Dialogue on Germany’s Future

2011/2012
Dialogue on Germany’s Future

How do we want to live together?

How do we want to make a living?

How do we want to learn?

Report of the experts in the Federal Chancellor’s Dialogue on Germany’s Future
2011/2012
Abbreviated version
Introduction to the Experts’ Dialogue: Structure and process

In early 2011, Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel initiated a Dialogue on the Future, comprising two parts. The first part, the „Experts’ Dialogue“ was a Dialogue on the Future with independent, non-party experts drawn from an academic and practical backgrounds; the second was a Dialogue on the Future with citizens1, the „Citizens’ Dialogue“. Three topic areas were discussed under the heading „Dialogue on Germany’s Future“. These are set to be highly relevant for Germany’s future over the coming decade. The objective of the dialogue was to produce specific proposals for actions to be taken by politicians on national level in politically relevant areas of activity.

The Federal Chancellor initiated a first dialogue with experts on Germany’s future back in 2008 and 2009: „Germany one generation on: How will we live? How do we want to make a living?“ was the topic, taking a look 20 to 30 years into the future. About 20 experts in each of three workshop discussions talked about the topics of „Values, guiding principles, life goals“, „Economy, work, education“ and „Prosperity and quality of life“. Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel discussed the results with a series of experts, and obtained suggestions from beyond the sphere of her everyday business. Some of us experts were already there at the time. We also found the discussions to be stimulation, but the time available then was very short, the perspective was set very far into the future and the topics covered an extremely wide range. It appears that the Federal Chancellor thought the same thing, because the current „Dialogue on Germany’s Future“ is a new development in every respect. The integrated concept of an Experts' Dialogue and Citizens' Dialogue has withstood its „baptism of fire“.

In May 2011, when we three coordinators met for the first time, the three topics of „How do we want to live together?“ „How do we want to make a living?“ „How do we want to learn?“ and the 18 working groups had been defined. The first question, „How do we want to live together?“, picks up on the intensive discussion that has taken place regarding old and new fault lines in our society. „How do we want to make a living?“ not only deals with the questions of what we understand by prosperity and quality of life, but also and above all the question of where and how we can continue to earn our prosperity in the future. „How do we want to learn?“ reflects the key topic of individual and social education – in all its facets: Individual learning by children and adults, learning in institutions and in companies through to learning in society.

An academic coordinator has been appointed for each topic area of the Experts’ Dialogue. Each topic strand involved discussions by six working groups under the direction of a “key expert”. The 18 working groups were composed of at least six experts each, scientists from different disciplines and people with practical experience drawn from civil society, business and administration. Not too many in one group and the blend had to be right! If, in the course of the process, it became apparent that a perspective was missing, then it was added. As a result, the proposals presented here are drawn from 134 specialists.

First of all, we spent a long time considering the approach of asking the right questions – together with the key experts, colleagues from the Federal Chancellery and the Federal Chancellor herself. Because the overarching questions were „broken down“ for each working group, meaning that the individual expert groups were able to start their work by tackling about five key questions.
The discussions of the 18 key experts quickly revealed the complexity of the issues. In the case of the working groups for „Learning society“ or „Self-responsibility in lifestyle and behaviour“, the titles themselves already indicated that there would be no quick answers forthcoming. This complexity of questions, usually involving horizontal questions, was intentional. It reflects reality, and to a certain extent stands in contrast to the vertical ministerial bureaucracy with its precise structuring of topics. Topics such as „integration“ and „health“ were deliberately not allocated their own working groups, but were rather intended to be dealt with where they arise in everyday life, e.g. how can health be improved in early years, in the workplace and in old age? High relevance for citizens and orientation on people’s everyday life and their everyday problems were recurrent themes. Topics that are already currently being discussed in politics and are the subject of actions by the government were deliberately set aside, for example the turnaround in energy policy, shortage of skilled specialists or reforms to the social security systems.

In the course of three one-day workshops involving the Federal Chancellor, the key experts initially discussed the questions that they were intending to address during a consultation period extending over one year. For example, family policy questions were discussed intensively with the key experts for criminality and security, old age and ageing, citizens’ participation and how Germany sees itself and is seen from abroad. Have the decisive questions been selected which will concern our children, families and society over the next five to ten years? Will the answers to these questions be able to help us in the struggle against criminality, and will they contribute to strengthening our identity? For us key experts, it was impressive to see the patience and personal commitment displayed by the Federal Chancellor in this matter. Then, it was time to get down to brass tacks.

From September to December 2011, the 18 working groups met for the first time. Analyses and arguments were wrangled over intensively in workshops each starting at noon and lasting until noon on the following day. The first proposals were developed. Each topic area was followed by a member of the planning staff in the Federal Chancellery, who was responsible for organisation and procedures. Other members of specialist departments of the Federal Chancellery were available for the discussions, and contributed their expertise in managing existing programmes and projects concerning responsibilities and possible obstacles. Professional moderators ensured stringent orientation on targets and results.

This was also what the guiding criteria specified by the Federal Chancellery were aimed at: The time horizon should be the near future, i.e. the next five to ten years. The questions and answers should be oriented towards the social needs and urgency. They should pick up on expected fault lines and social conflicts. We experts should „think laterally, think differently, think in a new way“, without worrying about party membership, ideology or „red lines“. We should work out specific proposals that can be implemented politically. This means never losing sight of the budgetary situation, for example. The criterion of political practicality also included the requirement for the Federal Government to possess regulatory competence. This represented a significant challenge in the area of „How do we want to learn?“ in particular, since the discussions threatened to be blocked time and time again by the responsibility of federal states for education. However, it was particularly here that all working groups revealed the need for sustainable change in education questions at all institutions of learning – including school – and that the Federal Government is called on to take the initiative in this area even if this does not fall directly within its area of responsibility.

In January 2012, the key experts discussed the initial interim results with the Federal Chancellor. Many things were confirmed, new questions arose and „blind spots“ were identified jointly. The second wave of workshops for the 18 working groups took place from March to May 2012. One central question was: Have we already set the correct course? Discussion and joint working on proposals continued even between and after the workshops: in many telephone conferences, meetings between experts and on an unofficial collaboration platform on the Internet. Many experts also took the opportunity to take part in the workshops of „neighbouring“ working groups.
The Citizens’ Dialogue started on 1 February 2012 with the website „dialog-ueber-deutschland.de“. The thematic structure was the same as that of the Experts’ Dialogue. Each citizen had the opportunity to submit proposals by 15 April, comment on them and support them with his or her vote. The word soon got around. The site attracted 1.7 million hits within ten weeks. About 11,600 proposals and something like 74,000 comments were submitted. This was a volume which far exceeded all expectations.

In parallel during the first half of 2012, three Citizens’ Dialogues were held in Erfurt, Heidelberg and Bielefeld involving 100 stakeholders each. There was also a conference attended by 50 schoolchildren and an international discussion event was held at the Federal Chancellery in Berlin involving the UK Prime Minister David Cameron and the Prime Minister of Norway Jens Stoltenberg as well as 100 students from 24 countries. This was supplemented by an initiative from the adult education centres and the Bertelsmann Foundation, which spontaneously held a dialogue event with the same questioning format in March 2012, along similar lines involving 50 locations in Germany and groups of 100 citizens. These were rounded off with a dialogue between 100 participants and the Federal Chancellor.

Many of us took part in the Citizens’ Dialogues and we found it exciting to hear how the topics really are relevant for citizens, how the topics are discussed by citizens and what proposals came from citizens. At the same time, we encountered a very high and unflagging personal commitment from the Federal Chancellor, something which could by no means be taken for granted given the day-to-day political problems that were pressing at the time.

In parallel, we tracked the online Citizens’ Dialogue and participated in the form of several blog entries. It goes without saying that we were unable to look at all the 11,600 proposals. Therefore, the editorial team at the Federal Press Office separated the proposals from mere venting of spleen, and then provided us with the proposals for our consideration sorted into topics. Some working groups were able to obtain new suggestions in this way. Others discovered that citizens were interpreting their topics in a different way. Yet more found a high correlation between the main points. Where the experts’ time and the time available in working groups permitted, individual proposals were picked up or commented on.

Our results had to be presented as briefly and succinctly as possible, so that the results of the Experts’ Dialogue would encourage discussion in the general public outside specialist circles. The specification that each
working group should only present six pages was initially unusual for many of us experts. The limitation on pages meant that the breadth of the argument could not be presented, whilst on the other hand it obliged us to set main points and to get to the heart of the matter. It was a concern of all experts that our proposals should reach the broadest range of groups and trigger a discussion. That is why it is recommended for the interested reader to read the long version as well. Time and time again, the Federal Chancellery staff members encouraged us experts to lay bare differences of opinion, and not to fall into a „consensus trap“. After all, reducing the consensus to the lowest common denominator does not always represent finding the optimum path. However, it was the basic approach of all working groups to discuss differences of opinion thoroughly until the optimum approach had been found. There are individual dissenting voices in the report where this was not possible.

In the report on findings presented here, the members of each working group are responsible for the result of their own work. Each academic coordinator led a working group and was responsible for leading all the working groups in his or her topic strand to one result – without however being responsible for every detail. On behalf of all the experts, we would like to express our gratitude to the Federal Chancellor for this initiative, and the opportunity to commit ourselves in this way. We are also grateful to our colleagues in the Federal Chancellery and the Federal Press Office who untiringly and enthusiastically enabled us experts to conduct this dialogue.

The Federal Chancellor’s Dialogue on the Future has set new standards in its combination of Experts’ Dialogue and Citizens’ Dialogue; this is a standard which no future governments should lag behind. Hopefully, the Dialogue on the Future has given our parliamentary democracy a new dimension in direct democracy. If, through taking this approach, we have succeeded in improving confidence in the relationship between citizens and the state, companies and politics, educational institutions and young people, then that alone makes the effort worthwhile.
Introduction to the Experts’ Dialogue: What have we noticed, and what has struck us as important?

Prof. Dr. Sabine Walper, academic coordinator topic I
Prof. Dr.-Ing. Klaus Henning, academic coordinator topic II
Prof. Dr. Stephan Breidenbach, academic coordinator topic III

It is difficult to reflect the wealth of proposals in a summarised form. As a result, we will restrict ourselves to presenting a few aspects, which we three academic coordinators for the future dialogue have noticed during our observations, monitoring and cooperation, and which have struck us as important.

Public spiritedness and economic strength – two firm pillars

It was a central topic in many working groups, and was made particularly clear in the conversations with citizens: Our country is characterised by an enormous level of public spiritedness and a strong commitment focussed on values. This is revealed in an inestimable number of clubs, associations, organisations and church institutions. This dynamism is also frequently an expression of the struggle for social cohesion, for a successful co-existence on all levels – in the family and in family-like groupings, in the neighbourhood, in firms and in the structures of civil society, between young and old as well as between people with and without a background of migration.

Accordingly, we present many proposals which are intended to help overcome the excessive structural demands made on the family, strengthen inter-generational cohesion, counter the worrying increase in mental illnesses or promote a long and healthy life by means of suitable measures. We have intensively addressed the obvious requirements for greater involvement by citizens in political discussions and decisions, and we make proposals for promoting a dynamic process leading to an understanding of the state with a greater tendency towards communication, cooperation and coordination of citizens, politics and public administration.

The other pillar is our economic strength. The unique nature of Germany’s position is based, to a decisive extent, on our industrial centres. These have developed a broad range of special products, system components and services that are in global demand. The position is sustainably characterised by a highly-developed variety of family firms in a most diverse range of sizes – from sole traders and contracting companies through to small and medium-sized enterprises. Many of these are small and large hidden champions, i.e. world-market leaders for technical system components and for comprehensive services in innumerable special areas. At the same time, we combine high-quality specialist work with engineering knowledge and the principles of social partnership in a special way. Many major companies successfully operate on the world market on this basis as well.

The strengths possessed by our location, the readiness of owner-managed companies to take risks as well as the flexible short-time working arrangements that are recognised throughout the world as exemplary have combined in a special way with the blend of pronounced public spiritedness and our approach to putting solidarity into practice, thus helping us to emerge from the last economic crisis in better shape than our neighbouring countries.

As a result, Germany today is not only reliable, precise, conscientious and innovative; it has also become fast, flexible and adaptable. However, building on these achievements is not something that can be taken for granted, because the major national economies of developing countries are rapidly catching up. In order to
Introduction to the Experts’ Dialogue: What have we noticed, and what has struck us as important?

maintain and expand the strength of our location, which is currently founded on a magnificent economic and regional basis, we regard it as necessary for work and working conditions to be shaped in such a way as to withstand demographic changes and the challenges of the future, as well as promoting and exploiting potential for innovation to the full. For example, the experience of older workers must be used more effectively at company level. In order to create a sustainable culture of independence, it will be necessary to achieve a stronger anchoring in the higher education sector, as well as providing stronger incentive systems for entrepreneurial people in all phases of their life and career.

Another key factor concerns an improved culture of innovation and an understanding of innovation which does not just integrate technical aspects but also personal and social ones. Nowadays, a technical lead alone is rarely sufficient to guarantee a competitive edge. It is not just people and technology that need to be better coordinated with one another; it is also a requirement for society as a whole to be prepared for innovations and/or innovative leaps so that they can be achieved. In general, we citizens of Germany must build on our strength with “incremental”, finely organised innovations and develop the capability and readiness for radical breakthrough innovations. This will take curiosity, creativity and a permanent readiness to learn by all those involved, the ability to work together in an interdisciplinary and intercultural way, as well as the openness of a society to consider major innovative leaps.

The turnaround in energy policy and the change of tack to a consistent sustainability policy are examples of future markets which offer major opportunities for Germany – if we seize them. These are areas in which significant economic and social innovative leaps are required. However, they are also areas in which acceptance by the population is decisive in terms of dissemination. Saving energy, a responsible approach to consumption, shaping and acceptance of major infrastructure projects are examples of the changes of behaviour needed in society, which call for information and incentives from the government just as much as they require individual participation.

The balance between public spiritedness and economic strength represents a healthy basis for the further development of our country. However, we need greater communication with regard to the question of where our journey should take us. For example, we believe it is important to reach a better level of understanding of what we as a society understand by prosperity, quality of life and progress. Ultimately, this also gives rise to priorities for political actions. In addition, we need better communication between the “worlds”: between us and our European neighbours, between the various academic areas, highly-specialised levels in administration, social and governmental actors, companies, etc. The progress of work sharing and specialisation, as well as the wealth of commitment to civil society will become an opportunity if we establish communication in order to be able to pull together. Therefore, many working groups spoke out for dialogue processes and structures independently of one another. Based on this, citizens and the government will be able to achieve better cooperation and coordination of their commitment – to the benefit of all.

This is all the more important given the growing complexity of the tasks facing us. Shaping the future of Europe, the consequences of demographic change, coping with the change in energy policy, digitisation of society and our place in the world are just a few examples of this. What they all have in common is that they are complex mainstream tasks which require systematic rather than sectoral thinking, coordinated rather than individual action and networked structures rather than subject-specific lines. Local government, the federal states and the Federal Government must work together just as much as actors in administration, business and civil society.
Learning to re-learn on all levels – unfolding our potential

Whether it comes to support for families, solving social problems or the ability to introduce innovations in companies, if we want to get ahead we need to develop the ability both here and there to learn with one another and from one another. Improving individual and collective learning processes represents a major source of social and economic potential for innovation.

This initially involves developing the potential of every single person at all institutions of learning in society – from families and nursery day-care centres, schools and universities, companies and public administrations through to associations and clubs. How will we succeed in allowing every citizen to develop his or her potential in all phases of life? Everyone – that includes young people without an apprenticeship or the generation of the over seventy year olds. To achieve this, we require a fundamental change in the willingness to learn and the learning culture. Admittedly, this is already happening in many places, but not everywhere. As a result, many proposals are directed at this issue.

There is an (unplanned) common theme running through almost all the working groups as a main thrust: It is high time for something to change in the education systems – moving towards a new division of tasks between the Federal Government, federal states, local government and private institutions. Questions have been asked about the predominant responsibility of the federal states from an extremely wide range of perspectives, which has led to numerous proposals – always with the explicit or implicit goal of promoting more effective development of individual potential.

International competitive pressure and demographic change are demanding to an equal extent that life-long learning must become a reality for all qualifications. Professional experience shows: the closer to companies and workplaces that continuing education and skills development take place, the greater their level of acceptance and effectiveness. That is why we suggest that the internationally recognised brand of „work training“ should be developed further into a brand of „work training and continuing education“. Permanent on-the-job learning and skills development by individuals must become a matter of course. At the same time, our professional education system must develop a new appreciation for non-academic work. It is a significant part of our strengths in international competition.

Last but not least, we require a better appreciation for all kinds of qualification and skills – irrespective of whether they have been acquired formally or informally. We believe that the possibility to demonstrate informal qualifications, such as in the form of a skills passport, represents a key for giving people with simple qualifications or no formal certificates better opportunities in the job market. This should also be helped by improved permeability of professional and academic education, and some proposals focus on this.

The question of developing individual potential leads us unavoidably to the question of developing the potential of companies, communities, organisations and, ultimately, society as well. How do we learn as a society? How does experience become progress? A host of proposals regarding social learning at local, regional, federal state or national level have coalesced here: From an improved exchange of best-practice examples through to disseminating them widely and anchoring the principle of sustainability in our society – there is even a proposal for amending the basic law. Information, openness and transparency of opinion-forming and decision-making processes are significant factors in social learning. As a result, there are proposals for practical internships available to public administration employees and a national call centre for acute problems with bureaucracy, for optimising administrative processes, for probationary periods for new laws as well as evaluating the effectiveness of laws and regulations.
The digitisation of our world is going to change many things – we need to rise to this challenge

All of these learning processes are thrown into sharp relief as a result of digitisation of the private sphere and the world of work. The innovative leap from the analogue to the digital world is changing not only our information and service processes at breath-taking speed, but also our everyday life and most of our „everyday products“. For many people, the Internet has become part of their living space. And the „Internet of things“, digital control and networking of information, will increasingly encompass items that we use every day: „intelligent bumpers“ will adapt their material properties to the traffic situation while „talking fridges“ will read out shopping lists and do our shopping for us automatically on the Internet. Digitisation, like the introduction of printing, is turning the world on its head, has a wide-ranging influence on all aspects of life and will demand new skills from us: young and old alike need to know how to use the Internet, e.g. in order to protect their private sphere, while even traditional craft apprenticeships will have to be modernised; just think about the roofer who installs not only tiles on roofs, but also solar panels and weather sensors. The digitisation of the worlds which many citizens inhabit is a topic that we have only just touched on, with some rather unorthodox proposals in particular regarding the education area. Providing support for this development in all areas represents a decisive factor in our society’s ability to face the future, and we believe that it requires the application of appropriate government resources and structures.

Living up to our good reputation in the world – our skills are in demand

Seen from our own perspective, we Germans think that many things in Germany and Europe are problematic. Seen from outside, Germany looks surprisingly different. A survey of 120 experts from politics and business worldwide1 has shown that, quite apart from good products with the „Made in Germany“ cachet, we also enjoy a good reputation in the world and are respected. The truth is probably somewhere in the middle. In fact, we are not always aware of our own abilities. For example, we have a competence in setting up good systems and taking advice when setting up such systems, irrespective of whether they are related to education, society or companies. The „Made in Germany“ brand is increasingly developing into the „Enabled by Germany“ brand, and is already on the way to acquiring a new worldwide reputation.

The good reputation we enjoy in the world represents an obligation on us. In future, we should allow ourselves to be guided more by this outward estimation and the expectations associated with it. We make proposals about new initiatives in foreign policy and improved networking in Europe. If we wish to learn from other countries as well, this will also require new forms of dialogue at European and international level. In doing so, we will not only be promoting our own future, but also living up to our responsibility in a larger, global context.

1 www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/gizstudie
How do we want to live together?
Introduction to topic I: „How do we want to live together?“

Prof. Dr. Sabine Walper, academic coordinator topic I

The question of „How do we want to live together?“ is one that spreads its net widely. It concerns the design of our social interaction in the close context of private bonds and relationships, and in the context of moderately sized neighbourhoods, interaction between the old and young alike and other social groups in our diverse society, the relationship between citizens and the state and – beyond national boundaries – the international relationships in which Germany is bound. It refers to modified guiding principles for this interaction, in which participation plays a decisive role, and becomes increasingly important in view of changing general conditions for our coexistence, which can be attached to economic disparities, changes to the professional world of work and global networking. It relates to new opportunities and potential as well as risks arising from demographic changes. And it is oriented towards all aspects of this interlinking, which are significant for individual well-being and health, for social cohesion and commitment in society, for the enjoyment of learning and productivity. The answers to this question have a decisive influence on the quality of life which we achieve in our country.

In six working groups, a total of 53 experts dealt with different facets of this topic and produced more than 80 proposals for politicians to act on. The objective of these proposals for action was to uphold, strengthen and make even better use of the high potential for public spiritedness in Germany, to improve exchange and cooperation in the person-to-person and collective sphere, to reduce tensions and burdens in the private and public space as well as to prevent incorrect developments. Six topic areas spread widely across the spectrum form the centre of attention:

Initially, it is a matter of how families can be strengthened and frictional losses can be avoided in the coordination of different areas of life as a means for creating the preconditions for sustainable and supportive relations between parents and children, between the generations and within couples. What is important here is to make it easier for the central activities of families to succeed, since this derives benefits not only for the family members but also for our society as a whole. We also address the question of coexistence between the generations on a social level in order to make better use of the potential for longer life expectancy as a means of benefitting individuals and society, as well as take account of the risks of impairment to health in old age, how it is possible to guarantee integration into caring, supportive communities and how structures can be created which facilitate the encounter, exchange and cooperation between young and old. When it comes to the fault line represented by heterogeneous standards, social disparities and virtual spaces which are difficult to monitor, we look at how criminality can be effectively curtailed and prevented in marginal areas of society, in the public space and on the Internet, in order to guarantee security. And, with an eye on strengthening political and social participation, we address the opportunities and limits of citizens’ participation and suggest processes which can guarantee citizens receive greater transparency and can exert more influence over political decisions, as well as measures in the social area which create suitable conditions for social commitment by broad social classes. Last but not least, we have looked into the issue of how our self-image of Germany can be readjusted in a constructive way, in order to build more effectively on the foundations of historical developments in freedom and democracy, as well as constructively anchoring the diversity of our society, which has come about due to earlier and current immigration, within the way that we see ourselves. This involves addressing a topic with regard to the position of Germany within Europe, which is ultimately considered with even broader perspectives when looking at the way that other countries see Germany from outside. It is important to involve this viewpoint systematically in business and politics, as well as using
it and developing it further: by intensifying economic and political cooperation within which the social strengths of Germany can also be mobilised, by specifically promoting foreign-policy strategic ability and better communicating the changed role of Germany in the international context.

The suggested actions for the various topic areas contain a series of common approaches. In many cases, promoting exchange and cooperation on all social levels occupies a foreground position as a means of communicating different perspectives, strengthening solidarity and exploiting synergy effects. There are similar goals in those proposals that aim to achieve improved coordination between actors in politics and in practice, such as by setting up a family summit in order to optimise consultation on measures of relevance to the family. Often, the pigeonholing imposed by political boundaries stands in the way of developing suitable cooperative solutions in complex, multi-faceted areas of activity. This problem was discussed in several working groups and is picked up in our proposal for changing the Federal Budgetary Regulations to give specific incentives to inter-ministerial cooperation. This issue of improving cooperative structures is not only important in shaping our internal relationships, but also in designing our external relationships, for example, when it is a matter of expanding international economic cooperation activities in a specific way as a means of countering the shortage of skilled specialists and developing a holistic strategy for integral measures in an attempt to meet the needs of our country just as much as those of the economic and social systems – a proposal which several working groups support.

In all areas, it is decisive to have a secure knowledge base for effective action. In view of the changing areas of activity, this knowledge has to be put to the test time and time again or – when new challenges come along and innovative solutions are being looked for – such knowledge has to be acquired in the first place. Above all, it must also be communicated to the corresponding professions. Here, academics are called on to a particular extent as partners in cooperation with politicians and those working „at the coal face“. Accordingly, several proposals for actions relate to the issue of professionalization improvement as well as specific expansion of practical research and anchoring such research within institutions as a means of achieving a self-supporting science base in the long term.

This very clearly affects the area of prevention, which was addressed in many working groups as a means of anticipating the development of problematical situations which are often costly and difficult to „repair“. This applies to the prevention of problems within families, to health prevention, which is decisive for professional integration and preventing health problems in old age, as well as to favourable strategies for avoiding violence and criminality. However, successful preventative strategies do not always fail as a result of inadequate insights into the effectiveness of measures, but are also faced with the difficulty of only being used locally and temporarily. We must pay greater attention to setting tried-and-tested approaches in stone whilst following specific strategies to scale them up on a wide front as standard offerings. This requirement also runs through the working groups in the other topic strands of this Experts’ Dialogue as a common theme.

Finally, in many areas it is important to change perspectives and permanently adopt new ways of looking at and appraising things in order to visualise potential and orient ourselves towards achievable goals. This implies working on the image of family welfare, on pictures of age, on recognition for political and social commitment, on the appreciation of diversity and on our reputation as a committed and reliable international partner with a sustainable economy. Image policy alone as an isolated strategy is not that self-supporting pillar on which we can build the further development of our society, but in concert with the numerous practical measures aimed at improving our coexistence, it does support the sustainability of our country.
I.1. The individual and society

Working group I.1.a) „Family“

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr. Sabine Walper. With: Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Gerd Brudermüller, Prof. Dr. Jörg M. Fegert, Dr. Karin Jurczyk, Prof. Dr. Hanno Kube, Prof. Dr. Bernhard Nauck, Prof. Dr. Susanne Stürmer, Prof. Dr. Haci-Halil Uslucan, Dr. Ilse Wehrmann

Families undertake decisive activities for the well-being, personal development and performance capability of their members, and thus also for the productive further development of society. This is particularly applicable to the younger generation, the physical and mental health and skills development of which is centrally determined by the quality of family life as well as the devotion, care and stimulation experienced in this context. Such activities are provided in a wide variety of private ways of life in which people reliably take responsibility for one another, especially across the generations. However, given the fault lines between professional, schooling and family requirements, in view of economic risks and as a corollary to increasing instability in relationships between partners, it is in many cases only with great difficulty that family life can be shaped positively. These activities to shape families for their members and society should be appreciated more highly. They must not be allowed to entail long-term poverty risks. Future-oriented policy for families must take account of the growing demands on partnership and parenthood, changing requirements in the world of work and education as well as the social, cultural and religious diversity of families in Germany. It is faced with the task of shaping forms of family life that promote development under common public and private responsibility. For this purpose, it requires the cooperation of numerous actors, even across departmental boundaries. Last but not least, it demands a secure knowledge of the effect of its instruments, in order to allow tried-and-tested instruments to be used effectively and on a wide scale.

The actions suggested below have the following intentions:

- To support families in their diversity through improved correlation and coordination with other areas of life, as a result of which concepts of life involving children, active fatherhood and caring for needy family members will become easier
- To improve financial resources for families and prevent (child) poverty
- To secure the knowledge base and specialist expertise for professional and low-threshold support of families
- To support sustainable relationships between partners throughout the spectrum of circumstances in life, life phases and family constellations
- To improve the developmental and education opportunities of children on a broad basis so that social inequalities become less important and the needs of different groups can be effectively taken into account

Specific proposals relating to the welfare of the older generation are dealt with in the „Coexistence between the generations“ section (from page 26 onwards).

Family policy is shaped within the context of different political areas that influence family life. It is important to coordinate these policies better as a means of avoiding disadvantages for families. Families need a secure economic basis, and time to shape their family life positively. Access to the job market and to appropriately remunerated work is correspondingly important – a problem for mothers, especially if they are bringing up children on their own. How much time you can spend with the family is dictated by the demands of the job market and depends on working conditions being designed to take account of families; it is not just flexible
working hours that are of significant importance here, but also a family-oriented company culture. Access to time is also conditional on the success of work sharing with a greater spirit of partnership within the family, something which is increasingly wished for by women and men alike, but can scarcely be achieved. Last but not least, families require a network of local infrastructures that is tailored to their requirements, in which these infrastructures are easily accessible and provide effective support.

Over recent years, a broad slew of measures have been initiated aimed to provide „early intervention“ above all to young families in precarious and troubled circumstances in life, bringing together social services as well as actors in the health system as a means of doing this. These initiatives are ground breaking because different actors are obliged to cooperate and the measures developed in this context are subjected to intensive evaluation. It is important to pursue this path on a broad basis, also beyond the early family phase. For one thing, this includes pushing ahead with the availability, further development and use of tried-and-tested resources for universal prevention with the objective not only of reinforcing parental skills but also, and to an increasing extent, addressing questions regarding constructive handling of problems between partners. For another thing, further intensive work is required on taking account of the specific requirements for selective prevention in target groups that are carrying a particular burden. One possibility in this context concerns a more intensive and more standardised professionalization of specialists in family education such as that currently being promoted as part of the government’s „Opportunities for parents are opportunities for children“ through the qualification of parent companions in order to make better use of early education opportunities for children within the family context. At the same time, interdisciplinary family research must be strengthened in this country as a means of providing those professions working with families with the basic knowledge they need, and the information required for them to take actions.

**Improved correlation and coordination between different areas of life**

**Proposal 1: Optimised coordination of family-relevant measures**

In order to make family policy more visible as a mainstream task and to put it into practice as such, it will be necessary for political measures appertaining to families to be better coordinated, and for family-relevant actors to be networked. What we need is to formulate shared family policy objectives, develop effective, consistent, mutually coordinated measures for supporting families and avoid unintentional side effects of individual activities. On the basis of experience from other countries (such as France) a formal inter-ministerial exchange should be established on the topic of family policy. For this purpose, the Federal Chancellor is setting up a standing coordination committee (State Secretary Committee) for the family. Its task is permanently to monitor the legislation passed by the Federal Government with regard to its relevance for families, and also includes estimating the consequences of laws for families and coordinating central measures for improving the situation of families.

Once a year, the Federal Chancellor issues invitations to attend a family summit organised by the Federal Government, which is prepared by the aforementioned coordination committee. The objectives of such a summit should be, firstly, to present the main aspects of measures and ideas with direct relevance to the family (e.g. also this paper) and to establish interconnections between the departments. Measures within the competence of the federal states, such as the general conditions for child day care or combining study with parenthood, should also be on the agenda. Secondly, indirect and unintentional consequences of political measures by other departments should be highlighted explicitly, reflected on and weighed up against one another; this concerns measures which are not immediately directed towards families, but which may have significant effects on them. Equally, the tasks of this family summit include concentrating, simplifying and
improving the effectiveness of family-related activities against the backdrop provided by the results of their overall evaluation. This inter-ministerial summit is supplemented by involving further relevant actors in family policy such as collective-bargaining partners, churches, academics, associations, child and youth services, local-government umbrella organisations, representatives of the federal states, etc.

In view of the current problems in families and partnerships, the coordination committee should consider the work-life-balance topic with high priority since this is one which requires particular cross-ministry cooperation due to its relevance to work and family life. An inter-ministerial working group on work-life balance will be founded for this purpose, in order to discuss measures for improving the work/life balance such as organisation of working time, limiting the requirements for continuous availability, part-time working, equality, health, equal pay, easing the burden on sensitive groups, etc. This working group includes not only the Family Ministry but above all the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS), the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi) as well as, for example, the Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF) in questions of tax regulations, the Federal Ministry of Justice (BMJ) on questions of working time and remuneration as well as the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG) on questions of health prevention and, if necessary, the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) (see also the proposal for „Family-friendly world of work“ from the Citizens’ Dialogue on this point).

Proposal 2: Federal pilot project for coordinated local time units

The importance of time as a resource in successful family life is becoming ever more apparent; consequently, emphasis should be placed on local time policy for families and a federal pilot project should be initiated in order to encourage, promote, monitor and evaluate improved mutual coordination between local time units. Relevant actors on the ground such as education authorities, child and youth services, especially in cases concerning child-care centres, service providers, retailers, transport companies, are called upon to coordinate their opening and operating hours more effectively in terms of the interests of families. However, local time policy for families can only gain traction if not only time units are coordinated in a time structure policy but also if approaches are made to tackling issues relating to infrastructure policy, geography and time, information and education policy. Actors that are firmly anchored in local government, such as local alliances for families, can play the role of key actors here and also develop participation instruments for families and other interest groups. The objective is to evaluate good practical experience and disseminate it widely so that it can be adopted into regulatory structures at local-government level.

Proposal 3: Preparation of legislative amendments of time budgets for care and support in the course of life

As a result of changed career paths and increased numbers of working mothers, the physical, emotional, mental and material care for other people within families and personal networks has become a scarce resource. To date, the existing legal frameworks have not been adapted to the fundamental change in gender, family, generation and work relationships and changed courses of life; they are fragmented, inconsistent and inadequate.²

Therefore, it is necessary to guarantee time budgets for family and community care and support extending over the entire course of life which are oriented towards equality and will neither become an obstacle to career path progression nor a cause of poverty and exclusion. The objective is to prepare legislative amendments which make it possible for both women and, in particular, men to withdraw time shares for family and
 communal care and support from a guaranteed time budget, and to enable them to link this with what is in principle an independent, safeguarded livelihood. In this way, active fatherhood, welfare for the older generation and, overall, gender equality should be reinforced as well. Entirely different legal areas are or could be affected by this; a comprehensive legal opinion will be required in order to provide an analysis of current regulations as well as working out proposals either as an omnibus law or as coordinated modifications within the corresponding areas of law. Secondly, national and international concepts and effects of life work time accounts should be compiled and recommendations issued for good practice.  

The proposal to be worked out must take account of the following dimensions: the extent of the overall budget, the flexible use of time shares for temporary leaves of absence from paid work or reduction in the same (e.g. part-time working entitlements for parents or family members who are carers), designing the overall budget as a combination of family care (as the base), voluntary caring activity, professional continuing education as well as personal time, differentiated proposals for financing modes and social safeguarding of the time budget, incentives for an equitable distribution of caring time between the sexes and interfaces to collective-bargaining regulations.

Proposal 4: Visualising gains in skills through family work

In order to flag up the skills development by men and women who take over family work for a limited time and then return to their workplace, it is proposed for a development project to be initiated in order to monitor and evaluate practical use of the instrument of the skills record. To achieve this, it will be necessary to identify employers who are prepared to use this instrument. The critical parameter to be checked in this case is the duration of the absence. The public service, with its currently existing regulations (right to reintegration, right to an equivalent workplace) serves as a good example and an area for investigation, as do exemplary companies in the free and social markets. The objective is to visualise the gain in skills through family work and to recognise this, to reduce the career setbacks caused by temporary leaves of absence, in particular for women, to capture greater potential from specialist workers as well as to oblige employers in the medium term to use such instruments with those returning to the career ladder. The Federal Employment Agency should incorporate the use of the skills record in its guidelines for placing job seekers. Professional development processes should be documented in a longitudinal design.

Promoting practical development of this kind should visualise the positive influence of temporary leaves of absence for family work on the skills development of employees. This will promote a change of perspective under which family times will not be evaluated unilaterally as a loss, but recognised as a phase of expansion and deepening of activity skills which are also professionally significant. Existing instruments for recording and evaluating skills, such as those referred to as the skills record, will be used and developed further for this purpose if necessary.
Improvement in financial resources for families

Proposal 5: Expansion of the married couple’s earnings averaging for income tax purposes to create a family’s earnings averaging scheme

The married couple’s earnings averaging for income tax purposes will be expanded into a family’s earnings averaging scheme. This corresponds to regarding the family as an earnings and consumption unit for income tax purposes. It involves dividing the family’s income by the number of family members and for the resulting fractions to be submitted for taxation purposes. This will significantly ease the burden on families due to the basic allowances and the progressive tax scales. In order to limit the fiscal effects, the splitting divisor could be less than one per family member (e.g. 0.8); in addition – also for reasons of social balance – the total splitting effect could theoretically be capped at an annual maximum amount. At the same time, the divisor should increase for each additional child (similarly to the staggered approach used in child benefit payments). At the same time, the requirements of separated families must also be taken into account.

The current income tax law is characterised by a haphazard juxtaposition of individual regulations taking account of children, which are in themselves problematical. In the family allowance system (Art. 32 para. 6 of the Income Tax Act (ESTG)), the child-related expenditure appears as consumption expenditure by the parents who are liable for income tax. The regulations on the deductibility of employment-related child care costs (Art. 9c paras. 1 and 3 of the Income Tax Act (ESTG)) redesignate child care as an obligation that is beneficial for employment. The interaction between measures is also systematically unclear.

Expanding the married couple’s earnings averaging into a family’s earnings averaging scheme would introduce the family into income tax law as a social unit for the first time, and one that is to be protected as an earnings and consumption unit (Art. 6 para. 1 of the Basic Law). The leading principle is the consideration that the joint earnings and consumption by the family unit, i.e. the discharge of social responsibility within the family, takes precedence over state participation in the income and state support through social services financed by taxation (subsidiarity principle).

Proposal 6: Poverty prevention by accompanied labour market entry for single parents

In order to counteract the significantly increased poverty risk to which the children of single mothers are exposed, the existing, successful (pilot) programmes for accompanied labour market entry by single parents should be evaluated on a comparative basis, optimised if necessary, broadened out and consolidated.

In cooperation with the employment agencies, work is underway towards providing more intensive, job-oriented advice for single parents, as well as an integrated, personalised pilot offer. As part of this pilot process, obstacles to earning such as lack of child care, unsuitable working times or lack of professional qualification for the available vacancies are examined in intensive consultation work with the mothers, in order to be able to develop strategies to sweep away these obstacles in cooperation with potential employers as well as other actors, especially in the child care sector. In a preliminary exchange of experience, pre-existing local-government strategies in this area are compared with one another in order to identify models of good practice which are suitable for broad-based implementation.
Professional and broad-based support for families

Proposal 7: Improvement of the training and continuing education that is available for specialists in family education

A central, government-sponsored and integrated learning programme (including e-learning) on the principles of family education and advice is intended to establish standards for the qualification of specialists in family education. For this purpose, a working group will be founded involving central stakeholders in family education who are involved in developing the education programme and defining the e-learning curriculum (or e-learning elements). The offer must take account of the diversity of families in all their social and cultural manifestations and the various phases of life.

It is recommended for the central e-learning curriculum to be developed through government sponsorship, e.g. by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), in which various stakeholders in family education as well as higher institutes of applied sciences and universities could be practical partners for the integrated learning phase. To date, specialists from different career groups, training courses and levels have been active in family education, most of which have been trained for activity profiles in other areas of work. They bring a variety of specialist skills to their practical work; however, additional qualification is usually required in view of their preventative mission in the area of family education. The aim of the proposed measure is to create a uniform, empirically grounded basis for the qualification of specialist personnel in the area of family education. The training would be based on the Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) training.7

Proposal 8: Intensification of interdisciplinary family research

In view of the striking lack of systematic family research, it is proposed that a research programme should be set up by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) to look into „family life and personal development“. In the longer term, independent institutes should be set up in order to represent topics in interdisciplinary family and childhood research as an analogue to international institutes, involving themselves with perspectives in family sociology and psychology, family law, developmental psychology, early childhood education research and social medicine. Junior professorships, professorships and corresponding research programmes and groups of researchers should be promoted to create an interdisciplinary family research network. One topic to be dealt with as a matter of priority would be research into and strengthening of social parenthood.8

Proposal 9: Virtual map of resources available to families

The Federal Government should instigate development of a virtual map of all resources available to families in Germany. The platform should provide information about child day care, early intervention, support possibilities, doctors, care services, administrative bodies, public authorities, therapy centres, advice services, etc. (infrastructure for families), as well as information about current topics, events, etc. Continuously updated data is of central importance in order to ensure that the platform remains up to date. Youth welfare offices, alliances for families, similar projects such as the Bremen Family Network, the action programme for multi-generational houses or the platform operated by the Statistical Office of the federal state of Baden-Württemberg, etc. should be included and assessed with regard to their structure, networking and low entry threshold.
Updating of the database must be guaranteed.

Examples of reference projects include the „Kigafinder“, an information system for displaying local child day care facilities and what they offer (www.kinderbetreuungskompass.de), as well as the FamilienWegweiser (www.familien-wegweiser.de).

**Proposal 10: Development and evaluation of a TV documentary series as a preventative measure for promoting parental child-rearing and relationship skills**

It is proposed for a TV format to be designed and evaluated (e.g. as a docuseries or short information broadcast such as „Der 7. Sinn“ (a road traffic safety broadcast shown on German TV)) as preventative measure for promoting parental child-rearing and relationship skills, which should be combined with an extensive and in-depth website. The objective is to promote parental child-rearing and relationship skills as well as a successful development of children and young people. Families are the target group.

**Proposal 11: Self-commitment by the industry to responsible and values-oriented contents in films and on television**

The film and TV industry should be invited, for example by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media or the Directors’ Conference of the State Media Authorities, to attend a round-table meeting, with participation of further actors such as the FSK (cinema) or FSF (television). The objective should be to develop a code according to which companies as well as freelancers in the film and television industry will undertake to communicate the basic values of our society and a positive view of humanity in their production of content. This code of values should go beyond the current framework which is specified by the voluntary self-controls in the cinema and TV sector as well as by the State Media Authorities (monitoring of compliance with general programme requirements, in particular with regard to infringements against legal provisions for the protection of children and young people). Similarly to the press code of the German Press Council, all phases of the genesis of the work should be covered. If possible, the code should be supplemented by a body modelled on the Press Council.

**Strengthening of partnership and marriage**

**Proposal 12: Prevention of partnership problems**

We are calling for an integrated programme comprising several building blocks in order to avoid serious partnership problems which could bring about negative consequences (e.g. restricted productivity, impaired child-rearing skills, burdening of children); this programme should include the following elements:

A widely disseminated campaign to communicate academically sound information in a generally understandable way, which can be accessed straightforwardly. Quick and easily available information can be provided by using modern, attractive media in the form of „infotainment“ offerings with the character of learning-by-play, e.g. a television series with positive communication examples close to the model. The use of printed media providing easily comprehensible information (e.g. workbook with suggestions for common discussions and exercises) and information pages on the Internet are other examples.
In addition, suitable information should be provided for couples dealing with specific questions (e.g. communication, sexuality, cooperation in child rearing, violence, etc.), such as self-help books, Internet-based resources and video series/DVDs or booklets/leaflets on particular topic areas.

Development and implementation of courses for strengthening relationships between partners similarly to the widespread offering of courses for strengthening parental child-rearing skills. This activity should focus on communicating those relationship skills which have been demonstrated through research as being of central importance for stabilising relationships within couples.

Development of a (semi-structured) special course available for young people with the intention of reflecting role models and their own future plans for family and career, as well as practising significant relationship skills (empathy, positive communication, conflict resolution). Sexual education resources could be integrated here. It should be possible to use the resources in the context of schools, vocational schools and companies. In an initial development and evaluation phase, the programme should be trialled for different target groups and, assuming the evaluation is successful, rolled out on a broad front in order to permit a differentiated analysis of effectiveness on this basis.

Proposal 13: Government information about the legal consequences of matrimony

As a means of avoiding unrealistic legal and economic expectations on marriage, and to provide partners with a basis of information in order to allow them to choose, the German Civil Code should lay down the information obligations on the government concerning the legal consequences of matrimony.

Proposal 14: Strengthening of marriage and the family – principles

Marital and family law should take account of three principles above all in the longer term: (1) When it comes to regulating private areas of life, the state is limited to core structures of equality; (2) Demanding responsibility between partners; (3) Priority of the wellbeing of children. Marital and family law should be oriented towards these principles, and it should be possible to measure all norms concerning this area of law against these principles.

These criteria should serve to guarantee the uniformity of marital and family law and to deal with distortions such as those revealed in the current regulation of post-marital maintenance. In the short term, the new regulation on reducing and placing a time limit on post-marital maintenance (Art. 1578b of the German Civil Code [BGB]) should be evaluated with regard to these principles (e.g. in respect of the transfer of responsibility to the state).

Furthermore, child support should be configured as a right of the child according to the principle of the child’s best interests, with consideration for procedural equality of treatment in child support law.

Proposal 15: Cross-sectional family-law legal opinion

A cross-sectional legal opinion should be obtained from the areas of civil law (in particular family and inheritance law), public law (e.g. public sector employment regulation), labour law, tax law, in particular with regard to the following questions:
To what extent do existing statutory regulations contradict the requirements and interest of families arising from the welfare and responsibility for children and young people as well as family members requiring care? What changes are required and what new measures are appropriate for easing the burden on family work and family life? Which regulations stand in the way of equality between marital partners or partners in a registered civil partnership, and which are beneficial (and could serve as role models for further regulations)? In addition to examining inconsistencies with regard to compatibility with families and equality of partners, the investigation should also aim to estimate the legal consequences.

Development and educational opportunities of children

Proposal 16: Expansion and quality assurance of family-related prevention

In order to systematise the various existing resources available for strengthening parental and family skills for all development phases and to ensure that child and youth services as well as family education and family advice have competent points of contact available, it is proposed, as a medium-term measure, the national centre for early intervention (NZFH) should be redesigned and expanded into a national centre for family-related assistance. The tasks of this centre include the following: carrying out prevalence studies (studies for estimating the proportion of those affected) on neglect, mistreatment and sexual abuse of children (within families); setting up a database of existing family-based preventative measures in the areas of child rearing, education, health promotion, addiction prevention as well as partnership for all phases up to when children reach young adult age; the systematic compilation of information for evaluating these programmes (e.g. in the form of meta-analyses); identifying gaps in the resources such as with regard to inclusion of fathers and immigrant families; instigating corresponding pilot projects as well as evaluating them; cooperation with child and youth services; family education and family and/or child-rearing consulting; further development of cooperative structures; and also regular reporting for the Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee on the Family and the family summit.

Proposal 17: Mentoring programmes for children of chronically ill parents (physical and mental illnesses)

As a means of counteracting the problems of children of chronically ill parents, an issue which is much more widespread than appreciated, mentoring models should be established for these children organised under the responsibility of youth welfare and coordinated with the institutions of the health system (psychiatric hospitals, maximum care hospitals). Various independent providers will be involved in establishing a standby care programme of mentors to provide specialist support in the sense of an interdisciplinary supply resource. The mentoring models should be introduced via sponsorship for pilot projects, and then possibly made into an independent assistance scheme or part of the foster care programme through a corresponding amendment of the Child and Youth Services Act (KJHG).³

If one parent becomes chronically ill, especially if this involves psychiatric illnesses, there can be temporary deficits with regard to the emotional devotion and provision for children of affected parents. Mentoring models can offer children of mentally ill parents a continuous relationship and support outside the family context. In case of need (crises, admission to clinic, etc.), there must be a possibility to provide more the support in a quick and flexible way. To this extent, professional mentoring models of this kind are an effective
alternative and offer great flexibility combined with continuity in the support for children. They fill a gap between foster placement and provision for families with mentally ill parents that may have a low entry threshold but is often inadequate.

Proposal 18: Audit „Parents as partners – family-friendly school“ as a foundation initiative

It is proposed that an audit should be set up to examine cooperation between schools and parents by means of a foundation. The objective of this would be to strengthen equality of opportunity in school by highlighting and awarding family-supporting forms of cooperation between parents and school personnel. At the same time, greater well-being of children in schools and families should be guaranteed through improved coordination and cooperation between both institutions and by strengthening the promotion of education and child-rearing skills of parents.

Schools should be motivated to work together with parents as central partners in the educational success of children. The teaching personnel should be encouraged to involve parents in a supportive role in the educational process wherever there is a need, by means of an intensive exchange. Schools should provide the general conditions for intensive parental work, i.e. creating structures and an atmosphere which permit, call for and support parental involvement in the educational development of the child, taking account of their resources and skills. The objective is to create equal educational opportunities by mobilising parents even if they themselves were not able to take part in the school life as a result of their professional situation (e.g. unfavourable working times), family situation (e.g. single parents) or language/cultural situation (e.g. families with a background of immigration) and social situation (families in poverty, families faced with particular problems). A special audit system should recognise and award efforts made by schools.

Proposal 19: Changes to Volume V of the social insurance code (SGB V) for adaptation to the Federal Child Protection Act

The objective is to standardise the exemplary, intended goals of the Federal Child Protection Act for a systematic cooperation between child and youth welfare, and the health system, in Volume V of the social insurance code (SGB V) as well. It is also intended that this should establish certainty of action and obligation for the health area and regular, transparent monitoring should be made possible. In the context of Volume SGB V of the social insurance code (SGB V), doctors must have reliable possibilities for diagnosis and intervention in cases of neglect, mistreatment of children, sexual abuse, which also include the labour costs of networking (reference is made to corresponding codes in Switzerland). The social security repayment obligation under Art. 294 a Volume V of the social insurance code (SGB V) makes no sense in the context of child abuse, and must be revoked in this regard. Furthermore, it is an objective for a uniform guideline to be developed across several doctors’ associations regarding the handling of mistreatment and neglect of children, and sexual abuse. The clarification of suspected cases of neglect, mistreatment of children and sexual abuse of children is essential for intervention in individual cases, as well as for monitoring prevalence (proportion of those affected, see suggested action 16 on page 22). These clarifications must also be activities that can be put into practice in the health system in the sense of corresponding billing codes, in particular in the in-patient area.
Proposal 20: Stocktaking and evaluation of offers for families in transitional separation situations (research and continuing education requirement)

In view of the increasing divorce and separation rates, as well as the not inconsiderable proportion of step families, it is suggested that the range of measures available to these families for facilitating the family transitional situation and safeguarding the well-being of the child should be evaluated and possible gaps in the resources filled. This includes both an assessment of available resources and an evaluation study into the question of what proportion of families, in which situations of need and under which regional conditions can be reached by which resources. This should be researched by a representative, systematic survey both of affected parents (evaluation study) and relevant advice centres, course providers as well as experts. Corresponding steps should be planned and taken in cooperation with the major stakeholder organisations in the area of family guidance (Federal Conference for Educational Counselling [bke], German Working Group for Youth and Marriage Counselling [dajeb], Evangelical Central Institute for Family Guidance [ezil]), in order to tackle the special requirements on families in the separation and step family context more effectively.10

Overarching proposals

Proposal 21: Modification of the Federal Budgetary Regulations to establish incentive models for government departments to be involved in co-financing of interdisciplinary projects

In addition to the departmental funds, funds will be provided from a direct „incentive pot“ for financing projects with cross-sectional topics if the projects are financed jointly across departmental boundaries. The objective is to create incentives for interdepartmental cooperation on cross-sectional topics and co-financing of interdisciplinary projects. In addition, shares of the department research budget affecting such cross-sectional topics should be provided subject to the condition of co-financing and co-responsibility by at least one additional department.

Proposal 22: Comprehensive integration („scaling-up“) of programmes by the Federal Government through uniform national guidelines on development, evaluation and implementation

The Federal Government should develop uniform national guidelines for its support programmes, according to which the principles of each programme should include evaluation and the goal of each successful programme must be widespread introduction. Exceptions must be possible where impulses for innovative practical development are concerned. The guidelines should be concerned to avoid duplicated structures and to provide for sustainable integration of the programme elements given positive evaluation, as a precondition for funding. At the same time, coordination with initiatives by federal states should be ensured.
The working group would like to thank the following experts for their valuable suggestions: Prof. Dr. Kurt Hahlweg, Professor for Clinical Psychology, Psychotherapy and Diagnostics at Braunschweig University of Applied Sciences.

For more information about this, see also the citizens' proposal „Family-friendly world of work“: 10-Wie-Leben/Einzelsicht/vorschlaege_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=5103

For more information about this, see also proposal 4, „Working life rule - oriented towards phases of life“, of working group II.3.b „Working in the context of demographic change“, page 122.

For more information about this, see also citizens' proposal „Part-time offensive, part time for all and on all levels“: DE/20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzelsicht/vorschlaege_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=13204.

For more information about this, see also citizens' proposal „Tax relief for single parents“: 20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzelsicht/vorschlaege_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=6397.

For more information about this, see also citizens' proposal: „Providing better support for single mothers and fathers“: DE/20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzelsicht/vorschlaege_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=11043.


For more information about this, see also citizens' proposal: „Protecting and strengthening alternative family and partnership models“: node.html?cms_idIdea=8103.

For more information about this, see also citizens' proposal: „Appreciating and supporting children and young people as family carers“: html?cms_idIdea=17111.

For more information about this, see also citizens' proposal: „Providing better targeted support for families, single-parent and patchwork families“: html?cms_idIdea=8103.
“Coexistence between the generations” working group

Working group I.1.b) „Coexistence between the generations“

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Andreas Kruse. With: Prof. Dr. Rolf Heinze, Prof. Dr. Thomas Klie, Ton Koper, Prof. Dr. Drs. h.c. Ursula Lehr, Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Pott, Dr. Almut Satrapa-Schill, Loring Sittler, Prof. Dr. Gabriela Stoppe

Demographic change, with a growing proportion of older people, is primarily discussed in our society in the sense of a burden on social security systems, and the conclusion is drawn from this burden that there will be growing conflicts between the generations. At the same time, however, this is to overlook the fact that a growing proportion of older people also means an increase in knowledge, productivity and creativity. Furthermore, our society can present numerous examples of successful cooperation between different generations. There are no signs of a generational conflict in our country. Instead, everyday life is more characterised by a remarkable solidarity between the generations – and this applies to relations both within and outside families. Upholding existing forms of coexistence and cooperation between the generations, as well as promoting new ones – both in the world of work and in civil society – is to be regarded as a significant social task. In this context, the further development of corresponding general conditions must be seen as a job of political work. Strengthening the local level is especially important here. „Strengthening“ refers to an expansion in the competence to shape structures as well as a growth in resources that local government needs in order actually to put these shaping competences into practice.

An important factor in maintaining and promoting coexistence as well as cooperation between the generations is represented by the social communication of images of forms of life and skills that are as differentiated as possible, as well as the attitudes to life held by the different generations. After all, dismantling clichés and stereotypes is a central prerequisite for perceiving the personality and strengths of a person in a differentiated way. In this context, it is particularly important that locations should be maintained, created and used in the living environment as places where the generations can meet and cooperate. This produces differentiated, mutual perceptions from the cooperation between generations. Aspects that should be mentioned here include not only intergenerational projects in associations, churches and other organisations, but also intergenerational projects in citizens’ centres springing forth from civil society. Generational tandems should be referred to with regard to the world of work.

The topic of generational solidarity also impinges on questions of generational fairness – not only between the generations but also within them. It should be remembered that rigid age barriers – in the world of work and in the individual areas of engagement within civil society – often lead to people being unable to apply their forces and strengths to the extent that they would like to, and would be able to; it should be remembered that our society would profit by a significant extent from these contributions. This is the context of the requirement for rigid age barriers to be replaced by flexible transitions so that people who wish and are able to work longer are thus afforded additional options for action.

Particularly with regard to older generations, it is necessary to reflect critically on social and institutional practices which make it harder to uphold a socially committed life with shared responsibility. Age is a phase of life in which people possess strengths that are of great value for the individual (in the sense of a contribution to the quality of life) as well as to society (in the sense of a significant portion of human capital). Items to be referred to here include the differentiated systems of knowledge and action strategies of older people concerning not just specific professional and non-professional areas of activity and interests, but also fundamental life questions. Our society must address older people as people who are acting with co-responsibility to a much greater extent, in order to utilise these resources of age. The contribution made by older generations to the cohesion between generations – and thus also in our society – must be brought much more effectively into the heart of social and political discourse.
Aging is a life-long process. The physical, mental and socio-communicative resources for health and activity in old age are significantly influenced by education, health promotion and prevention, material security and participation in all phases of the course of life. For this reason, all measures aiming to reduce discrimination in the areas referred to are of the utmost importance, including with respect to a personally fulfilled and satisfying life in old age in which responsibility is shared. In this context, it is also necessary to strengthen prevention and rehabilitation significantly in all phases of life. With regard to prevention, particular importance must also be ascribed to condition-oriented and not just behaviour-oriented prevention measures in order to reduce the consequences of social inequality.

Prevention as well as the use of sound diagnostic and therapeutic strategies are also important in view of mental illnesses (reference is made here above all to depressive conditions and dementias), many of which are not correctly diagnosed and treated: This results in the individual in question suffering significant impairments with regard to their quality of life, performance ability and commitment. It is necessary to ensure appropriate health care provision which is convincing from a technical point of view and appropriate for the needs of older people; here too, there is an urgent requirement for images of age to be corrected which assume that old people lack the ability to change. Considerations on the further development of structures for provision and quality of provision must take account of the significantly greater integration of age-related insights into training and continuing education programmes. Furthermore, there is a need for the health care professions to be reorganised in order to be able to guarantee efficient health care provision oriented towards the good of all in the future as well. It is necessary to respond to the growing demands in the areas of assistance, participation and personal contact with new professional profiles.

Even at the ultimate extremities of life from health and existential perspectives, human dignity remains the guiding principle for all actions. The same applies during this last phase in human life as in the preceding phases: Human dignity must be realised, must be able to „live“, meaning that the social spaces must be designed in such a way that open and participatory communication can take place within them, in a way which understands human beings in their uniqueness and addresses them accordingly.

### New role of age

#### Proposal 1: Campaign for coexistence between the generations

The goal is to communicate differentiated and realistic images of the different generations in various situations in life. In this way, age-related clichés should be dismantled, existing forms of coexistence and exchange between the generations rendered visible, promoted, and new forms encouraged.

It is proposed that there should be a multimedia campaign spanning several years comprising the elements of mass communication (TV, posters, advertisements, etc.), personal communication (including through media, companies or organisations of civil society) and cooperative structures between the Federal Government, federal states and local government; this campaign should address the different age groups – children, teenagers, young adults, older people – in a different way according to their particular life references (family, world of work, leisure time, etc.).
Proposal 2: Sweeping away obstacles to permit a longer working life

The Federal Government is initiating a round table with the collective-bargaining partners to discuss the question of increasing flexibility in age limits (e.g. as part of a further development of collective-bargaining agreements). Those employees who are able to and wish to work longer should be given the opportunity to do so. Making the age limit more flexible should go hand in hand with reinforcing sovereignty of time and action by older employees: They should be given the opportunity to be involved in the decision regarding the working time volume that they want to commit to each year in close cooperation with the company, as well as regarding what their work involves, which should be optimally adapted to their resources and skills. The Civil Service Law should be modified in such a way as to make this flexibilisation of the age limit also a perspective available to civil servants. The possibilities of additional earnings should be expanded with regard to the receipt of basic provision in old age.

Flexibilisation of the age limits in the world of work is an important step in view of the major individual differences with regard to physical and mental performance. Flexibilisation of the age limit in the upwards direction could reduce the strain on pension insurance in such a way as to make it possible for those employees who have been obliged to leave their working life early as a result of significant health impairments to receive a full pension – which would simultaneously contribute to intra-generational fairness. Generational tandems in which older and younger workers cooperate closely must be strengthened. “Sabbatical regulations” must be introduced to a greater extent.¹

Proposal 3: Strategies for implementing technological instruments for self-determined living and participation in a familiar environment

Demographic change is leading to an increased requirement for sociotechnical solutions which permit safe living in a familiar environment for as long as possible. This is an example of how provision is transferred to the domestic environment to an ever-increasing extent. Numerous age-appropriate assistance systems will be required for this. Welfare technologies are thus regarded as a future sector which still has to be opened up. In this field over recent years, the Federal Government has promoted various projects for technically supported living („Ambient Assisted Living“/AAL), amongst other things through the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), although none of these has yet surpassed the status of research and development projects, and there is no coordination of content between the sponsorship measures.

In order for the necessary interfaces to potential areas of use to function, new forms of cooperation must be developed between housing associations, social and health services, the communication economy as well as social service providers and insurance companies. Technical assistance systems must ultimately be included in the catalogue of services of insurance companies and nursing care insurance funds. However, this path will only be taken if there is an initiative from the Federal government extending beyond the current strategic proposals for reforming nursing care insurance.

What is required is an implementation strategy on a national level, that is practically oriented, reflects ethical principles initially involving a stocktaking exercise („SWOT analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats“) of the current situation in homecare and eHealth (electronic devices for medical provision) in Germany. Following the associated process of joint fact-finding (clarifying the facts through consensus) and a shared understanding of the problem, the next step will be to formulate specific action proposals. In this context, it might be possible to pursue the basic concept of caring communities, which are intended to
combine informal help (for example in the neighbourhood) with resources from professional services in the local-government area. This should also include regular innovation monitoring as well as innovation partnerships which could start in the form of „public/private partnerships“.

