

24|25



**GOETHE
INSTITUT**

Sprache. Kultur. Deutschland.



NEW IMPULSES

Inspiration through
residencies

AGAINST POPULISM

Europe defends
its values

LANGUAGE IS KEY

German teachers for
successful migration

“Cultural institutions play a vital role in instigating and driving societal developments. For me personally, without this AI short film competition I wouldn’t have engaged with the issue of artificial intelligence in such an in-depth way. As a cultural institution, the Goethe-Institut provided a key impetus here.”

Mesa, competition participant and winner of the Bravest Future Visionary award, Goethe-Institut China, August 2024

“The Europeanetzwerk Deutsch feels like a family connected by language. A great success – one we would like to wish a long future, especially in a Europe where political powers that instrumentalise language and culture for separation rather than cohesion are gaining ground.”

Jessy James LaFleur, spoken word artist from Eupen, Belgium, at the celebration of 30 years of the Europeanetzwerk Deutsch in November 2024

“Around this decades-old baobab tree, a place shall grow that makes exactly this possible: reflecting together on what kind of shared existence, what kind of partnerships we want and how we can develop them. For this reason it’s fitting that we’re extending the Goethe-Institut right here.”

Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock visited the construction site of the Goethe-Institut’s new building in Dakar, July 2024

“The scholarship gave me the opportunity to develop further as a visual artist and to improve my creative skills. Through my work I was able to transform the pain and the suffering the war brought into artworks that speak of hope and resilience.”

Participating artist in the Gaza Hub, a programme supporting artists from Gaza in Egypt through scholarships, mentoring and workshops

“Spending a week in Nairobi with the Goethe-Institut was an eye-opening experience. Exchanging ideas with the writers, journalists and students helped me to understand more about the perception of identity in the 21st century, which will influence and improve my future writing projects. I am very grateful for this time and this opportunity.”

Author Alice Hasters at a reading of her book *Was weiße Menschen nicht über Rassismus hören wollen* in the library of the Goethe-Institut Nairobi, February 2024.

“It is thanks to the Goethe-Institut that I understand myself as part of something that people call ‘Europe’. But I would rather describe it as the great, true home – and I like this description very much.”

Ana Kordsaia-Samadaschwili, writer and translator, at the 30th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut Georgia, September 2024

THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

We connect people all over the world. As a cultural institution of the Federal Republic of Germany, we promote cultural exchange, education and societal discourse in an international context, and support the teaching and learning of the German language. Together with our partners, we focus on global opportunities and challenges, bringing different perspectives into a dialogue that is based on trust. We regard the ability to listen and to reflect as the key to understanding. We are bound by principles of transparency, diversity and sustainability. These principles characterise our services and our ways of working. ●

150

Goethe-Instituts are active in 99 countries.

12

of the institutes are in Germany.

4,394

employees are active worldwide.

1,100

points of contact are part of our network through collaborations with partner organisations at many locations.

1952

the first Goethe-Institut opened in Athens.

Cover image: Actress Aneta Ivanova in Dario Bevanda’s *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. The intense, stripped-down study of memory, trauma and identity was produced as part of **New Stages Southeast**, which supports the development of new plays and brings together young playwrights and theatre-goers from South-eastern Europe and Germany.



Double anniversary: **Listening to the World** celebrates 100 years of radio history and art.



Friendly competition: **The Internationale Deutscholympiade** brings together young German learners from all around the world.



On tour: LIE NING combines music and sustainability with **Slow Touring**.



Lived cultural exchange: **Culture Moves Europe** promotes sustainable mobility across the continent.

4	A real utopia	Welcome from the President of the Goethe-Institut
5	A strong network in turbulent times	Foreword by the Executive Board of the Goethe-Institut
6	The interplay of politics and culture	The Secretary General on the Goethe-Institut's role in foreign cultural and educational policy
10	News from the Goethe-Institut	Institutional reports
12	Reports on the current situation	The future of the transatlantic friendship
14	Press review	

DIALOGUE AND CREATIVITY

16	Listening to the World	100 years of radio, from Montevideo to Berlin
18	The poetry of unheard voices	In conversation with the Angolan artist Isis Hembe
20	Residencies spark creative impulse	Sustainable inspiration for artists
24	Discovering literary heritage	Scilla Forti talks about her work as a translator
26	A place that moves more than pictures	Historical meets contemporary at Destination: Tashkent

MOBILITY AND MIGRATION

28	German teachers as key players	Why German teachers are crucial for attracting skilled workers
----	---------------------------------------	--

GLOBAL LEARNING / GERMAN LANGUAGE

32	A German course like no other	At the PASCH youth course in Bamberg
35	Linguistic diversity for the future of Europe	The Europanetzwerk Deutsch celebrates its anniversary
36	More than a language contest	An interview with the winners of the Internationale Deutscholympiade
38	The way to secure language exams	Why exam security is so important for language testing

SUSTAINABILITY

40	Music for the future	LIE NING goes on an eco-friendly tour through Europe
42	Art, life, resistance	Urban visions with Ecological Futures

WITH EUROPE, FOR EUROPE

44	Against populism – Europe defends its values	The Art of Staying Many
48	Creative beyond borders	Europe's biggest programme for cultural mobility

INNOVATIVE ORGANISATION

50	Between wonder and worry	The opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence
52	Exploring the GoetheVRsum	The Goethe-Institut's virtual 3D environment

COMMUNICATING WITH THE WORLD

54	The power of culture	The awardees of the Goethe Medal
58	Honoured	The Klaus-von-Bismarck awardees
60	In the spotlight	

From the regions of the Goethe-Institut

62	Germany
64	Central Eastern Europe
66	North Africa and the Middle East
68	North America
70	Northwestern Europe
72	East Asia
74	Eastern Europe and Central Asia
76	Sub-Saharan Africa
78	South America
80	South Asia
82	Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand
84	Southeastern Europe
86	Southwestern Europe

Goethe-Institut locations around the world

90	Regional structure
94	Facts and figures from language work in 2024
95	Facts and figures from cultural work in 2024
96	Facts and figures from information work in 2024
97	Annual financial statement 2024
100	Organisational chart
102	Board of Trustees, General Assembly and Advisory Boards
106	Acknowledgements
108	Legal notice

A REAL UTOPIA

One of my first journeys as the new president took me to our institute in Mexico City, where I visited a “Utopia” with my colleagues. Located in the Iztapalapa borough, it is part of the pilot project Utopías, which Clara Brugada launched in 2019 as mayor of the district.

Utopías is a network of 16 public spaces with a diverse programme encompassing culture, workshops, inspiration and community. Based on a utopian socialist idea of promoting well-being through sport and culture while simultaneously strengthening people’s political rights and social prospects, the network was deliberately installed in an area of the city marked by social deprivation and a high crime rate. Through the Utopías, living standards have been greatly improved – the high crime rate fell, locals’ satisfaction rose, and the neighbourhood has become a sought-after residential district characterised by art and culture in public space. Clara Brugada was so successful with her concept that in 2024 she was elected as the head of government for Mexico City, and she plans to roll out a network of a thousand Utopías across the capital.

Why do I speak of these Utopías? For me, the network of the Goethe-Institut is exactly such a network of utopias – of places where culture flourishes, where we offer educational programmes, where people have access to information, where they come into contact with one another. We have been continuously building this network for almost 75 years now, and with it we pursue a cultural and socio-political idea of togetherness, cooperation and exchange. Collectively, we are mapping out a future we want to live in. With our libraries, we invite our neighbours to participate in culture; with our language courses and our information work we provide education; through cultural exchange we experience an open society together and present a contemporary image of Germany.

Our network is mutually reinforcing. Its flexible and dynamic structure enables us – even in times of crisis, threats to

freedom of expression and the rolling back of democracy – to react sensitively and be resilient. In the political arena, we are currently confronted with enormous challenges: Donald Trump’s second term in office with its radical reorganisation of the political system, Russia’s ongoing war against Ukraine, the crisis in Sudan, the further escalations in the Middle East and the events in Syria are only a few examples. These are challenges that – in the spirit of the Utopías – we can only meet with our network of Goethe-Instituts.

Our utopia of a foreign cultural and educational policy becomes reality at our institutes. The Goethe-Institut in Mexico, for instance, has over 100 members of staff, strong language course operations, a lively cultural programme and a range of popular services for skilled workers. We fulfil our cultural-political agenda through the strong community that develops around our institutes: committed staff, who bring the Goethe-Institut to life; long-standing partner networks; a broad and diverse audience, who are inspired by our vision of an open and peaceful society. In Mexico, as in our 150 other Goethe-Instituts around the globe, we put the founding idea of bringing the world into contact with Germany through culture and language into practice in a contemporary way – through dialogue, shaping the future together.



Gesche Joost
President



A STRONG NETWORK IN TURBULENT TIMES

The world is undergoing serious upheaval. Russia’s attack on Ukraine and the wars in the Middle East and Sudan continue. In Turkey, Serbia and Georgia, large crowds demonstrate against those in power. Anti-democratic movements are gaining ground. The US government is pushing through disruptive changes. The global power and value system that Germany and Europe build upon is being called into question. Germany’s economy is undergoing a recession. The country’s need for skilled workers from abroad is a pressing challenge. Major global issues such as climate change and migration remain divisive.

For a country like Germany that is deeply embedded in international relations, astute positioning in this volatile world is of vital importance. Foreign cultural and educational policy plays a central role here. It promotes international understanding and works towards solutions that can only be found across borders. It connects people and societies otherwise divided by political conflicts and thus makes a crucial contribution to security in Europe and the world.

150 Goethe-Instituts; around 1,100 points of contact with language centres and cultural associations; a global network of partners in the spheres of culture, science, society and business; around 270,000 digital and in-person language course participants, a million exams taken, over seven million followers on social media – the Goethe-Institut’s worldwide network is a powerful, internationally recognised brand for Germany, standing for dialogue and cooperation, credibility and trust.

That sounds abstract and yet is concrete. Because at this very moment, somewhere in the world a Goethe-Institut activity is taking place and realising this promise for Germany. A reader picks up a book by a German author that – funded by the Goethe-Institut – is now available in their native language.

A book such as *Cairo*s by Jenny Erpenbeck, which has been translated into English and six other languages, winning the prestigious British Booker Prize. A pupil from the USA is greeted by a

German family – just like 3,000 others every year, as part of the German-American Partnership Program, organised by the Goethe-Institut and the Pädagogischer Austauschdienst. This transatlantic network already has 400,000 German and American alumni. In a Goethe-Institut in India, a student takes his first steps in the German language: “Wie geht es Ihnen? Wie heißen Sie?” Maybe he will soon study at a German university or develop his career here as a skilled worker. A German teacher logs on to the Deutschstunde portal and is glad of tips for his next grammar lesson. A member of the European Parliament gives a speech. Perhaps she is part of the European Netzwerk Deutsch, through which the Goethe-Institut and the Federal Foreign Office have been promoting German as an official language in European institutions for 30 years. An exhibition is opened, a German film begins, a discussion gains momentum.

All of this can be happening in this moment, as you read this annual report. With its programmes and partnerships all over the world, the Goethe-Institut forms a closely woven network where people come into contact with our language, our culture and our society. A network that remains strong, even when conflicts and tensions arise in the political sphere. Strengthening this network, extending it, attracting new target audiences and increasing its reach – that is our major task in these turbulent times. For your support in this, we thank you.



Johannes Ebert
Secretary General



Rainer Pollack
Business Director



THE INTERPLAY OF POLITICS AND CULTURE

Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, as does war in the Middle East and in Sudan. The policies of the American government call the stability of transatlantic relations into question. The largest opposition party in Germany is categorised as a "suspected right-wing extremist organisation". The world has changed to an extent that would have been inconceivable only three years ago.

An editorial by Johannes Ebert

Germany is facing serious challenges. The federal government has now presented its coalition agreement, which – bearing the title "Responsibility for Germany" – will also have an impact on foreign cultural and educational policy. What significance does this important document assign to this policy area? What understanding of culture does it convey? And in which of its six sections does it call upon the Goethe-Institut?

For over 70 years, the Goethe-Institut has been Germany's largest international cultural and social network. Its mission is to strengthen the German language, to promote cultural exchange and to provide information about our country. 150 Goethe-Instituts worldwide, around 1,100 points of contact with language centres and cultural associations, an extensive network of partners from the spheres of culture, education, economy and society around the whole world, around 270,000 in-person or digital language course participants, over a million exams taken, almost seven

million followers on social media – all these figures attest to the Goethe-Institut's global reach. We are a powerful, internationally recognised brand for Germany, standing for dialogue and cooperation, for credibility and respect. Especially in these turbulent times, the Goethe-Institut's motto – "For diversity, understanding and trust" – could not be more relevant.

If we consult the coalition agreement as to the role of culture and international culture exchange, two dimensions are evident. "Foreign cultural and educational policy is a central component of German foreign policy, an important element of Germany's soft power and thus a strategic instrument in the global competition for reputation, influence, narratives, ideas and values. We will [. . .] utilise it as a geopolitical instrument even more effectively aligned with our values and interests," reads the section "Responsible Foreign Policy, United Europe, Secure Germany". "Our culture is the



In April 2025, Johannes Ebert travelled to Brussels to celebrate three years of **Culture Moves Europe**. The largest EU programme for the mobility of artists and creatives in Europe, it increases the visibility of cultural production by building networks and fostering international connections.

foundation of our freedom. Art inspires, perplexes and opens up new perspectives. Without free and powerful art, there is a withering away of what forms the basis of all progress: the capacity

“Art inspires, perplexes and opens up new perspectives.”

to reflect on our lives and imagine a better one [. . .] We therefore want to deepen international cooperation, cultural exchange, cultural diplomacy and cultural tourism,” the coalition partners state

in the section “Stronger Cohesion, Steadfast Democracy”.

Foreign cultural and educational policy is, on the one hand, viewed as an instrument to represent Germany's liberal values and interests abroad, along with consolidating the country's position as a hub for science and business. On the other hand, art and cultural exchange are regarded as independent social realms of a globally embedded “cultural state”; they constitute the basis of social life and progress. The free development of ideas and artistic freedom are its foundation. This also holds for the international perception of Germany: “Our country should be a lighthouse in the world for free art and culture.”

Terms like “soft power” and the greater emphasis on values and interests reveal how the global competition between diverging ideologies has intensified in recent years. Building defence capability in order to safeguard “peace in freedom and security” is an important goal. A healthy economy, social cohesion,



In June 2024, the symposium **No Skilled Workers in Germany Without German Teachers** highlighted the consequences of the global shortage of German teachers, as well as strategies for attracting skilled workers to Germany and successful integration. Pictured: Secretary General Johannes Ebert opens the two-day event.

ensuring the state’s power to act and better management of migration – these are other interests of Germany’s, according to the preamble to the coalition agreement.

The Goethe-Institut is ready to represent Germany’s interests to the world in this spirit. Over the course of the transformation process of the past three years, the institution has ensured it is in the right position to do so effectively. On the basis of stable funding that takes global cost increases into account, the Goethe-Institut wants to contribute to the country’s future in areas such

Security is created through strong networks.

as security policy and the immigration of skilled workers, as well as by strengthening Germany’s international connections in a world where stable partnerships are indispensable.

Security for Germany means, on one level, investing in military defence capability. But security is also created through strong international civic networks. In a global context, these are formed when, on the one hand, people in countries and societal

groups who share liberal values are emboldened in their resilience and their ties to Germany. One example of this is the Goethe-Institut’s committed support of Ukraine’s cultural and educational sector, because this represents Ukraine’s shift towards Europe, promotes democratic identity and bolsters society’s capacity to resist. On the other hand, we also create security through intensively fostering dialogue with countries and social groups that are in competition with us and diverge from us ideologically. In both situations, international cultural and educational exchange offers great opportunities.

This broad understanding of security thus has very direct consequences for German foreign cultural and educational policy: “In Europe we will need to invest more in security, but while we are doing that we should simultaneously be investing in cultural and educational programmes, which are far more cost-effective and can make a major impact,” said Scott McDonald, the CEO of the British Council, at the Munich Security Conference event “Resilient Roots: The Role of Culture in European Stability”, organised by the Goethe-Institut and its British sibling.

How the Goethe-Institut contributes to the formation of international networks and wins friends for Germany is demonstrated by numerous examples in this annual report. The Internationale Deutscholympiade represents the 100,000 schools teaching German to which the Goethe-Institut offers services. The 15 million

pupils who learn German there engage in class with our society, culture and language, bringing them closer to Germany and promoting a high level of empathy for our country. The Europeanetzwerk Deutsch, which – supported by the Federal Foreign Office – has been bringing together senior officials with German language skills for 30 years, and the residency programmes for artists and creatives, the source of many international partnerships, are also presented in this annual report. One strong initiative is Culture Moves Europe, which the EU has entrusted the Goethe-Institut with implementing: since 2022, 7,000 artists and creatives based in Europe have taken part in residencies, workshops and research trips to cultural institutions outside their respective countries, across the whole continent. The networks that have grown from this are an important contribution to European cohesion.

The German government’s interests – strengthening the country’s economy and actively shaping migration – overlap when it comes to the immigration of skilled workers. The coalition agreement proclaims: “Securing a base of skilled labour is a crucial factor in our country’s prosperity. We are thus making every effort to ensure the immigration of skilled workers is a success in the coming years.” For this, linguistic and intercultural preparation in a person’s country of origin plays a significant role. This “pre-integration” is essential for a positive experience in the German job market and in German society, and the Goethe-Institut has a wide range of measures to facilitate it; some are outlined in the article “German teachers as key players”.

“Our land should be a lighthouse in the world for free art and culture,” writes the coalition. The claim to stand for liberal values around the world could not be formulated more clearly. “The universal, indivisible and inalienable nature of human

The Goethe-Institut sends a message of resilience.

rights constitutes the foundation of our rule-based international order,” the coalition agreement continues, identifying the European Union as the guarantor of freedom, peace, security and prosperity. In the face of historic upheavals, these values have come under massive pressure. The Goethe-Institut advocates for these liberal values and sends a message of resilience in less liberal societies. The institutes abroad are places of engagement with Germany, places of learning and exchange. But they are also spaces for open discussion and uncensored debate.

Through programmes fostering media literacy, as described in the article “Against populism”, the Goethe-Institut bolsters people’s ability to resist populist propaganda and fake news. With programmes about culture of remembrance, we address the dark chapters of German history – as the coalition agreement also calls for – and actively oppose all forms of antisemitism, racism and other kinds of discrimination.

Coined in the 1990s by the American political scientist Joseph Nye, the term “soft power” posits that a country’s ability to attract and persuade is crucial for its capability to exert influence in the world. A country’s culture, education system and values play a key role in this. But what does the term mean for Germany? What is “soft power made in Germany”? It is precisely the values underlined in the coalition agreement – freedom of expression, artistic freedom, justice and pluralism – that make our country attractive. Foreign cultural and educational policy only functions in our unsettled world if it can be measured against these values. If we want to use culture, guided by these values, for foreign policy, it must have the necessary room to

Liberal values require courage.

breathe. If we want art to “inspire, perplex and open up new perspectives”, then in an international context, too, it must epitomise free artistic experimentation and uncertain results. The fact that the German government has entrusted independent intermediary institutions such as the Goethe-Institut with the implementation of foreign cultural and educational policy is an expression of these democratic values, because this system reflects the societal pluralism and the independence of culture and education that Germany stands for.

Liberal values, particularly in times when they are under pressure, require courage and the willingness to engage in cultural exchange by means of critical dialogue and respectful cooperation. They require the ability to proactively present one’s own position while at the same time listening to others and considering their concerns. Only then can the credibility and trust develop that allow a rapprochement between differing positions. This openness, the willingness to engage in dialogue, the capacity for communication and discourse in international cultural relations constitute this “soft power made in Germany” and are the reason for the success of German foreign cultural and educational policy. They are what the Goethe-Institut stands for!



Johannes Ebert has been Secretary General and Chair of the Executive Board of the Goethe-Institut since 2012.

NEWS FROM THE GOETHE-INSTITUT



GESCHE JOOST IS THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

In November 2024, Gesche Joost was appointed President of the Goethe-Institut. She is Professor of Design Research at Berlin University of the Arts and leads the Design Research Lab. She also conducts research on the societal implications of digitalisation and artificial intelligence at the Weizenbaum Institute and the German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence. In a short interview, she discusses her new role.

