



# PRESS KIT

## Projects by the Goethe-Institut in the scope of Germany's EU Council Presidency 2020

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Goethe-Institut e.V.  
Dr. Jessica Kraatz Magri  
Press officer and head of communications  
T +49 89 15 921 249  
[jessica.kraatzMagri@goethe.de](mailto:jessica.kraatzMagri@goethe.de)

Goethe-Institut Capital Office  
Hannah Cuvalo  
Press officer  
T +49 30 25 906 481  
[Hannah.Cuvalo@goethe.de](mailto:Hannah.Cuvalo@goethe.de)

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# PRESS RELEASE

## EU 2020: THE GOETHE-INSTITUT'S EUROPEAN COMMITMENT TO GERMAN EU COUNCIL PRESIDENCY



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**The Federal Republic of Germany will take on the EU Council Presidency on 1 July and initiate a European cultural programme with the focus on the European public sphere and European solidarity. The Goethe-Institut's contribution to the cultural programme of the Federal government focuses on the questions: What will constitute Europe going forward and how can Europeans achieve cohesion even in the time of the coronavirus? The Goethe-Institut's Europe-wide discourse and art projects are dedicated to the diversity of Europe and the creation of a common European public sphere – whether through a generational dialogue about Europe, in debates about the influence of artificial intelligence, or about the state of freedom, by developing climate-neutral travel schemes, or eye-catching installations in European cities.**

16 June 2020



On the upcoming launch of Germany's EU Council Presidency, the President of the Goethe-Institut **Klaus-Dieter Lehmann** said, "In the middle of Europe, with nine immediate neighbours, for the EU Council Presidency Germany is called upon in a special way to act not only economically but to assume responsibility for a common European cultural region. Europe is the creative foundation of the Goethe-Institut. Its initiatives and projects for Europe are characterised by the freedom of art and culture, the ability to discuss and act with solidarity with one another. The political and cultural power of culture and the opportunity to understand how we live together as a cultural achievement are particularly evident during the coronavirus crisis with its tendencies towards isolation, racism, disinformation, and exclusion."

**#GoetheForEurope  
#GoetheFürEuropa**

For the German EU Council Presidency, the Goethe-Institut is fortifying its previous European engagement with a series of Europe-wide projects carried out in collaboration with its partners in the EU member states.

**Johannes Ebert**, Secretary-General of the Goethe-Institut, stressed, "Especially while the European Community is severely impacted by the effects of Covid-19 and nationalist ideas are on the rise, our projects aim to strengthen the European public sphere in order to enable cohesion and solidarity at the European level. The Goethe-Institut's projects extend across the countries of the EU and aim to make Europe as a whole tangible. Right now in particular, we need to promote open dialogue and encounters among people from all of the EU member states, and enter into a conversation about what will constitute Europe going forward. We can only do this together! Together with our partners in Europe we also want to use our projects to advance important topics such as dealing with technological innovations or nationalism as well as climate protection and sustainable mobility. Because dealing with these challenges determines the path that European society will take in future."

Five of these projects are officially part of the Federal government's cultural programme for the EU Council Presidency and are funded by the Federal Foreign Office: In **Europe's Kitchen**, the kitchen becomes a platform for a cultural and Europe-wide dialogue across borders. The **#oekoropa** digital youth competition calls on young people from all EU

### Contact

Dr Jessica Kraatz Magri  
Press officer and head  
of Communications  
Goethe-Institut e.V.  
Tel. +49 89 15921 249  
[Jessica.KraatzMagri@goethe.de](mailto:Jessica.KraatzMagri@goethe.de)

Hannah Cuvalo  
Press officer  
Goethe-Institut Capital  
Office  
Tel.: +49 30 25906 481  
[hannah.cuvalo@goethe.de](mailto:hannah.cuvalo@goethe.de)



member states to submit their ideas for a climate-neutral journey through Europe. **Generation A=Algorithm** uses interactive formats to explore the question of how artificial intelligence is changing our societies today and will in future. The **Tell Me about Europe** series of events initiates a cross-generational conversation about the European idea. At the **Disappearing Wall**, the diversity of Europe can be experienced through a participative installation in the public space.

