the UN, EU and OSCE. These areas are being implemented step by step through advice and training for partners, support for the development of allied capabilities and NATO Missions, and activities such as Operation Sea Guardian in the Mediterranean and the NATO mission in Iraq. Germany supports these measures in both a civilian and military capacity, while also emphasising compliance with important principles such as the primacy of member states in the war against terror, the avoidance of duplication of efforts, and complementarity with existing national and international initiatives.

The member states of the EU must work closely together if they are to be successful in defending against terrorist threats. The EU’s collaborative strategy for fighting terrorism is based on preventing and tackling its root causes, protecting the population, detecting and disrupting terrorist plans before they can be implemented, and ensuring that member states respond rapidly and decisively in the event that a terrorist attack cannot be averted. One particular area that the EU has worked on in recent years is international cooperation on
matters of judicial and police law enforcement. For example, it has introduced various legal instruments for improved information sharing on issues such as air passenger data and terrorist financing.

When it held the Presidency of the Council of the EU, Germany took great strides in advancing the fight against extremism, hate crime and terrorist content on the internet. For example, the Federal Government contributed personnel to build up expertise for fighting far-right extremism through the work of the Internet Referral Unit. A Europe-wide action day against online hate speech was staged in ten European countries with the cooperation of Europol and resulted in approximately 140
executive measures against individuals suspected of disseminating unlawful hate speech on the internet.

As far as the terrorist organisation Islamic State is concerned, Germany, together with its international partners, has supported military efforts to tackle the terrorist organisation in Iraq and Syria as part of the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh since 2015. Through its joint-chairmanship of the Coalition’s Stabilisation Working Group and extensive civilian engagement, Germany is playing an important role in stabilising the areas of north-eastern Syria and Iraq that have been liberated from Daesh. Another crucial and successful instrument of Germany’s security policy that complements military contributions such as air-to-air refuelling is its enable-and-enhance strategy. This strategy is based on equipping, advising and training Iraqi military and security forces by providing bilateral support and building capacities under the auspices of the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh and the NATO mission in Iraq. In Africa, Germany supports the Coalition for the Sahel and the Partnership for Security and Stability in their efforts to strengthen and train security forces so that they are able to fight terrorist threats on a more independent and long-term basis.

Promoting security in space

Free access to space and the reliable use of space systems and their applications are indispensable for modern societies.

Large swathes of our increasingly digitally networked societies are dependent on satellite-based services. The availability of secure communications and navigation, the provision of high-precision timing signals and Earth observation capabilities are all based on space technology. It is not least for these reasons that a country’s protection, defence and capacity to act are also reliant on secure access to, and reliable use of, space.

Space systems are increasingly facing risks and threats from the activities of other space users, and recent years have seen a steady increase in shows of force and demonstrations of capabilities. New weapon systems that inhibit the use of space-based services are being developed and tested with great urgency and are already being deployed in numerous conflicts. However, the lack of options for protecting and defending space systems make them especially vulnerable and a likely target in the event of future armed conflicts.
It is to be expected that the coming years will see state and private-sector actors make ever greater use of space. This will increase the number of satellites and generate more space debris. As a result, regulations and principles are needed to help manage the high level of traffic, ensure that space is used sustainably and securely, and avoid misunderstandings.

The existing legal and normative framework has proven to be inadequate with respect to limiting threats and risks to civilian and military applications in space in a comprehensive and long-term manner. This situation is further compounded by the absence of a basic international consensus on which activities in space are considered responsible and which are high-risk or threatening.

The UN is the primary framework for developing internationally recognised rules in space, particularly the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in Vienna, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and the Committee for Disarmament and International Security (First Committee) of the UN General Assembly. Since the start of 2020, the Federal Government and like-minded partner countries led by the UK have promoted a dialogue among the international community with the aim of containing threats and risks and achieving agreement on what constitutes responsible state conduct in space. In December 2020, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on this initiative with a large majority.

The EU and Germany are working to commence negotiations on both a voluntary instrument that will regulate peaceful and responsible conduct in space and a harmonised Space Traffic Management concept. The European Commission underscored the growing importance of space for the EU with its 2018 Space Strategy and by pooling its activities in the Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space (DEFIS) in 2020. The Federal Government considers the security of European space technology and space infrastructure to be an issue of European resilience and an important strategic aspect.
2.2 Multilateralism in the service of peace and security

The EU and Germany are working to commence negotiations on both a voluntary instrument that will regulate peaceful and responsible conduct in space and a harmonised Space Traffic Management concept. The European Commission underscored the growing importance of space for the EU with its 2018 Space Strategy and by pooling its activities in the Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space (DEFIS) in 2020. The Federal Government considers the security of European space technology and space infrastructure to be an issue of European resilience and an important strategic aspect.

NATO is devoting greater attention to space also with operational capacities in mind and has, among other initiatives, decided to establish the NATO Space Centre in Ramstein, which will serve as a coordination platform. Key priorities will be coordinating the Allies’ activities in space, sharing information and supporting deployments using space-based capabilities provided by NATO countries.

The Federal Government anticipates that issues related to space will play a prominent role in both the new fundamental security policy document of the EU – the Strategic Compass – and future NATO strategies. In the coming years, Germany will extend its own capabilities in areas such as space surveillance and contribute its own insights and capacities to NATO and the EU.

Promoting security in cyberspace

Cyberspace has become increasingly important in recent years as a result of global digital networking. Free access to and the secure use of cyberspace is a crucial prerequisite for all societies when it comes to participating in global trade and accessing scientific discourse, education and communication. The potential and possible applications of both civilian and military cyber capabilities are steadily growing in importance in the face of current security threats. Activities and threats both in and resulting from cyberspace are increasingly shaping the way that international conflicts play out. Five years ago, as a result of these changes, NATO countries acknowledged cyberspace as a separate operational domain alongside land, air, sea and space, and, in partnership with the EU member states, undertook to improve the protection of their infrastructure against cyber threats. In recent years, with the support of Germany, NATO and the EU have undertaken considerable efforts to make their systems more secure, expand their analytical capacities and support their member states. One example of this are the NATO Cyber Rapid Reaction Teams, which can provide countries with immediate assistance in the event of serious cyber attacks.
Societies also need to be resilient so that they can operate independently in digital environments and without the unwanted influence of third parties. This means that not only the military, but also civilian sectors of the state and the business community must minimise their vulnerability to disruption to IT infrastructures and data traffic as well as minimise the potential impacts of this and strengthen their digital sovereignty.

Germany, its European partners and many other countries share the conviction that international law – particularly the UN Charter and international humanitarian law – also applies to cyberspace and must be enforced both offline and online. Germany is therefore working alongside the EU and other partners on the continued development of voluntary norms for responsible state conduct in cyberspace. Germany is also coordinating its position to this end with like-minded countries in the relevant working groups of the UN and OSCE.

One particularly important aspect of these efforts is the ongoing development of the EU’s Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox and its broad range of preventive, collaborative, stabilising and restrictive support measures. These include confidence-building measures, building up capacities and raising awareness of this issue in partner countries, as well as sanctions and, last but not least, mutual support for self-defence against cyberattacks. Guaranteeing a credible deterrent against cyber attacks and attributing responsibility for such attacks are equally important. Illegal activity in cyberspace must have consequences. The Federal Government
is working continuously to improve resilience and is helping other countries to this end, for example by establishing a network of European cyber expertise. In cooperation with its European partners, the Federal Government has created a cyber sanctions regime as a component of the EU’s Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox. Travel bans for the EU and freezing assets there are two measures that make it possible to issue a clear, effective and targeted response to malicious conduct in cyberspace in line with applicable international law. In 2020, the EU imposed measures for the first time on individuals and organisations that had been involved in cyber attacks.

Germany was one of the first countries to support the Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace, which promotes cooperation between state and private-sector actors with the aim of enhancing stability in cyberspace. This initiative, which was presented under the auspices of the Alliance for Multilateralism, is supported by approximately 80 countries, almost 400 representatives from NGOs, research institutes, universities and civil society, and more than 700 businesses and other representatives from the private sector. Germany promotes confidence-building measures within the framework of the OSCE and supports the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise, which advocates capacity-building as part of the World Bank’s Digital Development Partnership.

Countering disinformation

Demonstrably false and misleading information that is spread for political reasons and with the aim of deliberately influencing or deceiving the public poses a challenge to liberal democracies and the international order. When it is successful, disinformation can create or reinforce negative stereotypes and prejudices and undermine democratic processes and values. It damages trust between and within countries and societies and thus poses a risk to cohesion. Disinformation fuels mistrust in the prevailing information landscape, the legitimacy of political decision-making structures and the international order. All this makes tackling disinformation an international task.

Digital dissemination channels have increased massively in importance and, as a result, targeted disinformation has also grown considerably in terms of its scale, scope and rate of spread. There are numerous actors behind disinformation strategies. They can be domestic or foreign, state or non-state individuals, and pursue very specific aims or work toward overlapping objectives with a great impact. The targets of this disinformation are just as diverse as the agents spreading it. For example, they may focus on discrediting individuals, businesses, groups within society, parties, parliaments, governments and political processes, or international organisations such as the WHO, the EU and NATO.
Resilience

In the context of the White Paper on Multilateralism, resilience refers to the capacity of people, societies and state institutions to cope with, adapt to and quickly recover from acute shocks and chronic burdens without medium or long-term damage. These shocks and burdens could be caused by volatile (unstable) situations, crises, violent conflicts and extreme natural events.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted just how dangerous the spread of disinformation can be. The WHO has witnessed a flood of false or misleading information that is making it more difficult for people around the world to access trustworthy information about the disease itself, how they can protect themselves against it, and vaccines.

Developments such as these demand a new level of social resilience and resistance from Germany and Europe. In recent years, the EU, the G7, NATO and their various member states have put in place countermeasures and honed their capacities for dealing with disinformation. All of these parties are closely monitoring (digital) disinformation strategies, sharing their knowledge and holding in-depth discussions about what action to take. For example, targeted fake news about NATO contingents in countries of deployment are often identified and corrected in the space of a few hours. The EU’s Intelligence Analysis Centre (INTCEN) comprehensively evaluates the disinformation policies of other countries and the European External Action Service (EEAS) responds with fact-based communications.
2.2 Multilateralism in the service of peace and security

2.2.3 Strengthening the UN, NATO and the EU and taking advantage of the G7 Presidency

Many institutions and organisations of the international order that work to prevent armed conflicts and create peace and security are not as effective as they could be or indeed need to be in order to carry out their tasks. There are many reasons for this, ranging from politically motivated deadlocks by individual members and inadequate tools to cumbersome decision-making processes in organisations with numerous members, stakeholders and levels of action. This is why the Federal Government’s aim is for international organisations to ultimately become more assertive and capable of taking action across all levels and for them to improve, reform or add to their toolkits. Close cooperation between these institutions will bolster their effectiveness.

Enhancing the United Nations’ capacity to act

The UN Security Council enjoys special competencies and responsibilities on issues of security and peace. It consists of five permanent members that have veto rights and ten members that are elected to the Council for a two-year period and do not enjoy veto rights. In the past, decisions taken by the UN Security Council often formed the basis for decision-making processes concerning security policy in international organisations and coalitions such as the EU and NATO and with regard to national mandates for Bundeswehr missions abroad.
In recent years, however, the UN Security Council has frequently been deadlocked on key issues of international security and peace due to differing positions among its permanent members. As a result, it has been unable to completely fulfil its role, for example to minimise the suffering of people caught up in civil wars such as in Syria. Germany is therefore one of the countries that still firmly believe that the UN Security Council must be reformed and expanded to include additional members and achieve a more balanced regional representation.

Adapting NATO to meet additional challenges

NATO protects the freedom of its member states and helps to uphold the rules-based international order and, in particular, maintain Euro-Atlantic security. The strength of the Alliance is a key prerequisite for a stable international system. The primary reason why NATO is effective in performing its core tasks – the protection of its members on the basis of deterrence and collective defence, international crisis management and cooperative security – is that it has, time and again, adapted successfully to new challenges and continues to do so.

Germany supports the recommendations made by the Expert Group that was set up on its initiative, which advocate updating NATO’s Strategic Concept by 2022 in order to account for recent and foreseeable security policy developments. In so doing, Germany is encouraging the Alliance to stick to its core tasks and keep NATO’s military focus on the Euro-Atlantic area. In order to be credible, any advocacy for joint action as part of the Alliance must be based on a fair division of obligations, which is why Germany stands by and fulfils its commitments to the Alliance. Moving forward, the Alliance should be used more extensively as a forum for security policy consultations among its member states, thereby strengthening its role and political authority as a values-based stakeholder in matters of peace and security. In view of the increase in hybrid threats, such as those posed by Russia and China, the tasks of identifying and analysing hybrid campaigns at an early stage and bolstering the resilience of NATO member states and their societies must play a bigger role in the future.