Ms Joost, how did you experience your first months in your new role?

I gained insights into our global network that impressed me deeply, and I was able to get to know our dedicated staff who make up the Goethe-Institut, who shape it and live it every day. The founding principle from almost 75 years ago – presenting Germany to the world and building connections through language and culture with our institutes – has been an absolute success. The decentralised network with its local ties is exactly the right structure for the challenges we face today.

What are your goals for your term in office? What motivates you, and what concerns you?

To continue preparing the Goethe-Institut for the future and to make our work even more effective, that is my agenda. Times are becoming harder, a cold wind is blowing against democracy, so we must keep asking ourselves what we can do to counter this, in order to defend our open society and to work towards increased security. That is our political task. How can we strengthen and strategically use the digital dimension of foreign cultural and educational policy? How can we reach people we have not yet come into contact with?

In your view, what role can and should the Goethe-Institut take on in the current, shifting international situation?

We play a central role, one that can't be filled by political and economic cooperation. Our informal networks with culture and civil society are part of a soft diplomacy. We see the spark early, before a fire takes hold. We keep talking to each other, even when conflicts arise. This is particularly important in the current situation. That makes us an important pillar of foreign policy.



THE GOETHE-INSTITUT'S LIBRARY IN UKRAINE REOPENS

In April 2024, the library of the Goethe Institut in Kyiv was reopened to the public, with Secretary General Johannes Ebert in attendance. For the first time since the Russian attack on Ukraine began, visitors can borrow books and other media again. Culture and education play a central role in Ukraine, especially in the midst of war, with Kyiv's cultural scene remaining vibrant even under difficult conditions. Thanks to a network of partners that the Goethe-Institut has established in its over 30 years in the city, major support programmes could be set up at the beginning of the war and existing projects adapted to the changing situation.



TRANSFORMATION AND REALIGNMENT FOR THE FUTURE

Due to shifting global conditions and tighter financial margins, the Goethe-Institut is undergoing a transformation process that will prepare the institution for the future. Structural costs are being reduced, while language course and exam operations are being strengthened, which will increase the Goethe-Institut's scope for action in its cultural, language and information work. The geostrategic realignment is demonstrated by the opening of new locations in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) and Yerevan (Armenia), as well as the planned liaison offices in Chişinău (Moldova) and Houston (Texas, USA).



NEW PREMISES IN SAN FRANCISCO

In autumn 2024, the Goethe-Institut San Francisco moved into a new site in the heart of the cultural quarter Yerba Buena. The opening event, attended by Consul General Oliver Schramm and Secretary General Johannes Ebert, focused on promoting dialogue about new technologies. To mark the occasion, the city of San Francisco presented the team of the Goethe-Institut with a certificate commending their commitment to the local community and to cultural exchange.

NEW LOCATION IN YEREVAN

On 1 April 2025, the Goethe-Zentrum in Yerevan, Armenia, was converted into a Goethe-Institut. Both Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and President of the Goethe-Institut Gesche Joost were present for the occasion. In a speech, Steinmeier highlighted the close bond between Germany and Armenia and was convinced that the new Goethe-Institut would further strengthen cultural relations. He also emphasised the major interest in German as a foreign language and in scientific cooperation. The new location in Yerevan, which will move to new premises in late 2025, underlines the growing partnership between the two countries.

THE FUTURE OF THE TRANSATLANTIC FRIENDSHIP

Since Donald Trump took office, the USA has been experiencing a period of radical upheaval, which also has an impact on cultural work and activities. Klaus Krischok, who has been regional director of the Goethe-Institut in North America since 2023, describes the general mood in the country and explains how – despite the many challenges – cultural relations between Germany and the USA can be strengthened.



Mr Krischok, what was your experience of the first 100 days following the re-election of Donald Trump? What is the mood like among our local partners?

On 6 November 2024 everyone in the USA was sitting in front of the TV, including ourselves in Washington. For many people, the election results came as no real surprise – Donald Trump was confirmed as the 47th president of the USA. It was a volatile week politically: that very same day, the SPD-Green-FDP coalition collapsed in Germany. The decisions and signals sent out by the US government since 20 January are causing great uncertainty among our partners in culture and education.

How does this uncertainty manifest itself?

The Trump administration is in constant motion. It operates via a chaotic torrent of decrees, laws and unforeseeable changes of direction, which also affect the cultural sector. This rapid onslaught of changes leads to a certain paralysis among sections of civil society, from policy-makers and opinion leaders to the press. The sheer quantity of changes is difficult to process and deal with.

In the media, educational and cultural sectors, the Trump administration has implemented numerous measures that are alarming. These include the changes at the Kennedy Center and the Smithsonian Institution's national museums here in Washington, at the National Endowment for the Arts (the US equivalent of the German Federal Culture Foundation) and at the public broadcaster National Public Radio: several museum directors have

already been removed from their posts, others instructed to make their programmes more "patriotic" in content, and all have had to end their diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

You're thereby suggesting, of course, that the government is exerting increasing influence over cultural institutions...

Cultural policy in the USA is at least as complex as in Germany, but the US government's direct influence over most of the cultural institutions in the country is relatively limited. The Trump administration, however, has started to screen the universities and revoke their research funding. It has declared academia a theatre of the culture war. The National Endowment for the Arts and National Public Radio may be on the brink of having all government funding cut.

Were the cultural institutions and universities prepared for this?

Before the election there was a comprehensive manifesto called Project 2025. Some knew about it, while others did not, but nobody expected that this specific programme would be implemented so quickly and categorically in the first 100 days.

What scope for action do cultural institutions have? How are they dealing with this new situation?

It's very challenging for the institutions, which are confronted with multiple new decrees and often don't know what they should react to or what action they should take. The primary objective of every institution is, of course, continuing with its work and fulfilling its mission. Whether institutions, like Harvard University, feel forced to take legal action, whether they adopt new approaches



The Goethe-Institut works to strengthen German-American relations through youth initiatives like the **German-American Partnership Program (GAPP)**, which organises transatlantic exchanges as well as school partnerships. During their time in the host countries, pupils join lessons and take part in numerous activities.

or follow completely different paths out of pragmatism – all are fully legitimate responses.

What role do partnership-based networks play in these times? Civil society in the USA is, fortunately, very closely interlinked with civil society in Germany: partnerships between towns and schools, associations of all kinds, a large number of German stakeholders in the country; all of this allows for hope that the transatlantic partnership will prevail. The relationship is nonetheless undergoing a stress test. But the Goethe-Institut can also take this as an opportunity: we can already see that our services and programmes have a new relevance and are experiencing increased demand. We are thus building on our strong partnerships in the US, as well as on European cooperation. We stay true to our values and act with flexibility.

How can cultural relations between Germany and the USA be strengthened? What new approaches could demonstrate a way forward?

The Goethe-Institut stands for diversity, understanding and trust. In order to advocate for our values, we need to engage in dialogue with people and policy-makers who hold different worldviews. Doing so is our duty. This means that in the USA it is more crucial than ever that we offer a space for open discussion between people with conflicting positions, rather than just a space where the like-minded reaffirm one another's views. What might that look like? For example, in conservative-voting states like Missouri and Texas we have thriving German-American heritage associations. These associations are important partners for us,

with whom we can have productive conversations about values and differences of opinion. We're also looking to the future with our planned location in Houston.

Reaching the next generation of Americans and sparking their interest in Germany is another key focus of our work. We do this through outstanding initiatives such as the German-American Partnership Program, which around 6,000 exchange students participate in annually. It has existed for 52 years. We also strive to have a presence in many different parts of the US; especially in the field of educational cooperation, we have a wide and diverse network of partners across the country – from Kalamazoo in Michigan to Boulder in Colorado, as well as from Boston to Los Angeles. As the regional director, I consider our mission more important than ever.

That sounds very convincing! You seem confident...

I have never been as convinced as I am today that the values of diversity, understanding and trust are vital, and that they will help to strengthen cultural relations between the USA and Germany. ●



This interview took place in April 2025 and was conducted by Katrin Sohns, Press Spokesperson of the Goethe-Institut and Head of the Communications Department at the head office in Munich.

PRESS REVIEW

BERLINER ZEITUNG CATALYST FOR INNOVATION

From the article “Dienstleisterin für den Standort Deutschland”, 19.11.2024
The Goethe-Institut’s activities in the domain of skilled worker immigration are also to be expanded, especially in countries with particular potential, such as Brazil, India, Indonesia and Mexico. The Goethe-Institut is entirely pragmatic – as service provider for the economic hub that is Germany. Gesche Joost probably has no inhibitions here.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG TRANSFORMATION

From Paul Ingendaay’s interview with Johannes Ebert, “Wir werden Personal abbauen müssen”, 18.10.2024
The challenges are enormous. Firstly, because the foreign policy and foreign cultural policy context has changed significantly as a result of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. And secondly because of shrinking financial resources. Plus inflation. Our transformation process entails realigning our network, making changes to our language work, increased digitalisation, the restructuring of the European regions.

N-TV ONLINE SKILLED WORKERS IN INDIA

From the article “Heil will mehr indische Fachkräfte nach Deutschland lotsen”, 16.10.2024
Expanding language services through the Goethe-Institut will ensure that more people are able to learn German in India. Alongside this, the Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA) is stepping up its efforts with job fairs in India and targeted consultation for Indian students in Germany. “The arrival of Indian skilled workers is already a success story for our country, and one we are continuing to write, with the help of over 30 measures as part of our strategy for skilled workers,” said the SPD politician.

FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU THE GOETHE MEDAL

From the article “Auf der Suche nach Zuversicht” (On the search for confidence) by Michael Hesse, 29.08.2024
“If there is one country that shares our vision of the fundamental importance of the performing arts for the life of a country and its citizens, then it is Germany, whose cultural institutions, especially the Goethe-Institut, we are indebted to,” said Carmen Romero Quero. “They have stood by our artists from Chile and Latin America in the dark times of dictatorship and throughout all the years of rebuilding democracy.”

THE GUARDIAN LEARNING GERMAN IN GREAT BRITAIN

From the article “It enriches your mind in every way: the fight to keep the UK learning German” by Kate Connolly, 17.08.2024
The German ambassador to the UK, Miguel Berger, is behind the initiative “Making the Case for German”, together with the Goethe Institut, and the UK Department for Education’s (DoE) German promotion programme – a joint effort with the British Council to re-energise language learning in state-maintained primary and secondary schools in the UK.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG STRENGTHENING THE PARTNER NETWORK

From Paul Ingendaay’s interview with Gesche Joost, “Kulturelles Erbe ist kulturelles Kapital”, 20.02.2025
We need friendship with other countries, because much of what I once considered self-evident is no longer the case. Societies do not always become more open, free and democratic. The Goethe-Institut is the ideal place to think in terms of partnerships.

SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG LATVIA LEARNS GERMAN

From the article “Lettland lernt lieber Deutsch” by Viktoria Großmann, 02.01.2025
In the Baltic country with its almost 1.9 million inhabitants, German is currently in great demand. The German government has even allocated special funding to support the Goethe-Institut in Riga with training German teachers. [. . .] In total, Latvia needs 300 additional German teachers by 2030. Of course, the Goethe-Institut is only providing support for further training, says Würz. In fact, almost half of the new German teachers are to be trained by the Goethe-Institut.

KREISZEITUNG HARPSTEDT UKRAINIAN GIRLS’ GRAMMAR SCHOOL JOINS THE PASCH NETWORK

From the article “Es geht um mehr als die Sprache”, 03.12.2024
Cooperation with the Goethe-Institut underlines its claim to be part of an international educational landscape. The school doesn’t only promote the German language among its pupils, but embodies “the values of intercultural dialogue and justice” through its projects. Joining the PASCH network is more than an honour: “It is a message of support, solidarity and hope,” emphasised Dalljo.

TAGESSPIEGEL ONLINE THE ROLE OF THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

From the article “Jahresbilanz des Goethe-Instituts: In der Krise präsent” by Rüdiger Schaper, 03.12.2024
If the Goethe-Institut did not exist, it would be necessary to invent something like it. In many places around the globe democracy is in danger, with autocratic overtures finding an increasingly attentive audience. For the new president Gesche Joost, the defence of liberal values is an absolute priority for her future work.



Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock visits the **Goethe-Institut Dakar’s sustainable new building**. With her are Johannes Ebert, Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut (right) and Philip Küppers, Director of the Goethe Institut in Dakar (left).

SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG ONLINE ANNALENA BAERBOCK IN DAKAR

From the article “Partner gegen den Terror” (Partners against terror) by Paul-Anton Krüger, 17.07.2024
We must be aware of the mistakes that Europe has made in Africa, Baerbock warned during a speech at the new Goethe-Institut in Dakar, which is still under construction. She was primarily referring to the colonial era, but also to paternalistic conduct in the course of cooperation. Europe must ask itself, she continued, why Russia’s narratives are making inroads in Africa, while Russia is itself waging an imperialistic war of aggression against Ukraine.

DEUTSCHE WELLE ONLINE DEUTSCHOLYMPIADE

From the article “Deutschlands größter Sprachwettbewerb: die Deutscholympiade” by Christina Burack, 16.07.2024
“The beautiful thing is that the German language connects so many young people from all around the world. It is something they share, which brings them together in Germany, at the final in Göttingen,” explains Dirani. The pupils, however, have different motives for learning the language [. . .] 16-year-old Rayyona Ibrokhimova from Uzbekistan, for example, dreams of attending a German university in the future. “I’m learning German because I want to study German Studies in Germany,” she wrote.

RADIOEINS RBB GERMAN TEACHERS

From the radio programme “Zweitägige Konferenz des Goethe-Instituts in Berlin”, 10.06.2024
Titled “No Skilled Workers in Germany Without German teachers – German Teachers as Key Players in the Integration of Skilled Workers”, the symposium will see politics, science and business convene to discuss this challenge – because learning German is, of course, key to successful integration into both working life and everyday life here in Germany.

SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG ONLINE THE GLOBAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

From the article “‘Kultur wirkt’ – Carola Lentz bei Carolin Emcke über die Kraft der Goethe-Institute” by Carolin Emcke and Johannes Korsche, 03.05.2024
For Carola Lentz, there is no question that “culture works”. It may indeed be difficult to measure in the figures of a federal budget, but she illustrates the power of the Goethe-Institut with an anecdote. At the 70th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut Athens, the city’s mayor gave a speech sharing his experience of the institution as a student. This was around 1970, when the junta ruled Greece. He recounted how the Goethe-Institut was, for him, “a place where he could meet with other students, where they spoke about the junta, where they drew strength, where they had a window to Europe”.

LISTENING TO THE WORLD

A hundred years after the transmission of the first radio programme in Germany, Listening to the World – 100 Years of Radio explored the historical link between radio and globalisation, as well as international, partly unknown archives and stories of radiophony. This two-year project was conceived by the Goethe-Institut, together with the Chair for Experimental Radio at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar's faculty of art and design, Deutschlandfunk Kultur and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW).

goethe.de/listeningtotheworld



Radio stories from Southeast Asia: For the Bauhaus.Listening.Workshop#2 in the Philippines, participants left the metropolitan area of Manila and met in the mountains of Sagada, in the north of the country, to explore sound cultures of various origins.

left: Cultural practices of listening: The Bauhaus.Listening.Workshop#3 in Johannesburg focused on the history of radio in Southern Africa, which is interwoven with indigenous listening practices, a long history of telecommunication through music and communal listening techniques.



Grand finale: In October 2024, the project concluded with a 12-hour day of performances at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin. Through diverse formats, the programme highlighted perspectives and practices from Southern Africa and geographically, politically and sonically related regions.



Sustainable networking: At the Bauhaus.Listening.Workshop#1 in Montevideo, radio broadcasters from across South America came together to engage with questions about practices and methods of listening and the political potential of radio collectives.

THE POETRY OF UNHEARD VOICES

Isis Hembe's music weaves together poetic lyrics, powerful beats and an important message. With songs like "Lágrimas de Deus" and "Ar", he inspires us to look at life through different eyes and discover our inner strength. The Angolan rap artist is known for his inclusive approach to art, which reflects his own experience of physical disability. He wants his music to evoke a state where we give to the world unconditionally – free of expectations and dissatisfaction with reality. In August 2024, he was invited by the Goethe-Institut in Angola to take part in the internationalen tanzmesse nrw in Düsseldorf.



What was your experience of the festival, and what were your impressions of the German music and dance scenes?

It was a great experience, really totally inspiring! I came home with so many new ideas. The performing arts often seem to merge with each other in the German cultural scene, and this creates incredibly diverse and surprising forms of expression

Your art reflects your personal experience of physical disability. How does this influence your creative work and what messages do you wish to convey?

Yes, these experiences have been flowing into my art more and more. This wasn't always the case – initially I wanted to consciously distance myself, so as not to be labelled "the disabled artist". But today I know that my body is my repertoire, and that disability gives me the chance to metamorphize humanity. You see, we are the only species that needs tools to live. What

is our civilisation if not the attempt to establish accessibility in the face of our imbalance with nature?

Could you give us an insight into your process? How do you create your songs?

My creative process changes the more I grow artistically. But essentially it's as follows: the concept comes first, then I experiment with language in order to express it the best I can. Recently, though, I've been increasingly open to the unpredictable – if something more exciting than my original idea emerges, then I take it up.

What was your experience of German culture during your stay? Were there cultural differences that surprised or inspired you?

I was truly surprised by how friendly the people were in Düsseldorf. But what impressed me the most was how casually art occupied public space. One day, for instance, I saw a group of women who just built an installation on the street – without causing a big fuss. I thought that was really great.



Isis Hembe from Angola and other artists took part in the internationale tanzmesse nrw in August 2024, which promotes dialogue and inclusion in art.

“Each of us is a symbol of uniqueness. We are originals of pure excellence. That's why I sing the dance of motionless bodies, scream the poetry of unheard voices.”

From the song "Prazer" by Isis Hembe



Will this cultural exchange with Germany influence your creative work?

The cultural exchange confirmed a notion I already had: that the intermingling of different art forms opens up an incredible number of possibilities. Today I am even more confident when it comes to my own work – and I owe that to this experience. ●

The **internationale tanzmesse nrw**: every two years, around 1,500 international exhibitors and visitors come together in Düsseldorf at the end of August to present a broad spectrum of aesthetic expression and artistic practices. The dance festival was founded in 1994 as a forum for exchange, networking and sharing knowledge. It is the largest professional contemporary dance event and an important hub for international dancers.



Interview by Emrike Knoche, trainee in the Communications Department at the Goethe-Institut's head office in Munich.

RESIDENCIES SPARK CREATIVE IMPULSE

Residency programmes don't just open up new perspectives for artists – they simultaneously spark cultural impetus on an international level. Through residences, artists and creatives often develop far-reaching networks and friendships that have an impact long beyond the original visit. Media artist Iz Paehr and Chandrika Narayanan-Mohan, writer, performer and cultural advisor, talk about their participation in residency programmes of the Goethe-Institut.



Iz Paehr, bangaloREsidency

What did you work on during the residency?

I was interested in Bangalore as a city of rapid and unequal digitalisation. My partner organisation was the National Center for Biological Sciences Archives. I focused on the interwoven networks in the city: on telegraphy's history as a colonial technology in the archives, and on the internet infrastructure in Cubbon Park, which mostly takes the form of unenclosed, dangling cables and ecological networks like cable-bearing trees. I have woven fragments of these networks into audiovisual stories in the form of photos, videos and interviews with internet activists as a website artwork.

What were the most striking moments?

The most beautiful thing was a network walk that I developed in collaboration with the artist Biplab Mahato. Together with 25 participants, we found network structures in Cubbon Park, like the ruins of the old telegraph office and miles of internet cables,

and we measured a hotspot by all moving away from a smartphone with long, colourful threads. The residency was also full of unforgettable moments outside of this creative work: collaborating with colleagues at the archive, the support of the Goethe-Institut and the dialogue with other artists, including Biplab, meant a lot to me.

How will your participation in the residency influence your work?