Monitoring and evaluation must always take account of the perspective of the consumers, in particular the effects on health-related quality of life (health services research).

Proposal 4: Avoidance of discrimination on the basis of age in legislation

The Common Ministerial Rules of Procedure (GGO) have already established equality between men and women as a „consistent guiding principle“ in Art. 2. Now, it is important to supplement this existing guiding principle with a second one: Avoiding discrimination on grounds of age. The new wording of Art. 2 of the Common Ministerial Rules of Procedure (GGO) should thus read:

„The equality of women and men as well as avoidance of discrimination on grounds of age are consistent guiding principles and should be promoted by all political, standardising and administrative measures carried out by the Federal Ministries in their respective areas.“

Discrimination against older people starts with correspondingly inconsiderate language and continues in the form of unjustified age limits and age-related special regulations or impositions. It is thus necessary to ensure that such practices are stopped in legislation.

The problem of age limits in the body of law identified in the 6th Report on Ageing must be examined from the perspective of age discrimination. Consistent measures must be taken to promote non-discriminatory legal practice by the Federal Government and federal state authorities, and to counteract the widespread application of across-the-board age limits which are imposed above all in insurance law and with regard to granting loans.

Promotion of mental and physical health, prevention, rehabilitation

Proposal 5: Strengthening of prevention

Mental and physical health is closely intertwined. Healthy aging starts from early childhood. An extensive, long-term strategy of prevention and health promotion is proposed, which should contain several elements and take account of social inequalities:

a) Topic-related communication with the objectives: (1) Maintaining and promoting physical, mental and cognitive age and aging-appropriate skills as well as (2) Maintaining and promoting an independent, socially integrated and self-responsible conduct of life with the main emphases on movement (promoting physical activity at all ages, maintaining and promoting mobility and independence), nutrition (nutrition according to need, improving dietary provision, avoiding incorrect nutrition) and mental health (maintaining and promoting, ensuring social integration and participation for subjective well-being, improving resource-oriented early diagnosis of mental and physical functional impairments) as well as cognitive training (mental activities and life-long learning).
b) **Academic underpinning and quality assurance** with the objective of establishing evidence-based, effective and efficient prevention and health promotion.

c) **Improvement in the general conditions** with the objectives: (1) Creation of transparent bases for action and (2) Establishing a continuous dialogue between practitioners, academics and politicians.

The target audience for this is not just the general public but above all those people who are active in medical and non-medical provision (housing, transport, etc.), as well as social groups and institutions (self-help through to social insurance providers), academics working in prevention research, quality assurance and evaluation as well as decision-makers in academic, political and economic spheres.²

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## Proposal 6: Coordinated specialist health care provision and monitoring (cure) as well as services to support families, households and individuals (care) must be highlighted, differentiated according to the law governing benefits and expanded in terms of infrastructure

User-oriented and efficient provision for people who are reliant on support, and monitoring of them, firstly demand well-coordinated cooperation between the health care professions – from medicine and therapy through to specialist care (cure) – and, secondly, support for families and households in their everyday course of life and promotion of their social participation (care). The tasks of the health care professions include not only prevention, rehabilitation and treatment but also palliative care.

It is thus proposed that the **cure area** should be grouped together in the meaning described above under **statutory health insurance law (GKV law)**, which means that the control of medical, health profession and rehabilitation support will be merged. On the other hand, the **care area is to be independently regulated** and integrated more strongly into family, neighbourhood and local-government contexts. Only in this way can the growing importance of local and district approaches gain traction in supporting people who are reliant on care.

The partial integration of nursing care insurance into statutory health insurance appears to be a significant perspective. It ought to go hand in hand with a merger between care services (domestic economy, social support, assistance) and those of participation. The efforts to create a benefits law on participation would be compatible in terms of content and timing.

The federal states and **health insurance companies** are called upon to improve the **general infrastructure conditions for geriatrics, gerontological psychiatry as well as rehabilitation** and to ensure comprehensive medical/rehabilitative provision.

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## Proposal 7: Reassignment of the health professions

Social, structural and epidemiological developments, as well as demographic change, are demanding changes to competences and professional roles.

Guaranteeing as long a life as possible in the domestic environment whilst making use of technical means of assistance and electronic support systems is becoming just as important as staying healthy, prevention and rehabilitation into very old age. This is creating new career models and modified job profiles in the curative area, as well as inducing changes of content in education, training and, above all, continuing education.
Life-long learning and preparing for cooperative action between health care professions in everyday working life must form the basis of training right from the outset. Clearly described, differentiated (academic) training courses and professional qualifications in line with European requirements will make it easier to attract young people.

The following measures are proposed on a national level:

- **Revision of regulations in professional and social law as well as the law governing benefits and liability** (e.g. general health care legislation with regulations on tasks and activity areas, including in the sense of reserved and primary activities, and in the relationship between activities), with creation of a consistent regulation governing health care professions with regard to professional law.

- **Calling of a (professional health care summit** with the objective of opening up a dialogue process, in the course of which new career models, questions of interdisciplinary cooperation, modified requirements on education, training and continuing education, development of interdisciplinary guidelines can be discussed and the necessary steps for implementation of them can be agreed.

- **Inclusion of gerontology, geriatrics and gerontological psychiatry as mandatory subjects in the education, training and continuing education of doctors and other health professions.**

- **Raising the profile of professional activities and training in the care sector.** Coordinated structuring, recognition and promotion of these professions could be initiated through the Federal Employment Agency and, possibly, the Conference of Ministers for Labour and Social Affairs of the federal states. This should take account of the variety of assistance professions which have been regulated in a diverse range of ways at federal state level so far. One example is the range of training and professions under the heading of „service assistant in the social and health care sector”, which provides a means of access for young people with weaker social and educational skills to the first job market in this sector.

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**Proposal 8: Development of a national dementia plan**

In addition to the establishment of the Centre of Competence for Dementia and the promotion of fundamental research at the German Centre for Neurodegenerative Illnesses (DZNE), measures should be taken which will immediately be felt by those affected and will make the social component of this illness a matter of public record. It is proposed that the Federal Government should set the following goals and measures in a national dementia plan, and should ensure that they are achieved:

a) Promotion of understanding for and acceptance of dementia and of ethical discourse, including suggestions on prevention and combatting of discrimination/stigmatisation.

b) Promotion of the readiness to solve the challenges associated with dementia by showing solidarity. This should involve undertaking demonstrations and making developments by way of example in cases of dementia, to indicate how we intend to deal with (chronic) illness, disability and vulnerability in our individualised, fast-paced society with its orientation towards performance; furthermore, it is important to examine how social participation can be encouraged.

c) Improvement in the provision for people with dementia and coordination between actors.

d) Examining the legal evaluation of capacity for consent and the importance of the living will for people with dementia; new version of Art. 832 of the German Civil Code (BGB) (duty of supervision) as well as the application under social law of the terms or concepts of illness and disability, taking the example of dementia.
e) Interdisciplinary health services research including prevention on the topic of dementia, as well as improved coordination between support programmes.

f) Different forms of living for people with dementia should be made possible and given equality of treatment under the area of law governing social benefits.

Coexistence of all generations as a social challenge

Proposal 9: Strengthening of local structures

Local government, and in particular the local level, have a central role to play in terms of the coexistence between the generations. Without being given additional competences and resources, local government will not be able to fulfil the growing tasks of maintaining and safeguarding favourable living conditions for the various generations, or able to promote and guarantee care for young and old people. The measures for strengthening local power to shape policy include:

- Planning competences and instruments for infrastructure development in the area of healthcare, prevention and health promotion as well as care (e.g. expansion of the German Federal Land Utilisation Ordinance to include the impact assessment and provision with care institutions according to need)
- Statutory integration of obligatory local government involvement in the tasks of care and case management (e.g. care consulting and care centres) as well as their financing, in order to safeguard and promote efficiently structured help in individual cases, and sponsorship of cooperation partners
- Examination of the possibilities for a strengthened, cross-sector „social space orientation“ of the social contribution law, in the area of participation and care as well
- Consistent modification of the applicable social contribution laws with the objective of dismantling mistaken incentives which promote in-patient forms of care (putting into practice the policy that out-patient care should take precedence over in-patient care, which has already been regulated in law)
- Easing of the financial burden on local government in the area of integration assistance and care through a Participation Benefits Act – with the inclusion of people with dementia
- Exemplary promotion of intelligently linking together „integrated provision“ through professional help in the health, social and residential spheres, with neighbourhood-related forms of assistance and engagement from citizens involving new technical assistance systems („mixture of professionals, citizens and technology“).

Proposal 10: Caring communities and welfare mix

Caring communities are found in local government, and constituted on local level. They are made up of families, neighbourhoods and people with a sense of civic engagement, who share responsibility in providing support for families or individuals, as well as in disseminating offers within local communities.

Networked provision to all generations in the residential neighbourhood will play an even greater role in future. The dovetailing of different forms of assistance and support should be promoted in this way, while rigid sector boundaries should be loosened up, and different professions networked together. Major opportunities could be derived from the cooperation between a social services actor, a cost bearer (health and nursing care insurance company) and the housing association, since this method will make it possible to strengthen the
formation of networks, which is required in any event. Implementation of neighbourhood-related systems of provision goes hand in hand with the goal of permitting living and dying in a familiar environment.

This results in several possible courses of action for the Federal Government:

- Round table with local government, welfare associations, churches, housing associations, etc. to examine the question of whether much closer cooperation is possible between full-time and voluntary workers.
- Launching support programmes such as the „Social City“ programme which support corresponding initiatives. The topic of „Promoting caring communities“ should be made a major topic in conversations with representatives of cities and districts.
- Initiation and financing of a nationwide support programme for „self-caring“ communities and local authorities, as well as in interdisciplinary research project. This will involve not only planning approaches oriented towards the social space, but also neighbourhood management and effective care/case management. The sponsorship and research orders should relate to differently structured regions: East/west, city/country as well as different network types and social milieus.

Proposal 11: Evaluated pilot project time bank/local-government points of contact for engagement to civil society („citizens‘ centres“)

A pilot project by the Federal Government is proposed, involving support for a time bank over an initial period of five years in five local government areas. This involves examining how time banks can be linked with cooperative models. Experience with time banks in Germany and abroad (above all in Italy, USA, Switzerland) should be taken into account in the sponsorship conditions. Models must be found which offer greater security than is normally possible for small associations – by means of a national guarantee or guarantees from major charitable associations, which benefit from a high level of trust, and are actually in a position to guarantee it.

People who have free time resources and wish to make these available to other people pay in, while people who are dependent on the provision of time (such as young couples who are building up a family or bringing up children and need to integrate their working and family lives, or family members who are carers and also in employment) can withdraw time. Such time accounts are intended not only for people of young adult age, middle age and old age. It would also be a good sign for the link between generations if children and young people would also take part in such time accounts – whether by paying in or making withdrawals.

The time bank will be run online by means of a computer programme provided by the Federal Government. As well as this, each local government area would have a defined point of contact in a „citizens‘ centre“ based on existing structures. Depending on the situation on the ground, the „citizens‘ centre“ could be an existing multi-generation house, the place of business of an association promoting not-for-profit and voluntary activities, the premises of the Federal Employment Agency, etc.

The project will be evaluated and appraised on an on-going basis over the entire five-year period. The objective is to achieve a nationwide rollout with one time bank in each local government area, each of which is networked to the others, after the five years have elapsed.
Proposal 12: Networking of platforms for engagement by citizens

The Federal Government should encourage the existing platforms for engagement by citizens to achieve greater networking with one another. This will support them to achieve a higher level of awareness. There should be a special search category for cross-generational projects on all platforms so that all the individuals in particular who are keen to become involved, as well as young people, will find it easier to identify the possibilities available locally for them to put their engagement into practice. This should also strengthen the dialogue between generations.

It is necessary to guarantee better knowledge management for the success indicators and exchange of experience between engagement projects of the same or similar type; corresponding meetings between projects should be encouraged in public or private terms. Local platforms are especially desirable, in particular on local government websites. Above all, the objective of networking is to strengthen communal, cross-generational engagement on the ground.

1 For more information about this, see also proposal 3 „Preparing legislative amendments for time budgets for care and support in the course of life“ of working group I.1a „Family“, page 16, as well as proposals 6 „Hiring new older workers: strengthening business incentives“, page 123 and 10 „Initiating a broad dialogue on demographics“ of working group II.3 b) „Working in demographic change“, page 125.
2 For more information about this, see also citizens‘ proposal: „Worry-free family life is important for us“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=14836.
I.2. Citizens and the state

Working group I.2.a) „Criminality and security“

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr. Britta Bannenberg. With: Honey Deihiimi, Christian Horn, Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Friedrich Lösel, Prof. Dr. Bernd-Dieter Meier, Prof. Dr. Herbert Scheithauer, Prof. Dr. Herbert Schubert, Thomas Weber, Prof. Dr. Andreas Zick

The trend in criminality, including youth criminality which is of particular concern to the general public, has been on the decline for more than 10 years. It is probable that this trend will continue in line with demographic development. Over the same period, registered incidents of youth violence have risen considerably, bucking the trend, and it is likely that only part of this rise is due to an increase in the recording of incidents. Even though the rise now appears to be flattening out, the level is still high. Although Germany is a relatively safe country in international comparison, certain trends in violence do call for preventative and repressive action. Structurally speaking, a considerable portion of the violent phenomena can be traced back to young male offenders from problematic social backgrounds (partially, but not only, ethnic in nature). Unusually serious acts such as multiple killings in public, killing sprees in schools as well as similar actions by adult offenders in other locations, suicide bombings and terrorist attacks are extremely rare, but cannot be ruled out in future either. The problem with these acts lies in the traumatisation effect induced by the high number of victims, deep-seated insecurity amongst (potential) victim groups, loss of confidence amongst the population and copy-cat effects. The development of ideological anti-group violence in the public and semi-public arena, as well as acts of violence that express a general rejection of social norms, are things which call for our continued attention. In certain urban areas, there is a risk of increasing social conflict, social inequality and the unfavourable development of risk groups, hand-in-hand with declining financial resources possessed by state institutions. Also, we must not lose sight of extreme risks such as a collapse of the electrical power supply or the financial market, even if such occurrences appear rather improbable. Equally, it is necessary to consider the prospect of massive and destructive cyber attacks on important institutions of society. There is a rising trend in criminal activities of all kinds relating to the Internet (fraud, data attacks, threats, radicalisation, incitements to violence, child pornography, cyber bullying), and it seems likely that there will be a steep rise in such cases over the next few years. Proper pursuit of corruption and financial criminality is being neglected, and this neglect entails various risks (loss of confidence in politics, institutions and the criminal justice system; further social division and radicalisation; increasing readiness by parts of the population to protest and use violence).

It is already the case that early action and prevention of crime are being widely applied in practice. Numerous preventative measures are being taken to respond to the complex causes of various criminal phenomena – although some of these measures lack coordination, they include strengthening and supporting families; education of young children; school measures against violence, aggression, developing addictions; combined measures in particular urban areas relating to urban planning and strengthening of social cohesion; specific measures such as against right-wing violence. From the perspective of (effectiveness) research, many interconnections have not been clarified in detail. However, there is basically more of a problem with implementation rather than recognition (e.g. preference for unevaluated measures, lack of quality assurance in undertaking measures, lack of implementation structures, coordination of strategies and implementation of measures for specific target groups). Typical and rather harmful „knee-jerk reactions“ by politicians need to be questioned in detail. Focussing strongly on individual and particularly headline-grabbing incidents of (violent) criminality, with spontaneous suggestions under the pressure to act, should be replaced by preventative and repressive long-term strategies arrived at through careful consideration.
Five topics for action can be defined:

1. It is necessary to examine how social cohesion, commitment to norms and broadly based consensus on norms can be established. In addition to the demand for civil courage and strengthening social capital, it is also necessary to improve protection and support for victims.
2. Existing insights into criminal prevention (particularly during childhood and youth) must be developed further, and implemented effectively above all else.
3. Radicalisation and development of criminality in certain urban areas must be counteracted in order to avoid the development of socially dislocated urban districts. This concerns, for example, areas suffering from high criminality, high fear of criminality with segregational tendencies, youth violence and pronounced uncivilised behaviour, problems of an ethnic character through to manifestations of organised criminality. Particular efforts must be made to counteract criminal careers in these milieus.
4. The public space (e.g. urban areas, public squares and locations) is faced with questions regarding design to staunch criminality, to reduce the opportunity for criminal offences and to promote social cohesion.
5. The rapidly developing area of media and Internet use not only offers numerous new possibilities, but also harbours significant security risks. All „shadow pages“ of the Internet and new media require appropriate monitoring and protection structures in order to counteract lawless spaces and opportunities for numerous criminal offences.

An analysis of the problems gives rise to proposals not only for improved and more professional criminal prosecution of particularly harmful organised forms of criminality which require international or nationwide prosecution (such as economic crime, organised crime, hate crime), but also proposals which focus on preventing criminality or the conditions in which it can arise.

The proposal of establishing a National Centre for Crime Prevention should be pursued as a matter of high priority.

Proposal 1: National Centre for Crime Prevention

An interdisciplinary National Centre for Crime Prevention should be created on the basis of the model of evidence-based medicine. Its task should be to build up a sound knowledge base which will be empirically proven in the short, medium and long terms, for preventing and monitoring criminality; furthermore, this knowledge should be processed in such a way as to allow political actions to be taken. The centre has two central areas of activity: Firstly, to establish knowledge for evidence-based criminal prevention through sound evaluations and, secondly, to transfer these insights into the various areas of society and/or the professions which are active there.

Area 1: Evaluation and quality assurance

a) Long-term controlled evaluation of:

1. Development and milieu-related preventative measures in the family, at school and in communities, with a particular focus on specific target groups such as socially disadvantaged people or migrants
2. Situation and city-related preventative measures (e.g. prevention of criminality through urban planning and opening of access pathways to social milieu that are difficult to reach)
Victim-related measures
- Measures to reduce the misuse of alcohol and other drugs
- Measures and sanctions against criminal offences with a cultural character;
- Measures against what is referred to as right-wing, left-wing and religious radicalisation (and the risk of terrorism)
- Measures to promote a realistic attitude towards criminality (including the topic of fear of crime)
- Preventative effectiveness of sanctions under the criminal law

b) Working out quality standards for preventative measures and their (unbureaucratic) accreditation for quality assurance.
c) Developing research syntheses for evidence-based policies and quality assurance.

**Area 2: Qualification, transfer and cooperation**

a) Qualification and transfer:

- Development of qualification modules for processional groups in local government facilities of social public services, such as for specialists in family-related services and integration work as well as teaching personnel for schools and educational institutions
- Qualification and advice for voluntary persons and groups with civil engagement, knowledge transfer to the federal states’ justice departments for optimising criminal prosecution in particular areas of criminality
- Provision of continuing education programmes for situation-related prevention for engineers, designers, architects, urban planners and housing association specialists
- Transfer of insights into the education programmes of security-related institutions such as the police, customs and criminal justice

b) Cooperation:

- Support in setting up cooperative structures by the relevant actors
- Public relations work to promote a realistic picture of criminality (including the fear of crime), development and evaluation of concepts for setting up networks
- Establishing international insights for the Federal Government, the federal states and local government to prevent crime (e.g. the findings of research syntheses by the worldwide Campbell Crime and Justice Collaboration)

The German Institute for Criminology (Kriminologische Zentralstelle e. V., KrimZ) and the German Forum for Crime Prevention (Deutsches Forum Kriminalprävention, DFK) must be involved appropriately in setting up the centre; it would also be an idea for the resources to be combined. It is not possible to address all important topics at the same time, therefore setting up the aforementioned areas of activity in succession appears sensible. The centre must be led by an academic management and a board of trustees (expert panel) comprising representatives of academic and practically oriented institutions. It must cooperate closely with other institutions dealing with criminologically relevant topics in order to generate synergy effects (e.g. National Centre for Early Intervention, German Youth Institute, Federal Centre for Health Education). International cost/benefit analyses indicate that setting up this centre would pay for itself even within the medium term.
It is suggested for a round table to be convened with the new National Centre for Crime Prevention, the Ministries of Justice of the federal states and other representatives if necessary, with the tasks of discussing above all the topics of improving \textit{resources of the criminal justice and youth welfare authorities}, the \textit{professionalization and specialisation of members of the judiciary} and more effective criminal prosecution of \textit{criminality near to the border}; a report on implementation should be produced.

The Federal Government should also ask the new Centre for Crime Prevention to establish a \textbf{working group} involving above all representatives of the federal states. Within one year, this should produce a \textit{concept for improving prevention of crime, violence and extremism, as well as bullying in schools} (including cyber-bullying).\textsuperscript{3} In particular, its key competencies should include dealing with problem behaviour in a preventative way.

\textbf{Social cohesion: Commitment to norms, civil courage, protection of victims}

\textbf{Proposal 2: Campaign programme for civil courage and social skills}

It is proposed for a \textbf{campaign programme to be set up by the Federal Government to encourage people to stand up against discrimination and violence}. Only once approaches for promoting civil engagement and strengthening both social and ethical skills have been evaluated and found effective should they be put into practice in a comprehensive and quality-assured way.

The proposed campaign programme has \textbf{four objectives}: (1) Strengthening educational skills of parents and schools; (2) Improving public treatment of the victims of discrimination and violence; (3) Reinforcing courageous, pro-social actions by promoting important skills and providing public recognition, above all in the context of educational facilities (nurseries, schools, institutions of higher education), public authorities, associations and companies; (4) promotion of civil courage and social skills through suitable public relations measures.

Within the scope of the campaign programme, it would also be possible to implement an issue that has been demanded in the Citizens' Dialogue: Development of short and meaningful guidelines to facilitate citizens' engagement on the ground.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbf{Proposal 3: Research project „How is it possible to promote readiness to comply with norms?“}

It is proposed that \textbf{research projects be put out to offer} dealing with the question of how to promote the readiness to follow generally accepted norms, in particular those relating to criminal law. There is need for research not only with regard to prevention in the general population but also in view of intervention with delinquents.

In terms of \textbf{prevention}, it is firstly necessary to research how children and young people can learn the fundamental norms and values of social living, and behave accordingly, given that they are living in a world that is characterised by a variety of social and media influences. Secondly, it is necessary to conduct research into clarifying social norms and the question of how tendencies to relativise norms and rationalise deviations from norms can be counteracted. As far as \textbf{intervention with delinquents} is concerned, the main aspect involves increased research into the
effectiveness of measures taken by criminal justice, and the conditions under which they are implemented. The objective is to bring together the practical approaches used in the penal system, and to ask questions about the results achieved thereby. Practically related communication of the research results can contribute to reducing recidivism rates.

Proposal 4: Central point of information for victim protection, victim aftercare

It is proposed that a central, nationwide information and advice centre should be set up, which should be if necessary linked to the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) or another independent institution in which the victims of violence and accidents can receive help both directly after the crime/assault/accident, as well as in the medium and long terms, as a means of counteracting psycho-traumatic consequences. The concept for a central institution requires interdisciplinary cooperation.

Setting up a central information and advice centre should make it possible for those affected and their family members to obtain information via various means, and in turn this information should be adapted to the particular needs of the affected groups. As well as information material on paper, and a telephone hotline, there should also be provision of Internet resources and the possibility for downloads. It is also recommended for social networks to be included, with possibilities for using modern means of telecommunication (e.g. apps for smartphones) in order to guarantee access to various tiers of the population.

In addition to specific information about possible mental stresses, it is also recommended for simply formulated factual information to be provided (e.g. regarding victims’ compensation legislation, victims’ aid associations, procedures for lodging claims or the position in a criminal case or other court procedure). At the same time, an information pool should be set up in which those affected can find addresses of trauma ambulances, victims’ aid groupings, advice centres, etc. Furthermore, the people affected should be protected by targeted awareness-raising campaigns in the long term so that family members and society are informed about the short and long term mental consequences. In the long term, it is above all stigmatisation and exclusion of the victim that should be prevented.

The evaluation of the newly launched multimedia measures could be undertaken by the newly founded National Centre for Crime Prevention.

Proposal 5: Adaptation of victim-related laws in social and administrative law

It is now the case that victims of violence receive social and legal understanding and recognition immediately after the crime. A nationwide network of trauma ambulances, specialised psychotherapists and victims’ aid associations has been established in order to provide rapid and targeted care and advice for those affected. In many cases, the Victims’ Compensation Act (OEG) forms the legal basis for rapid and proficient support.

However, in the medium and long term, it is not rare for the initial sympathy offered to victims to be replaced by a defensive posture by society towards those affected. This applies above all if those affected only seek help after a certain period of time has passed, if no successful cure is forthcoming, if the victim makes demands or takes action against maladministration. To a certain extent, a connection between conspicuous mental behaviour and the violent act is refuted too quickly. There is a risk of victim humiliation and incrimination. As a result of trauma, there is a risk that the person affected will encounter long-term social stigma and exclusion. A variety of legal responsibilities (social law, administrative law, etc.) and what are in some cases
divergent official interpretations and implementations of victims' protection in the various areas of law result in inequality of treatment in the various victims' groups. It is necessary for the concepts of the victim and of victims' protection to be harmonised in social compensation law, in statutory accident insurance as well as in the Civil Service Law, and for the application system to be simplified. Regular training measures for experts and decision makers are regarded as necessary. It is recommended that the payments made under the Victims' Compensation Act should be increased.

Proposal 6: Improvement of victim participation in the criminal proceedings

The legal position of the injured party in German criminal law has been consistently expanded since 1986, but nevertheless there are still gaps at important points. The gaps concern two points above all others: the lack of any possibility to influence the decision by the judicial system not to proceed with a case, and as before the lack of opportunity to obtain redress from a perpetrator who is unwilling to provide compensation.

It is proposed for the victims' interests to be strengthened further by changing the criminal proceedings regulations and the Criminal Code in three areas:

1. Opening of proceedings to force criminal prosecution against diversionary dismissals by the Public Prosecutor's Office (amendment to Art. 172 para. 2 sentence 3 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (StPO));
2. Allowing the injured party to submit an immediate objection to diversionary dismissals in the interlocutory and main proceedings (amendment to Art. 400 para. 2 sentence 2 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (StPO));
3. Introduction of a new sanction category, „redress punishment“, as a legal consequence (Art. 44a German Penal of the Code (StGB)).

Allowing sufficient possibilities for influencing the result of the case and demanding redress after the act make an essential contribution to establishing the truth and bringing about justice. Most injured parties do not primarily seek the harshest possible punishment for the perpetrator after the act, rather they feel the need to be taken seriously by the justice system and to be recognised as a victim who has been wronged by the perpetrator. If criminal proceedings are stopped without the injured party agreeing to this form of dealing with the case, the aforementioned requirement has thus not been taken into account; this applies in particular if the cessation of proceedings takes place against the background of plea bargaining (Art. 257c para. 3 sentence 4 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (StPO)). As a result, the legal situation must be supplemented accordingly. The criminal proceedings touch on the basic rights of the injured party just as much as on those of the accused, and must therefore be developed further with a view to taking the legitimate interests of the injured party better into account. Strengthening the concept of redress is also demanded in the Citizens' Dialogue.
Better implementation of crime-prevention insights

Proposal 7: Expansion and quality assurance of early development-related prevention

It is proposed – optimally as a measure by the National Centre for Crime Prevention – for there to be an expansion of and quality assurance for early prevention measures concerning development problems in families, schools and communities, for children of pre-school and primary school age. The measure supplements prevention resources that are already available within the scope of early intervention for families with children aged up to 3 years, and includes the elements of preventative measures in day nurseries and schools, prevention programmes for improving parents’ skills, networking activities, model programme by the government with regard to „intermediaries”, approaches to early risk diagnosis, training and continuing education for the practitioners.

In order for „early prevention” to be applied specifically, it is necessary to have family-related monitoring of the social space for risk and protection factors. Successful early interventions can also include the opportunities for families/children in other important areas, such as in education, addiction prevention, healthcare and social integration. Evidence-based development-related prevention pays off from a cost/benefit perspective. Thus the United States and United Kingdom have recently invested heavily in this area.

Proposal 8: Regular criminality and victims’ survey

It is proposed for a representative criminality and victims’ survey to be conducted regularly into experience of crime, fear of crime and reporting behaviour, as a means of shining light into the dark corners of criminality as well. Police crime statistics (PKS) and justice statistics only record criminal offences that have come to official attention; they overlook offences and victims’ experiences that go unreported or which the criminal prosecution authorities do not know about. A much more realistic picture of the reality of crime can be obtained through regular surveys into victimisation and perceived risks or threats by criminality. Important questions regarding re-victimisation, perpetrator/victim relations, reporting behaviour and the use of legal and informal recourses (e.g. victims’ protection institutions, Protection against Violence Act) may form the basis for such a survey. In addition, it is possible to establish main points and investigate perpetrator-oriented issues (such as perpetrators’ attitudes towards victims and sanctions, conditions of violence and escalation processes as well as exit scenarios and breaking off criminal developments). The data could enrich and incentivise new additions of the Periodic Security Report by the Federal Government.

Coordination should take place through the National Centre for Crime Prevention.
Proposal 9: Promotion of measures to combat Islamic radicalisation

It is proposed for concepts and measures to be developed in cooperation with the new National Centre for Crime Prevention in order to counteract extreme Islamic tendencies. Knowledge about radicalisation within Islam in Germany is growing, but there is very little insight regarding effective and early preventative measures. Preventative measures have been trialled over many years against radicalisation in other areas, such as within the extreme right-wing scene, but there is no guarantee that such measures would also prove effective against Islamic radicalisation.

Consequently, it is necessary to develop, trial and evaluate concepts and measures which act on and take account of aspects specific to the target group. For example, networks could be extended into religious groups, mosques, etc. in order to promote Muslim role models: Also, information campaigns should be designed and implemented to a greater extent.

Proposal 10: Promotion of research into radicalisation processes and how to find a way out of them

Incidents of violent disorder by groups are increasingly being observed in the public arena. Successful programmes only take effect at a late stage, after lengthy membership in a criminal group or a group which is prepared to use violence.

It is proposed that a priority programme by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) should promote research aimed at systematically investigating these radicalisation processes. Connected with this, the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) should develop concepts for promoting means of finding a way out, exit programmes and projects. It should be ensured that successfully evaluated programmes are continued in the long term.

In addition, the Federal Government should convene a National „Exit“ Conference (working title) to offer an optimum exchange of experience, given excellent preparation. After all, it is a matter of systematically promoting communication between the actors who offer a potential point of exit as a preventative measure or in the area of intervention. Knowledge about radicalisation and de-radicalisation processes in more or less organised groups should be communicated to practitioners faster, and practical experience can be exchanged more effectively. The National „Exit“ Conference should develop proposals for this.

Proposal 11: Crime prevention within the framework of EU freedom of movement

The existing EU regulations contain relatively severe obstacles to deportation following criminal offences, and do not take effect in the case of continued minor and medium criminality. Nevertheless, soundings should be taken at EU level as to whether non-moderate modifications could be undertaken, and if the regulations on residence and obtaining social assistance by people from countries of the European Union should possibly be adapted. On national level, it would be easier to introduce changes to the right to residence and social assistance for people from EU countries. Particularly in this regard, consideration should be given to
increasing the (minor) scope of employment required for long-term residence, and to placing stricter limits on circumventing these requirements through (bogus) self-employment. It can be expected that the problems referred to will become more serious in Germany over the next five to ten years.

Continuing expansion of the European Union and the associated freedom of movement have created specific problems of criminality for Germany as well. This applies, for one thing, with regard to organised crime from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe For another thing, there is immigration from South-Eastern Europe which is leading to robberies, inappropriate drawing of social assistance as well as imposing a burden on and increasing the level of anxiety amongst the population. Areas close to the border are particularly affected by this. To this extent, it is proposed for criminal prosecution to be ensured by **increasing personnel numbers**, in particular in the police force.

**Criminality in the public space**

**Proposal 12: Inter-ministerial campaign programme „Integrative City“**

It is proposed for an **inter-ministerial campaign programme „Integrative City“ to be established**. As well as greater orientation towards measures related to integration, the programme can be modified with regard to objective and subjective security by taking increasing account of design and development criteria for prevention of crime by urban planning measures. The interaction between different ministries will bring urban renewal and urban planning promotion into focus in a manner that is oriented towards integration and inclusion.

The campaign programme is made up of **7 building blocks**: (1) Situational handling approaches of **urban planning** for crime prevention, (2) Expansion of educational landscapes, (3) Strengthening of „social capital“ and „social cohesion“ factors, (4) Improvement in **professional qualification** above all of migrants, (5) Inclusion of the voluntary social year, (6) Activation of **local prevention councils**, (7) Setting up a round table for „Safe living neighbourhoods“ with the housing associations.

**Proposal 13: Introduction and evaluation of integrated protection concepts for urban (transport) infrastructures and their interfaces to the public space**

It is suggested that the **effectiveness of multi-dimensional protection concepts** in Germany should be **systematically** investigated. At national level, railway stations and trains are of particular interest in this regard; at local-government level it concerns the interfaces between the stops of public transport systems with the public space of the city.

Over the course of recent years, video monitoring has been implemented in rail transport, firstly at railway stations and station stops, and secondly within the trains used for local and long-distance transport. Simply the video recording of urban spaces and infrastructures alone only provides a relatively low level of prevention, but does entail enormous investment costs. As a result, and in accordance with recent insights, **“integrated protection concepts“ are proposed for busy urban areas, meeting centres, railway stations and public transport vehicles** (trains, buses, etc.).
An integrated protection concept includes several dimensions such as the design of the spatial arrangements, information and orientation, visual monitoring (e.g. video logs), personal monitoring, encouragement of civil courage by bystanders, taking over situational responsibility, prohibition of alcohol in means of public transport and public buildings, with enforcement, limiting the times when alcohol can be sold at kiosks, refreshment stands, petrol stations, etc. or imposing alcohol-free zones in public urban areas.

Criminality on the Internet and new media

Proposal 14: Improvement in combatting Internet criminality

Improvement in combatting Internet criminality requires measures in the preventative and repressive areas:

- **Adaptation of legal bases**: Substantive and formal criminal law must be examined with regard to the requirements imposed by ever-changing technical developments. Criminal liability loopholes and procedural problems must be swept aside.
- **Action plan for all ministries**: An up-to-date risk analysis should be conducted in each of the ministries in order to establish which important infrastructure components are connected to the Internet and thus could be manipulated from outside. Protection concepts must be kept up to date.
- **Establishing a national research and information centre**: A service and research centre should provide current information about risk constellations, activity variants in computer criminality and precautions that can be taken by citizens’ and, in particular, small and medium enterprises in order to protect themselves. The centre should be established as a department of the proposed National Centre for Crime Prevention. This establishment will also take account of a concern from the Citizens’ Dialogue.
- **Special responsibilities in the justice area**: In the area of justice, it is necessary for all judges and public prosecutors to have basic qualifications. Even though the organisation of the justice administration does not fall within the area of responsibility of the Federal Government, it must nevertheless take measures to ensure that the federal states’ justice departments comply with their responsibilities and establish separate departments for special forms of cyber criminality in each federal state. Major cases must be dealt with by specially trained and experienced specialised public prosecution officers or central departments.
1 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal: „Protection against forced marriage and the threat of honour killing“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=11767.


5 For more information about this, see also proposal 16, „Expansion and quality assurance of family-related prevention“, of working group I.1.a) „Family“ on page 22.


7 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal: „Rethinking in the handling of legal drugs in Germany – protection of minors“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=1408.

8 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal: „Information about Internet security“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=2573.
“Opportunities and limits of citizens’ participation” working group

Working group I.2.b) “Opportunities and limits of citizens’ participation”

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr. Oscar Gabriel. With: Prof. Dr. Heather Cameron, Frank Frick, Prof. Dr. Herbert Kubicek, Prof. Dr. Jörn von Lucke, Dr. Hans-Peter Meister, Prof. Dr. Hermann Pünder, Susanne Sander, Prof. Dr. Berthold Tillmann, Prof. Dr. Birgit Weitemeyer, Prof. Dr. Annette Zimmer

The demand for opening up politics and society to citizens’ engagement is one of the important topics of current political debate. Citizens’ engagement is the collective term for two types of involvement – social and political engagement. Social engagement refers to all non-professional activities by people and groups with the objective of strengthening social cohesion and producing collective benefits – without the direct involvement of state actors and institutions. Political engagement covers voluntary citizens’ activities with the objective of influencing political decisions individually or in groups. The diverse forms of civil society engagement form the foundation for democracy and solidarity in society.

They

- strengthen the self-organisation of citizens so that they can overcome challenges on a subsidiary basis;
- promote the acquisition of democratic attitudes and activity skills;
- limit and control political dominance;
- promote proximity between citizens and political decision makers/institutions;
- increase the problem-solving and innovative capacity of politicians;
- improve the legitimacy of political decisions, processes and institutions and
- connect people with the political community.

Citizens’ engagement has grown over recent years, and become more diverse. It is regulated in different ways in law, takes place in various phases of the political process, pursues different targets and is directed at different recipients. However, not all social groups play an equal part. Predominantly, new possibilities for shaping developments have come about for those who are already active. Consequently, citizens, administrative structures and politicians are called upon to develop a participatory culture as the basis for interaction between civil society, politics and administration, as well as to make constructive use of the engagement to civil society, also as a means of developing democracy further. Representative democracy and citizens’ participation are not mutually exclusive, but complementary. These objectives can be achieved by facilitating involvement in politics in such a way as to take account of the following principles:

**Inclusiveness:** This is the right of all people, and not just citizens of the state, to play an active role in shaping social and political life, and the resulting obligation on politicians to help this right to be asserted.

**Relevance of decision:** This means that engagement has an influence on decisions, and that politicians give report to the general public on how they have taken account of the results of citizens’ participation.

**Subsidiarity:** This describes the right of people to regulate their social and political affairs under their own responsibility. The state is only obliged to intervene if self-organisation does not function.

**Transparency:** This is a necessary precondition for active involvement. This means comprehensive, generally accessible and comprehensible information must be provided at an early stage about problems, resources and consequences of political and administrative actions.
Dialogue orientation: This characterises the open exchange between the citizenry, politicians, administration, interest groups and experts in a spirit of partnership, with the objectives of achieving a balance between competing ideas, reaching a consensus, justifying decisions, bringing about acceptance in the case of controversial solutions and forming political confidence.

These principles are not fundamentally new. However, they are anchored in different ways in the various areas of policy, and are implemented differently also. The following proposals are chiefly aimed at achieving better coordination, simplification or using communal resources. They concern the various areas of citizens’ engagement, namely social engagement, the acquisition and exchange of information, exerting influence over planning and administrative procedures, exerting influence within the institutions of representative democracy, direct-democratic involvement and unwritten political engagement.

Greater transparency

Proposal 1: Greater transparency through proactive obligations for publication by government authorities and a joint information register

Transparency of government and administrative actions is a fundamental precondition for free opinion forming in democracy. This includes information about resolutions and decisions taken by the government and administration, about the regulations applicable to these and the data on which these decisions are based, in the form of reports, statistics, etc. The applicable Freedom of Information Act (IFG) by the German Government dating from 2006 is no longer reconcilable with the current objectives of open government and open data. The former obligation on citizens to gather information should thus be converted into an obligation on the state to provide information.

By amending Art. 11 para. 3 of the Freedom of Information Act (IFG) or through a statutory instrument, the publication obligation on government authorities will be extended to plans, statistics, reports, cabinet bills following adoption of a resolution, memoranda to the Bundestag and Bundesrat, meetings and agendas, documents, reports and decisions of the public meetings of advisory committees, expert committees and other bodies convened by government authorities, as well as studies and reports that are commissioned. All these documents should be provided by the authorities free of charge within the limits defined by the Freedom of Information Act (IFG) on a decentralised basis for electronic download, according to the principle of open access. In order to make them easier to find, however, they should be reported to a central information register with specified and uniform metadata, in which case the register must be established by the Federal Government.

In the international context, publication of budget data has assumed a particularly high level of importance in establishing transparency. Complete transparency includes the publication of contracts that underlie the individual budget estimates/liabilities, as well as additional charges in requests for quotations and timely presentation of cash data for all expenditure amounting to more than €10,000. All budget and cash data must also be published as raw data in machine-readable format. In the UK, all expenditure of more than £25,000 must be published with the cash data (e.g. on http://data.gov.uk/openspending).

The information itself continues to be provided on a decentralised basis, as a result of which guidelines for the uniform design of websites should be prepared by the ministries and public authorities of the Federal Government, with checklists, comprising all relevant aspects.¹
Proposal 2: Greater transparency in preparliamentary legislative procedures

In future, the Federal Government should publish all the laws that it initiates right from the draft stage, all opinions that it obtains for this purpose (departmental consultation, possibly opinions of associations in and outside of hearings) as well as the cabinet decision. The Common Ministerial Rules of Procedure (CGO) will be amended accordingly. This will create greater transparency in the legislative procedure.2

For some time now, the German Bundestag has introduced transparency on the Internet for the laws that are introduced. However, the results of the legislative procedure are already defined in most cases by the time a draft law is submitted to the Bundestag. Decisions regarding technical and political alternatives are generally taken in advance in the ministries and in dialogue with the parliamentary parties, and set down in the cabinet bill. The general public suspects that associations and other lobbying organisations influence the legislative procedure during these early phases to a greater or lesser extent in their own particular interests. Lack of transparency leads to rumours and unjustified suspicions.

Early publication of drafts would enable the Federal Government to implement its open government approach as indicated in its manifesto for reforming public administration with „networked and transparent administration“.

Proposal 3: Increasing the transparency of civil society organisations through improved foundation registers and publication of their finances

Charitable organisations (not-for-profit organisations, NPOs) which are exempt from taxation should publish their finances in order to improve transparency. It is a precondition of this that the accounting procedures for associations and foundations must be standardised in law. This should be arranged in Art. 29a of the German Civil Code (BGB) for the association and in Art. 85 para. 2 of the German Civil Code (BGB) for the foundation with legal capacity. Furthermore, public foundation registers should be created with a publicity effect. The regulations should be made in Arts. 80 a, b of the German Civil Code (BGB) or in the foundation laws of the federal states. In addition, a non-profit governance code should be established obliging all NPOs to provide additional information by linking it with a statement of compliance according to the role model of Art. 161 of the Stock Corporation Act (AktG).

In order to improve transparency, it is necessary for the laws relating to NPOs in the legal forms of foundations and associations to be tightened up with regard to accounting procedures, standardised on a nationwide basis and for the organisations to be obliged to publish their financial statements in the register of associations and foundations. To avoid excessive bureaucracy, NPOs should be registered if their ordinary income or expenditure during two successive accounting years exceeds €1 million, or if their donation income exceeds €500,000 in two successive years.

The new regulation serves equally to provide state monitoring (taxation equity) as well as protecting potential donors and sponsors (protection against misappropriation of funds). Examples of this could include the Transparent Civil Society Initiative by Transparency International Deutschland or the German Central Institute for Social Issues.
Proposal 4: Federal Government/federal state platform for on-going processes of public participation

In order to publicise participation options, the Federal Government is developing a concept for a joint Internet platform on which currently available processes for public participation provided by the Federal Government and federal states can be located, together with the core data. Citizens’ participation, where it is offered, frequently does not achieve the hoped-for goals of greater transparency and acceptance because those affected do not know about what is available. The prescribed publications such as in the Federal Gazette or official journals do not fulfil their purpose satisfactorily. As well as a search function being provided, it should also be possible for citizens who have submitted the postal code of their residential address to be informed automatically about new participation processes in their residential area. The corresponding principles should apply to associations if they specify topic areas.

Involvement of the federal states is essential in this case because most participation offers exist at federal state and local-government level, as well as because citizens feel most strongly affected by the decisions taken there. The IT Planning Council has included open government and e-participation in its programme of work, and it is theoretically possible for this council to take an initiative leading to a joint project by the Federal Government and federal states.

To date, such platforms and participation landscapes have existed for individual topics (e.g. citizens’ budgets) and in individual federal states (e.g. urban development in Berlin) as well as by non-governmental organisations. As a result, the specific measure initially concerns a stocktaking operation and a concept for integration of or cooperation between these partial landscapes, filling gaps that are detected and providing a sustainable operating model.

Citizens’ participation within representative democracy

Proposal 5: Strengthening the participation potential of institutions of representative democracy in a state governed by political parties

The proposal comprises three components, (1) Introduction of a more highly personalised second vote for national Bundestag elections (accumulating and splitting the vote) by amending Art. 6 of the Federal Electoral Act, (2) Introducing primary elections for nominating candidates to public administrative bodies and (3) Setting up an Enquete Commission of the German Bundestag to prepare additional proposals for expanding citizens’ participation within the institutions of representative democracy (including extending the voting franchise to foreigners who have lived in Germany for many years, limiting the time in office of members of parliament and introducing a protest vote [‘vote blanche’] according to the French role model).³

In contrast to the general trend towards an increase in citizens’ activity, participation in elections and party-related activities has declined over recent decades. More influence of electors on the personnel composition of the Bundestag and on the candidate selection conducted within the parties, which is decisive for the electoral chances of the delegates, increases the value of elections and parties as institutions of political participation, makes them more attractive and contributes to reducing the significant gulf between many citizens and the parties. This is necessary because the increased opportunities for articulating individual interests require, in the form of a counterweight, greater acceptance of political institutions, which are necessary for a combination of interests and policy transfer.
The proposed processes are already practised in Germany at local-government and federal state level, they are widely used by electors and have proven themselves to be practicable. Predominantly positive experience is also apparent from other democracies. All these processes fit within the institutional framework of a representative democracy. They can be introduced at short notice, without extensive preparatory work and on a largely cost-neutral basis.

Proposal 6: Citizens’ participation in the legislative procedure

The objective of the proposal is to involve not only experts but also citizens in the process of legislation from an early stage, comprehensively and continuously. A process of joint fact finding should be undertaken right from the ministerial draft phase of laws, which should involve citizens, administration, politicians and experts. In the same way as interest groups are heard with regard to ministerial drafts, citizens selected on a representative basis are given the chance to become involved at an early stage. Whether on the Internet or in person, they formulate questions and suggestions regarding the draft laws. Participation processes involving intensive time commitments require a leave of absence for the citizens involved, as well as payment of an expense allowance. The results of the citizens’ participation are made available to the general public and members of the German Bundestag in a suitable form, e.g. as citizens’ reports. The course and results of the participation process are documented via a transparent information policy. The Bundestag is obliged to respond to the results of the citizens’ participation.4 The participation process can be repeated in subsequent phases of the legislation process, in particular when it comes to evaluating success and the further application of laws.5 Considering the high financial and organisational commitment involved in the measure, the participation process should initially be trialled as a pilot project on a socially relevant, complex legislation project.

Opening the legislative process to citizens’ participation represents an important contribution to the further development of representative democracy, because in this way the citizenry can participate in one of the most important tasks of parliaments, namely legislation. As a result, the information base of the parliament is extended and the preconditions are made for the wishes of the population to be taken into account right from an early phase of the decision-making process – rather than just the wishes of experts and interest groups. This promotes transparency, effectiveness and relevance of political decisions to the citizens; it can contribute to strengthening trust between electors and the elected.

Proposal 7: Improvement of citizens’ participation in administrative processes

The numerous participation possibilities in administrative processes which are regulated in various laws should be brought together under one Administrative Procedure Act, and put on a uniform footing. Furthermore, the scope of this law should be extended to executive standardisation processes, internal administrative processes and administrative decisions taken under private law. Rights of participation must always be provided when citizens’ interests are affected.6 The following improvements in the participation process are associated with this: (1) An early participation even before the actual application (on the basis of which the formal public hearing in the objection procedure can be dispensed with); (2) Revocation of the restriction to those immediately affected, in favour of broader public participation; (3) Comprehensive, early and continuous provision of all relevant information in a generally comprehensible form on the Internet; (4) Joint preparation of bases for decision-making with those immediately affected and the general public by a neutral „case manager“ e.g. according to the model of joint fact finding, who (5) May also undertake further public participation in the form of a neutral mediation. (6) As part of the process, attention must be paid to allowing apolitical groups to articulate their views (e.g. by ombudsmen). The right of final decision is retained by the responsible authority. The scope of application of authorisation decisions must be restricted.
The conflicts associated with planning of infrastructure projects have made it clear that the traditional forms of citizens' participation in administrative processes are unable to accomplish their conflict resolution function in many cases. The possibilities for participation in important (preliminary) decisions are highly diverse, not generally known and are not used by many people. In addition, consensus finding starts too late, on the basis of a factual situation that is often inadequately and controversially evaluated, and remains restricted to those immediately affected and legally protected positions. The administration's efforts to undertake participation processes encounter reservations, because their position is not perceived to be neutral. Citizens participation that starts at an early stage, on a broad base, with a firm foundation in terms of information and which is conducted in a neutral approach is a suitable tool for getting to grips with conflicts in planning and administrative processes.

The US Administrative Procedure Act provides comprehensive codification for the law of administrative processes. Some German laws contain examples of the proposed procedural changes, such as Art. 6 para. 3 sentences 2 and 3 of the Environmental Impact Law (UVPG); no. 1a of the Appendix to the Building Code (BauGB); Art. 4a para. 4 of the BauGB, Art. 4b of the BauGB; Art. 3 para. 1 of the BauGB. The draft law of the Federal Government „for improving public participation and standardisation of planning procedures“ points in the right direction – above all with regard to early public participation (Art. 25 para. 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act [VwVfG] new version).

Direct democratic processes

Proposal 8: Referendums and popular votes at national level

Referendums at national level expand and institutionalise citizens' influence on the Bundestag's agenda, or serve to instigate popular votes on factual issues. These give citizens binding rights of decision-making in legislation or changes to the constitution, including the right of recalling laws passed by the Bundestag. The introduction of direct democratic processes makes it necessary to modify the Basic Law and approve a Federal Referendum Act on regulating individual questions (scope of application, procedural rules).

A significant majority of Germans would like to expand direct democratic co-determination rights. According to those in favour, these strengthen problem-solving capability, citizens' involvement and legitimacy of the political system. They contribute to greater acceptance for controversially discussed political decisions and pacifying political conflicts. Through a close link-up between parliamentary processes and dialogue-oriented forms of participation, direct democratic processes contribute to a further development and increase in effectiveness of representative democracy. The danger of the majority being outvoted by highly active minorities can be excluded through suitable procedural rules.

Referendums and popular votes exist in many democratic states, and are practised in the Federal Republic of Germany in its federal states and local governments. Given the political will, the measure could be achieved within a period of 5-10 years, existing surveys indicate there is a corresponding need, costs would arise on an ad hoc basis.
Proposal 9: Reform of the Not-for-Profit Organisation Act

The purpose of the proposal is to facilitate social entrepreneurship. Non-profit organisations (NPOs) as social companies are characterised by offering services in exchange for payment, at the same time as accruing a social added value. To date, the Not-for-Profit Organisation Act has not been framed in this context. As a result, the following is proposed:

a) Reform of the legal forms of associations and cooperatives, improvement in liability law:
   Mini-companies that are active in the market (e.g. village shops run on a voluntary basis) should be able to be managed as profit-making associations. For this purpose, standard conditions should be defined for organisations offering assistance in income tax matters according to the role model of Art. 14 of the Tax Consultancy Act (StBerG). As far as cooperatives are concerned, the obligation for auditing of the annual accounts should be linked to achieving a particular size (based on turnover). The limitation on liability within associations should be extended to gross or deliberate negligence including by voluntary associations members (this is also a proposal from the Citizens’ Dialogue in Erfurt).

b) Tax improvements for NPOs: Social entrepreneurship must be promoted in tax legislation.
   Social companies furnished with small amounts of capital should be able to found not-for-profit partnerships for tax purposes (acc. to Art. 51 para. 1 of the Tax Code [AO]). The suitability of the entrepreneurial company (with limited liability) as a not-for-profit organisation must be clarified. In addition, specific tax law improvements are required for regulating the special-purpose enterprise in Arts. 65, 66 and 68 of the Tax Code (AO).

c) Promotion of cooperation between not-for-profit organisations: The Tax Code must recognise the promotion of civil society engagement through supporting third parties as a sole not-for-profit purpose. This reform would benefit volunteer agencies or funding agencies such as Ashoka. The not-for-profit character of the cooperation of NPOs under the umbrella of a German Civil Code (BGB) company (civil law partnership) must be recognised and exempted from trade tax. Art. 3 no. 6 of the Trade Tax Law (GewStG) must be expanded for this purpose. The activity of charitable NPOs (e.g. soup kitchens, clothing distribution centres) must be facilitated by expanding Art. 53 no. 2 sentence 6 of the Tax Code (AO).

d) Increasing the flexibility with which not-for-profit organisations can accrue reserves: NPOs must be permitted to accrue reserves. Detailed amendments of the tax code are required for this. Specific recommendations:

(1) Increasing the flexibility by which free reserves can be accrued (Art. 58 no. 7 letter a of the Tax Code [AO]);
(2) Relaxing the prohibition on prompt application of funds (Art. 55 para. 1 no. 5 sentence 3 of the Tax Code [AO]), in particular in case of natural catastrophes and high donation revenues;
(3) Simplification of the arithmetical presentation of reserves (Art. 58 no. 6 of the Tax Code [AO]);
(4) Loosening of the „endowment prohibition“ which prevents, for example, creation of endowed professorial chairs with their own capital stock by other foundations (expansion of Art. 58 no. 7 of the Tax Code [AO]);
(5) Recognition that the not-for-profit entrepreneurial company is not infringing the prohibition on timely application of funds if it accrues mandatory capital reserves (acc. to Art. 5a of the Law on Limited Liability Companies [GmbHG]).
**Proposal 10: National model programmes for teaching civil-society engagement („service learning“) to schoolchildren and students**

The objective is to incorporate skills and experience in the area of civil society engagement within the curriculum vitae of every individual. For this purpose, it is proposed for national model programmes to be established over two periods of from five to ten years in order to teach civil society engagement („service learning“).

- Coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMSFSJ) as a cooperation project involving schools and civil-society organisations with the objective of encouraging social participation by children and young people through involvement in civil-society organisations. The civil-society organisations are integrated into teaching as extra-curricular institutions of learning. This is intended to open up the schools, at the same time as increasing their practical relevance. Particular attention must be paid to trialling the programme in different forms of school and social milieu so that it can be used comprehensively and on a broad basis.

- Coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for students as a cooperation project for higher-education institutions and civil-society organisations with the objective of making it easier for students to participate at their place of learning, thus ensuring continuity of engagement as well as raising the profile of higher-education institutions as civil-society organisations and integrating them in a practical and dovetailed manner within the local context; target group: including specialist areas, students and teachers, as well as specialist areas that do not have any direct reference to the institutions of civil society and welfare.

Practising and deepening citizens’ engagement in cooperation with schools and higher-education institutions with organisations of civil society. This is prepared and accompanied in the participating schools and universities by means of events. They develop learning units on the topic of civil society for this purpose. It is ensured that the participating institutions are provided with the necessary resources for this purpose. The detailed configuration should be worked out by an expert committee established under the auspices of the „Council of Experts on Social Engagement“. This committee should provide academic support for the projects and undertake an evaluation or research the level of effectiveness.

As well as this, the ministries of culture are called upon to provide a „civil society“ component of school lessons to provide increased knowledge about the relationships between individual engagement, active society, a strong economy and stable democracy as well as giving appropriate practical experience. The content of the teaching component should include in particular: development of civil society, importance of civil society for democracy, civil society and a social community, participation and voluntary action, corporate citizenship and corporate social responsibility.

It is possible to build on experience when developing the programmes:

- „Learning by Engagement“ network service learning of the Freudenberg Foundation: www.servicelearning.de;
- „Social Genius“ of the Volksbank/Raiffeisenbank commercial credit cooperatives: www.aktive-buergerschaft.de/schulen;
- Ashoka Changemaker Campus (http://ashokau.org/changemaker-campus).
Proposal 11: Council of experts and foundation for citizens’ engagement

On the initiative and under the patronage of the Federal Chancellor, a „Council of Experts for Social Engagement“ should be set up. The council is designed – initially as a pilot project for the period of two times five years – as a forum for and of the civil society. Furthermore, the Federal Chancellor should issue a specific call for a „foundation for citizens' engagement“ under private law to be established from private donations (companies, private sponsors), in which case it would be possible for the council of experts to function as its advisory board.10

The tasks of the council of experts with an administrative office should include providing information about social engagement, researching civil society and participation, evaluating participation processes, consulting, modernisation of forms and developing new forms of participation at grass-roots level („small democracy“). The council would have complementary functions alongside existing institutions, e.g. the „National Network for Civil Society (BBE)“. The civil society research activities previously located at individual ministries could be combined and located at a greater distance from the state. The profile, working method and organizational infrastructure of the council are oriented on the model of the „Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration“ (www.svr-migration.de), an initiative of private foundations.

The tasks of the foundation should involve initiating its own projects and putting them into practice, sustained promotion of facilitation structures for citizens' engagement, promoting projects for revitalising urban and rural areas, establishing local and regional networks as well as improving the general conditions of self-organisation.

1 For information about this, see proposal 1a) „Design of official websites and petition process to be more citizen-friendly“ in the long version.
5 For more information about this, see proposal 12 „Strengthening monitoring of whether laws are successful“ of working group III.3.b) „Learning society“, page 182.
6 For more information about this, see proposal 6 „Coordinating committee for major projects with long-term relevance“ of working group III.3.b) „Learning society“, page 179.
9 Supported by working group I.1.b) „Coexistence between the generations."
I.3. Germany – self-image and external perspective

Working group I.3.a) „Germany’s self-image“

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr. Andreas Wirsching. With: Prof. Dr. Clemens Albrecht, Prof. Dr. Ab Klink, Prof. Dr. Volker Kronenberg, Prof. Dr. Thomas Risse, Prof. Dr. h.c. Richard Schröder, Xafer Senocak, Prof. Dr. Bülent Ucar

To the extent that society in Germany is changing, the self-image of the Germans is also undergoing a phase of accelerated change. It is true that the self-consciousness towards the nation itself has declined somewhat since 1990. At the same time, however, Germans are faced by the challenge of finding an identity and role in a rapidly changing environment. For example, uncertainty has grown from the coalescence and expansion of Europe since 1989, globalisation with its significant ramping-up of international competition, new migration processes as well as the emergence of new forms of politics. In addition, the political situation in many parts of the world has become fragile, and this is delivering a growing international responsibility to the Germans. Corresponding uncertainties about their own cultural identity, the role of Germans within an expanded Europe – which must in turn assert itself in the face of globalisation – must be taken very seriously. This is because uncertainty generates fears, which are in turn poor counsellors for political and civil-society behaviour. In view of this situation, it is important to analyse one’s own strengths and weaknesses as soberly as possible in order to diagnose sensitive areas for the next five to ten years, and to address them as political topics. It is only through open (and proactive) communication concerning these issues that confidence can be established and the effect of uncertainties limited.

It appears that four areas in particular will become especially important in the near future with regard to dealing with the problem and the further development of the Germans’ self-image.

Firstly, one’s own history is of decisive importance for any confirmation regarding national self-images. In this regard, it appears important for the Germans not only to take appropriate account of the dictatorships, but also to accept and reflect on their recent, democratically shaped history, in addition to using it fruitfully for their self-image as a cosmopolitan, pluralist and freedom-oriented nation. This should be supported by special assistance measures. In addition, it would be desirable for the curriculums for history teaching to be adapted in order to give greater attention to German traditions of freedom and democracy, especially since 1945. This concerns national history just as much as local and regional traditions.

Secondly, it is necessary to consider the question of what the Germans expect from their state, what they want to contribute to the development of a lively civil society and how they see themselves in relation to their state. The political context is becoming increasingly complex and the danger of voter alienation from the political class is not shrinking but rather becoming larger. With this in mind, it appears particularly important to address this trend actively, encouraging and recognising civil-society engagement and instigating corresponding communication processes.