Given the increase in geopolitical competition, which is closely linked to the rise of China, NATO will also need to focus more closely on global security policy developments in the future. In this context, it is important to intensify dialogue and cooperation with partner states of the Alliance and with other multilateral organisations. This includes, in particular, partners in the Indo-Pacific region that share its values and the EU.
With regard to the ongoing tasks of the Alliance, Germany will also continue to make important contributions to NATO operations, missions and standby commitments. In particular, Germany will, for the third time, assume the leadership of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) in 2023. The VJTF is part of the NATO Response Force, and a total of 22 countries will be represented in the units led by Germany. The German contingent will comprise approximately 17,000 soldiers and include 120 tanks and armoured vehicles, 40 aircraft and five ships.

Strengthening the European Union as a stakeholder

The EU is a cornerstone and proponent of a multilateral and rules-based order, not least in its capacity as a close partner of NATO and the UN. Taken as a whole, the Union and its member states contribute by far the most resources of any global entity to building peace, security and development opportunities, as well as to humanitarian assistance in fragile contexts. Its influence in the world is always at its strongest when it presents a consistent and politically coherent front.

“I experience multilateralism on a daily basis through my work for the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) and as part of an international team that is working hard in the interests of security and stability in Georgia and the surrounding region.”

Christina Sell, acting Head of the Political, Analysis, Reporting and Communications (PARC) department in the civilian European monitoring mission in Georgia (European Union Monitoring Mission, EUMM)
On Germany’s initiative, the EU is developing the Strategic Compass, which is scheduled to be completed by spring 2022. The Strategic Compass is intended to define the orientation and level of ambition of European security and defence policy with specific political guidelines, thus helping to strengthen the EU’s capacity to act as a player in the field of security policy. The purpose of the Strategic Compass is to help develop a common understanding of objectives and interests with respect to crisis management, resilience, capacities and partnerships. The Strategic Compass is also intended to help create Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) interfaces that are lacking on such issues as resilience, hybrid threats, cybersecurity and new technologies.

The new challenges facing the world increasingly blur the lines between civilian and military aspects, both in terms of the threats themselves and the responses to those threats. These challenges require a new level of cooperation between the EU and NATO. Both organisations are integral to European security, complement each other and are helping to strengthen cooperation between a total of 36 member states in Europe, along with the US and Canada, with a view to making the security of the Euro-Atlantic area fit for the future. The list of EU-NATO collaborations has grown to 74 actions in recent years alone. These actions range from defending against hybrid threats and cyber threats to military mobility, healthcare provision and joint exercises. Germany is committed to even closer, complementary cooperation and advocates coordinating the content of both strategy documents due for completion in 2022 – NATO’s updated Strategic Concept and the EU’s Strategic Compass.
Using Germany’s Presidency of the G7 in 2022 to advocate multilateralism

Existing global challenges will continue to be on the agenda under Germany’s Presidency of the G7 in 2022. Its G7 Presidency will inject impetus into tackling these challenges and discuss important issues in a multilateral framework.
2.3

Multilateralism that reaches people
The objective of multilateralism as a tool and basic principle of the international order is to give people worldwide a better quality of life in the long term and guarantee them dignity, security and self-determination. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015 is a clear expression of this commitment.

With the world now interconnected on economic, technological and human levels and the global population growing, primarily in Africa, the well-being of individuals is no longer dependent exclusively on their country’s government. Instead, the task of achieving tangible and long-term results for people requires robust cooperation as part of an effective and inclusive multilateral approach. This collaboration extends beyond international organisations and countries. It encompasses the private sector, civil society and academia and brings together local, regional, national and international levels.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it abundantly clear just how important comprehensive multilateralism is. After all, the pandemic does not stop at national borders, touches all aspects of our lives and has serious health, humanitarian and socio-economic impacts. It therefore requires a long-term response that focuses not only on the economic fallout, but also addresses the environmental and social impacts of the crisis and steers investment towards these areas in a targeted manner (Green and Better Recovery).

Multilateralism, as opposed to unilateral approaches by individual countries, is not just the answer to the current crisis, however, but will also be decisive in preventing future crises and achieving a systematic transition to a more resilient, sustainable and just world for everyone. While multilateralism will not solve problems on its own, it provides the tools that enable international actors to balance their interests.
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The aim of the 2030 Agenda is to enable all people worldwide to live their lives with dignity. With the 2030 Agenda, the international community has set 17 goals (Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs) for achieving socially, economically and environmentally sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda is a global partnership with a universal dimension. It removes the distinction between donors and recipients and formulates the collective responsibility of all countries and stakeholders from politics, civil society, the business community, academia and science to pursue a global transformation towards greater sustainability. At the same time, it aims to unite the various stakeholders involved in humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and development behind common goals and thus make both short- and long-term activities more coherent.

The latest update to Germany’s National Sustainable Development Strategy was adopted on 10 March 2021 as a means of translating the 17 SDGs into concrete and measurable objectives and indicators that can be implemented at the national level in Germany.
2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people

2.3.1 Saving lives, managing and preventing crises

At present, there are over 40 civil and interstate armed conflicts taking place around the world that are threatening the lives of countless people. They are a key cause of humanitarian crises. People in conflict areas are subjected to violence and the very worst human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. Armed conflicts are one of the reasons why 80 million people are currently classed as refugees or displaced persons. Furthermore, climate change has led to an increase in the number of extreme weather events. Storms and flooding often leave survivors homeless, while severe droughts can result in crop failures and famines. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are further increasing humanitarian needs. In 2020, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) put the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection at 168 million in 53 countries. OCHA estimates that, due to the pandemic, there are 239 million affected people in 2021, which equates to one in 33 of the world’s population.

Germany considers humanitarian assistance and development cooperation to be an expression of ethical responsibility and international solidarity that is also in its own liberal self-interest. Humanitarian assistance serves to alleviate the suffering of people who are in need, while crisis preparedness and development cooperation measures help to reduce humanitarian needs in the future. If the international community can combine humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and the promotion of peace (known as the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, or HDP nexus), it will help to prevent crises and manage emergencies more effectively. During a humanitarian crisis, it is crucial that help arrives fast, and if it is not coordinated effectively, there can be gaps in that assistance or duplication of efforts. Bilateral measures are often inadequate for this reason. The more effectively humanitarian assistance can be coordinated on a multilateral basis, the more likely efforts to liberate people around the world from acute hardship will meet with success.

The international humanitarian system, with OCHA at the centre, plays a unique role in coordinating humanitarian efforts. The current system would not be able to function without consensus in the international community surrounding the fundamental modalities of international humanitarian assistance. Multilateral humanitarian forums and institutions have played – and continue to play – a key role in stipulating rules and principles, harmonising norms and establishing the modus operandi for international humanitarian measures. International humanitarian law, the law relating to refugees, the standard of humanitarian access in crisis and conflict situations and the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence – all these are results and examples of successful multilateral
consensus-building. Since the humanitarian system is a product of functioning multilateralism, anything that weakens multilateralism poses a directly proportionate threat to the humanitarian system. When separate national approaches are seen as the solution during a pandemic; when those providing humanitarian assistance are vilified or specifically targeted for political reasons; when humanitarian principles are applied only on a selective basis; and when individual countries withdraw funding, thus putting entire areas of humanitarian protection at risk – this is when a strong alliance needs to take a stand against unilateral courses of action and advocate multilateral solutions.

Humanitarian assistance is provided by independent international and local humanitarian organisations with financial support from Germany and other countries. These organisations include UN bodies that either have a strictly humanitarian mandate or combine that with a development policy mandate (e.g. UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF), as well as the international Red Cross and Red Crescent movements (ICRC, IFRC, GRC and other national Red Cross and Red Crescent organisations), and other German and international humanitarian NGOs. In the vast majority of cases, these organisations provide assistance directly to the people who are affected and operate independently of state structures in the respective country.
2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people

The huge rise in humanitarian needs poses major challenges for the international community. Large shortfalls in the funding of humanitarian assistance are a regular occurrence, putting the proper functioning of the international system of multilateral humanitarian assistance at risk. Each year, contributions are far below the rising level of financial requirements associated with humanitarian assistance. For example, according to OCHA, just 63.4 percent of funding requirements were met in 2019, and that figure dropped to just 48.6 percent in 2020, despite the increased requirements resulting from the pandemic.

As the world’s second-largest donor of humanitarian assistance, Germany is making an important contribution to closing these gaps in funding and safeguarding the international humanitarian system. More than two billion euro of the federal budget for 2021 has been earmarked for humanitarian assistance. To ensure that this funding can be used as effectively as possible, Germany uses grants that offer greater flexibility and span multiple years. This gives organisations greater planning certainty, especially in the context of protracted crises, and also helps to speed up humanitarian responses.

Figure 8
Flexible humanitarian assistance

Source: Federal Foreign Office
Germany is working with other donors and humanitarian organisations to promote reforms aimed at making the international humanitarian system more effective and efficient. As part of its contribution to the humanitarian reform process known as the Grand Bargain, Germany has more than trebled the share of flexible funds for humanitarian assistance over the past five years. In 2019, the Federal Government also doubled its core contributions to the leading humanitarian organisations OCHA, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). In 2020, Germany was the biggest donor to the UN’s Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

Preparing for crises

As global humanitarian needs continue to grow, Germany is advocating anticipatory humanitarian assistance that will help to ensure that limited resources can be used more efficiently and effectively and can be deployed even before an emergency occurs. Data-based forecasting and qualitative analyses can help deliver early warnings that make it possible to fund and implement concrete preventive humanitarian measures at an early stage. One key approach is forecast-based humanitarian assistance for extreme weather events, which Germany has developed in partnership with the German Red Cross (GRC).
2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people

Dovetailing instruments

In order to meet humanitarian needs, it is essential that all instruments be dovetailed. To achieve this, Germany advocates a stronger link between humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peacebuilding in the form of closer cooperation and coordination between stakeholders in all three areas while also taking account of their various mandates (HDP nexus). Germany has been working within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to help develop binding recommendations for implementing this approach. Multilateral stakeholders such as the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the WFP signed up to these recommendations in 2020.

Between 2014 and 2020, Germany considerably increased its financial support for anticipatory humanitarian assistance from 37,000 euro to over 30 million euro. Germany provides funding for these measures to the GRC, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the WFP, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and NGOs, particularly the Start Network. Since 2019, Germany has been OCHA’s biggest donor for the piloting of anticipatory humanitarian assistance under the auspices of CERF. Moving forward, the Federal Government aims to further expand the capacities of anticipatory humanitarian assistance with regard to outbreaks of disease, contexts of conflict, and crises and catastrophes in urban areas.

Anticipatory humanitarian assistance goes hand in hand with comprehensive disaster risk management via development cooperation, for instance as part of work to implement the Sendai Framework and in the course of cooperation with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). Furthermore, in partnership with the WFP and UNICEF, the Federal Government is investing in efforts to improve the resilience of people and communities in fragile contexts, for instance as part of its transitional development assistance activities. Resilience programmes help to open up future prospects for people, better equip them to deal with crises and thus reduce humanitarian needs in the medium and long term.
2.3.2

Making the international development architecture fit for the future

The issue of global justice is a guiding political principle for Germany, and development cooperation plays an important part in this context. Germany is underscoring its European and multilateral approach to development policy with its Strategy for a Strong European and Multilateral Development Policy.

Germany advocates the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and is taking a firm stance against any attempts to dilute the 2030 Agenda and undermine its universality. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda for development financing is an important part of the 2030 Agenda.

Multilateral organisations such as the UN and multilateral and bilateral development banks all play a crucial role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, the UN is the central hub for coordinating international cooperation. The most important forum and central actor for international development cooperation is the UN development system (UNDS), which comprises subsidiary organisations that the UN uses to implement development policy. UN organisations with a dual mandate covering both humanitarian assistance and development cooperation also play a key role.

Working alongside the UN system, the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is tasked with defining standards and thus creating a shared understanding of which measures can be judged as helping to achieve the SDGs. Through its membership of the Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), Germany works to ensure that the performance of multilateral organisations is evaluated on a regular basis.
Supporting and enhancing the reform of the UN development system

The UNDS must be made more efficient and effective so that it can drive forward implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This is why Germany supports the current reform of the UNDS, a key element of which is the UN Funding Compact. As the second-largest donor, Germany supports its aim of raising the share of core funding from all donors collectively to 30 percent of overall funding. This should help achieve sustainable funding for the UNDS. Over the past five years, Germany has significantly boosted its core funding for a range of UN organisations. For example, the Federal Government has increased contributions to UNICEF sevenfold, more than doubled its donations to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), doubled its contributions to the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and almost doubled its funding for the UN Population Fund (UNFPA). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Government has also provided these UNDS organisations with 105 million euro in additional core funding to facilitate a flexible approach to managing the crisis. Besides aiming to ensure a sufficient share of core funding, Germany is also working to implement the UN Funding Compact by increasing the share of loosely earmarked funds, for instance through contributions to pooled and thematic funds. This will help to promote coordinated cooperation in the UNDS.