In addition to the five main EU 2020 projects, the Goethe-Institut is also involved in Olafur Eliasson's participatory artwork **Earth Speakr**, which the Berlin-based artist is producing as a part of the cultural program of the German EU Council Presidency. The project is funded by the Federal Foreign Office with special funds for the EU Council Presidency. The Goethe-Institut is supporting Studio Olafur Eliasson in realising the project in all 27 EU countries and the UK in order to reach as many children and young people as possible: 19 of 32 preparatory workshops have already been held at Goethe-Instituts.

Two other major projects bear on the German Council Presidency: From 30 to 31 October 2020, the participatory **festival** of the **Freiraum** project will be held. Using digital and physical formats in Brussels and other places, the Goethe-Institut, together with 53 actors from 42 European cities from culture, science, and civil society, is investigating the question: What does freedom mean in Europe today? From 8 to 9 October in Berlin, experts from EU language institutions will discuss the added value of multilingualism and its importance for the communication of European values in the **conference series** initiated by the Europanetzwerk Deutsch programme on **multilingualism in Europe**.

**You can find all of the information on the Goethe-Institut's EU 2020 projects at [www.goethe.de/EU2020](http://www.goethe.de/EU2020).**

**The press kit can be downloaded in German and English at [www.goethe.de/pressemappen](http://www.goethe.de/pressemappen).**

**Information on the entire cultural program of the German EU Council Presidency at: [www.eu2020.de](http://www.eu2020.de)**

*The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany's cultural institute, active worldwide. With 157 institutes in 98 countries, we promote the study of German abroad, encourage international cultural exchange and convey a contemporary image of Germany. Through partnerships with institutions in numerous other locations, the Goethe-Institut has about 1,000 contact points worldwide. As a national and European cultural institute, the Goethe-Institut is committed to the vision of progressive European integration and with its activities continuously advocates further strengthening the values of the European Union: liberty, equality, and openness. It operates 52 institutes in Europe.*



## EU 2020: PROJECTS BY THE GOETHE-INSTITUT IN THE SCOPE OF GERMANY'S EU COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

As a national cultural institute, the Goethe-Institut has been committed to the vision of extensive European integration for many years. It stands for a common European cultural region based on cultural diversity and autonomy. It continuously advocates the values of the European Union: liberty, equality, and openness. In 2015, commitment to Europe was also explicitly anchored in the association's statutes. With over 50 Goethe-Instituts in Europe, it supports the emergence and establishment of sustainable civil society structures in order to promote the growth of a European public sphere. The Goethe-Institut is an active founding member of EUNIC, the network for cultural institutes of the member states of the European Union, and successfully carries out large-scale projects in cooperation with or on behalf of the European Commission.

Strengthening European citizens' awareness, a European digital civil society, and commitment to an ecologically sustainable social transformation in Europe are the focus of this year's five projects that the Goethe-Institut is implementing as part of the Federal government's cultural programme for the German EU Council Presidency. With different topics and target groups, **Europe's Kitchen**, **#oekoropa**, **Generation A=Algorithm**, **Tell Me about Europe** and **The Disappearing Wall** address the overarching question of what will constitute Europe going forward and how the European community and cohesion can be strengthened. Since events of all these projects will take place in almost every EU country and are networked under one roof, the aim is to make Europe tangible as a common whole in these times of isolation. The Federal Foreign Office is funding the projects with special funds for the EU Council Presidency. In addition, the Goethe-Institut is also involved in Olafur Eliasson's participatory artwork **Earth Speakr**, which the Berlin-based artist is producing for the German Presidency of the Council of the EU and which is to be presented to the public for the first time on 1 July. The Goethe-Institut is supporting the project's realisation, for example through preparatory workshops in the 27 EU member states and making its European network available to it. Furthermore, for Germany's EU Council Presidency, the Goethe-Institut is implementing other large-scale projects with a European focus in the second half of 2020, in particular the festival of the multi-year large-scale project **Freiraum** and a **conference series on multilingualism** in Europe.