Thirdly, it is unavoidable for the self-image of a society to change when it is increasingly confronted with immigration, indeed almost one fifth of the population has a background of migration at this time. Cultural uncertainties regarding identity, integration requirements, processes of self-comprehension and renegotiation are thus to be expected to continue in the near future. Consequently, one major challenge arises with regard to defusing fears through suitable political and legislative measures and creating both pragmatic and functional solutions on the one hand, whilst on the other hand accompanying the processes which are, in themselves, unavoidable (and also necessary) through open and substantive discussions.
Fourthly, the question is becoming more and more relevant for the Germans regarding how they see themselves in a changing and expanding Europe, what they expect from this Europe, and how they want to position themselves in this Europe. The expansion of the European Union, enormous gains in freedom associated with this as well as the dangerous challenges evoked by recent crises are turning the relationship between Germans and Europe into a first-order issue within the near future.

The following suggested actions are mainly grouped around the four particularly sensitive issues stated above; they aim to provide an active response to the challenges in political communication which can be expected here over the next five to ten years, and should thus contribute to a positive reflection on the self-image of the Germans and, ideally, also to a selective strengthening of their cultural identity.

## History of freedom and democracy

### Proposal 1: Upgrading of places of remembrance for the history of freedom and democracy in Germany, in particular memorials for politicians of the Federal Government

Memorials and institutions of historical, political education activity dealing with the remembrance culture and communication of the German history of freedom and democracy especially since 1945 must be reinforced in terms of personnel and budget. As a result of this, the relevant institutions should be enabled to make use of the varied possibilities of our modern media society (interactive seminars, etc.) and other forms! of communication on a long-term and sustainable basis. The proposal particularly relates to institutions from the sphere of activity of the Federal Representative for Culture and the Media. In addition to the major museums (German Historical Museum Berlin, Haus der Geschichte der Federal Republic Deutschland Foundation Bonn/Berlin/Leipzig) and institutions which document the (freedom) history of the 19th century (such as the Hambacher Schloss Foundation), these include above all the politicians’ memorial foundations of the Federal Government, i.e. those public-law foundations administered directly by the Federal Government which – similarly to the much more generously endowed American Presidential libraries – stand in remembrance for central personalities of democratic Germany during the 20th century and, on this basis, research, communicate and discuss our democratic present (Federal Chancellor Adenauer House Foundation in Rhöndorf, the memorial to President Friedrich Ebert in Heidelberg, Federal Chancellor Willy Brandt Foundation in Berlin/ Lübeck and Federal President Theodor Heuss House Foundation in Stuttgart). The working group proposes a significant increase in the budget (of at least ten percent) for these institutions over the next 5-10 years. This would make it possible to provide greater support for the essentially important cultural remembrance and communication for Germany’s history of freedom and democracy.

### Proposal 2: Upgrading of the national public holiday on 3 October

3 October is the national public holiday. It should be used for considering the past, self-conception as well as the challenges facing united Germany on all possible levels. The following activities are proposed for this purpose:

In addition to the Federal rotation of unity celebrations, in future there should be a central unity celebration in Berlin. This could be accompanied by a speech to the nation by the Federal President or the Federal Chancellor at Brandenburg Gate and continue with concerts, a presentation of the federal states, presen-
tations by Federal Government organs, etc. The celebrations could be rounded off by an official banquet to which „ordinary“ citizens would also be invited.\textsuperscript{1}

In schools, 3 October would in future be accompanied by a \textit{project day at all schools}. Each schoolchild should play an active part in this project once during primary school, and once again during each half of their secondary school education, with all schoolchildren also being passively involved. The Federal Chancellor organises an essay competition together with the Deutsche Nationalstiftung Foundation. In addition, discussions could be held with eyewitnesses, and places of remembrance for German division and unity visited.

In the long term, \textit{inclusion of the memorial to freedom and unity} could be considered by the Deutsche Nationalstiftung Foundation holding the award ceremony for their main prize winners and the winners of the school essay competition here (in the castle).

The Federal Chancellor proposes to all mayors in Germany that they should invite citizens to their \textit{town halls} on the Day of German Unity in order to celebrate a „citizens party“, thus bringing the public holiday celebrations closer to the citizens. In parallel to the Federal Chancellor, the mayors could also hold a „speech to the citizens“ in their municipalities. Another possibility would be to plant trees as a uniform „reunification monument“:\textsuperscript{2}

\section*{State and civil society}

\subsection*{Proposal 3: Defining the key tasks of the state}

As in the past, Germany's self-image includes high expectations from the state. On the one hand, it is understood as an institution which is beholden to the general public beyond the vested interests in society; on the other hand, it is seen as an institution providing care and support which helps individuals who are in desperate straits in society. The Federal Chancellor should submit a proposal to the German Bundestag for an \textit{Enquete Commission to be convened with the task of evaluating the results of privatisation measures over recent decades and defining the key tasks of the state}, in order to counteract trends in society or the economy which undermine or cancel out the state's monopoly of government and action in these areas.

It must be assumed that the monopoly on the use of force – i.e. \textit{guaranteeing internal and external security} – and guaranteeing the infrastructure and \textit{legislation} will have to remain as genuine key tasks of the state.

\subsection*{Proposal 4: Improvement in the training of the upper echelon of the federal administration}

The \textit{training of first division civil servants} should be improved, e.g. by offering a supplementary master's course or vocational training courses along the lines of the French Ecole normale d’administration (ENA) in future, either at several sites (Potsdam, Speyer, Constance) or better still at a central Federal University (e.g. Speyer).\textsuperscript{3}

Although the classic civil service ethos has become outmoded nowadays, it does still exist in the expectations of the German population in relation to the state administration as a moment of identification between the citizens and the state. At the same time, it is apparent that not just the implementation of major projects is dependent on participation by the population, right from the planning phases (Stuttgart 21, a railway and
urban development project in Stuttgart). Recruitment of skilled and loyal personnel to administration is thus a central pillar of political legitimacy.

In this regard, the state is increasingly competing with business and associations for highly qualified, top personnel. The prospects of higher pay in the private economy are compensated for in different ways in various countries: France reproduces the elite awareness of higher echelon civil servants by means of specific French republicanism with education centralised at the ENA, whilst in the USA there is a permanent exchange of elites between private business and state administration. However, this model is highly susceptible to corruption if it is not simultaneously accompanied by a strong sense of national interest and ideas („mission“) which protects the office holders from using their decision-making powers for the benefit of private interests, in case of doubt. To this extent, the French model is more appropriate for Germany, including because of the desirable alignment of political systems in the process of European unification.

Proposal 5: Returnee survey

The Federal Government encourages a survey amongst German returnees who have been abroad for a long period (at least one year). The objective of the survey is to find out about the returnees’ self-image or image of Germany which may be changing, or at least more strongly reflected. As far as possible, the survey should pick up various population groups, including not only academics but other professions and, if possible, pensioners as well. The survey should be carried out in conjunction with organisations which have experience in the area of returnees from abroad, such as the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the „Deutsche im Ausland“ (DiA) organisation for Germans abroad, the Goethe Institutes as well as the chambers of industry and commerce. It must be conducted according to social-science standards and specifically ask about elements of the self-image or image of Germany. In particular, questions should be asked about the perception of specific strengths and weaknesses in Germany which may be thrown into clearer focus when seen from the perspective of longer-term stays abroad.

Proposal 6: „Strength through diversity“ communication strategy

It is proposed for the topic of immigration and integration to be approached on a comprehensively strategic basis, and for a communication strategy of „strength through diversity“ to be developed. The strategy should include factors such as a „We are Germany“ communication campaign and a digital citizens’ forum entitled „How does integration work in my context?“. The „We are Germany“ communication campaign should present people in the media with a migration background who have „made it good for themselves in their job“. At the same time, a digital citizens’ forum encourages an exchange of views regarding what advantages immigration into Germany or processes of migration within Europe have had and will have in future. The intentions here are, firstly, to bridge the cultural gulf between prominent political and intellectual agenda-setters on the one hand and a „silent majority“ on the other. Secondly, it is important to advance towards a substantial discussion involving both migrants and non-migrants. The objective is an intensive exchange of views amongst and with citizens.
Proposal 7: Peripatetic exhibition „Germany in Movement“ on the history of migration in Germany

The Federal Chancellor should initiate and promote a major peripatetic exhibition on the subject of „Migration in German history in the 19th and 20th centuries“, and assume the patronage of it. Its goal is to increase the awareness amongst the general public of the significant extent to which German history has been and remains characterised by migrations. This includes, on the one hand, migration by Germans for reasons of an economic and most definitely political nature (above all in the first half of the 19th century and from 1933 to 1945). In this connection, for example, it would be possible to point out that not a few Germans found political exile in Turkey and also in China during the Nazi period. On the other hand, an exhibition of this kind will show the many different facets of immigration into Germany. In this case too, systematic questions can be asked about political, economic and cultural influencing factors (push and pull factors) on immigration into and out of the country (migration balance). Appropriately communicated historical and political insights can make a contribution to breaking down prejudices and promoting understanding. To this extent, the measure picks up the enormous challenge posed by a growing proportion of the population with a background in migration and what effect this has on the self-image of the Germans. It is a matter of counteracting the formation of cultural fronts („culture clash“) and promoting understanding for a society in „movement“, for its dynamic properties and also the opportunities it holds.

Proposal 8: Establishing a German/Turkish youth foundation

Turkish people and the Turkish/German relationship play a prominent role in the self-image of Germans within the context of their society which is changing as a result of immigration. Significant anxieties amongst the population are concentrated on migrants from Turkey. Over the last 10-15 years, a German/Turkish discourse has established itself, but one which rarely has a communicative effect, rather serving to fan social anxieties. On the other hand, almost three million people in Germany have a Turkish origin. As before, the majority of this population group continues to maintain intensive relationships with its country of origin, despite their home now being in Germany. Almost two million (2/3) still only have Turkish citizenship. As a result, relations with Turkey are of particular importance for the interests of the Federal Republic.

It is thus proposed for a measure already suggested some time ago now to be implemented as a matter of political urgency, namely the establishment of a German/Turkish youth foundation. Experience and results with the Franco-German youth foundation, as well as more recently with the German/Polish youth foundation, are such as to make it appropriate for this measure to be recommended as a matter of the utmost urgency. After all, they show how the systematically enabled and promoted encounter between young people across borders can increase the intercultural learning capability, while a variety of personal relationships and friendships can allow mutual understanding for one another to grow markedly.

The German/Turkish university being established in Istanbul could serve as the institutional basis for a supplementary student exchange programme.
Proposal 9: Justifying Europe once again – a communication strategy for the Federal Government

The Federal Government needs a communication strategy to justify once again to citizens in Germany as well as in Europe as a whole what is the purpose and intention of European integration in the context of the Euro crisis. The strategy should include not only advertising campaigns and citizens’ dialogues, but also and in particular an annual speech by the Federal Chancellor to the European parliament. This justification must relate to specific political issues and not (just) general objectives of European integration. In particular, the advantages offered by the EU to citizens must be made clear by means of specific examples which can be experienced by people. It is only through specific political results that the general objectives of European integration can be made clear, including maintaining prosperity, welfare and European competitiveness in a globalised world; effective defence against inflation risks in the Euro zone; a boost for growth and employment in Germany since the mid-2000s (combined effects of the Euro and Agenda 2010); Europe-wide brake on debts due to the fiscal union; Germany, as an export nation, benefitting in particular and in specific terms from the EU as „Europe without borders“ (Schengen country and freedom of movement; background: all surveys of citizens primarily identify the EU positively with this aspect); sexual equality; safeguarding our system of values (freedom, democracy, human rights, state under the rule of law) in the face of varied threats from authoritarian regimes, transnational terrorism, cyber war, etc.; the self-assertion of Europe in a globalised world with new centres of power („G20-world“); Europe as an integral component of what defines us (as Germans), part of the German identity, the German raison d’état; making the costs of „non-Europe“ clear.

Proposal 10: Strategy for democratisation of the European Union

The deepened integration between European states will, with the fiscal union, reach a degree of transfer of sovereign powers to the EU which demands deepening of the citizens’ rights of participation if the democratic co-determination rights of the European population are not to be undermined. Only in this way will it be possible to avoid the danger of the elite project developing into an intergovernmental „post-democracy“ in institutional terms also (Colin Crouch). Only in this way can growing Euro-scepticism amongst the population be counteracted, as well as the danger that this scepticism could be exploited by Euro-phobic, political parties, especially those on the right wing, for their own purposes. As a result, the Federal Government should develop a long-term „Timetable for democratisation of the EU“. This should focus on the following projects:

- Reinvigoration of the debate concerning the future of Europe in the context of the emerging Europe of variable geometry (see also proposal 11)
- Expansion of the rights of the European Parliament, including election of the President of the Commission
- Reform of the Council of the European Union along the lines of a chamber of the federal states (in the sense of „cooperative federalism“)
- Europeanization of the European electoral campaign by Europe-wide lists and top party candidates
- Amendment of German electoral law: franchise for EU citizens in all national elections after having been resident in Germany for a sufficient period of time.
It is proposed to hold an annual European Conference in Berlin which – similarly to the Munich Security Conference – should bring together representatives from politics, academia and culture in order to discuss the central questions of European policy and work out suggested actions for the German role in the EU. The idea is for a two-day public conference involving 100 participants from Germany, Europe and around the world. The Federal Chancellor should be the patron of the conference, as well as opening the conference with a European speech, for example. Furthermore, the German Foreign Office should be involved in organising the conference.

The Euro crisis has massively shifted the balance within the EU. As part of this, Germany has a leading role to play, and one for which neither politicians nor the general public are adequately prepared. At the same time, some European partners are increasingly worried about Germany falling back into traditional power politics. The Berlin European Conference represents a location in which these fears can be articulated openly amongst friends and in which – together with European partners – discussions can be held regarding the role of Germany in a changing Europe.

To date, there has not been such a location for systematically considering Germany’s European policy „beyond the day-to-day issues“. Berlin is the suitable place for a project such as this. Berlin has a unique history, it is located in the middle of Europe between north and south, east and west, and today finds itself „encircled by friends“. Berlin has the skills in terms of people and institutions in order to hold such a project: the academic skills, cultural skills and political skills as a result of the government and Parliament.

The unfolding and strengthening of historical and political identification with Europe is growing into a central future task, in particular due to current problems relating to the European sovereign debt crisis. Consequently, the Federal Government should initiate the convening of a European committee of experts at European level in order to develop a concept for the European culture of remembrance, and specifically on „European places of remembrance“ to illustrate, communicate and discuss the milestones in European history. The Experts Dialogue should be linked to a citizens‘ dialogue, for example by means of digital citizens’ forums. The results of the citizens’ forums at national level need to be brought together and linked to the work of the committee of experts. The concept can borrow from the historical science approach which Pierre Nora created for French places of remembrance. However, there is a lot to be said in favour of concentrating on physical places of remembrance, in contrast to Nora. This refers to places which have become stations of peace and rapprochement in Europe. The concept can refer back to medieval history and the early modern period (such as the Peace of Westphalia), but should focus on the history of the European unification process since 1945. Candidates as places of remembrance would be Locarno, Paris (proclamation of the Schuman Plan, Elysée Treaty), Rome (Treaties of Rome), Helsinki (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe [CSCE]), Schengen (Schengen Agreement), Klingenbach/Sopron (cutting through the iron curtain) and Berlin (fall of the Wall). The concept should culminate in a museum or exhibition project: It should be checked to what extent museums dedicated to European places of remembrance could be set up at the named or selected locations. If it proves impossible to finance the „large“ museum solution, a „small“ solution could be considered, namely a German museum to European places of remembrance or initiating a peripatetic exhibition.
Proposal 13: Competition for developing a Europe game

The Federal Government should organise a competition to develop a Europe game. The call should go out to interested citizens, associations and parties, and above all to games developers and toy manufacturers (which could then work together with citizens’ groups and associations in developing the game). Ideas could include developing a board game, a card game and/or a digital version which simulate the processes of negotiation in the European Union.

The objective is to make it possible to try out and experience through play how Europe „functions” with its multi-layered structure, as well as providing food for thought about the further structure of Europe.  

Proposal 14: Upgrading of the German/Polish relationship

Alongside France, Poland is the most important direct neighbour of the Federal Republic. There are particular challenges here, as a result of the special history. For example, the Oder-Neisse frontier is rather a young, and still quite „hard” boundary compared to the Franco-German or German-Czech frontiers, for example. Unrestricted border crossings only became possible when Poland joined the EU. This frontier is „hard” because the families who had married across it over generations are now missing, in contrast to the former situation in Upper Silesia. Also, on the eastern side of the frontier there are not long-established Polish people, but rather Polish resettlers who, long after 1945, were uncertain about whether they would be able to stay there enduringly.

This situation, which remains complicated on the ground, could be alleviated by an initiative of the Federal Government. For example, the Federal Chancellor could devote a summer trip to the German/Polish border region in which it would be possible to publicise successes nationwide throughout Germany, address obstacles facing those living locally and, if possible, rectify them, as well as organising a meeting with the Polish head of government in order to emphasise appropriately the importance of the German/Polish relationship. Furthermore, in this context, it would be possible to expand exchanges under the auspices of the German-Polish Youth Foundation and provide greater public funds for exchanges between the scholarship holders and schoolchildren. Furthermore, additional Polish lessons could be promoted in Germany. A civil-society dialogue should also be started in parallel to the government consultations. Contributions to this could also be made by joint projects in the cultural area, on environmental issues or for catastrophe protection.

1 See also proposal 11 of working group I.3.b) „Germany in the eyes of the world“; „Speech by the Chancellor on „Germany’s position in the world““, pg. 70; as well as citizens’ proposal: „National public holiday“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzellansicht/vorschlaege_einzellansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=11889.
3 See also proposal 10 of working group I.3.b) „Germany in the eyes of the world“; „Improving the international and European skills of personnel in the Federal ministries“, pg. 69.
4 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal: „Integration, culture and „We-society““, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/10-Wie-Leben/Einzellansicht/vorschlaege_einzellansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=52.
Germany, the country with most neighbours in Europe, is particularly dependent on its foreign relations in political, economic and social terms. When we consider how we should live together in the future, how we should earn a living and how we should learn, it is not possible to do so without taking a look outside, whilst also including the way that we are seen from outside. Germany’s future flexibility and scope of action are increasingly influenced by the image that other countries have of Germany. Furthermore, the external perspective also makes it possible to discover opportunities and reform requirements for Germany which we either have not recognised, or not in the same way.

Trends

Over the past decades, the perception and position of Germany in the world has changed in many respects. Whereas the Federal Press Office concluded as late as 1966 that the Germans are „on average the most unpopular people“, a study published by the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) in December 2010 judged that Germany was regarded as the country with the most positive influence in the world. The confrontation with National Socialism, reconstruction, dealing with the reunification, economic and scientific/technical successes as well as Germany’s contributions to environmental and development policy have all contributed to the positive image. As a consequence of the recent financial crises, the contrast between Germany’s economic strength and developments in many of its neighbours has further reinforced the relative international political weight of our country.

As shown by a qualitative survey in 21 countries worldwide ([www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/gizstudie](http://www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/gizstudie)), this new, positive image of our country does however go hand-in-hand with high, perhaps excessive, expectations. For example, Germany is often ascribed a leading economic and political role inside and outside the EU. Germany should also play a more active role in the further development of general international conditions. Last but not least, Germany’s strength is seen in its „soft power“: global presence of German politics, business, science and civil society.

Germany’s published opinion, on the other hand, regards the new economic and political potential for influence, and the associated international responsibility, rather with a shrug of the shoulders, if not with out-and-out scepticism. Often, the expectations of allies and partners are received here with reticence and even mistrust. However, the outside world frequently does not really know whether it should welcome or fear a stronger Germany, and asks itself what Germany intends to do with its increased potential for influence. Indeed, many worry that Germany might lose sight of the interests of Europe, and particularly those of the smaller countries, and withdraw from its responsibility to uphold and develop international order further – whether it be in overcoming the financial crisis or providing military security. The number of proposals from the citizens’ dialogue indicates that Germany’s citizens are thinking about Europe and the challenges of co-existence in the EU.1
Challenges

Germany is growing into a new role which is not a simple one, and neither its political class nor its population appears to be adequately prepared for it. German politicians are being called upon more and more frequently to think not just for Germany but for the EU as a whole, and to formulate their initiatives for action without a schoolmastery attitude in intensive dialogue with others. Therefore, our proposals are aimed at achieving three things: improving the coherence of Germany’s international presence, making Germany more attractive for others and thus more influential, thereby raising the consciousness amongst the German population of our country’s general international conditions. The associated institutional strengthening of governmental activity should be balanced by an expansion in participation opportunities for non-governmental actors. We are aware that the quality of Germany’s foreign relations is not just characterised by the behaviour of politicians, but also by the variety of Germany’s civil-society engagement in the international arena.

The factors which will be important for German politics over the next five to ten years are:

- Deliberately including the external perspective in shaping Germany’s future scope of action
- Mobilising and utilising Germany’s soft power more effectively for implementing and communicating the political scope of action
- Strengthening the foreign-policy strategic capability and the consonance between foreign and security-policy actions by the Federal Government
- Increasing the skills for shaping international relations
- Communicating German motives and positions to allies and partners in a predictable way, and taking active measures to promote an understanding for Germany’s changed international role for the domestic audience.

Systematic integration of the external perspective

Proposal 1: Establishing an International Germany Forum as a regular meeting between German decision-makers, international multipliers and German actors from abroad

The Federal Government should organise an International Germany Forum in Germany on a regular basis, e.g. every year or two, with the objective of holding joint discussions with German and international decision-makers and experts from politics, business, academia and society concerning social, political and economic transformation, modernisation and innovation projects which are of equal import to Germany and other countries.

The development in Germany and Germany’s role in Europe as well as the international community is pursued with great interest, although frequently accompanied by misinterpretations, misunderstandings and mistrust. The International Germany Forum should counteract this in two ways. Firstly, by inviting foreign multipliers, it should be possible for German decision-makers to engage in direct and open dialogue, allowing them to present German positions. Secondly, involving German actors from abroad would make it clear what is the variety of German foreign relations, as well as allowing their insights to flow into the German debate. The invitation to exchange views on medium and long-term perspectives of German and European policy – for example the turnaround in energy policy, migration problems or the EU – would be articulated and
understood as a signal of a policy oriented towards reconciliation of interests and engaging in cooperation. With this orientation, the Germany Forum would be an example for the approach by German politicians to make an active contribution to shaping the world through open dialogue and international understanding.

Proposal 2: Opening up foreign policy to new forms and forums of political debate by means of an interactive public diplomacy strategy

The Federal Government should elevate active participation in the new forms and forums of global communication and opinion-forming into a guiding principle for its foreign policy. An innovative public diplomacy strategy based on using digital and social networks represents the precondition for this. In order to develop a strategy of this kind, it is recommended for a corresponding working group to be set up by the Federal Government.

The growing number of cross-border problems and new technologies of digital communication are creating a new, global public. Both in Germany and abroad, new forms and forums of political communication are being created, as well as new possibilities of political participation. According to the „5 in 5“ study by IBM, 80% of the world’s population will own a mobile communication device within the next 5 years; the number of people who can express an opinion on events in the world will be correspondingly greater. As a result, increased participation by the German state and German civil society in global digital processes of political communication and opinion-forming will become essential. One example of such a digital public diplomacy strategy might be the „21st Century Statecraft“ initiative by the U.S. Department of State in 2009.

Better use and mobilisation of Germany’s economic and social strengths (soft power)

Proposal 3: Networking of German actors from politics and business with actors for reform in selected crisis regions

The objective of the proposal is to make more effective contributions to stabilising crisis regions by involving German business on the ground, and thus strengthening Germany’s position as a regulatory-policy actor. This requires a targeted investigation of what is available from and in the interests of Germany’s (SME) economy, the strategic interest of the Federal Government as well as the requirement of partners on the ground.

For this purpose, the Federal Chancellor should establish a steering committee comprising Federal Government departments, business associations and selected implementing organisations active on the ground, as a means of prioritising strategic regional and sectorial objectives as a first step. The first candidate region for this would be North Africa, since this is a place where the interfaces between economic interests, international cooperation between nations (water, renewable energy, emigration of skilled workers) as well as foreign-policy stabilisation interests are especially great. The steering committee will establish content measures in line with these prioritised objectives which can be picked up by the private and government actors in a locally held conference, and put into practice. Measures could include (1) Creating training opportunities and workplaces for special target groups, (2) Alliances with private companies and governments, (3) Strengthening of local companies or (4) Implementing the do-no-harm principle in production sites and company procedures.
As an export nation without any raw materials worth mentioning, Germany is reliant on functioning international markets, supply and value-added chains, and thus has a particularly high interest in the stabilisation of crisis regions. Abroad, Germany is trusted to play an even more important stabilising role in overcoming crises. The potential of private (SME) business has not yet been brought into play in this context, however. This could be achieved by direct involvement of German companies in dialogue with partners on the ground, thus leading to the stabilisation of crisis regions which would benefit all those involved. Contacts with and experience of private business should also be used more assiduously in other topics and sectors (such as energy).

**Promotion of Germany’s strategic foreign-policy capability and the consonance between foreign and security-policy actions**

**Proposal 4: Establishing an experts’ council for the foreign relations of the Federal Republic of Germany**

Based on the process for assessing macroeconomic development, a foreign-policy experts’ council comprising up to seven members would be employed. Every year, it would prepare and publish a report on the status and development of German foreign relations, which would systematically take account of the „external perspective“. The Federal Government would issue a written opinion on the report. The report and opinion of the Federal Government would be presented to the Bundestag for debate.

There is no logical overall picture in which German foreign relations are presented and debated. The consequences are, externally, a high level of confusion regarding the direction of German foreign-policy, while internally there is a lack of overall understanding for the foreign-policy challenges facing the Federal Republic. An annual report on the status and development of German foreign relations, formulated by a small group of recognised experts would increase the interest in and understanding for Germany’s foreign relations at home and abroad, because they would no longer be mentioned as individual problems, but would instead be presented in the overall context of Germany’s international interests. The Federal Government would be induced to formulate its priorities in foreign relations, while the Bundestag would be prompted to engage in public debate about this topic.

The experts’ council on the assessment of macroeconomic development created by law on 14 August 1963 could serve as a model for the council proposed here. Candidate members would be drawn from amongst university lecturers, heads of renowned research institutes as well as recognised independent practitioners. One member should always come from abroad. The members of the experts’ council would be proposed by the Federal Government and appointed for limited terms.

**Proposal 5: Setting up a coordinating staff for national security questions with the Federal Chancellor**

A permanent staff will be created with the Federal Chancellor for interdepartmental coordination of German security policy.

Like in the case of its main western partners, it is also becoming a matter or urgent concern for the Federal Republic to deepen, extend and combine strategic expertise and interdepartmental coordination within the governmental apparatus in view of the increasing convergence between security-policy, economic, social and cultural developments. Implementing national interests in a coordinated way is something which is becoming increasingly dependent on the capability of forming a coalition and consensus with other international
actors, while the security-policy challenges, and their perception, can no longer be shoehorned into classic departmental responsibilities. They demand interdepartmental, fully strategic approaches/concepts as well as permanent adaptation of the same.

The fact that Germany has not had a facility of this kind before not only reduces the effectiveness of the government’s work, but also impairs its impact abroad. A fully strategic planning and coordination element in security policy which can be supplemented and reinforced on an ad hoc basis through the inclusion of practical and technical expertise from the departments (task force principle) would enable the executive to see its security-policy interests in context, analyse the variety of international trends and base a coherent strategy on this.

All significant partners and counterparts of the Federal Republic of Germany – most recently the United Kingdom – have now come to the conclusion that they require a facility of this kind, and have created it under their particular head of government.

Proposal 6: Setting up a staff for long-term analysis and strategic forecasting

The Federal Government should follow the lead of other western countries and establish a staff for long-term analysis and strategic forecasting within the Federal Chancellery. Its task would be to analyse risks, threats and opportunities in a methodologically sound manner, whilst clarifying underlining assumptions, characteristics, values and interests.

This staff should be located in the Federal Chancellery to allow it to be used optimally as an instrument of strategic planning. It would take its instructions from the Federal Chancellor. Its task would be to advise the government by preparing reports and analyses; its method would include decision-making games and working out scenarios. The objective of this reform would be improve the government’s strategic competence and to achieve a feedback between current politics and long-term analysis.²

Models could be the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit in the United Kingdom (2002-2010) and the new combination of strategic forecasting and planning competences within the French Secrétariat général de la défense et de la sécurité nationale (since 2009). The scenario development processes of Royal Dutch Shell have an exemplary effect within the business arena and beyond.

Proposal 7: Coordination of German EU policy by a Federal Minister for European Questions within the Federal Chancellery

A Minister for European Questions, if possible with cabinet rank, should be created under the Federal Chancellor, and would coordinate the European policy positions of the Federal Government with his/her own staff. He/she would represent the Federal Government in the EU General Affairs Council.

Appointment of such a minister has been considered on repeated occasions, although this step has always been blocked due to coalition policy interests. Nevertheless, the objective arguments for it have become even more important. All departments of the Federal Government, the Bundestag and the federal states are now dealing with EU-relevant questions, although the Berlin coordination mechanism has not yet caught up with this development. Frequently, this gives rise to friction between the departments in Germany as well as confusion and resentment amongst our partners. Establishing a Minister for EU Affairs within the Chancellorcy would finally create an office with the necessary weight in relation to other German and European players,
it would provide expertise and skills as well as offering a forum for bilateral consultation for other partner countries, above all smaller ones, in EU issues. One of its tasks would be to coordinate a communication strategy on Europe by the Federal Government.3

Many other EU states have a Europe Minister, who is generally a secretary or minister of state in the corresponding foreign office, which would be the case in Germany as well. However, the portion of European policy within which foreign ministries still play a genuine foreign-policy role has long since dwindled to a minimum. In constitutional systems which allow the head of government a right to intervene in the departments (such as in the case of France and the United Kingdom), EU policy is coordinated directly by the apparatus of the head of government. As a result, this is also the example that the Federal Republic should follow, and it should implement this approach accordingly in its constitutional system.

Proposal 8: Strategic alliance formation by Germany in multilateral arenas

Every year, the Federal Chancellor should issue invitations to attend an informal European G20 round table meeting. This should be specifically addressed to those member states of the European Union which are not themselves members of the G20, despite the fact that they do belong to the leading economies in terms of their economic development level or per capita income. These include Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands as well as the Scandinavian EU members. As neighbours of Germany and partners shaping the EU, they share the preferences of German politics in many areas. This grouping could sound out joint European positions on existing G20 topics, define new and independent positions and discuss the main emphases and features being stressed by the particular G20 presidency. The meeting should be regularly preceded by a dialogue between think tanks (idea factories) and non-governmental organisation of the countries involved; the results of and recommendations from this preparatory work would be used in the governments’ deliberations.

Germany can support the strategic goal of the G20 process, namely to integrate new powers into the responsibility for shaping the international community, by targeted cooperation with individual countries with respect to the G20. There are particular opportunities offered here by the partnership with Russia which is taking over the G20 presidency from Mexico at the end of 2012 and will be holding the presidency of the G8 in 2014; furthermore, this will be followed in 2015 by Germany’s G8 presidency. With regard to German policy, a partnership offers the opportunity both to integrate Russia more effectively in the international community and the potential to strengthen civil society in Russia. Germany should strive to forge comparable partnerships within the framework of the G20 with Brazil (in Group 3) as well as China and Indonesia (in Group 5).

Other countries ascribe a special role to Germany as a result of its political and economic weight with regard to the further development of multilateral formats and institutions. This is justified above all in the situation that Germany continues to be regarded as a broker between East and West, South and North, and is able to push ahead with global initiatives on the basis of its nuanced foreign relations. The effectiveness of multilateral action is suffering from both structural and political/cultural deficits. German policy alone does not have the ability to compensate for these deficits. However, it can and should be the initiator and carrier of innovations and compensation strategies, not least in order to ensure a role for Germany and Europe in shaping events and to give them the flexibility for action. Through the aforementioned activities, Germany could make a greater contribution to the international debate about further development of global governance.

Within the G20 developing countries, Germany possesses a well-developed network of organisations with academics, civil society individuals, business and government-sponsored bilateral cooperation. This „unique selling point“ should be brought to bear more effectively by involving these players systematically in shaping and implementing global agendas.
Increasing the competence for shaping international relations

Proposal 9: Raising the profile of Germany as a place of learning and innovation through a „German Network for International Cooperation“

The objectives are to expand Germany’s international cooperation in the education field in such a way as to create innovative impetuses for overcoming the challenges of the future, and to raise Germany’s profile as an international, practically orientated location for learning and innovation.

A „German Network for International Cooperation“ will be founded for this purpose. Under bilateral governmental agreements, international and German post-graduate students will network to discuss important future topics with one another and with leading German academic and business personalities. This will be conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, which will coordinate with the Federal Chancellery and the Foreign Office to select an interdisciplinary topic of significance for the future (e.g. green cities). The programme will also include exchange scholarships with relevance to the topic available to German and International post-graduate students. The network will be financed from private and government funds, and overseen by a politically high-ranking steering committee.

Other countries regard Germany as possessing a high level of expertise in the practically oriented application of research results. However, innovative strength and creativity are not associated so strongly with Germany’s image. Many particularly innovative foreign students direct their interest rather towards other countries. It must be made possible for them to experience Germany with its innovative potential. Successful networking of business and academia as well as dealing with innovative topics in an international atmosphere of learning will help to heft post-graduate students to Germany as a location. The network will enable the Federal Chancellery to set the agenda for interdisciplinary topics of future importance in international education cooperation, and thereby initiate implementation of these topics at universities, in business and society as a whole.

Proposal 10: Improving the international and European skills of personnel in the Federal ministries

The preconditions for entry to higher echelons of the civil service in public authorities of the Federal Government will be expanded by the requirement for spending at least one year abroad. Experience of living in other EU member states would be preferred. Furthermore, a one-year training programme will be completed as an in-service qualification during the first five years of the job in order to communicate the specific perspectives and historical experience of our neighbours (alongside increasing intercultural competence, leadership and innovation skills form an important component of the programme).4

The „Future Report on the Modern State 2008 – Public Administration in the Year 2020“ regards strategic control as a main task and challenge for public administrations. Setting up corresponding skills is however unthinkable without profound knowledge about foreign countries. Employees of all federal ministries should possess a high level of familiarity with the perspective and historical experience of our neighbours, as well as an understanding of their objectives and aspirations in the various fields of politics. The supplement to the recruitment regulations proposed here, as well as the in-service, one-year training programme, should assist
in this. Familiarity by German first-division civil servants with the mentality and condition of other partners would also make clear our readiness to listen to their suggestions and experience, and examine whether they can be utilised for the German environment.

The only available investigation into the importance that personnel departments in the civil service place on foreign experience of applicants was produced in 2003 (Heinrich Siedentopf/Benedikt Speer), and was restricted to the public service of the federal states. Its summary: Out of a total of 408 people recruited/promoted during the period of the study, not more than 22 (5.39 percent) had at least one year of experience abroad. As a result, there is a need for a binding and uniform expansion to the application requirements to the upper echelons of the German civil service in order to include a lengthy period of experience abroad, supplemented by an international training programme for people starting their careers in the federal civil services.

The Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi) has already insisted on a lengthy period abroad for its applicants; the recruitment condition recommended here would be possible without difficulty for all applicants in the higher echelons of the federal civil service. An example from Canada indicates that other countries are also thinking in this direction: There, personnel development programmes are imposed in the civil service in order to train young officials in strategic and cooperative scopes of action, accompanied by opportunities for „job rotation“ between commercial organisations, non-governmental organisations, academic institutions and government authorities.

Better communication of Germany’s changed international role

Proposal 11: Speech by the Chancellor on „Germany’s position in the world“

The Federal Chancellor should make a speech exclusively on the European, foreign and global policy interests and concerns of the Federal Republic of Germany once a year. This speech could be given to coincide with the International Germany Forum (see proposal 1) in the German Bundestag or, alternatively, at a historically important location, and preferably on a date which is redolent of recent German history. This would be a „State of the Nation“ speech – comparable to the annual speech given by the U.S. president to both Houses of Congress. This would not be a declaration by the government, but rather a general presentation of German interests and those forces which are relevant for the German role in Europe and in the world, and with or against which Germany attempts to define its interests.

The objective is to alert the citizens and increase their understanding about the consequences and resulting necessities of Germany’s embeddedness in global economic and political relationships. It is essential for citizens to be confronted with the trans-nationalisation and internationalisation of politics, economics and society. A major speech held regularly by the Federal Chancellor, dealing exclusively with the globalised world in which modern Germany finds itself and sees its responsibility, could help to communicate the view that Germany’s prosperity and security are based to a highly significant extent on international and European foundations. Public and media attention could be prepared and increased by making the speech the culmination of a series of events, accompanied by thematically similar publications, such as by research institutions.
Proposal 12: Establishing an international journalists’ programme for promoting international dialogue and political communication

The objective of the journalists’ programme is to make it possible to experience Germany as a locomotive of transformation, modernisation and innovation, as well as to promote mutual understanding and confidence through sustained international networking rather than – as in the past – bilateral arrangements. Foreign media should be offered a platform for getting to know and understand German positions in their national and global context, as well as developing a sustainable network for multilateral information exchange.

For this purpose, the Federal Government will organise a programme held annually in Germany for journalists from countries which are important in terms of strategic foreign policy (such as BRICs, EU, USA). This would deal with contentious issues (such as financial policy, energy, migration and security policy) which are significant for foreign countries and Germany alike. This proposal internationalises and extends the existing programme for journalists, e.g. by the Foreign Office, which is largely bilateral. Part of it involves setting up an online platform for journalists who regularly report on Germany.

The German Foreign Office should be the political sponsor of this programme as a result of its experience in promoting media as well as its existing foreign structure.

Proposal 13: Strengthening Germany’s sustainability image internationally

The Federal Government should conduct a „sustainability“ image campaign primarily targeted abroad. The objective of the campaign is to associate the globally known „Made in Germany“ brand with the quality feature of „sustainability“ in order to position Germany more strongly in the international arena as a pioneer, and thereby promote the initiation of sustainable development processes in other countries as well.

In this way, „sustainability“ will be associated with German products and services (including education) as a further positive highlighting characteristic, as well as a feature of the German commercial system and its geographical location. The formal economy supports this campaign, for example ideally as a source of ideas and impulses for communicative implementation, etc. The state-owned company, Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI), represents an institution with experience in questions of location marketing and with an excellent network of business contacts, which can function as a catalyst. By accompanying activities domestically, the image campaign would contribute to promoting awareness of Germany’s pioneering role in questions of sustainability amongst politicians, business people and society in general, as well as mobilising the motivation and resources for innovations and investments in order to uphold this location advantage.5

Germany is seen in the world as a credible model and a pioneer in sustainability issues. Sustainability is already a key component of the German economic system – from its production sequences through to its wealth creation and change processes. The German sustainability strategy and the German Council for Sustainable Development are highly respected abroad – not least because they are anchored „high up“ in the Federal Chancellery.

The fact that sustainability is currently on the way to becoming part of the international mainstream – coupled with Germany’s credibility as an economic power oriented towards sustainability – gives additional encouragement to successful positioning of the image, and also places Germany under pressure to take action. State and commercial actors in particular must define sustainability as part of their self-conception and one of their key areas of expertise in order to communicate a credible sustainability image of Germany in the long term.
International mobility of skilled workers

Proposal 14: Shortage of skilled workers and international mobility of skilled workers

A package of measures is proposed for promoting the international mobility of skilled workers by the Federal Government; this package should actively include the business sector and take account of the needs of the countries of origin, in dialogue with them. The package of measures consists of the following elements, which are co-financed by German business, amongst other sources:

- Reform of immigration law
- Development of suitable recruitment modules by means of „agency agreements”
- Development of integration modules
- Measures to accompany the stay in order to cushion the impact in development policy terms
- Publicity campaign within Germany

At present, Germany is not positioned well enough in the global competition for the cleverest brains in order to be able to ensure high-quality immigration to the necessary extent. In the external perspective, Germany is currently associated with the following location disadvantages above all: unclear immigration law, not very friendly to foreigners, low integration readiness, relatively undeveloped welcome culture, high language barriers. Counteracting this will require not only state control for sustainable and temporary mobilisation of skilled workers, but also the engagement by German business in particular with regard to identifying the requirement for skilled workers, providing assistance in the process of attracting skilled workers as well as international public relations work by the Federal Government.

1 For more information about this, see also the references by working group I.3.a) „Self-image”.
2 See also proposal 7 of working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture” on setting up a dialogue process: „Guiding principle for the innovation culture in Germany”, pg. 80.
3 See proposal 9 of working group I.3.a) „Germany’s self-image” „Justifying Europe once again. A communication strategy for the Federal Government”, pg. 60.
4 See also proposal 4 of working group I.3.a) „Germany’s self-image” „Improvement in the training of the upper echelon of the federal administration”, pg. 57.
5 For more information about this, see also the proposals of working group II.1.b) „Sustainable economic activity and growth” from pg. 84 onwards and working group II.2.a) „Uniqueness and location identity” from pg. 93 onwards
How do we want to make a living?
Introduction to topic II:
„How do we want to make a living?“

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Klaus Henning, academic coordinator topic II

The topic of „How do we want to make a living?“ is of interest particularly because it poses the question about our future livelihood, both economic and ecological: How should we work? How will our economy remain internationally competitive? What do we mean by prosperity, quality of life and progress? And how can we create sustainable innovations which are beneficial both to our environment and our economy? Realistic answers to these questions over the time horizon of the next ten years will always have to take account of two aspects: What we are and what we want!

1. For our future, we need to have a German economy and society that acts in a future-oriented and sustainable manner.

- Germany enjoys a significant international reputation for its type of social market economy with the tried-and-tested principle of social partnership. In contrast to the American model, the social market economy offers a sustainable basic structure for an economy which is not only competitive but also fair and sustainable. Our economy is only sustainable if it satisfies the requirements of today’s generations without endangering those of future generations.
- German SMEs are a classic example of this: Our family firms provide about two thirds of all the jobs and more than 80 percent of all apprenticeships in Germany. They shape regional milieus and undertake social responsibility.
- In order to shape our future, we need space for innovation and experimenting in which creativity, readiness to take risks, learning from mistakes and a culture of independence can be practised.
- A sustainable society must cultivate its available resources sustainably. This applies to material resources (energy, raw materials) just as much as to immaterial ones (skilled workers).

2. Germany is on the path to becoming a knowledge and service society with a strong industrial core.

- The strong German economy is based on our historically rooted and unique combination of engineering knowledge, skilled work and commercial proficiency – expertise that is in demand worldwide.
- In contrast to many other countries, we have never neglected the further development of industry and technology. Our industrial cores combined with intellectual property and service products are the decisive basis for areas in which we are world-market leaders.
- Radical technological innovations must be strengthened in future and integrated into existing products and business processes more rapidly in order to secure and extend our location advantage. At the same time, our expertise in structural change will become a decisive competitive advantage, because global challenges will increase and Germany has lots of systems expertise to offer, which will help to overcome the challenges.

3. The „Made in Germany“ cachet is increasingly developing into the „Enabled by Germany“ brand: Germany is becoming the specialist for highly complex industrial and infrastructure development processes all over the world.

- At the same time, Germany like scarcely any other country is combining the traditional virtues of reliability and accuracy with rapidity and flexibility.
Germany supplies **highly specialised parts, components and sustainable system solutions all over the world.**

In order to retain and expand these skills, however, it will be necessary to have a continuous re-structuring of education processes in all phases of life, through to an interdisciplinary and networked approach. Also, the politicians must lay the groundwork so that our economy can develop blueprints within this context for sustainable products and services for the world market.

4. **The job market cannot find enough young people. And we are living longer and longer.** This demographic change is altering the entire age and employment structure of our country. It is by no means to be regarded simply as a negative trend, but it nevertheless demands decisive measures.

**We must not live at the expense of coming generations.** Measures should aim to utilise the potential labour force more comprehensively. It is important to create attractive working conditions which take account of the needs and possibilities of various employees, and motivate them to work. One promising approach involves a **life phase-oriented working time regulation** which affords employees in all age groups the flexibility effectively to combine commitment to work with specific events in life to a special degree. Many people will not just be able to work longer, they will also want to. For this purpose, we will need to create suitable structures under the guiding principle of a „**Healthy Germany**“.

**We will become increasingly reliant on qualified skilled work in all career groups in order to maintain and expand our location advantage.** Once again, young people must be made enthusiastic about the German vocational training courses which enjoy high international recognition. It is important to draw attention to the attractiveness of work in Germany in order to keep qualified personnel in the country and attract internationally qualified workers.

There is a scarcity of young people in our country, therefore we must **rely on German society welcoming immigration and integration** – as part of the **dream of a Europe which shapes its future on the basis of its Christian values.**

The proposals made in this topic area should contribute to enabling Germany to face the future – as a country which contributes to the national and international division of labour through skilful cooperation, without wanting to do everything itself.
II.1. An economy capable of meeting the challenges of the future

Working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture“

Experts: Key expert Univ.-Prof. Dr. Marion A. Weissenberger-Eibl.
With: Prof. Dr. Lambert Koch, Wolfgang Müller-Pietralla, Prof. Dr. Eckart Severing, Dr. Philine Warnke, Dr. Manfred Wittenstein

Our concern – More mobility in the innovation culture

Germany is highly innovative, an important problem-solver with regard to the global challenges of our time, and represents quality, precision and efficiency. This positive image is enjoyed by „Germany in the eyes of the world“. The causes of this are seen as including the performance of its SMEs, its work training and the effective convergence between academia and business. As a result, Germany’s success is not based on the performance of individual geniuses, but its roots lie in the special innovation culture – the totality of its actors, structures and the routines of the German innovation system. However, the image of Germany is not an unreservedly positive one. Lack of flexibility in thought structures, neglect for the potential of migrants living in Germany and international exchange with scope for expansion – in short: the ability to take the broader view – are regarded as deficits in Germany’s innovation culture.

Germany is rich in innovation capital and scientific resources. However, we are lacking the ability to handle our opportunities and resources creatively, and there is also a dearth of positive guiding principles. As a result, we would like to have an innovation culture which builds on our strengths – fairness, inventive spirit and determination – and connects with modern values, permitting an open and adaptable society with responsibility for the future. Innovation is not an end in itself, but rather a communal task and a means of keeping our country worth living in. The high level of participation in the citizens’ dialogue and numerous individual proposals document the readiness of our citizens to take part and display their creativity. We need this openness and willingness to experiment. Although innovations always go hand-in-hand with risks, the more innovation processes we allow to take place in parallel, the greater we can spread the risk and the more opportunities we have for success. To do this, we need greater mobility in the innovation culture. We require general conditions and processes which allow many to take part, we must expand our innovative skills and break down barriers in education and integration.

Politicians cannot change the innovation culture on their own. However, they can set the tone: They can address the issues and put them on the agenda of research, innovation and education policy. They can shape general conditions, open up opportunities and promote new approaches. And they can initiate social debate, and thus become a pioneer of a paradigm shift. Thinking about our innovation culture and its further development represent long-term tasks which must be addressed jointly with all actors.

Initial situation

The general conditions for the innovation process in Germany are the known and adequately described mega-trends such as globalisation, demographic change or the threatened scarcity of resources. Traditionally, the innovation culture in Germany has been characterised by features that, in some cases, differ significantly from those in other countries. They include, for example, the role of SMEs, the work training system or the
diversified research landscape. In the past, technological leadership was an important refuge of the innovation culture; however, over the coming years, Germany is going to be confronted by the general conditions of various essential material and immaterial resources becoming increasingly scarce.

The innovation process in Germany is, at the same time, embedded in social changes that have direct consequences for the innovation process. Post-material attitudes and values are becoming increasingly important, and these not only have an influence on the acceptance of certain innovations, but are also reflected in an increased appetite for the population to participate and be involved in shaping events.

However, it is not just the environment for innovations that is changing. Also, the ways in which innovation is conducted are changing, as well as the issues that are addressed by innovations. Even today, the changes in our innovation culture are clear to see, for example in the form of open-source communities on the Internet. Also, innovative social practices are being discussed under the heading of „social innovations“, by means of which social tasks can be resolved. New forms of mediation between supply and demand, new coordination mechanisms and new constellations of actors are providing new opportunities for business and academia to make use of potential synergy effects. One precondition for this is the availability of well-trained skilled workers. However, this is where there is the threat of a shortage, and one which is already apparent today in the engineering sciences. Basically, it is necessary to ensure that the apprenticeship and education systems dovetail with the requirements of the modern worlds of living and working.

In view of this situation, there are deficits in three areas which should be addressed by suitable measures; by doing so, it should be possible to make a significant contribution to the further development of the innovation culture in Germany.

Dealing with scarcities: In view of the threatened increasing scarcity of resources (mineral and energy resources, education and skilled workers), there is a requirement for additional skills as a way of dealing with these scarcities creatively. This offers the opportunity of asking the question of what are the fundamental material and immaterial resources that the innovation process and innovation culture in Germany need, and how these resources can be cultivated in a sustainable way. For this purpose, innovative skills must be disseminated more widely in future than is the case with the specialisation which is normal nowadays. This includes anchoring the innovation culture in the education system throughout all phases of life, starting from early-age education, tapping as yet unused education resources as well as showing greater self-initiative and independence. There is significant need to catch up here. Our task is thus „rethinking innovative ability“.

New freedoms: Innovations require creative freedoms within which they can unfold, as well as fundamental skills for dealing with a future which may be uncertain, but nonetheless lends itself to shaping. For one thing, this requires infrastructures for innovations which forge new connections between technical and social elements, as well as opportunities within which new forms of innovating can be experimented with. For another thing, the complexity and long-term nature of the relevant (global) developments demand a strategic procedure predicated on fundamental social skills for dealing with an uncertain future (future literacy). So far, these freedoms have not been adequately available for us in „learning and experiencing innovation“.

Knowledge integration and system orientation: Innovations and innovation processes are becoming increasingly complex. Different interdisciplinary knowledge, experience and skills must be brought together in order to achieve successful (system) innovations. However, there is a lack of impulses and mechanisms in order to bring together the capabilities and experience from business, academia and education in an efficient way through mutual exchange, because they are often fragmented and compartmentalised. In order to develop innovation-oriented skills in future, we will thus need to think more about „implementing and networking innovation“.
The challenges associated with this will not just be tackled by means of developing detailed solutions. Rather, it will be important to see how the innovation culture can respond to the modified general conditions, and use them productively. Politicians are faced with the task of initiating and controlling activities and measures in quite diverse fields. To do this, it will take, not least, the ability to coordinate policies in different fields coherently with one another. In view of this situation, we propose the following measures.

### Rethinking innovative ability

Proceeding with innovations as a task for the whole of society under the conditions of ever-scarcer resources requires a new and broader-based approach to learning the importance of innovations and the skills for shaping them. We must learn to use our available resources efficiently and to tap the potential they provide systematically. The Federal Government should support this process with the following measures:

**Proposal 1: Dialogue forum „Scarcity is the mother of invention“**

Holding a dialogue forum entitled „Scarcity is the mother of invention“ with business, academic and political experts as well as representatives of civil society and interested citizens in order to answer the question of which material and immaterial resources should be regarded as central to further economic and social progress, what intelligent approaches to sustainable husbanding of resources could look like, and how the actors can be made more aware in order to arrive at mutually consistent strategies for actions and coherent approaches to policies. This also includes the questions of how resource consumption can be decoupled from economic growth, how quality of life can be assured despite lower growth and how an innovation culture ought to look on the other side of the growth paradigm.

**Proposal 2: Concentrated action „Education in Germany – Open to all“**

Professional learning is varied and happens in many ways. However, the education system in Germany only recognises and certifies what has been learned in its institutions using regular methods. This must be corrected by an overarching and concerted campaign (conducted for example by the Federal Chancellery with the involvement of the ministries responsible at national level for safeguarding the provision of skilled workers, namely the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi)) in order to prevent professional skills lying fallow, „creative minds“ failing to gain promotion and bearers of knowledge becoming demotivated. Instead, certification which is almost exclusively linked to initial education courses should be opened up. Access to the same or equivalent certificates should also be available to those who can demonstrate corresponding learning performance and skills. At the same time, it should also be possible to represent partial qualifications – e.g. in credit systems based on training modules. This would enable citizens to use professional experience, qualifications obtained abroad and knowledge acquired in unfinished courses on the job market, with the possibility of bolting on additional courses.
Proposal 3: Concentrated action „Education in Germany – Open to all“

A sustainable culture of independence is one of the decisive preconditions for strengthening an innovation culture in Germany. This can only come about if a programme of measures is developed and promoted at national level with the aim of achieving a systematic and long-term development of the necessary attitudes and skills amongst adolescents along the entire education process (Germany in international comparison, e.g. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2011). The government can go to work on strengthening the social entrepreneurship approach, facilitating application processes in the „funding jungle“, in investment finance, in taxation and legal regulations as well as unfavourable regulations in labour legislation, such as in the area of protection against dismissal. „Carers“ according to the one-stop agency model, such as in the network-based starter centre approach in North-Rhine Westphalia could be rolled out nationwide for this purpose.

The founding qualification must be firmly anchored alongside this in a manner appropriate to age, taking a spiral curriculum approach from the primary school stages up through to university education. The objective is to lead young people to a jumping-off point which will allow them to think independently in each phase of life as a promising decision-making option for success – encouraged for example through competitions such as youth start-up companies. Numerous proposals from the citizens’ dialogue indicate possibilities for supporting independence and start-up activities in Germany.

Learning and experiencing innovation

Amongst other things, innovations are dependent on providing the seed beds in which creative potential can develop and grow, as well as spaces within which dealing with uncertainty can be practised. The objective is to provide freedoms within an all-embracing sense: as individual freedoms just as much as within companies, organisations and (legal) structures within which food for thought can be developed, new approaches trialled and the results made available to wider groups in society. The innovative capability of society relies on the innovative skill of individuals. The Federal Government should thus support the following measures:

Proposal 4: Creation of „innovation experimentation spaces“

One central element for strengthening the innovation culture in Germany concerns formats which permeate the breadth of society and create the space in which social creativity and self-initiative can be applied for the benefit of society. „Platforms for social renewal capability“ identify options, potential and initiatives amongst citizens within regional contexts and help to make it possible to put them into practice („help to help yourself“). This help can include developing appropriate organisational solutions (such as interdisciplinary innovation networks or model regions with regional innovation laboratories (“living laboratories”), overcoming administrative or institutional hurdles in the course of such solutions and creating the necessary financial freedom of action to do this (e.g. as public–private partnership [PPP] finance). The requirement for freedoms of this kind is made clear in a series of proposals in the citizens’ dialogue which, in different ways, address the use of creativity and the „wisdom of the many“. The Federal Government should play an initiating role and formulate a requirement profile for these institutions as well as providing a budget in order for private providers to apply for a time-limited subvention. The budget could then be used for bolt-on financing of regional initiatives which contribute to promoting the innovation culture and are able to demonstrate private co-financing. Commercial actors should be included just as much as non-commercial ones (e.g. ranging from the year-round junior university and organised but informal citizens’ activities through to a commercial „innovation hub“ for companies).
Proposal 5: „Young people taking to the highway“

Politicians are promoting and supporting possibilities for young people to gather experience of living abroad in an early phase of their professional life, thus creating positive effects for world market-oriented German wealth creation. This should be addressed equally to students and apprentices, and should focus on transferrable experience primarily, rather than on experience specific to a particular training course. This could involve programmes and measures which are directly linked to an organised by the government, relevant cooperation with education and research institutes, industrial associations and companies as well as a financial participation in commercially based programmes (or indirect financial incentives for private engagement) founded on roles and rules that are to be defined.

Proposal 6: „Creative minds – ideas learning to run“

It is a task for the whole of society to bring young people into contact with natural sciences and technology at the earliest possible stage, to promote interest and to give them the opportunity of demonstrating their own capabilities. Furthermore, outstanding performance in this area must attract the necessary public recognition – creative and imaginative young people with the determination to put their ideas into practice should be honoured as the „stars“ of society. Politicians should create incentives for private engagement and establish practically oriented competitions in cooperation with companies which can be entered by schoolchildren aged between 12 and 18.\(^9\) For this purpose, the Federal Government could cooperate with the „MINT“ business initiative (an initiative for future development based on mathematics, information technology, natural sciences and technology) in order to examine how such a competition could be designed on the basis of existing initiatives.

Proposal 7: Dialogue process „Guiding principle for the innovation culture in Germany“

Within a dialogue process of „Guiding principle for the innovation culture in Germany“, representatives of all social groups could be familiarised with the long-term trends that are relevant to Germany in society, technology, ecology, economy and politics as well as the systematic connections between the subsystems; their awareness of the ability to shape the future could be strengthened and shared ideas arrived at regarding the basic features of a resilient innovation culture in Germany which would be sustainable in the future. The objective is to create a broad awareness of future challenges and opportunities for the innovation location Germany, and the ability to shape the future positively through creativity and innovation.\(^{10}\)

Implementing and networking innovation

Innovations are dependent on general conditions which promote and facilitate their implementation, particularly with regard to increasing interdisciplinary requirements. For this purpose, it is necessary to do more than provide specific impetuses and support measures from politics for specific innovation projects and approaches to interest young people in the task of innovation. It is also necessary to provide transfer mechanisms within the diversified German innovation system with its various actors from academia and business, which will address the systematic and interdisciplinary character of innovation processes in a more specific way. The following approach is available to the Federal Government:
Proposal 8: Establishing a transfer programme organised by the Federal Government and the federal states („Excellence initiative transfer“)

As a complement to the successful programmes of „Excellence initiatives“ and „Quality pact apprenticeship“, it is proposed for a „Quality pact transfer for promoting cooperative structures between academics and practitioners“ to be launched. Universities and practical partners (companies and other organisations) work together to develop intelligent, practical and transferrable approaches and concepts for an improved flow of knowledge and more efficient utilisation of knowledge in the exchange between academics and practitioners – which would benefit companies just as much as it would improve training and continuing education. Participants in the citizens’ dialogue also see the need for optimisation in this area.11

Within the scope of the Federal Government/federal state transfer programme, the actors are called upon to develop creative approaches for knowledge transfer. For example, a transfer through continuing education would be possible:

Proposal 8 a: „Technology transfer and exchange through increased participation by universities in the continuing education market“

The objective is to increase the profile of universities’ activities as education institutions in the continuing education market. For this purpose, it is necessary to establish or intensify contacts with companies, at the same time as adapting the course programmes to the needs of customers. This increases cooperation, for example by the mechanical engineering institutes of universities, with the didactical departments of universities, and thus achieves a better focus on tuition.

However, the transfer must not be construed as only functioning in one direction. Indeed, the necessary improvement in training at universities can also be achieved through formats that actively involve practitioners. The following examples illustrate the bandwidth of possible measures:

Proposal 8 b: „Engineering course – increasing innovative potential through interdisciplinary training“

Students from various departments work on interdisciplinary projects to address practical tasks, and thus gain a broader view. As a result of the general trend towards networked working in development teams, there is a necessity for harmonising different ways of thinking, development processes and individual working methods to an increasing extent. Tasks set by industry can generate additional motivation, because there is guaranteed to be topic relevance, a link to practice and content support (product and sector-specific knowledge).

Proposal 8 c: „University-controlled cooperative industrial projects“

Professional actions are practised in „university-controlled cooperative industrial projects“, at the same time as innovation potential in companies being promoted. The industrial placement portions of courses are optimised by involving skilled workers from the company at the same time as promoting the innovation potential in the company. At the same time, students learn to apply their knowledge strategically in compa-
Proposals 8 d: „Implementing a quality management system for university courses“

With regard to the training, the measures should be rounded off by „implementing a quality management system for university courses“ (e.g. in a pilot project for mechanical engineering and electrical engineering) aiming for greater study success and training according to need. Both preventative and interventional measures can be developed for this purpose in order to reduce the drop-out rate as well as defining the optimum time for applying them in the course of study (application, study and graduation phase).

1 For more information about this, see the survey by the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) „Germany’s external perspective – Conclusions for international cooperation“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/gizstudie.

2 For more information about this, see also working group II.1.b) „Sustainable economic activity and growth“, proposal 12: „Social dialogue on the central question: Germany – pioneer and locomotive for sustainability?“, pg. 91.


4 See also working group III.2.a) „Professional and life-long learning“, proposal 1: „Skills passport as a companion for lifelong learning“, pg. 152.