Germany advocates improved harmonisation of the UNDS and is working to ensure that the UN presents a united front in its role as a development policy actor. With numerous actors and institutions operating independently of each other, the UN development system is institutionally fragmented. As a result, a key element of UN reform is to improve coordination between the UN development organisations, particularly at national level. Germany is contributing more than 10 million euro per year to achieve sustainable funding for the new system of local UNDS representatives. Known as resident coordinators, they are the highest-ranking representatives of the UN development system at national level, a point of contact for national governments and thus the link between these authorities and the individual organisations of the UNDS.
Adding value thanks to innovative partnerships with the multilateral system

Another way in which Germany supports the implementation of UN reform and increased cooperation within the UN system is by promoting joint programmes between several UN partners. These involve multiple UN organisations operating in line with their mandates and contributing their respective strengths to the projects and their implementation. The lessons learned from these concrete joint approaches help to advance the UN’s reform process.

The Federal Government is increasing its proactive support for joint programmes, particularly in crisis regions. For example, Germany is promoting the closely coordinated and complementary work of the WFP and UNICEF in the Sahel region. The joint package of measures developed by both organisations to improve food security, education, healthcare, agriculture and child protection aims to help the people and countries of the Sahel region to strengthen their resilience to crises.

Encouraging international financial institutions to focus on the 2030 Agenda

Besides boosting the effectiveness and efficiency of multilateral development banks, Germany is focusing on bringing the work of development and investment banks into line with the Paris Agreement on climate change, maintaining the highest possible social and environmental standards, and ensuring that programmes focus more closely on key issues for the future. Together with its partners, Germany was able to ensure that ambitious climate targets were adopted in 2018 as part of the capital increase for the International Bank
Villagers from Ankirikiriky in southern Madagascar replanting trees on deforested land. In return for their work, they receive food rations from the World Food Programme.

2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people

For Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), which is an organisation of the World Bank Group. As a result, the World Bank will double its funds for climate protection for the period from 2021 to 2025 to 200 billion US dollars. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group are also providing decisive crisis funding for developing countries during the COVID-19 pandemic with support from the Federal Government and the European Union and in cooperation with other multilateral development banks. In view of global demographic developments, Germany is also calling for international financial institutions to increase their engagement in strategies to develop employment prospects for young people, for example.

2.3.3 Advocating equal participation worldwide

Germany opposes all forms of discrimination and structural disadvantage worldwide. This principle of non-discrimination, which is enshrined in Germany’s Basic Law and also in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is based on the principle of Leave No One Behind, as laid out in the 2030 Agenda.

Equality is a human right and a core aim of the 2030 Agenda. Everyone has the right to equal and full participation in political processes and all aspects of society. This applies irrespective of an individual’s gender, origin, disability, religion or sexual orientation. From a global perspective, women, victims of racist discrimination, people with disabilities, members of religious minorities and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community are among those sections of the population that are considerably disadvantaged, both in terms of their rights and on a day-to-day basis. In March 2021, the Federal Government adopted a strategy for LGBTI inclusion that explicitly incorporates the rights of this group and the need to protect it into Germany’s foreign and development policy engagement.
One particular focus of Germany's foreign and development policy is the promotion of gender equality. Around the world more than two thirds of all people suffering from malnutrition are women. One in three women worldwide is affected by gender-based and sexual violence. Girls have fewer educational opportunities than boys and, in large parts of the world, women are paid considerably less than men solely because of their gender. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare and, in some cases, exacerbated existing inequalities, reversing some of the progress that had been achieved. Women and girls have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic across the board, from the economy and security to social protection and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Discrimination against women not only contravenes their fundamental rights, but is also politically, environmentally and economically short-sighted, jeopardising the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Societies in which women and men enjoy equal participation are more stable, more peaceful and more economically successful. The international community will therefore not be able to tackle the global challenges we face unless there is equal participation for women.

Germany considers multilateral cooperation to be an important tool for ensuring that the protection and equal participation of women is factored into all phases and levels of peace, security and development processes in a systematic way. The Federal Government is working towards this aim with like-minded partners both within the UN – in the Human Rights Council, the Security Council, the Commission on the Status of Women and the General Assembly – and outside the UN system in the OSCE, NATO, the G7 and the G20.
Driving forward the Women, Peace and Security agenda

Women play a key role in preventing crises and armed conflicts. A particular focus of Germany’s 2019–2020 membership of the UN Security Council was therefore to drive forward the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda with all due resolve. The WPS agenda is based on UN Resolution 1325 (2000), which saw the UN Security Council expand the integral elements of its mandate to include not just combating gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies and armed conflicts, but also promoting the participation of women in international peace and security processes. The WPS agenda was fleshed out in nine subsequent resolutions, including Resolution 2467, which Germany sponsored in April 2019 during its UNSC Presidency. This resolution on ending sexual violence in conflicts obliges all UN member states to protect and support survivors of conflict-related sexual violence by providing healthcare, psychosocial and economic assistance, and legal advice. It is therefore an important step in the protection of women’s rights.

The Federal Government will continue to promote the participation of women in crisis prevention and peace processes. It is supporting the work of the NATO Special Representative for WPS in making the agenda an integral part of every mission and operation and is significantly increasing the proportion of women in missions and operations. Germany will also continue to ensure that survivors of sexual and gender-based violence receive support in the future and will invest further in violence prevention.

Germany aims to enshrine the Women, Peace and Security agenda effectively, systematically and in a coordinated manner at the international, regional and bilateral level. To achieve this objective it is, for example, working in partnership with UN Women to promote the participation of women in peace processes in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen. This work involves providing targeted training, assisting with preparations for political talks and offering advice. At the regional level, Germany is cooperating closely with the African Union and supporting strategies such as the establishment and expansion of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

Germany also aims to drive forward the further development and implementation of the WPS agenda at the national level, and is therefore seeking to enshrine it in the structures, further training measures and work of the Federal Government. In 2021, the Federal Government adopted the third national Action Plan on the UN Security Council’s Women, Peace and Security agenda for 2021 to 2024. It will implement this action plan in close collaboration with civil society.
2.3.4 Supporting healthcare worldwide

Supporting healthcare worldwide

Strengthening the role of women in the economy

The Federal Government is also undertaking multilateral measures in its efforts to strengthen the role of women in the economy so that they can enjoy equality, live self-determined lives and, in particular, improve their resilience to crises.

For example, Germany is the largest financial contributor to the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi), a multi-donor fund hosted by the World Bank Group that gives female entrepreneurs in developing and newly industrialised countries access to financial services and makes it easier for them to overcome structural obstacles. In 2020, Germany chaired the Governing Committee of We-Fi in order to lend its proactive assistance to the alignment and future of the fund.

The Generation Equality Process, administered by UN Women, brings together states, international organisations, the private sector and civil society. It pools all its resources in six Action Coalitions in order to achieve significant progress on implementing SDG 5. Germany has taken on co-leadership of the Action Coalition on economic justice and rights and will commit, alongside other stakeholders, to concrete actions for the next five years.

Global health issues and protecting the human right to health are two areas that have taken centre-stage in the field of multilateral cooperation, not least due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under SDG 3 of the 2030 Agenda, the international community has made a commitment to ensuring healthy lives for all. The Federal Government is a strong proponent of safeguarding global health. From Germany’s perspective, this is not just about defending against cross-border health risks, but is also a question of strengthening national healthcare systems worldwide, improving international health crisis management and, in particular, providing strong support for the World Health Organization (WHO).

In its Global Health Strategy of October 2020, the Federal Government sets out Germany’s role in international health policy up to 2030. As part of its efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals relating to health, Germany is focusing on multilateral cooperation within the framework of the UN with the WHO at the centre. Through its comprehensive mandate, the WHO sets the normative framework and guidelines for improving public health both in its member states and on a global scale. It is also the central body for coordinating the response to global health risks. Furthermore, the WHO sets the direction for the work of other multilateral, state and non-state actors in the health sector that also fund and implement programmes aimed at improving global health. They include the
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), UNFPA as a key player in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights, Gavi The Vaccine Alliance, the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF), and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). UNAIDS is a unique model of multi-sectoral cooperation in the UN system as it is run jointly by 11 UN organisations and coordinates the global response to HIV/AIDS.

Germany also views international cooperation and coordination as the key to finding an effective global solution to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has therefore been involved from the outset in the multilateral cooperation platform known as the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT Accelerator), which aims to accelerate the development, production and fair global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and diagnostics. Germany is currently the second-largest contributor to the ACT Accelerator and has supported the organisations that are involved (including Gavi, the GFATM and the WHO) with 2.1 billion euro so far in 2020 and 2021. An important part of the ACT Accelerator is the COVAX Facility vaccine platform, whose primary objective is to procure vaccines for at least 20 percent of the population in the world’s 92 poorest countries by the end of 2021. Some five percent of the planned doses of vaccine are to be made available for humanitarian purposes.
Reforming the global health architecture

Together with the EU, Germany is working to strengthen the role of the WHO as a leading and coordinating organisation in the field of international health policy and to make it more independent. It is also committed to ensuring that the International Health Regulations (IHR) continue to be developed as a relevant legislative framework under international law and that their implementation is improved. These efforts are aimed at enhancing the structures and core competencies of the WHO and strengthening its technical, financial and personnel capacities, including the WHO Health Emergency Programme (WHE), which is dedicated to preparing for and responding to health crises such as pandemics.

As the largest state donor to the WHO at present, and by far the biggest contributor to the WHO’s Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE), Germany is playing an important part in ensuring that the WHO has adequate financial resources. Germany is committed to ensuring that the organisation’s member states facilitate more flexible funding through a larger proportion of non-earmarked funds.

Integrating old and new stakeholders into the global health architecture

Two conditions in particular must be met if health policy is to be successfully implemented on a global scale. The first is improved coordination of the multi-layered global health architecture, which comprises multilateral organisations and global and regional initiatives and partnerships. The second is improved integration of the large number of state and non-state stakeholders at all levels. Germany believes that the WHO and its Regional Offices play a key role in this regard.

Reinforcing the WHO’s coordination function remains the guiding principle of Germany’s commitment to multi-actor partnerships in global health. Multi-actor partnerships build on innovative models of cooperation used by governments, healthcare facilities, civil society and community-based organisations and leverage their partnerships with the private sector. The Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (GAP), which was initiated by Germany, Ghana and Norway in April 2018, plays an important part in this. Thanks to GAP, a total of 13 international organisations from the healthcare and development cooperation sectors have since committed to working together to help countries achieve the sustainable development goals relating to health.
Networking health research worldwide

Networking biomedical research both within Europe and internationally is a cornerstone of a successful global health policy. Around two thirds of all new infectious diseases that occur in humans can be traced back to animals (zoonoses). Germany is advocating the One Health approach to prevent these health risks, or ensure that they can be identified at an early stage and tackled efficiently. To ensure the best possible health for people, animals and the environment, various stakeholders collaborate at local, national and global levels, from practical work and research to the authorities. Germany has joined forces with France to help bolster cooperation between the four organisations that are crucial to the ongoing development of this approach – the WHO, the FAO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The first step is the creation of a One Health High-Level Expert Panel, which is to be set up by the time of the World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2021, when all the members of the WHO will meet.

The health of people in developing and newly industrialised countries is a particular challenge. Sick people regularly have no access to vaccines, medicines and other medical assistance, or cannot afford them. There is also a lack of both vaccines and effective medicines for treating a range of diseases that occur primarily in low-income regions, which is due to a lack of economic incentives for researchers in the pharmaceutical sector. Targeted multilateral research and development cooperation helps to pool material, financial and personnel resources and thus speed up medical progress. By funding international research platforms such as the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Germany is supporting the development of vaccines against infectious diseases that have a high potential of causing a pandemic. This work centres on diseases that the WHO has identified as potential future causes of pandemics or for which the WHO has declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. Germany is also involved in the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GloPID-R), which aims to strengthen the framework for research cooperation through improved networking.
2.3.5

Championing self-determination through education

Education is a key aspect of Germany’s development policy and is enshrined in the 2030 Agenda with SDG 4. Germany pursues multilateral cooperation as a means of ensuring that everyone has access to an inclusive, equal and high-quality education.

Education is a human right and enables people to improve their political, social and economic situation. Consequently, education is key to leading a self-determined life and to tackling global challenges such as population growth and achieving sustainable development.

Although the international community made a commitment to high-quality education and lifelong learning in the 2030 Agenda, UNESCO estimates that around 773 million young people and adults worldwide are unable to read and write. Almost two thirds of those people are women and girls. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 260 million children and young people had no access to education. More than half of all children and young people in developing and newly industrialised countries went to school but did not learn due to the poor quality of their education (learning poverty). UNESCO estimates that 24 million children and young people will not be returning to school due to the pandemic. The World Bank predicts that an additional 72 million children and young people will be affected by learning poverty. There is a risk that social inequality will be exacerbated, especially for population groups that are already marginalised. By interrupting education in a large number of countries, the COVID-19 pandemic is also putting the employment prospects of an entire generation at risk.