I learnt a lot about communication networks and their ties to colonialism, and about internet activism. Much of this I was only able to find out about by being there – for example, I identified the old telegraph office at a busy intersection with the help of historical photographs and then noticed that nowadays it is clad with internet cables. Working with historical telegrams in the archives meant I could literally grasp the history of telegraphy. All of this has a lasting impact on my practice. But I would also like to continue the collaborations and friendships that began during the residency, hoping for more collaborative works as a result.



In 2024, the **bangaloREsidency** saw artists from Germany collaborate with partner organisations in Bangalore; among them was the Indian Music Experience Museum. The programme enables projects to be developed and presented in a new context. .

120

residencies for creatives on different continents are organised by the Goethe-Institut each year.



SDG 5, 10, 12/13, 16, 17

The **bangaloREsidency**, established in 2022, is a collaboration between the Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Bangalore and various innovative and contemporary art- and cultural spaces in Bangalore.



At the "Fertile Void" event at Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, artists and scientists explored the synergies between quantum physics, art and culture. Pictured: Chandrika Narayanan-Mohan and the multidisciplinary poet David Odiase, who both participated in the **Studio Quantum residency**.



Chandrika Narayanan-Mohan, Studio Quantum

Why did you become interested in the residency program?

I developed a series of works for which I interviewed physicists about their professional careers and turned their stories into poems. I wanted to "demystify discoveries" by focusing on their daily lives. A short story by lisa minerva luxx inspired me to write a piece that combines quanta with shifting identities and family. During the residency, I wanted to expand this work by talking to quantum researchers who identify as migrants and telling their stories in poems.

What were your highlights, but also challenges?

The encounters with the other scientists and artists were definitely the highlights of the residency. But I also faced some challenges. I often found it difficult to understand quantum physics, and I felt overwhelmed as a writer in the midst of accomplished visual artists and technologists. It was also emotionally draining to spend time in London, twelve years after I had to leave the UK due to restrictive immigration policies. But now I have integrated all these worries, uncertainties and emotional upheavals into the project itself, allowing them to underpin and sometimes even outshine the original proposal.

How did you experience the symposium "Fertile Void" in Berlin last year?

For "Fertile Void" I collaborated with Studio Quantum artist and performance poet David Odiase to link our work together in

a performance. Our common themes were motherhood, non-linear time, and memory. We performed pieces that related to each other's work. I wrote "Fertile Void," a new piece about the uncertainty of pregnancy that feels like a quantum state. We also worked with OpenAI to create film clips of our pieces. It was magical to share the stage and the artistic process with David Odiase and meet the other artists from Studio Quantum. I've never worked with international artists before, and it was nice not to be the minority in a group for once. I felt like I was part of a global conversation – and not just a Western one. "Fertile Void" was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. This stay has opened doors for me, and I look forward to walking through them.

Studio Quantum Studio Quantum is an international events and artist-in-residence programme from the Goethe-Institut, exploring emerging quantum technologies through the lens of art. The project is managed by the Goethe-Institut Irland. ●



Interview by Katrin Figge, Deputy Head of the Communications Department at the head office in Munich.

RESIDENCY LOCATIONS OF THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

goethe.de/residenzen



TARABYA CULTURAL ACADEMY

The Tarabya Cultural Academy is a residency programme in Istanbul for artists of all disciplines. It was established in 2011 on the initiative of the Bundestag and promotes artistic exchange between Turkey and Germany. Each year, the Tarabya Cultural Academy enables around 20 scholarship holders who live and work in Germany to make connections in the Turkish cultural scene, as well as promoting German-Turkish artistic collaboration through co-production grants. It is situated on the grounds of the historic summer residence of the German ambassador in Tarabya (Istanbul) and is run by the German embassy in Ankara; the Goethe-Institut is responsible for curating the programme. Since the first participants arrived in 2012, over 90 outstanding artists have developed their projects at Tarabya Cultural Academy.

VILLA KAMOGAWA

The Villa Kamogawa residency offers artists and creatives from Germany the opportunity to spend three months living and working in Kyoto. Since 2011, around 180 creatives working in various disciplines have travelled to Japan to take part. The stay in Kyoto offers insights into an unfamiliar everyday life and a new environment. To foster creative connections and international cultural exchange more intensively, Villa Kamogawa is partnering with institutions in East Asia and Europe to expand its residency programme: as well as scholarships for creatives from Germany, regional and international participation is now also possible.



VILA SUL

With VILA SUL in Salvador, the centre of the Afro-Brazilian diaspora in the South Atlantic, the Goethe-Institut established its first residency in the southern hemisphere in 2016. The aim of the programme is to have international participants look at selected key topics from a variety of perspectives each year. In doing so, they enter into dialogue with local partners as well as with each other. As of 2025, the VILA SUL has hosted around 140 artists and creatives.

DISCOVERING LITERARY HERITAGE

Scilla Forti translates German-language texts into Italian for the publishing house Keller Editore. Her translations include books by the well-known German authors Mariana Leky (*Was man von hier aus sehen kann*) and Lukas Rietzschel (*Mit der Faust in die Welt schlagen*), as well as the journalist Andrea Roedig's autofiction debut *Man kann Müttern nicht trauen* for VandA Edizioni. Scilla Forti shares with us what she enjoys about her work, the challenges it involves and why the Goethe-Institut's translation funding is so important.



What fascinates you about German literature and about translation?

For me, translation is ultimately about engaging with language. The form of the German language has always fascinated me – it's so different from Italian, but that's exactly why

it's so stimulating. I find it fun to “decode” the original text and then to try and convey it in Italian the best I can. The more complex the language, the more this process enthrals me. My love of German literature is a direct result of this: literature is the highest form of verbal expression, and so I find what I need there!

What is the greatest challenge when translating a book?

Many examples come to mind: wordplay, untranslatable terms, ambiguity, cultural references that an Italian reader wouldn't get. There is probably nothing untranslatable, a solution can always be found, but in such cases you sometimes need to dare to try something new.

Beyond those individual examples, I think the great challenge of translation is finding the balance between fidelity and clarity; that is, making the text understandable without distorting it. In other words, reconciling responsibility to the author with responsibility to the reader.

7,000

translations of German-language books have been funded by the Goethe-Institut since 1974.

Do you work together with the author?

Normally we aren't in direct contact. At most, I occasionally send questions via the Italian or German-language publishers. In these cases, it's about aspects that I wasn't able to resolve myself. Only once did I have direct dialogue with an author who was willing to answer all of my questions right from the start. She provided useful information for contextualising or explaining particular events, and was a truly invaluable source.

How do you manage to translate an author's individual style from German into Italian?

My approach is very instinctive. I don't use special techniques; instead I immerse myself in the text. Initially I try to “imitate”

every aspect of the work, no matter how small, by following the author's style as closely as possible, even if this means that the translation feels a little stiff. In the following versions I gradually move away from this, but by the end of the first draft I have internalised the style of the author, and so it seems natural to me to think from their perspective.

Why, in your view, is it important for literature to be translated into other languages?

It may sound trivial, but without translation many readers would be shut out of a vast literary heritage. What would a country be like if it limited itself to only publishing works written in its own language? The translation of literature from other countries means moving between subjects and styles; encountering historical and cultural realities that we would not otherwise have access to, unless we travelled to each place. Translating also means engaging with others and learning not to be afraid, to open your mind and embrace diversity.

What impact does the Goethe-Institut's translation funding have on your work?

The translation funding enabled me to work for fees higher than the market average, and this in turn made it possible to



“The translation of literature from other countries means encountering historical and cultural realities that we would not otherwise have access to.”

translate in peace, without overwhelming myself with too much work, as can happen when fees are low. But aside from the economic aspects and the benefits for individual translators, the programme is valuable because it promotes ambitious and challenging literary works, which may have had difficulty finding a place in Italy without the Goethe-Institut's support.●

goethe.de/uebersetzungsfoerderung

In 2024, the Goethe-Institut's translation funding had two important anniversaries: the global **Translation Funding Programme** turned 50. Through a translation fee subsidy, it supports publishers who wish to translate current German-language works into their respective national languages. The **Litrix Programme**, which celebrated its 20th anniversary, offers publishers financial incentives to translate selected German-language works into a focal language, which changes every three years. A highlight of this special anniversary year was the Turin International Book Fair in May 2024, where the German language was the guest of honour.



Interview by Sina Bahr, who was a trainee in the Goethe-Institut's Communications Department until January 2025.

SDG 8, 16, 17



“I find it fun to ‘decode’ the original text and then to try and convey it in Italian the best I can.”



Constructed in 1974, for decades the Hotel Uzbekistan was the face of Tashkent, and more recently it was the centre of the international film festival Destination: Tashkent. Project Manager Lea Wölk and Maren Niemeyer, Director of the Goethe-Institut Uzbekistan (right), hold up a photo of the 1978 Tashkent Festival in front of the imposing building.

A PLACE THAT MOVES MORE THAN PICTURES

From 1968 to 1988, the Tashkent Festival for African, Asian and Latin American Cinema was one of the most important platforms for the film scene of the Global South – a place of international exchange amidst geopolitical tensions. Inspired by this historic festival, Destination: Tashkent – a festival for film and discourse – took place in Tashkent from 26 to 29 September 2024 and in Berlin from 27 November to 1 December 2024. In an interview, Berlin curator Can Singu discusses continuing legacies and new perspectives.



Tashkent Festival played a central role for the cinema of the Global South. How did Destination: Tashkent build on this?

The Tashkent Festival offered an alternative to the dominant, Western-influenced festival structures and made possible transcontinental networking and alliances based on solidarity between filmmakers from these three continents. Destination: Tashkent continued this tradition in that it not only screened films but also curated a discursive programme to examine the political, cultural and historical contexts of these encounters, as well as the social space. What made Destination: Tashkent special was the connection between past and present; our festival looked critically at history to learn from it, to generate constructive ideas for the future.

What themes did last year's festival focus on?

We were interested in how the Tashkent Festival served as a platform for negotiating anti-imperialist and anticolonial ideas while simultaneously providing space for popular cinema. We also wanted to understand how filmmakers from Asia, Africa and Latin America engaged with the Tashkent audience – the festival became a place of lived internationalism through cinema, a dynamic meeting point. Another area of interest was the festival's translation practices and their role in this transcontinental dialogue.

How did you put the film programme together?

When curating the programme, it was particularly important to me to make different historical, aesthetic and contemporary approaches visible. As well as selecting films that had appeared in the original programme of the Tashkent Festival but are today only rarely, or not at all, shown on the big screen, I also curated two short film programmes featuring contemporary films from Central Asia and from African and Asian diaspora communities in Berlin. These programmes were intended to supplement the gaps in the historical programme – particularly with regard to films by women or queer filmmakers – and thereby reflect critically on the heavily male-dominated festival programme of that time. The films in these programmes interrogate historical narratives and contrast them with alternative perspectives, be it through a feminist, postcolonial or queer lens.

In your opinion, how has the visibility of Asian, African and Latin American cinema changed in recent decades?

On the one hand, there are now more festivals and forums that specifically focus on cinema from these regions. Digital platforms, international co-productions and targeted funding programmes have increased accessibility. On the other hand, many structures are still shaped by Western funding mechanisms, market logic and curatorial agendas. Many films from Asia, Africa and Latin America need to cater to certain expectations or a "Western" audience's viewing habits if they want to remain visible. Indigenous voices, popular cinema and avant-garde perspectives only occasionally manage to make it beyond their regions of origin. The Tashkent Festival is itself an example of the selective memory of film history: hardly anyone in Europe has heard of the festival, and most of its films cannot easily be accessed today. This is exactly where Destination: Tashkent comes in – we want to make forgotten narratives visible again, reconstruct networks and show alternative perspectives.

How can cinema contribute to fostering solidarity and international collaboration – both then and now?

Cinema was and is a social space. I continue to believe in the potential of cinema as a place where people come together not only to watch films, but also to take part in the lively space for discourse that unfolds. I am for a cinema that understands itself as a public space, that feels a responsibility to both a local and an international community, that considers film-historical work part of memory culture and that advocates for the diversity of film culture and cinema. This was my motivation for co-founding SINEMA TRANSTOPIA in Berlin, which – along with the Haus der Kulturen der Welt – was a venue for Destination: Tashkent. ●



Interview by Emrike Knoche, trainee in the Communications Department at the Goethe-Institut's head office in Munich.



GERMAN TEACHERS AS KEY PLAYERS

At least 4,000 more teachers of German as a foreign language are needed worldwide. For skilled workers and students hoping to move to Germany, language skills are the key to integration – and for this, highly trained teachers in their home countries are essential. This was the topic of the two-day symposium No Skilled Workers in Germany Without German Teachers, which took place in June 2024 in Berlin.

“German teachers abroad don’t just teach German: when it comes to lessons for skilled workers, they’re also integration advisors,” explains Dina Radwan, Head of Educational Cooperation at the Goethe-Institut Cairo. “Teachers need an additional qualification.” Radwan found her way into the teaching profession through the Goethe-Institut’s Deutsch Lehren Lernen (Learn to teach German) programme and job shadowing; these theoretical and practical elements are combined in the Green Diploma, the in-house qualification for teaching German at Goethe-Instituts abroad. When, in 2019, the Egyptian Ministry of Education wanted to provide German language courses for engineering and medical students, the cooperation that Radwan now oversees came about. “A number of German companies are based in Cairo,” she explains. “Deutsche Bahn and the German Chambers of Commerce Abroad organise language courses for specific groups.”

EVERYONE AGREES: LEARNING THE LANGUAGE IS KEY

High-quality German teaching is a key requirement for successfully settling in Germany. Thomas Liebig, a senior economist at the OECD, has researched the subject in depth. He asked people hoping to migrate to Germany and those who had already done so how important they thought learning the language was for their future. Even before coming to Germany, only a small number of respondents were under the illusion that they could get by with English skills alone. And for those who’d already made the move, things were crystal clear: they identified being able to communicate well in German as key to their new life. The importance of excellent German teaching in people’s countries of origin is evident – as is the fact that this teaching must centre the ability to communicate. “Many candidates abroad are keen to learn German before moving here, but the opportunities for doing so are



During the symposium at the Alte Münze in Berlin, innovative projects on the topics of skilled worker immigration and teacher training were introduced at the “marketplace of ideas”.

“For skilled workers from abroad, German language skills are crucial for settling in at work and in the social environment.”

Christoph Mohr, Head of Educational Networks and Skilled Worker Immigration at the Goethe-Institut

limited,” Liebig summarises. In countries such as Mexico, Kenya and India, teacher training is unable to keep pace with demand.

At the symposium, Vibha Surana, Professor of German at the University of Mumbai, laughed as she recalled being woken up the previous day by a call from the education minister of a large Indian province: “He asked if we could teach 10,000 skilled workers German. It was about an agreement with Baden-Württemberg.” Surana called on the representative of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), who was also on the panel, to provide grants or other forms of financial support for German teachers. This is another obstacle: teachers abroad often receive lower pay and less respect than their counterparts in Germany. The Goethe-Institut aims to remedy the global shortage of German teachers through special programmes and partnerships, which will

enable vocational schools in Vietnam, for example, to teach German to their pupils.

SMALL GROUPS AND IMPROVED TEACHER TRAINING

In many countries, pedagogical knowledge is lacking and there has been little attempt to modernise teaching approaches. The traditional method is still prevalent, with sixty pupils repeating, in unison, the words and sentences the teacher recites, and exams focusing on the ability to identify the verb in a sentence. Integrating conversations about emotions and real-life problems into lessons is just as – if not more – important. In future, improved teaching training programmes should break with old habits and focus on imparting not only language skills but also modern lesson planning and design. Jan Sprenger, Head of Language Work at the Goethe-Institut, summarised the priorities for international teaching training programmes capable of meeting current needs:

- To offer German teachers good job and career opportunities
- To provide grants that enable teachers to spend time in Germany, gaining practical language skills and knowledge about the country that will inform their teaching back home
- To ensure that the qualifications earned are recognised in foreign education systems

Further suggestions were made in the workshops at the symposium, such as bringing technical knowledge and language skills together and thereby adapting German teaching in line with occupational

requirements: a nurse needs to know medical terms, an electrical engineer the names of parts and components. In Germany, there are already courses tailored to specific occupations and sectors, but teachers in other parts of the world still need to be trained for this specialised language instruction.

An additional 4,000 German teachers are needed in the coming years if demand is to be met, according to Carola Lentz, the former president of the Goethe-Institut. Germany’s new Skilled Immigration Act, in force since June 2024, facilitates immigration for trained professionals. However, “German wasn’t a central consideration,” admits Boris Petschulat from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action: “for most visas, language skills aren’t a requirement.”

4,000

additional German teachers are needed.



No Skilled Workers in Germany Without German Teachers – German Teachers as Key Players in Skilled Worker Integration: questions from the audience were also an opportunity for dialogue between skilled workers, teachers and experts.



Tamara Carranza Porras (right), in conversation with moderator Amira El Ahl, shares her experience of being a foreign worker and offers insights on integration.

GOOD GERMAN LESSONS NEED TARGETED SUPPORT

It was thus all the more important to make clear at the symposium that targeted support and training are needed to improve German teaching abroad. The Goethe-Institut has developed a wide range of online programmes to attract new German teachers, as well as resources for people planning to immigrate to Germany. The website My Way to Germany provides information and answers many practical questions, from registering with the tax office to health insurance and waste separation.

For many immigrants, these kinds of resources are essential. “Germany was a culture shock for me,” explains Houssame Mabrouk from Morocco. A trained chef and restaurateur, Mabrouk found out about the job opportunities in Germany through a GIZ project for trained professionals. He learnt German through online courses during the pandemic, and now manages a family-run restaurant in Oberstaufen in Bavaria. The symposium showed that immigrants like Mabrouk have a great deal to contribute to German society – and because the German language is the key to communication and mutual understanding, it needs competent, committed teachers.●

goethe.de/fachkraefte

“German teachers abroad don’t just teach German: when it comes to lessons for skilled workers, they’re also integration advisors.”

Dina Radwan, Head of Educational Cooperation at the Goethe-Institut Cairo



Elske Brault is Editor for North Frisia at the Schleswig-Holsteinischen Zeitungsverlag (SHZ). Previously she worked as an editor and broadcaster for public radio.



A GERMAN COURSE LIKE NO OTHER



The Aufseesianum boarding school in Bamberg is a special place. Not just because Erich Kästner's *Das fliegende Klassenzimmer* was filmed here – but also because of the young German learners, who in summer 2024 became an unbeatable community.

The sun has already set as the participants of the PASCH youth course gather in the common room. The PASCH initiative – PASCH stands for “Schools: Partners of the future” – links together schools with a particular focus on the German language and special ties to Germany. It is now the third and final week at the Aufseesianum in Bamberg, and it's clear that the teenagers have become close during their stay. They congregate in mixed groups, chatting in German, English or other languages. After a few minutes' commotion, everyone sits down, spreading out across chairs, window sills and the floor, their gaze fixed on the words projected onto the wall: “Beat the Team”.

This games evening, which sees them compete against the supervisors' team, is tradition. The supervisors are students who take on the role of contact person to the young participants during their semester break, explains course coordinator Heiko Kirbach. The recreational activities are an important part of the three-week stay – the idea is to offer something for everyone, Kirbach says, whether that's sport, music or sightseeing. This way, the more than 70 pupils who come together in Bamberg from PASCH schools all around the world can also get to know each other and make friends outside lessons.

MORE SIMILARITIES THAN DIFFERENCES

Gisele, a 17-year-old pupil from Cameroon, says she initially found meeting so many strangers daunting. “Now I've seen that the people are very nice and are accepting of the different cultures. I'm happy to be here.” Aleksa, who is 18 and from Bosnia and

Herzegovina, also needed a little time to warm up in the unfamiliar environment. But since then he's been enjoying every second. “It's just something new, you have to get used to it, but then it's a dream.” And he is struck by how “although there are many differences between us, there are more things that we have in common.”

The teachers can also provide support as the pupils are getting to know each other, says Adrienn Szigriszt, one of the five teachers who each oversee a class on the PASCH youth course. Games and group work make up a significant part of the lessons. She thinks the fact that the participants come from many different countries makes the course particularly special; everyone treats each other with tolerance and openness. “The children bring their own culture, their own identity, with them, and when that mixes, sometimes real miracles happen.”