5 For more information about this, see working group II.2.a) „uniqueness and location identity“, proposal 4: „Increased anchoring of entrepreneurship in the entire higher education system“, pg. 95.


Innovation culture working group


10 The importance of dialogue processes is also emphasised by other working groups. For more information about this, see working group II.1.b) „Sustainable economic activity and growth“, proposal 12: „Social dialogue on the central question: „Germany – pioneer and locomotive for sustainability?““, pg. 91, and working group II.2.b) „Prosperity, quality of life and progress“, proposal 1: „Citizens' dialogue on quality of life, Vision 2040 – for my children“, pg. 104. There are also points of contact to proposal 6: „Setting up a staff for long-term analysis and strategic forecasting“ of working group I.3.b) „Germany in the eyes of the world“, pg. 67.

Never before have people in Germany had it so good as today. Thanks to a high-performance economy, committed people and secure social cohesion, most people are able to lead their lives in freedom, security and prosperity. However, as can be seen from the financial and sovereign debt crisis, we are paying for this by accumulating debts and outsourcing costs. To a significant extent, we are living at the expense of others, at the expense of future generations and at the expense of the environment. Never before in the history of humanity have ecological systems been placed under such high levels of strain, never before have public budgets been as debt-burdened as in the past few decades, with serious and in some cases irrevocable consequences.

The central idea of the sustainability concept can be summarised by the task that each generation must solve its own problems itself, and must not pass on the burden to coming generations. At the same time, economic, ecological and social dimensions of this task must always be considered with an integrative approach. Our economy can only be sustainable if it satisfies the needs of today’s generations without endangering those of future generations. As a result, sustainable economic activity and growth involves retaining our natural livelihood and providing for its protection, permitting sustained prosperity and progress through an innovative and competitive economy as well as giving everyone the same opportunities and possibilities for development in an open and free society based on solidarity.

For Germany, sustainability means responsibility and opportunity at the same time: In the face of major global challenges, Germany as a high-performance industrial nation bears responsibility – towards other countries and also towards future generations. The opportunity is to be seen in the fact that sustainable innovations „Made in Germany“ are in demand on the world market. In this way, sustainability can also inspire „green growth“. If we create freedoms for efficient, environmentally compatible and socially adjusted innovations in technology, business and administration in our own country, this can become a blueprint for supporting others on the path to greater sustainability, and thereby simultaneously improving our competitiveness on the world market.

Proposals

It will take concerted action by numerous social actors to accelerate the implementation of sustainability as a guiding principle – and the decision for the turnaround in energy policy was an important step in this direction. Politicians must undertake a coordinating function in this. Firstly, they must set guidelines for business and establish reliable general conditions which provide security of planning and support sustainability in production and consumption. Secondly, they must ensure that the guiding principle of sustainability is put into practice in the drafting, promulgation and implementation of laws. And they can only achieve these two ends if they are capable of achieving social acceptance for the corresponding measures, something which is predicated on creative and institutionally anchored forms of communication and participation.
Economic actors’ group – incentive systems and environmental policy framework for the economy

Proposal 1: Promoting innovative markets for environmental protection and sustainability without prejudging the outcome

Promoting innovations for environmental protection and sustainability should concentrate more strongly than it has in the past on the early, creative phase of innovation development.

a) Research and development in the area of sustainability innovations – i.e. innovations which make the value-added chains more sustainable – should receive more financial support through improved funding for government research institutions and tax incentives in the private sector. This could be financed by releasing funds by dismantling subsidies that are harmful to the environment (see proposal 2).

b) Financing of young, innovative companies during their start-up phase through venture capital should be made easier. For this purpose, withholding tax should be better coordinated with corporate taxation, and it should be possible to carry losses forward in other legal forms than only the corporation.

c) Promoting the spread of new environmental technologies should be oriented towards selection criteria (e.g. compliance with certain environmental and social standards), but not however linked to a specific technological implementation pathway.

In Germany, there is a highly advanced system for promoting environmental technologies that are already advanced in the diffusion phase, particularly in the energy sector (e.g. Renewable Energy Act). However, the early phase should be promoted more strongly, without prejudging the outcome, as a result of the extraordinarily high importance that innovations have for the competitiveness of Germany’s economy, as well as the significant potential for German environmental technologies. Not only does this relate to environmental technologies in the narrow sense, but to all innovations which help to make the value-added chains more sustainable.

Proposal 2: Dismantling of environmentally harmful subsidies

Environmentally harmful subsidies should be dismantled. According to estimates by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Germany spends about €40 billion annually on subsidies which provide incentives for environmental pollution. Examples include the preferential treatment for air transport (e.g. energy tax exemption for jet fuel) or assistance measures for the development of new commercial areas. These subsidies should be gradually reduced across the board over a lengthy period, for example by ten percent each year. Also, indirect subsidies via the back door of taxation law (e.g. preferential treatment for SUVs through differentiated car tax rates) must be dismantled accordingly. The reduction plan should be worked out under the coordination of the Federal Chancellery by the Experts’ Council for Environmental Issues, the Federal Government’s Scientific Advisory Board on Global Environmental Changes as well as the scientific advisory board in the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi).

Subsidising environmental degradation by the national economy contradicts sustainability in dealing with nature just as much as the principle of a sustainable national budget. In addition, subsidies restrict the freedom of action of future generations, because the increasing duration of a subsidy makes it difficult to abolish it.
Proposal 3: Closing loopholes in the implementation of environmental policy measures

In many areas, existing (environmental) laws are not adequately enforced. This includes, for example, recycling electrical scrap or illegal fishing in international waters. It is important to strengthen state monitoring and to pull the economic rug out from under the feed of illegal conduct. In the case of illegal export of electronic scrap, for example, a deposit system should be introduced which offers an incentive for used electrical devices to be returned to the dealer.²

Effective implementation of environmental policy measures is of decisive importance for consolidating and increasing the reliability of a political culture of sustainability.

Proposal 4: Promotion of environmental innovations by slowly increasing energy and raw materials taxes

At present, incentives for saving energy and raw materials are predominantly provided by regulatory instruments (e.g. Energy Saving Ordinance) and financial support programmes (e.g. subsidies). This policy should be supplemented by increasing the price of energy, resources and land use by means of a long-term, tax-driven scheme. This is because slowly increasing the price of basic industrial raw materials will induce innovations which cannot be detected at present, and thus which are not able to be promoted by proactive government programmes. Ideally, there should be a long-term, gradual price escalator which creates a high level of investment certainty. The rate of increase could be linked to average increases in the efficiency of the national economy, as a result of which the costs for energy users would remain constant on average.

It would be necessary to offer compensatory measures in order to avoid an excessive overall tax burden on the national economy and overloading energy-intensive and strategically important industrial sectors. For one thing, the energy tax reduction should be structured to be more weighted towards offering incentives and linked to energy reduction measures, whilst otherwise being maintained at a moderate level; for another thing, taxes without environmental relevance should be reduced accordingly for all companies in order to avoid increasing the overall burden on business. Furthermore, adaptations would have to be made to the social transfer system in order to avoid social distortions.

There are several reasons for such fiscally motivated price rises on energy and raw materials:

- a) Innovations in the area of environmental technologies should be profitable in the medium term, even without government sponsorship. This will only be the case if the primary energy sources and primary raw materials become more expensive, something which can be expected only to take place in the medium to long term by means of world market prices. Innovation research shows us that good market prospects are the most important factor governing the growth of innovation markets. Early, government-induced price rises for primary raw materials thus improve the market opportunities of new technologies with lower raw material consumption in the medium to long term.
- b) This will make it possible to shift subsidy programmes to new areas of innovation which are currently unknown, with little political resistance.
- c) Progress in the area of energy and raw material efficiency is frequently thwarted or indeed over-compensated by modified behaviour (the rebound or boomerang effect; compare this to the concept of a „paperless office“). This effect is counteracted by a policy of increasing the prices of
raw materials, because fiscally motivated price rises offer incentives to use innovations in environmental technology on the one hand, whilst on the other hand there is no indication of an increase in demand if the tax is raised in line with the efficiency gains.

Proposal 5: Exploiting sustainability potential in public procurement

The Federal Government should:

- Define clear criteria for sustainability in public procurement
- Based on this, identify the proportion of sustainable procurement across-the-board, make the procurement process transparent, efficient and uniform, and monitor it
- Set ambitious targets for increasing the proportion of sustainable procurement in all product groups – to at least 80-90 percent by 2020
- Create conditions for taking account of sustainability in financial and requirement planning.

Public procurement has a high potential for sustainability. However, it is currently highly dependent on the motivation and competence of the people responsible for procurement as to whether this potential is utilised, because sustainable procurement is voluntary. Furthermore, the process of procurement is generally put on the same footing as the principal stage, despite the fact that decisions taken before and after the order placement have a central influence on the environmental effect of public procurement.

Political actors’ group: Strengthening of sustainability through transparent development and testing processes

Proposal 6: Increasing the effectiveness of sustainability management

In order to strengthen sustainability, the Federal Government has introduced „sustainability management” into its National Sustainability Strategy, something which provides management rules, indicators, targets and monitoring. In spite of many good approaches, the effectiveness of this sustainability management is still capable of improvement in central points.

a) An independent committee should regularly check whether defined targets and indicators are still appropriate, and how both should be adapted if necessary in order to reflect changed conditions and visions of desirable futures. The German Council for Sustainable Development could support establishing a committee of this type by involving the Experts’ Council for Environmental Issues, the Experts’ Council for Assessment of Macroeconomic Development and the Federal Government’s Scientific Advisory Board on Global Environmental Changes.

Indicators are always selective and can never take account of the whole picture. It is all the more important to have the appropriateness of this selection examined regularly and independently. Is there problem shifting? Do new insights into absolute pollution limits make it necessary to adapt the indicators? The committee to be formed would have to assess these questions and work out new indicators and future scenarios with recourse to participation processes (see proposal 11) in order to encourage political and public debate about desirable futures.
b) Every target set as part of sustainability management should be linked to specific measures (see proposals 7, 8 and 9). If targets are not systematically linked to measures, success will remain uncertain. At present, the sustainability strategy has too little influence on the departments’ political actions. The Federal Government should subject the status of sustainability management to political interpretation once a year, and report to the Bundestag on this.

c) Important actors and responsibilities should be named across department boundaries for target achievement at indicator level when goals and indicators are being set. Management will only succeed effectively if specific targets are associated with specific measures and specific responsibility.

d) Monitoring of target achievement should be improved. There should be a clear definition of what procedure to take if the target is missed. As long as no procedures are defined to ensure a course correction is made if targets are missed, monitoring for sustainability management will not be an effective control instrument, it will remain purely descriptive and will not have either administrative or political consequences.

**Proposal 7: Strengthening of sustainability testing in the legislation process**

Greater attention must be paid than before in the legislation process to ensuring that the consequences of legislation are examined with regard to their effects on sustainable development. This is the concern expressed in proposals 7, 8 and 9 – with successive increases in effectiveness and obligation, as a result of which the corresponding political processes also become more extensive.

a) Specification of the content in order to improve the sustainability test in estimating the consequences of legislation⁴

The currently applicable sustainability test as part of estimating the consequences of legislation should be documented and communicated more effectively so that this test can also be examined (e.g. by the Bundestag). Furthermore, transparency should be improved regarding the test criteria and the result of the test. Finally, attempts should be made to increase the level of implementation (2012: 77 percent) and also to test draft laws by the parliament.

The Common Ministerial Rules of Procedure do indeed prescribe that the explanatory memorandum should explain whether the effects are in accordance with sustainable development, although this is not made specific enough, it is not done transparently or substantially, and above all there is no evaluation or monitoring.

b) Organisational precautions for improving the sustainability test in estimating the consequences of legislation

Staff positions or officers for sustainability should be established in all Federal Ministries in order to examine whether the draft laws have been subjected to the sustainability test, and to effect adaptations if necessary. The scope of the test should encompass administrative regulations that should be produced on the basis of the sustainability strategy. If there is a conflict between departments, the responsible positions should be able to cast a suspensive veto which, ultimately, would have to be exercised by the particular minister in the cabinet. However, this would be done with the objective of promoting interdepartmental agreement at an early stage prior to the approval in cabinet – arranged via an interministerial working group and/or consultation by the Secretaries of State.
If, in practice, the sustainability test proves to have deficits, this is chiefly because the criteria of the National Sustainability Strategy are complex, and can only be implemented on an interdepartmental basis. As a result, this interdepartmental orientation should take place at an early stage in estimating the consequences of legislation, and be anchored in the organisational procedures.

Proposal 8: Strengthening the implementation of sustainability strategies through institutional precautions

Above and beyond proposal 7, independent institutions should be established to monitor implementation of the sustainability strategy overall (monitoring):

a) At the level of the executive (1st stage), the Regulatory Control Council should monitor and check the implementation of the sustainability test in the federal ministries.

b) At the level of the legislature (2nd stage), the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development should be strengthened as a committee of the Bundestag. Alternatively, a sustainability officer (ombudsman5) of the Bundestag could be established, and should be integrated into the decision-making processes as a representative of the interests of future generations.

c) Objective cooperation in established Federal Government/federal state-committees (above all as part of the ministerial conferences of the federal states) should be expanded and focussed more specifically on the general and strategic questions of applying the sustainability principle.

Institutions entrusted with the specific task of examination, and thus which are relatively independent although integrated within the organisation, ensure effective implementation of the sustainability strategy in the entire legislative process. Existing institutions will be used at the level of the executive and legislature, although their remit would be extended and their role strengthened.

Proposal 9: Strengthening of sustainability through change to the constitution

a) Anchoring a sustainability test in the Basic Law

If sustainability is going to become an effective guiding principle of state actions, then sustainability must be recognised as a constitutional principle in a new Article 20b Basic Law, and linked to an implementation order in the sense of a sustainability test. This new Article 20b Basic Law should read as follows:

„The requirements of the sustainability principle are defined in a National Sustainability Strategy, in particular in the interests of future generations. They must be taken into account in the definition and conduct of all state policies and measures. To this extent, the Federal Government and the federal states must take suitable organisational and institutional precautions."

The precautions under proposals 9 and 10 should be safeguarded in constitutional law in the interests of their effectiveness. This applies in particular with regard to the federal states, because the Federal Government only has a very limited influence over their administrative processes and organisation (see Articles 83, 84 Basic Law). The proposed Article 20b Basic Law would also oblige the federal states to orientate their administration which is of significant importance to the implementation of federal laws, towards the requirements of the sustainability principle.
b) Constitutional anchoring of an experts’ council for sustainability

In order to guarantee sufficient implementation of the sustainability principle in the legislative process, and independent experts’ council for sustainability should be established and equipped with constitutional authority – in contrast to the current German Council for Sustainable Development. This experts’ council for sustainability should be composed of members with the greatest possible expertise in the areas of sustainable environmental, social and economic policy, and be elected half by the Bundestag and half by the Bundesrat. It should be anchored in a new Article 20b para. 2 Basic Law:

“In order to guarantee effective implementation of the sustainability principle, an independent experts’ council for sustainability will be established, the members of which will be elected in equal proportions by the Bundestag and Bundesrat. The council assesses the National Sustainability Strategy and, on its own initiative or in response to an application by organs involved in the legislative process, examines laws with regard to their compatibility with the sustainability principle. Further details are regulated by a federal law with the consent of the Bundesrat.”

Specific tasks of this experts’ council for sustainability which is to be set up:

Assessing the particular National Sustainability Strategy of the Federal Government, and, if necessary, recommending corrections approved by a majority of its members.
In case of serious doubts regarding the compatibility of a bill with the sustainability principle, it would have the opportunity within a three-month period to submit opinions and recommend any necessary corrections approved by a majority of its members; furthermore, it would have the opportunity to impose a suspensive veto with a 2-thirds majority within eight weeks of a bill being approved by the Bundestag. Following a period of reflection, the Bundestag decides whether to take account of the objections.

If the appropriate protection of future generations is to be accorded practical significance, the legislature must institutionalise long-term state responsibility through regulated processes and forms of organisation. Through anchoring in the constitution, the experts’ council for sustainability is assured political authority and public attention. The right of veto, which only has a suspensive effect, would promote political and public debate without implying an independent right of decision, and to this extent would not stand in the way of the principle of the separation of powers or the democratic principle either.

Society actors’ group: Information and participation

Proposal 10: Setting up a „sustainability metabel“ for products

Private consumption plays an important function in implementing sustainability. To allow the sustainability of a product to be assessed in the purchase decision, there is a need for a simple and generally applicable standard to provide orientation. As a result, the Federal Government should instruct a sustainability metabel to be established. This metabel should have a modular and multi-layered structure, awarding sustainable products and services. As a first step, the metabel should define a minimum standard on the basis of information that is already available. In the medium term, the basis of information for the metabel should be improved by establishing an integrated product information platform. This platform should give consumers transparency with regard to the sustainability of products and companies, at the same time as giving companies transparency with regard to the sustainability of their input products and suppliers Following start-up
financing by the Federal Government (such as through the Stiftung Warentest consumer organisation), this platform should be supported by commercial companies. The German Council for Sustainable Development should work together with the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection to produce a plan for implementing this measure.

There is no lack of labels, but there is the lack of a general standard which qualifies a label as a sustainability label; this is because the increasing number of product labels merely makes purchase decisions more confusing. A metalabel could counteract this effect, facilitate sustainable consumption and thus also indirectly influence companies’ production.

Proposal 11: Communal citizens’ participation for a successful turnaround in energy policy

It will only be possible to implement the guiding principle of sustainability through social consent and support. As a result, there is a need for constructive dialogue between citizens on the one hand and decision-makers in business, politics and society on the other, as well as active participation by the citizenry in collective planning and decision-making processes.

a) It is recommended for a participation programme to be anchored at local-government level and for financial and organisational support to be given to innovative participation formats for the sustainable reconfiguration of the local-governments in question (above all in the areas of energy, housing, nutrition, mobility).

b) The content of this initiative should be directed towards each local-government authority making a significant contribution to the turnaround in energy policy or to another objective of sustainable development in cooperation with local groups and the citizenry on the ground.

c) Based on experience with this initiative, the Federal Government should prepare documentation with best-practice examples (amongst other reasons for overcoming local obstacles), in order to offer assistance to other communities which wish to inaugurate such an initiative themselves.

d) This format could also support the process of working out citizen-based visions and scenarios which will be incorporated into the defined targets and indicators of sustainability management (see proposal 6).

The Federal Government should provide financial support for this project and request submissions in order to choose the best implementation concepts at local-government level. This should involve giving awards and support to about 100 local-government projects. Furthermore, the entire planning process should be accompanied by an institutionalised group of relevant actors, (e.g. network operators, public authorities, local-government authorities, environmental associations) and be given support in terms of content and organisation by the German Council for Sustainable Development, with the effect that a continuous, confidence-building communication process will be guaranteed.

In situations in which decisions have wide-reaching consequences for shaping the world in which we live, feedback regarding social values, interests and preferences cannot be provided to politicians solely on the basis of the system of representation. People affected by the decisions frequently regard their own interests as inadequately reflected in the decision-making committees. As a result, there is a need for greater direct participation by citizens in decisions with a collective effect, above all at local-government level.
Proposal 12: Social dialogue on the central question: „Germany – pioneer and locomotive for sustainability?“

The transition to a sustainable society will take significant effort. It will only succeed if it is accompanied by intensive debate about desirable futures linked firstly to the achievements and traditions which have left their mark on Germany and, secondly, to the factors which will help to ensure that our country can face the future in the global community. As a result, a broad social dialogue with the heading „Germany – pioneer and locomotive for sustainability?“ could provide the opportunity to strengthen the many good approaches to sustainability which are already in effect, promote cohesion and keep our economy competitive in the long term within a changing world of tomorrow.

This dialogue should extend from the grass roots up to national level and involve citizens in a sequence of online and offline formats in order to gather together the many successful approaches for sustainable shaping of the world in which we live, gathering experience, forming alliances and self-initiatives, learning from one another and contributing to a vision for the future of Germany. For this purpose, the Federal Government should

a) establish a „Sustainable Development“ dialogue forum together with a provider in order to gather proposals as well as providing forums for exchange and current information.
b) organise regionally distributed sustainability forums in order to discuss the proposals submitted online with experts and decision-makers from politics, business and civil society, and to examine whether they can be implemented. The goal should be regional pilot projects.
c) appoint sustainability ambassadors to communicate these initiatives actively into society.
d) encourage special programmes to be established for schools and young people in order to familiarise young people with sustainable modes of living (e.g. learning software).
e) inaugurate a national „Keep Germany Tidy“ day as a day of action for cleaning up the environment (proposal from the youth conference of citizens’ dialogues).
f) Furthermore, numerous social actors such as non-governmental organisations, associations, clubs, churches and unions should be invited to provide subsidiary support for this dialogue process, and to identify points of contact for the National Sustainability Strategy in each of the relevant groups.

Apart from start-up financing by the Federal Government, many of the local and regional initiatives and events should be financed externally in order to raise the interest of the various actors in sustainability. Furthermore, the project could be linked to a sustainability publicity campaign directed abroad.

In addition to economic and regulatory policy, there is a need for communicative strategies to promote acceptance of the necessary processes of change in the course of sustainable development. For this reason, particular attention must be paid to comprehensible and consistent communication content which is appropriate for the concerns of people. Once attitudes and convictions have been established, they are frequently stubbornly held and characterise the way in which new information is absorbed and processed; for this reason, there is a need for communication at the earliest possible stage, which should also be as comprehensive as possible, on a multi-media basis and with methodological variety.

2. For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Deposit on electronic articles“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaeg_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_ididea=8864.
3. For more information about this, see also proposal 9 „Change in the law to promote sustainable state procurement“ of working group III.3.b) „Learning society“. 

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4 See also proposal 7 „Integrated assessment of the consequences of legislation prosperity, quality of life and progress“ of working group II.2.b „Prosperity, quality of life and progress“, pg. 108.


6 Innovations, and particularly also sustainability innovations, are of supreme importance for Germany’s ability to face the future, as a result of which this proposal shares the concern of proposal 7 of working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture“ for a „Dialogue process „Guiding principle for the innovation culture in Germany““; see also proposals 1 and 2 of WG II.2.b) „Prosperity, quality of life and progress“, pg. 104/105, which suggest corresponding dialogues for sub-aspects of sustainability (quality of life or participation).

7 For more information about this, see the survey by the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) „Germany’s external perspective – Conclusions for international cooperation“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/gizstudie.
II.2. Strengthening Germany’s strengths

Working group II.2.a) „Uniqueness and location identity“

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr.-Ing. Klaus Henning. With: Dr. Frank Hees, Prof. Dr. Silvia Martin, Prof. Dr. Christoph M. Schmidt, Prof. Dr. Frank Wallau, Prof. Dr. Frank-Hendrik Wurm

Our concern: Maintaining and expanding Germany’s structural variety

How do we want to make a living? In order to provide sensible answers to this fundamental question, we need to be aware of the skills that we have, and what challenges are confronting us. The working group on uniqueness and location identity thus dealt with the characteristic properties of Germany as an economic location and workplace. The central question here is how we can apply our strengths and global unique selling points in order to ensure Germany’s social prosperity given the growing international division of labour in the global economy.

At the same time, the prosperity of Germany in the future is more than just an economic value; it also includes the quality of life of all citizens. The objective must be to ensure the current and future well-being of people in this country on the basis of our unique socio-economic strengths. Targeted and continuous improvement in economic performance is an essential precondition for this: Only in this way can we create the freedom to avoid excessive state and private indebtedness, and to allow us to maintain our social system.

Germany’s identity is characterised by its structural variety. The equivalence of rank amongst urban centres and rural regions, the co-existence of companies of different sizes as well as the interplay between academic expertise and highly qualified skilled work ensure a high cultural and economic diversity – which is a decisive basis for the location identity and unique strengths of Germany. These strengths are linked to the Christian/Western culture of Germany, and are expressed to different extents on a regional basis. The link between competitive and innovative capability is one of the foundations of Germany’s view of its economy.

In combination with a comprehensive social security system and a reliable legal system, the social market economy demonstrably forms the crisis-proof basis for our social order. This is an order in which the social partnerships between employers and employees are nourished by a clearly pronounced capability of reflection, criticism and consensus. Processes of critical discussion and consensus-finding through dialogue are characteristic mirror images of the mature heterogeneous structures in our country. They form the basis which is required for developing joint solutions and achieving agreed targets.

Alongside the highly pronounced concept of solidarity and community, Germany is one of the most liberal countries in the world, one which – also due to its history – places great value on cultural tolerance, social justice as well individual freedom, and thus has already achieved a central part of the European dream today. On the basis of this „systems expertise“, Germany does not need to worry about new challenges. It has already proven its „expertise in structural change“ in the past. However, these strengths are not so clearly visible from outside as to make Germany adequately recognised as an attractive destination for investments and immigration.
Challenges and fields of action

Our Germany of the future will not come with a zero price tag – we must be able to afford it. In view of the up-and-coming developing countries and demographic change, we are only going to be able to remain competitive as an advanced industrial nation if we are able to bring forth innovations on a continuous basis which comprise technical, organisational and social aspects to an equal extent.

To do this, we must develop our industrial heartlands, further, which are characterised by their locations in creative regional milieus as a rule. After all, Germany was, is and remains a place of industrial production. In contrast to many other countries, a one-sided orientation towards the burgeoning service sector was avoided. The industrial heartlands have been retained in the country and have proven themselves to be a decisive basis for the international competitiveness of German companies. The combination of skilled manual work, commercial acumen and the arts of the engineer as well as the strong role played by family companies lay the ground work for our unique products and services. In the future too, they will form the most important cornerstones of Germany’s socio-economic location identity. With a view to global economic changes, it is important to strengthen these unique characteristics politically, as well as developing them economically.

Against this background, the working group has developed the following priority proposals:

- Supporting the opportunities for family firms to develop
- Strengthening education and skilled work
- Systematic use of German expertise in structural change
- Optimisation of government administration processes
- Strengthening the attractiveness of Germany

The proposals aim to contribute to Germany’s ability to face the future 1 – a country which integrates itself into the national and international division of labour through skilful cooperation, without trying to do everything itself.

Family firms – a strategic success factor

Just under 95 percent of all German companies are family firms. They provide more than 60 percent of the jobs subject to social security payments, and earn more than 40 percent of all sales in Germany. This means family firms have a fundamental socio-economic significance. The social–market character of the family firm and its social responsibility means that family firms are the central „locomotives“ of a sustainable economy, at the same time as providing the „home“ for a large majority of the population. The working group proposes the following measures to provide political support to family firms:

Proposal 1: Promotion of the innovative strength of family firms

The economic strength of many family firms is based on their innovative strength. Consistent research at the cutting edge combined with rapid implementation of the results in new products are particularly important for ensuring the future competitiveness of these companies on the world market. It is particularly those family firms which can no longer be categorised as small and medium enterprises (SMEs), but which are not „major concerns“ either which can improve their innovative strength through targeted encouragement, e.g. research cooperations with scientific institutions. The still-manageable size of these companies, however, means that
they do not always have enough funds available themselves for research and development, a factor which could endanger their leading technological position in the medium term. Promoting research in these „grown-up“ family firms could be done in two ways¹:

- Tax relief on the companies’ expenditure on research according to the French model (there, research expenditure delivers significant tax reductions; the procedure for demonstrating research expenditure is also highly straightforward in bureaucratic terms)
- Targeted research programmes by the Federal Government for larger family firms in order to ensure their technological leadership

Proposal 2: Strengthening the image of family firms

A politically buttressed marketing campaign should strengthen the image of family firms amongst the general public, and reinforce their outstanding importance for the self-conception of the German economy. In this way, encouragement will be given in particular to entrepreneurial spirit and the associated company foundations as well as boosting the attractiveness of family firms as employers. At the same time, the thousands of companies that are, in some cases, world-market leaders with their relatively small workforces turning out unique, highly specialised products and services, should have their profiles raised in particular beyond their immediate region. The campaign should be supported by political measures (such as inheritance tax on company succession, promotion of founding new companies, promotion of marginal areas as well with a view to securing young skilled workers, strengthening of the infrastructure, reduction in the complexity of regulation for small and medium enterprises).

Proposal 3: Interactive map for the importance of family firms

As a means of strengthening awareness of the economic and social importance of Germany family firms, and thus increasing their attractiveness and reputation, their performance and merits should be reported on regularly and continuously. In this context, it is necessary to examine whether there is a fundamental possibility in the official statistics, such as the company register, the micro census, etc. for family firms to be listed separately, or else what work would be required in order to include this criterion in the official statistics. Furthermore, implementation of detailed and multimedia information on German family firms within the scope of an interactive digital map of Germany should contribute to promoting the visibility and awareness of these special companies.

Proposal 4: Increased anchoring of entrepreneurship in the entire higher education system

To improve convergence between businesses and universities, a new dimension in interdisciplinary cooperation with companies must be introduced for all universities. This includes targeted campaigns by means of which young scientists and graduates of all courses are encouraged to found their own companies – for example in partnership with the Business Angels or by national competitions promoting interdisciplinary cooperation in economically relevant projects, which could also be combined with „Jugend forscht“ (a German youth science competition) projects.¹
Strengthening the importance of non-academic skilled work

Ultimately, innovations are always based on the knowledge and skills of the people who initiate and implement them. Outstanding education and training conditions are thus decisive preconditions for long-term innovative ability and competitiveness. Germany’s strengths in international competition are particularly based on the globally unique quality of German skilled work, which explains why there is a specific focus in this area of education. The lack of skilled workers which is threatening the existence of many companies should not just be regarded as a lack of academic engineers, but also one of non-academic skilled workers. Skilled work in Germany has been strengthened, for example by making the qualifications of Bachelor, Master and technical education qualifications equivalent to one another as part of the nationwide introduction of the German Qualification Framework. According to this development, further measures for strengthening non-academic skilled work are proposed:

Proposal 5: Appreciation initiative for non-academic skilled work

To complement the current „Vocational training – practically unbeatable“ campaign by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Ministry for Economics and Technology (BMWi), an initiative should be designed for appreciating the value of non-academic skilled work. This should push ahead with the sustained development of a nationwide network of schools, companies and intermediary institutions, in order to strengthen the attractiveness of training as skilled workers. What is involved here is in particular the process of working out possible interactions within the network (such as providing internships, organising company open days, holding training shows at schools, inviting economic players to attend school events) as well as increasing public attention for the pact for training and young skilled workers to include schools and other actors in the education sector.

Proposal 6: Integration of modules for skilled work in various phases of training

Integrating creditable modules for skilled work in various phases of training is intended to firmly anchor the aspects of skilled work in school, post-school and higher education phases. In this way, sustainably safeguarding unique German skills and expertise in industry, services and commerce can be supported. At the same time, this should improve transitional possibilities between academic and professional courses:

- School phase: integration of „skilled work“ practical modules in the upper schools
- Post-school phase: possibility of training as a skilled worker as part of the voluntary social year
- Higher education phase: obligation to provide a dual system of education for all courses at all types of higher education institute, especially in the areas of mathematics, information technology, natural sciences and technology (MINT).

Proposal 7: Increasing the education level, improving equality of opportunity

During the coming decade, Germany must start an education policy offensive to include the entire education lifecycle in order to increase the average education level in Germany and reduce the inequality of education opportunities. As a result of the high return on investment, education investments are focussed in the
elementary area where, in particular, the education investments will be increased for children under three years, as well as introducing an obligatory pre-school year and comprehensive provision of all-day schools. In the school sector, it is important to improve the transition from the pre-school year to primary school, and from primary school to the secondary sector, as well as reducing the number of drop-outs and increasing competition between schools. In terms of professional education, the variety of training groups should be reduced in favour of career groups, and an increasingly modular system established for less skilled young people. In the tertiary sector, tuition fees should be abolished and attempts made to achieve greater permeability of professional training right through to university study.

„Enablers“ for structural change

The special position of Germany in the international concept is now not only based on the excellent product quality („Made in Germany“) but also on globally recognised expertise as an enabler of complex production, wealth-creating and change processes („Enabled by Germany“). Against the backdrop of an aspiring global knowledge economy, this combination technical and management skills is opening up new markets for Germany in the international context, and represents a unique selling point which must be exploited economically. The international export of German expertise encompasses the following proposals:

Proposal 8: Systematic use of German expertise in structural change

As an enabler, for structural change, Germany must make even more consistent international use of its skills and experience as a mature industrial national economy in the area of regional and economic and structural change, as well as in complex system change processes such as the turnaround in energy policy. The proposal includes the following fields of action:

- Overcoming sectoral thinking in ministries, business associations, unions (greater system perspective, e.g. by project and matrix structures)
- Establishing a national (early warning) centre for monitoring structural change processes (with a recommendatory character for the federal states)
- Setting up a consultancy for international structural change processes (e.g. conversion of infrastructure and energy systems)

Proposal 9: Export of training as a skilled worker abroad

The work training system in Germany enjoys a high international reputation. In addition to direct economic effects, systematically exporting Germany training as a skilled worker abroad aims in particular to achieve indirect effects such as expanding access to highly qualified foreign skilled workers who can quickly be integrated, permitting international career paths for skilled workers as well as establishing German education standards internationally. Implementing the German training system represents an important basis for promoting development, in order to support developing countries in setting up internationally competitive markets independently. In this context, the proposal should also be understood as deliberate acceptance by Germany of its international global responsibility, which is demanded internationally.
The export of training as a skilled worker abroad includes, in particular

- Establishing training and training centres
- Advising foreign public authorities and institutions
- Developing skills by train-the-trainer concepts
- Promoting international career paths for skilled workers

In this process, it is first necessary to make such education services exportable, and provide corresponding institutions with entrepreneurial freedoms. The scopes of action here are:

- Competitive tendering for international service contracts by the federal ministries
- Foundation of a „Gesellschaft für Bildungsexporte“ mbH (a company to export education, referred to GBE) based on the „German Society for International Cooperation“ (GIZ)

Modern state

Successful socio-economic systems require efficient administrative processes. As a modern state, Germany has bureaucratic structures to guarantee a functioning public administration. At the same time, however, these structures also imply the risk of self-perpetuating excessive bureaucratisation – a tendency that has resulted in significant additional burdens on German citizens and companies over recent decades. Excessively bureaucratic structures and processes represent a serious brake on innovation, especially for small companies and foundation projects. As a result, a modern state must continuously reflect on and adapt its system of bureaucracy. In view of this situation, Germany has reduced the bureaucratic burden on business imposed by information obligations by just under 25 percent since 2006, and has thus already taken important steps towards further optimisation of administrative processes. Continuing to reduce the burden, with particular regard to small and medium enterprises, holds out the promise of freeing up important innovative potential. At the same time, building up new burdens must be minimised through developing a detailed and holistic comprehension for the potential and limits of current and planned measures in political legislation. The following measures are intended to optimise the administrative processes:

Proposal 10: Practical test for laws – establishing a culture of evaluation in politics

The effectiveness of the political regulatory framework and interventions should be strengthened by establishing a political culture of evaluation. Unwanted side-effects, long-range effects and repercussions could thus frequently be identified at an early stage, and projects changed or stopped accordingly. The first approaches to tackling this recognition can already be seen in the establishment of the Regulatory Control Council or in the formulation of the Common Ministerial Rules of Procedure, even if this does not yet provide a means of answering the question regarding success or failure with all the necessary degree of consistency. In order to implement a sustainable culture of evaluation, actors in politics and administration must be prepared to investigate successes and failures of measures empirically, and identify the corresponding causes. What is required is a constant interplay between the formulation of expected effects ex ante and effectiveness checks ex post. Useful evaluations of measures with complex interdependencies require adequate methods, as a result of which the academic quality and independence of the evaluators themselves should be continually assured. Ultimately, it is essential for there to be greater transparency in the data material generated during the political process as well as open and early cooperation between politicians and academics in order to establish a culture of evaluation, and to increase the efficiency of political legislation. Last but not least, the results
obtained during the evaluation of measures in a political area should be provided with complete transparency to the general public, or at least the other departments, possibly through establishing a corresponding information management system.

Proposal 11: Making administrative processes more flexible and optimising them

Increased efforts to reduce bureaucracy at the same time as giving special consideration for small and medium enterprises will reduce the economic costs of bureaucracy, which continue to be considerable, while increasing competitiveness and also boosting the appeal of Germany as a place for doing business. Picking up the reins of previous activities, it is proposed for a new target to be set for dismantling bureaucracy, an increased bonfire of red tape at European level as well as intensifying the discussion on the benefit of statutory regulations. Furthermore, a service and consultancy centre for reducing bureaucracy should be set up. Similar to the „Red Tape Challenge“ website provided by the UK government, citizens are provided with an Internet platform which enables them to initiate the removal of specific bureaucratic obstacles. Furthermore, companies and other institutions should contact a call centre directly in case of specific problems with bureaucracy, by means of which they can get in touch with trained and experienced employees to help them resolve the problem. Bureaucracy placements should be set up in companies for certain government employees in order to increase the awareness of public authorities for the obstacles and difficulties imposed by bureaucratic processes. In this way, bureaucratic actors will be able to shift their perspective and can input important experience from business practice into the future shaping of bureaucratic processes.13

Proposal 12: German export agency for modern administration and E-government14

Germany has sufficient technical and organisational e-government solutions available which can take effect in different organisational contexts. It is proposed that a specialised, national export agency should be set up for modern administration and e-government which would systematically analyse the available or implemented innovative e-government approaches in Germany and work on them until they can be marketed or exported. As a result of this, e-government and the associated services could become an effective economic factor. Expert orientation in administrative models and e-government has strategic significance for Germany. Particularly as an export nation, Germany needs reliable partner governments which possess a high level of good governance.

Although some activities are already being taken today by individual organisations and companies, these represent at best an uncoordinated combination. At present, there is no body in which the knowledge about modern government is being systematically processed on all levels – particularly for export.

Strengthening the attractiveness of Germany

In future, Germany will only be able to achieve appropriate rates of economic growth if it becomes attractive for the influx of capital and labour. Firstly, this is a question for Germany as location for investment which attracts investments from abroad and, in this way, secures its physical capital endowment. Aspects such as high legal security and a magnificent infrastructure in international comparison certainly play a part in this, whereas bureaucratic obstacles tend to act on the downside. Secondly, Germany must become even more attractive than before as a destination for immigration by highly trained migrants and their families as well as
young talents from abroad who can further their training here. They will either remain in the country afterwards as productive workers, or will return to their countries of origin as implicit ambassadors for Germany. At all levels of this striving to attract the influx of capital and labour, it is important to establish a „welcoming culture“, and make this better visible abroad.

Proposal 13: Migration as an identification factor

The decline in the volume of work in the course of demographic change as a result of the fall in the working population can be cushioned in various ways: Firstly, by making better use of domestic potential for workers, secondly by immigration of (qualified) workers. The following measures are proposed:

- A selection process with a points system oriented towards attracting applications from immigrants with high qualifications
- Supplementing the system with a right to rapid and nationwide evaluation and recognition of qualifications already obtained abroad
- Acquisition of young talented people who wish to expand their productive capacity as part of a study in the destination country following basic training in their country of origin
- Reinforced support for the efforts made by new immigrants to integrate themselves quickly with regard to the language

Proposal 14: Strengthening the process of discovering Germany through tourism

Under the heading of „Strengthening the attractiveness of Germany for foreign countries“, it is proposed that Germany should be opened up to discovery by tourists, with reference to various suggestions from the citizens‘ dialogue. Increasing the appeal of Germany to tourists with innovative products must go hand-in-hand with a new brand image. Alongside the classic tourist magnets (Romantic Rhine, etc.), the German entrepreneurial landscape must, for example, also communicate an esprit which appeals to young, mobile people all over the world. In this way, tourism can promote the desire to visit Germany and return again, because the country is perceived more positively and prejudices are dismantled. As a result, tourism has the potential decisively to counteract the shortage of skilled workers and greying of the population. The following measures are proposed:

- Combination of activities in the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology in order to increase international influence. This is necessary because tourism in Germany, like scarcely any other branch of the economy, suffers from a parochial mentality.
- The task of the tourism business must be expanded in order to increase the attractiveness of Germany overall in the aforementioned sense. Thinking about destinations must be replaced by a systematic perspective which delivers an image-generating effect as a result of nationwide, strategic control and combination of offers.
- Developing new and attractive offers for „digital residents“ (people whose everyday life is in large part characterised by the Internet): It is important to attract the enormous group of young potential tourists (and possibly subsequent immigrants and skilled workers) who scarcely differ from one another worldwide with regard to how they deal with new media.
1 The proposals represent measures prioritised by the working group, and thus do not provide an overview of possible national political measures in the topic area of ‘uniqueness and location identity’. The success and failure of political measures are only something that can be assumed in advance as a result of complex side-effects, long-range effects and repercussions, which means that all measures in the process of implementation should be evaluated by independent monitors in order to identify the effects and possible causes empirically, and adapt the measures accordingly.

2 According to the definition by the Institute for SME Research (Institut für Mittelstandsforschung) in Bonn, family firms are characterised by up to two natural persons or their family members holding at least 50 percent of the company’s shares, and at the same time being part of the company management. Family firms exist in all sectors of the economy and may be companies of different size – from your local hairdresser through to a global, high-tech concern.

3 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „The world appreciates Germany“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschläge/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=322.

4 For more information about this, see also working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture“, proposal 3: „Creation of a sustainable culture of independence“, pg. 79.

5 For more information about this, see also working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture“, proposal 3: „Creation of a sustainable culture of independence“, pg. 79; citizens’ proposals „We need more entrepreneurs! (those who actually do things, because we’ve got enough thumb-twiddlers)”; www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschläge/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=16407, „In future, we will earn money in other ways!“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschläge/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=5426.

6 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Knowledge is our raw material and we’ve got to safeguard it!“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschläge/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=8643.


8 See also working group II.3.a) „The future of work“, proposal 1a: „Strengthening professional work training“, pg. 115.


10 For more information about this, see the survey by the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), „Germany’s external perspective – Conclusions for international cooperation“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/gizstudie; also working group II.3.a) „The future of work“, proposal 1: „Initiative for developing a „dual education and training system“ brand“ pg. 114, working group II.3.b) „Working amidst demographic change“, proposal 1: „Employer brand for Germany: I love to work in Germany“, pg. 120. See also citizens’ proposal „We’ve got to stop paying for things that only cost money but don’t deliver any benefits“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschläge/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=5536.

11 Regarding the exemplary role of administration, see also working group II.1.b) „Sustainable economic activity and growth“, proposal 5 „Exploiting sustainability potential in public procurement“, pg. 87; working group II.3.b) „Working amidst demographic change“, proposal 2: „Federal administration as an attractive employer – using strengths, shaping variety and acting as a model for other employers“, pg. 121, citizens’ proposal „Fitness for civil servants – on the way to a service society! (the state as role model)“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschläge/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=14090.

12 For more information about this, see also working group II.1.b) „Sustainable economic activity and growth“, proposal 7: „Strengthening the sustainability test in the legislation process“, pg. 88, working group II.2.b) „Prosperity, quality of life and progress“, proposal 7: „Integrated assessment of the consequences of legislation „prosperity, quality of life and progress““, pg. 108.

The proposal was taken over from working group III.3.b, “Learning society” (authors: Prof. Dr. Stephan Breidenbach, key expert of working group III.3.b), Prof. Dr. Tino Schuppan, temporary expert in working group III.3.b).

For more information about this, see also working group II.3.b, “Working amidst demographic change”, proposal 1: „Employer brand for Germany: I love to work in Germany“, pg. 120.

Working group II. 2.b) „Prosperity, quality of life and progress“

Experts: Key expert Dr. Stefan Bergheim. With: Prof. Dr. Dr.-Ing. Christian Berg, Albert Braakmann, Prof. Dr. Georg Cremer, Prof. Dr. Jan Delhey, Denis Huschka, Prof. Dr. Andreas Knabe, Oliver Zwirner

Our concern: Systematically promote quality of life

Three long-term trends form the starting point for the work of the „Prosperity, quality of life and progress“ working group.

Firstly, immaterial requirements such as freedom, self-realisation and co-determination are becoming increasingly important in materially wealthy countries such as Germany. This also includes a growing awareness that the natural resources of the earth are finite, and that fulfilling material needs also has negative consequences. As a result, gross domestic product is becoming increasingly irrelevant for people’s concept of quality of life. Additional measurement parameters are required.

Secondly, social complexity is increasing at the same time as citizens’ information level is rising. Interdisciplinary topics such as integration, health or sustainability are becoming more important. Different and interlinked actors are becoming involved in important questions, as a result of which dialogues, experiments and large group methods are required in order to work out social priorities. This can supplement representative democracy and develop it further.

Thirdly, high levels of sovereign debt result in growing pressure for scarce time and financial resources to be applied where they can achieve the greatest benefit in terms of current and future quality of life.

Challenges and fields of action

The objective of our proposals is to promote the quality of life for people in Germany even more effectively and systematically than before. First of all, this includes pushing through a broader understanding of quality of life, one that goes beyond economic prosperity. Our proposals are based on such an extended understanding, and specify it. Quality of life cannot be described or measured directly, rather this can only be done with reference to its subsets such as health, education, material standard of living, natural environment and co-existence. In our proposals, progress means a continuously secured improvement in this quality of life. This is not just aiming at average values, but is differentiated explicitly according to population groups, as a result of which politicians can act in relation to target groups. Furthermore, our proposals are intended to make it possible for citizens to be involved more in the political process and play a greater part, with the effect that various socio-political actors will all be pulling in the same direction, with their efforts to increase the „quality of life“ coordinated better than before.

The ten proposals of the working group can be allocated to three closely intermeshed components of a continuous process: The first two proposals are about raising the level of decentralised knowledge by professionally supported dialogue processes, as well as achieving a pluralist understanding throughout society for a future of Germany that is both desirable and realistic, and then making it visible. Proposals 3 to 8 develop new yardsticks and reporting systems for quality of life. They take account of the interactions between the various aspects of quality of life, and reflect the image of the future developed in the first step. In order to control and support these tasks, finally, it is necessary to achieve an institutionalisation which is presented in proposals 9 and 10.
These proposals primarily aim to achieve changes at national level. The three trends described initially also affect other levels of the state and private organisations, however. Presumably, federal states, local-government authorities, companies and foundations will in future direct their priorities more strongly towards quality of life and improving it in the long term, as well as developing corresponding measurement parameters and reporting systems. Productive convergence between these activities represents a major challenge.

Many proposals were made in the Citizens’ Dialogue that are reflected in the ten proposals by this working group. Some proposals explicitly suggested using gross domestic happiness instead of gross domestic product3 or were intended to „orientate the development of society towards satisfaction“ 4. Our proposals are also aiming in this direction. Many other highly specific proposals on improving the quality of life for people in Germany are also reflected as elements of a desirable future or parts of the reporting system proposed here. The working group has developed a structure by means of which these specific citizens’ proposals can be allocated systematically.

Understanding and communication


We suggest that the Federal Government should start a citizens’ dialogue on working out a common – and simultaneously pluralist – idea for a desirable and realistic future for the Federal Republic of Germany and a shared understanding of quality of life, together with methods for ensuring it is improved in the long term. For this purpose, citizens should use a website and social networks to submit statements on their understanding of quality of life and suggestions for main topics in order to measure quality of life. Questions could be: What is particularly important for you in your life? What will be important for (your) children in 30 years’ time? What defines social quality of life for you? Please evaluate how well Germany is positioned in the various topic areas. In your everyday life, where do you see specific projects that are making a major and sustainable contribution to improving quality of life?
Furthermore, local events should be held in cooperation with local organisations, which should also be addressed at people (children, old people, sick people, etc.) who would be very hard to reach by an online dialogue. In order to ensure representativeness, it would also be a good idea to carry out opinion surveys on the most important citizens’ topics. The Citizens’ Dialogue of the Federal Government should have a limited time period of about half a year, although it should be repeated every four to five years, in order to record changing priorities and estimates in people’s minds. Between the dialogues, there would be space for additional dialogues on the level of local-government authorities and federal states.

The Citizens’ Dialogue on quality of life – and other dialogues on special topics (see proposal 2) – will lay a foundation for the „Germany worth living in“ reporting system (proposal 3): the reporting system will represent the things that are important for citizens. Thus, it is probable that a high level of relevance and acceptance for the reporting system will be achieved amongst citizens, media, politicians and in the public administration. The Citizens’ Dialogue also serves as an interface between society, experts and politicians. The citizens’ evaluations on the individual topic areas should provide the impetus for specific political decisions, and they should be taken into account in the progress report quality of life by the Federal Government (proposal 8).

Proposal 2: Dialogue process on participation and quality of life

We suggest that the Federal Government should start a dialogue process as a follow-up to the 4th National Report on Poverty and Wealth, which should focus on developing the quality of life of groups which are under a permanent poverty risk: These are people who, over several years and without any perspective for change, have a net equivalent income below 60 percent of the median value or who rely on unemployment benefit. The most important risk groups are people without professional qualifications, the long term unemployed, single parents and people in particular life circumstances (e.g. over-indebted households).

The key questions are how the participation opportunities of these groups can be improved, and how to prevent the risk of poverty becoming ossified and „bequeathed“ to the next generation. The Federal Government, federal states, local-government authorities, collective bargaining partners, churches, welfare associations, environmental associations and civil-society organisations will be invited in their corresponding responsibility. The objective is to generate specific obligations on the various political levels and in the civil-society organisations. Similar processes are also theoretically possible for other major questions relating to quality of life. The Council for Quality of Life to be established (proposal 9) and/or the proposed Federal Institute for Progress (proposal 10) will be involved in the process.

In order to work out common factors and obligations constructively instead of producing a clash of entrenched positions, the dialogue process will be supported by one or more external process supporters and independent academics. The process supporters can use methods such as dialogue interviews, appreciative enquiry or even study trips, as are already common practice in the organisational development of companies. The academics would address the topics and questions which arise in the course of the process from their own perspective.

A dialogue campaign could lend greater effectiveness to the wealth and poverty report than is currently the case, because it would oblige politicians and civil society to go beyond ritualised outrage and take concrete steps to overcome entrenched poverty circumstances and promote participation. This would also meet an important requirement in the analysis of quality of life: it should not just take a look at average values, but also differentiate clearly according to population groups.
Measuring and reporting

Proposal 3: „Germany worth living in“ reporting system

We propose that the Federal Government should enable a reporting system to be created via an institution which is to be founded (proposals 9 and 10), in order to record the status and trends in quality of life in Germany, as well as potential for future development. Quality of life should be defined in a multidimensional way (i.e. over various areas of life) and transcend material conditions of life. The areas should cover not only individual living conditions but also aspects of social quality of life. Important areas could be: Accommodation, income, work, work/life balance, education, health, political participation, environment, (public) security, social cohesion and subjective well-being. The topics worked out in the Citizens’ Dialogue will be input into the reporting system, which can be adapted and extended over the course of time in the light of new insights. Each area of life should be measured using several key indicators; the focus should be placed on objective indicators, although supplemented by subjective ones. Measured values with a summary character should be defined for each area of life and the objective quality of life. Furthermore, there should be an estimate of the individual, social, ecological, economic, etc. potential for future developments.

The reporting system enables a solid, continuous observation and reporting of the status, trends and potential for quality of life, e.g. using a traffic light system: green for areas of life with a good situation/improvement, red for an inadequate situation/impairment and amber for a situation that could be improved. The report is not just a litany of numbers, but also provides assessments and evaluations. In order to select the relevant key figures and undertake these evaluations, academics and experts from various disciplines ranging from the natural sciences to the social sciences will have to work together. It is not a report by the Federal Government, but the responsibility of an organisation without party-political affiliation. It can be used by politicians as a way of checking success, and provides the public with important information. A first draft version offers a basis for discussion in the Citizens’ Dialogue which, in turn – and together with academic innovations and other social discourses – initiates the revision of the reporting system. The report should be made every two years with specific products such as summaries for various target groups, complete report and additional technical report. The website with interactive elements should be updated on a continuous basis. Smaller studies into changing main topics should be published at least every quarter.

Proposal 4: Making the distribution of life chances visible

It is proposed that the distribution of life chances should be recorded in order to visualise the social, economic and ecological conditions of life amongst the various population groups. Such distribution information should provide a picture of the life situation of various population groups that is more realistic than the average values which have been frequently used to date. For this purpose, it will be necessary to have statistical data about various life areas (e.g. income, health or education), which should, if possible, also be interlinked. First of all, it will be necessary for the legislature to create the general legal conditions for linking together the various data sources, while as a second step, the statistical offices of the Federal Government and federal states, as well as research institutions of a wide range of disciplines will also need to be linked together. The distribution information and analyses on conditions of life will form a basis for the dialogue process on participation (proposal 2) and for the „Germany worth living in“ reporting system (proposal 3). On this basis, evidence-based political measures could be developed in relation to target groups, and then both implemented and verified.
The economic situation is frequently described using per capita gross domestic product. However, this parameter only provides information about an average, and not how this income is distributed. Even if average income has risen, it is possible for the development in the actual income situation amongst individual population groups to be highly diverse. For example, we are currently experiencing the situation that only a small portion of private households is participating in economic growth through greater income. To obtain a realistic estimate of the income situation, it is necessary to have information about (personal) income distribution which can be found in reliable micro-data for individual households. As a means of improving the data situation, it would be sensible to combine information from statistical surveys of households with data from income tax statistics. This would avoid further statistical burdens on citizens.

Man does not live by bread alone. Instead, quality of life is influenced by a great variety of factors. In this context, reference is frequently made to health, education, security, environmental situation, social contacts, etc. Even in these subsets of quality of life, averages have usually been employed in the past (e.g. average life expectancy), although the distribution is exceedingly diverse by population group. Here too, recording the actual distribution of health, education, security, environmental quality, etc. by population group would enable much more meaningful analyses. Furthermore, a bad situation in one dimension of quality of life can also have an amplified effect on other subsets, and thus lead to a vicious circle. For example, low education frequently leads to low income, which can then entail unhealthy nutrition. Considering the distribution in various subsets of quality of life in a combined way opens up entirely new analytical opportunities and new approaches for political measures.

Proposal 5: Comprehensive economic balance sheet

In addition to the „Germany worth living in“ reporting system (proposal 3) and as a significant basis for integrated economic analyses as well as estimating the potential for future developments, we propose a comprehensive economic and supplementary national balance sheet to include tangible assets, natural assets, human assets, social assets and financial assets. Companies regularly produce a balance sheet which represents an important basis for evaluating their success; however, none such exists either for the economy as a whole or for the state. A comprehensive balance sheet would make it possible to ascertain how the overall social assets are changing. Official statistics and academic research would thus be tasked by the Federal Government with working out calculation methods and including the other areas on a gradual basis starting from the existing data on financial and tangible assets, before moving on to refine the calculations. The first results should be available after two years, with a complete balance sheet prepared by the year 2020. Evaluation methods for company balance sheets could provide important impulses for this. Many companies now also produce knowledge balance sheets which reflect human assets and social assets.

This comprehensive balance sheet reflects the expanded understanding of prosperity and quality of life, which goes beyond measuring income. This proposal is linked to, amongst other things, the 3rd recommendation in the concluding report of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission in 2009: What is carried over into the future necessarily has to be expressed as stocks. The World Bank already uses such a method. Assets such as natural, human and social assets have not been analysed to any great extent in the past, although they are very great; they should be systematically recorded. The proposal provides a better basis for information to be used in public and private decisions, especially in economic, financial, social and environmental policy. This is above all because both desirable and undesirable shifts between various types of asset are made visible.
Proposal 6: Use the satisfaction approach for cost/benefit analysis of public projects

In future, the Federal Government should use the satisfaction approach in addition to traditional methods in cases in which formal cost/benefit analyses of public projects are undertaken, for which purpose immaterial goods have to be valued (e.g. in infrastructural measures or environmental protection). Furthermore, various ministries should employ pilot projects to examine how this approach could also be used in other areas. The information received by this method should also be taken into account in the national balance sheet (proposal 5).

The satisfaction approach represents a new path supplementing familiar methods for determining the value of goods which are not traded on markets. At the same time, the results of major population surveys are used for determining the relationship between the provision of public goods or the occurrence of undesirable social and natural events and people’s satisfaction. Using such data, it is possible to measure by how much people’s income could be reduced in order for them to have the same level of satisfaction as without the public good. This would provide a monitory measure for the benefit of this good or the social harm caused by undesirable events. In conjunction with cost information, the results obtained would make a contribution to optimum provision of public goods. In the academic area, the process is already used for the topics of unemployment, criminality, health, care, transport and, above all, the environment.

The task of this working group also included the question of how time and financial resources can be used in order to permit the greatest growth in quality of life, with optimum distribution over time. In order to perform social cost/benefit analyses, it is essential to have accurate information on the social value of public goods or the social effect of political decisions. As a means of comparing these with the costs of the measures, it should be possible to calculate the benefit of these goods in monetary equivalents. The advantage of the satisfaction approach is that it avoids the problems inherent in evaluation methods used previously. However, the satisfaction approach remains the subject of academic debate and is undergoing further development, as a result of which its use can only be recommended at present within a pilot project as a supplement to familiar approaches.

Proposal 7: Integrated assessment of the consequences of legislation
prosperity, quality of life and progress

We propose that all draft laws and regulations, plans, programmes and strategies at national level should be accompanied by an analysis of the effects on prosperity, quality of life and its long-term improvement to be provided by the administration. This analysis would follow a standard and systematic approach oriented towards the „Germany worth living in“ reporting system (proposal 3). For each area of life, the estimate would be made as to whether there are presumed positive, unclear or negative effects, or no effects at all, and when these occur in the time sequence. The list of areas to be examined should aim for completeness right from the start, even if individual (academic) methods for analysis would only be developed over the course of years. Furthermore, the administration can look at other effects which are not (yet) included in the systematic quality of life approach. Many laws, programmes, etc. are of a very specific nature, therefore they will generally be many with „no effects“ on life area XY, although it would be necessary to take account of indirect effects and feedback effects. Over the course of time, a more precise systematic approach should be worked out, although one which still corresponds to the „Germany worth living in“ reporting system, by means of which „micro-effects“ on sub-aspects of current or future quality of life could be estimated.
Wherever possible, the strength of the effects should also be estimated, either in quantitative terms by means of key figures or qualitative terms by categories such as dramatic, significant, insignificant, etc., in order to allow the consequences to be assessed more easily. Individual evaluations would enable a „consequences of legislation profile“ to be produced, thereby achieving a rough estimate of the overall impact. Projects which have predominantly unclear and negative effects in the first analysis should be analysed in more depth in order to provide the political decision-makers with a sound basis in their deliberations.

This proposal links together the other proposals with specific government action. For example, a reference is made to the Citizens’ Dialogues, because the analytical system and individual political projects should reflect the priorities of citizens. The reporting systems to be set up (proposals 3, 4 and 5) can be developed further in the light of the topics and indicators from the political area. In this way, the questions and concerns of politicians can be adopted and subjected to the academic litmus test. Furthermore, an estimate of the consequences would enable committees, associations and civil-society organisations to visualise their own consequences of legislation evaluations, and thus stimulate public debate. Furthermore, this estimate of consequences would also contribute to preparing the quality of life progress report by the Federal Government (proposal 8). The uniform systematic approach and the analyses undertaken will facilitate comprehensive reporting.

Proposal 8: Quality of life progress report

We propose that the Federal Government should publish an interdepartmental opinion in an annual „quality of life progress report“ regarding the most important policy areas to do with quality of life and their long-term improvement. The individual governmental activities over previous years and the planned activities are presented with their effect on various areas of life for current and future generations. The aimed-for targets in the relevant policy areas and the measures planned to achieve these goals are presented. On the basis of the „Germany worth living in“ reporting system and other, including international, reports, strengths and weaknesses are analysed and specific actions required in future are derived. The progress report combines a statement of account and an action programme. All presentations must pay particular attention to interactions and synergy effects between the areas. As a result of this, the underlying interdisciplinary topics can be analysed and discussed.