Reinforcing multilateral cooperation on education

Germany pursues bilateral, regional and multilateral development cooperation in order to promote education through all of its stages, from early-years education through to starting work, including primary, secondary and tertiary education as well as vocational training. Priorities of this cooperation include strengthening education systems, education in contexts of displacement and crises – in particular, ensuring access for refugee children – digital learning and qualifications for the new world of work, gender-equal education, and qualifications for economic activities that conserve resources.
2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people

“In our regional programme, we are working with partners from various countries in Southeast Asia to ensure that more children have access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools. This is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic. By holding exchanges on lessons learned and best practices across borders, we can achieve our shared objectives faster.”

Nicole Siegmund, Project Manager for the regional Fit for School programme at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

The Federal Government will promote the ideal of lifelong learning on a more multilateral basis. To achieve this aim, it is working primarily with the global education funds Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW). On an institutional level, Germany is also working with UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) and multilateral development banks. To achieve the SDGs, Germany is supporting education for sustainable development both nationally and internationally. For example, it is working with UNESCO on the organisation’s Education for Sustainable Development: Towards achieving the SDGs framework. As a major donor, Germany has the potential and a responsibility to play a greater role in shaping multilateral policy in the education sector through these organisations. Germany is also working to strengthen coordination platforms to ensure that multilateral resources are used more efficiently to promote education.
Strengthening educational opportunities for women and girls

Germany is also promoting educational opportunities for girls and women in a targeted manner. For example, it is supporting UNESCO’s Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI) and is also joining with its partners to champion this work within the framework of the Alliance for Multilateralism. Launched in spring 2021, the SHE – Support Her Education initiative for girls, which is being implemented via the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), is aiming to make it possible for at least one million more girls to finish school. Germany is helping women and girls to develop digital skills with the #eskills4girls initiative, which was launched as part of Germany’s Presidency of the G20, and by working with multiple stakeholders in the EQUALS Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age. It is cooperating with the G7 countries on an initiative to promote vocational training for women and girls in developing countries and thus improve their employment prospects. The aim is to increase the number of women and girls in developing countries receiving vocational education by a third by 2030.

2.3.6 Working to end world hunger

Germany has played an important part in putting efforts to fight world hunger onto the international agenda. Responding to an initiative from Germany, the G7 countries have made a commitment to lift 500 million people out of hunger and malnutrition by 2030. Efforts to end world hunger and all forms of malnutrition between now and 2030 are enshrined in SDG 2 of the 2030 Agenda.

However, hunger and malnutrition are still a reality for many people in today’s world. According to the UN’s State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020 (SOFI 2020) report, the number of chronically undernourished people rose from 630 million in 2014 to 690 million in 2019 and could grow further, to 840 million by 2030. The WFP fears that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of people whose lives are acutely threatened by food insecurity could have doubled in the space of a year, rising from 135 million to 272 million by the end of 2020.

Food insecurity has numerous impacts at the global level. It contributes to poverty that endures from one generation to the next, places considerable strain on healthcare systems and dampens productivity in the global economy, thereby affecting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Inadequate food supplies often lead to conflicts that escalate into
2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people

violence and force people to flee their home regions. Food security is therefore not just an issue for individual countries, but a challenge for the international community that can only be tackled through multilateral cooperation.

Making food security an integral part of the international agenda

Germany is promoting the adoption of norms and guidelines under international law that form a frame of reference for the actions of national governments in the area of food security. One particularly important body in this context is the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which is part of the FAO. Within the CFS, government representatives work with relevant UN organisations, civil society, science and research, international financial institutions and private-sector associations as well as foundations to develop strategies, policy recommendations and voluntary guidelines.

Germany aims to tackle undesirable developments in food systems. The Federal Government is therefore playing a major role in preparations for the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 (FSS) and is also providing financial support for the event.

Strengthening special UN organisations with a food mandate

The Federal Government is determined to improve the global food situation through multilateral cooperation, primarily with the UN agencies based in Rome. Besides being the central forum for political negotiations surrounding international norms and standards, the FAO is also a repository of knowledge, advising governments and institutions in the fight against hunger and undernourishment and providing technical expertise. Germany supports the FAO as the fourth-largest donor of mandatory annual contributions (at approximately 23 million euro) and with voluntary contributions in 2020 totalling around 45 million euro.

Over the past decade, Germany has considerably expanded its work with the WFP, which implements humanitarian and development policy measures related to food security. Since 2016, Germany has been the second-largest donor to the WFP, with funding in 2020 totalling 1.05 billion euro. The Federal Government’s support focuses on providing humanitarian food assistance, strengthening resilience and improving the quality of nutrition, and centres on cash-based approaches and innovation in the fight against world hunger. Since 2015, Germany has, among other things, funded the WFP Innovation Accelerator in Munich, which monitors and supports innovative ideas for combating hunger right up to the stage when they can be put into action.
Germany is helping to reduce the causes of displacement and carry forward the fight against poverty and hunger through its involvement in the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). IFAD provides low-interest loans to developing countries, shares agricultural expertise and technologies, and supports innovation. It focuses on the poorest target groups and on remote and fragile regions where the activities of other stakeholders are limited or precluded by access problems. The Federal Government will extend its financial support for IFAD. Germany was one of IFAD’s biggest donors between 2019 and 2021. If core contributions and voluntary additional contributions are combined, Germany is the fund’s biggest donor in the current three-year financing period (IFAD 11). An increase in Germany’s contributions to IFAD 12 (2022–2024) will enable IFAD to make a substantial contribution to the fight against poverty and hunger – a fight that has been made all the more difficult by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.3.7

Defending human dignity in displacement and migration

Germany pursues a coherent overarching approach in its international policy on migration and displacement. The Federal Government uses all the policy tools at its disposal to achieve its aims, whether in terms of diplomacy, security, defence, the economy, trade, development or humanitarian assistance. This approach includes mitigating the causes of displacement and irregular migration, protecting and supporting refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities in host countries, harnessing the potential of existing, legal migration routes, actively shaping and managing migration processes, helping people who wish to return to their countries of origin to do so, and assisting with the sustainable reintegration of people who have returned to their countries of origin.

According to data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), there were over 270 million regular and irregular migrants as well as displaced persons in 2019 – roughly equivalent to 3.5 percent of the global population – who left their homes either willingly or against their will and moved elsewhere in their own country or to another country. Data from UNHCR indicates that the number of forcibly displaced persons rose to almost 80 million worldwide. The adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
In 2018 are important successes for multilateralism. With these two compacts, the international community has both acknowledged that displacement and migration are global phenomena that require multilateral solutions and put a human rights-based approach at the centre of its strategy.
Tackling the root causes of displacement and reducing irregular migration

Serious human rights violations, fragility and crises, poor governance, corruption, discrimination, impunity, the impacts of climate change, food insecurity and adverse economic conditions – all these are examples of structural factors that cause or exacerbate the dynamics of displacement and migration.

Germany is bringing its diplomatic influence to bear at the European and multilateral level to mitigate the acute and structural causes of displacement. Measures of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation foster sustainable development, crisis prevention, conflict resolution and stabilisation, and promote respect for human rights. Through its development cooperation, Germany is strengthening economic and legal structures in countries of origin and is improving living conditions there on a sustainable and long-term basis. This involves especially close cooperation with multilateral organisations on reducing the causes of displacement.

Germany contributes to peace missions and projects such as strengthening local police structures in the Congo and supporting the reconciliation process in Mali. Stabilisation projects in conflict and post-conflict situations aim to re-establish a secure environment, basic medical provision and a functioning infrastructure and to give refugees the opportunity to return to their home countries. They are also designed to lay the groundwork for a robust peaceful order in which social conflicts can be resolved peacefully.
Germany will expand existing multilateral partnerships at the regional level. The Federal Government is working closely with the African Union (AU) and regional mechanisms for Africa to bolster their efforts to reduce the causes of irregular migration and displacement. Together with UNFPA and the AU, Germany is hosting a dialogue among African and Asian countries about how to deal with the current demographic challenge. This dialogue will lead to the development of a best-practice guide for the UN and AU. The EU’s collaboration with countries of origin, destination and transit is supported in part by the European Union Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa. As its biggest bilateral donor, Germany is taking steps to ensure that there are no gaps in funding when this fund is merged with the EU’s new external financing instrument, the NDICI.

Germany is the second-largest bilateral donor to UNHCR. The Organisation ensures that people who are seeking protection can receive asylum and provides basic supplies for refugees, including drinking water, food, emergency shelter and medical assistance. The Federal Government will also continue to support refugees and their host regions so that they can live in security. Moreover, Germany will continue to admit contingents of asylum seekers from third countries. The resettlement programme set up in cooperation with UNHCR will be carried forward and expanded as part of the EU Resettlement Programme. In addition, Germany will continue to advocate that refugee quotas be increased or put in place in other UN member states. The Global Compact on Refugees gives UNHCR a central coordinating role in linking up humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peacebuilding, and Germany is one of the most important partners in these efforts. As part of a strategic partnership, the Federal Government is striving to ensure that several different elements are dovetailed more efficiently at an early stage, including humanitarian assistance.
and development cooperation on the ground, support for refugees and their inclusion in national and local planning and systems, and systematic and long-term support for host communities.

Access to education and training is absolutely essential if displaced people are to have long-term prospects and a better chance of successfully integrating and finding employment in their host countries. However, almost half of all refugees of school age do not attend school and only three percent of all refugees worldwide have access to vocational training or tertiary education. This is why the Federal Government, one of the biggest donors to UNHCR, UNICEF and the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) fund, helps host countries to establish and expand their education systems and champions the integration of refugees. Germany is also the biggest contributor to the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI), a scholarship programme run by UNHCR that enables refugees to study at a university in their country of first admission.

The future prospects of returning refugees and migrants must also be improved. Facilitating voluntary repatriation is one of the three durable solutions promoted by UNHCR. In the last ten years, in order to achieve the objective to “support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity” (UN Global Compact on Refugees, UN Global Compact for Migration), Germany has initiated additional measures such as the Perspektive Heimat (Returning to new Opportunities) programme, which incorporates advice centres and offerings for returnees and local populations in 13 partner countries.

Taking on responsibility together

According to the latest UNHCR data, almost 40 percent of all refugees in 2020 were taken in by just five countries. To ensure that responsibility is shared more widely, Germany is working with its EU partners and the UN on expanding cooperation with and support for countries of origin, transit and destination. As the biggest donor and host country, Germany played a major role in shaping the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). Both compacts exemplify Germany’s approach of finding shared responses to global challenges.

The aim of the GCR is to distribute the responsibility and burdens associated with the refugee context more evenly internationally to provide greater support for the major host countries – particularly in crisis regions – and to resolve or even prevent large-scale and protracted refugee crises. As a co convener of the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2019, Germany has taken on a central role in implementing the GCR. The first High-Level Officials’ Meeting is scheduled to take place at the end of 2021.
The GCM aims to improve cooperation between countries regarding international migration. The Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund was set up by the UN member states as one of the capacity-building mechanisms stipulated in the GCM for providing financial resources to help implement the compact. As a member of the Steering Committee and the first and biggest contributor, Germany plays a key role in the Trust Fund’s work of putting the GCM into action. Furthermore, Germany supports the Secretariat of the UN Network on Migration, which is based at the IOM in Geneva, in its work for the GCM.
2.3.8

Championing humane social and employment policies

Germany is a strong global proponent of decent work, fair working conditions and the fight against exploitative human trafficking of workers. Decent work is a human right, and the international community has, under SDG 8 of the 2030 Agenda, made a commitment to ensuring that it is upheld. Nonetheless, decent work is not guaranteed in many countries around the world. Minimum social standards and the International Labour Organization's (ILO's) core labour standards, such as the ban on forced and child labour and discrimination at work, are being violated. Employees often do not receive adequate pay that will secure their livelihoods. Inadequate standards of hygiene and occupational health and safety harbour an increased risk of sickness. Large numbers of people around the world have only precarious or informal employment conditions. The COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts have exacerbated social inequalities in many countries around the world and have had a particularly severe impact on groups that were already disadvantaged as well as on people who suffer discrimination on multiple levels.

In a globalised world, many products are manufactured as part of an international supply chain incorporating workers in various different countries. Germany believes that the only way to achieve long-term progress in establishing fair working conditions in the age of the global economy is to pursue multilateral cooperation. Although technological advances and the digital transformation have impacted the world of work for decades, the use of artificial intelligence in particular will further accelerate changes to employment. Climate change, global inequalities and demographic developments are also having a huge impact on the future of work. This is giving rise to new opportunities, but is also leading to new challenges with respect to creating fairer employment conditions – a process that can only be managed in concert in a globalised world through multilateral coordination.