### Europe's Kitchen

Like no other place, the kitchen stands for community and gathering, for comfort and for lively debates. It is also a safe haven of free speech in countries where it is restricted. During the coronavirus crisis, the kitchen has gained even more meaning; it is no longer just a place to meet, but also a workplace and classroom. The Europe's Kitchen project is now making it a platform for a cultural and Europe-wide dialogue across borders. Between August and December 2020, physical or virtual gatherings will take place in ten EU member states in private, public, or metaphorical kitchens. Artists from a wide range of disciplines who live and work in Europe will be invited to organise an event – be it a reading, a concert, a film screen-



ing, a performance, or a conversation – in a city other than their hometown.

Each of these evening events will stimulate promising discussions on current topics that are relevant Europe-wide. Fundamental questions about what Europe is and should become will also be discussed in small groups and can be experienced together in a contemporary artistic context. For example, the Portuguese artist Patrícia Portela will first exchange letters with the guests she will meet in Copenhagen. Then, during the live event in a Danish kitchen, the little stories this creates will be told together on 15 August 2020 and put together like a puzzle. Croatian author Ivana Sajko, together with amateur actors, is developing a play about a dinner that could not take place. Under her digital and bilingual direction, the play will be performed in an empty theatre in Marseille in November 2020 and recorded live. For his event, the German artist Mischa Leinkauf wants to leave the private space and create a public meeting point after times of isolation. Together with people from Chania, he will build a large table from found materials. Residents are invited to bring food or other items to the dedication of the table object. In addition to the installation, which will remain standing for a few weeks, Leinkauf is developing a visual guide that can be used to replicate the table in other places.

The other participating artists include the Czech concept artist Kateřina Šedá, the Italian artist Marinella Senatore, the German-French journalist Géraldine Schwarz, the artist Arpad Dobriban from Hungary, the Danish video artist Jeannette Ehlers, and the Berlin-based British author Priya Basil who is also curating the project. The encounters and discussions can also be experienced in the digital space. All of the European kitchen gatherings will be condensed into a series of short videos and accompanied by bloggers. The events can be followed at [www.goethe.de/europa](http://www.goethe.de/europa) or on the project website [www.goethe.de/europakueche](http://www.goethe.de/europakueche).

Dates and locations for Europe's Kitchen:

**15 August: Copenhagen** (Denmark) with Patrícia Portela

**25 -27 September: Tallinn** (Estonia) with Kateřina Šedá

**4 October: Wrocław** (Poland) with Priya Basil

**8-10 October: Chania** (Greece) with Mischa Leinkauf

**16-18 October: Huntly & Glasgow** (Scotland) with Jeannette Ehlers

**24-25 October: Palermo** (Italy) with Géraldine Schwarz

**November (tbc): Ljubljana** (Slovenia) with Marinella Senatore

**6-8 November: Vienna** (Austria) with Jasmina Metwaly

**14-15 November: Marseille** (France) with Ivana Sajko

**21-22 November: Madrid** (Spain) with Arpad Dobriban

**4 December:** Finale at the Münchner Kammerspiele, Munich (Germany) with Johny Pitts

*Europe's Kitchen is a project by the Goethe-Institut, funded by a special grant from the Federal Foreign Office for Germany's EU Council Presidency in 2020.*

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### **#oekoropa youth competition**