The quality of life progress report establishes a clear link between the other proposals and the actions of the Federal Government. The results of the Citizens’ Dialogues and the measurement systems for quality of life and assets have an influence on the structure of the progress report – and with the progress report, the Federal Government has the opportunity to address the dialogues, measurement systems and academic research results in detail. Closer cooperation between the departments is promoted through the networking between the federal ministries brought about by the structure of the report and the proposal for estimating the consequences of legislation; this will make it possible to derive synergy effects. In this way, new projects and initiatives can be created in the Federal Government regarding the interdisciplinary topics which citizens regard as particularly important, and for which the quality of life reporting system indicates that there is a need for improvement.
Institutions

The proposals made by the working group for developing desirable futures in social discourse as well as measuring and reporting on the quality of life of current and future generations must be linked together and soundly anchored in the institutions. An underlying institution should carry out the following tasks itself or as a client:

- It should design and create (or have created) the „Germany worth living in“ reporting system (proposal 3) as well as setting up and maintaining an interactive indicator website.
- It should reduce complexity by setting priorities and communicating accordingly. It should integrate proposals made by other actors and visualise interfaces between topics and social groups.
- Also, it should serve as an information transfer hub, i.e. by being the host of multi-stakeholder processes, networking reports and enabling dialogue processes to take place.

There was no consensus in the working group regarding the specific configuration of such an institution. Therefore, two possibilities are presented here. Proposal 9 is in favour of a strong role for academically recognised experts, and a focus on the current situation of quality of life, whereas proposal 10 envisages bringing together a large number of social actors in order to work out forward-looking solutions jointly.

Proposal 9: Using a council for prosperity and quality of life

We propose setting up a „Council for prosperity and quality of life“. This council comprises academics with relevant backgrounds who cover the full spectrum of relevant disciplines, and includes the actors of civil society in its work in an appropriate manner. The main task of the council is to organise a German quality of life report on a regular basis („Germany worth living in“, see proposal 3) and to transfer the insights into politics and the general public. Similarly to the report by the experts’ council on assessment of macroeconomic development, the council would submit the quality of life report to the Federal Government on a regular basis (every two years) in a manner which attracts public attention.

Organisationally, the council should have the following structure: A chairperson with an office and a staff of employees in order to organise the reporting, public relations work and knowledge transfer. The council itself is a committee composed of top-class experts which is institutionally independent; its functions would be to provide advice, expertise and combine these results into organising a quality of life report. The office operates under the instructions of the council in order to carry out all specific tasks such as achieving public attention for the topic so as to permit a continuous debate in civil society regarding prosperity and quality of life (for example by publishing smaller, thematically concentrated studies at regular intervals – such as every quarter). The extensive report appearing every two years would be based on expertise in the most important dimensions of quality of life (regarding the concept of the reporting system: see proposal 3). These experts’ positions are allocated to recognised academics, as is the case at present with the data report (published by the Federal Statistical Office and the Social Science Research Center Berlin).

Apart from some subsets of the quality of life – specifically the natural environment – in which additional empirical information would be desirable, the basic problem with quality of life reporting is not the lack of data, experts or research results, but rather the lack of combining insights and diffusing the results through politics and society overall. These two tasks require an institutional underpinning such as is suggested here with the council. The legitimacy and credibility of the council are increased because it is an independent in-
stitution (not bound to follow instructions). It is also beneficial in terms of legitimacy and credibility that the council is made up of experts, and the individual expert positions are subject to academic competition. In this way, the reporting will be able to absorb the latest indicators, methods and knowledge.

Proposal 10: Federal Institute for Progress

A Federal Institute for Progress (with its leadership changing every five years) could be a central network hub for all questions relating to quality of life and progress. It would be an interface between the various specialists, an experimentation space for new concepts, and would accelerate the transfer of knowledge. A small number of permanent employees from various disciplines would carry out interdisciplinary projects (such as relating to diabetes, mental well-being) together with people from ministries, academia, official statistics bodies, business and civil society. Regular publications (at least quarterly) which are easily comprehensible as well as events would promote visibility and engagement with society. An advisory council of users (politicians, welfare associations, churches, business associations) and an advisory council of the chairpersons of existing councils under the Federal Government would ensure the quality of work. It is necessary to examine whether the institute should also issue a request for quotes regarding the creation of the proposed measurement systems (proposals 3 and 5).

This proposal is based on the insight that experts may be the correct solution for complicated circumstances – in spite of the danger of analytical paralysis and exaggerated self-confidence. Human systems, on the other hand, are complex structures with, for example, cause/effect interdependencies that cannot be predicted. Ambiguity and emergence are the rule in complex systems. The correct way of dealing with this involves dialogues with those involved, experiments, large group methods, etc. The major challenges relating to quality of life and progress should thus be dealt with jointly by the relevant actors (citizens, politicians, academics, entrepreneurs, media, etc.) with their corresponding specific knowledge and perception instruments, as well as using the latest cooperative measures.

In addition, it is known that people are more likely to accept projects if they were involved in their creation. It is a major challenge to cultivate and develop our collective capability of seeing. As a result, the role of leading people changes from being heroes who can do everything and know everything, to one of being the hosts for broad dialogues. The doers should also be amongst the guests. They have brought about the most important innovations in the world (aircraft, containers, Facebook, etc.).

1 The working group would like to thank Prof. Dr. Heinz Welsch (Oldenburg University), Dr. Christian Kroll (Jacobs University Bremen) and PD Dr.-Ing., M.A. Giuseppe Strina (Osto Systemberatung GmbH) for their contributions.
5 The importance of dialogue processes is also emphasised by other working groups. For more information about this, see working group II.1.a „Innovation culture“, proposal 1: „Dialogue forum „Scarcity is the mother of invention““, pg. 78, proposal 7: „Dialogue process, Guiding principle for the innovation culture“, pg. 80, as well as working group II.1.b „Sustainable economic activity and growth“, proposal 12: „Social dialogue on the central question: Germany – pioneer and locomotive for sustainability?“ pg. 91.
6 See also proposal 7 of working group II.1.b) „Sustainable economic activity and growth“, „Strengthening the sustainability test in the legislative process“, pg. 88.
7 Proposal 9 is not supported by the leader of this working group and one other working group member.
8 Proposal 10 is supported by the leader of this working group and one other working group member.
II.3. The future of work in demographic change

Working group II.3.a) „The future of work“

Experts: Key expert Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr.-Ing. E.h. Dieter Spath. With: Walter Ganz, Prof. Dr. Jürgen Howaldt, Ulrich Klotz, Prof. Dr. Eckhard Kreßel, Prof. Dr. Notburga Ott, Prof. Dr. Ronnie Schöb

Work as a source of economic and social prosperity

Work is and remains the source for prosperity and social participation. Through paid work, we create the products, services and innovations which shape our prosperity. Paid work ensures our existence. Furthermore, it is through unpaid work such as in the family and household, in a club and the neighbourhood that we contribute to making our environment worth living in, and strengthening social cohesion. Ensuring prosperity for all means securing access to both kinds of work for all on a permanent basis.

Initial situation

The world of work is undergoing a far-reaching change: Places of work are changed, routine activities are automated, specialisation and international division of labour are increasing, the boundaries between professional and private life are becoming blurred. „Atypical“ forms of employment such as part-time work, temporary work, time-limited and freelance (project) activities are becoming more widespread. Work remains the source of prosperity. It is thus a socio-political task to enable everyone to have a permanent access to the sources of prosperity. Access to paid work can be facilitated by education measures concentrating in particular on people with a lower education level. In the future too, education will prove to be the best insurance against unemployment and exclusion from prosperity. Furthermore, the state must specifically support those people in their paid work who with their productivity are no longer able to achieve a market income which is above a socially defined minimum income level.

The fundamental change in the world of work entails risks and opportunities at the same time. For many employees, flexible forms of employment lead to a reduction in the extent to which they can plan their own work, and thus also plan how they safeguard their existence. Aspects of the entrepreneurial risk are transferred to the workforce. Flexible forms of employment are not clearly regulated under labour and social law. The blurred boundary between work and leisure can lead to compulsion to remain in contact at all times, and to over-exertion. As far as the companies are concerned, frequent staff turnover means that valuable knowledge that has been built up specifically for the company is lost. Employees who only work in the company for a short time identify less with its objectives. At the same time, both parties have opportunities for greater freedom. Frequently, people in a flexible employment situation can coordinate their professional and private tasks and plans more effectively. Changing requirements means they remain capable of learning, and flexible in professional terms. Companies can respond with flexibility to market requirements, secure their competitiveness and increase their attractiveness for qualified skilled workers.

Even today, employers are increasingly taking control over the rules of work within the scope of their possibilities. In many places, there is a move away from the usual forms of finding, retaining, developing and remunerating personnel. New forms of structuring working hours and working organisation are coming about. For example, there are companies which are developing new solutions whilst retaining the traditional value
system of permanent contracts of employment. Flexible working time models are intended to introduce a change of culture, which decouples career opportunities from working hours, safeguards continuing education of varying kinds as a component of the contractual working time regulation and establishes additional old age provision. Individual adaptations to the needs of the workforce according to their phase of life and career are structured flexibly.

Other strategies aim to phase out traditional work structures and processes by largely dispensing with employees on permanent contracts. Projects are to be dismantled into the smallest possible working packages and put up to worldwide tender via the Internet. Anyone can apply for these global mini jobs, including the former staff members. The contractors distributed worldwide then cooperate via the Internet, in what is referred to as talent clouds. Only the core workforce is to be kept on for maintaining customer relations and controlling the liquid resources. It is not the work but the permanent job that disappears under this type of crowdsourcing. Work becomes a commodity that is traded globally.

In virtual working worlds such as this, the „digital reputation“ becomes an important element in quality assurance on the employer’s side, which means it is a success factor for potential employees; this reputation is derived from various sources such as the current employer or client, other companies and social networks. Ensuring data protection, data security as well as transparent evaluation criteria and fairness will be a major task for such a system.

### Challenges

The structure of paid work must take account of the increased relevance of mobility, availability and accuracy of fit for both parties in a working relationship. Work outside of the paid work category must be given a new value in society, while the compatibility of paid work with non-paid work, or the change between the different forms of work, must be specifically promoted. At the same time, it is important to retain the existing technological lead and position at the head of the world-market, while tapping the demand from new markets with innovative and sustainable services. When doing this, companies must learn to deal with new demands on their innovative capability. The increasing global scarcity of resources is forcing them to direct their innovative efforts towards products and activities which make efficient use of resources. As a rule, this cannot be achieved by incremental (gradual) improvement in existing activities, which means the ability to achieve radical (breakthrough) innovation becomes decisively important. For the companies, this means that new capabilities have to be established, which are usually significantly different from the usual technologies, and these new technological approaches must be integrated into the existing business. As far as the employees of companies are concerned, it is thus especially important to have an interdisciplinary, technology-oriented continuing education. Service providers on all levels must learn to combine their understanding of the market with the expertise from new specialists, who may be incorporated in the network, in such a way as to make new creative activities possible. In addition, there is the challenge of mobility, of being able to act and react very quickly and straightforwardly, and in a frequently global arena, as well as the ability to learn new things time and time again. Radical innovations cannot be predicted. However, it is possible to create a favourable location climate which is capable of absorbing their effect. The process of work is a central element in this.

In view of these challenges, it is necessary to ensure that no gulf opens up between the winners and losers of changes in the world of work. In a social market economy with its proven model of organising work between social partners, it is thus the case that transparency, participation and collaboration will not lose their relevance as elements of the future of work. As a result, employers, employees and the state are jointly obliged to create new approaches here. The answer to the question „How do we want to make a living?“ includes structuring paid work and non-paid work with equal social and legal value as sources of innovation and prosperity, and safeguarding them in social policy and socio-legal terms.
Fields of action

The working group sees three important fields of action for structuring the future of work:

- „Learning what we need to be able to do“ - Developing an excellent dual training and continuing education system further for long and successful gainful employment.
- „Protecting what needs to be protected“ - Creation of an integrated legal code for labour law and social insurance which offers social security and social protection, as well as permitting freedom in detail.
- „Knowing how we can shape things“ - Implementing a research programme for sustainable solutions for designing work.

Learning what we need to be able to do

Proposal 1: Initiative for developing a „dual training and continuing education system“ brand

People’s performance is one of the key resources for the future of the economy and society. It is necessary to have an agile system of professional training and continuing education in order to make it possible to provide the necessary skills for developing and producing new products and services even under conditions of rapid change. Such a system must be capable of anticipating future requirements for professional skills and servicing them. It is the declared aim for human beings as a resource to be offered attractive development possibilities for their performance over a working life, throughout the entire biography. An initiative for offensive development of a „dual education and training system“ brand should transfer the advantages of work training to other education pathways and develop them further, since they are also internationally appreciated.

4 The heart of the matter is a systematic approach which does not separate learning, working and growing older, but rather links these with a suite of different, high-quality and certified training and continuing education offers during various phases of life.

The systematic approach of the activity proposal demands concentrated action by the responsible bodies at national and federal state level, the social partners and the training and continuing education organisations during implementation. Early detection is provided by the corresponding research organisations, which are capable of taking into account the interplay between early technology detection and early qualification detection. The „dual education and training system“ initiative can be started quickly, but it does demand a sustained and consistent engagement, at least over the medium term, in order for a brand with lasting impact to be established correctly.

The „dual training and continuing education system“ contains the following elements:

Proposal 1 a: Strengthening professional work training

With a decline in the number of school leavers, increasing tendency to study, technological change and growing internationalisation of many working processes, there are increasing demands placed on the dual professional education system. The objective must be to achieve further developments which support a
qualified opening-up of the system downwards, its upward permeability and greater flexibility in adapting the education content. It is necessary to examine to what extent the categorisation into Bachelor and Master courses introduced for university education in the Bologna Process can be transferred to dual professional training, with the key professions of initial education and certified development modules for continuing education. A pilot study in the industrial/commercial area can make it clear at which points there is space for new career patterns below existing skilled worker qualifications.

In this context, it is also necessary to strive to integrate new forms of learning into training and, in particular, continuing education. New didactic and methodological concepts of knowledge transfer as well as variants of technological support for learners can make a contribution in the initial education phase towards giving new attractiveness to professional education, particularly amongst groups of young school leavers who are difficult to reach. New media and networking permit learning directly at the place of work during continuing education. This includes a supporting campaign to qualify teachers at professional education schools as well as creating and maintaining corresponding technologies.

**Proposal 1 b: Concept of a „dual continuing education 50plus“**

Employment biographies are becoming more fluid, people are supposed to remain in their working lives for longer, the need for highly trained skilled workers is growing. The concept of a „dual continuing education 50plus“ aims to give older people the opportunity as well to obtain a certified education qualification in a recognised career path in the course of a (working) life. In this way, it can be possible to open up and utilise education resources, maintain employment capability until reaching pensionable age as well as remotivate the target group of semi-skilled and unskilled workers.  

**Proposal 1 c: Engagement for systematic early detection of qualification requirements**

Systematic early detection of qualification requirements is oriented towards technological changes, change in the organisation of work, innovations in products and services, employment and growth potential of activity areas, as well as tried-and-tested structures of associations and professional education. Systematic early detection provides responsible actors with the knowledge required to ensure that the offerings of work training jobs and continuing education options correlate with the needs in the economy and society. An important element in this will be locating early detection of qualification requirements at the earliest possible stage in the innovation process, and linking it to the observation of technological developments. Only in this way will it be possible to guarantee that technologically feasible developments do trigger the necessary developments in terms of quality in good time. Demographic change also means it is obvious for the early detection of quality requirements not just to be focused on professional initial education but also on continuing education contents.
Protect what we need to protect

Proposal 2: Creation of an integrated legal code for labour law and social insurance

The applicable labour law is distributed across what has now become a scarcely manageable number of individual laws and legislation. At the same time, in spite of this quantity, important trends in the world of work are not legally regulated, or if so then only inadequately. For example, the division between an employment contract and self-employment that applied over decades has changed significantly in practice. Numerous mixed forms have developed which are difficult to pick up in labour and social law. In addition to the classic type of core workforce with fixed working hours at a fixed place of work, more and more working relationships will adopt a form that is characterised by greater freedom for the employee with regard to the location, time and intensity of the work provided in formal terms, despite this also having features of a dependency relationship which is typical of an employee. In such cases, presence times cannot be used as the yardstick for performance and remuneration. For such cases, new and individual structuring laws must be created, and new points of reference found for protection laws. Protection laws must be oriented towards the specific protection requirement.

It is proposed that the labour law should be codified and summarised in an integrated legal code. In this way, it should be possible to create a clear and reliable legal framework for employees and employers. At the same time, opening clauses should ensure that social partners can quickly and accurately take account of the protection requirements of new forms of employment. The task of creating a uniform labour code results from the Unification Treaty of 1990. This step has been postponed repeatedly since then.

The step that now must be taken goes beyond a uniform labour code and evaluates not just the protection requirement at work but also the protection required under social law according to uniform principles in one legal code. The European Union treaties also understand „social security and social protection” to mean a uniform body of law to provide labour and social law protection of employees.

As a result, general conditions in individual labour law, in labour protection law and social insurance are important for work in the future, permitting a differentiated structure for different types of employed groups and their particular specific protection requirements.

The following items must be addressed in particular:

- Examining central legal and general conditions with regard to their appropriateness for controlling new models of gainful employment, contracts and working time models.7
- Codification and compilation of the labour laws distributed throughout individual laws and legislation, and description of basic structures for future-oriented social insurance.
- Consideration of necessary, also international, flexibility in employment biographies, and contemporary, adequate safeguarding of risks by social policy. The social insurance law should be configured so that different forms of employment (self-employed/employed; insignificant/significant; domestic/foreign) do not lead to gaps in the course of social insurance.
- Opening up the legal regulations with regard to the dynamic nature of forms of employment and aspects of participation, to allow individual and collective agreements. At the centre, there will be a concept for payment to be more strongly linked to the company’s collective result.8
The collection, examination and structuring of all existing regulations and legislation will initially involve experts from company practice, social partners, the judiciary and the executive. It would be possible to use sound proposals, such as from various foundations. Placing a research and development order for developing and describing types of work in the future could indicate possible solutions in order to meet existing requirements, and in particular to proactively shape the expected requirements for reliable regulations to cover future working relationships. The resulting information and knowledge base can provide the starting point for a legislative process in order to codify a clear, manageable and suitable legal framework for employees and employers.

**Proposal 3: Participation for all by redefining performance capability in the social state**

Supportive society must be given a uniform definition with regard to income tax and social insurance obligations. For this purpose, it is necessary to reduce the burden of social insurance contributions from low full-time incomes on a continuous basis. Tax is imposed on income above the defined socio-cultural minimum subsistence level, whereas this is not the case for contributions to statutory social insurance. Anyone who works has to pay. That means wages are subjected to social insurance rates of over 40 percent, even in the low-wage range. In contrast to the tax system, this charge applies from the very first euro that somebody earns. As a result, the performance capability principle is violated because even low incomes are used for financing social insurance without the social insurance contributions in the low-wage range justifying new claims against the supportive society. Anyone who is unemployed is already fully covered by social insurance. Taking up employment merely transfers the costs from the state to the employee without any modification to the scope of service. Social insurance contributions thus make work more expensive, and thus endanger jobs, particularly in the area where unemployment is already at its highest today, and will remain at the highest levels in future.

Reducing social insurance contributions on low full-time incomes will ensure that

- employees can achieve a full-time income above the minimum subsistence level, even in less productive activities;
- access to prosperity via access to work remains open to everyone, because companies will pay wages above subsistence levels if the costs of employment are sufficiently low.

**Knowing what we can shape**

**Proposal 4: Research and development initiatives „New forms of work 2015/2020“**

In Germany, the development of solutions for designing work in such a way as to create practicable, tolerable, reasonable and personality-enhancing workplaces and working conditions has been supported since the mid-1970s, amongst other things by research promotion programmes. From the „Humanisation of work“ in the mid-1970s through to the „Innovative capability in a modern world of work“, the support programme by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research running until 2012, a lot has been achieved. Even today and in the future, questions about good solutions for the sustainable use of human beings as a valuable resource
remain relevant: because economic areas and worlds of work are changing, because people’s values and expectations on their professional and life path are not the same. Shaping work effectively in the future means conceiving of workplaces and working contexts as an economic and social environment.

It is thus suggested for a research and development initiative to be instigated for „New forms of work 2015/2020“ by means of a support programme for designing work with a significant profile. The fundamentally changing realities of the world of work are bringing about a pluralisation in the forms of work and employment. These entail a series of contradictory effects. As well as opportunities offered by new freedoms, many employed persons are burdened by new psycho-social concerns which impinge on their working situation. At the same time, demographic change and the emerging shortage of skilled workers will turn companies’ ability to train qualified employees, attract them and retain them in the long term into a decisive success factor. In this context, it is going to become more important in the future for companies to be able to offer attractive workplaces. Questions regarding the quality of work will once again become important. It is people who drive economic development through their work and their creativity.

Against this backdrop, the question regarding conditions for retaining and further developing innovative capability at the level of structuring human work will become one of central future importance in government innovation policy.

A support programme for designing work 2020 should focus on the following aspects:

- Structuring human work as a central element of government innovation policy
- Organising the deployment of workers around the core processes of interactive value creation, the ability to provide services, knowledge work and innovation
- Quality of work between rationalisation and humanisation as a location and prosperity factor

The main actor in the proposed initiative is the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The time is favourable for an initiative with a high profile, because the current support programme will soon come to an end. The support programme for designing work 2020 was intended to take account not only of open research aspects in the establishment of theories, models and normative concepts but also solution-oriented design aspects which address the reality of the working world and its dynamic properties. A decisive factor in determining the success of the programme will be whether it can succeed in motivating not only the traditional research community but new groups of knowledge carriers to get involved in research and development regarding designing work for the future.

2 For more information about this, see also working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture”, proposal 1: „Scarcity is the mother of invention”, pg. 78.
3 For more information about this, see also working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture”, proposal 4: „Creation of spaces for innovation and experimentation”, pg. 79.
4 Regarding the importance of work training, see also working group II.2.a) „Uniqueness and location identity”, proposal 7: „Raise the education level, improve equality of opportunity”, pg. 97, and proposal 9: „Exporting skilled worker training abroad”, pg. 97.
5 See also results paper of working group III.2.b) „Integration of young NEETs“, pg. 159.
6 For more information about this, see also working group II.3.b) „Working amidst demographic change”, proposal 7: „Flexible exit from the labour force · working longer”, pg. 123
7 For more information about this, see also working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture”, proposal 3: „Creation of a sustainable culture of independence”, pg. 79, working group II.3.b) „Working amidst demographic change”, proposal 5: „Personalised life working time rule”, pg. 122.

8 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Employees should participate appropriately in the wealth creation of their company!“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschläge/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelsicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=10747.
"Working amidst demographic change" working group

Working group II.3.b) „Working amidst demographic change“

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr. Heike Bruch. With: Dr. Beatrix Behrens, Martin Hubenschneider, Dr. Ulrich Walwei, Michael Vassiliadis, Prof. Dr. Dieter Zapf

Initial situation

Numerous forecasts indicate a bleak picture of the future world of work. A demographic catastrophe is even referred to. So far, there is little to be seen of this. The problems will not really get going until 2020 onwards, when the baby boomers start retiring. Unless effective countermeasures are taken, forecasts indicate that Germany will have a shortage of two million skilled workers as early as 2020 (McKinsey consultancy). The forecast is for there to be seven million fewer people in the working population by the year 2030 than was the case in 2009 (Federal Statistical Office), with a shortage of more than five million skilled workers (Prognos economic research company).

In addition, the number of workers will be reduced by mental illness, emotional exhaustion or burnout. Their numbers have grown enormously over recent years. Even today, 40 percent of early retirements are on mental grounds. Also, only 30 percent of self-employed workers and 41 percent of contracted staff assume that they will be able to withstand the stress until their pension age of 65 (Association of Company Health Insurers [BKK], 2010).

The forecast shortage of skilled workers could represent a massive threat to economic growth. If Germany does not succeed in the competition to attract workers, the picture of demographic change will be anything between bleak and menacing. Consistent and bold actions are urgently called for. Only in this way will it be possible to fend off the demographic catastrophe. However, extensive opportunities are also associated with the demographic change.

Vision of a „Healthy Germany“

These opportunities for working in Germany amidst demographic change can be set in a positive picture of the future, which we have called the vision of a „Healthy Germany“. This vision describes a picture of the future to be aimed for, in which Germany develops in a healthy way in the long term. It is our concern that this vision should be implemented and become reality in Germany.

Working in a „Healthy Germany“ includes:

a) People are not made sick at work and due to work.

b) Complete physical, mental and social well-being (definition by the World Health Organisation WHO) of people at work, and thus also healthy and high-performing employees.

c) Healthy, effective and people-friendly companies as well as a country with healthy and sustainable systems and structures.

d) A „healthy“ and high-performing health system with services oriented towards the concerns of an older and evermore diverse society.

„Healthy Germany“ should stand internationally for productive, healthy work in Germany, and build on the „Made in Germany“ brand with the promise of „sustainable, based on partnership and socially valuable“.
Fields of action:

In view of the background of threats and opportunities posed by demographic change, the working group regards the following selected fields of action as central:

- **Increasing employers' attractiveness in Germany**: The competition is shifting in the job market. As a result, employers' attractiveness will become a decisive competitive factor, and one which must be increased in German companies (this term is used below to refer to all organisations providing employment, including public administrations and charitable organisations) and in Germany overall.

- **Promoting work based on phases of life**: Companies are becoming older, more feminine and more colourful. In order to meet the needs of increasingly diverse employees and motivate them to work longer and accept more work, it will be necessary to create more multifaceted selection opportunities and offers. Amongst other things, this must be promoted within personnel management oriented towards life phases.

- **Promoting working and employment capability**: In order to maintain working and employment capability, it will be necessary to promote (mental) health and healthy working conditions appropriate for older employees and an ageing workforce, as well as improving the employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

- **Steps on the path to a „Healthy Germany“**: On the way to responsible demographic management, it will be necessary to take measures that promote a corresponding awareness, create general legal conditions, publicise positive engagement and permit joint activities by politicians, business people, social partners, academics and selected key institutions (e.g. Federal Employment Agency and The Demographic Network ddn).

Companies must make a significant contribution to coping with demographic change. To date, many are not adequately prepared - it is important to strengthen the will, expertise and confidence to act responsibly and jointly amidst the demographic change.

**Increasing employers' attractiveness in Germany**

**Proposal 1: Employer brand for Germany: „I love to work in Germany“**

The objective of the proposal is to position Germany internationally as an attractive place of work (as a supplementary measure to the „Make it in Germany“ information portal, a shared skilled worker campaign by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology [BMWi] and Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs [BMAS] as well as the Federal Employment Agency [BA]). By 2020 at the latest, the „I love to work in Germany“ employer brand should be so firmly anchored that trained workers from abroad (possibly with the main emphasis on particular target countries and professions) will be enthusiastic about Germany as a place of work, and German skilled workers will be retained (stopping the emigration of highly qualified skilled workers, i.e. the brain drain).

The suggested procedure involves the following steps under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi) and/or Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the Federal Employment Agency (BA):
Identifying Germany’s strengths/weaknesses as a place of work: „What do employees love about Germany (as a place of work)?” This question could also be posed in a Citizens’ Dialogue.

- Development of a strengths and weaknesses profile in international comparison: „What are the characteristics of Germany as a place of work?”
- Setting limits on the to-be idea: „What are the expectations of those employees that we hope to attract to Germany by 2020?”
- Strategy and measures for strengthening Germany as a place of work brand: „How can the strengths be increased further by 2020? And how can the weaknesses be overcome by 2020?”
- Communications strategy for the employer brand: „I love to work in Germany”, possibly also with famous personalities, via social media, etc.

The results from analysing specific strengths and weaknesses of Germany as a place of work produces a large number of possible political intervention options, such as for promoting family orientation or work/life balance in companies, or else statutory regulations for flexible working hours and personalised life working time models with the possibility of choice. Germany’s competitiveness and the answer to the question „How do we want to make a living?” depend on whether companies succeed in retaining workers in Germany and establishing their attractiveness beyond the borders of Germany. A particular opportunity involves identifying Germany’s unique strengths as a country for working and living, making these strengths visible internationally and, furthermore, strengthening the premium brand of „Made in Germany” or, newly, „Designed in Germany” or „Enabled by Germany” worldwide.

Proposal 2: Federal administration as an attractive employer - using strengths, shaping variety and acting as a model for other employers

It is above all in public administration that a significant amount of catching up is seen to be done with regard to employers’ attractiveness, and this question must be addressed with a comprehensive package of measures. Various measures are suggested in order to attract new applicant potential, retain talent as well as „marketing” the multifaceted and interesting areas of activity more effectively:

- Designing and carrying out a marketing campaign for the federal administration, e.g. a common Internet platform with the possibility of individual presentations by the public authorities and what the employment offers, such as regarding compatibility between family and work/private life
- Formulation of joint recommendations for successful personnel marketing with consideration for experience from previous individual campaigns, such as the national action plan for attracting additional talents with a background in migration (applicant platform „www.wir-sind-bund.de”);
- Introduction of a life phase-oriented personnel policy with offers of personnel consulting on designing attractive working conditions for older employees and an ageing workforce, as well as a promotionally effective link-up to the reform programme of the Federal Government entitled „Networked and Transparent Administration”, and also implementation of the demographics strategy
- Promotion of exchange, in particular involving managers, between business and administration (see the example of France) in order to increase employers’ attractiveness and the mutual exchange of knowledge
- Expansion of the „New Quality of Work” initiative (INQA) to include working conditions in public administration.
Proposal 3: Employer excellence initiative for universities and non-university institutions

One area of particular relevance for Germany’s competitive strength is the attractiveness of German universities and research institutions. It is proposed for an employer excellence initiative to be called into being - an expansion of the excellence initiative under the responsibility of the Federal Government and the federal states to include the aspect of „Excellence as an employer“.

The primary objective of the proposal is to develop German universities and non-university research institutions into excellent employers which can compete internationally with leading universities (and to do away with unattractive conditions such as the widespread use of short-term contracts) and to increase their attractiveness for outstanding academics and scientists.

This initiative is intended to:

- Strengthen Germany as a science location
- Make German universities and research institutions into highly attractive employers worldwide, and thus even more competitive, above all in the international science market
- Attract excellent scientists and academics to German research institutions and retain them
- Create outstanding perspectives for employees at German universities and non-university research institutions
- Select and promote German research institutions with successful and promising proposals and ideas for excellent personnel policy (based on the „Excellence initiative of the Federal Government and the federal states for promoting science and research at German universities“)
- Promote cooperation between academia and business, also as a means of offering employee perspectives within the scope of personnel development

Proposal 4: Employer attractiveness campaign for the health system

In an aging society, a „healthy“ and high-performance health system is of increasing importance. At the same time, the lack of skilled workers can already be felt now in the health system (lack of doctors and nursing staff). It is important to achieve significant improvements in the attractiveness of working and employment conditions, professional perspectives and development possibilities as well as recognition of jobs in the health system. This is a matter of fundamentally realigning the system with the goal of retaining doctors and nursing staff in Germany, and attracting them from abroad.

Promote life phase-oriented working

Proposal 5: Personalised life working time rule

The more older people, women or people from other groups who need to be attracted into the labour force, the more important it is to think about the prevailing paradigm of „everyone works flat out“, and instead introduce a more flexible paradigm, namely „life working time varies individually in different life phases“. 
"Working amidst demographic change" working group

One effective measure here would be a nationwide regulation for personalisation of life working time according to life phases. This would create the legal possibility for all employees to vary their working time flexibly within bands and use their time according to their life phase (e.g. for childcare, care of the elderly, continuing education and sabbaticals, voluntary activity, gradual transition into retirement or company pension scheme). It is worth examining whether existing models can be transferred from companies (e.g. SICK or Trumpf) or from other countries. The Dutch „life-course savings scheme“ appears particularly interesting. According to this, employees have the legally guaranteed right to save a maximum of twelve percent of their gross salary and use this money for early retirement or individual periods of unpaid leave (in 2009, this was used by three million employees, i.e. one third of the employees in the Netherlands).

Proposal 6: Re-hiring older people: Strengthening company incentives

The proposal aims at achieving increased incentives for companies to re-hire older people. Integration subsidies are already an effective instrument for counteracting productivity reservations at an individual level. Another approach involves paying a temporary subsidy in order to cover the costs of continued payment of wages during long-term illnesses. To reduce the potential cost risks for companies, there should be the prospect for the health insurance company covering the costs for continued payment of wages of re-hired older people in the event of them suffering a severe illness during the first 24 or 36 months of their employment. The following financing alternatives can be considered:

- Higher state subsidies for health insurance companies - advantage: under favourable circumstances (no increase in direct taxation) there is no additional burden placed on the work factor; disadvantage: consolidation path of the government is made more difficult
- Expansion in pay-as-you-go financing - advantage: solidarity financing at company level; disadvantage: costs of the work factor increase due to mandatory contribution
- Higher contributions to health insurance - advantage: government and companies could be „unburdened“; disadvantage: if there are higher employee contributions, the „tax wedge“ would increase between the employer’s wage payment (all the employer’s costs of employment) and the pay received by the employee (net pay of the employee).

The employment situation for older employees has in fact improved significantly over the past one and a half decades. The chances of (unemployed) older people entering the labour market still remain lower than those of younger people, however. An incorporation obstacle, namely the fear that older employees could fall victim to long-term illnesses, could be removed by taking over the costs of continued payment of wages. The measure should be trialled for an initial five-year period.

Proposal 7: Flexible exit from the labour force - working longer

In view of the increasing shortage of skilled and ordinary workers in Germany, greater use should be made of the potential labour force represented by older people. The long-term trend shows that life expectancy for the population in western countries has increased substantially over recent decades, and older employees have the mental and physical potential to work longer; however, it is necessary to take account of significant differences in performance capability. In view of this situation, a raft of measures is proposed in order to make the exit from working life more flexible, promote longer working and take account of differences in performance capability:
The age of exit from the workforce should be made flexible with the objective of making the longest possible working life attractive and promoting this.9 Pension reductions should be introduced for shorter life working times, pension supplements for longer life working times (higher valuation of the pension points for working longer). In addition, some proposals are made for making the pension more flexible in a fair way: (1) The age of exit from the workforce should be orientated less on age and more on life working time.10 (2) Qualification and child-raising times should count towards pension entitlements. (3) The level of physical strain should be included, as a result of which the possible age of exit from the workforce varies with heavy physical labour, e.g. on the basis of a points system developed by experts (ergonomists, occupational health specialists, work psychologists and collective-bargaining partners).

These measures should be accompanied by the provision of jobs in a manner appropriate to age, taking account of the special strengths and weaknesses of older employees. Finally, professional mobility should be supported to assist in the transfer from activities involving a high level of strain to ones that are less physically demanding.11

Examples can be found in other countries which have introduced various incentive systems for longer working. For example, a variable pension age from 63 to 68 years has been introduced in Finland, with financial incentives for a later pension take-up age: between the 18th and 52nd years of life, the pension entitlement increases by 1.5 percent per year; between the 53rd and 62nd years of life, it increases by 1.9 percent; and between the 63rd and 68th years of life, by 4.5 percent annually. Following that, the pension entitlement increases by 0.4 percent per month. Raising staff in Germany, and attracting them from abroad.

Promoting working and employment capability

Proposal 8: Introduction of a nationwide health monitor (focusing on (mental) health/prevention of burnout)

Increasing mental and physical strain on the working-age population is becoming a social and economic challenge which is exacerbating the shortage of skilled workers.12 A health monitor should be introduced which makes it possible to issue statements about the health status and significant working conditions of employees in Germany over the course of time; on this basis, it will be possible to achieve targeted and coordinated improvements in health management within companies.

This monitoring is intended to create transparency regarding the state of health in Germany (broken down by sector, region, federal state and by individual company). Above all, however, it should provide a basis for companies and support centres for early detection of (mental) illnesses and targeted intervention in order to achieve improvements in the health and working conditions within companies.

The results of the health monitor will permit political interventions in order to promote health within companies by coordinated measures in a targeted way. Interventions could include the following: a legal obligation to carry out particularly effective measures in all sectors, identification of particularly heavily affected sectors/regions so that specific advice/assistance can be offered, identification of best-practice approaches which can be distributed more widely, offers of consulting and support services for companies with regard to their health management, especially for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). For example, in Denmark the
SME advisory service „Raadgivning“ offers advice for dealing with the challenges of social change. A health monitor can offer the basis for a coordinated procedure in dealing with (mental) health, so as to target reductions in the illness level in Germany, for example. A comparable procedure exists in the form of the Norwegian IA agreement. The IA agreement concerns a „more inclusive working life“, and is coordinated by the Norwegian Insurance Institute with the objective of reducing illness levels by 20 percent throughout the country. This body makes agreements with companies on reducing the illness level, offers financial incentives and provides information as well as practical support. Sweden can also serve as a model with its 11-point programme entitled „Better health in working life“ involving national targets for a healthier working life and a variety of support measures such as audits in companies, incentives for improvements in companies, etc.; this could be implemented on a much sounder and comprehensive basis with the help of a health monitor.

Proposal 9: Increasing the job market opportunities of persons with disabilities

The employment rate of persons with disabilities should be increased. Socially responsible companies could blaze a trail here by setting a good example through providing workplaces which are appropriate in terms of requirements and workload, thereby showing how valuable it is to make appropriate use of such people in the company. Coordinated by an action alliance (based on the National Action Plan of the Federal Government for implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) at national level, e.g. with the participation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, regional networks of local actors would be set up in the job market in order to carry out extensive marketing in favour of integrating persons with disabilities into the job market.

Regional networks with the participation of all relevant job market actors ensure a change in awareness and mentality on the ground. This could be the responsibility of employment agencies and providers of basic social security provision which can keep special consulting offers for companies and targeted job profiles for persons with disabilities, thus bringing both sides together.

Steps on the way to a healthy Germany

Proposal 10: Initiation of a broad-based demographics dialogue

The goal of this proposal is to implement an obligatory demographics analysis. The results of such an analysis should provide information of what demographically related changes are to be expected, and what quantitative/qualitative risks could result from these. Society is not only growing older, it is also becoming more diverse, as a result of which cooperation with the Diversity Charter as well as the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency would be worthwhile. Following this, it would be a good idea to network together all responsible actors and the population in order to work together to develop potential solutions for successfully shaping the demographic change in companies and society (e.g. in seminars, workshops, network conferences, expert hearings, etc.). The objective is not to come up with isolated individual measures, but rather an overall concept for the demographics dialogue. Models of comparable dialogue forums: www.wegweiser-kommune.de, www.inqa.de, www.demtv.info, www.demografie-risk-map.eu, www.demografie-netzwerk.de.
Proposal 11: Mandatory orientation of risk management in companies towards facing the challenge of demographic change

The objective of this proposal is to establish an obligation within companies to take account of and give separate representation for demographic risks as part of their risk management system. Demographic change and the personnel consequences for companies must not just be regarded as a human resources topic, but one of central importance for company strategy. As a result, the risk management system of companies should in a binding way be extended to include personnel aspects and personnel risks which arise due to the strategic challenge posed by demographic change. This can be done, for example, by means of legal changes such as in the German Corporate Governance Codex or the Stock Corporation Act.

Proposal 12: Creation of general legal conditions for company demographics regulations

It must be the shared intention and task of the government and social partners to permit a sustainable and forward-looking personnel policy to be achieved by means of sustainable outline regulations. The general legal conditions should be established under which demographics management in companies can be supported and incentives given for using and developing pre-existing instruments further.

Corresponding regulations should contribute to giving equal importance to the requirements of companies for changed personnel structures, the interests of the workforce for age and performance-appropriate working conditions and flexible forms of transition into retirement. The central elements of a „sector formula for demographic change” to be regulated in collective-bargaining agreements on demographics are carrying out a demographics analysis (age and qualification structures), measures for designing the working process appropriately for the factors of ageing and health with the goal of improving employability and performance capability as well as measures for qualification throughout the entire working life and measures to provide for and use various instruments for a gradual transition between education, work and retirement phases.

Current collective-bargaining arrangements by the Mining, Chemical and Energy Union (IG BCE) can serve as a model. These relate to three central areas of regulation:

- Creation of legal conditions for the collective-bargaining partners to regulate flexible transitions, in particular the expansion of partial-retirement pensions in conjunction with a legal entitlement to part-time work.
- Improvement in the general conditions and statutory promotion of time accounts.
- Publicly financed company support programme entitled „Starting Your Career“ for encouraging school leavers who have not found an apprenticeship, and who do not meet the conditions for successfully starting an apprenticeship.

Proposal 13: „Healthy Germany campaign“ Internet platform

As a means of involving citizens and creating incentives for companies, it is important for models for the change to a „Healthy Germany“ to be identified. Consequently, outstanding projects in the „Healthy Germany campaign“ should attract prizes, be described on the Internet as a template for copying and awards should be given locally. The „Aktion-Gesundes-Deutschland.org“ Internet platform should create a central platform for communication in order to publicise the „Healthy Germany“ vision and establish it securely in society.
The platform should create awareness:

- Exemplary projects in line with the „Healthy Germany“ campaign attract prizes as examples of best practice, and are described on the platform. The „Award-winning project – Healthy Germany“ campaign label will be created and publicised through public awards.
- Patronage by the Federal Chancellor will be initiated; in terms of content, the platform will be operated by the Federal Chancellery, which will also coordinate the activities in the departments. An advisory board (comprising several sub-groups) made up of academics, business people as well as representatives from society will be founded in order to control the strategic further development of the campaign and provide technical advice for the departments.

The platform is intended to promote involvement:

- A best-practice guideline will support rapid dissemination. The guidelines will be written by experts and approved by the advisory board. The most successful examples will be honoured and presented at local events.
- News regarding certain topics (such as healthy employees) will be published in blogs. These can be addressed, commented on and discussed in abbreviated Twitter form. „Friends“ can subscribe to news and information specifically in line with their interests, and take part in the further development of the ideas.

**Proposal 14: Nationwide demographics programme – overcoming the demographic change as a national challenge**

The principal goal of the proposal is to permit a nationwide programme to be instigated for effective, coordinated interaction in order to overcome the demographic change; this would involve politicians, academics, social partners and business people as well as key institutions such as the Federal Employment Agency or The Demographic Network (ddn) working together.

A central step is the development of a shared strategy and shared implementation of the strategy with active participation by the relevant actors. Significant contents include a divided understanding of the vision, of the central target parameters (e.g. increasing the employment quota of people over 55, extending life working time, increasing the health quota, etc.) and of important fields of action for overcoming the demographic change (e.g. pension system, age-appropriate working conditions, promoting health, etc.) In addition, it is a matter of developing a common understanding for implementing this strategy. Furthermore, it is important to derive a set of medium and short-term key measures from the frame of reference, to examine progress on a continuous basis and to continue developing the contents in various sub-stages. For this purpose, a department should be created with the necessary authority to act and take decisions, e.g. a Ministry of Demographics (based on the Department of Health and Ageing in Australia, for example).

Examples of such a nationwide programme that have proved very effective include the Finnish National Programme for Aging Workers (FINPAW) or the Australian national strategy with comprehensive inclusion of all actors.

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1 The working group is grateful to Dr. Almut Satrapa-Schill (working group I.1.b) „Co-existence between the generations“ for her contributions.
2 The suggestions developed in proposal 14 „Shortage of skilled workers and international mobility of skilled workers“ of working group I.3.a) „Germany in the eyes of the world“, pg. 72, could also provide a valuable approach for overcoming the shortage of skilled workers.
3 Regarding the exemplary role of administration, see also working group II.1.b) „Sustainable economic activity and growth“, proposal 5: „Exploiting sustainability potential in public procurement“, pg. 87, working group II.2.a) „Uniqueness and location identity“, proposal 12: „Making administrative processes more flexible and optimising them! (the state as role model)“, www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=14090.

4 For a Federal Government/federal state programme as a complement to the excellence initiative, see also working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture“, proposal 8: „Stipulating a Federal Government/federal state transfer programme (‘Excellence initiative on transfer’)“, pg. 81.


6 Regarding the contemporary adaptation of general legal conditions, see also working group II.3.a) „The future of work“ proposal 2: „Creation of an integrated legal code for labour law and social insurance“, pg. 116.


8 Regarding this objective, see also working group II.1.b) „Co-existence between the generations“, proposal 2: „Sweeping away the obstacles to permitting a longer working life“, pg. 28 and working group II.3.a) „The future of work“, proposal 1 b: „Concept for a Dual continuing education 50plus““, pg.115.


10 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Make the life working time fairer and thereby increase productivity:“ www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=3996.

11 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „A career model that grows with the advancing age of manual workers“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=3806.

12 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Employee satisfaction in German companies“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/20-Wovon-Leben/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=398.

13 The importance of dialogue processes is also emphasised by other working groups. For more information about this, see working group II.1.a) „Innovation culture“, proposal 7: „Dialogue process „Guiding principle for the innovation culture in Germany““, pg. 80, working group II.1.b) „Sustainable economic activity and growth“, proposal 12: „Social dialogue on the central question „Germany – pioneer and locomotive for sustainability?““, pg. 91 and working group II.2.b) „Prosperity, quality of life and progress“, proposal 1: „Citizens’ Dialogue on quality of life Vision 2040 – for my children““, pg. 104.
How do we want to learn?
Introduction to topic III: „How do we want to learn?“

Prof. Dr. Stephan Breidenbach, academic coordinator topic III

In the 21st century, education is one of the major and central challenges. To overcome it, we must develop an extended understanding of learning and knowledge. It is a question of the bandwidth and the consciousness with which we perceive ourselves and the world. This is because the world is becoming more and more networked, complex and dynamic. The flood of information is increasing. Things that still applied yesterday often no longer offer security tomorrow. In order to navigate this globalised world effectively, it is important not just to keep learning new knowledge, but also and above all to develop a new attitude towards ourselves and the world. It is a matter of making a qualitative leap, of transforming our perspectives. Complex and uncertain situations, which are now part and parcel of our everyday lives, demand us to display a high flexibility of learning, the courage to take risks, readiness to experience new things and make changes, display self-initiative, take personal responsibility, offer creativity, enjoy taking decisions and present a high level of social intelligence. This corresponds to a humane and inclusive picture of humanity: everyone should be able to develop their own possibilities and potential.

Central questions must be asked against the background of this self-conception:

- How can the development of one’s own potential, from childhood through to the late phases of life, contribute to a successful life for everyone?
- How can we succeed in maintaining our children’s natural enthusiasm for learning, discovery and shaping things, including in school?
- How can we improve the learning and thus life perspectives even for disadvantaged young people? How can we make sure we leave no-one behind?
- How can everyone participate in the digital life, including obtaining access to global knowledge?
- How do we ensure that people of any age, even above 70, are prepared to expand their qualifications and skills? What offers and formats can we use to make this attractive?

1. We need learning at a variety of learning locations

We have a wide variety of learning locations. Nowadays, we do not just learn in school or at university. We learn on the job, in our social life, in voluntary activity, in companies. We learn from social experience. It is impossible not to learn. Consequently, the variety of learning locations must be input into an education strategy which does not just concentrate on school and university. This is because the variety of learning locations makes a significant contribution to developing the various skills that we need.

When learning takes place at many locations, the dominance of formal learning will be broken. Education can no longer just be equated with school and university. Education means educating yourself (Gadamer), and is not tied to institutions or qualifications. Living, working and learning must (once again) form a single unit, given the growing complexity and uncertainty of conditions of life.
2. The learning potential of the Internet must be open to everyone

The Internet is a learning location of growing importance. Over the coming decades, it will penetrate all areas of life, business models and methods of working, and fundamentally change them. The „Internet of Things“ will lead to our everyday life and most everyday products being networked together. The same thing applies to the way in which we learn. As with all revolutions, it is not a matter of whether we want it, but how we deal with it and how we shape it – how we can use it constructively.

From the perspective of education, it is a matter of basic capabilities which enable everyone to participate in an increasingly digitalised world. And it is a matter of being able to use the potential of net-based learning.

3. We need learning processes in all phases of life

People do not just learn at learning locations in a linear sequence. Learning in the sense of acquiring knowledge and skills takes place at all ages, even beyond the 70th year. Each age brings its own challenges, opportunities and capabilities, while at the same time the individual profile offers learning opportunities which were previously attributed to other age levels. This means that our public and commercial education systems must become more transparent. Learning in the process of work will take on an ever-increasing importance. And we have got to develop education processes so that they are adapted to the requirements of the particular life phases.

4. We need more coordination and cooperation with civil society

To enable everyone to develop their individual potential at all learning locations and in all life phases, it is necessary for politicians, business people and representatives of civil society to work in a highly coordinated way. In our diversified society, the Federal Government, federal states and local-government authorities must take joint measures instead of hindering one another in a federal structure. The most specific way of doing this is locally. Civil society displays itself in regional and community structures, in different milieus and group formations, with requirements and opportunities. Here, it is possible to work on a new quality of learning together with people, and in line with their requirements. This is because in the same way that every person contributes their individual potential, the living environment contains individual characteristics and models which the local actors are best placed to imbue with life.

5. The learning locations must permit an unfolding of potential

We have got to support the unfolding of potential within every individual, as well as their enjoyment of lifelong learning. Short-term learning successes and examinations also form part of this. The most important aspect, however, concerns attitudes and inner beliefs: the readiness to learn from mistakes and to face challenges with confidence, as well as taking pleasure in one’s continuous on-going development. This applies in particular to our children. Only children who are individually appreciated and encouraged, and who have the experience that their abilities make a significant contribution to their social environment, will later be able to shape our society actively, creatively and successfully.

We need learning locations in which this is precisely what happens. Learning locations in which there is more on offer than just complying with obligations, struggling for good marks and learning by rote. Children should retain their enthusiasm to learn, discover and shape things – including and particularly in school.
**Topic III: How do we want to learn?**

The situation is similar for employees who need to unfold their potential in order to deal with the increasing requirements for creativity and responsibility – companies need corresponding spaces and opportunities. The most important step of all involves securing the unfolding of potential as a value and basic principle of all aspects of our education system, and in the social attitude towards people.

Part of unfolding potential means there is no reason not to act independently and with responsibility. This develops a new image of the entrepreneur. It is in organisations that entrepreneurs develop their areas of responsibility, or indeed shape them in the first place. This is self-evident for companies. In the social context of social challenges, social and political entrepreneurs give expression to their concerns in focused changes and innovations. Anyone who complains has not understood that action is possible.

**6. We have got to understand how our society gains knowledge, orients its activities more effectively – and learns**

One of the major challenges is to create structures and processes so that society as a whole can learn better. The decisive factors are: We observe and evaluate social responses to challenges, and continuously adapt our behaviour to this. However, how do we develop institutions, processes and rules so that necessary changes can be implemented quickly, effectively and with innovative solutions? As a result, politicians, business people and representatives of civil society must work together more effectively so that society as a whole becomes more innovative. Transparency, participation, learning from mistakes, cooperation beyond „silos“, sectors and bureaucratic boundaries, feedback loops and a systematic perspective are only some of the factors that are decisive here. We can learn as a society. The more awareness we bring to bear, the greater our success will be.

Individual unfolding of potential and collective learning by every community and society as a whole are cumulative factors. It is only in the community that exchange and interactions take place, however above all it is only here that everyone’s uniqueness is simultaneously complemented by a meaningful We.
III.1. Learning to live

Working group III.1.a) „Unfolding of potential and self-responsibility for shaping life“

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr. Gerald Hüther. With: Prof. Dr. Fritz Böhle, Prof. Dr. Werner Greve, Kay Senius, Dr. Günter Walden, Nina Wielage

Education processes are about more than just mediating knowledge and acquiring professionally relevant capabilities and skills. Opportunities for the potential rooted in everyone to unfold and for acquisition of the skills required for shaping one’s life in a self-responsible way are provided not just in traditional education institutions, but in all areas and ages of life. The task of state education institutions must be to include such opportunities and encouragements more firmly than before in the education process.

Empirical assessments of pedagogic sciences, social sciences, psychology and at present also neurobiology concur that development potential is often unused or develops inadequately. This concerns all phases of life and education institutions: For example, the training of educationalists, and in particular teachers, must be improved and offers of further and continuing education must make a significant course change from pure (technical) knowledge transfer towards skills in self-shaping and unfolding of potential.

Unfolding of potential means discovering and completing one’s own gifts and talents, creatively using one’s own possibilities for shaping things, experiencing the pleasure in one’s own discovery and personal further development, and last but not least the acquisition of emotional and social skills.

In each age of life, it is possible to secure new learning experiences within the structure; this is also revealed neurobiologically in the form of new nerve cell connections within the human brain. A precondition for sustained learning is that the emotional importance of what is learned must be communicated and experienced: experience of the sense and emotional learning experience activate emotional centres in the brain. People who are learning must evaluate the material they are learning as important, it must interest, enthuse and concern them. This also demands the readiness to accept responsibility for one’s own further development and shaping of life.

In order to enable people to acquire the skills required for them to shape their lives under their own responsibility, future education offerings must be designed so that they invite, encourage and inspire people of any age to learn and develop themselves further. This can only be successful if the acquisition of knowledge and skills is experienced and evaluated as subjectively important by those who are learning. All those people who have previously had unfavourable learning experience and thus acquired unfavourable internal attitudes and opinions towards offerings of learning and continuing education must have their inner readiness reawakened by education offerings that are designed to be attractive to such people, so that they want to learn something, to educate themselves further and pursue their personal development. A fundamental reorientation of education and continuing education measures is necessary on all levels.

In addition to education and natural science insights, the ever-quicker pace of social, technical and economic change (individualisation, digitalisation, globalisation) is leading to completely new requirements on the activity skills of people in their professional and private lives. The problems arising from the increasing variety of decisions, growing uncertainty and the confrontation of new challenges must be overcome by people in every age of live. As a result, the ability to shape one’s life under one’s own responsibility is taking
more and more of a central position in all education efforts, not only at home, in kindergartens or at school, but also in the area of professional and occupational education and continuing education. However, people can only accept responsibility for their own life and for shaping their coexistence with others if they are given the opportunity to do so, i.e. if they can have the experience that what counts is their interaction and engagement in solving their own problems and the challenges arising in the coexistence with others.1

Practical implementation of these new insights and requirements can only succeed if education institutions and education measures meet two decisive criteria:

Instead of concentrating on short-term successes (knowledge of facts, learning by rote, passing exams, forgetting), the focus of all education efforts must be on strengthening and/or reawakening pleasure in one’s own further development, one’s own discovery, understanding and shaping of things.

Starting from these jointly derived insights and the resulting requirements, the „unfolding of potential and self-responsibility for shaping life“ working group has dealt with producing specific, politically feasible suggested actions which are presented briefly below. At the heart are proposals to strengthen the unfolding of talent and gifts within every human being on a sustainable basis. The following measures are about creating suitable general conditions which will invite, encourage and inspire people to acquire the skills required for them to shape their own lives under their own responsibility.

**Unfolding of potential in schools**

**Proposal 1: Introduction of training as a „Potential unfolding coach“ at teacher training colleges**

The working group proposes introducing an academic training course entitled „potential unfolding coach“. For this purpose, it would be necessary to develop a curriculum for a Master’s course to be established as a new feature in interested universities. Students could qualify for this Master’s course by a Bachelor’s qualification or a state exam in educational science or psychology, possibly also with other associated university qualifications. The course should also be set up for remote study by graduates from these courses who are already in work. Areas of work for potential unfolding coaches include all areas of education processes within and outside schools; they range from education programmes for expecting parents through to reactivating the learning processes for older people.

The knowledge that has been widely held amongst educationalists for some time, and is now confirmed by brain research, that learning processes only succeed if the person who is to learn something regards the learning content as important for themselves, has not yet been put in the centre of most educational training curriculums. There, the focus of acquiring educational skills is still directed towards learning specialist knowledge and the didactic methods of knowledge transfer. The teachers who are trained there are thus not necessarily capable of supporting learners in a sustainable way within their self-education process. Learning guides cannot fulfil this task either. It is not sufficient simply to accompany and support someone when learning. Instead, it would be necessary to awaken the requirements, the wish and the will to acquire a particular knowledge, particular skills and abilities. Learners ought to be invited, encouraged and inspired really to want to acquire the particular knowledge, skills and capabilities. As brain researchers can now show, and most people have experienced for themselves, it is primarily experience made in association with others that leaves its mark on the brain and permits learning processes to occur. Whenever you discover something together
with others, whenever you shape something, whenever you can attend to something important, education processes occur. New knowledge and new experience can be anchored particularly enduringly in the brain on all these occasions.2

To permit such social learning processes to take place, educationalists must thus also be able to take the usually randomly assembled learning groups which are their responsibility and form them into a performance-oriented team which is concentrating on developing its individual and collective potential. Also, this capability has not yet played a central role in the majority of current pedagogical training courses. For this reason, it appears to be as appropriate as it is necessary and contemporary for a training course to be redesigned and established at interested teacher training colleges which will enable the students to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills that they will need in order to support learners more effectively than before in developing the potential that is inside them.

Bringing together pre-existing approaches is the responsibility of a working group to be established. These efforts will be accompanied and supported by academics and practitioners who already have specific knowledge and experience regarding the general conditions that are required and must be created for such potential unfolding processes.

Proposal 2: Nationwide promotion and support for the creation of locations outside schools and opportunities for learning processes under personal responsibility and oriented towards the experience of children and young people

The knowledge communicated in school education is not immediately relevant to practical activity requirements, as a result of its systematic structure. This applies to the entire school education system, and is even the case in schools which have an explicit career orientation. As a result, school education must be supplemented by the acquisition of skills which make it possible to implement and utilise systematic knowledge in a practical way (recontextualisation of systematic knowledge). The skills which make it possible to achieve situational action are the ones that are specifically required in order to overcome the imponderabilities and uncertainties which arise in practice. For this purpose, it is necessary to have capabilities and modes of action such as flair, perceptive and behavioural thinking as well as an explorative, interactive way of dealing with the world around through dialogue.

In order to overcome these deficits, the working group proposes supporting cities and communities, as well as the education institutions existing there, in creating locations and opportunities for self-responsible and experience-oriented learning for children and young people. The model for this can be provided by the programme of „New learning culture in local-government authorities“ developed in Thuringia, in which children and young people undertake tasks and projects under their own responsibility for the reinvigoration and further development of community co-existence in the area of cultural development or environmental protection. The foundation and support of schoolchildren’s cooperatives and school companies also represent suitable strategies for strengthening self-education processes and acquiring the skills required for shaping one’s own life under personal responsibility. The capabilities acquired in the course of such entrepreneurial or social activities undertaken outside schools should be certified as qualifications obtained under self-responsibility, and made useful for subsequent applications to further education processes. It is also recommended that a nationwide competition should be set up, similar to „Jugend forscht“ (a German youth science competition) for those activities and projects that are undertaken by young people outside of school.
Unfolding of potential in education processes

Proposal 3: Creation of opportunities for experience-oriented learning in the world of work

Learning is usually equated with learning in school. This is also the case with most proposals of the Citizens‘ Dialogue relating to this topic. The school – from primary school to higher and continuing education – is not however the only „location“ where learning does and must take place. It is above all in the area of work that important skills can only be acquired through experience-oriented learning by practical activity. This applies above all to the skills: applying general knowledge in practical activity, finding one’s way in novel situations and acquiring new knowledge independently as well as acting with rationality and flair when confronted by uncertainty.

Experience-oriented learning does not relate to taking over knowledge that is already available, but is directed towards the independent acquisition and application of knowledge through practical activity and experience. Learning in this case is often „on the fly“ through confrontation with practical requirements. It is not a self-propagating process, but will only succeed if both the working requirements and the working conditions are conducive to learning.

As a result, it is necessary to create specific opportunities for learning within the working process, and for personnel to be employed, the work organised and performance assessed in a corresponding manner. Demanding and self-responsible work are favourable when it comes to experience-oriented learning. At the same time, however, there is resistance due to time and deadline pressure, low tolerance for mistakes and performance assessment that is based on short-term results. As a result, special efforts must be taken in order to create opportunities for experience-oriented learning in „everyday“ work. In practice, approaches have already been made in this direction such as „learning islands“ integrated in practical contexts or special trainee and mentoring programmes for university graduates.

Such approaches must be picked up and developed further. This should be driven forward by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in a multi-stage process. As a first step, a preliminary stage should be organised in order to take stock of the approaches that already exist regarding experience-oriented learning, and on this basis a conference should be held involving companies, associations and academics. In further steps, practical models of experience-oriented learning in the world of work should be developed in cooperation between companies and academic institutions. Financial support of such model projects by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) would create particular incentives for companies to develop innovative ways of integrating work and learning. In addition to pre-existing knowledge about designing work in such a way as to promote learning, new knowledge about promoting experience-oriented learning should also be picked up by the new media as well as in game and artistic practices.