Germany advocates multilateral cooperation as a means of realising international social and employment policy and promoting international social and labour standards. The central partner for these efforts is the European Union. On the one hand, agreeing a common EU policy or EU standards sends a signal of support for agreements at an international level. On the other, the EU is joining with like-minded countries to support multilateral solutions.

Together, Germany and the EU are pursuing their goals in international organisations such as the ILO, which is the central international institution for implementing multilateral approaches under the aegis of the UN. One example of this work is the move to ensure that safe and healthy working conditions are included in the ILO framework of fundamental principles and rights at work. Decent work is therefore being promoted on a global scale, underscoring its importance for future developments.
2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people

The OECD, OSCE and Council of Europe are also important partners for Germany. Germany works closely with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on issues relating to inclusive and sustainable industrial development. The G7 and G20 are likewise cornerstones of multilateral cooperation for social and employment policies that respect human rights. They create important impetus for these issues that is also harnessed by the ILO and other international organisations. The Federal Government is working hard to keep social and employment policy on the G7 and G20 agenda and ensure that strong signals are sent to this end, for instance through the final declarations issued by the heads of state and government.

Enforcing international social, labour and environmental standards throughout global supply chains

Germany is adopting a multilateral approach in its efforts to enforce international social, labour and environmental standards in order to ensure that globalisation is fair and sustainable. Together with its partners, Germany aims to ensure that workers all around the world enjoy opportunities for good and decent work.

During its Presidency of the G7 in 2015, Germany therefore launched an initiative to promote the effective implementation and observance of social and environmental standards along global supply chains. One key outcome of these efforts was the establishment of the Vision Zero Fund (VZF). The VZF is administered by the ILO and aims to ensure that businesses, governments and social partners share responsibility for strengthening occupational health
and safety in the export-oriented sectors of poorer manufacturing countries, thus reducing the high rate of fatal accidents at work worldwide. A key criterion for funding is that governments, trade unions and employers agree on collective measures to improve occupational health and safety in a country and/or sector. The VZF is also currently being used as a tool for mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and helping to prevent future pandemics, particularly in the area of occupational health and safety. Germany has also advocated the adoption of an EU Action Plan for corporate social responsibility that will drive forward implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

The UN has declared 2021 the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour and aims to work with the ILO to take stock of the fight against child labour and develop future measures. This aim has been enshrined in SDG 8 of the 2030 Agenda. Together with other governments, social partners, NGOs and additional relevant stakeholders, Germany will intensify efforts to eradicate child labour and forced labour as part of the global partnership Alliance 8.7.

**Shaping the future of work**

Digital and environmental transformation processes are fundamentally changing the world of work, including across borders. Germany aims to shape these developments in the interest of ensuring a fair and just transition to a future of work that promotes sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

To this end, Germany is promoting innovations such as artificial intelligence (AI) from the perspective of human needs while emphasising the interface between research and practical application and highlighting dialogue within society as a whole and between employer and employee representative bodies. Germany has also been a proactive supporter of the establishment and development of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) since it was founded in June 2020. This multi-stakeholder initiative emerged from the G7 and brings together experts from around the world. It is intended to improve expertise and knowledge in relation to AI applications and systems and their impacts in order to identify areas where governments need to take action as well as where they have scope for shaping developments.

Another priority is shaping the platform economy from the perspective of labour and social policy. The objective here is to enforce tried-and-tested labour laws and social safeguards for new, cross-border, internet-based types of work and employment relations, including in the international context.
2.3 Multilateralism that reaches people
2.4 Multilateralism for sustainable prosperity
2.4 Multilateralism for sustainable prosperity

In no other policy area is international cooperation as important as when it comes to the preservation of our planet’s natural resources. One of the most decisive challenges facing us today is how to reconcile economic growth and prosperity with climate and environmental protection against the backdrop of global population growth. Rising to the challenge of protecting the climate and environment requires global multilateral cooperation to shape economic, energy and financial systems and deliver environmental, economic and social sustainability. In a globalised world with diversified value chains and widely networked economic systems but also very different environmental and social norms and standards, this crucial task cannot be left to free market forces or regulation solely by individual countries acting alone. There is a danger that purely national interests and ambitions will be prioritised over the global common good, resulting in runaway climate change and the progressive loss of biodiversity.

Germany aims to preserve and advance prosperity while also facilitating other countries’ legitimate desire for economic growth. Sustainable development is the guiding principle for the Federal Government’s policies in this endeavour. The focus is on achieving economic growth that takes into account both social aspects and the boundaries of our planet’s resilience. Germany has a particular responsibility in this regard. After all, to a large extent, the established industrialised countries achieved their level of prosperity at a time when the impact on the habitat and living conditions of future generations was not a significant criterion. Germany now aims to be a role model for sustainable growth and to help other countries and societies speed up their transition to a more sustainable form of development. One success story in this regard concerns greenhouse gas emissions, which Germany has been able to reduce significantly, by 40 percent in 2020 compared with 1990 levels, while maintaining economic growth with systematic climate protection measures.
Germany has had a continuously evolving sustainability strategy in place since as early as 2002, the latest version of which was published in March 2021. The Federal Government has also been working to establish stricter sustainability regulations at international level. By the same token, measures agreed at the international level are incorporated into domestic legislation. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the 2015 Paris Agreement give Germany a solid framework for its policies. One of the key priorities is that necessary changes are made on a socially acceptable basis (Just Transition). This is why Germany is working both in a financial and technical capacity with a large number of countries on concrete projects to implement the 2030 Agenda. The European Union is also pursuing sustainable economic development through its European Green Deal, which aims to advance environmental issues, economic affairs and social justice collectively.

Germany is seeking to speed up the transition to more sustainable patterns of consumption and economic activity by engaging proactively in numerous multilateral environmental agreements that cover a wide variety of issues. It is also supporting corresponding initiatives by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other UN organisations that promote economies with a greater focus on social justice and environmental protection, particularly the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE). UNEP has been considerably strengthened over recent years at Germany’s instigation. For example, all UN member states are now represented at the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), which is UNEP’s high-level decision-making body. This ensures that UNEA’s decisions carry particular weight within the UN system, thereby reinforcing the multilateral approach to global environmental policy on a long-term basis.
2.4 Multilateralism for sustainable prosperity

2.4.1 Tackling climate change

Issued in 2014, the most recent Synthesis Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) once again confirmed that global warming since 1950 has been largely caused by human activity. Humanity’s task now is to combat climate change and mitigate its impacts. After all, global warming is already having a clear impact on natural resources in some regions of the Earth. Impacts such as droughts and forest dieback are also evident in Germany. The situation is more drastic in countries and entire island groups whose very existence is threatened by the predicted rise in sea level. This underscores the fact that climate policy is an issue of collective global importance – one that calls on individuals and peoples to come together in solidarity and take global action that spans generations.

When the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015, the international community showed what it can achieve when there is the will to compromise and cooperate. Countries from around the world gathered in Paris and agreed on the objective of limiting global warming to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. When the Paris Agreement was ratified, the signatories made a commitment under international law to put in place measures to achieve its targets. However, this commitment has not yet translated into sufficient action. In fact, global emissions are continuing to rise. Additional and more extensive emissions reductions are needed in order to limit the rise in temperatures.

This calls for measures that are coordinated on a multilateral basis and applies especially to countries that are responsible for large proportions of global greenhouse gas emissions or are expanding their use of fossil fuels. There is also a special focus on newly industrialised countries, where strong economic growth, changing consumer behaviour and, in some cases, population growth have led to a sharp rise in greenhouse gas emissions. The Federal Government continues to be aware of the fact that the international community needs to undertake greater efforts to achieve the target of 100 billion US dollars for climate financing that was agreed in Copenhagen in 2009. This is crucially important in order to help countries that depend on financial support to adapt to climate change on the one hand and implement the Paris Agreement on the other. As early as 2019, the Federal Government achieved the target announced by Federal Chancellor Merkel in 2015 of doubling Germany’s climate financing to four billion euro. Factoring in the public financing that was mobilised and private climate financing, Germany contributed approximately 7.58 billion euro to international climate financing in 2019.
Working with European partners to protect the environment

Multilateral agreements depend on their implementation at national level. Germany aims to be a role model in this regard and has made a firm commitment to its climate protection targets by passing the world’s first Climate Change Act. Through this law, the Federal Government is pursuing an interministerial approach as it seeks to achieve the emission reduction targets it has set itself. The aim is to reduce emissions by at least 55 percent compared with 1990 levels by 2030 and to pursue the long-term goal of greenhouse gas neutrality by 2050.

Germany’s climate policy is closely linked to that of the EU. In its European Green Deal, the European Commission has set out an ambitious roadmap – supported by Germany – that aims to see the EU achieve at least a 55 percent reduction in its greenhouse gas emissions compared with 1990 levels by 2030. The EU is to be completely climate neutral by 2050. To reach these targets effectively while still keeping costs as low as possible, Germany is advocating that emissions trading be made a leading instrument across Europe for decarbonisation, including in the heating and transport sectors.
2.4 Multilateralism for sustainable prosperity

Multilateralism for sustainable prosperity

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The multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2021–2027 and the temporary recovery instrument Next Generation EU stipulate that 30 percent of funds – more than ever before – are to benefit climate protection. These tools will also help to foster growth and long-term competitiveness by investing in sustainable economic practices. Another important element in this strategy is the circular economy. The remaining funds not directly earmarked for climate protection are to be used in line with the targets of the Paris Agreement and the green oath to “do no harm” enshrined in the European Green Deal. As part of its development policy, the Federal Government is also using bilateral funding instruments and working in multilateral forums to support the implementation of international aspects of the EU’s Circular Economy Action Plan.

The European Climate Initiative (EUKI)

Set up and funded by Germany, the European Climate Initiative (EUKI) supports climate protection projects in and between the countries of the European Union (EU) and the Western Balkans. In doing so, EUKI is assisting and bringing together governments, municipalities, civil society and businesses. Its aim is to drive forward the achievement in Europe of the climate protection targets that are enshrined in the Paris Agreement. It pursues this aim by encouraging state and non-state actors to work together across borders, establish dialogue, share their expertise and experience and thus learn from each other and build networks. EUKI is helping to ensure that the EU is coming ever closer together on issues of climate protection. Furthermore, it is building a bridge to EU funding programmes for climate protection. Overall, EUKI is funding climate protection projects in eight areas of activity: climate policy; energy; buildings and municipalities; mobility; agriculture, soils and forestry; awareness; climate-aligned finance; and sustainable economy. Since it was established in 2016, EUKI has funded 128 climate projects in 25 EU countries and four countries in the Western Balkans.

Another aspect of climate protection is close cooperation between the population, governments, private sector and NGOs, since joint efforts can help develop effective measures that are supported by the population. Germany has launched the European Climate Initiative (EUKI) in order to ensure that this cooperation is effective also across borders. EUKI promotes projects that support the sharing of best practices, such as the BEACON (Bridging European and Local Climate Action) project, which connects ambitious municipalities in Germany with European partners and thus plays a part in ensuring that experience in climate protection is shared within Europe.
Advocating greater ambition internationally and supporting adaptation

Germany is pursuing a holistic climate policy that takes into account climate change and its impacts in all aspects of foreign relations in order to drive forward sustainable development. This applies to fields of action such as Germany’s European policy, including the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and to trade and economic policy, multilateral work within the UN, as well as all activities seeking to promote regional stabilisation, post-conflict rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance. For example, Germany advises governments on how to transform their economies in line with the Paris Agreement and cooperates with partners in the Powering Past Coal Alliance to promote the phasing out of coal. It also collaborates with experts in key countries where greenhouse gas emissions are high, discussing technical aspects of issues such as renewables, hydrogen and sustainable finance. Furthermore, Germany has a long track record of addressing the security policy impacts of climate change, particularly in the UN Security Council. Climate policy is a key element in the policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific.

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A total of 23 countries around the Indian Ocean, from South Africa to Australia, have joined together in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). I am assisting the IORA Secretariat in Mauritius with a view to strengthening the organisation overall. One of the priorities of this project is the link between climate change and security.”

Dr Thomas Krimmel, Project Director of the Strengthening the Capacities of the Indian Ocean Rim Association project at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Working in close partnership with the EU and other countries, Germany advocates more ambitious climate targets within the High-level Political Forum of the UN and other formats such as the G7, G20 and Petersberg Climate Dialogue. For example, some of the world’s biggest economies, such as China, Japan, Korea and South Africa, have made commitments to long-term climate targets over recent months. Following the change of administration, the US is also now formulating an ambitious climate policy that aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. These developments are a source of hope for a successful 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP) in November 2021.