The coronavirus pandemic requires sacrifices – even for travel. But nature is definitely benefiting from the radical restrictions. Is there any better time to ask ourselves how we want to travel in Europe in future without polluting the environment? With its digital youth competition #oekoropa, the Goethe-Institut now invites pupils between the ages of 16 and 19 and their teachers from all EU member states to submit their concepts for a climate-neutral journey through Europe. In order to take part in the competition, the young people and their teacher should digitally form teams of three to four people and jointly develop a concept for a tour from their hometown to the trio capitals of the EU Council Presidency 2020/2021 (Berlin, Lisbon, and Ljubljana) – whether by bike, rail, or virtually, all climate-friendly means of transport are allowed. In addition to planning the travel route, the concept should also include ideas on how the pupils can convince as broad a public as possible of the advantages of their climate-friendly journey to raise awareness for responsible mobility in Europe. The deadline for all digital travel concepts is 1 October 2020 and they must be written in German. An international jury of representatives from environmental organisations, foundations, and environmental ministries will then announce the ten most innovative travel concepts at an award ceremony on 20 November 2020 in Brussels. The winning teams will be able to begin their journeys starting in the spring or summer of 2021. According to plans, the winning teams will also jointly develop a recommendation on climate-neutral travel, which will then be submitted to the EU Parliament. All information about the project is at [www.goethe.de/oekoropa](http://www.goethe.de/oekoropa).

*#oekoropa is a project by the Goethe-Institut, funded by a special grant from the Federal Foreign Office for Germany's EU Council Presidency in 2020.*

### **Generation A=Algorithm**

Big data, algorithms, deep learning, combined information and biotechnology: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing our lives from the ground up and has long been present in everyday life. So far, however, its potentials have been used almost exclusively by industry, while AI often remains abstract and sometimes vague for government and civil society. With a view to the sometimes negative experiences of the present-day – commercialisation by large technology corporations in the US, the development of surveillance software in China and Russia, the influencing of opinions by bots in social media – as “digital natives,” Generations Y and Z, today's 18- to 30-year-olds, should continue working on an open and critical network culture. At the beginning of digitisation in the mid-1990s, the debate over network democracy in the spirit of the ideals of the enlightenment was kindled in Europe. Generation A=Algorithm is based on this idea. The project investigates how artificial intelligence is changing the world and how this development can be influenced in a socially responsible manner. Aspects such as ethics, work, creativity and climate change are in the foreground. The project will be accompanied by a European-wide network, the European AI Alliance, consisting of well-known



representatives of the current discussion about AI as well as media education initiatives, art institutions, and civil society organisations.

From May 2020, the project will be implementing various digital and physical formats in cooperation with the Goethe-Instituts in Europe. For example, every Wednesday from 5 to 6 PM until 22 July 2020, in the online discussion series COUCH LESSONS AI experts and scholars will take a look at various aspects of AI (information on [www.goethe.de/couchlessons](http://www.goethe.de/couchlessons)). From June 2020 and for over a year, two humanoid robots will travel to different Goethe-Instituts to be programmed by coders and artists and taken personally to the next stop. The first stops on their journey will be Rome and Milan as well as Ljubljana and Prague. Their newly programmed skills will be presented at the closing festival in autumn 2021. In September 2020, the representative online survey WE & AI, developed in cooperation with the Weizenbaum Institute, will ask young adults across Europe about their fears and hopes about AI and their usage behaviour in relation to AI. Two climate hackathons – a physical one in Glasgow and a digital one for participants across Europe – will develop technological solutions for the fight against climate change in autumn. From October 2020 to June 2021, so-called AI residencies are expected to invite visual artists to various European locations to work on AI and art. In November, an online ideathon realised with the Goethe-Institut in Lisbon will investigate how algorithms can strengthen the idea of Europe. In contrast to the hackathons, the focus here is on the formulation of ideas for which no technological solutions have to be worked out. The discussions and results of the individual formats will ultimately flow into a manifesto that will be brought to the attention of political decision-makers. The completion of the project will finally be marked by the Generation A Festival in autumn 2021. All dates and information available at [www.goethe.de/generationA](http://www.goethe.de/generationA) (expected from 1 July 2020).

*Generation A=Algorithm is a project by the Goethe-Institut, funded by a special grant from the Federal Foreign Office for Germany's EU Council Presidency in 2020.*

### **Tell Me about Europe event series**

In the first half of the twentieth century, wars, state repression, and major social upheavals shook the European continent. This experience gave rise to the idea of a united Europe, which ensured an era of peace, freedom, prosperity, and legal protection on the continent. Nevertheless, the European idea has been in serious crisis for several years; recent months have made it worse. On what values did we build Europe? What can and should this political, social, and cultural project be in future? The Tell Me about Europe series of events relies on the power of intergenerational dialogue and invites us to listen to European life stories and to discuss the character of Europe together. The conversations were recorded by the European Archive of Voices, which interviewed numerous people who were born before 1945 and tell young people about their life paths against the background of the European idea. The return of nationalism, the gap between city and country, the different view of Europe in east and west, but also gender (in)justice and freedom of religion come up for discussion.