Alongside this, handling of uncertainty (including experience of failure) should be dealt with and evaluated more effectively than before as a welcome learning opportunity and seen less as a problem, a pathology or a deviance. This could be achieved through training guidelines, as well as guidelines for order placement, possibly including other social institutions. Mistakes are reliable learning opportunities as long as they are not covered up or superficially corrected, but instead used as information or references and are communicated. Uncertainty, ambiguity and planning limits will become part and parcel of everyday experience more than
ever before in a complex and networked global world – particularly outside school and professional education, it will be important for positive mistake cultures to be combined with particular learning locations and opportunities.

**Proposal 4: Change of selection criteria for continuing education courses promoted by national funds**

The working group proposes introduction of an additional criterion for admission and selection of education and promotion measures financed by the Federal Government: Demonstration that a provider of the measure in question is capable of awakening interest within the particular participants for what is being offered and should be communicated.

As a result, it is no longer – as in the past – the content, quality and costs of the offerings which should be examined and treated as criteria for cost acceptance, but rather their „attractiveness“ for the participants. This would ensure that the intentionality required from the participants will be created, i.e. the desire and the will really to acquire the knowledge offered there and the capabilities which are communicated. As a means of specific implementation, it is proposed that this criterion should be adopted into admission and competition processes for providers of education measures and further assistance measures. Appropriate criteria must be developed in order to evaluate the concepts. In particular, it could be possible to rely on learning theories and investigations into learning resistance from the area of adult education.

This proposal can be used in particular:

- In the area of qualification of providers of integration courses offered by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)
- In the area of certification and selection of providers for implementing labour-market policy measures in accordance with Book III of the German Social Code or Book II of the German Social Code
- In the area of qualification of providers for implementing professional further education measures within the scope of the Advanced Further Training Assistance Act (AFBG, also known as the „Master BAföG“).

In view of the requirements established within the working group regarding safeguarding the sustainable efficiency of education and continuing education courses, it appears necessary to undertake a change in the requirement profile of the education measures financed by the Federal Government (professional continuing education, adult education, measures in active labour market policy by providers, language learning and integration programmes, etc.). In the past, measures such as these have only been examined from the perspective of whether they meet the necessary preconditions with regard to content, didactics, validation, organisation and cost. It is to be implicitly understood that a measure undertaken according to these criteria does in fact result in the participants acquiring the knowledge offered there and the skills that are communicated in the course. However, this requires the desire and will to learn the content that is offered.

The participants are however generally obliged to attend the corresponding education course, are persuaded to do so by the prospect of „rewards“, or else constrained by the threat of sanctions. This also applies if the participants can select the education courses themselves in a voucher process, such as the education voucher in accordance with Book III of the German Social Code.
Irrespective of whether measures of this kind involve a voucher system or not, the success is normally measured based on qualification, certificate or confirmation of attendance obtained at the end of the measure, possibly in the form of a report. When measuring the success of professional continuing education within the framework of active labour market policy, the decisive parameter is whether the people who receive the support are more frequently able to reintegrate into the labour market than those who were not so supported.

**Unfolding of potential in companies and organisations**

**Proposal 5: Pioneering role of the federal administration in employment services and personnel development**

The actual unfolding of the potential within all employees and strengthening of self-responsibility should be the objective and the practice in implementing the strategy for modernising personnel management in all areas of the federal administration. In this way, employees of the federal administration would become multipliers for a modified understanding of personnel development. In the public sector, the effects would also spread to all other employment relationships in the civil service. The federal administration would be regarded as an attractive employer, and the effectiveness of work in the federal administration could gain significantly in terms of efficiency and acceptance, also with regard to public interest orientation. For the aforementioned reasons, the unfolding of potential should also be regarded as a central component in the education area of the civil service, especially in the qualification processes for employees in consulting and mediation.

Blended learning including the use of new technologies for forming learning communities/learning groups can also promote self-organised learning supported by group experience. The use of instruments of reflexive consulting such as practical consulting or coaching creates personal relevance and thus promotes the sustained integration of what has been learned in what is done. Furthermore, a promotion of learning transfer/ accompaniment of the learning process provides the necessary emotional and motivational basis for sustainable learning, assuming it is not just applied to the technical or socio-communicative development requirements, but rather aims at the individual motives and interests of the mediator/consultant.

**Proposal 6: Use of the experience held by the Federal Employment Agency in other areas of the federal administration**

The specific personnel policy measures of the Federal Employment Agency (BA) show that development of potential is a topic that can be addressed by specific implementation steps, even in areas with highly formalistic regulations and ossified structures.

On the basis of this reform experience, there is a fundamental ability to transfer the insights to other public areas (e.g. federal administration), which is something the Federal Government should examine. In the course of reforms in the labour market, the legal and de facto preconditions for a personnel policy were established at the Federal Employment Agency (BA) providing

- Replacement of (existing) civil servant relationships by labour relationships and their competitiveness in relation to the economy
Career orientation both in hiring and promotion by means of orientation towards competence which is less concerned with formal qualifications than professional success biographies
Opening up new appointment options to all decision-making positions – irrespective of the status of the holder of the official post
Establishment of more attractive salary and incentive structures

The objective of the reform was to establish a comprehensive personnel management approach. Conceptually, all process functions (e.g. recruitment, personnel development, qualification, performance management) are linked together in their effectiveness. A personnel development system with a modular structure has significant importance in this context.

Components of the personnel development system are:

- Activity and competence profiles (transparency)
- Performance and development dialogue (dialogue and strengthening of self-responsibility)
- Development pathways (horizontal and vertical personnel development)
- Personnel development instruments (also promotion of work-based learning)
- Performance management with various elements

In this, the principle applies of flexible competence development oriented towards the individual requirement, with a focus on learning by experience in real working situations. The objective is to promote the lifelong learning of all employees, and at the same time increase self-responsibility.

As a further development, personnel management has been put on a more holistic footing. Personnel policy with an eye on demographic developments, combined with integrated diversity management and modern health management, is oriented towards individual life phases and the requirements of employees. It is closely linked to organisation development and personnel development. As a result, potential is individually promoted throughout the entire professional life, employment capability is maintained and innovative capability strengthened.

In the collective-bargaining negotiations on 10 June 2009, the collective-bargaining partners agreed that the remuneration volume previously intended for a performance component would be used for an adaptation to the salary scale. Linked to this, the collective-bargaining partners agreed to provide a result-oriented, annual performance bonus from 2010 onwards. The following additional measures should be emphasised:

Holistic personnel management: The psychological employment contract contains the subjective, mutual expectations of the employer and employee. These expectations generally go beyond the mutual expectations formulated in the (legal) employment contract.

Experience by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) has also been input into the „Demographically sensitive personnel management“ project as part of the „Networked and Transparent Administration“ reform programme by the Federal Government. Responsibility for the project is shared between the Federal Employment Agency (BA) (technical direction) and the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI). This is also based on a holistic management approach, as well as systematic personnel development characterised by transparency.
Proposal 7: Statutory and collectively agreed establishment of the „development and potential unfolding“ objective

It is recommended that the federal laws of Book II of the German Social Code and possibly also Book III of the German Social Code should contain the further objective as support for personal development/stabilisation as a precondition for living life in a self-responsible way. It may be necessary to adapt other paragraphs if the objective is expanded, for example those relating to consulting and mediation. Also, additional sponsorship possibilities may have to be designed and established in law. As an alternative, the Federal Government could also inaugurate a competition for measures of personal development and stabilisation, or expand „free funding“ in such a way that the current activities could be implemented by these means. Support in personal development stabilisation should not be offered to all the unemployed, but only to those who have corresponding needs. This should form the basis in this target group for a return to gainful employment (that covers the needs).

Book III of the German Social Code should include a right to promotion of development for all. Promoting professional continuing education should furthermore be formulated as a legal right rather than an optional activity. It is possible to continue differentiating between different target groups in the configuration of the promotional possibilities. The former restriction on funding to the unemployed and people without recognised professional qualifications should however be abandoned and Book III of the German Social Code should also be used as an instrument for developing the potential of the employed. This proposal is intended to pick up the guiding principle of preventative continuing education promotion once again, which was the basis for the Employment Promotion Act (AFG), the predecessor of Book III of the German Social Code.

The collective-bargaining partners should reach agreements more frequently than in the past for effective qualification and promotion of development of employees within an area covered by a collective-bargaining agreement. As a result, participation by employees in qualification measures should be promoted, thus making a contribution to developing potential. The agreements should relate to different instruments for promoting development. Specifically, this includes the following regulatory content: Procedure for establishing the company continuing education requirement, promoting specific employee groups, carrying out meetings with employees, taking over the employer’s costs for participation in development promotion measures, creation of exemption arrangements and learning time accounts as well as structuring the work organisation and remuneration systems in such a way as to promote qualification. In individual areas covered by a collective-bargaining agreement, it would be a good idea to create collectively agreed funds for cross-company promotion of qualification and development promotion measures, or to set up joint institutions in order to encourage measures for promoting development.

In Germany, there is a series of collective arrangements which regulate questions relating to professional qualification. Since the year 2000 alone, qualification regulations have been reached in the course of industry-wide collective-bargaining agreements for five sectors, affecting about 5 million employees. However, the regulations frequently only contain rudimentary approaches for effective promotion of development, or mere intentions to act. Collective-bargaining agreements of further-reaching importance took the form of company agreements in which time accounts were established for qualification and works council participation when establishing the continuing education requirement. These include, for example, the collective-bargaining agreements at Compaq Computer GmbH, Digital Equipment, SINITEC GmbH, all in 1998, and in 2001 the „5000x5000“ project collective-bargaining agreement at Volkswagen AG.

The social partners are responsible for implementing this proposal. However, the Federal Chancellor should submit a recommendation to the collective-bargaining partners. The point of contact would be the top-level talks between the Federal Government, unions and German business, such as about „Work in the Future“.
Furthermore, the Federal Government should promote corresponding efforts. The Federal Government is already doing this with finance from the European Social Fund (ESF). About 140 million euros are available for this as part of the „further education“ initiative over the next few years. In order to qualify for funding under the ESF guideline, there must be a sector-related agreement between social partners regarding continuing education. A coordinating office for continuing education has been set up to implement the funding. Financing is being provided as part of the 2007–2013 ESF funding period. It would be desirable for such projects also to be sponsored during the 2014–2020 funding period.


2 For more information about this, see also the citizens’ proposal „The school as a community“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/30-Wie-Lernen/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=4076. This is almost identical to the citizens’ proposal „Creating open learning locations“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/30-Wie-Lernen/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=6773.
Public-spiritedness is the foundation for co-existence in democracy. The increasing compartmentalisation of social milieu as well as cultural and increasingly marked spatial segregation are leading to the milieu drifting apart. This is associated with the basic experience of disintegration and lack of recognition, which is relevant from the socio-political point of view. This negative experience endangers the common good and public-spiritedness. The individualisation that has taken place to date at the expense of solidarity and public-spiritedness leads to division, destruction of social capital and livelihood. What we need today is strengthening of attention for one another, public-spiritedness and responsible people who make an active contribution to the whole. This applies at all levels: in private, in public, in politics and business, and needs to be learned.

Experience that creates public-spiritedness and consent does not come about virtually, but specifically on the ground during discussion with people, talking about concerns and situations. There is a high need for development and action in this context in Germany. Failure to exploit the engagement of many people has numerous causes, in particular: lack of confidence in human possibilities, lack of courage and willingness to experiment and – as a result of this – lack of occasions and opportunity structures for experience which leads to public-spiritedness. Regaining the local relevance and experience from first hand as a principle to control actions represent an essential counterweight in an increasingly virtual world of experience and virtually networked society, in the sense of empathy, the courage to act, self-effectiveness, local and global responsibility.

The learning culture to date is based above all on development of intellectual, cognitive capabilities. What this misses is that learning needs above all experience, meaningful action and a relationship culture which appreciates value, as the bases for developing public-spiritedness. This applies to all learning locations. „The key to learning is enthusiasm and enthusiasm needs sense“ (Hüther).

- **The family as a learning location:** The first education location that leaves its mark is the family. Significant foundations for developing social skills are laid in early childhood. The paradigm shift here: from aftercare through to relationship offers that strengthen families and networking measures in the community environment, low-threshold, with comprehensive coverage, for all.¹

- **Child day care as a learning location:** Here, it is about creating a better balance between encouragement and targeted promotion and freedom for self-controlled curiosity, discovery and development of interests, entirely in accordance with existing education plans. The institutional schooling to be observed in practice must be decisively opposed. What is involved in this is a move away from cognitive learning programmes and associated documentation requirements in order to win freedom in which to promote the relationship culture.

- **School/professional education as a learning location:** School, alongside the family is a place which leaves a powerful impression. The key task of school is to strengthen public-spiritedness and social skills. The responsible person with a sense of responsibility, courage and shaping skills is an education target anchored in all school laws. Instead of being a location of fortifying experience, however, school is frequently a competition-based selection instrument which weakens the personality. The paradigm shift here: Strengthening the ability of teachers to create a learning culture which appreciates value, with enthusiasm, sense, empathy, creativity, team learning, the experience of diversity, service learning, civil-society engagement in the community environment.² The upco-
ming implementation of inclusion, involving the required specifications of a „sense of belonging” and „sense of dignity” offers a fundamentally high potential for reform for the Federal Government as part of its reporting obligation towards the United Nations.

- Universities as a learning location: A paradigm shift is also due in the sciences. In the past, knowledge was generated through separation and specialisation. However – as taught by modern physics – the truth lies somewhere in between. This is what has fallen victim to the scientific recognition paradigm. Rediscovering what lies in between and placing the solidarity between everything existing in the focus of the interest of knowledge is thus the central task for modern science. This also requires the new forms of learning and acting which have already been described.

- The workplace as a learning location: People spend the majority of their life in the workplace. Social learning also takes place in the workplace. Social actions in the company percolate into society. To this extent, it is of outstanding importance to create a cooperative relationship culture which appreciates values. Such a culture extends from the quality of relations between and amongst employees through to a promotional leadership culture. Learning takes place in the process of work and, if shaped effectively, contributes decisively to unfolding the development potential of employees.

- The social environment as a learning location: The primary learning location of the future will be civil society in its broadest sense. This includes not only private relationships in the immediate social context (neighbourhoods, friendships, coexistence between the generations, relations in the public space) but also formal memberships of organisations (clubs, churches, parties). These relations can be shaped in varying ways: in personal contact or virtually.3 The „We“ that is capable of acting comes about in civil society. It is based on relationship, encounter, meaningful shared experience and opportunities for acting. This demands a dismantling of bureaucratic obstacles and permission for freedoms in self-organisation and acceptance of responsibility. The social environment also includes digital reality.

What is required is nothing less than a paradigm shift in the picture of humanity, in education and learning culture.

Instead of forgetting the losers in the system as before and blocking the development of gifts, it is necessary for a picture of humanity to come forth in which people experience dignity and effectiveness as unique carriers of potential – as children and young people, men and women in all social milieus. This requires a learning culture which enables people to do the following:

- develop multiple intelligences in their heads, hearts and hands
- Experience diversity as an opportunity
- Practise public-spiritedness
- Respond flexibly, innovatively and creatively to unknown challenges
- Take over responsibility for themselves, others and everything as people of action

There is thus the need for a shared, strong movement and combination of energy, in particular involving politics, the Federal Government, federal states, local-government authorities – civil society and the world of business. At heart, this means a new division of tasks according to the subsidiarity principle, in which blockages due to responsibilities can be overcome. As a result, we propose the following suggested actions:
Proposal 1: Education in Germany – speech by the Federal Chancellor on the education system

Every year in autumn, the Federal Chancellor holds a keynote speech on education topics, in order to underline the importance of Germany as an „education republic“. The speech provides the opportunity to address fundamental and current issues of the education system.4

The content guideline provides the responses described in the introduction for new challenges to promote public-spiritedness and social skills. The various structural rift phenomena in society according to the poverty and wealth reporting by the Federal Government and problems of social exclusion by having the status of a foreigner or a person with disabilities could also be discussed, as could the social consequences of behaviour by the competition and self-interest. On the contrary, it is important to emphasise what can be gained by successfully promoting the learning locations of the family, child day care centres, the school and youth work as well as civil society in general on an increased level.

Furthermore, the Federal Chancellor can raise current questions such as setting up an „education council“ or the demand repeated in the Citizens‘ Dialogue for abolition of school grades5 and, as far as practicable, adopt a personal position. With regard to the education responsibility of the federal states, these are suggestions for the Federal Government/federal state dialogue.

It should be an „address to the nation“, not a speech to the Bundestag, and accompanied by widespread publicity. The place and time will be selected so that the annual repetition becomes an event with recognition value. The proposal is based on the annual „Back to School“ speech by the President of the United States, Barack Obama.

Proposal 2: Reform impulses through international human rights‘ agreements

The Conventions on Human Rights ratified by the Federal Republic of Germany contain numerous aspects in the form of the emphasis on human dignity, basic and human rights equal for all, non-discriminatory participation in society (inclusion) and the priority of the rights of the growing generation6 which support the proposed paradigm shift in the education system. In particular, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which link the right to education directly to human dignity and the unfolding of personal potential in human society, can be seized upon by the Federal Government and federal states as previously untapped potential for reform.

With regard to the implementation of the Conventions, the Federal Government as a subject responsible under international law, is accountable to the General Secretary of the United Nations even for items which are exclusively within the sphere of responsibility of the federal states. To this extent, the federal states must meet the Federal Government part-way and report on what progress they have achieved in implementing the international obligations. As a result, the Conventions permit a specific dialogue on education policy to be held without interfering in the federal states‘ responsibilities.
The Federal Chancellor should take the following measures through her authority to issue guidelines:

- Processing of the specifications under convention law by the specialist departments with regard to their particular applicability, combined with the task of establishing and designating the potential for reform within their area of responsibility as contained in the Conventions, after hearing of the German Institute for Human Rights
- Disclosure of the international law references and reform impulses („international law relevance“) in the practical departmental policy of the Federal Government
- Announcement of the primacy of children’s well-being according to Art. 3 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Art. 7 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Art. 24 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights as a directly applicable requirement for consideration in the public authorities of the Federal Government as well as in federal states and communities
- Tasking the specialist departments to put the international law specifications on the agenda of the conference of ministers, and urge compliance with them

Proposal 3: Creation of a nationwide „citizens' Internet portal“ for promoting public-spiritedness and civil-society responsibility as the basis for dialogue between the Federal Government, federal states, local-government authorities and business

Based on experience in the current Dialogue on the Future, the Federal Chancellor will initiate a special „citizens’ Internet portal“, firstly as a time-limited Internet platform and secondly as a „round table“ organised by her personally. The general topic concerns promoting public-spiritedness and unfolding potential in all areas of society, with the question of how public-spiritedness and social skills can be promoted better in all theoretical learning locations and in both formalised and informal learning processes. The citizens’ platform would also function as a forum for civil-society exchange and networking between the initiatives.

The results of the dialogue should be presented professionally in the form of a book, and successful initiatives should be identified. On the basis of results that she regards as interesting, the Federal Chancellor would invite a selection of sample initiatives to a „Federal Government/federal state meeting for civil-society responsibility“ with participation of the local umbrella organisations, the umbrella organisations of free social welfare, civil-society organisations as well as the unions and employers’ associations. The objective of the conference is to take critical stock of the corresponding problem areas and the development of implementation strategies, in particular with the question of whether existing programmes need to be recalibrated, or new programmes developed, within the particular areas of responsibility. The question of scaling up tried-and-tested programmes should be considered.

In order to ensure results without giving rise to additional bureaucratic complexity, the Federal Chancellor should encourage the conference partners to concentrate their on-going reporting on one special point amongst the themes that are regarded as important, and to provide the Federal Government with (excerpts) of information for publication on the Internet.

There will be a corresponding order for working out the procedure in detail. Experience must show at what intervals this initiative needs to be repeated.
Learning locations

Proposal 4: Prevention before intervention

The objective is not to repair social problems, but actively to stop them occurring in the first place. With regard to social skills and public-spiritedness, it is a matter of creating conditions under which people are enabled to take responsibility for themselves and others, and to orientate their actions towards the common good. In order to make the paradigm shift from after-care intervention (sorting out deficits) towards successful and comprehensive prevention in everyday life, we propose the following:

In addition to or building on already existing facilities for early intervention and early-childhood education (family midwives, children’s and families’ centres, neighbourhood or multi-generation houses, etc.), 100 nationwide one-stop shops should be set up as part of a federal action programme (possibly linked with proposal 5). These one-stop shops would combine the responsibilities across departments, with a low entry threshold, in accordance with requirements and in a comprehensive way, as well as offering support for children and families. They would move away from responsibility thinking and provide offers in the sense of „universal prevention” under the „help to help yourself“ aspect. Such one-stop shops will ensure health provision, education courses for children and adults, relief and counselling in professional, economic and family challenges as well as education in the personal interest and public-spiritedness, all from a single source. The connection to the health system and the job centre is particularly important. It makes sense to have a link to early-childhood education facilities in order to reach parents and families at the earliest possible stage. The design of these centres depends on the particular analysed social space requirement. The interdisciplinary professional groups and providers involved are to be provided with the resources required for control, interdisciplinary communication and subsidiary planning.

Ideally, one-stop shops can be points of contact between the generations and throughout all phases of life. However, with regard to prevention aspects, it is the earliest childhood and enabling parents and families which are most important. In the sense of public-spiritedness, it is above all a matter of mobilising existing resources in families and with parents. The British system of family workers within the Sure-Start concept not only serve the needs of people seeking help, but also seek out the needy; in a similar way we recommend that the one-stop shop action programme should involve the qualification of skilled workers who would be provided with special skills for the education partnership. It is important that these family workers are appointed to the one-stop shops on a regular and prolonged basis where they can function as points of contact, coordinating interdisciplinary cooperation between specialists in the family field.

We propose that corresponding expertise be included in the advance training initiative for pre-school education specialists (WiFF) conducted by the Federal Government as part of its programme. Parent/child support should not be provided by voluntary workers, because it only functions if there is a long-term relationship of trust. The broad variety of offers open to parents ranges from visiting parent/child support through to parental school that is used for personal qualification.
Proposal 5: 100 schools with a fresh start – learning locations for public-spiritedness and social skills

The Federal Chancellor initiates a foundation project for promoting and awarding schools which make public-spiritedness and social skills a central feature of their guiding principle and their learning culture. It is the task of schools to rethink learning in view of the radical changes in social situation based on the paradigm shift described in the introduction, as well as trying out approaches for unfolding potential and creating preliminary forms of future examples for schools which stand for a new start over all, and not just for niche reforms: Inclusion, a relationship culture that appreciates values, individual learning offers which take account of the heterogeneity of gifts and tendencies amongst children and young people, learning by experience based on the challenges of life. The schools integrate the „Civil-society responsibility project“ and through networking in the community they permit community-based health, education and training work right from the start. As before, schools with a fresh start would lead to a recognised qualification.

The objective is for the schools to receive a „laboratory status“ which will liberate them from requirements that prove to be an obstacle, according to the concept of the „responsible school“. They will be supported by potential development coaches,11 combine good approaches and models that have already been implemented under the focus of „strengthening public-spiritedness and social skills“, work in a team, learn from one another and develop the existing approaches in a forward-looking way. For this purpose, the schools will have to be provided with supplementary (foundation) funds and given the task of documenting their work so that transmissible concepts can be developed from it. With regard to the necessary networking, encouragements should be given to supplementing foundation support with regional sponsorship funds provided by business.12

With regard to responsibilities in the education area, the project should be under the responsibility of a network of foundations drawn from amongst the major ones committed to the education area, such as the Bertelsmann Foundation, the Robert Bosch Foundation, the Hertie Foundation, the Böll Foundation and the Software-AG Foundation, thereby securing the material requirements for the project. The schools involved will be recruited through a call for applications. They would participate voluntarily. The federal states must be involved with regard to the participation of schools and the possible need for liberation from the regulations of school law.

It is proposed for the starting pistol to be fired by a meeting between the Federal Chancellor and the Association of German Foundations. The President of the State Conference on Education and Media should be invited in order to achieve a fundamental consensus regarding further procedure. The details of the concept should be worked out by a lead foundation.

Proposal 6: Civil-society responsibility project

The Federal Chancellor uses the education speech (see proposal 1) to propose the „Civil-society responsibility project“. Against the background of positive experience in schools nationwide over many years, it is the objective to publicise the project nationwide, achieve a larger programme of models, provide further education and exchange of experience for teaching personnel and education specialists, as well as initiating and scaling up an accompanying programme for evaluation.

The civil-society engagement project means: All young people in secondary education for one year or longer involve themselves once a week in a responsible community project that they have selected themselves. As a result, civil-society engagement will become a central element in the learning biography of all young people,
because responsibility is not learned from books or through moral appeals, but by accepting responsibility.13 Wherever children and young people can act together responsibly and increase their experience that their commitment is important, that is where sense, sensible action and public-spiritedness will spring forth. The Civil-society responsibility project is a win-win project in this regard. For young people, this amounts to developing social skills, motivation for learning and a positive identification with the community. The support from adults lends professionalism to the project in the work with other partners. It makes it possible to set up networks with a broad range of synergy effects and experience with project-oriented, cooperative culture. For the community, it creates the opportunity of gaining citizens who are prepared to take on responsibility.14 The project itself is conceived of as a cooperative undertaking involving a wide range of partners. With regard to engagement in the school area, the proposal must be submitted to the State Conference on Education and Media, with the objective of motivating schools to establish corresponding time windows in their structure, e.g. in the full-time education sector. In youth education outside schools, there is the opportunity of appealing to youth associations as providers of youth assistance through the German Federal Youth Council and the umbrella organisations of free social welfare. Contact with the local umbrella organisations is necessary in the interest of creating networks within local-government authorities.

In order to include content extending beyond the local community and to strengthen the awareness of children and young people about global challenges, it would be necessary to talk to the organisations under the Verband Entwicklungspolitik Deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen e.V. (VENRO, the umbrella organisation of development non-governmental organisations in Germany) such as Kindernothilfe, Save the Children, Misereor or Maltese International, which have programmes of lobbying and education work with children and young people.

The Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth should be given the task of organising a specialist conference with representatives of the cooperating bodies in order to develop an overall concept on the basis of existing best-practice examples, and initiate scaling-up. Agreements and public relations work should ensure that the variety of initiatives can be combined under the heading of the „Civil-society responsibility project“, thereby allowing the project to become one „concept“ in the general consciousness.

Proposal 7: Sport and youth associations as incubators of engagement

The informal education sector plays a central role in the democratic education of young people. Youth associations such as sports clubs, youth groups, etc. are civil-society, charitable organisations which would benefit from the proposed change in the German law on non-profit organisations.15 In addition to school facilities, they are the first ports of call for children and young people to experience active, civic engagement, i.e. being involved in decision-making processes as well as developing and undertaking projects.

The exchange of best-practice models and closer cooperation with universities and other education and training institutions as part of service learning initiatives could improve qualifications.16

Cooperations between schools, child day care centres, universities and youth associations remain, as in the past, burdened by the heavy-handed bureaucracy of the funding guidelines. The associated tasks can generally only be accomplished by large welfare associations with a correspondingly large number of employees. Here, the Federal Government could make a contribution to improving the overall situation by developing guidelines and best-practice exchange programmes.
Proposal 8: Young lateral thinkers in dialogue with the Federal Chancellor

The Federal Chancellor invites young people for a dialogue in order to find out their ideas for solving major social problems, for example: environmental and climate policy, turnaround in energy policy, demographic development and inter-generational dialogue, cultural variety, future of education, future of work, limits of performance of the health system, debt cap and fiscal saving potential, opportunities and risks of social networks, the position of Europe and EU citizenry, north/south problems. A dialogue of this type should take place at least once a year.

The proposal is intended as a challenge of civil-society responsibility and as a signal in the context of the further development of civic participation, in which children and young people have been excessively marginalised to date.

Participation projects are usually (and for good reasons) based on children's and young people's personal relevance and experience in the local, immediate area, although this overlooks the fact that they are also highly interested in questions of global responsibility. Experience shows that the unconventional thinking of youth can lead to unexpectedly interesting suggestions here as well. The point of contact could be the youth conference held as part of the Dialogue on the Future, although it would be prepared in a specific way and oriented towards the major topics of society. 17

A professional design would be required for implementing the details, in particular regarding the selection of the young people.

Proposal 9: Social risks of the Internet as a learning location

The learning location of the Internet offers enormous opportunities for high-quality multimedia content, which also permits dialogue and interaction. At the same time, we know little about the social side effects of learning on the Internet. Some risks of social interaction are known, especially cyber bullying such as on Facebook, the effects of which are particularly serious due to the immediate dissemination through the Internet. Also, it is known that attempts can be made to groom minors behind the concealment of hidden identities. There is the danger that technical possibilities and networking will give rise to risks, possibly of a significant extent, which have been ignored for too long.

As a result, the following procedure is proposed: The Federal Government should commission a study to investigate the positive and negative experience of different age groups on the Internet. The attempts should be made to identify risk groups and long-term consequences. The results will be presented and discussed in a subsequent conference involving representatives of various academic disciplines and other actors. The action strategy of the Federal Government will be worked out on this basis.

Proposal 10: Civil society as a We capable of action

Politicians alone are not up to meeting complex challenges. What is required is an interaction between politicians, business people and representatives of civil society. In this case, civil society stands for a living democracy with the range of perspectives, views and knowledge for necessary solutions. To enable it to take on this role, it needs the space and opportunity to organise itself without instrumentalisation, and thus understand itself and be understood „at eye level” with other sectors of society. It is then a central location for participation and a learning location for public-spiritedness and social skills. In addition to the traditional forms
of democratic participation oriented towards parties, it is important in the future above all to encourage self-organisation processes within the community, without prejudging the outcome, and to accompany and strengthen them. In the past, participation has been understood as citizens being allowed to express themselves within limited questions, in this case the citizen would be in the foreground, asking his or her own questions, developing answers in the community and accepting responsibility.

To trigger the necessary impulse for this development, we propose setting up a foundation which would promote exemplary projects nationwide. Unlike previously in foundation work or even in conventional government funding, where the self-organisation potential is capped by the frame of reference and purposes imposed by the funding providers, in this case the central aspect would be establishing the conditions for possibilities.

In this way, the foundation can achieve the following work:

- Providing instruction, training and support for exemplary, self-organised projects in the area of citizens' self-organisation
- Active search, support and further education of people who initiate and accompany such organisation processes over a longer time in the community
- Provision of start-up support exclusively for the aforementioned kind of project, not for service projects or other projects with an offer character The sponsored projects should feature a high degree of participation, integration of marginalised people, combination of existing actors on the ground and sustainability.

1 For more information about this, see also working group I.1.a). „Family“, pg. 14.
2 For more information about this, see also working group I.2.b) „Opportunities and limits of citizens’ participation“, pg. 45.
3 With regard to the virtual world, refer to working group III.3.a) „Digital skills“, pg. 166.
7 See also working group I.1.a) „Family“, pg. 14.
8 For more information about this, see also citizens‘ proposal „With the entire local-government authority on the way to a new learning culture“ www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/30-Wie-Lernen/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=14293.
9 In the broader sense, this is also matched by the suggestion in the citizens‘ proposal: „Learning for the time after school“, which addresses the acquisition of practical life skills: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/30-Wie-Lernen/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=8164.
11 See proposal of working group III.1.a) „Unfolding of potential and self-responsibility for shaping life“, pg. 134.


See working group I.2.b) „Opportunities and limits of citizens’ participation“, pg. 45.

See working group I.2.b) „Opportunities and limits of citizens’ participation“, pg. 45.

III.2. Professional and life-long learning

Working group III.2.a) „Professional and life-long learning“

Experts: Key expert Dr. Martina Niemann. With: Joachim Hoffmann, Dr. Iris Pfeiffer, Christian Rauch, Hedwig Schomacher, Dr. Ulrich Schoof, Dr. Günter Walden

Three trends will shape the general conditions of learning in Germany over the next few years:

1. Demographic development

There are fewer and fewer people in Germany, and they are getting older. The number in the working population will decline by approx. 8 million by 2030 to 42 million, and at the same time their age structure will change. The group of 50 to 65 year-olds in the working population will account for approx. 40 percent, which will be equal to the 30 to 49 year-old group. Only one in five will be younger than 30. As a result of this demographic development, Germany will not be able to shape its future without older workers.

2. Demand for skills

The demand for unqualified employees and employees with low qualifications will continue to decline; that for medium qualifications will remain relatively constant, while the demand for qualifications corresponding to a university degree will increase. At the same time, more and more activities – even in the low-wage area – will impose significant requirements in terms of decision-making capability, creativity and social skills.

3. World of work and knowledge

The change in the world of work – i.e. digitalisation, globalisation, technical progress – means that people will no longer be able to rely on the knowledge that they acquired during their youth. It will have to be acquired on a permanent basis, including during professional activity.

Unfolding potential is the key concept: In Germany, we must create general conditions for learning so that as many people as possible are prepared and able to expand their qualifications and skills on a continuous basis throughout lengthy phases of their lives. In future, opportunities for learning will have to be much more focused on the over-50s than is the case today. All education demand must be supported. Anyone who wants to learn something should be enabled to do so. Opportunities for learning must be expanded to informal learning and new learning locations, and the different forms of learning must be networked together better in order to make the education system more transparent.¹

There are already numerous ideas and initiatives for this. To date, however, they have not been brought together consistently and implemented throughout Germany. In order to achieve a real widespread effect, the Federal Government should take action in two main ways:
a) Maintaining the enthusiasm for and access to lifelong learning – Give more attention to informal learning – Increase the transparency of the professional education system

In the changing world of work, the importance of permanent career patterns is declining continuously, while the questions relating to informal learning are increasing. As a result, informal learning experience must be recognised more easily by amendments to the Vocational Training Act, and it must be easy to demonstrate such experience in a skills passport.

In order for people to experience learning as a personality-enriching activity, the desire to learn must be (re-)awakened, and simple access to learning made possible. Rethinking is decisive: Pathways must be created outside classic education institutions, making it possible to acquire a wide range of skills and qualifications during all phases of life, e.g. with an open university. The idea of education vouchers for basic education must be developed further into a two-account model so that it remains possible to finance learning phases in subsequent phases of life and in order to strengthen incentives for work-based learning.¹

In addition, the new profession of „potential unfolding coach“ should be introduced. The tasks of these potential unfolders would be to help people discover their desire to learn, and to overcome the formal obstacles.²

b) Activate a regional and community learning landscape

Learning takes place locally, in the community and within the region. Today, the actors are not adequately networked, i.e. the connectability of the opportunities for learning and the interfaces to other offers have not been given enough attention. The Federal Government thus has the central tasks of increasing actors’ awareness, helping them in shaping and managing their specific regional learning landscape and actively integrating the possibilities offered by the Internet.

Regional and community networking of citizens with business, politics and both formal and informal education institutions needs locations that are suitable for this purpose: new kinds of citizens’ houses, for example. There, opportunities for learning could be made transparent and participation possibilities visualised. There, seals of approval could be given to companies and nationwide days of action carried out.

It will not be possible to make any progress without success measurement throughout Germany, communication of the activities by federal states, regions, local-government authorities as well as the institutions and actors that are represented there. For this purpose, we need atlases of education offers in Germany. The German Learning Atlas published by the Bertelsmann Foundation is a good first approach to this. However, additional steps must be taken to create a platform for transparency which should be combined into a national initiative for continuing education.

The working group has developed the following specific suggested actions in order to support the two lines of action:

¹ „Professional and life-long learning“ working group

² „Professional and life-long learning“ working group
Give more attention to informal learning – increase the transparency of the education system

Proposal 1: Skills passport as a companion for lifelong learning

An initiative could be imagined at national level to promote the introduction of a skills passport in companies, schools, social institutions, adult education colleges and similar institutions. On the basis of the skills passport, employed and unemployed citizens could be supported by companies, social institutions and the adult education colleges in an accompanying process, to help them back into work for example. The idea of potential unfolding coaches proposed by working group III.1.a) „Unfolding of potential and self-responsibility for shaping life“ would play an important role here. Professional colleges could take on a multiplier function for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The objective is for people to be given the possibilities of representing their formal and informal skills on a continuous basis in the further development process. The task of the skills passport is not only to make people aware of their own potential but also as a document for them to present to the training and labour market. The skills passport could already be used by schoolchildren: A description of the professional training qualification supplements the reference based on school grades, and represents the skills of the individual schoolchild which have been acquired with regard to career orientation. In this way, a company definition of professional training qualification could be included in the references.

More extensively than in the past, people are becoming the shaping subject of their education and qualification processes. This implies a higher intrinsic learning motivation: strengths serve as the starting point, goals are set by the individual. Employees are made capable of expanding their already existing and recognised qualifications on a continuous basis.

Recognition of non-formal education and learning processes will increase citizens’ motivation to shape their own education processes. As a result, this will provide the job market with employees who can help to shape things, and who perceive change as an opportunity and not as a threat.

The skills passport creates the link between promoting education and the individual’s social engagement and thus expands the range of learning locations and learning processes. By making use of skills passports and within accompanying processes, social institutions will be able to play a mediating role for unemployed people in the first job market. This would create opportunities for women not (previously) in employment, above all.

Proposal 2: Improvement of transparency and recognition possibilities in professional education

The Federal Government can improve the recognition possibilities in professional education by creating training modules and easier access to external examinations (catching up the professional qualification) and creating and promoting institutions – such as potential unfolding coaches – who support people in having their skills recognised in the case when they have acquired these skills outside the system or alongside their work.
Federal Government initiatives already exist for this purpose. The initiative by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in 2005, „Credit of vocational competences towards higher education study programmes (ANKOM)“, has the objective of creating transitions between education institutions, and in doing so recognising already existing qualifications and skills. The pilot initiative by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in 2007, „DECVET – development of a credit point system in vocational education and training“, worked out approaches for recording, transferring and accrediting learning results and/or skills from one part of the professional education system in another part. Over recent years, the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training has also developed training modules for selected training professions.

These initiatives have produced significant results, although political implementation has not yet been entirely clarified. As a result, the Federal Government should continue and combine the initiatives over the next five years in cooperation between the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi) and Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) in such a way that the accreditation of learning results and skills is really improved. At the same time, it will be necessary to carry out nationwide implementation.

In addition, the possibilities afforded by the Vocational Training Act (BBiG) with regard to accreditation of previous professional education during the training time and reinforced use of external examinations must be implemented in all federal states. To date, North Rhine-Westphalia has played a pioneering role with the Vocational College Accreditation and Registration Regulation (BKAZVO).

For the purpose of registration for the external examination, Art. 45 para. 2, sentence 3 of the Vocational Training Act (BBiG) should be formulated as follows:

„Demonstration of the minimum time is waived if references or other credible evidence is presented in order to demonstrate that the applicant has acquired the professional activity capability which would justify admission to the examination."

At present, the corresponding legal passage has only been formulated as an optional regulation. Experience of implementing the new act for recognition of qualifications acquired abroad should also be examined, with regard to the extent to which approaches to improving recognition and transparency can be produced in general for the education system. The recognition act, which came into force on 1 April 2012, provides citizens with the legal right to have qualifications acquired abroad recognised in Germany. This also includes a right for confirmation of partial skills from the career path, as well as for qualifications that are still outstanding.

The job market requires people to learn different professions over the course of their life, and acquire professional qualifications. The requirements and the legal provisions for different activities define that employees are only allowed to be engaged there if they can demonstrate the specific professional qualifications.

From this perspective, the legislature must make it possible as a matter of urgency for employees to have qualifications and capabilities acquired in a significantly greater extent recognised for admission to further examinations, in order to permit the following:

- Entry by people with non-standard learning biographies into recognised professions
- Changing between professions even in later phases of life
- Making the education system resilient to demographic change
- Transitions between the various learning systems of a preparatory, training and academic character
- Transparency of learning and education systems
Implementation of the proposals should also open up a base for improving the recognition possibilities in the process of lifelong learning overall. In the longer term, the following targets are involved:

a) Making skills acquired by people outside their job useable and transparent  
b) Making skills acquired by people through informal learning at work useable and transparent  
c) Creating instances which support individuals in doing this

This potential-oriented approach for promoting qualifications and skills should be based on more dimensions than solely on the training duration and the level of the activity currently carried out.

Proposal 3: Open university*

Courses of study are required for the target group of professionally qualified people or general skilled workers without the necessary qualification to attend university; these should be able to be implemented alongside work and integrated within the career. An open university is an important building block in this. Compared with the British model of the open university, all interested adults would be able to take part in study, irrespective of their previous level of education. The design as a distance-learning university will not only create nationwide access, but also further support the objective of inclusive education. Courses of study have a modular structure, and can be studied part time or in parallel to work. Preliminary experience is available, for example at the Hagen distance-learning university with almost 80,000 students, although this organisation is linked to the professional education university access regulations applicable in North Rhine-Westphalia. Further opening and expansion of the offering would be conceivable here. As a result of current discussion regarding cooperation between the Federal Government and federal states in the university area, there is also the opportunity for acceptance of an open university to increase, and for the Federal Government to become involved financially in a project of this kind. The open university was already mentioned at the education summit back in 2008.

Target group for the measure: Adult population

Targets:

a) Access to vocational academic education for all those who are interested  
b) Recognition of modules obtained for academic qualifications, irrespective of the formal preconditions  
c) Provision of academic continuing education courses for the interested public

Duration: unlimited

In spite of extensive adaptations to the university access entitlement in federal states, the hurdles for people without a school-leaving certificate to take up a course of study remain high, and the number of professionally qualified people starting studies is low: According to information from the Federal Statistical Office, just under 5,400 out of 425,000 new students were in this category in 2009.

Important targets for academic education include higher flexibility and transparency as well as greater convergence with offers of professional continuing education. At the same time, the current burdens imposed by double school-leaver cohorts and the high number of new students must be taken into account.
Activate a regional and community learning landscape

Proposal 4: Citizens’ houses for community learning management

Citizens’ houses will be set up as points of coordination within local-government authorities. Citizens’ houses are, firstly, physical locations serving as central points of contact for citizens who wish to pursue further education and get involved. Secondly, citizens’ houses function as Internet-based virtual centres.

Here, local promoters from business, associations, adult education colleges, the Federal Employment Agency, foundations, social partners and both formal and informal education institutions would combine their offers and implement community learning management with the help of the Internet. The citizens’ houses would provide the tools required for this.

The citizens’ houses will be supported by a nationwide promotional competition. This offers the necessary points of contact at Federal Government level, and supports the regional approaches. Local-government authorities can apply with a concept for networking the education actors with companies and social actors (foundations, associations). The criteria for selection should be:

- a) Widespread acceptance in the region as well as a sustainable cooperation model for the actors
- b) Clear target picture for the region („Where do we want to go?”) which is developed with participation by the population, e.g. as part of a future workshop
- c) Specific implementation plan with measurable targets for mobilising citizens as well as scaling up tried-and-tested ideas

Citizens’ houses integrate existing education infrastructure such as adult education colleges, municipal libraries, professional colleges or career information centres (BIZ) operated by the Federal Employment Agency. They permit and support access to learning portals such as „ich-will-lernen.de“ operated by the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs and the German Adult Education Association (DVV) or online universities.

Alongside this, the citizens’ houses could incorporate the regional networks for safeguarding skilled workers. Involvement by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) would produce the possibility of discussing the job market monitor of the Federal Employment Agency in the regional network, thereby recognising fields of action for the local-government authority and bringing together the relevant actors. An active role for employers’ associations would also be feasible here.

In Germany, there are more than 4,500 civic foundations that focus on the topic of education and training. In addition, there are adult education colleges, small medium and large companies who are involved in this, as well as large number of associations and social institutions which look after the concerns of disadvantaged job market participants.

This large number of actors represents a danger of not seeing the wood from the trees in the forest of lifelong learning. There is need for instruments and locations for coordinating education work, and avoiding duplicated work or a confusion of offers.
Proposal 5: Nationwide day of action

Regularly, on a set day each year, companies and training firms, schools, professional colleges, universities, research centres, foundations, other learning locations such as adult education colleges, cultural and social institutions as well as education consultancies and employment agencies all over Germany would hold local events for people of all ages and qualifications, in order to promote what they offer in terms of professional training and continuing education, and thereby present the associated opportunities.

These events will be entered on a campaign map in advance, and published on the Internet. They will be communicated intensively through the media in order to draw the attention of the public, politicians and business people to the advantages of professional continuing education.

On the „demand“ side, associations, foundations, schools, etc. should be encouraged to motivate people (especially those not in education) specifically to attend one of the participating learning locations on this day. The objective is to awaken enthusiasm for education and qualification amongst everyone, and to make it clear what they can do with their talents.

The Federal Government supports these campaigns with a nationwide promotional competition for regional education networks.

The day of action should make it clear what possibilities and opportunities exist for training and continuing education, by learning locations and companies opening their doors to interested parties of all ages and qualifications. The objective is to visualise the fascination of professional training and continuing education by means of specific examples, and to provide information about additional current possibilities for individual training or continuing education measures.

In addition, the competition associated with the day of action is intended to achieve better networking between learning locations and offers for acquiring professional skills. It is used for activating promoters who are involved in education policy from the fields of politics, business and civil society within the regions to disseminate and scale up existing ideas into larger units.

Therefore, the day of action should also include speeches by prominent politicians such as the Federal Chancellor, the Federal Minister for Education and Research and other personalities, as its central feature.

Proposal 6: Seal of approval for companies that provide continuing education

It is proposed for a seal of approval to be given to companies which are committed to the continuing education of their workforce. The basis for awarding the seal of approval would be demonstration that the company has a systematic continuing education concept (e.g. finding the requirement, strategies for potential development, concepts for formal and non-formal continuing education), that all employee groups regularly take part in continuing education and that the different continuing education requirements of all groups in the workforce are taken into account. As well as this, not only formalised learning processes but also, in particular, workplace learning and self-organised learning should be considered.

The seal is awarded for between three and five years after completion of an audit process, and is reaudited at the end of this period. The auditing process raises the profile of continuing education for companies as an instrument in strategic company management. In this way, the processes for structuring continuing
education in companies are also improved. At the same time, consulting resources are provided in order to offer information for effective structuring of vocational continuing education.

Target group: companies, especially SMEs.

Targets:

a) Increasing awareness of the importance of continuing education for their own competitiveness
b) Improvement in the processes of structuring continuing education
c) Increasing the involvement of companies in continuing education
d) Creation of competitive advantages for companies which invest in continuing education
e) Support for the innovative capability of SMEs

Duration: one-time development phase for the concept, after that a continuous offer.

All in all, involvement in vocational continuing education is stagnating in Germany. According to surveys by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), Germany has an average position among other countries with 69 percent vocational continuing education and concentration on skilled workers/managers as well as short-term measures. The smaller the companies, the less continuing education is implemented. Companies' innovative capability correlates with participation in continuing education.

As a result, there is an urgent requirement for vocational continuing education activities to be intensified. The seal of approval is intended to provide an incentive for entry into continuing education and for expansion of the activities. Creating a recognised seal of quality will deliver competitive advantages for the companies, and thus incentives to invest in continuing education.

 Proposal 7: National initiative for continuing education

It is proposed that the Federal Government, social partners and umbrella organisations should get together to promote participation in continuing education. Coordinated and concerted activities are required at regional and supra-regional level, just as there is a need for the self-obligation to promote continuing education in companies, especially also for target groups with low participation in continuing education. Existing structures and networks can be used for this purpose.

Actors: Federal Government, business, social partners, umbrella organisations.

Target group: companies.

Targets:

a) To act as a signal for companies and the population, and as a means of emphasising the urgency to take action;
b) Strategic realignment of existing networks towards the topics of qualification/continuing education with the objective of continuing with tried-and-tested structures and partnerships.

Duration: providing an impulse for approx. three to five years.

The proposal picks up on a suggestion by the Minister of Education, Annette Schavan in a conversation held in February 2012 to generally discuss the future education constitution in Germany, and in doing so to involve the local-government authorities, whose role has become significantly more important over recent years.
With 69 percent vocational continuing education, Germany has an average position among other countries and concentrates on skilled workers/managers as well as short-term measures.

Coming together on a national basis would provide a clear signal for the public. According to existing experience, the majority of SMEs would not be capable of overcoming the challenges involved in this, without joining together. A national initiative for continuing education involving experts could include all actors and push ahead with the process.

**Proposal 8: Creation of transparency regarding regional learning landscapes at national level – by a web-based regional information system**

On a standardised, national IT platform, regional and municipal learning worlds (education and learning data as well as best practices) could be presented in an appealing and comparable form, which would induce competition between the regions in order to kickstart the best ideas and solutions. As well as the straightforward education data, it would also present relevant socio-economic and demographic contextual data, which would allow an analysis with adequate consideration of different regional starting conditions. Central provision of this data should also make it easier to establish a comprehensive, community learning and education monitoring scheme.

As a first step, quantitative data and key figures existing at the federal states’ statistical offices should be processed on a regional, comparative basis and used for the presentation. As a next step in the development, additional actors relevant in education (such as the Federal Employment Agency [BA], Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training [BIBB], etc.) should be encouraged to provide their regional indicators in the system by means of standards. The quantitative data should be updated every six months or at least annually. In a further step of development, the best-practice examples should also be recorded. The question of Web 2.0 functionality should also be considered in this case, in order to permit easy user access as well as interactive networking. As a final step, the qualification and continuing education courses available in the particular region could be recorded successively and integrated clearly into the system.

The target group of this regional information system at national level is composed of regional decision-makers, the political elite, the specialist community, the media and interested citizens.

Expertise in shaping the content of regional learning systems and learning landscapes is situated at national and federal state level, as well as at local government level. The different systems make it difficult to assess best-practice examples nationwide. As a result, the development opportunities for a learning system are limited.

Transparency permits better regional orientation and political control, at the same time as creating a pressure to act and competition between the systems and initiatives on the grounds of comparability. Furthermore, a better overview of the employment opportunities and qualification options in the region can provide the people living there with more incentives for their own further qualification. The system can be based on existing data and be continuously developed using new standards.

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1 See amongst other proposals those of working group III.1.a „Unfolding of potential and self-responsibility for shaping life“, pg. 133.
2 See proposal 5 of working group III.3.b „Learning society“ , „The two-account model in the education system“, pg. 178.
3 See proposal 1 of working group III.1.a) „Unfolding of potential and self-responsibility for shaping life“: „Introduction of training as a ‘potential unfolding coach’ at teacher training colleges“, pg. 134.

4 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Electronically stored record of qualifications on a personal chip-card“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/30-Wie-Lernen/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=657

5 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Amendment to the Geriatric Care Act“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/30-Wie-Lernen/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelansicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=540.


Both the technical and mental requirements in professional life are increasing incessantly. The education system has not taken sufficient account of this development to date. The proportion of young people in the „transitional system” has been growing for years and, psychologists and social researchers confirm that there is a decline in social cohesion and empathy (theory of mind). Young people are being expected to shoulder more and more responsibility for themselves, and for shaping and planning their own lives. At the same time, it is possible to see a marked decline in social involvement and a loss of the integrative power of social and family networks. Social involvement and social communities are particularly important as a support for young people in their successful development processes within natural living worlds, although the fortifying and protective effects of these are becoming diluted.

The gulf between growing requirements on the one hand and declining socialisation power on the other is a particular threat for the group of young people not in education, and may exclude them permanently from social participation through earning an income. Lack of education is only the apparent cause of failure in work. The underlying cause can be found in the social conditions for acquiring technical and mental skills. Immutable physical or mental deficits thus only explain a minor part of the problem which is failure to access education. The larger part, which can also be influenced, has to do with failed socialisation processes.

In addition, there is discouragement which is based on the pessimistic expectation that it is not worth trying. To the extent that this expectation dominates, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy and can thus become a social reality. It will only be possible to overcome this vicious circle if effort is rewarded, whether in the short term through social recognition or in the long term through the estimate that the goal of leading an independent and fulfilled life does lie within reach.

At the same time, the opportunities for successful implementation are better now than they have been for a long time. The profound decline in the birth rate is forcing companies to be more considerate than in the past when dealing with available resources, and also to give an opportunity to those who were only recently regarded as unemployable. If these new opportunities are perceived as real by the previously disadvantaged young people, this could possibly change a not inconsiderable cause of the disadvantages quicker than expected. Even today, there are considerable regional differences in youth unemployment within Germany. These differences cannot be explained by education deficits alone. Instead they have a striking correlation with regional economic power, and thus regionally different scarcity conditions on the job market. The youth unemployment rate in many eastern and northern regions of Germany tops the 20 percent mark, whereas it is practically zero in booming regions such as Ingolstadt or Freising. A current study by the Rhine-Westphalia Institute of Economic Research (RWI) shows, amongst other things, that there is strikingly high correlation between the regional school drop-out rate and the regional unemployment rate. Lack of education is clearly both a cause and effect of the absence of job perspectives.

This provides cause for hope that the demographically induced changes to scarcity perspectives will lead to positive education effects over a broad front, because investment in education will be more worthwhile in future. It is all the more important to convince today’s young people that their opportunities will noticeably improve. Otherwise, there is a risk of them incorrectly judging the job market perspectives on the basis of past experience, and thus neglecting to make the necessary efforts to seize the new opportunities.
Furthermore, it would be careless to assume that current problems will soon resolve themselves. Success in the job market is not solely a matter of having a job. Success is also measured by the level of autonomy and development possibilities associated with it.

Expanded possibilities for individual self-development represent important freedom gains in modern societies. The modern individual does not just think of himself or herself as an autonomous and self-determined subject. Such individuals are also expected to conduct their lives and cope with life’s challenges autonomously, which represents a risk. The course of life is no longer down to fate, but is shaped. Modern subjects are increasingly left to their own devices. These developments are linked to increasing expectations on individual performance capability and the ability for self-discipline.

Early indicators of development problems in this context are problems with the kindergarten teachers, sustained problems with performance and behaviour at school as well as problems of social cooperation with children of the same age or orientation towards precarious peer groups. It can be regarded as empirically proven that such indicators have a high predictive power with regard to individual earning potential. Long-term studies show that the chronic occurrence and accumulation of everyday burdens and development risks during childhood go hand in hand with below-average income achievement in adulthood in a strikingly high proportion of cases.

Young people suffer to a particular extent from a lack of reliable attachment figures, relationship breakdowns, loss of communities, experience of poverty and exclusion; these are frequently also associated with migration experience. These risks can culminate in circular processes. What remains is social isolation or integration into precarious peer groups, discouragement, resignation, aggression and, in extreme cases, hatred. The young people affected often have not been able to develop their planning, decision-making and action capability (agency) in their life worlds, or else have lost it. In that case, the objective must be to link targeted individual assistance measures with the offers of social assistance in such a way that they support young people’s capability to overcome everyday problems in life worlds that are under great strain.

To date, the education system has not paid sufficient attention to such problems. In order to be able to reverse the associated incorrect development, it will be necessary to strengthen the integrative force of professional education systems so that young people can be offered opportunities that they can indeed take. Successful learning processes are based on the feeling of being confronted by challenges that can be overcome and/or that sufficient social support is available to enable the challenge to be mastered.

With regard to associated support measures, it is ultimately a matter of strengthening social skills and awakening enthusiasm for learning. „Meta-competences” such as communication and network capability in a broad sense as well as inertia, for example, and the capability of acting in a targeted way represent an important basis for acquiring technical and cognitive skills, and using them in relevant (working) environments. It is in particular young people out of education who find themselves confronted by the problem that acquiring corresponding meta-competences, both in the family and in the primary social reference group („clique”) is often not a means of adequate support, and is indeed negatively sanctioned in some cases by refusal of recognition. As a result, education and funding institutions are increasingly unable to rely on the existence of corresponding meta-competences as a precondition for funding the technical acquisition of skills, and indeed find themselves obliged to communicate the corresponding meta-competences themselves. A particular challenge here is that the communicated skills are in some cases not recognised in the lifeworld of young people. There are also meta-competences which are sometimes closely connected with particular values (sense of duty, determination, etc.). To communicate them, it is again necessary to consider the declining value base of young people’s action orientations.
Targeted early detection systems are required to allow corresponding assistance to take effect at an early stage. The problems frequently only become virulent during adolescence, and generally have their causes at a much earlier stage in the development of the personality. Recent insights from neurobiology and pedagogical research make it clear that the decisive steps in setting the course for personality development take place during the age between two and four years. Curiosity and the joy of discovery are decisively imprinted in the second and third years of life. At about four years of age, the ability develops to put yourself in other people’s shoes. Disruptions in these development phases can only be compensated later through great effort – if at all. Therefore, it is important to recognise such disruptions at an early stage in order to rectify them.²

There is, furthermore, a particular responsibility for the area of social assistance, because young people outside of education are frequently reliant on social support. The way in which social support is granted can have a wide-reaching influence on how alternative options are perceived. The less pronounced the link between social assistance and reciprocation, the more difficult it becomes for young people to detect the purpose of securing their own livelihood. Demanding nothing from the young people in return for the support that is granted represents a lack of respect for them from officialdom, implicitly writing them off as irresponsible and feckless. The situation is quite different if reciprocation is demanded from the young people in the form of training and voluntary activity. This is a sign of appreciation, and expresses society’s reliance on them. It goes without saying that the principle of support and reciprocation must also be backed up by the sanction of refusing support. Where the refusal to act is tolerated without punishment, the social state is undermining its credibility, and thus actively contributing towards a deterioration in standards.

Last but not least, politicians are faced with the task of credibly communicating the changing opportunity situation on the job market. In view of the negative experience of the job market in the past, it is not just young people who are likely to find it difficult to believe in the radical reversal in scarcity relationships in the job market that is just around the corner. However, if we fail in our attempt to convince young people today that their opportunities in the future are very much brighter than was the case until quite recently, there is a risk that young people will be unnecessarily steered around precisely these opportunities as a result of failing to make the effort to invest in their training, due to false expectations.

Proposal 1: Modernisation of administration

Success in integration does not just depend on the type and number of measures, but rather on the density and quality of support. This was a central point recognised in the legislative process for Book II of the German Social Code, although to date this has not been adequately put into practice in organisational terms. The key elements of this are:

- Introduction and/or expansion of professional case management
- Increasing the intensity of support
- Outreach work
- Integration of private companies (internships)

Without granting assistance in a binding and promoting way, the benefit of job centres from the perspective of needy young people is reduced to the question of how much money is paid out. Under these circumstances, the option of drawing social assistance (unemployment benefit) for young people who do not regard an apprenticeship as particularly useful even in a long-term perspective represents a relatively attractive alternative to that of funded training. As a result, they also find it difficult to motivate themselves to complete an apprenticeship. This dilemma must be overcome. Improving the density and quality of support would, firstly,
increase the relative attractiveness of training. Secondly, and above all, it would establish a social link to the case manager in such a way as to communicate recognition, motivation and obligation. This requires special skills in case management.

Integrating private companies is important in this context because being confronted by the reality of work in a company is a much more effective way of experiencing the importance and appreciation for one’s own person compared to purposeless dry runs in artificial model firms. Without doubt, this will require close cooperation between the job centres and companies, which will only work if the case managers at job centres are perceived as intensive „carers“.

Proposal 2: Orientation of social assistance in the social space

The obligation for cooperation between the organisations that grant assistance is regulated in all relevant social laws. These regulations should be extended in such a way that the official bodies granting assistance are obliged to orientate their responsibilities in the context of social assistance and their internal systems of order entirely in line with the social space.

As far as the development of children and young people is concerned, it is the immediate social space in which they live that represents a significant influencing parameter. Therefore, public authorities that grant assistance – as well as granting individual help – must keep an eye on the social space and orientate their assistance accordingly. However, most public authorities are organised according to the „alphabetical principle“, referring to the sorting of case files by initial letters, so that their cooperation is at best only in relation to individual cases. A general organisation of all public authorities in line with the social space (in particular social offices, youth offices, job centres, agencies for work, housing benefit centres and health authorities) would permit help to extend beyond the individual case starting from a milieu perspective.

In this way, the living situation and education opportunities for many children and young people in problematic milieus could be significantly approved because „It takes a village to bring up a child!“ (African proverb).