“I think it's fantastic how much the young people come out of their shells and blossom.”

Adrienn Szigriszt, PASCH youth course teacher

18,000

international participants since 2008

500

young people from Germany have supported the programme since 2008 as Young Ambassadors

left: Participants come together for the games evening in the common room and enjoy the lively atmosphere of the PASCH youth courses. They offer pupils from all over the world a unique experience: three weeks of learning German in Germany as part of a vibrant international community

LEARNING GERMAN WITH MEANING AND PURPOSE

Tonight, the teenagers can relax and fully enjoy their evening, since the exams are already behind them. Those who pass will receive a Goethe-Institut language certificate for the relevant level. Adrienn Szigriszt did her best to prepare her class, and though the results are not yet in, she is optimistic, having witnessed the young people's motivation and swift progress. “When they first arrive, they often don't dare to ask anything in German,” she explains. Over the three weeks, they have become much more confident: “Now they are expressing their opinions and having discussions. I think it's fantastic how much they come out of their shells and blossom.”

Aleksa wants to continue improving his language skills in order to really immerse himself in German culture. Like many of the other participants, he can imagine himself studying here one



Against the historical backdrop of Bamberg's old town, young people from different countries come together through the Goethe-Institut's PASCH programme.

day. Germany has good universities, says 17-year-old Keso from Georgia. This course is a "very important opportunity and valuable experience for a future career".

IN THE END, EVERYONE WINS

"Suddenly, international is [. . .] no longer just a word" – the lyrics by Sportfreunde Stiller resound through the room at the end of Beat the Team. The supervisors won two out of seven games, while the pupils came out on top in the others. There are always tears on the last evening, says Kirbach, but there's no sign of any yet. There is dancing and singing until the young people

eventually have to return to their rooms to get some sleep. Even the best evenings have to end at some point, just as the PASCH youth course in Bamberg will soon come to an end. Will they keep in touch with their new friends afterwards? Keso, Gisela and Aleksa are unanimous: "Yes, of course!" ●



Sina Bahr was a trainee in the Goethe-Institut's Communications Department until January 2025.

Since 2008, PASCH youth courses have been offering pupils from all over the world a unique experience: three weeks of learning German in Germany and immersing themselves in an international community that will have a lasting influence on their educational path. Almost 18,000 young people from 120 countries have already taken part. As well as improving their language skills, many develop a close bond with Germany and help to promote German language and culture in their home countries.

The comprehensive concept of the PASCH youth courses makes them a truly special opportunity for pupils. Participants receive a full scholarship covering all costs and complete 72 teaching units of German as a foreign language. These lessons are supplemented by projects, excursions, cultural activities, and visits

to universities and companies. At the end of the course, participants have the opportunity to take a Goethe-Institut exam. As well as developing language skills, the aim is to foster cultural exchange with young Germans, who also join the courses as part of the Young Ambassador programme, offering insights into local youth culture and language. So far, 500 young Germans have taken part.

Many international participants are accompanied on their journeys by PASCH teachers from their home countries who are completing advanced pedagogical or language training in Germany. The opportunity thus benefits not only the young individuals themselves, but also the German lessons at their PASCH schools. goethe.de/pasch



LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

A director-general of the European Commission, a high-ranking official from the Portuguese interior ministry and a representative of Serbia's national court of auditors discuss European economic policy in their German course. That may sound far-fetched, but in the Europanetzwirk Deutsch it has been an everyday occurrence for three decades.

Since 1994, the Goethe-Institut, on behalf of the Federal Foreign Office, has been promoting the German language as a working and procedural language in the European Union with the scholarship programme Europanetzwirk Deutsch. The initiative facilitates dialogue and networking between policy-makers from EU institutions, member states and countries planning to join the EU. In 2024, the programme celebrated its 30th anniversary under the motto "The future of Europe".

The programme centres on the "EU courses" in Germany. These intensive language courses are tailored to the specific skills and needs of each group, and present a current, detailed image of the country. Thanks to close cooperation with the German states, participants have the chance to meet with stakeholders from politics, culture, business and society – sometimes sparking longstanding collaboration. To date, more than 3,000 policy-makers from 39 countries have taken part.

"A key element of intercultural understanding is getting to know other languages and cultures, so I am very happy to have improved my German skills," says Iliana Ivanova, former EU Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth and alumna of the Europanetzwirk Deutsch. "The Europanetzwirk Deutsch course in Munich was a fantastic opportunity for me to discuss a wide range of interesting topics in German and to experience German culture first-hand."

As well as the language courses in Germany, the programme offers participants the chance to stay in touch with each other and regularly refresh their German skills through additional language courses and a variety of events exploring social and cultural issues in Brussels, Luxembourg and online.

In November 2024, more than 150 guests came together in Brussels for the anniversary celebrations: alumni and partners of

the programme as well as guests from EU institutions. The event highlighted the importance of linguistic diversity and intercultural exchange for the future of Europe – and the key role of the Europanetzwirk Deutsch in this.

In a speech, Martin Kotthaus, Germany's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Belgium, recalled the early days of the programme. Its roots go back to a joint initiative of the

then Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel and Jacques Delors, who was President of the European Commission. Only five years had passed since the fall of the Berlin wall, the EU was comprised of just 12 member states – many believed in "the end of history". Mutual understanding in Europe is fundamental, particularly in this day and age, which is marked by multiple crises and wars - and language plays a crucial role. According to Ambassador Kotthaus, the Europanetzwirk Deutsch has made an impact by ensuring that more German is spoken in EU institutions.

But much more importantly, those who have taken part in the programme have gained a fuller understanding of and a deeper sympathy for Germany, as well as its concerns in the EU. ●

goethe.de/europanetzwirkdeutsch



Sonja Ebner has been Head of the Europanetzwirk Deutsch at the Goethe-Institut's head office since 2019 and coordinates the programme's activities in Europe.

MORE THAN A LANGUAGE CONTEST

From 15 to 22 July 2024 in Göttingen, over 100 pupils from around 60 countries came together under the motto “Creating knowledge, making the future” to vie for the title of the world’s best German learners at the International Deutscholympiade (IDO). In a gripping final, Mahek Khan from Bangladesh, Rayyona Ibrokhimova from Uzbekistan and Ana Kotevska from North Macedonia won in their respective language levels. The three of them tell us about their experiences.



Could you briefly introduce yourselves?

Ana: My name is Ana Kotevska and I love the German language very much. I usually spend my free time with friends, but my passion for books and maths is also part of my everyday life.



Mahek: My name is Mahek, I’m 16 years old and come from Bangladesh. I love interacting with people and I’m very extroverted.



Rayyona: I’m Rayyona Ibrokhimova and I’m 17 years old. I am currently in the 11th class at the PASCH school. Learning languages is my great passion. I also write poems and I like watching videos of outer space on the internet.

Why did you decide to learn German?

Ana: I already knew at a young age that this language would change my life. Firstly, because

I later want to study in a German-speaking country – I am a big fan of Austria. Secondly, because the language brought out new qualities in me. I feel more professional and presentable when I speak German.

Mahek: I found German interesting because it was the language many authors had spoken, like Franz Kafka und Friedrich Nietzsche.

Rayyona: My school belongs to the PASCH Network, that’s why I decided to learn German intensively. By now the language has become part of my life.

Do you have a favourite German word?

Ana: My current favourite word is very long and weird: *Fachkräfteeinwanderungsgesetz* (Skilled Immigration Act). We discussed this in class recently and it sounds really funny. It refers to the

simplification of the processes for access to the labour market in Germany. For this reason it inevitably stuck in my head.

Mahek: My favourite word is *Knochen* (bones). It was one of the first words that I learnt and through which I understood the “ch”-sound in German.

Rayyona: My favourite German word is *Seele* (soul), because we can feel all our emotions with the help of our souls. This word means everything to me.

Could you share your impressions of the IDO with us?

Ana: Remembering the IDO always gives me butterflies in the stomach. The friendships and moments with the other participants were and are still invaluable. As well as this, I gained new knowledge – it was a special experience for me.

Mahek: The IDO 2024 was the best experience of my life. Every day I was able to explore a new country and get to know new people. I never would have imagined that people could become so close so quickly.

Rayyona: It was brilliant to spend time with friends from all around the world. The activities were interesting and varied. I will always miss this time in Göttingen.

What was the best moment?

Ana: The cultural evening of the Olympiade. The best moment was when everyone in the room danced in a circle and laughed. I was happy the whole time and I felt accepted.

Mahek: The last evening, when we all danced, cried, laughed and danced some more. It was unbelievably bittersweet and I will treasure the memories forever.

Rayyona: My most unforgettable moment at the IDO was when my name was read out at the award ceremony.



Ana Kotevska from North Macedonia receives first place in the Internationale Deutscholympiade. She won in the language level B2.

Ana, you said before the IDO that multiculturalism is the greatest treasure of the world. Did the contest confirm that for you?

Ana: Yes. The coming together of cultures from all around the world at the IDO, the contacts we made – we grew together. All the people I got to know had a big influence on me, and I am incredibly grateful to have met them.

Rayyona, you told us that your greatest dream is to study German Studies at a German university. Did the IDO confirm this?

Rayyona: Yes, it did. Unfortunately I have not yet got the C1 certificate, which I need for German Studies. I will keep trying to achieve it. Studying in Germany is still my greatest dream.

What did you take with you from the IDO for your future?

Rayyona: It was great to make new friends from around the world during the IDO and to improve my German language skills. I learnt to communicate in an international environment. This experience

will help me to be more open and more confident in the future.

Mahek: The IDO confirmed for me that you can achieve anything if you try. To win the competition, while there is war in my home country, was a shock for me. In the future I will always be able to take motivation from this achievement.

What’s next for you?

Ana: I view the IDO as not only a great memory from the past, but also a springboard to the future. It has opened new doors for me in the German-speaking world, with which I can perhaps realise my dream of living in a German-speaking country. So I’m even more motivated than before.

Mahek: The IDO continues to be a part of my life. I talk to the others regularly and we are already planning a reunion. Thanks to the IDO I now have friends all over the world. That is truly something special. ●

Since 2008, the Goethe-Institut and the Internationaler Deutschlehrerinnen- und Deutschlehrerverband (IDV) have been organising the largest German contest in the world, the **Internationale Deutscholympiade** (IDO). Taking place every two years, the IDO is not only a contest but also a meeting place for young international talent – around 100,000 schools worldwide are invited to participate. The IDO enables 14- to 17-year-olds to get involved in Germany’s cultural and educational scenes, to engage in international cultural exchange with their peers and to make friends. A training programme for accompanying teachers runs alongside the contest, focusing on contemporary pedagogical approaches and the latest trends in language teaching. goethe.de/IDO



Interview by Katrin Figge, Deputy Head of the Communications Department at the head office in Munich.



THE WAY TO SECURE LANGUAGE EXAMS

Pens scratch across paper, glances sweep the room, fingers drum nervously. Suddenly, a ringing smartphone pierces the silence – a breach of the rules. To prevent something like this happening, strict regulations are in force. Exam security is key to guaranteeing fairness, a level playing field and the legitimacy of exam results. As an auditor, Julia Wecker travels to Goethe-Instituts around the world to monitor compliance with quality standards.



Why is exam security so important for language testing?

Exam security is important for ensuring a regulated process and thereby the legitimacy of our certificates. We have to make sure that no one can gain an unfair advantage. For visa applications in particular, language exams play a major role. A person who wants to come to Germany to join their spouse, for example, requires a different certificate from prospective skilled workers or students. So that all these exams remain globally recognised and comparable, the same high standards must apply everywhere. For this, it's also crucial that all staff at the Goethe-Instituts feel responsible for exam security. Our security standards are high; this has been verified by independent audits by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE). Measures that promote exam security include training on the topic, certificates for examiners that require regular renewal, exam audits, and strict authorisation management for software, as well as thorough documentation of processes in the IT system.



We want to further raise awareness of the importance of exam security and add further steps to the audit. Our goal is to carry out up to 50 exam audits per year in future.

What is an exam audit? And what do exam audits have to do with exam security?

During an exam audit, we record quality standards in seven different areas. One part of the audit focuses on organisational aspects – for example, the rooms used and the technical equipment. But the majority address aspects relating to security. Are trustworthiness and the confidentiality of the exam materials guaranteed throughout the process? Are all materials kept in a



lockable cabinet and in a lockable room? On the basis of on-site interviews and observations, we then check if these stipulated quality and security standards are met.

What measures is the Goethe-Institut taking to ensure that exams are fair and transparent?

There is a whole set of measures – I'll name just two as examples. An important part of this process is training examiners. We have a network of 32 people who work globally to provide examiners with regular training on assessment and exam conduct and increase their awareness of exam security. Following this training, examiners need to obtain a certificate to prove they are applying the evaluation criteria correctly. As well as this certificate, examiners must have experience of teaching German lessons, a contract with the Goethe-Institut or a partner institution and at least C1-level German.

As for the exam questions, these are only used once they have been tested by a sufficient number of participants. This way we can ensure that the difficulty of a question accurately reflects the respective language level. This testing and the standardised implementation guarantee fair exams, regardless of where they are taken.

You were recently in China and Nepal. What is the work of an exam auditor like?

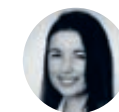
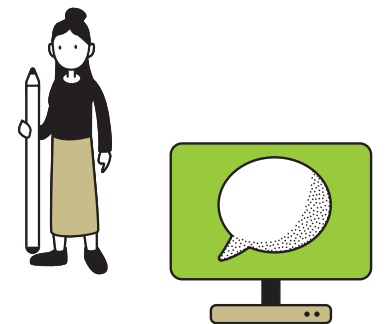
To begin with, I received an overview of the scheduled exam dates at the examination centres in China and Nepal. The central component of each audit is the exam day, when I have the opportunity to closely observe the assessment processes. I agreed the dates I would be present with the exam centres, and then they had until two weeks beforehand to compile dossiers containing, for example, the processes for identity checks or examiners' certificates – that is, proof of their qualifications. These provided me with an overview in advance and meant that I could identify initial questions.

At the examination centres, I monitor the entire process, from admission – including identity checks – to the secure storage of exam materials. The second day involves many different interviews: with the institute director, the head of language work, and the staff responsible for language courses and testing. I also speak to staff in the language course office, as well as the examiners and assessors, and of course the exam entrants themselves. In addition, I consult documents in the exam archive and compare these against the data in the system.

What types of exams are used, and what are the advantages of digital exams?

Currently there are two types: the classic paper-based exams and the digital exams on a laptop in the Goethe-Institut. The digital exams are gradually being rolled out at Goethe-Instituts worldwide. Their great advantage is, firstly, that they are so user-friendly: the time remaining and the progress made are displayed digitally, the font size and volume can be adjusted to suit individual needs and in the written section the words are counted automatically.

Evaluation is also much easier, since handwritten answers no longer need to be deciphered and the answers to multiple-choice questions can be automatically checked against the answers. As well as this, the system adds up the points and transfers them to our software. For the exam team especially, that saves a lot of time. ●



Interview by Emrike Knoche, trainee in the Communications Department at the Goethe-Institut's head office in Munich.

MUSIC FOR THE FUTURE

Is it possible to set an example of sustainability in the fast-paced music industry? In autumn 2024, Slow Touring explored this question by inviting the musician LIE NING from Berlin, whose work spans the genres of indie, soul and R&B, on a four-week resource-efficient tour. The project, which was developed at the Goethe-Institut Irland, took them across Europe by train and ferry – from Amsterdam to Brussels via Paris, Dublin and Manchester. Here, they look back at the most memorable moments and the biggest challenges.



You're a musician, dancer and model. How do you combine these different art forms?

I've always been interested in considering complex themes from different perspectives and tying them into art forms so as to bring them to a broader audience. Creating dialogue is also one of my main motivations. I grew up in a collective house project with 25 people and quickly found out that we have a lot to learn from each other, even if not everyone is always on the same wavelength. That's something I want to bring to the world and share with others. I love combining all this, and I'm very glad I can fuse these different art forms together through music – because in the end they're all just different facets of a story that reflects our society.

Could you share your impressions of the tour with us?

The tour was one of the most beautiful experiences I have ever had. At the same time, it was also the most physically arduous thing I've done, because the infrastructure for such journeys simply doesn't exist. We got our luggage down to a minimum, of course, but I still ended up with two big suitcases and a backpack, since we had to bring some instruments and stage outfits. Sometimes it was difficult to get to the ferry on time, because the ferry terminals are difficult to reach without a car – there's no bus that stops directly, so we had to drag all our luggage through an industrial area, over cobblestones. Other times we took fully booked trains that had little storage space. Eventually, all of this became very tough on the body. There were moments I realised I was reaching my limit.

And despite the physical challenges, you describe the tour as one of the most beautiful experiences you've ever had?

Yes, it was an absolute dream. Knowing that I was now travelling to a different country, that I was spending the night on a ferry and wouldn't reach my destination until the next day – that gave me an entirely different sense of where I was at that moment. Another aspect was that I was able to spend several days in the various cities and so I could get to know and appreciate these places a bit better. And I had the opportunity to collaborate with local artists in person, and in some cases we performed together. That made up for all the pain.

Which memories stand out?

In Manchester we stayed in Islington Mill, a queer creative centre. There's a residency on the top floor with a community kitchen and a community space, where we slept. I really liked that, because we were directly welcomed into the community. Each morning we sat down together and shared our plans for the day. That made me feel we were achieving something together, we were productive and kept each other motivated.

links: LIE NING, a soul and pop musician from Berlin, went on a sustainable concert tour in autumn 2024 and travelled across Europe by train and ferry. The Goethe-Institut Ireland supported the 'Slow Touring' project.

“Through collaborating with locals, you can interweave their perspectives into your own vision.”

What did you take away with you?

I want to work with local artists in the future, whether on stage design, costumes or musical collaborations. As a touring artist, often when you go to a city you just bring yourself with you. I don't necessarily see that as sustainable, since you're almost pushing your own ideas onto a place that already has a life of its own. Through collaborating with locals, you can interweave their perspectives into your own vision, which is much more exciting – not only for me, but also for the audience.

How can sustainability be promoted in the music industry?

There are an increasing number of projects, seminars and workshops that support sustainability in the music industry; we'll have to see what comes from this. It could also be smaller things – for example, asking people to come to events via public transport and making the journey easier. Aside from the classic sustainability topics, we could also approach the issue at the societal level, for instance by ensuring we're supporting marginalised people. In any case, it's important to implement such projects. ●

As well as sustainable travel and a positive climate impact, the **Slow Touring** project emphasised slowing down at individual tour stops. LIE NING spent time getting to know local communities and collaborating with international artists. All events used local resources, such as stage elements produced on site. This not only benefitted the local economy, it also further reduced the tour's CO₂ footprint.



Interview by Katrin Figge, Deputy Head of the Communications Department at the head office in Munich.



As part of the "Ecological Futures" initiative, students from the Social Impact Studio at the Düsseldorf University of Applied Sciences / Peter Behrens School of Arts restored the fence surrounding the football pitch at Metropoliz. They also constructed the "Metropoliz Stadium" sign and a scoreboard.



ART, LIFE, RESISTANCE

Above the industrial landscape and the old trees that border the Via Prenestina on the outskirts of Rome, a tower made of reddish bricks rises. Its structure is visible from afar, but if you come closer, you may notice something unusual on its roof: a large telescope. This is just the first of many artworks waiting to be discovered amidst the rambling complex of buildings, where art and life merge. The Metropoliz/MAAM exemplifies the ideas driving Ecological Futures: urban practice as visions for the future in the here and now of our cities.

Murals and graffiti cover the walls; paintings, sculptures and installations enliven the rooms and courtyards of the former meat factory. In the halls and corridors, between old conveyor belts and in the open spaces, individual artworks like the telescope – created by the artist Gian Maria Tosatti – repeatedly direct your gaze towards the moon, night sky and stars.

The old factory was occupied in 2009 and named "Metropoliz" by its new inhabitants. Today, it provides a home to around 200 people forced into precarious living situations. Improvised flats were established in the empty buildings, the infrastructure and spaces developed by community groups. In 2012, in order to protect the Metropoliz and its residents from eviction, the Museo dell'Altro e dell'Altrove di Metropoliz (MAAM) was founded.