Through its multilateral approaches, the Federal Government is helping developing and newly industrialised countries to chart a path to greenhouse gas emission neutrality and is lending more weight at the international level to the task of adapting to climate change. Among other things, Germany is the third-largest contributor to the first replenishment of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which gives countries financial support to help them reduce emissions and implement adaptation measures. Germany is also the second-largest donor to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the fourth-largest contributor to the Climate Investment Funds (CIF). To date, the Federal Government is the biggest contributor to the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF). Germany has launched the Green Recovery Initiative with the World Bank to ensure that the recovery from COVID-19 is built on climate protection from the outset. By providing strategic advice to finance ministries and central banks, this initiative helps partner countries implement green reforms, ensuring that the World Bank’s major recovery programmes translate directly into climate protection and the dismantling of subsidies for fossil fuels.

The Nationally Determined Contributions Partnership (NDCP) plays an important part in multilateral cooperation on climate financing. Since it was established in 2016, more than 113 countries, 42 multilateral organisations, development banks and 33 non-state actors have joined the NDCP. The partnership aims to make it easier for member countries to combine their climate and development objectives and to implement and further develop their nationally determined contributions with the support of bilateral and multilateral donor programmes and donor coordination. Through its Economic Advisory Initiative, the NDCP is also helping a total of 34 member states to develop and implement measures for a sustainable and climate-sensitive economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Germany’s International Climate Initiative (ICI) is an important tool for bilateral and multilateral cooperation for financing climate protection and protecting and promoting biodiversity. Over the past 12 years, the ICI has approved and funded over 730 projects in more than 60 developing and newly industrialised countries to the tune of four billion euro. As energy demand will continue to grow in many developing and newly industrialised countries, the ICI is lending particular support to processes in coal-mining regions in Southeast Asia and in South Africa. In terms of adaptation, anticipatory climate and disaster-risk financing solutions strengthen the resilience of poor and vulnerable people to climate shocks. The InsuResilience Global Partnership, which was established in 2017 under Germany’s Presidency of the G20, brings together approximately 100 countries, institutions and businesses with the aim of massively expanding climate risk insurance and other risk transfer solutions in developing countries by 2025.
International engagement for sustainable financing and low-emission goods and passenger transport

Investment charts the course for developments in the future. The aim behind aligning global financial flows with sustainability aspects is to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote adaptation to climate change – the fundamental objectives of the Paris Agreement. It is therefore particularly important that international finance policy not only focuses on key areas such as international financial stability and functioning financial markets, but also factors in sustainability targets. Germany promotes sustainable finance initiatives to ensure that financial market players take into account social, economic and environmental sustainability aspects when making decisions. At the European level, the Federal Government is committed to introducing regulations that will result in financial players taking greater account of sustainability risks. The reporting of financial climate risks and opportunities can help ensure that these factors play a bigger role in financing decisions, thereby potentially steering capital flows into sustainable investments. The Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action (CFMCA) brings together finance ministers to contribute to climate change solutions from a financial perspective. It was jointly founded by Germany and currently has 60 member countries that are responsible for approximately 39 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. The coalition seeks to make aspects relevant to climate change more firmly a part of the work of finance ministries through sharing experiences and promoting joint standards and principles, for example.

Another multilateral challenge is reducing emissions in air and sea transport and making this sector more environmentally friendly. After all, CO₂ emissions caused by the transport sector have not only remained high since 1990, but have risen almost across the board around the globe in many areas. Through its participation in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and International Maritime Organization (IMO), Germany is involved in various measures aimed at reducing the burdens on the environment and climate. For example, the initial IMO GHG Strategy seeks to at least halve absolute greenhouse gas emissions from ships by 2050 as compared with 2008 levels.
Obtaining new energy sources

The energy sector is responsible for the largest share of greenhouse gases worldwide. For this reason, the global energy transition must play a decisive role in climate protection, help secure an economically successful future and ensure access to reliable energy (SDG 7). The primary strategies for achieving these aims include replacing fossil energy sources with renewables and increasing energy efficiency. The energy sector is undergoing rapid technological developments already today. Renewable energy is growing faster than any other energy source. Improvements to storage technologies and bio and synthetic fuels will also make it possible to expand the energy transition to include diverse modes of transport, heat generation and industrial production.

Renewable energy currently accounts for almost 43 percent of all electricity generated in Germany. In its National Hydrogen Strategy, the Federal Government has created a framework for developing this technology of the future and is taking proactive steps to make this energy source competitive, thus establishing it as an alternative source of fuel in Germany, Europe and around the world as quickly as possible. One important element in this is close cooperation with partner countries in Europe and worldwide that are located in regions that have favourable climatic conditions for the import of both green hydrogen and products derived from it that have been produced using renewable energies. The use of low-emission production processes to manufacture green hydrogen can also, for example, promote

Figure 12
Share of gross power generation accounted for by renewable energy

Source: BP 2020, graphic: RENAC, Federal Foreign Office
sustainable socio-economic development in the partner countries of Germany's development cooperation, an approach that also helps to achieve global climate targets.

Germany’s contribution to multilateral energy policy is primarily intended to achieve a multiplier effect in order to influence the momentum towards a global energy transition. After all, the vast majority of greenhouse gases are generated outside Europe – primarily due to energy mixes that are dominated by fossil fuels (use of oil, coal and gas). International institutions also play a key role, such as the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), which has an almost global membership, the International Energy Agency (IEA), whose members are predominantly industrialised countries, and the UN. Through their analyses, which are highly regarded internationally, these organisations can highlight where action is needed and point to options for taking action, thus also influencing the expectations and decision-making criteria of politicians and the business community in favour of a sustainable energy transition.

Regional forums such as the North Seas Energy Cooperation (NSEC) for offshore wind power and the Federal Government’s programme of cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region could serve as role models at the European and international level and encourage support for the cross-border expansion of renewable energies that extends beyond the specific region concerned. Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM), a global forum for decision-makers and interest groups, currently offers 26 industrialised and newly industrialised countries the opportunity to engage in dialogue on promoting sustainable energy supply and usage. Germany is also a driving force behind the European Battery Alliance, which promotes green battery storage technology in Europe.

In view of the pressing challenges caused by climate change and the major role of the energy sector in tackling these challenges, Germany sets great store by working within international forums to ensure that discussions about energy and climate policy are much more closely interconnected than was often the case in the past. Germany is striving to ensure that common international and European standards are developed for future technologies, that intellectual property is protected, and that all parties refrain from protectionist measures. The energy markets of the future should also be kept open for German and European companies. By hosting the annual Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue, Germany is playing a major role in advancing multilateral exchange and cooperation on the global energy transition.
2.4 Multilateralism for sustainable prosperity

Given the different levels of dependency on fossil energy sources, the Just Transition principle also has a part to play in the EU context. For example, the EU has set up a Just Transition Fund totalling 7.5 billion euro to help member states that are still very much reliant on carbon-based fuels to tackle the challenges they face as a result. The EU is also using its foreign policy tools to foster a just transition to sustainable economic models in its neighbourhood.

This kind of transition, which is also socially equitable, has multiple aspects. These include, for example, mitigating the negative impacts of climate change, putting in place occupational health and safety in relevant sectors as temperatures rise, providing adequate social security for all in a changing world of work and supporting the creation of decent work and sustainable, green jobs. Germany is promoting these aims not just in the EU, but also in the UN and other international forums.

2.4.2 Maintaining biodiversity, utilising it sustainably and restoring ecosystems

It is not just global warming that is endangering to life on our planet. Earth’s biodiversity is being eroded at an increasingly rapid rate due to the continued overuse of the planet’s natural resources without any regard for plant or animal habitats. In its 2019 Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) emphasised that the rate of species extinction is at least dozens to hundreds of times higher than it has averaged over the past ten million years. IPBES warns that one million out of an estimated eight million species of plants and animals are threatened with extinction – many of which within the next few decades. Biodiversity is the very foundation of intact ecosystems and is thus crucial for the production of healthy food, safe drinking water and clean air. It is an important factor behind the resistance of landscapes to natural disasters and climate change and is one of the cornerstones of sustainable development, which is why its preservation and promotion must be considered as being closely bound up with this consideration. Moreover, rather than simply halting the loss of biodiversity, efforts should be made wherever possible to restore lost or damaged ecosystems – not only in Germany, but worldwide.
Environmental changes cannot be attributed solely to greenhouse gas emissions. Overfishing, agricultural expansion and the intensive use of agricultural land all play their part, in some instances as result of the world’s constantly growing population. Furthermore, as their habitats shrink, wild animals come into more frequent and closer contact with humans, which increases the risk of potentially dangerous pathogens being transmitted from animals to people. One such pathogen is the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19. The legal and illegal wildlife trade also poses a fundamental risk of pathogens being passed from animals to humans. The establishment by Germany of a new international alliance to reduce the health risks associated with the wildlife trade intends, together with other partners, to implement the One Health approach, which addresses the interplay between humans, animals and the environment in healthcare.

More than 190 countries have signed the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). This convention, in conjunction with two other internationally binding agreements – the Cartagena Protocol (2000) and the Nagoya Protocol (2010) – pursues three equally important goals: the conservation of biological diversity, its sustainable use and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. In 2010, the signatories to the CBD adopted 20 targets aimed at preserving species and protecting the natural environment worldwide. Known as the Aichi Targets, they were to be met by 2020, but by the end of that year none of the objectives had been achieved in full. Twelve of the Aichi Targets are also enshrined in the 2030 Agenda. Published in 2020, the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-5) found that the rates of loss, degradation and fragmentation of habitats remain high in forest and other biomes, especially in the most biodiversity-rich ecosystems in tropical regions. Wilderness areas and global wetlands are continuing to decline. Food and agricultural production are still two of the main drivers of global biodiversity loss. Plans for more sustainable production and consumption are not being implemented on the scale necessary to eradicate the negative impacts on biological diversity. Overall, the past ten years have seen little in the way of progress towards eliminating, phasing out or reforming subsidies and other incentives that are harmful to biodiversity. The failure to achieve biodiversity targets also undermines efforts to achieve other global targets such as global food security and climate protection.

Germany is working proactively to introduce effective regulations coordinated on a multilateral basis that will ensure the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity. At the CBD’s 15th Conference of the Parties, currently scheduled for 2021, Germany will advocate ambitious targets and, in particular, effective implementation mechanisms during the negotiations on the post-2020 global
biodiversity framework. The EU is to take a leading role in these negotiations. As a member of the Global Ocean Alliance, Germany will call for marine protected areas to be expanded from 7 to 30 percent of all seas and oceans by 2030. To achieve this aim, Germany is working to conclude a new UN treaty to regulate the conservation and sustainable use of high seas biodiversity. This treaty would be the first environmental agreement on protecting the biodiversity of the world’s oceans. Germany is also lending its proactive support to two significant multilateral species protection agreements – the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES, Washington Convention) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS, Bonn Convention). Furthermore, the Federal Government has promoted a joint multilateral approach against poaching and the illegal wildlife trade at UN level since 2015. Germany is one of the biggest donors in this area worldwide.

Forests are home to most of the Earth’s terrestrial biodiversity. Moreover, some 11 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions caused by humans come from the clearance or degradation of forests, particularly in the tropics. Forests also protect the Earth’s natural resources such as soil, water and air. Furthermore, they are an important source of raw materials, food and income for millions of people, and play an important part in the achievement of virtually all international sustainability development goals.

As one of the biggest contributors to forest-related projects worldwide, the Federal Government is committed to both bilateral action and a variety of multilateral organisations, initiatives, processes and funding mechanisms. These global activities address issues such as preservation, sustainable management, reforestation, the fight against illegal logging and the promotion of deforestation-free production methods and supply chains for agricultural raw materials. Besides obligations under international law arising from the UN Biodiversity Convention, these activities are also guided by the UN Strategic Plan for Forests. The Federal Government also promotes coordinated multilateral projects through key multilateral platforms such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), which is made up of 15 international organisations and secretariats with substantial programmes on forests.
Moreover, Germany also provides political and financial support for the Bonn Challenge, which is a global platform that aims to restore forests and forested landscapes worldwide. Furthermore, Germany promotes global projects that focus primarily on sharing expertise and building capacities. The goal of these activities is to establish efficient and effective forestry management in developing countries and assist forest farmers and their self-help organisations with devising ways to conserve forests without destroying economic opportunities.

In declaring 2021 to 2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the international community has committed to a major collective endeavour. The goal is to achieve a paradigm shift by 2030, ensuring that natural resources and the benefits they offer are used on a fully sustainable basis founded on intact, healthy and stable ecosystems. To help reach this goal, Germany is lending its support to the leading UN organisations – UNEP and FAO – and the multilateral movement, as well as to concrete projects and measures for restoring ecosystems.