Proposal 3: Education and participation – information principle

The individual funding of learning that is possible for disadvantaged schoolchildren on social security benefits through the education and participation package could be increased by a change in the law – away from the application principle and towards the information principle. The information principle means that the social authority responsible can actively instigate granting of education and participation measures where this appears to be sensible and necessary. To do this, it is not reliant on the parents submitting a corresponding application – as has been the case up to now.

Proposal 4: Rapid help for funding professional training, saving bureaucratic costs

The Federal Government is requested to get the National Regulatory Control Council to examine whether professional training allowances could be granted without bureaucratic complications, in order to avoid training cancellations in future. A change could be made, for example, by revising the action recommendations/directives and instructions (HEGA) 10/10-03-Professional Training Allowance (BAB); directives and instructions (GA) of the work agency or amendment to Article 67 Book III of the German Social Code.
Proposal 5: Creating space for conflict resolution (positive peer culture)

One of the educational tasks of a school should be to create opportunities for peer groups (such as the class) in which they can exchange views about the problems of individual members or conflicts between members. This can be done both during regular meetings and on an ad hoc basis. It is merely important that the need for such exchange should be recognised by the school as part of the school routine, and thus becomes an integral component of the educational responsibility.

Proposal 6: Economic pact

The objective of the initiative is to fund young people outside of education in the work training system. Without doubt, the entrepreneurial side is ready to do this. It can be implemented as part of a foundation supported by companies above all. The foundation should support companies in overcoming the particular challenges that can occur in connection with integrating young people outside of education into professional training. The activities of the foundation can extend to cover various areas:

- Regular awards to companies which play an exemplary role here
- Advertising for promotion of young people outside of education in companies
- Holding specific seminars and training courses for instructors (such as with regard to conflict resolution, detection of urgent psychological problems, etc.)
- Targeted funding of individual model projects in companies (e.g. experience workshop) in the sense of a learning system

Proposal 7: Funding of social work in companies

In view of the increasing scarcity of young people for training, companies are more and more reliant in their recruitment of apprentices on accepting young people with deficits in terms of qualifications for the training. Their training requires greater care, engagement and empathy than would otherwise be the case. As a result, the requirements on instructors and companies are correspondingly higher when it comes to dealing with this target group. Companies must not be left alone to cope with these requirements themselves. They need positive experience as role models and support in dealing with conflicts and unusual behaviours. Otherwise, there is a risk of refusing training, with long-term negative consequences not just for the young people affected but also for the overall economy.

In the same way as with social work in schools, there is thus a requirement for educational specialists, psychologists and educationalists to work closely with companies in order to support the young people and the companies. They should not only support the apprentices in the learning process and accept the non-vocational sources of obstacles to training (addiction, debts, lack of language skills, etc.) of young people, but should also provide advice for the instructors in handling conflicts and unusual behaviours. In this way, they will enable the instructors to focus largely on communicating the technical content, and thus prevent them from being overtaxed by the imposition of excessive demands in terms of social skills.
Proposal 8: Variable training duration with regard to the individual learning success

The necessity for a variable training duration in terms of achieving a professional qualification is appropriate in the context of integrating young people who are outside of education and the job market.

The individual training duration required to achieve a professional qualification is defined by the learning success reflected jointly by the instructor and the apprentice.

Preconditions for implementation:

- Learning time and examination dates must be adapted to the individual learning success (removal of modular structures)
- The process is accompanied by qualified coaches
- The general conditions are in place with regard to the need for changes to legislation (examination regulations, etc.) in the Vocational Training Act (BBIG Articles 6 and 8).

In order to test the practicality of implementation, it is recommended that performance should be as part of pilot projects with an experimental monitoring design.

Proposal 9: Putting the reality of life and life experience into schools

Teacher training should never be regarded as complete once the candidate has qualified. Instead, life-long continuing education should be made into a basic principle. In addition, exercising the profession of a teacher should in all cases be subject to continuing technical and didactic suitability checks. Last but not least, discrimination against late-entry candidates for the teaching profession with life and professional experience should be eliminated. Instead, such late-entry candidates should be explicitly taken into account during capacity planning for teacher training, because they represent an essential enrichment to the teaching body.

Proposal 10: Evidence-based learning from model projects – evaluation requirement of publically funded measures

All publically funded measures for improving integration opportunities of unemployed people should be subject to a valid success check. The objective must be to identify the causal contribution of a measure to integration success. For this purpose, it is necessary to ensure that suitable yardsticks are provided as an integral component of programme implementation.

The practice of integrating young people outside of education consists of numerous model projects with an extremely wide range of conceptual backgrounds. There is no lack of goodwill, active engagement and imaginative ideas amongst those in responsibility. However, what is lacking is a culture of systematic learning from project experience. This leads to a circular process of model practice in which conceptual errors are repeated, causes of success and failure go unnoticed and successful concepts are put on the backburner and forgotten. As a result, this is equivalent to a vast waste of scarce resources.
Proposal 11: Linking training and social data – introduction of a statics ID

Citizens and politicians frequently complain about the apparent mania of public authorities regarding collecting information, whereas at the same time there are glaring gaps in information held by central areas of governmental planning functions. One important cause for the coexistence of redundant data surveying on the one hand and information deficits on the other is that individual data is collected by different authorities independently from one another, and without any possibility of „joining up the dots”. This problem could be overcome in the long term by introducing a statistics ID. This would enable knowledge of enormous significance for education policy to be obtained, especially with regard to the transition from the education system into gainful employment. On the basis of information such as this, it would be possible to identify the signs of incipient failure to access education much earlier in the course of life in future than is the case today. As a result, corresponding preventative measures could be applied in future at a time when the prospects for success are still relatively bright and, presumably, also relatively cost-effective.

Proposal 12: Access by academics to official social data

Access to official social data for independent research should be significantly simplified. This would require revocation of the purpose principle as laid down in Article 75 of Book X of the German Social Code with regard to communicating social data for research purposes. This would provide a sustained impetus to the gathering of knowledge for government planning tasks on the basis of social data, without impairing the justified interests of those affected for their data to be protected.

1 RWI (2012): Calculations and scientific evaluations as part of the DCV project (Report on local education opportunities“ Essen.
III.3. Learning society

Working group III.3.a) „Digital skills“

Experts: Key expert Jörg Rheinboldt. With: Bea Beste, Jutta Croll, Philipp Justus, Prof. Dr. Jörn von Lucke, Prof. Dr. Horst Niesyto

The Internet is increasingly finding its way into the life of people in Germany and all over the world. In addition to computers, more and more devices offer the possibility of connecting to the Internet. Computers, mobile phones, TV sets and tablet computers are much-used devices nowadays which provide a means of accessing the digital world. Many areas of life and co-existence are supported online nowadays. We communicate online, make contacts and stay in touch, do our shopping online, search for information and learn more and more things via digital media and networks.

Digital media are accelerating technical and social development, and are changing the everyday life of human beings. Digital media offer opportunities for self-realisation, cultural and political participation, and have significant importance in the world of work. At the same time, problematic areas are developing in aspects such as the increasing commercialisation of social communication, hazardous content and risky use of media as well as what is referred to as the digital divide in access to and use of digital media. Media skills are called for in all areas of life. It is scarcely possible any longer to opt out of the digital life; this would be tantamount to refusing to learn how to read and write. The omnipresence of media is obliging people to prepare themselves for a life in which they can control the media. It is a matter of enabling people to handle media in a socially responsible, critically reflective and actively productive way, so as to strengthen the existing potential of people and to allow them to participate in society.

Life-long learning offers new opportunities for learners and teachers, at the same time as presenting new requirements; however, the forms of learning and learning locations are changing significantly. At the same time, our networks, forms of working and also the requirements on individual skills are changing: decision-making ability, creativity and social skills, a new understanding of and for media and entirely new abilities in handling digital media and digital communication are both required and expected because classic media (print, audio, photo, film, etc.) are merging together within digital media. As a result, media skills also call for knowledge of the particular, specific qualities of these kinds of media and their importance in convergent media worlds. The knowledge required here and the appropriate skills are changing rapidly, thereby placing exacting requirements on learners, teachers and learning locations.

In this case, other working groups in topic III „How do we want to learn?“ have made various key proposals which also form part of our proposals: Unfolding of potential as a paradigm shift towards classic knowledge transfer can positively influence processes of change in the context of promoting media skills. This particularly affects people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. It is important to play to their strengths, to relate to their experience in the places they live and, by these means, permitting access to learning, communication and shaping events with media.

Many institutions and organisations have detected these challenges and already made a start on working out and implementing proposed solutions. Promoting media competence amongst all age groups in a broadly-based and sustainable way is one of the main challenges. Firstly, it is a matter of building up and expanding the abilities of teachers (especially in basic media education) and expanding offers for the various target groups of learners. Furthermore, it must be ensured that all sections of society receive straightforward and low-cost access to the digital world. In addition, free access should be funded in order to compensate for soci-
al differentials. The variety of learning locations will extend far beyond the classic locations of the school, apprenticeship and universities as a result of digital media. Places of formal, non-formal and informal learning can and must communicate media skills. Therefore, networking institutions and courses together represents an important step, firstly as a means of using resources effectively and secondly in order to integrate the additionally required measures in a sensible way.

The Enquete Commission on „Internet and digital society“¹ of the Bundestag has discussed many of the topics that are also relevant for this group in its interim reports, and the suggested solutions are heading in a comparable direction. The State Conference on Education and Media (KMK) published a policy paper in March 2012² on media education in schools which defines the framework for a strategy of sustainable media education funding in schools. Various federal ministries have recently produced policy papers on promoting media skills, which we have also included in our considerations. The same applies to various proposals by the nationwide initiatives „No Education Without Media!“ and „D 21“.³

During work on this topic, it also became apparent that there are many other interdisciplinary topics involving different topic areas of the Dialogue on the Future and the Citizens’ Dialogue. We have taken account of the relevant connections in our proposals.

The topic of direct, digitally supported democracy was also discussed repeatedly during the cooperation. The topic of e-democracy is a natural component of media skills; ideas and proposals on this topic are not part of the order of business of this group, however.

The basic idea behind the proposals made by our working group is for skills in handling digital media to be sustainably cultivated in society. Above all, it is important to define media skills, to establish the topic on a sustainable basis within the institutions, to create an enduring framework for continuous implementation and specific individual proposals embedded within this.

**Our proposals are divided into four main categories:**

1. **Skills standards in dealing with digital media**

   The objective is to develop standards for competence in handling digital media, in order to describe skills levels, target groups, changing behaviour, contents and learning locations.

2. **Council for Digital Media and Media Skills**

   The objective is to bring together the actors that are, in some cases, already active in the political, economic, academic, education and civil-society spheres within one continuous body which will develop a programme of work to push ahead with the promotion of media skills on a broad front and a sustainable basis in all relevant areas.
3. The media education pact

The objective is to set up a pact between politicians, education providers, academics and business people for sustained promotion of media education and media skills. It is proposed for a highly publicised kick-off event to be held (2013) and for a „basic media education“ to be established in apprenticeships and courses at universities, as well as creating corresponding continuing education courses with widespread availability.

4. Joint infrastructures

Not only the communication but also the acquisition and application of skills in handling digital media require suitable infrastructures. Firstly, this is a matter of securing and supporting media education on a local basis. Secondly, it is necessary to consider establishing an online portal as a central information and reference system. The objective of the proposal is to create low-threshold and broad points of access for acquiring skills in handling digital media that reach people in their everyday education, working and leisure contexts, and encourage them to use media in a self-determined, creative and critical way.

Proposal 1: Competence standards in handling digital media

Digital media is based on using, storing, processing, distributing and presenting data (digital content) in a binary coded form. Text, images, graphics, speech, sound and music as well as moving images can be created, read and processed again by electronic, computerised means. Numeric representation, pixel-by-pixel processing, modularisation, variability, interactivity, global networking and transcoding are significant characteristics. Digital media does not just process and transport content, it changes our way of perceiving and experiencing reality, as well as the way in which information is processed and communication takes place. More and more areas of life and work exist in a substantial and physical world alongside a digital world; both worlds are hardly separable from one another.

This fact makes it necessary to understand the basic principles and the development of digital realities. It is necessary to have a basic media education which – based on knowledge of the various media types and their specific qualities – will create a basic understanding for the way in which virtual worlds and algorithmic processes function, as a means of enabling the acquisition of technical, aesthetic, social and communicative skills in an active and productive interaction with media. To a large extent, this also includes the skills required for a critical approach to handling media in the personal sphere and in society. In addition to acquiring media skills, there is also a need for specific media-education skills in education contexts so that corresponding suggestions can be provided for education and learning processes.

Alongside the technical aspects, a fundamental attitude towards digital media and towards education and learning is central. Fundamentally, the ability to learn is an innate gift possessed by new-borns, and should be encouraged rather than harmed by education institutions. There are basic dimensions which form what is in effect a virtuous circle, and it is from these that skills in handling media and technology also develop: curiosity and openness, patience and the ability to observe, constructively critical reflection, communication and the involvement of others. To this extent, the proposal for developing minimum standards for skills in handling digital media is subject to the underlying concept of the entire topic group „How do we want to learn?“: potential unfolding and a view to opportunity and/or resources. Here too, it becomes clear that it is above all a new learning culture which is permeating our entire society which can form a basis for promoting media skills. Associated with this, there is a self-conception that learning in a digitalised world takes place under self-responsibility – meaning that training is not necessary for every skill, but what is required is the basic readiness to learn and acquire knowledge. With regard to the communication, acquisition and application
of digital skills, this means that the existing everyday media skills possessed by children, young people and adults must be included, and that this self-conception is a basic orientation for all learning locations – starting with the family and including childcare facilities, schools, locations outside the school environment, apprenticeships and university and on to higher continuing education and the Internet as a communication space.

At the same time, all areas of education require incentive milieus to be strengthened and personnel and infrastructure resources to be provided in order to promote media education and media skills.

This is the only way to prevent that the phenomenon referred to as the digital divide becoming even wider as a result of people who live in circumstances conducive to education using and profiting from the learning opportunities provided by digital media, whereas people who live in disadvantaged education circumstances are unable to obtain access to them in the way described above. The fundamental readiness to learn with digital media and thus acquire knowledge must be awakened and secured in the long term through corresponding encouragement and individual promotion of the potential of the individual.

The digital world is changing and developing on a permanent basis. It is not possible to arrive at a conclusive definition of (digital) media skills. What does make sense is to evaluate proposals that have already been made regarding media skills standards, in particular with regard to the following aspects:

- Which skills areas in handling digital media are relevant in terms of timing for a medium reach, and how these skills areas should be continued
- How these media-related skills areas should be sensibly linked to underlying skills (personal, social and methodological skills)
- How, in coordination with the federal states, minimum standards can be agreed for the communication and acquisition of media skills in formal education contexts

The processing and continuous on-going development of these tasks forms part of the fundamental work tasks for the Council for Digital Media and Media Skills.

**Proposal 2: Council for Digital Media and Media Skills**

The topic of media education and media skills needs to be put on a permanent footing in the form of a Council for Digital Media and Media Skills. In a similar way as the „German Council for Sustainable Development“4, it is all about promoting media skills continuously in Germany, and achieving widespread and effective take-up. The Council for Digital Media and Media Skills advises the Federal Government and contributes to this objective with proposals for an overall strategy of promoting media skills as well as implementing this strategy by suitable measures. It goes without saying that the council has nationwide responsibility, although it must be effectively networked with international initiatives for promoting media skills.

The programme of work of the Council for Digital Media and Media Skills includes the following fundamental tasks:

- Development of a strategic overall concept which analyses requirements and formulates tasks in all relevant fields of action
- Working at proposals for medium and long-term assistance measures in all relevant fields of action; this also includes invitations to tender for qualification programmes to act as multipliers, with awards for best-practice projects
- Continuous examination of the state of development achieved
Promotion of nationwide networks in the area of promoting media skills
- Instigation of research into social media development, media use and media socialisation (continuous monitoring and forecast studies, including basic research) as well as practical and evaluation research in selected fields of action of promoting media skills

**Composition** of the Council for Digital Media and Media Skills:
The council brings together the actors that are, in some cases, already active in the political, economic, academic, education and civil-society spheres within one continuous body which promotes and supports the integration of skills in handling digital media into all relevant areas. The members of the council should include above all Secretaries of State from various federal ministries, experts in the area of media education appointed by the Federal Government, representatives of federal state governments, the State Media Authorities, the public broadcasting institutions, the media business as well as representatives of the „media education round tables” from the federal states. In terms of organisation, the council should be directly linked to the Federal Government, and be endowed with an office, academic staff and resources with which to hold conferences and carry out its own measures for promoting media skills.

**Working method** of the Council for Digital Media and Media Skills:
The council works on a permanent basis and forms individual working groups as a supplement for relevant fields of action. In addition to a firm core of members, it requires a changing body of participants appointed specifically according to topics. The council must be capable of dealing with the various target groups adequately and authentically, as well as being present in relevant media and at events. The cooperation includes groups and organisations from different social areas which are relevant for promoting media skills, such as specialist bodies with a focus on media, representatives of specialist bodies from the areas of child, youth, parent, adult and third-age education, representatives of the German Association of Cities and Towns (Deutscher Städtetag), the German Rural District Association (Deutscher Landkreistag), representatives of Internet start-ups, digital opinion leaders from all age groups and social categories, representatives of foundations (with a funding focus in the media area).

As a result of the rapid pace of media development and the significant requirement for promoting media skills, it is recommended that this proposal should be implemented promptly.

**Proposal 3: The media education pact**

In the federal system of the Federal Republic, it is necessary to achieve cooperative solutions, especially in the education area. In the central future question of promoting media skills, Germany can no longer afford a turf war and a non-associated co-existence between lines of funding at national and federal state level, as well as between different ministries and funding institutions. Coordination and agreements regarding a division of labour are urgently required. Establishing a Council for Digital Media and Media Skills could take a decisive step in this direction. What is required is for the Federal Government clearly to nail its colours to the mast of broad-based, sustainable funding for media skills in all areas of society. All relevant actors and players must be brought on board:

- the Federal Government, federal states and local-government authorities, the education areas, academics, politicians, specialist associations and bodies, media institutes and the media business, chambers of industry and commerce, employment agencies, the unions, churches, etc. Also, it is important to network with activities and programmes of the European Commission.

The following measures are proposed to stand the media education pact on its feet:
a) **Kick-off event in 2013 (involving the Federal Government and the aforementioned actors/players)**

The event should have a high publicity effect and communicate the message that „What we need now is a floodlight, not just lighthouses!” A national effort must be made to mobilise significantly greater resources for the broad-based and sustained funding of media skills! At the same time, this event could also fire the starting pistol for the Council for Digital Media and Media Skills, and present the first measures.

In further events and activities, efforts should be made to achieve permanence, especially in conjunction with the „Media education round table“ campaign that has already started in various federal states. Consideration should be given to joint activities/events with other partners, such as with the IT summit „re:publica“, the initiatives „No Education Without Media“ and „D21“, radio and TV broadcasters, State Media Authorities, the CeBIT, the Didacta, various specialist events and exhibitions (agriculture, building and associated trades, industry), foundations (which fund media skills projects).

b) „**Basic media education“ for all skilled educationalists**

This proposal represents a key function for a broad-based and sustainable qualification of skilled workers in the education area, and is by now being supported by numerous bodies and organisations in Germany. This was also expressed in the Citizens’ Dialogue, in which this proposal attracted a large number of votes in the topic area of „Internet and new media“. At the Youth Conference (held on 15 May 2012 in the Federal Chancellery), there were also voices calling for better training of teachers. Several studies over recent years have produced clear findings: the bulk of skilled educationalists, especially those in the area of early-years education and teacher training, do not have adequate media skills and expertise in media education. To date, there has been no binding integration of „basic media education“ in education courses at universities and in training courses (e.g. for educators without university qualification). Also, the courses available for further qualification of skilled educationalists in various fields of action are too few and far between.

The proposal of a „basic media education for skilled educationalists“ includes various aspects. It is aiming to achieve not only a basic education for all specialists on education courses in media education, but also to locate academic media skills of university teachers and students in all subjects and courses. The following steps are most urgent within the media education pact:

a) Undertaking a Federal Government/federal state study on the as-is status of the integration of media education content areas/building blocks/modules within the existing education courses; recommendations for integration of basic media education in education courses

b) Federal Government/federal state initiative for firmly integrating a „basic media education“ at universities in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the German Rectors’ Conference, the German Council of Science and Humanities and specialist academic organisations; linking to the experts’ report of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research entitled „Skills in a culture with digital characteristics“ (2009) and the current declaration by the State Conference on Education and Media (KMK) dated 8 March 2012 on „Media education in school“, naming firm integration of media education in teacher training as its task.

As well as these measures, various infrastructure measures are also required above all in the area of information access, which we specify in more detail in proposal 4.
Proposal 4: Shared infrastructures

a) Local media education

Integrating measures for promoting media skills in the local community represent an important infrastructure task. The idea behind the proposal for „local media education“ is to develop low-threshold access to the acquisition of media skills. The measure reaches people in the places where they live, at the same time as linking self-expression possibilities within the social space to virtual ones, as well as communication and participation in social life. Infrastructure assistance measures could concentrate on rural areas and areas of particular social concern in a first phase, and include the following activities:

- Digital learning events at unusual places
- Community guides 2.0 – peer education in media within milieus that are educationally disadvantaged: Linking to the existing media knowledge possessed by young people, youth work together with youth experts are exploring additional problematic areas and developing strategies for competent handling of Web 2.0. The peer educators qualified in this manner pass on their knowledge and experience to people of the same age as part of an interactive exhibition. The visitors themselves play an active role and acquire knowledge in forms of expression other than text, which means the media project is particularly suitable for young people from structurally disadvantaged life circumstances as a means of taking a reflective and critical approach to media. Together with young people, a database should be kept in which on-going changes such as the security settings in Facebook could be reported, updated and made available to teachers as well as skilled social workers (school social work, youth work). This database can serve firstly as a basis for qualifying the peer educators in media education and, secondly, be used for training multipliers. Multiplier training courses are required in order to achieve a fast-breeder effect in the peer education method described here.
- Local Internet experience locations: The Digital Opportunities Foundation currently lists about 8,000 institutions of social work and non-formal education in a nationwide database; these give their corresponding target groups access to the Internet and undertake a wide variety of media education work. As a result, it is not necessary to build up new infrastructures in order to achieve equality of opportunity with regard to access to media education courses for all groups in the population, but rather it is necessary to guarantee sustained funding and use of the potential that already exists. The people working in these institutions know the capabilities and education requirements of their clientele; they require extensive support and further qualification for their task of communicating media skills. As a result, this infrastructure of Internet experience locations can make a sustainable contribution to the comprehensive implementation of the skills standards formulated in proposal 1 for working with digital media.

Overall, the „local media education“ proposal assumes that local-government authorities, federal state governments and national institutions will shape a funding policy by working hand-in-hand as part of the envisaged media education pact, without interfering with the responsibilities of the individual units. This would make it possible to achieve activities as part of a nationwide support programme of „local media education“ in the interplay between various funding institutions (division of labour in financing sub-areas; national institutions would above all provide resources for multiplier training and evaluation of the measures.
A support programme of „local media education“ could also create incentives for local-government authorities to develop sustainable infrastructure media concepts on a local basis (developing local media concepts is an important criterion for receiving funding). At the same time, it would be possible to support existing approaches and efforts at schools, libraries, local media centres and adult education colleges for improving the networking of courses and resources and providing better access to them.

If it were possible to establish a „National Foundation for Media Education“ in the medium term and provide it with adequate foundation assets, this would also represent an instrument for providing sustainable funding to local applications within various main funding areas of this topic.

b) IT-based open education cloud

A nationwide, IT-based, open education cloud is required on the basis of open standards, interfaces and contents. In future, all education providers and teachers should be able to select the available teaching media and teaching content that is relevant to them, and incorporate it in their teaching on the ground. The concept of such a platform is not trivial, because it will be necessary to develop and implement not only editorial aspects but also concepts for clarifying the rights and settlement situation. Establishing such an ecosystem for the long term must be approached as a joint project by the Federal Government and federal states.

An initiative of this kind can only be achieved at significant effort. First of all, the IT planning council, with the involvement of the responsible Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Council for Digital Media and Media Skills, should define open IT standards by 2013 and require all providers to comply with them by 2015. In parallel to this, the fundamentals of media education will have to be developed further. The concept, implementation, operation and supporting services can be put out to public tender, and monitored on an independent, constructive basis.

1. See www.bundestag.de/internetenquete.
4. See www.nachhaltigkeitsrat.de/startseite/?size=tlncxmdmqxghcc.
Working group III.3.b) „Learning society“

Experts: Key expert Prof. Dr. Stephan Breidenbach. With: Dr. Knut Bergmann, Frank Frick, Prof. Dr. Jörn von Lucke, Prof. Dr. Birger Priddat, Dr. Rolf Schmachtenberg, Christina Tillmann, Prof. Dr. Christian Welzel. Experts for individual proposals: Prof. Dr. Peter Friedrich Bultmann, Prof. Dr. Burkhard Hess, Prof. Dr. Tino Schuppan, Dr. Stefan Shaw

The central topic of this working group is the question of how an entire society learns: How do we develop institutions, processes and rules so that necessary changes can be implemented faster and more effectively, as well as with innovative solutions? It is a matter of the capability of reacting, as well as above all the action and innovation skills of an entire society. A central aspect concerns the interplay between politicians, business people and civil society.

The following section states some important elements which are required in order to constitute a learning society in this regard. Some of these elements are already terms in frequent use, but this does not detract from the fact that they are essential for the learning of an entire society:

Basic principles

The principles for a learning society are composed of:

- Transparency
  Transparency makes it possible to understand structures, procedures, arguments, decisions and their consequences from the outside. It is a prerequisite for central aspects of social learning. Without transparency and immediate insight into the significance, there are no prospects for the creative potential of a society to develop. Transparency is a challenge for everyone to contribute to new solutions.

- Participation
  The central idea in participation is that the knowledge and experience of an entire society can be used jointly for new solutions through suitable processes. Things that have previously been tested on cautious and not particularly successful participation processes are merely the start of a digitally networked society. Participation ranges from simply listening to the social actors and citizens through to discussions and common structures, and even extends as far as cooperating and independent action under individual responsibility. In the age of mobile, broadband Internet, this potential must be systematically harnessed. In this way, democracy will be strengthened as a community of responsibility which is experienced and seen to be such.

- Sector cooperation
  Departments and specialist areas in politics and administration often think and act within „pigeonholes“. This applies all the more to inadequate cooperation between politicians, business people and civil society. Last but not least, this also applies to the vertical cooperation between local-government authorities, federal states and the Federal Government. There is great potential to be tapped if it proves possible to achieve dialogue beyond the limits of these „pigeonholes“: A deeper understanding for the perspectives and approaches of others, improved interdisciplinary problem definitions and extended, more creative and systematically thought-out solutions. This is because interface cooperation permits interdependency as a central learning element. The „dialogue spaces“ discussed in the Citizens’ Dialogue point in this direction.
**Systematic thinking**
Social challenges cannot be solved in isolated units or areas. They form a complex system: Well-meaning interventions at one point can trigger undesirable side effects at other points. A wide variety of dependencies makes it necessary to keep the greater whole in sight at all times, instead of only optimising individual elements. Systematic thinking is the basis on which sector cooperation can unfold in a sensible way.

**Process principles**
One consequence of thinking in systems is orientation towards processes. In order to avoid thinking and acting in statuses, but rather in processes, it will be necessary to work on the following elements, amongst others:

**Prevention**
Threatening problems require early warning systems and preventative measures. Prevention is better than the cure. However, it is easier to justify the cure if the problem is already in sight. As a result, preventative action requires greater transparency and a deeper, systematic understanding in order to be able to communicate the advantages of prevention effectively. Good preventative measures improve the chances for success in the „visual flight“ of politics.

**Lifecycle analyses**
Lifecycle analyses come from the product world. For example, they show the ecological consequences of a product from its manufacture through to disposal in systematic interaction with the environment. Lifecycle analyses are usually only used internally and not published, because the ecological balance sheet is often catastrophic. Lifecycles can also be observed, and even calculated in some cases, for social actors. For example, trends in population groups drawn from problematic family backgrounds can be modelled from early childhood development and its associated obstacles through to possible failure at school and ultimately leading to almost unavoidable poverty in old age. If this is done transparently and not just dealt with in expert circles as known but unavoidable consequences, it will be possible to justify early interventions much more easily, compared to the disproportionately high costs that will be incurred later.

**Rapid prototypes**
Design processes benefit enormously from rapid prototypes. They create very specifically direct consent or criticism, and thus provide feedback. This means that problems can be recognised at an early stage, leading to suggested improvements or, in other words: rapid learning. Frequently, a rapid prototype involving several hundred participants, irrespective of how simple and provisional it may be, represents a decisive yardstick for the potential and direction of a solution option. Major social projects – such as the health card – can be designed more effectively by continuous testing with prototypes. This is not just a case of populist shooting-from-the-hip. Democratic communities need time for social solutions. And rapid prototypes offer plenty of scope for innovative solutions to be developed.

**Learning from mistakes**
Learning from mistakes in the measures taken is something that is closely related to rapid prototypes. Learning from mistakes is part of the ability to adapt. Trial and error results in continuously improving solutions. Errors are actually prohibited in administrative actions. No politician enjoys saying that an error or a mistake has been committed in his or her department. The opposite is regarded as productive. However, if mistakes are accepted and welcomed as a necessary component of development, because it is only through them that learning is possible, this creates a new culture of solution development, an iterative process towards something that really works. Learning from mistakes is a central component of social learning, and at the same time a cultural revolution.
Feedback loops

True learning always requires feedback. Prototypes and learning from mistakes will not produce anything worthwhile unless the results are played back in a feedback process, so they can be evaluated in the next improvement stage. Feedback is rapidly implemented and productively applied experience, as a result of which it is essential for every learning process. Political and administrative processes must be thought of and conceived right from the beginning involving continuous and seriously intended feedback loops.

The following suggested actions deal with some sample elements as well as possibilities for implementing them. On the path to a „learning society“, the listed elements must in principle be incorporated into every action taken by the state – and not just by the state.

Create transparency

Proposal 1: Free access to publically financed studies and reports

As part of the opening up of administrative data, an obligation will be introduced that all studies and reports financed from federal funds should be made available for free use, dissemination and further use via the Internet, in the interests of the general public. This publication obligation also applies retrospectively, to the extent this is legally possible, to studies produced previously. Exceptions to this rule in areas which require protection and are relevant with regard to security must be explicitly justified in future when the order is placed, or funds are applied for. This represents a major contribution by the Federal Government to national common rights over data.

Proposal 2: Opening up the entire legislative process

There is great potential for the legislative process and the lifecycle of laws to be made more transparent via the Internet and social media. The following elements are suggested:

- The entire legislative process is supported across all departments and decision-making organs by electronic means in standardised formats.
- This means the public can follow the legislative process by means of legislation portals. In particular, this will make it clear which social groups are responsible for which proposals, and which components are adopted into the final version of the laws.
- Also, debates in the Bundesrat and in the mediation committee will be published, like those in the German Bundestag.
- Once a law has come into force, evaluations and analyses of its effect will also be allocated to the statutory regulations within the legislation portal in a comprehensible and transparent way.
- The texts in the portal will be supported by visual formats, and thus be made more easily accessible.
- Within suitable time windows, citizens will be given the opportunity to get involved in the legislative process in a transparent way with contributions, comments and criticism. The consultation tools required for this should be trialled and improved in pilot processes (rapid prototypes), and then be available to the ministries in such a way that no special developments will have to be made for each legislative process.
Legislative processes are the heart of production of social rules; however, they are only partially transparent. As a result of departmental supremacy, different document management systems, federalism and the independent tradition of mediation committees, the Federal Republic of Germany is currently incapable of handling the legislative process entirely electronically without media discontinuities. To the extent that transparency has already been achieved – for example by publishing the debates in the German Bundestag – there is a lack of compatible formats for citizens to use. In-depth searches are required in order to reproduce lines of argument and comprehend the influences of interest groups. Here, there is the need for great flexibility in design in order to establish improved traceability and transparency through appropriate visualisation and presentation methods. An entirely desirable side effect is that this would also assist the work of the parliament, because it goes without saying that not all deputies are entirely au fait with all areas of the production of legislation. Traceability forms the basis for citizens’ participation. This starts the process of involving the knowledge and creativity of more and more social actors.

**Enabling participation**

**Proposal 3: Free access to publically financed studies and reports**

The enormous potential of more than 12,000 citizens’ submissions will be intensively used. The platform of the Citizens’ Dialogue will continue to be operated. This means:

- The proposals will be analysed in greater depth, especially with regard to frequent topics (e.g. in the area of education), as indicators for the need to change and the great perspectives for change directions that lie behind them.
- The knowledge will be made useable through systematisation, especially with regard to responsible actors.
- Successes will be built on and implemented proposals will be visualised on the platform.
- The platform of the Citizens’ Dialogue will be expanded into a cooperation platform. On the platform, citizens, non-governmental organisations and other actors can network, find cooperation partners and document successful implementations.
- Furthermore, the Citizens’ Dialogue will be continued and put on a permanent basis. Central questions will be handed over to the dialogue in a new round at regular intervals, and evaluated accordingly. This means that activity recommendations to other actors can also be transferred from civil society and business.

First of all, the consistent use of results, communication about them as well as putting the dialogue on a permanent footing are of central importance in order to increase the credibility of the entire process. Work, ideas and engagement by the citizens involved will be taken seriously through further processing, and used as a valuable resource. The cooperation possibility takes account of the fact that proposals can be directed not only at the state but also at other social actors in a complex, networked community. If interested actors obtain knowledge from one another, are able to support one another and if the state also promotes implementations where necessary, this will increase the number of proposals put into practice overall, and thus the success of the Dialogue on the Future. This is not a matter of passing responsibility for implementation to other actors, but rather a question of making the best possible use of available potential.
Proposal 4: Opening up the budget process

The Federal Government uses the potential of social media for opening up the budget process. Existing transparency and obligations to the public are checked and supplemented by citizens’ participation opportunities to be trialled in pilot projects.

The public budget system in Germany is subject to transparency and obligations towards the public at all levels. At present, social media makes a significant contribution to opening up the state and administration. It is above all Web 2.0 technologies that are invigorating existing reporting instruments, and permitting more intensive citizens’ participation in the budget processes. Throughout the entire budget cycle, there are many points at which joint conception, consultation, decision-making, control and quality control of public budgets can be applied. Participation budgets, interactive visualisations of open budget data and transparency portals open up wide flexibility for innovative formats, such as have not been able to be implemented before.

All over the world, there are now many examples, pilot projects and experiments in this area. It is necessary to evaluate these with regard to the processes in Germany, and sound them out as early as possible with prototypes and experimental formats.

Proposal 5: The two-account model in the education system

Participation is based on the potential of citizens. A learning society needs an education system because it enables the individual members of the society to acquire new knowledge and new skills throughout their individual lifecycles, which they can reuse in the education system.

We suggest a two-account model for the education system to serve as the vision for individual development steps.

The first account will be created for each citizen on birth, and contains education points with monetary value. They are initially under the responsibility of the parents, and later of the individual himself or herself, for use in education measures.

The second account is used for collecting all the building blocks of learning – knowledge and skills. The decisive factor here is that it is possible to represent not only qualifications gained in the formal education system but also learning results in the much broader sphere of informal learning. Recording informally acquired skills is always difficult, but it is possible in what are referred to as portfolios. The decisive factor for the transparency of the education system is that the skills acquired through informal learning – in the course of professional activity through to voluntary work – can also be credited to this second account by means of the portfolio, in order to acquire formal qualifications.

Our education system should be centred on the principle of unfolding potential: everyone should unfold their possibilities and potential in order to be able to live a successful life. If we take this principle and the variety of learning locations seriously in our society, informal learning will acquire significantly greater importance. Anyone who has obtained a skill should also be able to document it, and thus use it for self-promotion. Setting aside the difficulties of certification, there is otherwise no reason why knowledge and capabilities should not be recognised, irrespective of the time and place where they were acquired, even in the formal education system of school and university.
Enable cooperation between sectors and between departments

Proposal 6: Coordination committee for major projects with long-term relevance

A project advisory council will be used in future in major projects (such as nationwide network planning) and long-term reform projects (such as in the health and pensions area). This will be made up of representatives of the following relevant actors, according to the area of politics: administration (Federal Government, federal states), implementation actors, politicians, academics, business people, interest groups and selected „normal citizens“. The project advisory council will be convened at an early stage, even before the initial deliberations (e.g. the first draft bills); it then accompanies the entire process and communicates with the public transparently. It discusses scientific reports, interpretations and positions as well as subsequently working out reform targets, approaches to solutions and recommendations. The implementation is accompanied by continuous target and success checking. Major reforms and projects are thus processed in a more evidence-based and transparent way, they are communicated more uniformly and a balancing of interests takes place in the direct process. Financing must be provided through the budget of the project in question (and allocated to the risk management item, for example).

In order to plan, implement and communicate major projects and long-term reform projects effectively, it is necessary today more than ever to establish participative problem-solving processes – including at national level. Here, politics no longer functions just as the sole provider of solutions and definitions of problems, but rather its role is changing: Politics calls the relevant actors together and offers a space in which solutions to the challenges can be worked out jointly. If transparency is only established through information without involving citizens in the processes, the citizens will presume that they are not being informed about what is important. At the same time, the population is more likely to support decisions if it knows that „normal citizens“ were involved in the process (e.g. British Columbia). Expected effects are: growing support for the project in the general public, better solutions as well as simpler and quicker implementation. In the long term, this will develop (and must develop) a new culture of dealing with mistakes, and learning within the entirety of society will be made easier.

It is not a matter of indirectly introduced direct democracy, but rather of opening up and explaining the process, with the ability for social knowledge to be input additionally. We need forms of involving citizens which enable them to understand democracy as their project as well (de-anonymisation through expanding the debate).

Proposal 7: Change funds

The objective of the proposal is to permit interdepartmental, systematic thinking and to bring about cooperation between sectors. A Federal Government department responsible for a reform project receives a budget by means of which additional employees, reports, studies, evaluations, workshops, etc. can be financed in a flexible way during a period of at most three years. Part of the funding must be used in the departments to be involved. Responsibility for the use of funds rests with the Secretary of State who is responsible for the project. It is initially proposed that up to five change funds should be established. They create the means and the flexibility for thinking in a systematic way together with all departments involved in the topic, rather than producing isolated solutions.
Acting preventatively

Proposal 8: Social impact bonds for financing long-term preventative measures

The Federal Ministry of Labour established a social impact bond (SIB) as a pilot project, which is a financing model for sustainably effective work by civil society organisations. The pilot topic could be preventative measures for reducing youth unemployment („no-one gets left behind!”).

Private investors make long-term capital available as part of SIBs. The particular providers of a measure identify, finance, support, link and monitor the preventative programme on the basis of defined and tried-and-tested success factors. The civil-society organisations achieve effects that demonstrably lead to subsequent cost savings to the public purse. As a result, the public purse would refund a proportion of its savings, thus repaying the venture capital provided by the investors, with appropriate interest.

It is self-explanatory that preventative action avoids enormous distortions and saves costs. Nevertheless, short-term thinking, lack of systematic analysis and equally short-term, unbending cost rules also stop preventative measures from being taken. Therefore, the following picture is often seen:

- Public measures take effect too late, or not at all.
- The effectiveness of the application of public funds is not guaranteed.
- Non-profit organisations work in a fragmentary way.
- Donations are the only form of private participation.

Social impact bonds open up a new perspective here:

- Non-profit organisations act as effective early warning systems with the skills to provide solutions
- Success-dependent application of public funds
- Increased effectiveness through cooperations
- Exploiting the megatrend of sustainable investment.

Proposal 9: Change in the law to promote sustainable state procurement

It is proposed for the Federal Government to be subjected to a stronger obligation to take account of environmental criteria when allocating orders. As a supplement to the law regarding allocation of orders, state clients „should” in the legal sense protect the natural livelihood in the course of the public tendering process. Accordingly, it is necessary to use a bound discretion, an environmentally related description of activities and environmentally related award criteria. Exceptions are only allowed if the interests of sustainable procurement are paramount.

The Federal Government is committed to sustainability on many levels. These include environmental compatibility and combating climate change. However, the public purse does not make an important contribution in the form of appeals to the business sector or in pilot projects, but rather by undertaking a pioneering role: It can use its massive purchasing power within the framework of public procurement in order to promote ecologically sustainable production, thus creating a pull effect and firmly establishing the topic in society, as well as promoting creative solutions on the supply side. Directing the economy through
state purchasing power is a steering instrument that is basically worthy of preference compared to subsidies in particular. Two features of the public tendering process above all explain the advantageous character of public orders compared to subsidies: Firstly, use of funds in order to purchase a specific item of value in return (referred to as active exchange) and secondly, allocating these funds in the competitive process. At the same time, it is part of the core of preventative action for sustainability risks to be taken into account, instead of having to repair damage in a costly process later on. At the same time, it is necessary to make sure that no disproportionate cost is incurred which would prove to be an obstacle to effective fulfilment of public tasks.

**Providing feedback and analysis of mistakes**

**Proposal 10: Innovation portal of the Federal Government**

The Federal Government encourages creation of an information portal, or initiates it itself, by means of which it is possible to see:

- What topics have already had model projects or currently have them
- What evaluation results are available
- What their success factors are
- What can be learned from the experience, and also from the failure factors

A platform for this purpose could be the „Innovation Portal of the Federal Government” that is to be created, on which freely accessible information would be provided regarding social innovations of all kinds. This includes information about projects of all kinds, both government and civil-society ones, whether successful or not, continued, completed or still in progress. Most projects are evaluated, as a result of which the evaluations can also be made accessible. Learning from experience means learning from mistakes as well. However, this does not form part of the culture of work either in political institutions or in civil-society organisations.

**Proposal 11: Top-runner approach**

In certain central product groups – such as domestic appliances, IT, vehicles – the market leaders (best-in-class) are calculated for certain criteria such as CO2 emissions or energy consumption. The standard achieved by the best is then made into a legally binding minimum criteria for new products in this category, subject to a lead-up phase.

The market feedback shows that technical innovations have achieved a particular improvement standard within a product group. Taking account of the product prices, there is thus potential for demonstrating an innovation leap for a politically intended criterion. As a result, the state can decide to establish this as a product standard. The speed of technical process cycles can be accelerated in this way. Being average is no longer enough, and whoever creates better technologies quicker steals a march on the competition. The Federal Government should go beyond the pre-existing concepts in this case, and promote the introduction of the top-runner approach to an increasing extent in the EU.
Proposal 12: Strengthening the success check on laws

Sunset and evaluation clauses should be included in the laws, ordinances and administrative regulations of the Federal Government. It makes sense for evaluation clauses to be used in individual cases, such as in regulations which have significant effects in the economic, ecological or social area. General sunset clauses and evaluation clauses should not be recommended, otherwise there is a risk of automatic extensions and senseless bureaucratic complexity. Time limits should always be linked to evaluation duties. This means the effects of the regulations must be checked before they are extended or suspended – without sound reason. In this respect, the evaluation duty is more important than a time limit. Only an evaluation can decide whether, or after which changes, it makes sense continuing with a law.

The combination of time limits and evaluation creates feedback loops. It offers the possibility of systematically learning from successes and failures in statutory regulations.

The time limit on individual regulations has been practiced by the Federal Government for a long time (examples include anti-terrorism legislation, Book XI of the German Social Code on social care insurance, referred to as the Hartz Laws). However, there has to date been no systematic use of the „time limit” instrument as part of a formalised process – and not in conjunction with the „evaluation” instrument either.

Proposal 13: Improved access to the law – expanding collective legal remedies

The applicable private law and procedural law are based on the assumptions that injured parties will defend themselves individually against violations of their rights, and that the courts will then put a stop to the violation of rights and award damages. This picture changes if violations of rights, and thus cases of damage, occur en masse. In this case, there are a large number of injured parties who have had their rights violated in similar or identical ways, and are reluctant to take individual recourse to law for various reasons. It is proposed that what is referred to as collective legal remedy should be extended. By means of an incentive system, consumer associations and lawyers should be encouraged to pursue claims in response to such violations of rights. It is only through joint, combined action that mass damage claims make sense. This supports the feedback effect of justice.

Proposal 14: Reform of the Not-for-Profit Organisation Act

The proposal is concerned with changing the law on non-profit organisations. It focuses on a significantly improved possibility for non-profit companies to meet their budget needs by up to 100 percent through their own commercial activity on the market, so that they are no longer dependent on donations. This could be based on the model of the social enterprise, which is a form of company introduced in the UK. It is concerned with expanding the range of options. However, this approach is by no means suitable for every non-profit project.

Non-profit organisations are an important form of organisation in civil society. From the perspective of the current law on non-profit organisations, they are still based on the assumption that – to put it in very brief terms – donations are collected and promptly used for charitable purposes. However, more and more non-profit projects are attempting to free themselves up from dependency on donations and achieve other income as well in the key area of their activity. This serves to implement their purpose, rather than
maximising profits. This represents an important element in a social learning process, because in this way non-profit projects will be challenged to make their way on the market under their own steam, at least in part. This participation in a feedback process, one provided by the market, leads to the desired learning processes.

Create rapid prototypes

Proposal 15: Test projects for developing administrative offers using rapid prototypes

Five test projects should be developed as part of the development of administrative offers, which consistently implement the principle of rapid prototypes. The following key aspects should be taken into account in this:

a) All groups, organisations and institutions of politics, business and civil society involved in the topic should play their part with persons in key roles.

b) Project targets and the configuration of the administrative offer are not specified, but are developed in the closest possible cooperation with the future user groups of this offer and the people who will be responsible for implementation directly on the ground. The users in particular contribute to the solution, because they have the greatest knowledge of the challenges and requirements.

c) Very quickly – within days or weeks – prototypes of the project will be designed, implemented immediately and continuously improved in a rapid sequence of further developments.

d) The result is always in the foreground: developing offers that the user groups really want and need. The users are subjects and not objects of the process.

The best known are rapid prototypes from design and information technology. Objects to be designed are exposed to criticism and feedback as prototypes. This permits continuous, fast improvements or, in other words: rapid learning.

A rapid prototype with a manageable group of participants is a snapshot of the interplay between users, people in positions of responsibility and specialists. It is provisional and is simultaneously experienced and practised as a definitive offer; improvements are immediately implemented in an adapted version. Instead of following a planning specification from above, a creative problem-solving process is set in motion from below. The fallow problem-solving knowledge possessed by citizens is thus used, just as much as the different perspectives of experts. Models are created of what works and what does not. A particular approach is implemented in a pilot project, whereas prototypes are more: they are processes that further develop and approach in continuous interaction. Internationally, design projects of this kind have already been used under the heading of Design Thinking, including in the case of social innovations. It is particularly in the UK that experience exists from areas such as dealing with chronic illness or living in old age.
Proposal 16: Qualified immigration – regional pilot projects

a) Citizens’ Dialogue on the challenges of demographic change – carried out as a future workshop.
b) Encouragement and improvement of immigration by preparing for the immigration of possible immigrants into Germany in their home countries (language, culture, vocational education), support for the immigrants to integrate within Germany and to be welcomed with hospitality in the pilot regions (integrated living).

Objective: Perception of the guiding principle of Germany as a country of immigration. In addition, demonstration that qualified and integration-oriented immigration is possible.

Target group: citizens who reject immigration, as well as possible immigrants for whom Germany is not their country of first choice.

This is a field of action for practising exemplary social learning. It is necessary to resolve the conflict in the near future.

The use and encouragement of domestic potential takes precedence in the policy to secure skilled workers from the Federal Government’s perspective. In order to overcome the enormous demographic challenges, it is essential to have qualified immigration from abroad (see the Federal Government’s concept for securing skilled workers).

Persuading a large majority of the advantages of this guiding principle compared to the possible alternatives requires an open, cool-headed discussion without taboos; this must deal with the associated effects, including negative ones (such as the negotiating power in collective-bargaining disputes or in the housing market) as well as with existing uncertainties.

The proposed project is centred on pilot projects as prototypes, making rapid changes and adaptations possible. If they are embedded in future workshops involving citizens, it will be possible to make improvements on a continuous basis by transparency, participation and continuous feedback.

1 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Politicians’ training“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/30-Wie-Lernen/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=18282.
2 For more information about this, see also citizens’ proposal „Promoting hubs for social learning projects“: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/20-Vorschlaege/30-Wie-Lernen/Einzelansicht/vorschlaege_einzelsicht_node.html?cms_idIdea=12014.
The Experts’ Dialogue on Germany’s Future: Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Mathias Albert

Prof. Dr. Mathias Albert is Professor of Political Science at Bielefeld University. He is one of the leaders of the 16th Shell Youth Study. In addition to youth studies, his main area of research is the theory and history of international politics.

“The main issue is the fact that politicians and society generally fail to accept that it is the normal state of affairs for up to one-in-ten young people in Germany to be permanently left behind. Only then can this “normal state of affairs” be dealt with. Finding solutions in this respect remains a very difficult, but at the same time it is potentially a very rewarding task!”

Clemens Albrecht

Prof. Dr. Clemens Albrecht is Chair of Sociology at the University of Koblenz-Landau and Executive Director of the Institute for Sociology and Political Science. He acted as spokesman for the Cultural Sociology section and is Editor-in-Chief of the journal “Sociologia Internationalis”. One of his main areas of research is interpretations of German history.

“I am concerned about whether my children and grandchildren will still be able to lead a good life in the face of economic pressures and political and social change – a life of self-determination and meaning, with a sense of social responsibility and communal security.”

Britta Bannenberg

Prof. Dr. Britta Bannenberg is Professor of Criminology, Juvenile Justice and Penal System Law at the Justus Liebig University in Giessen. Her main areas of research include violence, murder, crime prevention, corporate crime and corruption.

“I am very interested in why people act violently and how victims live with this. It is very important to find ways of reducing violence. I believe that – even in our very safe society – dramatic outbreaks of violence can occur more quickly than many people think. This is why it is essential to be constantly strengthening a peaceful and civil society.”

Beatrix Behrens

Dr. Beatrix Behrens graduated in Public Administration and is Head of HR Policy and HR Development at the Federal Employment Agency, where her responsibilities include diversity and HR policy in light of demographic change. Beatrix Behrens is responsible for the technical management of the Federal Government’s “Demographic-sensitive HR Management” project as part of the “Connected and Transparent Administration” reform programme.
“Our world of the future, so full of diversity and differences, must be characterised by a climate of appreciation, respect, acceptance and anti-discrimination. Professional diversity management in every area would provide a solid basis and make a real contribution to social cohesion. Politicians, business and the authorities need to focus more on models that are orientated towards life phases, bearing in mind the different types of life partnerships, and also use these to promote social cohesion. All-in-all, Germany has positioned itself as an attractive place to do business.”

**Christoph Beier**

Dr. Christoph Beier is a Member and Deputy Chairman of the Management Board of the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). Prior to this, he was Director General of the Department for the Mediterranean, Europe, Central Asia, Asia/Pacific and Latin America/Caribbean regions and of the Sectoral Department of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ). Christoph Beier is a Member of the Steering Committee of the Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI) as well as a Board Member of the German Asia-Pacific Business Association, the East and Central Europe Association and the Business Association for Latin America.

“Think globally, act locally – global issues such as climate change, migration, the financial crisis and the supply of raw materials conceal complex international negotiations. New partnerships and alliances emerge that have an impact on Germany’s role in the world. One of the main challenges lies in how to translate these international issues and dynamics into a national and local context and involve citizens in this process.”

**Christian Berg**

Prof. Dr. Dr.-Ing. Christian Berg is responsible for Thought Leadership in Sustainability Consulting at SAP’s Global Services Sustainability Hub. He is also Honorary Professor of Sustainability and Global Change at the Clausthal University of Technology and Visiting Professor of Corporate Sustainability at Saarland University. He graduated in Physics, Philosophy and Protestant Theology and is a Board Member of the German Association of the Club of Rome.

“Germany has to take resolute steps down the path towards sustainability and seek to take on a pioneering role – for the sake of our children and because of our role in the international community. Exporting sustainable products and services to other countries and helping to promote sustainability in those countries also helps our own economy. So for Germany, sustainability is both an absolute responsibility and an economic opportunity.”

**Stefan Bergheim**

Dr. Stefan Bergheim is Director of the “Center for Societal Change” think tank, set up in 2009 in Frankfurt am Main. Here, with the help of an extensive network of contacts, he investigates new ways and methods of improving the quality of life in Germany. From 1995 to 2008 he worked as an economist in Frankfurt, analysing the country on behalf of a number of leading banks.

“How can we structure communication between different people, organisations and disciplines in such a way that we can work together to create a better future?”
Knut Bergmann

Dr. Knut Bergmann is a fellow of the New Responsibility Foundation and Head of the Berlin Office of the Cologne Institute for Economic Research. Prior to that, he worked in the Press and Communications Division of the German Bundestag and was an advisor to the Office of the Federal President. He lectures at several Berlin Universities and regularly publishes articles on issues relating to civil society.

“My concern is how to get our society to understand that wealth is more than just money. Everyone can do something, and it would be good for our community if everyone felt a responsibility to use their abilities in the service of the greater good.”

Christoph Bertram

Dr. Christoph Bertram is Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Berlin Institute for Population and Development and a columnist at ZEIT ONLINE. He was Director of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) until 2005, Foreign Affairs Editor of the weekly newspaper DIE ZEIT until 1998 and Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London until 1982.

“The worry is that Europe will break up, to the detriment of Germany.”

Bea Beste

Bea Beste graduated in Industrial Engineering and Social and Business Communication, has worked as a management consultant and is the founder of the Phorms chain of bilingual schools, where she was CEO until 2011. Inspired by the innovative international approaches to education that she encountered on an educational trip to India, Australia and the USA, she developed PlayDUCation to create a new approach to learning through play.

“I am driven by the idea that education empowers people for their lives. With today’s rapid pace of technological change, this includes an ability for lifelong learning, social values, optimism and the confidence to take control of one’s own destiny. If we are to help every child to develop these faculties, we have to promote their individual strengths and encourage them to act independently – right from the start. This would provide an excellent foundation for their futures, and I am keen to make my contribution.”

Fritz Böhle

Prof. Dr. Fritz Böhle graduated in Sociology, Economics and Psychology. He is Chairman of the Management Board of the Institute for Social Science Research, Munich (ISF) and Head of the Research Unit for Socioeconomics of the Work Environment at Augsburg University. He is a member of a various advisory councils and commissions.

“I try to show how, along with intelligence, people have and need “other” skills that are drawn from experience in order to understand the world and find solutions to problems. For our future survival, I believe it is necessary to transcend the one-sided cognitive/rational way of understanding knowledge and intelligence in order to gain a better understanding of and promote people’s abilities in both education and work.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Anton F. Börner

Anton F. Börner is President of the Federation of German Wholesale, Foreign Trade and Services (BGA) and a partner with personal liability of Börner + Co KG. Mr Börner is a Member of the Foreign Trade Council of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, a Member of the Board of Supervisory Directors at the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) development bank and Spokesman for the SME Advisory Council at KfW. He is also Chairman of the German-Israeli Council of Economic Advisors and President of the German-Russian Chamber of Foreign Trade.

“The identity of Europe and its values. The pre-eminence of individuality and freedom as a prerequisite for the creativity and innovation that is the basis of the productivity we need to compete in the world.”

Albert Braakmann

Albert Braakmann is Head of the National Income, Sector Accounts and Foreign Trade Division at the Federal Statistical Office. An economist, he worked for some years at the Statistical Office of the European Communities and is a Board Member of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth (IARIW).

“Raising the profile of quality of life and caring for the family. Providing information to ensure policymaking is issue-driven.”

Stephan Breidenbach

Prof. Dr. Stephan Breidenbach is Chair of Civil Law, Law of Civil Procedure and International Economic Law at the European University Viadrina, Frankfurt an der Oder, co-founder and Dean of the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance in Berlin and Professor at the University of Vienna. He is a business mediator and co-created www.betterplace.org.

“It is particularly challenging to discuss specific policy recommendations with experts from a wide range of disciplines and with all kinds of social stakeholders, without being given any guidelines or restrictions on ideas. I am particularly fascinated by the question of how a whole society learns, how institutions, rules and processes should be set up in order to bring about the necessary changes more effectively and to create social innovation.”

Heike Bruch

Prof. Dr. Heike Bruch is a Business Management graduate and Director of the Institute for Leadership and Human Resources Management at the University of St. Gallen. She is a Member of the Executive Board of the German Association for People Management. Her main areas of interest include organisational energy, generational leadership and age- and family-friendly employment conditions.

“I am interested in the question of how to increase responsibility and active leadership within business and society.”
Gerd Brudermüller

Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Gerd Brudermüller is Presiding Judge at the Karlsruhe Higher Regional Court and Honorary Professor at the University of Mannheim. He is also Chairman of the German Family Court Committee and Executive Chairman of the Institute of Applied Ethics.

“How can we encourage people to take responsibility for each other and ensure participation in the partnership? How can we ensure that children’s welfare is given priority? When should governments interfere in people’s private lives?”

Peter Friedrich Bultmann

Prof. Dr. Peter Friedrich Bultmann is a lawyer and Associate Professor of Public Law at the Humboldt University of Berlin. He specialises in public procurement law and public-private partnerships, especially in the area of public infrastructure.

“Linking knowledge and perceptions from different academic disciplines to solve problems in a practical way, particularly with regard to controlling behaviour using written and unwritten rules.”

Christian Calliess

Prof. Dr. Christian Calliess is a lawyer and Chair of Public Law and European Law at the Free University of Berlin. He also holds the Jean Monnet Chair for European Integration. He is a Member of the German Advisory Council on the Environment and the German Federal Government’s NanoKommission.

“I’d like to preserve for my children and for future generations the greatest possible freedom to set their own political course. They should not find themselves in an environment that has been irrevocably determined by the decisions of previous generations. For example, this applies to the preservation of basic natural resources, but also to advances in technology and the level of public borrowing. The stakeholders in our time have a long-term responsibility that should be institutionalised in the political process.”

Heather Cameron

Prof. Dr. Heather Cameron is Junior Professor of Inclusive Education at the Free University of Berlin and Associate Professor at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa. The British-Canadian academic was chosen as Professor of the Year by the German Association of University Professors and Lecturers in 2010. She is the founder and CEO of Boxgirls International and, since 2011, an Askoka Fellow.

“I believe in a society that encourages diversity and democracy and that is ready to face the urgent challenges of our time. I would like to make my contribution to reorganising the German education system, so that in future everyone has the opportunity to develop themselves without hindrance and participate in the process of dealing with problem areas in society.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

**Georg Cremer**

Prof. Dr. Georg Cremer is an economist and educator. Since 2000 he has been Secretary General of the German Caritas Association, where he is also Head of Social and Professional Policy. Since 1999 he has been Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Freiburg. His main areas of research include social policy and social services.

“How can we create the right conditions so that every person can develop their full potential? We need social policies of empowerment in order to strengthen solidarity and ensure fairness under present conditions.”

**Jutta Croll**

From 1985 to 1990 Jutta Croll graduated in German Literature, Political Science and Journalism at the University of Göttingen, where she obtained a Master of Arts degree. She has been Managing Director of the Digital Opportunities Foundation since 2003 and a Member of the Executive Board since 2010. The Foundation is a non-profit organisation under the patronage of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. The work of the Foundation is focused on achieving the digital integration of those sectors of society that are currently under-represented in terms of internet use. It develops projects and innovative strategies for promoting media competence.

“The internet has the potential to give everyone access to education and promote democratic participation. These are visions that have been around since the time of Brecht’s radio theory, but it has never been possible to turn them into reality. I am interested in how we can set up the process of digital integration in such a way that it leads to greater equality of opportunity within society.”

**James Davis**

Prof. James Davis, Ph.D. is Director of the Institute for Political Science and Professor of Political Science with special focus on international relations at the University of St. Gallen. The American-born professor lives in Munich and St. Gallen and writes regularly on German-American relations for the Munich newspapers “Merkur” und “tz”.

“What is left of the idea of the “West” in the 21st century? How can we uphold our values in a globalised world?”

**Honey Deihimi**

Honey Deihimi is Head of the Social Integration Unit at the Federal Office of Migration, Refugees and Integration. Prior to that, she was Commissioner for Integration in Lower Saxony and worked at the European Parliament, where she was responsible for the Middle East and dialogue with Islam.