A MUSEUM LIKE NO OTHER

Over the years, over 450 international artists have created site-specific work here. Art and life are not, however, separate; they intertwine with each other. Children play in the Museum of the Others and the Elsewhere, art reaches into the living spaces and a resident-run cafeteria in the centre of the complex invites you to linger and chat. In every corner, the energy and work that the residents, activists and artists have invested over 15 years is palpable.

If you visit the museum, you will encounter a truly unique place: it is – depending on your perspective – the world's first inhabited museum, with art that became a barricade against the threatened eviction, an alternative to the profit-oriented city, a visionary place for another kind of living together, a spaceship, a utopia.

THE METROPOLIZ BEFORE THE TRANSFORMATION

After 15 years of tolerating the Metropoliz, in 2024 the city of Rome decided to purchase the site, legalise it and set up social housing. Some of the flats are to be made available to the current residents. The MAAM will also be renovated and will become an equal member of Rome's museum network. But with this, the Metropoliz faces new challenges. While improving the living conditions is absolutely necessary, there is a danger that the residents' way of living together could be disrupted and the special qualities of the place lost.

To document these qualities of the Metropoliz before its transformation and from them develop a vision for the place's future was the aim of Un'altra Casa, the pilot initiative of the international project Ecological Futures, which was initiated in 2023 by the Goethe-Institut and ARCH+, the discourse-setting architecture magazine in Germany and beyond. In dialogue with the stakeholders of Metropoliz, PlanBude (Hamburg), raumlabor (Berlin) und Jörg Leeser from the Architekturbüro BeL (Cologne) were invited to engage with the Metropoliz and devise a vision for the future.

A HETEROGENOUS NETWORK

Planbude collaborated with the residents to document their perspectives of the place and its unique features. With the Social Impact Studio and students from the Peter Behrens School of Arts, Jörg Leeser focused on the Metropoliz's football pitch, a favourite



A glimpse into one of the Metropoliz's rooms: with murals, paintings and installations by more than 450 artists from all around the world, the venue on the outskirts of Rome has become a centre for contemporary art and creativity.

spot of both children and adults. raumlabor, in turn, worked with the artist Maria Dilemas on a visualisation of how the new Metropoliz could one day look. In it, the football pitch has been kept. The currently sealed area would be open, a small grove growing at the far side of the site; museum and flats continue to merge. On the roof of the tower, a rocket recalls the Metropoliz's metaphor of outer space. This sketch is intended not as a blueprint, but as an image to make the future imaginable and enable desires for the site's renovation to take shape.

This is the central idea of Ecological Futures: urban practices as visions of the future in the present of our cities; visions for a tomorrow that heterogeneous networks of neighbours, activists, scientists and artists can start shaping today. It is about other forms of collaboration, of learning and experimenting, of connections and mutual support. In short: a transformation from below. This is exactly what Ecological Futures wants to try out in cities across the world in the coming years. ●

Eva Schmitt and Lukas Heger from the Goethe-Institut developed Ecological Futures with Christian Hiller, Anh-Linh Ngo and the team from ARCH+. Ecological Futures's pilot project in Rome was initiated by Antonella Perin.



Lukas Heger is a project officer in the Fine Arts department at the Goethe-Institut's head office in Munich.





AGAINST POPULISM

— EUROPE DEFENDS ITS VALUES

As part of the event series The Art of Staying Many, the Taiwanese dance group Cloud Gate Dance Theatre presented the German premiere of *Sounding Light* in Weimar. Through Cheng Tsung-lung's choreography, the performance melds dance, light and sound to reflect on the relationship between humanity and nature.

The increasing polarisation of the political climate has, in recent years, led to a weakening of democratic structures in Europe. To counter the exacerbation of social divides, the Goethe-Institut supports local stakeholders and provides a constructive space for debate with its cultural programme exploring contemporary issues.

Together with its partners, the Goethe-Institut organises projects that explicitly address right-wing populist, nationalist and far-right movements and support democracy by promoting critical thinking, participation and democratic approaches.

In many European societies, disinformation is facilitating polarisation. People turn away from scientific evidence and appear willing to be seduced by populism and propaganda. Algorithms act as a potent vehicle for this influence, as they prioritise extreme content and populist narratives and thus produce strong emotional responses. To raise awareness of these mechanisms, the Goethe-Institut works to further young people's cultural education and media literacy, with the aim of combating illiberal or extremist tendencies.

International cooperation is particularly important for developing and consolidating strategies to oppose populism and right-wing extremism; with the European National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC), the Goethe-Institut, along with other European institutes in the sectors of culture and education, provides a meaningful counterweight – primarily through supporting independent partner organisations abroad that are committed to human rights, a more open society and liberal values.

**THE ART OF STAYING MANY:
NATIONWIDE FORUMS FOR ART, FREEDOM AND
DEMOCRACY**

In summer 2024, the federal culture fund Fonds Darstellende Künste, in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut and numerous theatres and festivals, hosted a nine-part event series. Performances, talks and workshops in Leipzig, Düsseldorf, Bitterfeld-Wolken, Berlin, Potsdam, Erfurt, Dresden and Weimar opened up debate about social coexistence, independent artistic production and the threats facing our democracy.

Around 6,000 participants discussed how the performing arts could contribute to democracy and societal cohesion. In addition, 27 productions were presented: international performances from three continents, including *La Obra* by Mariano Pensotti (Argentina) and *Fatigue* by Viktor Szeri (Hungary), were complemented in the programme by German productions such as *Bitter Fields* by les drama-turx and *LECKEN* by CHICKS*.

In close to 70 formats – lectures, panels, workshops – well-known personalities including the philosopher Omri Boehm, the filmmaker Hito Steyerl and the authors Sivan Ben Yishai, Anne Rabe, Manja Präkels and Deniz Utlu shared their views. Numerous politicians, among them Ferda Ataman, Joe Chialo and Carsten Brosda, as well as the Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut Johannes Ebert, also expressed positions on the challenges facing society.

In times of societal polarisation and rising right-wing populism, the event series, curated by Felizitas Stilleke and Franziska Werner, sent an important message locally, nationally and internationally. Essays and impressions are documented online, in a book and in a film that will tour in 2025.

Manfred Stoffl is Director of the Theatre and Dance Division at the Goethe-Institut's head office.



FAKELESS

Against the backdrop of illiberal powers gaining ground in Europe and the media landscape becoming increasingly restricted, the Goethe-Institut in Athens developed the exhibition *Fakeless* with the Ukrainian NGO Kunscht. *Fakeless* fosters media literacy among all generations, promoting a more critical attitude to news in order to counter disinformation. Encompassing an interactive offline exhibition and an online platform with games and visual resources, it is designed for all age groups, since older people are not necessarily more media-savvy than the young and can be more prone to share content without checking its source. Available in nine different languages, *Fakeless* can be installed in sections.

8,000

people have visited the exhibition *Fakeless* since autumn 2023

Since autumn 2023, over 8,000 people have visited *Fakeless* in Southeastern Europe. In Athens it was accompanied by fact-checking workshops titled “Bring your Grandpa”; in Sarajevo, the library’s director gave a tour of the exhibition to an 85-year-old woman who wanted to be improve her digital literacy. The exhibition toured universities in Turkey, hosting lectures about disinformation, while in Serbia, it was installed in a partner library in Kragujevac. The exhibition can be visited until the end of 2025, and future projects are in the works.

Bettina Wenzel is Head of the Information Division for the Europe I region.



HUNGARIAN-GERMAN COPRODUCTIONS

How do we behave under increasingly illiberal conditions? How do we bolster the ability to resist nationalistic ideologies? How do we create a vibrant European cultural scene, one characterised by dialogue and artistic collaboration? These questions were explored in a coproduction by the Örkény Theatre Budapest and the Theaterhaus Jena, which was funded by the Goethe-Institut's International Cooperation Fund (IKF). The main focus was democratising theatre structures and testing out new models of collaboration that transcend language barriers and national borders.

The theatre-makers were looking to develop a theatre model that took into account both the globalised present moment and societal responsibility for the cultural life of the city. The project engaged with and worked to defuse the political tensions in both locations: the novels that inspired the plays deal with issues of identity and societal conflict. *Oft sterben wir nicht* by Andrea Tompa examines the experience of theatre workers in an authoritarian system, while László Krasznahorkai's *Herscht 07769* turns the lens on the rightwards shift and right-wing extremism in rural East Germany. The collaborative approach reveals parallels between the two works: both productions take an experimental dramaturgical approach to represent historical and contemporary challenges from a range of perspectives. The premieres and performances took place in Budapest and Jena in spring 2025. ●

Miriam Bruns is Director of the Goethe-Institut in Budapest.



Mária Szaplanczay and Florian Thongsap Welsch in *Oft sterben wir nicht*. Based on the novel by Andrea Tompa — adapted for the stage by the director Ildikó Gáspár — the production tells a complex story of identity and reckoning with the past.



Fakeless is an international exhibition created by the Ukrainian collective Kunsht in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut. It promotes media and digital literacy in order to safeguard democracy, pluralism and diversity in times of growing illiberal powers and a restricted media landscape.

“At a time when democracy is under pressure around the globe, it is even more important that we, as the Goethe-Institut, actively advocate for our vision of an open society. We are working towards this mission with a diverse range of programmes – for example, initiatives promoting media literacy. Being able to take a critical approach to information and recognise instances of misreporting or fake news is crucial for all generations, and is a challenge we are tackling together.”

Gesche Joost, President of the Goethe-Institut, at the Goethe-Institut’s annual press conference in December 2024.

CREATIVE BEYOND BORDERS

With Culture Moves Europe, the Goethe-Institut is implementing the European Union's biggest programme for cultural mobility. Since 2022, more than 7,000 artists and creatives from 40 countries have received funding. This international networking increases the visibility of their cultural work and simultaneously strengthens dialogue and cohesion in Europe.



*left: Manuela V. Colacicco and Giacomo Graziosi's performance *about:blank* explores the fluidity of identities in the clash between projection and reflection.*

*right: Korean artist Hye Young Sin presents her visual sound installation *Trashes* at the anniversary celebration in Brussels.*



On the evening of 3 April 2025, the third anniversary of Culture Moves Europe was celebrated in the Koninklijke Vlaamse Schouwburg theatre in Brussels. Across the building's three floors, artists who had received grants from the programme gave an unforgettable demonstration of its founding idea: culture that grows through exchange and is shared with others.

Many different creative disciplines were in the spotlight, with performances, a sound installation, contemporary dance, a curated menu and a DJ set. The programme was supplemented by short talks and presentations. As well as Secretary General Johannes Ebert, the guests included representatives of the EU Commission, the Polish Presidency of the European Council and figures from Brussels's cultural scene.

STRENGTH THROUGH DIALOGUE

Johannes Ebert emphasised the importance of cultural mobility in the context of current global challenges. In this time of geopolitical tensions, societal polarisation and increasing restrictions on artistic freedom, he said, targeted programmes are needed to enable dialogue, strengthen cooperation and make cultural perspectives visible.

Marie Le Sourd, Secretary General of On the Move network, also considers the programme to be trailblazing: "Culture Moves Europe is one of the few programmes that systematically reflects on issues such as disability, parenthood, sustainability and the inclusion of remote regions." By doing so, it has set an inspiring example for inclusive, sustainable and future-oriented initiatives in the European cultural sector.

ACCESS AND DIVERSITY

Since 2022, Culture Moves Europe has been offering artists and creatives a range of opportunities to work abroad and take part in residencies and exchanges. The programme is implemented by the Goethe-Institut on behalf of the European Commission, and in the first project phase received 21 million euros in funding from the programme Creative Europe.

Equal opportunities, sustainability and equitable access are central principles of Culture Moves Europe. Thanks to specific financial incentives, more than half of the grant recipients chose an eco-friendly journey. Those who require additional support due to disability, care responsibilities or higher visa costs receive additional funding. There is outreach in regions that have thus far been less represented in the programme: workshops on the application process in the respective national languages were organised in Tunisia, Georgia and Serbia, leading to a notable increase in applications.

LONG-TERM IMPACT

Natalia Kempa-Paplińska, representative of the Polish Presidency of the European Council, emphasised: "The mobility of artists is a professional stepping stone. There is clear evidence that it plays a decisive role in their career paths." Reports from participants confirm this: the majority noted that their projects would not have been possible without the grants. Almost all would recommend applying.

Culture Moves Europe intends to build on this positive reception. The second phase is due to start in summer 2025, and will continue enabling emerging artists and creatives to make international contacts, work together and generate new perspectives. ●



Georg Milz is an officer in the Communications Department at the Goethe-Institut's head office in Munich.



BETWEEN WONDER AND WORRY

Once upon a time there was a wanderer who discovered, in a remote forest, a mushroom he'd never seen before. Unsure if it was edible, he asked artificial intelligence for advice. "Harmless," pronounced the voice, so he tasted the mushroom. But barely had he swallowed the first mouthful when he felt the poison spreading in his veins. After his death his ghost rose, full of wrath and the desire for justice, to seek the AI who caused his demise.

The short film *AI vs.* by Hans Lu is part of the Goethe-Institut's global engagement with the subject of artificial intelligence. Like the workshop AI Magic, which raises young people's awareness of the creative uses of AI, it demonstrates the various ways of addressing the topic. The Goethe-Institut, too, is dealing with the various opportunities and challenges the increased use of AI brings.

THE VISION OF A KAFKESQUE FUTURE

In her film, Han Lu explores the sweeping consequences of AI-generated false information. At the Goethe-Institut China's AI short film contest, The Future of Freedom in the Age of AI, she was awarded the prize for artistic innovation.

The film is inspired by real events. "A person used an AI app to identify a mushroom, but the app got it wrong and so the person ate a poisonous one," explains Han Lu. "This made me ask myself: Can we really trust AI? Instead of presenting this story in a realistic way, I wanted to explore it through a fantasy perspective. That's why I invented the ghost. Here AI has an almost magical, godlike power – I think that gives the story an ironic twist."

To make the dialogue sound realistic, she took on the role of the ghost and asked AI a series of questions. The dialogue in her film was also created with AI – but to her ears, most AI voices sounded too emotionless. She decided to speak the lines herself, in order to retain the pitch, and then used AI to transform the recording into a male voice.

With her film, Han Lu wants to get the audience to engage with the topic of AI in a nuanced way – particularly at a time when it is increasingly being integrated into everyday life, whether in hospitals or schools. "AI tools are very powerful, but can they take responsibility for their mistakes? That is the big question with every new technology: does it make our lives easier – or does it create new problems?"

WHERE AI LOOKS LIKE MAGIC

To some people, AI can look like magic, since it can accomplish complex tasks seemingly effortlessly. But those who understand that behind it are data sets and algorithms can implement AI responsibly and use it creatively. With the workshop AI Magic, the Goethe-Institut prepared teenagers in the North Africa and the Middle East region for a future in which AI may exercise increasing influence on our society. The young people developed – with the help of AI – creative solutions to sustainability issues like waste management and the preservation of biological diversity.

Itamar Friedman from Tel Aviv, a 12-year-old participant in the workshop, found the information about deepfakes most interesting. "The AI creates a new image every time of a person who doesn't even exist," he says. "I was surprised at how hard it can be to tell. Sometimes you notice small mistakes, but often it looks totally real."

Through AI Magic! he now has a better understanding of how AI can be utilised, in positive as well as negative ways. "People can create a lot with it, but it can also be dangerous, because people can gain power," said Itamar. "AI can be used for good or bad things, depending on the person. I now always try to think about that when I see AI-generated things."

THE GOETHE-INSTITUT AND AI

Through its cultural and educational programme, the Goethe-Institut advocates for an AI that is free of discrimination and oriented towards the common good, and observes developments from a critical, cultural perspective. In the language, culture and information sectors in particular, AI-produced solutions are generating exciting possibilities. A central focus is on promoting people's ability to use and engage with AI, and for this the Goethe-Institut is not only using the existing AI tools, but also developing its own applications.

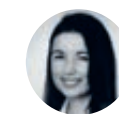
Specifically in language lessons, artificial intelligence is revolutionising learning possibilities. For example, language course participants have been benefiting for some time from an AI conversation assistant, which enables them to practice spontaneous everyday dialogue both verbally and in writing, and AI assists teachers with marking homework.

As well as this, the Goethe-Institut is developing chatbots, which online users will soon be able to integrate with goethe.de and thus tailor resources like teaching material to their individual needs. All staff worldwide have access to an AI assistant and regularly receive training on how AI tools can support them with their everyday tasks.

These developments demonstrate that AI helps to implement innovative solutions. The potential risks and dangers, though, should be kept in view. This way, Han Lu can also see the positive side of AI rather than viewing it as a threat to her artistic freedom.

"Although my film critically interrogates AI, in my own work I consider it more as creative assistance," she explains. "I have no training in animation, but with AI I can now create animations myself. That makes the process quicker and more accessible. I love incorporating fantasy elements into my stories, but in the traditional film sector that often comes with high production costs. Through AI, special effects are much more affordable and easier to implement."

Nevertheless, she adds, sometimes she misses the creative process of traditional filmmaking – especially working together with others on set. "Working with AI can be quite isolating. And although AI can do an incredible amount, it often lacks the depth and nuance that I consider so important to my stories." ●



Emrike Knoche is trainee in the Communications Department of the Goethe-Institut's head office in Munich.



left: The short film AI vs. by Han Lu tells the story of a ghost who died after accidentally eating a poisonous mushroom and subsequently demanded justice from an AI. The prize ceremony for the AI short film contest The Future of Freedom in the Age of AI was held in August 2024 at the Goethe-Institut China.

EXPLORING THE GOETHEVRSUM

Similar to a multiplayer game, you use a personalised avatar to meet other people and explore different spaces, which offer new event formats in the fields of culture, language, education and creativity. The team behind the GoetheVRsum, from the Education and Discourse Department at the Goethe-Institut's head office, invites us to join them on this journey.

Tell us about the GoetheVRsum – how does it work in practice?

The GoetheVRsum is like a computer game. You meet people who, for instance, are also on the way to an artist talk in a cafe, who come to the breakout room after their language class or who are listening to a panel discussion on the stage. Our "Library of Things" provides a wide range of virtual objects like whiteboards, notepads and 3D graphics that can be spontaneously placed in the space and moved around. This means you can quickly visualise complex matters, share videos and presentations, design something together or just put up a disco ball and host a party.

Why does the Goethe-Institut need its own virtual 3D environment? Who can use it?

The GoetheVRsum was created by various Goethe-Instituts and the head office in response to the keen interest in virtual worlds. This new digital world is intended to be as accessible and data secure as possible and to fulfil the needs of our cultural and educational programme. The GoetheVRsum should be understood as a "Goethe environment" that facilitates international cultural exchange across physical borders. Some of the first users were our colleagues at the Goethe-Institut Sudan. They organised a workshop in the GoetheVRsum for artists and creatives from the region who were under threat and who, due to the geopolitical situation, could not meet in person.

“Suddenly Doggo just wouldn't stop talking! That still happens sometimes – if you're curious, try it out.”

Some areas in the GoetheVRsum are inspired by the experimental approaches of the Bauhaus. Could you tell us more about the design of the virtual world?

In the conceptual phase, a central inspiration was the internationally known Bauhaus – their avant-garde approach was an ideal fit for the project. The Studio für unendliche Möglichkeiten devised the design, taking inspiration from three Bauhaus artists, Gunta Stölzl, Wassily Kandinsky and Oskar Schlemmer. One advantage of the Bauhaus style is its geometrical forms, which can be mapped onto 3D models relatively easily and efficiently. This means that the GoetheVRsum is still accessible even with a weaker internet connection.



Staff gather via their avatars for the launch of the GoetheVRsum, which took place as part of Perpetual Beta Festival in 2025 – a forum for discussions about digital society and its impact on international cultural exchange.

Has anything unexpected happened in the GoetheVRsum, or were there any technical glitches that made you laugh?

One of the funniest moments in the process occurred when we began to train Doggo, the GoetheVRsum's AI assistant. The AI-supported "engage" function needed numerous training rounds, and by the end, when Doggo had pretty extensive knowledge, another challenge appeared: suddenly Doggo just wouldn't stop talking! That still happens sometimes – if you're curious, try it out.