Within Europe, Germany will use its 2021 to 2024 co-chairmanship of the Forest Europe process, which includes all 27 EU member states and 19 other European countries, to promote multilateral cooperation. Particular priorities will include continuing to develop standards for sustainable forest management, adapting forests to climate risks and promoting green jobs. Through its involvement in the Amsterdam Declaration Partnership, which consists of seven EU countries plus the United Kingdom and Norway, Germany is also supporting the European Commission’s announcement that it will present a legislative proposal on deforestation-free supply chains in 2021. Furthermore, this support extends to other measures and dialogue platforms that address production and demand considerations in an effort to eliminate deforestation from agricultural supply chains.
2.4.3 Shaping the digital future

Traditional production processes, business models, trade patterns and ways of life are undergoing fundamental changes due to the ever-advancing digital transformation, which is also referred to as the fourth industrial revolution. This rapid technological development is creating new opportunities for more efficient ways to do business, improved efficiency in public administration and better political participation and public-sector services based on digital interaction between the state and its citizens.

Digital technologies can play a decisive role in efforts to tackle social challenges. Large-scale investment in areas such as the development and application of artificial intelligence is essential to ensuring that opportunities can be harnessed. However, besides opening up a whole range of opportunities, the digital transformation is also creating a need to take action in a wide variety of policy areas. In some cases, the only sensible way to meet this need is by adopting a multilateral approach.

Driving forward the development of artificial intelligence together with European partners

One of Germany’s main objectives is the development and application of artificial intelligence (AI). In many areas, the growing number of potential applications of digital technologies of the future such as AI offers major benefits for economies, societies and individuals. In the future, AI will make a major contribution to
economic development and can also benefit the common good in a huge variety of ways. For example, it plays a part in business models for the data economy, can help optimise production and logistics, assists in the treatment of diseases and can reduce the environmental impact in agriculture. Ensuring that Europe is well positioned as regards the development and application of this key technology is fundamental to safeguarding the region’s prosperity and capacity for innovation. As a result, the aim must be to proactively shape development, anticipate new trends and opportunities, and make extensive use of advances in innovation associated with digital technologies. In addition to strengthening digital skills and resources, a strategic and anticipatory approach is crucial if we are to shape the digital revolution in line with our vision. One concrete initiative in this context is GAIA-X, which is creating a federated data infrastructure for a European digital ecosystem that is open to international partners. When it comes to the use of automated decision-making systems, Germany has long advocated ethical principles and the protection of human rights. During Germany’s Presidency of the Council of the EU, forward-looking presidency conclusions were adopted on fundamental rights in the context of AI and the digital revolution.

Promoting the digital economy and digital capacities

Germany is working in a variety of ways to promote the sustainable use of digital technologies in business and development cooperation in a multilateral context. When it held the Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2020, Germany initiated the establishment of the European Digital4Development (D4D) hub. This forum brings together 11 member states, the European Commission, the private sector and partners from the Global South in a structured multilateral approach aimed at promoting a sustainable digital economy in Europe and other partner countries. Together with the World Bank and the Smart Africa Alliance, the Digital Economy for Africa initiative (DE4A) will bolster capacities for regulating the digital economy.

Closing regulatory gaps

The handling of data flows and other cross-border issues are examples of areas where there are regulatory gaps. It is essential to close these gaps through broad-based international coordination and in dialogue with additional stakeholders. Germany is striving to ensure that international data rooms are subject to the same laws, with common rules, standards and norms. One of the economic and financial policy challenges that has a global reach is the fact that the bulk of digital value creation is concentrated among a small number of international technology companies, which are developing considerable global influence. Alongside large global companies, a growing
number of small and medium-sized enterprises are playing an active role at the international level and in the digital domain. However, there is as yet no uniform multilateral fiscal framework for cross-border digital economic activities. As a result, companies sometimes do not pay their taxes in the countries where they generate a large part of their income, but instead shift their profits specifically to countries that have very low rates of tax. Furthermore, personal data is often processed in countries with low standards of data protection, making it difficult to enforce European data protection standards. The Federal Government is assisting the European Commission with negotiations on appropriate data protection conditions.

Together with its partners and allies, Germany intends to safeguard and further develop best practices in international cooperation in the area of the digital transformation. On this basis, it is seeking to strengthen the setting of international standards, close regulatory gaps in the taxation of the digital economy and protect the set of rules that applies. Ultimately, Germany is striving to ensure that ethical standards and human rights also apply in the digital world and that a level playing field and innovation are facilitated and encouraged. This requires international cooperation, which – particularly when it comes to digital policy – also means involving both state and non-state actors.

The EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is an effective tool that, thanks to the market power of the EU, sets an example for data protection standards worldwide. The EU’s Digital Services Act Package was presented in December 2020. This package aims to protect the rights of digital service users and strengthen the responsibility of online platforms and information service providers when it comes to managing the content that is shared through these services. It also aims to improve the regulation of gatekeeper platforms and create a level playing field across the EU and beyond. Germany is also cooperating closely on a regulatory proposal for artificial intelligence that was published in the first half of 2021.

Within the WTO, Germany is working on the Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) on E-commerce in Geneva to create a set of rules for digital trade aimed at facilitating trade and guaranteeing legal certainty for companies. Alongside its European partners, Germany is working hard to achieve a swift conclusion to negotiations on a set of rules for taxing the digital economy. Particular priorities include the redistribution of interstate taxation rights and the Franco-German initiative for a global minimum effective tax. The primary goal is to achieve a multilateral agreement at the OECD Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) negotiations by mid-2021.
2.4.4

Promoting global trade and investment for the benefit of all

Germany’s industrial production and economic power depend to a large extent on international trade and networked production. For this reason, a key priority of German policy is to liberalise global trade in line with common rules that have been developed jointly with other countries, facilitate cross-border investment, keep markets open to goods and services, dismantle trade barriers and fight protectionism – while maintaining a level playing field between suppliers from different countries. However, trade policy today is about more than just reaching agreement on the exchange of goods, but can also play a part in fostering sustainable development. The resilience and diversification of supply chains is becoming increasingly important, too, because a high level of dependence on individual trade partners can have implications for security policy, among other areas.

As part of the European common market, Germany is represented in the EU’s trade policy by the European Commission. The European Commission presented its new trade strategy in February 2021. Its main objectives are to support the post-pandemic economic recovery, fundamentally transform the EU economy in line with objectives for environmental and digital transformation, develop rules for more sustainable and fairer globalisation, and strengthen the EU’s capacity to pursue its interests and exercise its rights in its trade relations.

Economic relations between the EU and the US remain crucially important for the Federal Government. With the arrival of the Biden administration, Germany is continuing to lend its strong support to the objectives of a positive trade agenda between the EU and US in order to revitalise transatlantic economic relations for the benefit of all parties. The Federal Government is also committed to advancing joint efforts to reinforce the multilateral trade system, bolster WTO reform and strengthen the enforcement of agreed international rules, particularly with regard to activities by non-market economies that distort the market.
2.4 Multilateralism for sustainable prosperity

Figure 13
German exports and imports by key region

Source: BMWi (Federal Statistical Office; own calculations)
Reforming the World Trade Organization

The World Trade Organization (WTO) provides a framework for open, rules-based trade between its 164 members, which together account for approximately 98 percent of global trade. Its role is to facilitate mediation in the event of disputes, oversee the creation and ongoing development of generally accepted rules, and monitor compliance with those rules. However, this system is under growing pressure due to protectionism, unilateral measures outside the WTO regulatory framework, market-distorting practices, trade policy tensions and efforts to exploit trade tools for political purposes in pursuit of geostrategic interests. Years of stalled negotiations on developing WTO rules have allowed regulatory gaps to open up, for example with regard to cross-border data flows. The dispute settlement mechanism has been partially deadlocked since the end of 2019. Multilateral trade rules must be adapted to account for changing economic and geopolitical realities. There is also a need for action with regard to special and preferential treatment for developing countries, which is currently based solely on the principle of self-declaration, irrespective of concrete needs.

Germany is working to resolve current distortions within the rules-based multilateral system of global trade and to reform the WTO. After all, the WTO offers an ideal platform for balancing trade interests between countries thanks to its inclusivity, its legally sound and reliable regulatory framework, its guarantee of open, rules-based markets and its integration of developing countries into the global economy.

With this in mind, Germany supports the proposals for WTO reform that the European Commission is pursuing as a trade policy priority. These proposals are intended to guarantee a functioning dispute settlement mechanism and strengthen monitoring of trade rules. The same applies to the initiatives presented or driven forward by the EU that seek to modernise the WTO rulebook for cross-border data flows and the digital transformation, improve rules in particular for subsidies, forced technology transfer and market-distorting practices by state-owned companies, as well as to foster fair and sustainable global trade rules that support a climate transition. The European Commission is joining forces with like-minded countries to advocate appropriate WTO reforms. For example, it is seeking to establish a level playing field through trilateral discussions with the US and Japan and in its work with the Ottawa Group, which Canada set up for this purpose.
Free trade agreements as a building block of multilateralism

In many cases, the agenda of multilateral trade reform that the EU is pursuing within the framework of the WTO requires the consensus of all WTO members if it is to be adopted. Negotiations within the WTO are usually protracted and typically involve resolutions that amount to a compromise between the interests of very different countries – something that is not unusual for multilateral negotiations in general. For this reason, Germany is working within the framework of EU trade policy to pursue a parallel agenda aimed at concluding ambitious free trade agreements with individual countries or regions. Key features of these agreements include ambitious market liberalisation, robust competition rules and strict consumer, environmental and social standards. Such agreements with one or several countries help to reinforce a rules-based, multilateral trade system, further liberalise markets and achieve the EU’s sustainable development goals.

The EU is currently involved in negotiations to finalise agreements with Mexico, Chile and the MERCOSUR countries of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay that, when ratified, will see the EU advance its network of economic and association agreements with Latin America on the basis of ambitious trade rules and sustainability standards. Germany is working to promote a more proactive bilateral trade on the part of the EU in the Indo-Pacific in light of shifting economic centres of gravity and the conclusion of major free trade agreements such as, most recently, the Regional Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (RCEP). Modern and
comprehensive free trade agreements with Japan, Korea, Singapore and Viet Nam and the fully negotiated investment agreement with China are levelling the playing field, fostering rules-based international trade and promoting sustainable development goals. In its work on this issue within the framework of the EU, Germany advocates robust dispute and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that these objectives are achieved.

Germany supports the rapid conclusion of free trade agreements with its partners Australia and New Zealand for the same reason. Within the framework of the strategic partnership between the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Germany also envisages prospects for a future EU-ASEAN free trade agreement, building on agreements with individual ASEAN member states. As an important step in this process, the ongoing negotiations on a free trade agreement between the EU and Indonesia should be brought to a successful conclusion. Furthermore, Germany is seeking to re-enter negotiations on free trade agreements with Thailand and Malaysia and is interested in continuing negotiations with the Philippines. The Federal Government also supports the rapid reopening of negotiations on free trade and investment agreements between the EU and India.

Moreover, Germany supports the EU’s objective of closer trade cooperation with countries in its southern neighbourhood and Africa, building on cooperation under free trade and economic partnership agreements, as well as on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This approach is in line with the long-term objective of concluding an intercontinental trade agreement with Africa.

Trade policy in the context of sustainable development

By opening up markets and diversifying supply chains, EU trade policy will make a major contribution to the economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. The sustainability of global trade also plays an important role with regard to environmental and climate challenges as well as labour and social standards.

Furthermore, the WTO’s Aid for Trade initiative aims to help developing countries that have been particularly badly affected by the pandemic in their economic recovery by integrating them into international trade and embedding them in global supply chains. Germany is placing a particular emphasis on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in this work. The Federal Government is working to extend the EU’s Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP), which is due to expire in part by the end of 2023. The GSP gives developing countries preferential access to the European market while taking into account the goals of sustainable development and responsible governance accordingly and incorporating robust review and implementation mechanisms.
With support from Germany, the European Commission has jointly initiated a structured process of dialogue on trade and sustainable development in the context of the WTO. One of the aims behind this dialogue is to drive forward the liberalisation of trade in environmentally friendly goods and services. These include, for example, goods that will contribute to the achievement of environmental, climate and energy targets, for instance by generating electricity from renewables or improving energy and resource efficiency.

Germany is also looking forward to the European Commission’s proposal for a carbon border adjustment mechanism that is intended to help reduce global emissions by preventing carbon leakage, a process whereby countries transfer emissions from the EU to third countries with lower climate protection ambitions. Germany is working to ensure that any such mechanism is fair, transparent, WTO-compliant and implementable from an administrative perspective, that it pursues climate targets exclusively without fostering protectionism, and that it takes development issues into close consideration.