From September to November 2020, ten events will take place as part of Tell Me about Europe in the UK, Sweden, Georgia, Russia, Czechia, France, Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and Croatia, which will take up the interviews in the European Archive of Voices and the virulent topics they contain and make them accessible to a broader public. At the respective event locations – either physically or digitally – the young interviewers of the European Archive of Voices, local experts, or people in public life will meet and discuss the state of and visions for Europe. Whether as a panel discussion, fish bowl, roundtable, or radio broadcast – the different types of events will be accompanied by audio formats. A sound collage by the sound artist Marc Matter picks up passages from the interviews and makes them tangible at the various stages of the event series. The composer Michael Langemann is working on a choral piece dedicated to the future of Europe for amateur choirs. The piece will be performed for the first time in October. The project is curated by the curator duo Leona Lynen and Edouard Barthen. The interviews will be made available to a broader audience through selected publications such as the cultural magazine *das goethe* (available at [www.goethe.de/dasgoethe](http://www.goethe.de/dasgoethe)) or in the Goethe-Institut's Europe dossier ([www.goethe.de/europa](http://www.goethe.de/europa)). More information about the project is at [www.goethe.de/EU2020](http://www.goethe.de/EU2020).

*Tell Me about Europe is a project by the Goethe-Institut and is being produced in collaboration with the group Arbeit an Europa, which was founded in 2016 on the initiative of Simon Strauß and Robert Eberhardt. Tell Me about Europe is funded by a special grant from the Federal Foreign Office for Germany's EU Council Presidency in 2020.*

### **The Disappearing Wall**

Whether it's a quote from Hannah Arendt, a lyric from a Beatles tune, a line from the film *Amélie*, or a statement by the Hungarian Nobel Prize winner Imre Kertész, in local competitions, the Goethe-Institut asked people in ten European countries for their favourite quote from European high and pop culture. The quotes submitted, which reflect the linguistic and intellectual diversity of Europe, are now being engraved in the original language and in translation on 6,000 wooden blocks and made visible as an installation called "Disappearing Walls." From September 2020, these installations will be set up in central, public locations in the participating countries Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Great Britain/Northern Ireland, Poland, Lithuania, Spain, Italy, Greece, and Cyprus. But the diverse ideas of Europe are not only visible in this project, but also tangible – and lasting. After the unveiling, all passers-by will have the opportunity to take blocks with quotes home with them. All that remains is the clear Plexiglas grid: The wall will disappear.



Dates and locations of the Disappearing Walls (\*Subject to change):

**24-27 August:** Poznań

**30 August - 1 September:** Gdańsk

**18 September:** Segovia

**18-20 September:** Warsaw

**20 September:** Antwerp

**25 September:** Vilnius

**28 September - 19 October:** Belfast

**2 October:** Madrid

**1-10 October:** Torino

**3 October:** Brussels

**10-11 October:** Nicosia

**10-21 October:** The Hague

**24 October - 1 November:** Rotterdam

**5-8 November:** Nemur

**11-15 November:** Milan

**14 November:** Barcelona

All dates and exact locations will be announced on the website [www.goethe.de/europa/verschwindendewand](http://www.goethe.de/europa/verschwindendewand).

*The Disappearing Wall is a project by the Goethe-Institut, funded by a special grant from the Federal Foreign Office for Germany's EU Council Presidency in 2020.*

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## OTHER EUROPEAN PROJECTS BY THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

### **Freiraum Festival (30-31 October 2020)**

Physical distancing and stay-at-home orders, border closings and surveillance have shaped the lives of Europeans during the recent months of the coronavirus pandemic – both private and public freedoms have been restricted. What is the status of freedom in Europe today? Where is it in danger and how can we protect it? These questions will be the focus of the Freiraum Festival on 30 and 31 October. Freiraum is a project by the Goethe-Institut that has been exploring the state of freedom in Europe with 53 stakeholders from culture, academia, and civil society in 42 countries since 2017. One aim of the festival is to initiate a timely and Europe-wide discourse on freedom in (post) coronavirus times. Another is to support the Freiraum platform so it can act independently in future.