How did you succeed in getting colleagues – or people who may see the technology as more of a barrier – excited about the GoetheVRsum?

The best way is by experiencing it together. We invited colleagues and external partners on guided tours, so that they could get to know the GoetheVRsum in a completely relaxed way. It's just more fun exploring the virtual world in a group, and that's exactly what we want to convey. Gaming experience or technical know-how aren't necessary for navigating the GoetheVRsum. Our mascot Doggo takes all visitors by the hand, accompanies them for the first steps and answers their questions. In the onboarding room there's a basic guide, and anyone who wants to dive deeper can familiarise themselves with a range of functions via our handbook. And if you want to organise events in the GoetheVRsum yourself, you can get the necessary knowledge to be a host.

Last but not least, a glimpse into future: what's next?

People from all over the world come together in the GoetheVRsum to network and to learn from and engage with one another – regardless of their current location. They can meet without physical borders, travel restrictions or financial resources posing a barrier. We want to continue trying out this new technology and creatively utilising its possibilities. As well as the tours, we already have a lot planned for 2025: a series of workshops for young people on the topic of AI, an exchange between artists in exile, an immersive reading, a project with female gamers, an external launch in cooperation with a festival, and much more. ●



Interview by by Katrin Figge, Acting Head of the Communications Division at the Goethe-Institut's head office in Munich.



THE POWER OF CULTURE

Fostering a multiplicity of voices, creating networks, building bridges: in 2024 the Goethe Medal went to literary translator and interpreter Claudia Cabrera from Mexico, art historian and cultural manager Iskra Geshoska from North Macedonia and Carmen Romero Quero, the founder and director of the Chilean theatre festival Teatro a Mil.



“I believe in the politics of sharing and in the organic community that creates spaces of emancipation through critical self-examination. Societal dynamics can be supportive and open only when they allow free exchange between courageous individuals who succeed in preserving their autonomy by creating strong and vibrant platforms of solidarity together.” Iskra Geshoska



Cultural work creates trust, strengthens liberal values and opens up free space for dialogue. And here the awardees of the 2024 Goethe Medal – Claudia Cabrera, Iskra Geshoska and Carmen Romero Quero – have made outstanding contributions in recent years.

“All three awardees make a huge impact in their own communities and far beyond,” emphasised Carola Lentz, the former president of the Goethe-Institut, in her speech at the ceremony in Weimar on 28 August 2024. “They create safe spaces and resilient networks, they make utopias of togetherness and transcending borders possible, and they impart courage and power through the beauty of art.”

left: The awardees of the 2024 Goethe Medal after the ceremony: Iskra Geshoska (North Macedonia), Carmen Romero Quero (Chile) and Claudia Cabrera (Mexico), pictured with Katja Keul, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office; Peter Kleine, Mayor of Weimar; Johannes Ebert, Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut; Professor Carola Lentz, former President of the Goethe-Institut; and Rainer Pollack, Business Director of the Goethe-Institut.

Introducing Claudia Cabrera, the writer Olga Grjasnowa highlighted the multidimensional nature of the awardee’s work: “The career of the literary translator is [. . .] a career that demands extraordinary skill; not only the knowledge of both languages, both cultures, countries, but also the magical ability to render a literary work, with all its distinctive features, in a different language and cultural context, and in doing so stay as true as possible to the original text.”

Claudia Cabrera is an award-winning literary translator and interpreter. She studied Hispanic literature and Roman and German philology in Mexico City and Göttingen, and began translating literary works in the 1990s. Her most recent project is the new translation of the exile literature by Anna Seghers, who lived in Mexico during the 1940s. She is also a founding member and the president of Ametli, the Mexican union of literary translators.

The philosopher Boris Buden paid homage to Iskra Geshoska by addressing the many challenges of independent cultural work the awardee encountered in North Macedonia:

"What does it take to create art in a continuously disintegrating cultural sphere? [. . .] How does one ensure one's moral and intellectual integrity? [. . .] Iskra managed it, and continued creating even as the ground was being ripped away from under her feet."

Iskra Geshoska is an art historian, festival organiser and the director of Kontrapunkt in North Macedonia, where until 2017 the cultural scene was deeply marked by censorship and repressive measures. In 2001 she founded the NGO Kontrapunkt and the cultural centre Tocka to support young artists with their projects and thereby contribute to a self-confident, independent cultural scene. Tocka had to close in 2010 after a political intervention, but since establishing Kontrapunkt, Iskra Geshoka has been the co-founder of multiple networks that build connections among the free cultural scene in the region.

Theatre producer and director Amelie Deuflhard praised Carmen Romero Quero for her trailblazing work, her knowledge of art and her "energy for making the seemingly impossible possible. For the many city projects that bring theatre to the people and create

new ways in to theatre for many people!" She added that Carmen Romero Quero was one of the few people "who have shaped international theatre and continue to shape it today".

Carmen Romero Quero is the director of Teatro a Mil theatre festival, which she founded in 1994 and is now the most important interdisciplinary theatre festival in South America. She is also founder and director of the Fundación Teatro a Mil foundation, through which she made a major contribution to the internationalisation of the performing arts in South America and to cultural exchange between South America and other continents.●



Katrin Figge is the Deputy Head of the Communications Department at the head office in Munich.



“Über-setzen, the beautiful German word for ‘getting from one shore to the other’. For me, for 30 years now, that has meant crossing the ‘language ocean’ between Mexico and Germany, day in, day out, again and again, with every one of the many words and thoughts that I translate from Germany to Mexico. Therefore I would like, at a time when divides between people, parties, countries and cultures are becoming ever greater and language is constantly devalued and misused, to remember the importance of language as one of our most precious means for mediation and reconciliation.” Claudia Cabrera



“I have faith in the performing arts. A thousandfold faith that humanity can reconnect through shared emotions. Through the arts, we will return to what is human. Therefore, our message is simple: MORE HUMANITY. To stop and reconnect with the present, with our community, with nature, and with our very essence through art.” Carmen Romero Quero

Since 1955, the Goethe-Institut has awarded the **Goethe Medal** once a year as the official decoration of the Federal Republic of Germany. Honouring individuals from all over the world who have done outstanding work to promote the German language and international cultural exchange, the Goethe Medal is the most important award of Germany's foreign cultural policy. The more than 300 awardees include Daniel Barenboim, David Cornwell aka John le Carré, Ágnes Heller, Petros Markaris, Jorge Semprún, Robert Wilson, Neil MacGregor, Helen Wolff, Juri Andruchowytch, Irina Scherbakowa, Shirin Neshat, Ariane Mnouchkine, Yoko Tawada, Sofia Gubaidulina, Dogan Akhanli and Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell. A musical highlight of the 2024 ceremony was the world premiere of Aaron Dan's composition "Melos". The music programme was curated by Tiago de Oliveira Pinto, UNESCO Chair at the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt Weimar. goethe.de/goethe-medaille

HONOURED: THE KLAUS-VON-BISMARCK AWARDEES

Every year, the Klaus-von-Bismarck Award recognises outstanding employees who have shown particular professional and personal commitment to the mission of the Goethe-Institut. In 2024, the award went to two longstanding and dedicated colleagues in New Delhi and Kyoto.



Puneet Kaur has been working at the Goethe-Institut Max Mueller Bhavan | India in New Delhi for 25 years and has had a lasting impact on educational cooperation during this time. Showing outstanding commitment to strengthening the teaching of German in India, she is the initiator and source of numerous projects, President of the Indo-German Teachers' Association (InDaF) and Secretary-General of the Internationalen Deutschlehrerinnen- und Deutschlehrerverbands (IDV). When there were plans to remove foreign language teaching from the Indian public school curriculum a few years ago, she successfully lobbied to prevent it spelling the end for German. The project German in 1,000 Schools, which she initiated, now mentors over 28,000 pupils, the majority of whom come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. At the special event Namaste Deutschland, the project brought together 5,000 participants from all schools in North India.



Naoki Ishida has been bringing his innovative spirit and drive to the Goethe-Institut Villa Kamogawa in Kyoto, west Japan, for over 30 years. An early advocate of digitalisation, he overcomes all challenges at the institute – from technical support for the trinational conference AIR on Air – Residencies in the Air to artistic projects. His ingenuity has no limits. He recalls, for example, a project featuring a sculpture in a public square: The artist covered the ground with plastic and created ornate designs on the surface. Three years later she came back to Kyoto and we needed to remove the plastic from the ground. For this you need a pneumatic drill, and neither of us had any idea what to do. But after a little research we figured it out together. The ground is now clean again, and beautiful.

The Klaus-von-Bismarck Award: Klaus von Bismarck, who was president of the Goethe-Institut from 1977 to 1989, is the founder and namesake of this award. Since 1991, the Executive Committee has been honouring two employees every year from the global network of the Goethe-Institut.

ON THE MOVE WITH THE GOETHE-INSTITUT

Numerous artists, researchers, cultural workers and politicians from Germany travel all around the world with the Goethe-Institut every year. They convey a contemporary image of Germany abroad and gather new inspiration for their own work.

FINE ARTS

Anna Ehrenstein
Boris Eldagsen
Forensic Architecture/Forensis: Robert Trafford, Dimitra Andritsou, Eyal Weizman
Anna Heringer
Natascha Sadr Haghighian
Anne Duk Hee Jordan
Emeka Ogboh
Pinar Öğrenci
Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
Tobias Rehberger
Farkhondeh Shahroudi
Clemens von Wedemeyer

EDUCATION AND DISCOURSE

Prof. Dr. Omri Boehm
Prof. Dr. Naika Foroutan
Dr. Navid Kermani
Prof. Dr. Lars-Christian Koch
Charles Landry
Dr. Caroline Lindekamp
Prof. Dr. Bertolt Meyer
Prof. Dr. Susan Neiman
Luisa Neubauer
Dr. Mark Terkessidis
Prof. Dr. Mirjam Wenzel

FILM, TELEVISION AND RADIO

Erol Afsin
Narges Kalhor
Timm Kröger
Sophie Linnenbaum
Helke Misselwitz
Steffi Niedertzoll
Asli Özarslan

Christian Petzold
Axel Ranisch
Margarethe von Trotta
Wim Wenders
Maryam Zaree

INFORMATION AND LIBRARIES

Martin Baltscheit
Robin Baumgarten
Dirk von Gehlen
Petra Hauke
Klaus-Peter Hommes
Holger Krimmer
Jörg Maas
Chantal-Fleur Sandjon
Valerie Scholz
Dr Frank Seeliger

LITERATURE AND TRANSLATION FUNDING

Fatma Aydemir
Antje Damm
Jenny Erpenbeck
Durs Grünbein
Judith Hermann
Nicolas Mahler
Barbi Marković
Terézia Mora
Reiner Stach
Deniz Utlu

MUSIC

Aki Takase/Daniel Erdmann
Ensemble Aventure
Ensemble Modern
Ensemble Recherche

Florian Herzog
Kaleidoskop
Stephanie Lottermoser
Magda Mayas
Orchester im Treppenhaus
SALOMEA
Signum Quartett
Trio Catch

LANGUAGE

Onyeka Oshionwu
Anke Reiffenstuel
Tscharällo
WOANDERS

THEATRE AND DANCE

Dance On Ensemble
Lucy Wilke und Paweł Dudus
Regine Dura und Hans-Werner Kroesinger
Florentina Holzinger
Susanne Kennedy
Barrie Kosky, Berliner Ensemble
Ligia Lewis
Rabieh Mroué
Münchner Kammerspiele
Ceren Oran
Rimini Protokoll
Schaubühne Berlin
Richard Siegal
Zufit Simon
Theater Thikwa
The Chicks
Joana Tischkau






IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Encounters between people build trust. They make mutual understanding and respect possible. This past year, Goethe-Instituts around the world once again welcomed figures from the spheres of politics, culture and education.



- 1 Federal President **Frank-Walter Steinmeier** and his wife Elke Büdenbender attend the delegation's reception in the Komitas Museum-Institute in Yerevan. President of the Goethe-Institut Gesche Joost (right) accompanied the trip to Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- 2 Choreographer **Sasha Waltz** (centre) at the Goethe-Institut in Helsinki having breakfast with Director Irene Bark (left) and Laura Åkerlund, who manages the culture programme.
- 3 Author **Olga Grjasnowa** discusses the question "How can one repair the world?" with Brazilian authors Daniel Galera and Antônio Xerxesky at the literature festival of the Jewish Museum of São Paulo.
- 4 Minister for Culture and the Media **Claudia Roth** and Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut Johannes Ebert at the opening of the Ukraine Program at the Frankfurt Book Fair.
- 5 **Deniz Utlu** reads from *Vaters Meer*. For the first time, the Goethe-Institut was able to nominate a book for the European Union Prize for Literature, and selected the work by Utlu. At the award ceremony, he presented his novel in the state office of Lower Saxony.
- 6 **Lars Eidinger**, lead actor in *Sterben* (directed by Matthias Glasner), is interviewed in the Goethe-Institut Athens. The film was screened at the 30th edition of Athens International Film Festival.
- 7 **Wim Wenders** during his visit to India. In New Delhi he presented the retrospective Wim Wenders – King of the Road, organised by the Film Heritage Foundation and the Goethe-Institut.
- 8 At the end of his trip to China, Federal Chancellor **Olaf Scholz** visited the Goethe-Institut Beijing, where he discussed their work and challenges with cultural professionals and representatives of civil society.
- 9 The former footballer **Thomas Hitzlsperger** visited the Goethe-Institut London in his role as football ambassador for UEFA Euro 2024, and swapped ideas with pupils in a workshop titled "German and Football".
- 10 Author **Jenny Erpenbeck**, with her American publisher Declan Spring, attends the Goethe-Institut in New York to mark the translation of her novel *Kairos* into English.

GERMANY

	12 institutes
	60,623 course participants
	134,231 exams taken
	109 cultural events
	3,699,126 visits to country portals



Imke Mohr has been Regional Director for Germany since July 2024. Previously she was the Head of Language with regional responsibility for Germany.

What’s on people’s minds locally?

The people who come to our institutes in Germany are worried about the political uncertainty and unrest in Europe. The question of where German and foreign language learning is heading, in light of the developments in AI, is also crucial for our colleagues and for those attending language courses.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

In 2024, the regional customer service unit began working for the 12 institutes in Germany. The aim of this virtual service is to improve availability for the increasingly demanding customers, and to ease the pressure on customer service managers by standardising and digitalising processes. In 2025 a comprehensive evaluation of the unit’s work will show to what degree this ambitious undertaking has been successful.

What are the greatest challenges?

Providing services for skilled workers from abroad and creating good conditions for their arrival in Germany and for them to learn the language remains an important goal. Experiences from 2024 show that it’s not always easy: organising partnerships with businesses and customising certification programmes is very complex, and many skilled workers are learning German under difficult conditions. There needs to be discussion with companies and firms as to how successful integration can be achieved.

What moments were particularly memorable?

From 15 to 22 July 2024, 107 teenagers took part in the Internationale Deutscholympiade, which had the motto “Creating knowledge, making the future”. The Goethe-Institut head office in Munich and the Goethe-Institut in Göttingen organised this great event in cooperation with the Forum Wissen in Göttingen. And after two years in a crowded temporary residence, since 28 August 2024 the Goethe-Institut in Frankfurt has been in new premises near the Konstablerwache square. Colleagues, Mayor Eskadari-Grünberg, Business Director Rainer Pollack and countless friends and supporters of the institute gave a toast to the new beginning at the opening event. The Goethe-Institut in Frankfurt is now well-placed to once again serve as the central hub for international skilled workers.

What’s planned for 2025/2026?







In the Germany region, the Cultural Education department is working with all institutes, focusing on combating antisemitism and fostering dialogue with Islam. Despite a difficult financial situation and funding cuts, 2025 will see more projects that oppose exclusionary ideologies and contribute to social cohesion. Our institutes are visited by people from many different countries, and the global crises also have an impact on our community and interactions here – there are conflicting viewpoints and perceptions. To foster a constructive approach and dialogue in these situations, measures to promote peaceful and respectful engagement are planned.



above: In Göttingen, 105 teenagers from 61 countries took part in the **2024 Internationale Deutscholympiade**, the biggest contest for German learners in the world. In the Forum Wissen museum they discovered – with a four-metre-high tower of books – the line between documentation and the history of knowledge.

below: A **language course at the Goethe-Institut’s new location in Frankfurt**. After two years in temporary premises, in August 2024 the institute moved into its new building in the centre of the city.

CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE

	9 institutes
	11,457 course participants
	18,177 exams taken
	2,132 cultural events
	55,760 library visits
	1.502,273 visits to country portals



Sonja Griegoschewski was Regional Director for Central Eastern Europe from 2021 to 2024. As of 1 January 2025, the institutes in this region have become part of the new Europe I and Europe II regions.

What's on people's minds locally?

The countries in Central Eastern Europe continue to bear deep wounds from their eventful history, and the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine triggers memories and fears. While freedom is self-evident for the younger generations, those who personally experienced war and displacement still carry the sense of the precarity that dictatorship instils. The election results show, as in Germany, a growing radicalisation and polarisation among the population. A societal split along the dividing line pro-Russian/anti-European is evident in countries including Latvia and Slovakia, where – since the change of government in 2023 – cultural protests have grown into large nationwide demonstrations.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

The institutes in the region continue, through larger European projects, to promote media literacy (Perspectives: One Europe, Many Stories), provide film training for young people (FilmED) and encourage art and sustainability (Cycle Up!). Thanks to special funding, the two-year project Get Started with German contributed to the language's increased popularity in schools and to teacher training in the three Baltic countries. Building Bridges of Remembrance facilitated knowledge sharing and collaboration between Polish, Czech and German historical sites, focusing on how new technology can be used for commemorating historical events and fostering dialogue.

What are the greatest challenges?

In a growing number of countries, increasingly strict stipulations and proscriptions relating to cooperation with international organisations present us and our partners with challenges. In addition to this, the artistic, cultural and educational spheres are particularly affected by shrinking resources, and this has an impact on independent cultural production. Dedicated staff, cooperation and the acquisition of third-party funding mitigate much of this, yet can hardly match the rising demands and costs.

What moments were particularly memorable?

On the 100th anniversary of Franz Kafka's death, numerous events, exhibitions, films and the video game *Playing Kafka* – which was downloaded 100,000 times – demonstrated the enduring relevance of the German-speaking author. At the event FEMINIST EUROPE, young LGBTQ+ collectives from Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia presented their perspectives on feminist and queer practice, and their focus on nonviolent and inclusive language was received enthusiastically by the audience. And thanks to Mischa Kuball's light installation, the voice of reason and the Enlightenment illuminated Slovenia, where the 300th birthday of Immanuel Kant and the 20th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut Ljubljana were celebrated.

What makes the region special?







The people in Central Eastern Europe, the meeting point between east and west, possess valuable experiences and lessons from European history. Their diverse perspectives and approaches are important building blocks for the construction of a united Europe.



above: Conclusion of the first cycle of **Mutual Empathies** in Vilnius – a residency programme organised by the Goethe-Institute in Vilnius, the Akademie der Künste der Welt in Cologne and the Rupert Centre for Art. The artists Vanja Smiljanić (pictured) and Saroot Supasuthivech presented their projects, which investigate our individual emotional reactions to the intensifying global crises.

below: For the 100th anniversary of the death of Franz Kafka, the **Kafka Edition** invited people to join a very special dinner: Kafka's favourite vegetarian dishes – a sign of his healthy lifestyle – were served in the garden of a sculptor's studio, itself nearly 100 years old, in the Prague district of Ůřechovka.

NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

	16 institutes
	23,283 course participants
	101,899 exams taken
	1.445 cultural events
	135,471 library visits
	2,976,896 visits to country portals



Lilli Kobler has been Regional Director for North Africa and the Middle East since September 2023.

What's on people's minds locally?