“Ridendo dicere verunt! (Tell the truth while laughing!)”
Jan Delhey

Prof. Dr. Jan Delhey is Professor of Sociology at Jacobs University in Bremen. His main areas of research include quality of life, subjective well-being (happiness) and interpersonal trust. He was worked on a range of projects on quality of life in the European Union for the European Foundation in Dublin and is a Member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Happiness Studies.

“In this way I’d like to make my own small contribution towards making Germany a country that is (even) better to live in.”

Reinald Eichholz

Dr. Reinald Eichholz graduated in Law and Political Science and was a judge before becoming Head of the Coordination Unit on Family Policy Issues for the State Government of North Rhine-Westphalia and later Commissioner for Children’s Affairs. He is a Member of the German Unicef Committee and of the “National Coalition for the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Germany”.

Jörg M. Fegert

Prof. Dr. Jörg M. Fegert is Medical Director of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the Ulm University Hospital. He is Vice President of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth as well as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the “Achtung! Kinderseele” foundation. He headed up the accompanying research for the contact point of the Independent Representative on Sexual Abuse and was a member of the round table on “Childhood Sexual Abuse”.

“On the professional front, I am concerned that more and more children and young people are not growing up with good mental health, despite living in favourable circumstances. Families need support at an early stage and we must pay attention to the needs of children for bonds and education. If they have developmental problems, children and young people need to be given a second or third chance. As Medical Director, I am interested in the question of how to combine work and family responsibilities, particularly in the medical and healthcare professions.”

Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger

Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger is Foreign Editor of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. He graduated in American Studies, Economics and Politics and in 2008 he was awarded the Steuben Schurz Society Media Prize. In 1985/1986 he worked in the US Congress on a Congressional Fellowship.

“Worries about the cohesion of the EU – concern that Germany should not be trampled underfoot in the world’s future power structure – distress that less and less political energy is being invested in Trans-Atlantic relations, particularly on the part of the Americans.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Frank Frick

Political Scientist Frank Frick has been working for the Bertelsmann Stiftung since 1994, where he is responsible for economic and employment policy and labour law. He is currently Head of the “Good Governance/Future of Employment” programme. His main areas of interest include the transparency and impact of legislation, the transition from school to working life, lifelong learning, civic participation and the continuing growth of our democracy.

“I am driven by the desire to find solutions to the great social challenges of our time and in this way ensure the social, economic and political participation of all people.”

Oscar W. Gabriel

Prof. Dr. Oscar W. Gabriel is Chair of Political Systems and Political Sociology at the University of Stuttgart and Director of the Institute for Political and Social Sciences.

“I would like to see a surge in participation that reinforces and reinvigorates representative democracy, that strengthens citizens’ and politicians’ consciousness of communal responsibility for the creation of social and political co-existence and that sweeps aside the typical German atmosphere of collective ill-temper.”

Walter Ganz

Walter Ganz M.A. is Director of the Fraunhofer Institute of Industrial Engineering (IAO) and of the Institute of Human Factors and Technology Management at the University of Stuttgart. He is also Coordinator of the innovation project “Partners for Innovation” and a member of the advisory boards of several research initiatives.

“I am keen to harmonise the development of new technologies and new services in such a way that innovative solutions to pressing challenges can be found in Germany and around the globe. These include the energy revolution and mobility as a means of reducing climate change; reliable healthcare provision to allow people to enjoy their later years; easy access to communication for a growing global population; protection and security for people in a connected world. These innovations will come from people. This is why I am committed to organising work so that it allows the innovative power and creativity of each and every individual to develop in the best possible way.”

Hermann Genz

Hermann Genz is Head of the Labour and Social Security Department for the City of Mannheim and Managing Director of the Mannheim Job Centre, which is being considered as a best practice model for tackling youth unemployment.

“We could be much more successful in reducing youth unemployment if we would only worry less about the type and number of funding instruments that we use and focus more on the quality and concentration of individual support from a single source. The most important thing we need is for companies to be willing to give youngsters a chance to learn – even if they have teething problems to begin with.”
Werner Greve

Prof. Dr. Werner Greve graduated in Psychology and Philosophy. He is Professor of Psychology at the University of Hildesheim. Prior to this, he was Deputy Scientific Director at the Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony. His main areas of interest include developmental psychology, legal and criminal psychology and theoretical psychology.

“Gaining insight(s) is a critical issue, not only for society, but on a personal level it is also something that makes life and work worthwhile. University lecturers are given the special opportunity and task of not only seeking their own insights but also helping others to gain them wherever possible. People who follow this career have to face up to the special challenge of developing the necessary attitude of constant effort and self-criticism combined with cheerfulness.”

Daniel Hamilton

Prof. Dr. Daniel Hamilton is Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation Professor at the Johns Hopkins University in Washington D.C., where he is Head of the Center for Transatlantic Relations. He is also Executive Director of the American Consortium on EU Studies. Dr. Hamilton is a Member of the Academic Advisory Board of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs and from 1992 to 1990 was Deputy Director of the Aspen Institute in Berlin.

“I am interested in how the USA and Europe build their relations in an age of globalisation, emerging powers and turbulent challenges.”

Frank Hees

Dr. Frank Hees graduated in Economic Geography, Politics and International Cooperation. He is Deputy Institute Director of the Centre for Learning and Knowledge Management at the Rhine-Westphalia University of Technology in Aachen (RWTH) and Managing Director of the Institute for Business Cybernetics.

“I feel the need to get involved when spaces appear that enable the creation of an effective and lasting co-existence and special things happen. Often this is only made possible by the power of teamwork. I find this very inspiring.”

Rolf Heinze

Prof. Dr. Rolf Heinze is Chair of General Sociology, Labour and Economics at Ruhr University Bochum (RUB) and is also Academic Director of the Institute for Housing, Real Estate, Urban and Regional Development at RUB.

“It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; it is because we do not dare that they are difficult.”

(Seneca)
Klaus Henning

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Klaus Henning graduated in Electrical Engineering and Political Science. Until 2010, he was Professor at the Rhine-Westphalia University of Technology Aachen (RWTH), where he was Chair of Information Management in Mechanical Engineering and Head of the Centre for Learning and Knowledge Management. Klaus Henning currently works as a Senior Consultant at Osto Systemberatung GmbH.

“In the eyes of the world, Germany is a fascinating country and many people view it as a role model. Our unique service products are in demand all over the world. Will we succeed in gaining a proper appreciation of these strengths so that we really respect them and build upon them? Will we succeed in continuing to improve our position in the global markets and thus safeguarding prosperity and progress?”

Christine Henry-Huthmacher

Christine Henry-Huthmacher graduated in Labour and Social Law, Social Psychology and Sociology. She worked for the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung as a researcher and for ten years was Head of the Women’s and Family Policy Department. Since 2003, she has been Coordinator for Women’s and Family Policy.

“Creating equal educational opportunities for boys and girls, regardless of their social backgrounds. Linking educational policy to family policy. Getting to grips with the everyday lives of children and young people.”

Burkhard Hess

Prof. Dr. Burkhard Hess graduated in Law in Germany and Switzerland. He is Professor of German and International Civil and Procedural Law in Heidelberg. On 1 August 2012 he became Head of the Department of European Procedural Law in the newly-formed Max Planck Institute for International, European and Regulatory Procedural Law in Luxembourg.

“In an increasingly complex and connected world, individuals need to have the opportunity to effectively assert and protect their interests and rights. Fair and efficient procedures for settling disputes are a prerequisite for citizens to develop trust in the rule of law. This regulatory task is gaining importance at European and international level.”

Joachim Hoffmann

Joachim Hoffmann is Head of Strategic Human Resources Development and Change Management Consultancy at the BMW Group. The main focus of his work includes labour markets and employability, and creating change in individuals, teams and organisations. In his earlier role as CEO of the BMW plant in Eisenach he helped to develop the Thuringia Network for the Initiative for Employment, which included many projects connected with learning and development. As Head of Human Resources Development he has also been closely involved in the issue of skills management.

“How should we start to encourage everyone to once again take greater responsibility for their actions or non-actions and really live their beliefs? How should we anchor or reinforce values and attitudes within companies, organisations and society? How should we as a society consciously create a future that has a future?”
Christian Horn

Christian Horn is Police Chief Inspector in Berlin. He is Head of Integration and Migration at Police Directorate 5, which is responsible for the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg and Neukölln areas.

“I’d like to see people in Germany living together in peace, regardless of their origins, cultural backgrounds and religious beliefs.”

Jürgen Howaldt

Prof. Dr. Jürgen Howaldt is a social scientist, Professor at the Business, Economics and Social Science Faculty of the Technical University Dortmund and Director of the Social Research Centre in Dortmund. His main areas of interest include the theory and practice of organisational consultancy and development.

“I am driven by the question of how we make our society fit for the future and at the same time more liveable. In view of the major challenges that face us today, we particularly need social innovations to accompany technological innovations.”

Martin Hubschneider

Martin Hubschneider is an industrial engineer. He is the founder and CEO of CAS Software AG, which specialises in Customer Relationship Management solutions for medium-sized enterprises.

“As a medium-sized business, competitive conditions for our location in Germany are crucial to our survival. As the father of five daughters I would like to make a contribution to the future of our country. In this I’m spurred on by my personal motto: Positive thinking gives you wings.”

Gerald Hüther

Prof. Dr. Gerald Hüther graduated in Biology and Animal Psychology. At the Göttingen Clinic for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy he is Head of the Centre for Neurobiological Prevention Research of the Universities of Göttingen and Mannheim/Heidelberg. His main area of interest is applied neurobiology.

“Neuroscientists have now proven something that we have known for some time – that the kinds of learning processes that are used in our educational institutions are not destined to succeed.”

Denis Huschka

Denis Huschka graduated in Sociology and Political Science and since 2007 has been Managing Director of the German Data Forum. He is the founder of the Science Policy and Infrastructure Development Organisation (wissenschaftspolitik.org) and has been Executive Director of the International Society for Quality of Life (ISQOLS) since 2011. His work focuses on social change and research into quality of life and well-being, and he is a policy advisor.

“In business and society we need to press ahead with changes that contribute to our quality of life and that of our children and grandchildren. It is this – rather than re-election – that needs to be the benchmark against which politics is measured.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Josef Janning

Josef Janning is Director of Studies at the European Policy Centre (EPC) in Brussels. Until 2010 he was Senior Director at the Bertelsmann Stiftung with responsibility for the “International Understanding” department. Prior to this, he worked as Deputy Director of the Centre for Applied Policy Research at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich.

“In a globalised world, Europe needs to be able to act to protect its interests and bring the strong interdependence of global economy and global society into a sound political order. Europe is the main lever of German politics. Germany must develop the will, the ideas and the power of conviction to lead Europe with others.”

Karin Jurczyk

Dr. Karin Jurczyk is a sociologist and Head of the Family and Family Policy Department at the German Youth Institute in Munich. She was a co-opted Member of the Expert Committee of the 7th Family Report of the German Federal Government. Her main areas of research include parenthood and work, day-to-day living, gender and the blurring of borders between private and public life.

“I am motivated by finally finding better ways of combining work and family – for both men and women. For me, this doesn’t just mean finding better ways of functioning in business, but also in terms of quality of life, quality of relationships and time wealth. The family more than a business operation!”

Philipp Justus

Philipp Justus is CEO of zanox, a network for performance-based online marketing. Prior to that, he worked for eBay for 10 years in various management positions, including as General Manager of eBay Germany and eBay Europe and head of the company’s auction business in the USA. Philipp Justus graduated in Business Administration at the WHU in Koblenz and the Kellogg School of Management.

“I am interested in the question of how we in Germany can take more active and decisive advantage of the opportunities provided by the digital revolution. I think there is a great deal still to be done, particularly in the areas of education and digital literacy, because changes in digital media are outstripping our education systems.”

Thomas Klie

Prof. Dr. jur. Thomas Klie is Professor of Public law and Administration at the Protestant University for Applied Sciences in Freiburg and Associate Professor in Gerontology at the Alpen-Adria University Klagenfurt/IFF Vienna. He is also a lawyer and Head of the Institute for Applied Social Research – Age, Society, Participation (AGP) and the Centre for Civil Society Development (ZZE) in Freiburg and Hamburg.

“Who cares? Who cares about our children and their future? Who will take responsibility for vulnerable people in their old age? In future we need a caring community. But to achieve this we need to fight to create the right conditions – politically, culturally and in the way we live our lives.”
Ab Klink

Prof. Dr. Ab Klink is a sociologist and Doctor of Law. He is a Professor at the Free University of Amsterdam (Employment, Health and Social Welfare) and has worked for the management consultancy Boos&Co since 2011. From 2007 to 2010 he was Dutch Minister for Health, Welfare and Sport. Prior to that, he was Head of the Scientific Institute of the Christian Democratic Appeal Party (CDA) and was a Senator from 2002 to 2007.

“I’d like to make a contribution to preserving the welfare state for the future, even if issues such as demographic change make this increasingly difficult. To achieve this, we need to carry out balanced reforms, such as in healthcare, but we also need a policy of integration that provides opportunity, that is demanding and that does not neglect cultural dimensions.”

Ulrich Klotz

After completing his studies in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Ulrich Klotz worked in the computer and machine tool industries and as an ergonomic at the Hamburg University of Technology. Since the 1980s he has worked as a Director of IG Metall and as Endowed Professor at the Offenbach Academy of Art and Design specialising in the area of “Computers and Work”, with a particular focus on the development and promotion of new forms of work and organisation to maximise potential for innovation.

“Creativity and innovative ideas are absolutely essential if we are to overcome the various challenges that face us and the generations to come and create the conditions that allow us to live on our planet in dignity. So I am interested in the question of how we can finally transcend industrial society’s ways of working and the command structures that prevent innovation, in favour of creating a working culture that is characterised by mutual appreciation, respect and tolerance. An example of this is the open culture of innovation seen in the open source communities online – our institutions and businesses can learn a great deal about modern ways of organising work from these kinds of communities.”

Andreas Knabe

Prof. Dr. Andreas Knabe is an economist and Chair of Public Economics at the Otto von Guericke University in Magdeburg. Prior to this, he was Junior Professor of Labour Market and Social Policy at the Free University of Berlin. His main areas of interest include theoretical and empirical labour market research and research into economic satisfaction.

“Safeguarding prosperity and progress poses a great challenge to politics and science, particularly in times of economic crisis. If we are to master this task, then we need a new, all-encompassing understanding of what makes up prosperity and quality of life.”

Daniela Kobelt Neuhaus

Daniela Kobelt Neuhaus graduated in Therapeutic Pedagogy, Psychology, Pedagogy and Philosophy. She is a Member of the Management Board of the Karl Kübel Stiftung für Kind und Familie, which works to promote family competence, family-friendliness, equal opportunities and global responsibility both at home and abroad through educational work and preventive projects.
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

“My concerns are: 1) That it is so difficult to support all parents – not just those where there is an obvious risk – with young children right from the start in a consistent and appropriate way, so that they are in a position to act as role models for their children in terms of their self-efficacy and commitment to society. 2) That bringing up and educating children in a comprehensive and inclusive way is hampered by the pillarised structure of public departments (e.g. Youth Welfare Office, Social Welfare Office, Health Authority) and by discontinuities in the educational trajectory, and by the fact that local networks that promote growing up with equal opportunities and solidarity are constantly threatened with failure as a result of segregational and structural barriers. 3) That our scarce educational resources (compared to GDP) are raised through special private funding, interventions and/or amendments to the educational system rather than underpinning a preventive and consistent education system for children from the ages of 0 to 16 years in an individualised and professional way so that all children can be given the support they need. There still seems to be little understanding of the fact that our future not only depends on knowledge and proficiency, but also on social skills and cohesion.”

Lambert T. Koch

Prof. Dr. Lambert T. Koch graduated in Economics and since 2008 has been Vice Chancellor of the University of Wuppertal. As Dean of the Economics Faculty at the Schumpeter School of Business and Economics he was responsible for raising the faculty’s profile. He is Head of the Wuppertal Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Research.

“I am very keen to see as many citizens as possible being actively involved in creating the future of our country. People of every age should feel that their particular skills, imagination and creativity are needed to make Germany a place that is worth living and worth loving. If we are successful in this, then we have made a decisive step towards a cooperative culture of innovation.”

Ton Koper

Ton Koper is founder and Creative Director of RespectNet, a service communications consultancy company in Basel. He is also the founder and President of the powerAge Foundation, which launches initiatives, develops services and organises networks aimed at supporting those who are in the “third phase of life”. Its aim is to give people the courage to overcome the traditional, passive and superficial notions of growing old that existed in the past.

“The quality of our future will not be determined by technical innovations, but by social innovations. Old ideas about age are being changed by a new generation, providing a wonderful framework for huge opportunities to achieve social change and find new solutions to social problems.”

Eckhard Kreßel

Prof. Dr. Eckhard Kreßel is Head of Human Resources and Employment Policy at Daimler AG. He is Associate Professor of Public Law, Employment Law and Social Law at the University of Würzburg.

“For me, it is an exciting challenge to think about the future in an interdisciplinary way and work together to come up with appropriate concepts. This is even more the case when we consider the leading role that Germany plays in the area of social policy. We need to continue with our traditions and at the same time find new answers for the future in a global, web-oriented world.”
Madeleine Krispin

Madeleine Krispin qualified as a Systemic Business Coach and Reiss Profile Master. She provides consultancy and coaching services to managers, private individuals and companies and has experience in youth work, including leading the “come in” youth project aimed at mobilising young people.

“People are the focus of my professional life. As a personal coach, I love discovering people’s resources and revealing their potential. My work has meaning if my actions help to progress society, families and individuals, for example young people.”

Volker Kronenberg

Prof. Dr. Volker Kronenberg is Academic Director of the Institute for Political Science and Sociology at the University of Bonn and Honorary Professor at the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. He is also Academic Director of the Bonn Academy for the Research and Teaching of Practical Policy. His studies encompass the areas of political culture and patriotism in relation to nation, integration and Europe.

“What unifies us – in Germany and in Europe?”

Andreas Kruse

Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Andreas Kruse is Director of the Institute of Gerontology at the Ruprecht Karl University in Heidelberg. He was Chairman of the Federal Government’s 3rd, 5th and 6th Gerontology Commissions and a Member of the 8th Family Report Commission.

“Contributing to a new culture of aging that recognises and uses the power of age and that also treats people with respect when they are vulnerable. Inspiring students to take an interest in the wide range of issues that relate to aging.”

Hanno Kube

Prof. Dr. Hanno Kube is Chair of Public Law and Fiscal Law at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz. As Authorised Representative, he represents the Federal Government in cases before the Federal Constitutional Court and the European Court of Justice.

“I think we need to rediscover the value of determining one’s life in private and political freedom, but also the importance of solidarity and consideration within society. As a lawyer, I am concerned that the binding force of the law no longer seems to be treated as a given.”

Herbert Kubicek

Prof. Dr. Herbert Kubicek is Senior Researcher at the Institute for Information Management at the University of Bremen (IfiB). Until 2011 he was Director of the Institute and Chair of Applied Computer Science, in particular Information Management and Telecommunications. He is also Chairman of the Board and Scientific Director of the Digital Opportunities Foundation in Berlin.
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

“I would like to reduce the existing inequalities in access to information. And in my writings and practical work I am committed to achieving greater transparency in government and business, so that modern technology is not only used for the benefit of those in power.”

Ursula Lehr

Prof. em. Dr. Drs. h. c. Ursula Lehr is President of the German National Association of Senior Citizens’ Organisations (BAGSO). From 1988 to 1991 she was German Minister for Youth, Family, Women and Health. From 1986 to 1998 she held the first German Chair in Gerontology at the University of Heidelberg.

“It’s not a question of your age, but of how you age; it is not just a case of adding years to your life but of adding life to your years!”

Christa Liedtke

Dr. Christa Liedtke is a biologist and heads up the “Sustainable Production and Consumption” research group at the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy. Her main areas of interest include assessing the resource efficiency and sustainability of value chains (including the consumption phase) and the development and implementation of appropriate management concepts, including the necessary governance structures.

“If we have an idea, a picture in our heads of how we want to live in future, in what kind of society and world, than we can work together to achieve this. I am motivated by actively supporting people with the results of my scientific research so that the stakeholders involved are inspired by sustainable sociotechnical change processes resulting in a paradigm change in favour of sustainability. The goal is to achieve lifestyles that are light on resources.”

Friedrich Lösel

Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Friedrich Lösel is Director of the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cambridge (UK) and until September 2011 was also Chair of Psychology I at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. He was President of the European Association of Psychology and Law and of the Criminological Society and a Member of the German Federal Government’s Commission on Violence.

“Academic curiosity and an interest in people.”

Jürgen Ludwig

Jürgen Ludwig graduated in In-company Education and Training and is Training Officer for System Electronics at Wirten GmbH. He develops work projects aimed at promoting and developing meta-competencies. He is also leader of the training team in the development of in-house aptitude testing.

“People’s creativity, enthusiasm, their ability to love and experience – these give me the courage and belief to use my energies and creativity in the service of a society that is worth living in!”
Silvia Martin

Prof. Dr. Silvia Martin is a Business Management graduate and Managing Partner of the Möbel-Martin-Gruppe. She was awarded an honorary professorship in 2009 for her contribution to the promotion of science and teaching.

“The majority of jobs in Germany are created by family-run companies, and they guarantee lasting success and social responsibility. In times of demographic change and a growing lack of specialist skills, how is it possible to generate a positive mood and appreciation to make them significantly more attractive as employers? How can we overhaul location development so that family-run companies can permanently establish themselves, even in rural areas where they play an important role, not just in economic terms?”

Bernd-Dieter Meier

Prof. Dr. Bernd-Dieter Meier is Director of the Criminological Institute of the Leibniz University in Hanover and Professor of Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure Law and Criminology. His published works include textbooks on the law of criminal sanctions, criminology and juvenile criminal law.

“For me, it is important that our society deals with conflicts in a rational way, particularly when criminality is involved. By this I mean that we should always adhere to proven facts and not lose sight of the basic rights of those involved. If there is any doubt, we should step in to protect the freedoms of those who are weaker.”

Hans-Peter Meister

Dr. Hans-Peter Meister is the founder and CEO of IFOK GmbH, a communications and strategy consultancy that specialises in participation, dialogue and mediation. A qualified biologist, he also lectures at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin on the subject of management and communication in a modern networked society. He is the author of numerous publications on participation, new governance and mediation.

“How can we actively create and change something in our highly complex, dynamic, networked society? What common values and spiritual foundations do we need for such heterogeneous networks?”

Georg Meran

Prof. Dr. Georg Meran is Chair of Environmental Economics and Policy at the University of Technology, Berlin. His main areas of interest include technological innovation and environmental policy as well as the implementation of a green tax system and its practical consequences.

“Technological and scientific advances and the spread of civilisation mean that many societies now enjoy prosperity and people can live their lives in security. But this path to paradise is being endangered by the scarcity of resources, the problems of waste and conflicts over distribution. What tools and what plans do we want to leave to our children?”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Wolfgang Müller-Pietralla

Biologist Wolfgang Müller-Pietralla is Head of Future Research and Trend Transfer at Volkswagen AG, where he conducts research into future developments in society and technology and translates this into research strategies and technology roadmaps. He is also a lecturer in Futures Studies at the Free University of Berlin.

“In my work, I’d like to make a contribution to improving the culture of innovation and value creation in Business Location Germany.”

Bernhard Nauck

Prof. Dr. Bernhard Nauck is Chair of General Sociology at Chemnitz University of Technology. He is Spokesman for the German Family Panel, which as the “Panel Analysis of Intimate Relationships and Family Dynamics (PAIRFAM)” is part of the permanent programme of the German Research Foundation (DFG).

“(1) Comprehensive social scientific family research that gives insights into the cultural and social diversity of different ways of life in our society and thus provides politicians with reliable information for decision-making. (2) The development of training programmes to help with counselling and prevention for families in different circumstances.”

Martina Niemann

Dr. Martina Niemann graduated in Economics and is Chief Human Resources Officer at Air Berlin. Prior to this, she was responsible for Remuneration and Social Policy at Deutsche Bahn AG and was Head of Human Resource Deployment with responsibility for the group’s labour market. Her main areas of interest include professional training, professional reorientation, older employees and restructuring.

“I would like to help to make Germany a place where everyone – young, old, women, men, migrants and non-migrants – all have an equal chance of developing their potential. And not only when they are young – they should have plenty of opportunities throughout their lives.”

Horst Niesyto

Prof. Dr. Horst Niesyto graduated in Pedagogy, Sociology and Psychology and is Head of the Media Pedagogy department at the Institute of Educational Sciences at the Ludwigsburg University of Education. He is Chairman of the Media Pedagogy section of the German Association of Educational Research (DGfE) and spokesman for the initiative “No education without media!”

“Every area of society is accelerating. In the constant battle for recognition, high viewing figures and the competitive edge, those areas that require time and leisure are increasingly finding themselves left behind. Children’s upbringing and educational and learning processes – these are areas where time is needed to learn, to build personal relationships, to develop orientation and values, to understand how things are connected, to learn how to communicate successfully and co-exist with others. For many years I have been working on how media can be used to this end in a creative, skilful and socially responsible way. I hope that the Chancellor’s Dialogue on Germany’s Future will lead to media education being afforded much higher value
in Germany. A free, democratic society is a basic prerequisite for the critical, socially responsible use of media. Media education for all – the "Keine Bildung ohne Medien!" initiative has come up with some proposals in this respect (www.keine-bildung-ohne-medien.de)."

**Günther Opp**

Prof. Dr. Günther Opp is a special education teacher and Professor of Pedagogy for Behavioural Difficulties at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, where his main areas of interest include inclusive schooling, resiliency research, positive peer culture and school quality and development in the area of educational assistance.

"Modern society is characterised by gaining individual autonomy and more intense processes of individualisation. Even at a young age, children are affected by this ("insulation of children"). The focus of my pedagogical interest is the question of the pedagogical shaping of collective and communal experiences that safeguard social cooperation and support, mutual appreciation, empathy and solidarity in peer groups. The development of positive peer cultures should help children, teenagers and young adults to handle the challenges of modern life and above all to help each other."

**Notburga Ott**

Prof. Dr. Notburga Ott is Chair of Social Policy and Institutional Economics at Ruhr University Bochum. She is a Member of the Scientific Advisory Board on Family Affairs of the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Her main areas of interest include the potential of different generations, pension provisions for single parents, health and welfare.

**Leo J. Penta**

Prof. Dr. Leo J. Penta graduated in Catholic Theology, German Literature and Philosophy and is a Professor at the Catholic University of Applied Social Sciences in Berlin. His main areas of interest include community organisation and community economics. The US-born Dr. Penta is also Director of the German Institute for Community Organizing and has been successfully launching citizens’ platforms in both the USA and Germany for over 30 years.

"I am motivated by bringing together "inconspicuous" and excluded people and groups so that they can take political action together. In this way, they can create their own community and at the same time unleash their own abilities. This is how our society can grow together and become more fair and democratic."

**Iris Pfeiffer**

Dr. Iris Pfeiffer graduated in Psychology and Economics and is Head of Education and Employment at Prognos AG. Her main areas of interest include strategies for meeting the demand for skilled employees, international comparative studies and providing support and evaluation for model projects and funding programmes for skills training and employability.
“Too much potential is wasted in Germany. I am keen to ensure that everyone who wants to learn and achieve something is given the support they need to develop their skills, regardless of gender, age or social and ethnic background.”

**Elisabeth Pott**

Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Pott is Director of the German Federal Centre for Health Education and Honorary Professor at the Hannover Medical School, Centre for Public Health and Healthcare at the Institute for Epidemiology, Social Medicine and Health Systems Research.

“I would like to make a contribution to bringing more humanity to society (“Albert Schweitzer syndrome”).”

**Birger Priddat**

Prof. Dr. Birger Priddat is former President of Witten/Herdecke University, where he still teaches Politics and Economics. His main areas of research include institutional economics, modernisation processes, work theories, business ethics and theories of governance and networking.

“The conditions of democracy are changing within the framework of globalisation and EU processes. Politics is now increasingly subjected to economic constraints and citizens are becoming more sceptical about politics. How can we improve the processes of democracy in light of these new conditions? How can we retain our democratic consciousness? What institutions do we need to modernise? How do we want to live and how can we create the best conditions for the generations to come?”

**Hermann Pünder**

Prof. Dr. Hermann Pünder, LL.M. (Iowa) is Chair of Public Law (including European Law), Science of Public Administration and Comparative Law at the Bucerius Law School in Hamburg. His main areas of interest include the modernisation of government and administration (strengthening representative and participatory democracy, budget law and public debt, administrative organisation and procedures, mediation and privatisation of public proceedings), along with comparative constitutional and administrative law and public commercial law (particularly public procurement law).

“What needs to happen to make our democracy succeed? This question always has to be answered afresh. The events surrounding “Stuttgart 21” have been very unsettling – and present us with a real challenge.”

**Margret Rasfeld**

Margret Rasfeld is Director of the Protestant School, Central Berlin. She is active throughout Germany in the area of school development. Her main areas of interest include community education, citizenship education, education for sustainable development, cultural education and health promotion. A recipient of many awards for educational innovation, she advises schools, projects, foundations and associations.
"I am carried along by my unconditional faith in the potential of children and young people. My aim is to generate broad awareness and create spaces for this potential to unfold in all its amplitude and uniqueness. I have a vision of an exciting, appreciative learning culture that inspires, encourages and empowers learners to be public-spirited, responsible, creative, visionary, entrepreneurial and bold in their actions."

**Christian Rauch**

Christian Rauch is Head of Unemployment Insurance Product Development at the Federal Employment Agency in Nuremberg. He is responsible for processes, products and programmes in Book III of the German Social Code and therefore deals with all issues relating to professional training and the challenges this presents for the future.

“How can we organise lifelong learning in such a way that everyone has the opportunity to participate and at the same time ensure we maintain and increase the global competitiveness that forms the basis of our society’s prosperity?”

**Ortwin Renn**

Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Ortwin Renn is an economist, sociologist and social psychologist. He is Chair of Environmental and Technological Sociology at the University of Stuttgart and is Director of the interdisciplinary research project “Risk and sustainable technological development”. Ortwin Renn is a Member of the Executive Board of the German National Academy of Science and Engineering and Chair of the Baden-Württemberg Council on Sustainable Development. He was formerly a Member of the “Safe Energy Supply” Ethics Commission.

“As a social researcher, my main interest is in the question of how attitudes and actions relating to environmental issues and technologies are formed and how public debate develops. My participation in interdisciplinary research alliances has particularly taught me a great deal about the interplay between technology, business and the environment. This has also inspired me to tackle the issue of “sustainable development” in a conceptual and pragmatic way. This is the key question for the 21st century.”

**Jörg Rheinboldt**

Jörg Rheinboldt is an internet specialist and entrepreneur. He is the founder of denkwerk GmbH and alando.de AG, which was sold to eBay in 1999 and where he served as Managing Director. He is the founder of the venture capital company M10 GmbH and co-founder of betterplace.org.

“I’m involved in the Dialogue on Germany’s Future because I have experience of how digital advancements can bring many opportunities and a few challenges, and I am convinced that as a society we need to make use of these opportunities and set ourselves these challenges. One of the foundations of our co-existence is education for all. There is a great deal of potential to build and improve digital and media skills in all age groups and across all levels of society. If I can be involved in making this potential accessible to a great many people, then of course I want to make my contribution.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Thomas Risse

Prof. Dr. Thomas Risse is Professor of International Politics at the Otto-Suhr-Institute for Political Science at the Freie Universität Berlin. He is Spokesman for the German Research Foundation (DFG) in the special research area “Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood” and Co-Director of the DFG-sponsored research unit “The transformational power of Europe”.

“Will Germany manage to fulfil the leadership role that has been thrust upon it with regard to the euro crisis in a wise way that takes into consideration our European partners – particularly those in Eastern and Southern Europe – so that in the end there is greater European integration?”

Susanne Sander

Susanne Sander is a political scientist and was involved in the area of adult education for many years, before working for six years in the “Social Cities” programme as a District Manager. She built the Wedding/Moabit civic platform “Wir sind da!” and acted as its organiser. She is also Deputy Head of the German Institute for Community Organizing.

“In a democracy, people don’t just want to participate, they want to determine for themselves how and what they get involved in and they want to discover that they can change things by working together. I try out new ways and help people to bring their knowledge and experience to find solutions to social problems, regardless of their educational or family background, age, religion and gender. I also try to convince politicians that they are not required to manage everything but can leave more to the citizens themselves.”

Almut Satrapa-Schill

Dr. phil. Almut Satrapa-Schill has been responsible for funding strategies and development of the “Health”, “Care” and “Age and Demographics” programmes at the Robert Bosch Stiftung for over 20 years. She also heads up the special division “Future Health Care Issues”.

“I am keen to ensure that we recognise and make use of the opportunities presented by demographic change across all generations and that we meet its challenges.”

Herbert Scheithauer

Prof. Dr. Herbert Scheithauer is Professor of Developmental and Clinical Psychology at the Freie Universität Berlin. He has developed a range of programmes in the area of violence prevention, such as the NETWASS NETWASS (Networks Against School Shootings) programme, Papilio in kindergartens (behavioural problems) and fairplayer in schools and sports clubs (including bullying).

“Encouraging people’s social skills, motivating them to work for other people and take responsibility – this is a fundamental element of living together without violence.”
Rolf Schmachtenberg

Dr. Rolf Schmachtenberg graduated in Mathematics and Economics. From 1990 to 2001 he headed up the Labour Department at the Ministry of Labour, Social Health and Women’s Affairs in the state of Brandenburg. From 2002 to 2010 he headed up the department at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs that was responsible for drafting the laws on reforms in the area of SGB II and SGB III. He is currently Head of the Indo-German Social Security Programme (a GIZ project) that is assisting the Indian Ministry of Labour and Finance to introduce a social security system for informal workers.

“Love. And the desire to be involved in making our society fit for the future.”

Wolfgang Schmalz

Wolfgang Schmalz is Managing Partner of J. Schmalz GmbH, a family-run, globally-active, medium-sized company providing vacuum solutions for automation, handling and clamping technology. Wolfgang Schmalz and his company have received many awards for their commitment to sustainability.

“Our society urgently has to find a sustainable way of living, because we are responsible for ensuring that future generations have the same chances in life that we have today.”

Christoph M. Schmidt

Prof. Dr. Christoph M. Schmidt is an economist and President of the Rheinisch-Westfälischen Instituts für Wirtschaftsforschung (RWI). He is also a Professor at the Ruhr University Bochum. He is a Member of the German Council of Economic Experts and sits on the German Bundestag’s Enquiry Committee on “Growth, Welfare and Quality of Life”.

“1. Where do we really stand on issues of prosperity, quality of life and social progress when we remove some of the emotion from the debate and make it more transparent? 2. How can we selectively expose economic and political failures and reliably identify successes, where the object of our interest can generally have a major influence on its fate through its own actions? 3. What course should we set in order to improve the lot of disadvantaged members of society and inspire the progress of society as a whole?”

Hilmar Schneider

Assistant Professor Dr. Hilmar Schneider is Director of Labour Policy at the Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA). A social scientist and economist, the main focus of Dr. Schneider’s work is on social security, labour market policy and demographics. He is a Research Affiliate at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin) and a Member of the German Census Commission.

“I am personally driven by the quest for truth and responsibility for the common good. I am thankful that I live in a society where sound arguments have a chance of included in policymaking. So I am committed heart and soul to making academic findings understandable and useful for policymaking.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Ronnie Schöb

Prof. Dr. Ronnie Schöb is an economist and Professor of International Public Finance at the Freie Universität Berlin. His research interests include “reform of the welfare state”, basic welfare issues, combating unemployment among unskilled workers, taxation theory and the economic analysis of happiness.

“In times of increasing globalisation, the welfare state is constantly being faced with new challenges. If the welfare state does not want to simply give up then it must find new, intelligent solutions to these challenges. As an economist, I am keen to work on these solutions – particularly when it is a question of harmonising the goals of income equality and full employment.”

Hedwig Schomacher

Hedwig Schomacher teaches Social Sciences and German at the Vera Beckers vocational college in Krefeld, a college that offers 32 different courses in the areas of health, education/social studies, sport, clothing and design. The courses form part of the dual and full-time systems of vocational training.

“To provide learning opportunities for people in different life circumstances, regardless of age, gender, family background, etc, and in this way help them to become stronger.”

Ulrich Schoof

Dr. Ulrich Schoof graduated in European Studies at the University of Osnabrück, and gained a Masters in Management from the Ecole Superieure de Commerce, Poitiers, France. He was a trainee at the EU Commission in the office of EU Commissioner Monika Wulf-Mathies. From 2004 to 2006 he worked at the United Nations International Labour Organisation in Geneva, Switzerland. Since 2006 he has been a Project Manager at the Bertelsmann Stiftung, with responsibility for the “Modern Employability” programme within the “Future of Employment” project (creation of an index on lifelong learning in Germany, the “German Learning Atlas”).

“I am particularly interested in how we can encourage learning alongside schools – so the development of informal and non-formal learning environments via better learning opportunities, better infrastructure and better management and governance.”

Miranda Schreurs

Prof. Dr. Miranda Schreurs is Professor of Comparative Politics and Director of the Environmental Policy Research Centre at the Freie Universität Berlin. Until October 2007 she was a Professor in the Department of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland. She is a Member of the German Advisory Council on the Environment (SRU) and was formerly a Member of the “Safe Energy Supply” Ethics Commission.

“I am very interested in nature and I am concerned about how we are damaging the environment. So I am very motivated to push forward with the sustainable use of resources – this is our obligation to future generations. A global commitment to sustainability is therefore something that is very important to me.”
Richard Schröder

Until 2009, Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Richard Schröder was Chair of the Department of Philosophy and the Faculty of Theology at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. In 1990 he became Chairman of the SPD faction in the freely-elected People’s Chamber of the GDR. Dr. Schröder is Chairman of the Deutsche Nationalstiftung.

“I would like to encourage national unity and a sense of caution in the way public judgements are made.”

Herbert Schubert

Prof. Dr. Herbert Schubert is a social scientist. He is Professor at the Faculty for Applied Social Sciences at the Cologne University of Applied Sciences, where he heads up the “Sozial/Raum/Management” research division. He is also Associate Professor in the Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Sciences at Leibniz University in Hanover.

“Safety’ is a central element of the quality of life in cities and communities. I am particularly interested in how we can improve safety through architecture and urban construction, by bringing together urban planning and the housing industry and through the involvement of the people who live there.”

Tino Schuppan

Prof. Dr. Tino Schuppan graduated in Administrative Science at the University of Potsdam, and since 2005 he has been Scientific Director of the Potsdam eGovernment Competence Centre. He is also Visiting Professor for Public Management and regularly lectures in Public Management and eGovernment at the Universities of Bern and Salzburg. The focus of his research work is on modernising administration and eGovernment, along with IT in developing countries.

“Within a strong Europe, how can Germany remain internationally competitive and think globally? Science has to come up with some answers to this if it is to be socially responsible and relevant. Science has to be able to act effectively, and to this end we also need an enlightened administrative science that understands the strategic potential of IT for government and society, because at the end of the day new, skill-intensive services will only be created if there is global demand for them.”

Jan Seidler

Jan Seidler is CEO of Unwire Deutschland GmbH, the German subsidiary of the Scandinavian market leader in mobile services. He was Chief Technology Officer and Board Member at MyHammer AG. His responsibilities included heading up the Product Development, System Operations, Quality Assurance, User Experience & Design and Internal IT departments. Prior to that, he was at eBay, where he was responsible for product strategy and innovation.

“I’m an idealist on a virtual crusade. For over 20 years, I have been motivated by making technology understandable and tangible, putting it to use to find solutions to people’s actual problems. I think it is a great opportunity to make a contribution to creating a deeper and lasting understanding of new media at an early stage in a way that is tailored to the needs of the population.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Kay Senius

Since 1974, Kay Senius has been working at the German Federal Employment Agency in a range of management roles. After managing Specific SGB II Products and Programmes at the head office in Nuremberg, in July 2009 he was appointed to the Executive Board of the Sachsen-Anhalt-Thuringia Regional Directorate. He is a Member of the Demographics Council for the State of Sachsen-Anhalt.

“When viewed in the long term, cost-cutting stands for government action. But it also provides an opportunity to focus more closely on efficiency and sustainability. In turn, this calls for a similar degree of transparency with regard to outcomes and effects.”

Zafer Senocak

Zafer Senocak is a writer of Turkish origin who has been living in Germany since 1970. Since 1990 he has lived in Berlin, with frequent interruptions to act as Writer in Residence at universities in various countries including France, Canada and the USA. His book “Deutschsein. Eine Aufklärungsschrift” was published in 2011.

“I always look at language as if I am hearing a word for the first time. Language astonishes me with the possibilities it offers and the traps that it sets.”

Eckart Severing

Prof. Dr. Eckart Severing is Head of the Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (f-bb) in Nuremberg, Munich and Berlin and teaches at the Institute of Pedagogy at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. He is a Board Member of the Vocational Education and Training Research Network (AGBFN). As a Board Member at the Bildungswerk der Bayerischen Wirtschaft, he is responsible for innovation management.

“Creating innovation – with all and for all.”

Stefan Shaw

Dr. Stefan Shaw graduated in Psychology, Media Studies and Cultural Science and is founder of the consultancy firm change matters. Shaw advises companies on issues relating to strategic and organisational development and is also closely involved in the introduction of “Social Impact Bonds” in Germany.

“Being ‘well-meaning’ is not sufficient justification for actions in the welfare sector. Instead, I believe ‘well done’ should be the leitmotiv for commitment on the part of government and citizens alike. To this end, the whole sector needs to become more professional, with the effect that actions that are proven to be ‘well done’, such as in the educational sector, are strengthened, as opposed to actions that are simply ‘well-meaning’.

Loring Sittler

Loring Sittler is one of two directors of Generali Future Funds at Generali Deutschland Holding AG. Generali Future Funds works with institutions and associations, supporting campaigns, organisations, competitions, initiatives and projects, along with academic studies on volunteering activities among older people.
"As I have five children, I am personally concerned about the high level of public debt. The rigidity of German thinking and power structures is obstructing the necessary changes in society. I am particularly interested in one question: How can we make more people take on greater responsibility for themselves and others?"

**Dieter Spath**

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr.-Ing. E.h. Dieter Spath graduated in Mechanical Engineering and is head of the Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering and Organisation (IAO) and the Institute for Human Factors and Technology Management (IAT) at the University of Stuttgart. Since 2009, he has been Vice-President of the German National Academy of Science and Engineering (acatech). Dieter Spath has gained experience in industry and is a member of several advisory councils.

"I am interested in how we can continue to create the necessary growth, not only in Germany but also in a global context, without overburdening our communal resources. I focus my efforts on research and development to find new kinds of products and services that will create a comparable level of prosperity in the future for the developed industrial nations and for the countries that are currently playing catch-up, but using radically fewer resources – so that means finding more radically new ways of doing things!"

**Constanze Stelzenmüller**

Dr. Constanze Stelzenmüller is Senior Transatlantic Fellow of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF). Prior to this, she headed up the Berlin office of the GMF. She is Chair of the Advisory Council of the German Foundation for Peace Research. From 1994 to 2005, Constanze Stelzenmüller was an editor at the weekly magazine DIE ZEIT.

"I am interested in how Germany can harmonise power and responsibility – and how it can contribute to creating a peaceful world order."

**Gabriela Stoppe**

Prof. Dr. med. Gabriela Stoppe is Professor of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the University Psychiatric Clinics in Basel. She has worked on innovative projects to improve the care of elderly people with mental illnesses and specialises in healthcare research. She heads up the “Mental Health and an Aging Population” working group for Swiss Public Health and is Deputy Chair of the “Old Age Psychiatry” section of the European Psychiatric Association.

"I would like to see renewed solidarity within society."

**Susanne Stürmer**

Prof. Dr. Susanne Stürmer is an economist. She is Managing Director of UFA, where she is responsible for New Media, Legal and Regulatory Affairs, Media Policy, Communication and PR and Market Research. Prior to this, she worked for a telecommunications company and in the Corporate Finance division of an international auditing firm. She is Professor of “New Media Production” for the course on Film and Television Production at the Konrad Wolf University of Film and Television in Potsdam and is a Board and Advisory Board Member of various industry bodies.
“The media is omnipresent in everyday life and for many people it is at least as close as reality. And with the advent of the digital age, this presence is growing massively. Children and young people are influenced by the media with almost no protection, so media professionals have a great responsibility to society. What does ‘good’ media content look like, how can media make a ‘worthwhile’ contribution to the cohesion of social groups? And what does this mean for work in the media?”

Christina Tillmann

Christina Tillmann graduated in Political Science, Public Law and Administrative Science and has carried out many consultancy projects on strategic management in the public sector. She is currently managing the “Engaging Citizens in Governance” project for the Bertelsmann Stiftung, which has the aim of increasing the effectiveness and connectivity of citizens’ participation in political and administrative processes.

“How can we develop a new culture of dialogue and participation in Germany? What kinds of cooperative processes allow relevant stakeholders to come together to find lasting and effective solutions – without producing unclear responsibility for decision-making and drastically slowing down processes?”

Berthold Tillmann

Prof. Dr. Berthold Tillmann was Mayor of Münster from 1999 to 2009. He is Honorary Professor at the Institute for Political Science (IfPol) at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster (WWU), where he lectures in local and regional politics. He is also involved in the WWU IfPol’s interdisciplinary “Competence Centre for Sustainable Local Financial Policy”.

“Everything to do with the question: ‘What can hold a pluralistic and individualised society together?’”

Bülen Ucar

Prof. Dr. Bülen Ucar is an expert on Islam, Professor of Islamic Religious Education and Head of the Centre for Intercultural Islamic Studies at the University of Osnabrück. He is a Member of the German Islam Conference at the Federal Ministry of the Interior. Previously, he worked at the State Institute and Education Ministry of North Rhine-Westphalia in the Integration department.

“Dealing with minorities and diversity in an appropriate way using a common code of values is something that will in the medium-to-long term be critical for the survival of our society in Germany. I want to make my own modest contribution in this respect.”

Haci-Halil Uslucan

The psychologist Prof. Dr. Haci-Halil Uslucan is Academic Director of the Centre for Turkish Studies and Integration Research and Professor of Modern Turkish Studies at the University of Duisburg-Essen.

“In Germany there is still a great need for clarification and communication about issues relating to co-existence in society. Experts and the general public need to engage in more debate. Because knowledge is always social and I believe at the end of the day it serves society.”
Michael Vassiliadis

Michael Vassiliadis is President of the Union of Mining, Chemicals and Energy (IG BCE). In 1986 he began his professional union career as Secretary of IG Chemical-Paper-Ceramics (IG Mining, Chemicals and Energy since 1997) in a range of different positions. Since March 2004 he has been a Member of the Board of IG BCD. Michael Vassiliadis is a Member of the German Federal Council for Sustainable Development. He was a Member of the “Safe Energy Supply” Ethics Commission.

“Seizing the demographic challenges and using them as an opportunity to achieve a democratic and fair society. More than ever before, in today’s dynamic, global economy, qualifications, skills and the ability of people to perform play a critical role in the success and competitiveness of businesses. Faced with cost pressures and growing demands for productivity, companies will find it is increasingly important to engage in strategic HR planning.”

Jörn von Lucke

Prof. Dr. Jörn von Lucke is Professor of IT for Public Administration and Business at the Zeppelin University in Friedrichshafen. He is also a founding director of the Deutsche Telekom Institute for Connected Cities (TICC) and is involved in the T-City Friedrichshafen project.

“How can work together to successfully handle the current opening-up of government and administration? Open Government, Open Data and Open Budget.”

Günter Walden

Dr. Günter Walden graduated in Economics and since 2003 he has been Head of the Sociology and Economics of Vocational Education and Training department at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training. After working in market and social research, since 1981 he has been a Research Associate at the Institute for Vocational Education and Training in Bonn.

“How we can maintain our economic performance in light of demographic change and how we can create lifelong learning that leaves no-one behind.”

Frank Wallau

Prof. Dr. Frank Wallau graduated in Economics. He is Professor of SME Policy, Business Start-Ups and Corporate Succession at the Paderborn/Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences and also works at the Bonn Institute for SME Research. His main areas of research are measuring bureaucracy costs, (industrial) family businesses, assistance for start-ups and SMEs and corporate succession.

“Over 3.6 million SMEs form the backbone of our economy. They are responsible for the lion’s share of value creation and provide countless jobs and placements for trainees. It is important to focus more strongly on this in public debate and at the same time improve economic and social conditions for SMEs.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Sabine Walper

Prof. Dr. Sabine Walper is Research Director at the German Youth Institute in Munich and is Professor of Education with special focus on Youth Research (currently on sabbatical) at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. She is also a Member of the Advisory Council on Family Affairs at the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Board Member of the German Children’s League and Spokeswoman for the Developmental Psychology section at the German Psychological Society.

“In the course of its development, humankind has profited enormously from its particular ability to cooperate and care for others. For me, it is very important to support and encourage these abilities. I believe families are crucial in this respect, as more and more is expected of them in terms of caring for, bringing up and supporting the next generation”.

Ulrich Walwei

Dr. Ulrich Walwei graduated in Economics and is Deputy Director of the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), a research institute set up by the Federal Employment Agency. The main focus of his research is on longer-term labour market trends, policy analysis and labour market flexibility.

“The future of Germany will to a large extent be determined by the excellence of its national education system. The public’s willingness and ability to learn is also crucial. Lack of educational and training opportunities should be avoided wherever possible.”

Philine Warnke

Dr. Philine Warnke is Deputy Head of the Innovation and Technology Management and Foresight Competence Centre at the Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research (ISI). She specialises in foresight, production innovation and technology studies.

“Using dialogues on the future to discover more possibilities for the present. A culture of innovation – spaces for all kinds of stakeholders to come together and try out solutions for the future. Measuring advances in quality of life and creating sustainable models of production and consumption.”

Thomas Weber

Thomas Weber is a Psychologist and CEO of TraumaTransform-Consult GmbH. His main focus includes short-and-medium-term psychological counselling for victims of violence and accidents, crisis management and interdisciplinary follow-up care after major disasters, acute incident deployment and stress management worldwide for an aid organisation.

“Working to provide victims with greater protection.”
Joachim Wedekind

Dr. Joachim Wedekind is a biologist and holds a doctorate in Education. He has worked at the University of Tübingen and at the German Institute for Distance Education Research (DIFF). Since 2001 he has worked at the Knowledge Media Research Institute (IWM) on the design and implementation of complex information systems. He has won awards for his computer-based learning environments.

"After more than three decades working on research and development in the area of teaching technology and media didactics, I know that we have reached a point in our knowledge and experience where we have to give all children and young people access to knowledge, practise new forms of individual and communal learning and in this way create a basis for lasting media and IT skills. If not now, then when? But to do this we need constructive support from educational policies!"

Ilse Wehrmann

Dr. Ilse Wehrmann is a Social Pedagogue and Educator. As a specialist in early childhood education, she advises companies on setting up their own kindergarten facilities. Until 2007 she was Head of the State Association of Protestant Day-Care Facilities for Children in Bremen.

"As may children as possible should be given (more) equal educational opportunities! We need to invest early on rather than repair things later."

Marion A. Weissenberger-Eibl

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Marion A. Weissenberger-Eibl graduated in Clothing Technology and Business Administration. She is Head of the Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research (ISI). Since 2004, she has been Professor of Innovation and Technology Management at the University of Kassel.

“How should we innovate tomorrow and the day after? How can we be more creative in our use of scarce resources? And how can we all work together to take responsibility for creating our future? Innovation always has its roots in curiosity. So we need to give our culture of innovation more scope to come up with new ideas and be prepared to treat risks as opportunities in order to secure our quality of life in the future.”

Birgit Weitemeyer

Prof. Dr. Birgit Weitemeyer is Chair of Tax Law and Director of the Institute for Foundation Law and the Law of Non-Profit Organisations at the Bucerius Law School in Hamburg. She is a Member of the Public Interest Alliance of the Central Association of the Third Sector, sits on the Advisory Council of the Association of German Foundations and is President of the Hamburg forum Unternehmensteuerrecht e. V.

“Just like my own children, I try to help students to get a good education, to find learning fun and to give them a sense of responsibility and respect for the civilising achievements of a functioning legal and economic system.”
Who are the experts and what motivates them?

Christian Welzel

Prof. Dr. Christian Welzel is Professor of Cultural Research at the Institute of Political Science and Centre for Democratic Research at Leuphana University in Lüneburg. A political scientist and economic historian, his main areas of interest include social change, participation in civil society and social capital.

“I am interested in the question of how we progress towards a world that is better for us all to live in and what values are central to this.”

Nina Wielage

Nina Wielage is an economist and a Consultant at Ramboll Management Consulting in the Labour Market and Employment Policy department. Prior to this, she worked as a Research Associate at Dr. Bruno Kaltenborn – Wirtschaftsforschung und Politikberatung.

“How can we ensure real equal opportunity in the future? I am particularly interested in this question with regard to education and access to the labour market. How can we provide better opportunities for advancement here in Germany for people from migrant backgrounds and for people from underprivileged and/or low income families?”

Andreas Wirsching

Prof. Dr. Andreas Wirsching is Director of the Institute of Contemporary History Munich-Berlin and Professor of Recent History at the Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität in Munich. He is joint publisher of the “Journal of Modern European History”, the "Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte" and the “Zeitschrift für Politik”, along with the online newsletter of the Institut d’Études Politiques, Paris. He is also President of the Commission on the History of Parliamentarianism and the Political Parties, Berlin.

“Accepting change. Thinking conceptually. Remaining optimistic.”

Manfred Wittenstein

Dr.-Ing. Manfred Wittenstein is Chairman of WITTENSTEIN AG. An industrial engineer, he is a Member of the Industry-Science Research Alliance and a Member of the Senate at acatech. From 2007 to 2010 he was President of the German Engineering Federation (VDMA).

“Global demand and German value creation are an excellent combination. We could be the main winners when it comes to globalisation. But every section of society, including politics, is required to act in an attentive and responsible way – but unfortunately all too often I find that this is lacking.”
**Frank-Hendrik Wurm**

As head of the Research and Technology Centre at the Dortmund-based pump specialists Wilo SE, Prof. Dr. Frank-Hendrik Wurm was responsible for global research and technology development in the areas of fluid engineering, electric motors, electronics, materials technology and systems technology. He is currently Professor of fluid flow engines at the University of Rostock and is Chair of the University’s Competence Centre for Fluid Flow Machinery.

“Along with my colleagues, I carry out research into pumping systems, wind turbines, ships’ propellers and renewable energy production. One of my main interests is finding ways of working with German industry using innovative concepts that are effective and fit for the future. This new concept for joint research efforts by the university and industry is designed to contribute to our capacity for innovation and ensure that German companies continue to be at the forefront in the global marketplace.”

**Dieter Zapf**

Prof. Dr. Dieter Zapf graduated in Psychology and Protestant Theology. He is Professor at the Institute of Psychology at the Goethe University in Frankfurt, where he also heads up the Work and Organisational Psychology department. He is one of the Academic Directors of the Center for Leadership and Organizational Behaviour (CLBO). The focus of his research includes psychological stress in the workplace and emotion work in organisations.

“For a long time now, I have been interested in the issue of psychological stress in the workplace and have been very concerned to see how work-related mental illnesses have increased dramatically over the last 10 years. Many older workers take early retirement on health grounds or because they feel they can no longer cope with the stresses of work. In the past, companies even encouraged this and were happy to be able to replace older workers with younger staff. But the latest research shows that older workers have great potential because of their experience and knowledge, their social and emotional skills and their generally higher sense of job satisfaction and positive attitudes towards the company, and this should not go to waste. In light of demographic change, I believe it is essential for people to work longer. But this also means it is necessary to ensure that the workplace meets the needs of older people! I hope the public dialogue initiated by the Chancellor will result in society taking these issues more seriously. Efforts must be made to reduce pressures in the workplace. Workers need to be motivated and enabled to participate in working life until they retire at 67.”

**Andreas Zick**

Prof. Dr. Andreas Zick is Chair of Socialisation and Conflict Research at the Faculty of Educational Science at Bielefeld University. He is a Member of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence (IKG). Andreas Zick has a doctorate and habilitation as a psychologist, specialising in the analysis of group conflicts, prejudices and integration.

“The question of the future of a culturally diverse Europe that is capable of handling conflicts between groups in such a way that they do not lead to radicalisation. And currently also the question of what are the causes and consequences to people of threats by groups within society.”
Annette Zimmer

Prof. Dr. Annette Zimmer is Professor of Social Policy and Comparative Political Science at the Institute of Political Science at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster. Her research activities focus on civil society and civic engagement, along with non-profit organisations (foundations, unions, associations, NGOs/NPOs). She is a Board Member of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) and joint publisher of the series “Nonprofit and Civil Society Studies”, “European Civil Society” and “Bürgergesellschaft und Demokratie”.

“Solidarity, democracy and commitment to each other have to be on the agenda! Our communities are drifting apart. The gap between rich and poor is widening. Competition and cost reduction are now part of every aspect of life. It’s high time to end this.”

Oliver Zwirner

Oliver Zwirner works at the European Commission in the economics department of the DG Environment, where he is involved with indicators, statistics and the “Beyond GDP” initiative.

The working group sessions were moderated by:

Henning Banthien, IFOK GmbH

Mathias Beck, Kronos Network GmbH

Kirsten Frohnert, IFOK GmbH

Günter Refle, M.A., Osto Systemberatung GmbH

Rene Ruschmeier, Ramboll Management Consulting GmbH

PD Dr.-Ing. Giuseppe Strina, M.A., OSTO Systemberatung GmbH

Henning Werner, Ramboll Management Consulting GmbH
Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor and the key experts on topic II in the Federal Chancellery on 4 July 2011 (picture by Steffen Kugler)

Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor and the key experts on topic III in Meseberg on 25 August 2011 (picture by Steffen Kugler)

Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor and the key experts on topic I in Meseberg on 13 September 2011 (picture by Sandra Steins)

Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor and the key experts on topic II in the Federal Chancellery on 16 January 2012 (picture by Steffen Kugler)
Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor and the key experts on topic I in the Federal Chancellery on 12 January 2012
(picture by Jesco Denzel)

Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor and the key experts on topic III in the Federal Chancellery on 23 January 2012
(picture by Jesco Denzel)

Citizens' Dialogue on topic I
„How do we want to live together?”
in Erfurt on 29 February 2012
(picture by Sandra Steins)

Citizens' Dialogue on topic III
„How do we want to learn?”
in Heidelberg on 14 March 2012
(picture by Steffen Kugler)
Citizens’ Dialogue on topic II
„How do we want to make a living?”
in Bielefeld on 28 March 2012
(picture by Jesco Denzel)

Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor
and 50 young people about their ideas
on Germany’s future in the Federal
Chancellery on 15 May 2012
(picture by Guido Bergmann)

Closing ceremony of the „Citizens’
Dialogue in 50 cities” initiative
organised by the German Association of
Adult Education, adult education centres
and the Bertelsmann Foundation
in Berlin on 6 June 2012
(picture by Guido Bergmann)

International discussion meeting between
the Federal Chancellor, the UK Prime
Minister David Cameron, the Norwegian
Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg and
100 students from 24 countries on the
topic „Learning from each other. New
paths in the relationship between
citizens and the state”,
Federal Chancellery, 7 June 2012
(pictures by Jesco Denzel and
Steffen Kugler)
International discussion meeting between the Federal Chancellor, the UK Prime Minister David Cameron, the Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg and 100 students from 24 countries on the topic „Learning from each other. New paths in the relationship between citizens and the state“, Federal Chancellery, 7 June 2012 (pictures by Jesco Denzel and Steffen Kugler)

Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor and the experts about the Experts’ Dialogue on the occasion of the publication of the book „Dialogue on Germany’s Future“, Federal Chancellery, 2 July 2012 (picture by Jesco Denzel)

Dialogue between the Federal Chancellor and the citizens whose proposals received the majority of votes in the online Citizens’ Dialogue or have been selected by the experts from the Experts’ Dialogue and the employees of the Federal Press Office and Federal Chancellery, Federal Chancellery, 3 July 2012 (picture by Steffen Kugler)
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