The 2007/2008 financial crisis and the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have shown all too clearly just how important a stable European and international financial and monetary system is for prosperity and social harmony. The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered the biggest global recession since the end of the Second World War. The entire international community – led by the G20 as the central forum for international economic cooperation – put together a formidable stabilisation package for the global economy, thus preventing an even worse scenario. The decision taken by the G20 in spring 2020 to offer the 73 poorest countries debt relief is particularly important. During the Spring Meetings between the IMF and World Bank, this debt relief initiative was extended for the last time to 31 December 2021. In November 2020, the G20 also agreed on a framework that enables debt restructuring for the poorest countries on a case-by-case basis. This now needs to be implemented. At the same time, the crisis has seen some countries pursue unilateral courses of action, thereby exposing the fragility of the global economy while also underlining the importance of a multilateral approach to effective crisis management. Furthermore, the finance ministers of the G20 are working closely together to develop fair taxation of the digital economy, improve
the provision of financial services to all and create international standards for funding infrastructure projects.

In order to carry out their many tasks, the IMF, World Bank Group and other multilateral development banks must have adequate funding and the backing of constructive cooperation on the part of their shareholders. Germany is doing its part in this respect, for example as the IMF’s fourth-largest shareholder. Furthermore, international financial institutions should make a decisive contribution to implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. With this in mind, Germany is working to ensure that international financial institutions are held more accountable for financing public goods in an even more extensive and more targeted manner. This includes, in particular, funding climate protection and sustainability measures as well as investing in access to education and the prevention of pandemics.

Germany is also a member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which was founded by China in 2015. This institution is a new multilateral development bank alongside the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As part of the constituency of Eurozone countries, Germany is working to ensure that this new financial institution develops in line with international standards as a transparent multilateral development bank. Furthermore, the bank is already cooperating with other multilateral development banks in many areas.

Germany sets great store by the strengthening of international financial market regulation and financial supervision. This task falls in particular to the Financial Stability Board, which was created in the wake of the 2008/2009 financial crisis on the initiative of the G20, and in which G20 countries and other institutions such as the World Bank, IMF and European Commission are represented. In Europe, the introduction of the European Banking Authority and the creation of the European Systemic Risk Board were key milestones in the effort to shore up the international financial system.

2.4.6

Creating international impetus for research and development

The knowledge society is global and its findings are fundamental to worldwide prosperity. International research and development are decisive when it comes to finding rapid solutions to global challenges. Examples of such challenges include the COVID-19 pandemic, advancing social resilience, tackling climate change, providing high-quality education for all, promoting scientific freedom and supporting Open Science and further digital transformation. International cooperation is crucially important to harnessing this wealth of knowledge and safeguarding the long-term innovative capacity and competitiveness of both Germany and Europe as attractive locations for science and business.
Scientists from all around the world carry out fundamental physics research at CERN in Switzerland using, among other things, the most powerful particle accelerator ever built.

Intensive cooperation with newly industrialised and developing countries is another important building block for Germany. Besides the mutually beneficial dialogue with scientists in these countries, such collaboration also reinforces our partners’ development opportunities and can help achieve the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda worldwide. Governments are supporting this networking in order to strengthen cross-border research and drive forward the global quest for new scientific knowledge. Multilateral cooperation between governments is an important driver for strengthening research activities and helping to shape global research agendas.

Germany’s strategy for the Internationalization of Education, Science and Research is the basis for its commitment to more closely networked, international cooperation. It is being rolled out at the European level, as well as in the UN – particularly through UNESCO – and within the framework of the G7, G20 and OECD. The Federal Government attaches particular importance to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including renewable energy, Open Science, scientific freedom, research infrastructures, health research, and lifelong learning and education for sustainable development.

Germany is striving to make the European research community more dynamic, resilient and even more productive while also strengthening its expertise in artificial intelligence. Through the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI), Germany is making a proactive contribution to joint
Advancing international networking with science diplomacy

Multilateral scientific and research cooperation depends on international networking between leading scientists. After all, smart minds working together will drive forward innovation and solutions to problems, regardless of their nationality. Countries adopting this approach are creating the ideal conditions for international collaboration in the fields of research, science and education. Through its education and science diplomacy, the Federal Government is providing proactive support in this regard and thus helping to solve global challenges. In so doing, Germany is striving to promote partnerships (connect), facilitate knowledge-based policy advice (inform) and create favourable conditions for free science, research and teaching (enable). Scientific communication, scientific freedom, Open Science and participation are core elements of this strategy.

During its Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2020, Germany strongly advocated the protection of scientific and research freedom in international cooperation. This ongoing effort to promote the fundamental right of scientific freedom was also enshrined in the Bonn Declaration on Freedom of Scientific Research, which was not only ratified by EU member states and the European Commission, but is also supported by partners such as Canada, Israel, Mexico, Norway and Switzerland. Within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), steps are being taken to strengthen both a comprehensive monitoring system and the dialogue between all 49 countries.
The UNFCCC Secretariat is based at the UN Campus in Bonn.

that are involved. Germany is also supporting networking between scientists, international organisations and UN organisations as well as joint solutions for global problems via the UN Campus in Bonn. Together with the 150 NGOs and universities located in Bonn, the 25 offices and secretariats of UN organisations that are based at the Campus form an ecosystem for innovation in the fields of climate protection, the environment and sustainability.

Germany is also playing a proactive role in promoting cooperation in science, research and education in order to create the ideal conditions for outstanding international cooperation. This is being implemented at the level of the OECD, UNESCO, the EU, the G7 and the G20.

Making the promotion of science part of climate and development policy

Many African countries have inadequate scientific structures for developing their own approaches to dealing with climate change. By 2024, regionally and internationally recognised science-based climate and environmental service centres are to be established in western and southern Africa. To achieve this, Germany is already working with several African countries that are particularly badly affected by climate change to develop concrete projects aimed at building scientific structures. This will ensure that, when it comes to issues such as land use and water supplies, these countries can make scientifically sound decisions independently in the region in question.

Furthermore, strong partnerships are being cultivated with medium and low-income countries in the area of health research in order to help improve the health situation in the region, for instance by promoting the Research Networks for Health Innovations in Sub-Saharan Africa initiative.
Looking ahead – multilateralism for the future
Global economic integration, the digital transformation and, most recently, the experience of a truly worldwide pandemic – all these things have changed the challenges that multilateral activities need to address. For many countries, economic growth and peaceful development have only been possible based on the binding rules of the international system and an open economic order. Looking to the future, a functioning international order will be even more essential for sustainable prosperity, security and lasting peace.

Moreover, what the multilateral order is expected to provide in terms of legitimacy and capabilities is also changing. More countries than ever before are justifiably exercising their right to join in the debate about and help shape the international order. Civil society is also demanding a bigger role. At the same time, geopolitical shifts are creating tensions and conflicts that are also increasingly being played out in multilateral organisations and are therefore making it more difficult to achieve collective action and broker compromise on challenges of global importance.

The multilateral order needs to take greater account of these new conditions and heightened expectations. Germany supports the preservation and ongoing development of values-based multilateral cooperation that is geared towards the fundamental principles of democracy, the rule of law and the protection of human rights. This white paper provides examples of this commitment, thereby offering an insight into its scope and diversity.

Germany will continue to advocate values-based, inclusive and effective multilateralism in the future. Its commitment to defending and continuing to develop multilateralism in its many different manifestations is based on the following four fundamental guiding principles:

→ The multilateral order must not stick to well-trodden paths, but forge new ways ahead and evolve. A key criterion for any initiatives and proposals that seek to foster the further development of multilateralism is the extent to which they make multilateral institutions more effective. They must also be compatible with the basic norms and principles of the multilateral order, which focus on peaceful relations between states, the protection of human rights, the principles of democracy and the rule of law, and sustainability as the crucial dimension for global prosperity.
The rise of new stakeholders and formative powers poses considerable challenges for the multilateral order. The Federal Government is committed to embracing this dynamic as an opportunity. The burdens and responsibility of maintaining the multilateral order can and must be shared more widely. At the same time, different perspectives and experiences must also be integrated into the process of shaping and developing this order.

The Federal Government is working to make multilateralism more proactive and effective. Examples of this understanding of multilateralism include flexible formats of cooperation and support within multilateral frameworks; informal alliances and forums of consultation; and broad coalitions of multiple countries, regions, NGOs, private-sector stakeholders and individuals. Germany will continue to develop and flesh out this type of multilateralism over the coming years. It will do this through the Alliance for Multilateralism, new approaches to arms control and peacekeeping, networking between European communities with the aim of sharing experience on climate protection, and numerous other initiatives that are outlined in this white paper. At the same time, Germany will continue to assume responsibility within the existing institutions of the multilateral order. For example, it is campaigning for a seat on the UN Security Council in 2027/28 and will assert its position as a member of the Human Rights Council, as President of the G7 in 2022 and – as in previous years – as one of the biggest donors within the UN system.

The return of the US to the Paris Agreement on climate change and other key forums of multilateral cooperation has considerably strengthened the foundations for future efforts to shape the global order based on rules and values. Germany firmly believes that close cooperation in multilateral forums, particularly between Europe and the US, will play a major part in strengthening the rules-based order in the long term. Working in partnership with the US, its allies in the EU and NATO, and its global partners, Germany will use this momentum to advance multilateral approaches to global and regional challenges with all due determination.

This white paper outlines the next steps in this process and also extends an open invitation to join the discussion and help develop further ideas and suggestions for proactive multilateralism. Whether these aspirations can be met will depend not on the scale of the challenges, but on the determination and commitment that is demonstrated in the pursuit of multilateralism.
Looking ahead – multilateralism for the future
List of abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>AfCFTA</td>
<td>African Continental Free Trade Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIIB</td>
<td>Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APSA</td>
<td>African Peace and Security Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCSC</td>
<td>Berlin Climate and Security Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEACON</td>
<td>Bridging European and Local Climate Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEPS</td>
<td>Base Erosion and Profit Shifting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BWC</td>
<td>Biological Weapons Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Convention on Biological Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEM</td>
<td>Clean Energy Ministerial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEPI</td>
<td>Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERN</td>
<td>Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire – European Organization for Nuclear Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFE</td>
<td>Contingency Fund for Emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFMCA</td>
<td>Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFS</td>
<td>Committee on World Food Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIF</td>
<td>Climate Investment Funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPUOS</td>
<td>Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTED</td>
<td>Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWC</td>
<td>Chemical Weapons Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRC</td>
<td>German Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDPR</td>
<td>EU General Data Protection Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEAS</td>
<td>European External Action Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECW</td>
<td>Education Cannot Wait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECTHR</td>
<td>European Court of Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHR</td>
<td>European Convention on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPF</td>
<td>European Peace Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESO</td>
<td>European Southern Observatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJEU</td>
<td>Court of Justice of the European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUTF</td>
<td>EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEU</td>
<td>Treaty on European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>EQUALS</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU INTCEN</td>
<td>Intelligence Analysis Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAIR</td>
<td>Facility for Antiproton and Ion Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATF</td>
<td>Financial Action Task Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSS</td>
<td>Food Systems Summit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>Informal forum bringing together the leaders of seven industrialised countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G20</td>
<td>Informal forum bringing together 20 leading industrialised and newly industrialised countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAP</td>
<td>Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCF</td>
<td>Green Climate Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCI</td>
<td>Gender at the Centre Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCM</td>
<td>Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCR</td>
<td>Global Compact on Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFATM</td>
<td>Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFF</td>
<td>Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GG</td>
<td>Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (German Agency for International Cooperation)</td>
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<td>GloPID-R</td>
<td>Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPAI</td>
<td>Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPE</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSDP</td>
<td>Common Security and Defence Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDP nexus</td>
<td>Humanitarian-development-peace nexus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Artificial intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAEA</td>
<td>International Atomic Energy Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBRD</td>
<td>International Bank for Reconstruction and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAO</td>
<td>International Civil Aviation Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEA</td>
<td>International Energy Agency</td>
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<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICJ</td>
<td>International Court of Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>IKI</td>
<td>International Climate Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>International Maritime Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>INF Treaty</td>
<td>Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPBES</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPCC</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRENA</td>
<td>International Renewable Energy Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCPoA</td>
<td>Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Iran Nuclear Deal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSEC</td>
<td>Joint Support and Enabling Command</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSI</td>
<td>Joint Statement Initiative on E-commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTI</td>
<td>Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCF</td>
<td>Least Developed Countries Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERCOSUR</td>
<td>Mercado Común del Sur – The Southern Common Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOPAN</td>
<td>Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New START</td>
<td>Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>Nationally Determined Contributions Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDIICI</td>
<td>Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPT</td>
<td>Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODHHR</td>
<td>Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHCHR</td>
<td>Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIE</td>
<td>World Organisation for Animal Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPCW</td>
<td>Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBF</td>
<td>Peacebuilding Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>RENAC</td>
<td>Renewables Academy AG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMM</td>
<td>Special Monitoring Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCT</td>
<td>UN Counter-Terrorism Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDS</td>
<td>United Nations Development System</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNGEI</td>
<td>United Nations Girls Education Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNOCT</td>
<td>UN Office of Counter-Terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN WOMEN</td>
<td>United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>VZF</td>
<td>Vision Zero Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHE</td>
<td>WHO Health Emergency Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>WPS</td>
<td>Women, Peace and Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZMSBw</td>
<td>Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Science</td>
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