Conflicts and wars continue to be omnipresent in the region and leave deep scars. Then there is the difficult economic situation, which affects our staff and partners privately as well as professionally. Global challenges such as climate change, US foreign policy and a fundamental sense that our freedoms are becoming increasingly restricted give rise to fear and uncertainty. People here are tired and exhausted. Yet at the same time they don't give up hope, they are committed and keep going. That is impressive.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

We were delighted to start work on not just one but two EU-financed projects: the residency programme Mishkal in Ramallah engages, in new and in-depth ways, with Palestinian cultural heritage, while the art and culture platform Halaqat II is now the centre for exchange between the region and Brussels on the topics of gender equality and care work. With the exhibitions *Postcards from Cairo* and *Postcards from Kampala*, the team of the Goethe-Institut Sudan developed the idea behind *Postcards from Khartoum* in an impactful way, continuing to work transnationally and connect with various exile communities, including in Berlin and in the digital space. AI Magic! captured the imaginations of young people in Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Morocco with workshops on the creative potential of artificial intelligence. In addition to these projects, we are increasingly engaging with the target audience of skilled workers, for example in a vocational college in Cairo, through projects run by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and in cooperation with the GIZ in Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan – that is both exciting and challenging.

What are the greatest challenges in communicating?

The most important question is what we are actually communicating to whom. When listening and persevering become ever more difficult, the aims and limits that previously seemed clear blur.

What moments were particularly memorable?

Particularly striking was the third edition of the regional dance project Un|Controlled Gestures in June 2024 and the animated audience at the busy performances at the HAU Hebbel am Ufer in Berlin. During two residencies in Cairo and Berlin, six dancers from Arab countries developed their own productions with the support of mentors. The focus was on personal, intimate memories, but also on those that are burned into the collective consciousness. An evening full of hope.

What's planned for 2025/2026?







We are planning a fourth edition of Un|Controlled Gestures, as well as many long-term collaborations and changes of perspective. Back in January 2025, Egypt's Minister of Education visited Germany for three days at the invitation of the Goethe-Institut. The purpose of his visit was to discuss qualifications for skilled workers and the launch of 100 German-Egyptian schools. The Goethe-Institut Sudan is using the GoetheVRsum to bring together artists from various exile communities in a shared digital space. And with the regional project Gamechangers we are helping young women get started in game development.



above: Soundscape for wandering: at the May concert **Three Rooms Experience** in Studio Janaklees in Alexandria, the audience witnessed, with trumpet player Mohamed Sawwah and other musicians, a concert in movement. The event was part of Wana's Music Sessions, curated by Ayman Asfour, which bring music to unfamiliar places.

below: In her project for **Un|Controlled Gestures**, Safa Baluchi, an artist from Oman, examines themes such as belonging and identity. Inspired by her Balochi heritage, she combines traditional customs with modern influences and the digital world. Created in collaboration with HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Un|Controlled Gestures is a transnational project of the Goethe-Institut in North Africa and the Middle East for emerging choreographers.

NORTH AMERICA

	11 institutes
	10,307 course participants
	21,522 exams taken
	1,768 cultural events
	9,362 library visits
	1,261,002 visits to country portals



Klaus Krischok has been Regional Director for North America since February 2023.

What's on people's minds locally?

The result of the US election has major consequences for America's domestic policy and for German-American relations. It also has an impact on the neighbouring countries of Mexico and Canada. The radical nature of the changes, which could already be felt in early 2025, affects everyone – migration and diversity, the self-conception of the government and of course questions about the economy and national security are the focus of heated discussions. In Cuba, discontent over the poor supply situation is growing and this leads to emigration; in some areas of Central America, we are observing a worsening situation with regard to human rights.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

In the Foreign Correspondent event series, American and German journalists discussed the state and future of the transatlantic friendship, while the festival Longing Belonging looked at ideas of migration, leaving and arriving. The Goethe-Institut Mexico and the cultural associations in Central America have been successful with their efforts to attract skilled workers. And in 2024, Kant and Kafka were celebrated at all locations.

What are the greatest challenges?

The political upheaval makes civic dialogue and thus the Goethe-Institut increasingly relevant. It's not yet possible to say whether this upheaval will have a negative impact on our exchange programmes, such as the German-American Partnership Program and the Transatlantic Outreach Program, and on the German language's position in the education system.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The devastating forest fires in Los Angeles at the start of the year shocked and distressed us. The Thomas Mann House and the Villa Aurora – both historic places of exile that are now cultural centres – fortunately remained largely unscathed. The region has made great progress in realigning our network: the reopening of our institutes in Chicago and San Francisco gave cause for celebration, and at these events the appreciation and impact of our work was made tangible. In Chicago, we were also able to honour our colleague Rita Grassl Shefa for 50 years of service. While the switch to solely digital language courses was painful for many, within a year of its launch our German Online Language Department reached participants in all 50 US states and in Canada. That is a great success!

What's planned for 2025/2026?







In New York we are planning another move, in Houston the opening of a branch of the Goethe-Institut in Chicago. In Mexico we are working on a residency programme for artists from Central America who are facing persecution. With our educational programmes and digital services, we want – despite scarce financial resources – to continue working effectively across the whole region. We are looking forward to hosting the Berlin Schaubühne in Canada and Rimini Protokoll in the USA.



above: On 24 October, the Goethe-Institut in San Francisco celebrated the move to its new location with a performance by Joy Kammin, choreographed by Julia Riera. The evening in the Yerba Buena quarter offered an immersive experience that united art and technology and promoted intercultural exchange

below: Erin Woodbrey's *Gardeners for a Geologic Afterlife* is an installation in the Goethe-Institut Boston, produced as part of the residency programme Studio 170. Inspired by the movements of a gardener preparing for the spring, it weaves sculpture and gardening together into a spatial narrative.

NORTHWESTERN EUROPE

	8 institutes
	5,600 course participants
	12,522 exams taken
	1.764 cultural events
	19,885 library visits
	856,685 visits to country portals



Dr. Katharina von Ruckteschell-Katte was Regional Director for Northwestern Europe from 2018 to 2024. As of 1 January 2025, the institutes in this region have become part of the new Europe II region.

What's on people's minds locally?

In many places, the political balance of power has shifted following the European Parliament elections and national elections, demonstrating the necessity of actively working to protect democracy. Against the background of continuing international crises and conflicts, social protection and climate action appear as prominent issues in societal debates. At the same time, in Northwestern Europe disinformation is increasingly undermining trust in media and institutions.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

The institutes in Dublin, London and Amsterdam organised worldwide residencies with Studio Quantum, and the third instalment of the Cultural Bridge programme supported 20 German-British collaborations. Meanwhile, the Goethe-Institut in Stockholm and its partners explored how lessons taught in a pupil's native language could be a model for inclusive school development in Europe with the Erasmus+ project Your Language Counts! Language work in the United Kingdom was shaped by the Gimagine initiative and the high-profile launch of a special reader for young German learners: *Wuschel auf der Erde*, brought to life by Gruffalo illustrator Axel Scheffler. The Goethe-Institut London was also, together with the DAAD, an important partner in the German Embassy's Making the Case for German project. With the regional initiative Vorzeichen: Who, What, and How We Read, practices of canonisation in literature were interrogated. A further highlight was Slow Touring, which saw musicians, guided by sustainability, travel by train and ferry to Ireland – stopping off at multiple Goethe-Instituts in Western Europe – and collaborate with local artists.

What are the greatest challenges?

The war in the Middle East is a considerable stress test for cultural work and divides opinions, which continues to lead to the cancellation of events and partnerships. The internal transformation process involves decisions that have significant effects on the region, often entailing financial constraints.

What moments were particularly memorable?

One of the most memorable moments in 2024 was the launch of *Wuschel auf der Erde* – its charming stories and illustrations inspire young German learners, and the event was hosted by a school in London, with the British Schools Minister and illustrator Axel Scheffler in attendance.

What's planned for 2025/2026?

This year, we are looking forward to the increased opportunities for cooperation with the countries in the new Europe II region. With an emphasis on European integration and exchange between East and West, we will develop joint projects that foster dialogue and strengthen cultural and social links within Europe.



above: As part of the "GIMAGINE" project, which promotes German learning in the UK, German vegan food blogger Maya Leinenbach (FitGreenMind) met the winners of the Goethe-Institut's sustainable cooking and German competition in London in March. Together with the German Fun Club of Channing School and St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, the participants baked vegan muffins.

below: "Fertile Void" explored the synergies between quantum physics, art and culture. Accompanied by installations by the Studio Quantum artists in residence, the exhibition at the Goethe-Institut in Dublin invited visitors to explore the connection between science and art.

	8 institutes
	12,810 course participants
	58,864 exams taken
	1,835 cultural events
	123,317 library visits
	1,356,337 visits to country portals



Dr. Clemens Treter has been the Regional Director for East Asia since autumn 2022. Previously he spent six years working at the Goethe-Institut in Beijing. The East Asia region has been expanded, and as of 1 January 2025 is East and Central Asia.

What's on people's minds locally?

The economic, social and political challenges have not diminished in 2024. Trump's inauguration and its consequences for the global economic and political order, the short-lived but wholly unexpected declaration of martial law in South Korea, followed by the successful impeachment of the president and North Korea's involvement in the war against Ukraine, have exacerbated people's feeling of uncertainty. In many countries in East Asia, the limited career opportunities for young people in the ageing societies constitute an additional pressure. The topic of AI has reached broad segments of society—especially following the success of DeepSeek.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

One great success was the German-Taiwanese Symposium for Youth Theatre in Taipei, which paved the way for future collaborations. Together with the Duolun museum in Shanghai, the Goethe-Institut curated *Journeys in the Absence of the Body*, an exhibition featuring video art and installations by German and Chinese artists exploring transhumanism in the digital age and algorithmic manipulation. In Beijing the international AI short film competition *The Future of Freedom in the Age of AI* provoked animated discussion, and at the Asian German Studies conference in Qingdao a panel organised by the Goethe-Institut looked at the AI revolution in the classroom. In Korea, the focus was on sound art and new music, from the exhibition *Technical Gardens* to our cooperation with PAN festival *Nomad Spirit*, an EUNIC project in Mongolia, enabled European and Mongolian artists to draw attention to the effects of climate change and desertification with site-specific artworks in the Gobi Desert.

What are the greatest challenges?

In almost all countries in the region, Germany is increasingly viewed as a place with declining economic power and limited capacity to innovate. The fact that China is perceived and reported on negatively in Germany poses a significant challenge for our work locally. The dwindling trust, which we notice even among cultural partners, is something we need to moderate.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The world premiere of She She Pop's intergenerational dance battle *Dance Me! In China*, adapted by the ensemble _ao_ao_ing in Shanghai. The play *This is not an embassy* by Rimini Protokoll at the National Theatre in Taipei made a resounding impact on theatregoers – and also caused a sensation in Seoul. On the 15th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut Ulan Bator, the first concert in Mongolia by the prizewinning jazz pianist Shuteen Erdenebaatar – who studied in Munich – thrilled the audience. Last but not least, the audience's overwhelming response to the event series *A Century of Ukrainian Film*, which was organised in cooperation with the Institut français and the Ukrainian embassy in Beijing.

What's planned for 2025/2026?







We are looking forward to a regional project exploring the subject of solitude. Various artists will explore different aspects of loneliness, and their work will be brought together in 2026 at the HAU Hebbel am Ufer in Berlin. All institutes in the newly created East and Central Asia region will participate – a great opportunity to build connections between artists and learn more about their social realities and aesthetic perspectives.



above: As part of the international residency project **Nomad Spirit**, Elena Krištofor from Austria presented her photographs in Mongolia. Taken in the open expanse of Deren Soum, they explore the dynamic tension between verticality and horizontality.

below: In September, **Dance Me! In China**, the Chinese version of *Dance Me!* by She She Pop, premiered at the Shanghai International Dance Center. It was produced in collaboration with the Chinese ensemble _ao_ao_ing, and also toured to OōElii theatre in Hangzhou.

EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

	8 institutes
	18,058 course participants
	59,493 exams taken
	2,651 cultural events
	104,618 library visits
	1,857,149 visits to country portals



Dr. Heike Uhlig was Regional Director for East Europe and Central Asia from 2019 to 2024. As of 1 January 2025, the institutes in this region have become part of the new regions Europe I and Europe II and East- and Central Asia.

What's on people's minds locally?

Three years of war have led to tremendous exhaustion in Ukraine, and our partners in culture and education are no exception. The remarkable thing is that despite the focus on the war, lively debates about feminism, ecology and democracy are taking place. In all countries of the South Caucasus, concern is growing that fundamental freedoms and rights could be further restricted. Since November 2024, there have been ongoing protests in Georgia against the government's turning away from the EU, while hopes for a peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan have thus far remained unfulfilled. In Kazakhstan, debates on the colonial heritage of the Soviet Union continue, while issues of ecology and sustainability are topics of discussion across Central Asia.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

In Ukraine, we continued to support the local cultural and education sectors, ensuring contemporary Ukrainian perspectives were visible in Europe. The Goethe-Institut assisted 23 cultural institutions with a resilience fund and continued work to digitalise the curriculum for German teaching in Ukrainian secondary schools. With Matthias Schrieﬂ and his band, the Goethe-Institut Uzbekistan drew attention to the consequences of melting glaciers; in Russia, thanks to collaboration with the Institut franais, we developed a platform for ecological- and environmental films that inspired young filmmakers and screenwriters. In Yerevan, support from the cultural foundation of Saxony-Anhalt enabled us to realise the project DIALOGIES ON MODERNISMS: Yerevan – Dessau, which highlighted the links between European and Armenian modernist architecture and urban planning.

What are the greatest challenges?

What can we offer partners who no longer have time for culture because they're on the streets demonstrating every day? What free spaces are there for our work in illiberal contexts? How do we reach partners who withdraw from cooperation with foreign organisations for fear of the consequences?

What moments were particularly memorable?

The overwhelming response of the audience as the architect Philipp Meuser discussed Tashkent's architectural modernity; the celebrations for the 30-year anniversary of the Goethe-Instituts in Kazakhstan and Georgia; the many conversations with our partners, the continued learning from each other, the exchange of knowledge and mutual solidarity; the immersion in Kyiv's culture scene, which remains lively despite the war.

What's planned for 2025/2026?







In Kyiv, online language courses are continuing and our in-person language courses will also resume. The Goethe-Institut in Central Asia is highlighting the roles of women in local societies through various projects, and in Baku the project Symphony of the Sirens will, a century after the monumental premiere, once again fill the city with music, but under different premises: History and present have long since turned into another. What does that sound like, how should it sound?



above: In December, the **EU4Culture Network Festival: Human Stories, Diverse Voices – AWAKENED VISION** brought inclusive dance to the stage in Baku. For the National Day of People with Disabilities, dancers from the company DanceAbility Azerbaijan and the platform InForm gave impressive performances, sending a strong message in support of diversity and cultural exchange.

below: In October 2024 the concert series **Alphorn Dialogue in the Mountains of Urgut – Samarkand** took place, organised by the Goethe-Institut in Uzbekistan. Jazz composer Matthias Schrieﬂ and his band Amithias performed in Uzbekistan and discovered the musical parallels between German and Uzbek mountain regions. Highlights included concerts in Tashkent and Samarkand, where they improvised with an Uzbek orchestra.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

	15 institutes
	18,058 course participants
	125,844 exams taken
	1,474 cultural events
	61,628 library visits
	2,281,003 visits to country portals



Andreas Ströhl has been responsible for the Sub-Saharan Africa region since 2023. He was Regional Director for North America from 2016 to 2023.

What's on people's minds locally?

For the vast majority of the population, the living conditions in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa have not improved in recent years. Quite the opposite: rising prices, economic crises, civil wars, political instability, the cuts to USAID and other factors have further exacerbated social tensions. For many people in Africa, things are worse today than they were a year ago. Therefore, people here are primarily concerned with their own survival. Many are considering emigrating. This is obviously a reason for the immense interest in German language qualifications, which are necessary for working or studying in Germany.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

As part of the AMIF project Living and Working in Germany, which promotes the pre-integration of skilled workers looking to emigrate, 62 people received training that will help them disseminate knowledge and skills. One of the most challenging and important tasks for the Goethe-Institut in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2024, particularly in the wake of the significant funding cuts, was the planning and acquisition of four big EU projects. These will be a focus of the next three to five years and will take a variety of forms – exhibitions, networking events and cultural exchange, as well as residencies and festivals.

What are the greatest challenges?

Cultural life in Sub-Saharan Africa has important but different functions compared to in Europe. Culture in the Western sense often plays a subordinate role, and contemporary artistic production is highly dependent on the support of international cultural institutions. There will now be real losses here. Other difficulties the Goethe-Institut is grappling with in the region are the severe shortage of German teachers and an altered perception of Germany – in many countries people are voicing criticism, as Germany's stance on the war in the Middle East is considered too one-sided. Reports about far-right extremism and xenophobia also mean that Germany is now considered less attractive than it was just a few years ago.

What moments were particularly memorable?

More important than rectifying the aforementioned challenges, which often come from intellectual and artistic circles, are events that demonstrate the institutes also offer a platform for opinions that may be controversial, conflicting or uncomfortable. One event with Damon Galgut and Navid Kermani in Johannesburg exemplified this and had a huge impact. It's not through pronouncements that we make the meaning of our work tangible, but in practice.

What's planned for 2025/2026?







In 2025/2026 we will be busy with the EU projects. Our language course and examination centre operations need to be made sustainable at the high level they have reached, and compliance strictly monitored on an ongoing basis. A lot of energy is flowing into training German language teachers, which universities in most African countries no longer provide. In Dakar, the Goethe-Institut's spectacular new building, designed by Diébédo Francis Kéré, will be opened.



above: In the Goethe-Institut in Nairobi, photographer Sarah Waiswa spoke with curator Sunny Dolat about Kenyan fashion and how it developed in parallel to the country's political development. As part of the project **Fashioning a Nation**, they investigated the history and ideals that shape and distinguish contemporary Kenyan fashion and aesthetics.

below: At a job fair in Nairobi, Kenyans interested in living and working in Germany can receive advice and make contacts. The fair was organised as part of the European Union's **AMIF Programme**.

SOUTH AMERICA

	12 institutes
	17,226 course participants
	27,819 exams taken
	1,809 cultural events
	50,001 library visits
	1,420,116 visits to country portals



Dr Matthias Makowski has been Regional Director for South America since 2019. He was previously responsible for the Southeastern Europe region.

What's on people's minds locally?

Unlike in Germany, people on the South American continent look to the future with a healthy optimism, despite all the challenges – and despite increasing societal inequality and civil society coming under pressure almost everywhere. In 2024 South America was spared by extraordinary crises, but the effects of major global conflicts are palpable here. The situation is difficult in Argentina, Bolivia and Venezuela, and South America has been observing the changing political climate since the reelection of Donald Trump with concern. In such times, we need optimists.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

Many institutes are engaging with the forest and its history, which has been interwoven with humanity for thousands of years. Our residencies are a place where Indigenous artists from the northern and southern hemispheres devise work, creating a dialogue between tropical rainforests and boreal woods, and then present their art in the context of the COP30 World Climate Conference. As well as this, our projects providing guidance for skilled workers planning to move to Germany are increasingly in demand, with trainee partnerships becoming key to the region with regard to education policy.

What are the greatest challenges?

Illiberal tendencies are growing, in some countries independent spaces for art, culture and education are being restricted. That both creates possibilities for cooperation and poses great challenges for the institutes. But the horrendous rate of inflation and our declining income from language work are also sources of difficulty.

What moments were particularly memorable?

In 2024 and early 2025, the institutes in South America, which had to radically scale back their activities following the pandemic, had lost none of their innovative spirit and were thus able to increase their impact despite the tight budgetary situation.







What's planned for 2025/2026?

The institutes in the South America region are planning a wide range of activities for the 75th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut in 2026. Together with the Humboldt Forum, they will showcase the work developed with Indigenous artists during residencies – the theme will be water. We will also present the regional initiatives Fit for the German Labour Market (FIIMA) and the APAL training partnerships in Germany.



above: For the **AI festival** organised by the Goethe-Institut in Buenos Aires, the Artlab gallery was the first exhibition space in Argentina to curate a programme focused on digital culture. Featuring different artists every month, it furthered engagement with societal, aesthetic and technological issues and put the Latin American digital art scene centre stage. The artwork pictured is Glass-Orchid by the artist duo Hypereikon.

below: As part of the project **Cosmoperceptions of the Forest**, Indigenous artist João Paulo Barreto, a member of the Tukano people, examined the ethnographic collection of the zoologist Johann Baptist von Spix and the botanist Carl Friedrich Philipp von Martius in Fünf Kontinente museum in Munich.