The festival consists of physical and digital formats. In addition to an online programme curated by all partners with pre-recorded lectures, discussions and performances, which will be broadcast live across Europe on 31 October from 2 to 7 PM, on the same day in at least 15 locations in Europe, the Freiraum partners in cooperation with the local Goethe-Instituts are also organising their own physical events. There will also be an extended opening programme in Brussels: Bulgarian political scientist Ivan Krastev will hold a keynote on freedom and Europe in (post) corona times. On the second day, the festival in Brussels will continue in the multidisciplinary Beursschouwburg theatre with discursive and artistic formats. Among other things, the participatory Big Conversation will take place in which journalists from all over Europe and representatives of European institutions and NGOs will enter into a dialogue with the audience about the state of press freedom in Europe. The full programme will be announced in July 2020. More information is at [www.goethe.de/freiraum](http://www.goethe.de/freiraum).

### **Multilingualism in Europe conference series (8-9 October 2020)**

According to the European Union, 24 official languages are spoken in Europe – not counting the numerous dialects and language variants. Europe is a continent of multilingualism – but what value does the concept of multilingualism add to the European community? Why must it be promoted and what role does multilingualism play in conveying European values? These questions are at the heart of the conference series Multilingualism in Europe, which the Goethe-Institut's Europanetzwerk Deutsch programme is implementing for the German EU Council Presidency. On 8 and 9 October, experts from EU institutions and from the field of language will meet in Berlin to discuss these issues. The conference in Berlin will be complemented by a follow-up event in Portugal in the first half of 2021 and another event in Slovenia in the second half of 2021. The format of the conference series will thus “migrate” with the EU Council Presidency from Germany to Portugal and Slovenia as part of the above “trio” and will highlight the role multilingualism plays in the trio countries and in Europe. At the end of the conference series, the results of all three events will be reflected and presented in Brussels (end of 2021). The Goethe-Institut's Europanetzwerk Deutsch programme has been promoting



the German language as a working and procedural language in the European institutions since 1994 on behalf of the Federal Foreign Office. EU employees and European ministerial officials are invited to attend exclusive language courses in Germany in order to network with professionally relevant German experts.

Dates and locations of the Multilingualism in Europe conference series:

**8-9 October 2020:** Conference in Berlin

**1<sup>st</sup> half year 2021:** Event in Portugal

**2<sup>nd</sup> half year 2021:** Event in Slovenia

**Late 2021:** Closing event in Brussels

**More information about all of the Goethe-Institut's projects for the German EU Council Presidency at:** [www.goethe.de/EU2020](http://www.goethe.de/EU2020)

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# Earth Speakr will launch on 1 July in all EU countries

*I'm inspired by the millions of young people across Europe who show an urgent interest in the wellbeing of our planet. They understand what is going on. Yet they don't all have the opportunity to express and share their ideas. My new artwork – Earth Speakr – is a playful digital platform that invites young people to speak up for the planet and the future that they want. Earth Speakr aims to amplify their ideas.*

*The young citizens of Europe have, roughly speaking, as much time ahead of them as decision-makers and people in power have behind them. They may not yet be voters but they are the ones to whom we are responsible for passing on a healthy planet. It's about time that adults start listening to the generations of the future. With Earth Speakr and all its participants, I will work to make that happen.*

**– Olafur Eliasson**

Earth Speakr is the new artwork by the Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson, funded by the Federal Foreign Office for the German EU Council Presidency 2020 and realised in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut. As of today, a video with a preview of the artwork is available on the Earth Speakr website at <https://earthspeakr.art/>. More information about the artwork will be announced at the official launch on 1 July 2020.