	11 institutes
	21,113 course participants
	227,813 exams taken
	1,869 cultural events
	134,726 library visits
	4,652,194 visits to country portals



Dr Marla Stukenberg has been Regional Director for South Asia since December 2022. Before this, she spent six years as Regional Director for East Asia.

What’s on people’s minds locally?

In Bangladesh, nationwide protests led to the fall of the government, and Pakistan continues to struggle with political instability, a fraught security situation and economic problems. In Sri Lanka, dealing with the consequences of the decades-long civil war remains a central concern. At the same time, global crises and China’s influence in the region are prompting a reappraisal of foreign policy, particularly in India. Young people are demanding more freedom and equality, especially in relation to gender roles and sexual identity. The pursuit of social justice and change finds expression in art and media, which serve as platforms for critical reflection.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

The Kunstmuseums Wolfsburg’s touring exhibition *Empowerment* is making its way through South Asia: in 2024 it got off to a great start in Pune, and the Sandbox Collective curated a series of multidisciplinary talks and performances in collaboration with local artists and initiatives to accompany it. In 2024 we also concluded our two-year programme for digital civil society, *Alternative Futures*, with workshops in Bangalore, Delhi, Dhaka and Kolkata.

What are the greatest challenges?

Because of Germany’s shortage of skilled workers, many young people in the region are interested in the possibility of moving there. For the Goethe-Instituts in South Asia it is crucial to consider ethical aspects relating to the linguistic and intercultural preparation of skilled workers. The intense demand for exam places, the need to uphold quality and exam security and the struggle against unfair practices by purely profit-oriented agencies present challenges.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The Goethe-Institut Sri Lanka endeavours to foster cultural exchange in the majority-Tamil north of the country and supports the cultural meeting space *Kālam* in Jaffna, where a particular highlight was the premiere of *I’m hungry*, a production by *Kālam* in Colombo that portrays the war and postwar experiences of an entire Tamil generation.

What’s planned for 2025/2026?







The year began with not one but two high points: Germany was guest of honour at the International Kolkata Book Fair, the most-visited book fair in the world. The Goethe-Institute created a modern, innovative pavilion and organised a diverse programme of events. Shortly afterwards, Wim Wenders visited India for the first time – 25 days, 18 films, 5 cities – and was enthusiastically welcomed by thousands of people.



above: At the **48th International Kolkata Book Fair**, the literary and cultural links between Germany and India were celebrated. The guest appearance offered insights into the diverse German-language literary landscape and fostered in-depth dialogue about longstanding cooperation between Germany and South Asia.

below: Filmmaker Wim Wenders visits India: under the title “**Wim Wenders – King of the Road**”, 18 of the director’s films were screened in various Indian cities from 5 February to 1 March 2025, among them classics like *Paris, Texas* and *Kings of the Road*.

SOUTHEAST ASIA, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

	12 institutes
	27,404 course participants
	102,007 exams taken
	3,214 cultural events
	191,019 library visits
	4,258,134 visits to country portals



Constanze Michel has been the Regional Director for Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand since August 2024. Previously, she was Regional Director for the Goethe-Institut in Germany.

What's on people's minds locally?

As a result of shifting global power relations, the region is increasingly coming into focus on the world stage. The war in Gaza is eliciting expressions of solidarity and condemnations in Indonesia and Malaysia. For years Myanmar – particularly the civilian population – has been suffering the consequences of the February 2021 military putsch, the violent repression of all opposition and the continuing civil war. In Vietnam, free and independent spaces continue to be heavily restricted, and in the Philippines, reckoning with the civil war is as urgent an issue as the lines of conflict in the South China Sea. In many cases, urgent environmental problems such as air pollution, climate change and coastal erosion are not treated with the necessary gravity.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

In Singapore, the Goethe-Lab supported creative work like the play *trans:mission*, which explores transgender identities. The HOMOHAUS Performing Arts Festival in Bangkok provided a platform for queer visual arts, while the Resonance Rave in Manila combined electronic music with workshops. In Wellington, Picture Me used children's book illustrations as an intercultural format. The traumas experienced in Myanmar were addressed in the Academy of Care project, which strives to improve psychological support for diverse and marginalised communities. In the area of digitalisation and gaming, a series of discussions and the gaming festival Game-Changer: Games for Social Impact (Jakarta) underlined the social significance of computer games.

What are the greatest challenges?

In many Southeast Asian countries, political restrictions and censorship are restricting artistic and civic work. In the language sector, the shortage of German teachers – especially in Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines – is another obstacle.

What moments were particularly memorable?

Our work has been enlivened by many memorable events, such as: the opening of the Competence Centre Southeast Asia for Labour Migration to Germany in Bandung, the inaugural career fair for skilled workers in Hanoi and the introduction of German as a foreign language in Singapore's education system, for the first time ever. In Jakarta the music festival Alur Bunyi offered a platform for innovative musicians, while in Sydney the German Culture Day attracted more than 3,000 visitors.

What's planned for 2025/2026?







Skilled labour migration remains a central focus in Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines. Jakarta is taking the 50th anniversary of Hannah Arendt's death as an occasion to reflect on totalitarian regimes and Germany's history, while in Manila, we will support the contemporary performance art scene. The region is inviting artists from the Southeast Asian diaspora in Germany to join a residency exchange with local artists in South Asia and collectively create a nomadic festival. Digital cultural work will also be expanded: Bangkok is developing new platforms for electronic music and digital art, and in Hanoi and Singapore online formats for literature and art will be expanded.



above: For **Hanoi Pride Week**, the Goethe-Institut in Hanoi and its partners presented a creative firework as a message of solidarity with the LGBTQI+ community. The event put diversity and inclusion centre stage and emboldened others to continue fighting for a more just society.

below: In 2024 the final concert, Rupa Suara, of **Alur Bunyi** festival took place in the GoetheHaus Jakarta. At the event, five interdisciplinary musicians, including Aldo Ahmad Fithra (Sipaningkah), enlivened the music scene with innovative sounds. The festival promotes new collaborations, experiments and exchange between local artists of various genres.

SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

	12 institutes
	31,009 course participants
	113,577 exams taken
	2,795 cultural events
	103,708 library visits
	3,129,505 visits to country portals



Angela Kaya was Regional Director for Southeastern Europe from 2019 to 2024. As of 1 January 2025, the institutes in this region have become part of the new Europe I region.

What’s on people’s minds locally?

The intertwining of present and past thirty years after the wars that led to the breakup of Yugoslavia marks the region, as does the current tense geo-political situation. The challenges in the education sector and the limited opportunities for young people contribute, along with political instability, to widespread uncertainty. Countries’ unclear alignment, with EU integration on one side and closer ties to China and Turkey on the other, leads to increased friction. Despite the success of the right’s attempts to restrict debate and dialogue, a strong drive to create and protect open spaces of discourse remains. How we handle the rise of right-wing political movements and their effects on societal debates is a key issue.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

The digital platform ARchipelago transforms archive documents from the wartime and post-war period in former Yugoslavia into an exciting Augmented Reality experience. Other themes were taken up by the project True Lies, which strengthened the ability of young people in Serbia to resist manipulation, and the interdisciplinary programme Three Doors in Turkey, which confronted mechanisms of racism in the context of the attack in Hanau. The workshop and event series Engaged Scenography, organised by the Goethe Institute Athens, explored current approaches to the design of exhibitions in urban space and posed new questions about sustainability in the area of stage design. With regards to marketing, Southeastern Europe focused on the promotion of online language courses and attracting teachers. Through increased reach, our market potential was able to be used more effectively, strengthening the education services in the region.

What are the greatest challenges?

Our work promoting language, culture and dialogue takes place in an increasingly restrictive environment, one which constrains freedom of expression and an open exchange of ideas. This demands flexible and creative formats in order to keep communication channels open, and interdisciplinary educational programmes and digital services therefore become more important.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The festival Missing Voices – Stimmen unerhört, held in the borderlands of Albania, Greece and North Macedonia, showed the power of cultural cooperation in the region. The Art Week Belgrade and the contemporary opera Waste Side Story, which depicts social problems the Roma experience in Romania, made a lasting impression. We also celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut Izmir, highlighting its role as a builder of bridges.

What’s planned for 2025/2026?







In the future, the regional institute in Athens will oversee 21 Goethe-Instituts instead of nine. This new Europe I region promises a new dynamic for project ideas, dialogue and exchange.



above: **Engaged Scenography** takes a closer look at set design in the performing arts, providing specialists with a platform for exchange and networking. Local and international artists from Athens and beyond discussed contemporary praxis, ecology and identity.

below: The **Folkwang Tanzstudio** inspired audiences at the 37th International Izmir Festival with Rodolpho Leoni’s piece *Wonderful Life*. In cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Izmir, ten performers presented a celebration of contemporary dance.

SOUTHWESTERN EUROPE

	15 institutes
	9,819 course participants
	59,518 exams taken
	1,392 cultural events
	73,849 library visits
	1,491,959 visits to country portals



Dr. Elke Kaschl Mohni was Regional Director for Southwestern Europe from 2019 to 2024. As of 1 January 2025, the institutes in this region have become part of the new Europe II region.

What's on people's minds locally?

The geopolitical paradigm shift is catalysing uncertainty and threat. Yet at the same time there is hope that, under this pressure, the continent's cohesiveness may be strengthened and a unified Europe can find a new role in the world. The countries of Southwestern Europe remain instrumental in the functioning of European unity, even if democracy and pro-European attitudes face growing opposition with the rise of the far-right and societal polarisation.

What projects did the Goethe-Institut launch in 2024?

Our projects took up subjects such as the freedom of the press, media literacy – for young people in particular – new forms of promoting democracy in libraries and AI's influence on democracy. Cross-regional cooperation with Goethe-Instituts across Europe is proving impactful here. In terms of dialogue, there were intercultural reflections on the great questions of our time, for example at Shared Views in Italy, which featured experts like Jutta Allmendinger and Lucio Caracciolo and addressed the future of democracy, the perception of the world in a time of fake news and AI, the development of social inequality and the transformation of gender roles. Kant's birthday gave almost all institutes a reason to look anew at 300 years of Enlightenment, for instance at After Reason in Brussels with Nikita Dhawan and the performance artist Sonya Lindfors. Unternehmen Start sparked German-French creativity, and Slow Touring through Amsterdam, Brussels, Dublin, London and Paris with the musician and dancer LIE NING combined sustainability with music across Europe.

What are the greatest challenges?

Constructively engaging with the many critical perspectives on Germany – particularly in relation to the war in the Middle East and a political approach that, in recent years, has often been perceived at the European level as being primarily driven by domestic considerations – remains a challenge. At the same time, the new regional composition offers opportunities for fresh narratives and new constellations of thematic collaboration among the Goethe-Institutes across Europe.

What moments were particularly memorable?

The closing event for the first phase of Culture Moves Europe was very moving: in the past three years the Goethe-Institut, on behalf of the European Commission, has enabled international mobility within the 40 Creative Europe countries for 7,000 artists. Their experiences are a striking testimony to how Europe can become tangible and how the power of culture links people across divides.

What's planned for 2025/2026?

The merging of the institutes in the new Europe II region and the organisation of brave, prominent projects on issues such as populism, the rightwards shift and European cohesion, the influence of new technologies on our society, the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and new forms of memory culture. On the agenda are also colonial heritage as a shared European consciousness, environmental sustainability, diversity, inclusion and the question of how we want to live in the future.



above: In May, the **Read Parade – 2024 la letteratura si fa strada** brought music, literature and parade floats to the streets of Turin. Organised by the Goethe-Institut, the Frankfurt Book Fair, Pro Helvetia and the Austrian Culture Forum, the event celebrated the German language, a central focus of the 2024 Turin International Book Fair.

below: For the **ninth Deutsch-Spanische Kulturbegegnung**, Spanish-German artist Ana Lessing Menjibar gave an impressive performance of her latest work, which she created, along with other pieces, during a stay at the Goethe-Institut in Madrid.

GOETHE-INSTITUT LOCATIONS WORLDWIDE

As of 31.3.2025



BELGIUM Brussels	GERMANY Berlin Bonn Bremen Dresden Düsseldorf Frankfurt/Main Freiburg Göttingen	Hamburg Mannheim Munich Schwäbisch Hall	FRANCE Lyon Marseille ³ Nancy Paris Toulouse GREECE Athens Thessaloniki	UNITED KINGDOM Glasgow London IRELAND Dublin ITALY Milan Naples Palermo ⁵ Rome	CROATIA Zagreb LATVIA Riga LITHUANIA Vilnius LUXEMBOURG Luxembourg ¹	THE NETHERLANDS Amsterdam NORTH MACEDONIA Skopje NORWAY Oslo	POLAND Kraków Warsaw PORTUGAL Lisbon Porto ROMANIA Bucharest	SWEDEN Stockholm SERBIA Belgrade SLOVAKIA Bratislava SLOVENIA Ljubljana	SPAIN Barcelona Madrid CZECH REPUBLIC Prague TURKEY Ankara Istanbul Izmir	HUNGARY Budapest CYPRUS Nicosia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Regional instituteGoethe-Institut¹ Institut Pierre Werner² Associated institute³ Liaison office⁴ In the form of local corporations⁵ Franco-German Cultural Institutes** In abeyance	<p>Also part of the network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Field offices: Dubai (2007), Maskat (2007) <i>responsible institute: Abu Dhabi</i>Franco-German Cultural Institutes: <i>Partner networks: Atlanta (2022), Palermo (2021), Ramallah (2022)</i>
----------------------------	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--

NEWLY ALIGNED

The Goethe-Institut opens a new chapter: since 1 January 2025, it has, in the course of its transformation process, reduced the number of regions from 13 to 10. This structural reshaping is part of a comprehensive strategic alignment, through which the Goethe-Institut is adapting to changed geopolitical and fiscal conditions.

This change is especially evident in Europe, which from now on will be comprised of just two, rather than five, regions. The new region Europe I encompasses 17 countries, with a total of 23 institutes from the formerly separate regions Central Eastern Europe, Southeastern Europe and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Europe II brings together 28 institutes in 18 countries.

This change helps to simplify multilateral project cooperation and enables more efficient regional management.

The realignment also strengthens European cooperation within the network. Particularly in the context of geopolitical developments – such as Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine and the tense situation at the borders with Russia and Belarus – strong links with the northern and Baltic states gain in importance.

There have also been structural adjustments outside Europe. The former region East Asia has been extended to become the region East and Central Asia. With the integration of the Central Asian institutes, the Goethe-Institut takes account of intensifying geo-strategic developments. Through regional projects, new channels of communication will be opened into which German and European perspectives can flow.

All in all, the reduction of the number of regions and the associated restructuring marks an important step in the Goethe-Institut’s strategic realignment. The aim is a future-oriented organisation that can respond to global changes with flexibility and thereby strengthen its cultural and political efficacy.

“With our global network of institutes and contact points we send out a strong signal of resilience - in less liberal societies too. Goethe- Instituts are places of engagement with Germany, places of learning and exchange. But they are also spaces for open discussion and uncensored debate.”

Johannes Ebert, Secretary General of the Goethe-Institut, in his article “The interplay of politics and culture”.

REGIONAL STRUCTURE

With 150 institutes, the Goethe-Institut has a presence in 99 countries worldwide. In total, the Goethe-Institut’s network encompasses around 1,100 points of contact. These include examination cooperation partners, educational resource centres, German reading rooms, information centres, Goethe-Centres, cultural associations and language centres, as well as residency locations and project spaces .

As of 31.3.2025

GERMANY

Berlin (1960)
Dr. Manuela Beck

Bonn (1985)
Anna Dimitrijević

Bremen (1981)
Gesine von Ribbeck

Dresden (1996)
Robert Sobotta

Düsseldorf (1984)
Frank Baumann

Frankfurt am Main (1983)
Uwe Mohr

Freiburg (1971)
Kay Hug

Göttingen (1972)
Anke Kleinschmidt

Hamburg (2002)
Jan Helfer

Mannheim (1980)
Dr. Katharina Buck

Munich [R] (1981)
Dr. Imke Mohr

Schwäbisch Hall (1965)
Svenja Hecklau-Brümmer

EUROPE I

Ankara (1957)⁴
Dr. Petra Köppel-Meyer

Athens [R] (1952)⁴
Sonja Griegoschewski

Belgrade (1970)⁴
Dr. Christoph Veldhues

Bratislava (1993)¹
M.A. Markus Huber

Bucharest (1979)⁴
Dr. Joachim Umlauf

Budapest (1988)¹
Miriam Bruns

Istanbul (1961)⁴
Mani Pournaghi Azar

Izmir (1954)⁴
Dr. Anne Schönhagen

Kyiv (1993)³
Fabian Mühlthaler

Kraków (1992)¹
Dr. Claus Heimes

Moscow (1992)³
Beate Kolberg

Nicosia (2011)⁴
Tanja Krüger

Novosibirsk (2009)³
Beate Kolberg

Prague (1990)¹
Anaïs Boelicke

Sarajevo (2000)⁴
Simone Voigt

Skopje (2007)⁴
Katrin Ostwald-Richter

Sofia (1989)⁴
Dr. Kirsten Hackenbroch

St. Petersburg (1993)³
Beate Kolberg

Thessaloniki (1955)⁴
Beate Köhler

Tbilisi (1994)³
Laura Hartz

Warsaw (1990)¹
Julia Hanske

Yerevan (2025)
Dr. Jan-Tage Kühling

Zagreb (1973)⁴
Dr. Árpád-Andreas Sölter

EUROPE II

Amsterdam [R] (1968)²
Dr. Elke Kaschl Mohni

Barcelona (1955)⁵
Joachim Bernauer

Brussels (1959)⁵
Dr. Julia Sattler

Copenhagen (1961)²
Dr. Barbara Honrath

Dublin (1961)²
Noémie Njangiru

Glasgow (1973)²
Hanna Dede

Helsinki (1963)²
Dr. Irene Bark

Lisbon (1962)⁵
Dr. Jana Binder

Ljubljana (2004)¹
Dr. Alix Landgrebe

London (1962)²
Andrea Pfeil (kommissarisch)

Luxembourg (IPW)* (1970)⁵
Diane Krüger

Lyon (1966)⁵
Hannah Kabel

Madrid (1957)⁵
Ph.D. Antonia Blau

Marseille [VB] (2013)⁵
Hannah Kabel

Milan (1958)⁵
Roberta Canu

Minsk** (1993)³
–

Nancy (1963)⁵
Sima Reinisch

Naples (1961)⁵
Dr. Maria Carmen Morese

Oslo (1962)²
Jutta Behnen

Palermo (1962)⁵
Dott.ssa Heidi Sciacchitano

Paris (1961)⁵
Nicolas Ehler

Porto (1963)⁵
Dr. Jana Binder

Riga (1993)¹
Ulrike Würz

Rome (1955)⁵
Dr. Jessica Kraatz Magri

Stockholm (1963)²
Judith Mirschberger

Tallinn (1999)¹
Conrad Doberauer

Toulouse (1962)⁵
Stefanie Neubert

Vilnius (1998)¹
Anna Maria Strauß

NORTH AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST

Abu Dhabi (2006)
Dr. Claudia Römmelt

Alexandria (1959)
Matthias Jochmann

Algiers [VB] (1963)
Christiane Schulte

Amman (1961)
Dr. Christian Diemer

Beirut (1955)
Anne Eberhard

Cairo [R] (1958)
Lilli Kobler

Casablanca (1960)
Philipp Küppers

Damascus** (1955)
–

Erbil [VB] (2010)
Dr. Thomas Lier

Jerusalem (1987)
Dr. Carola Dürr

Khartoum** (1964)
–

Rabat (1960)
Philipp Küppers

Ramallah (1998)
Katharina Hey

Riad (2020)
Volker Redder

Tel Aviv (1979)
Dr. Carola Dürr

Tunis (1958)
Andrea Jacob

NORTH AMERICA

Boston (1967)
Jörg Süßenbach

Chicago (1978)
Dr. Leonhard Emmerling

Havanna [VB] (2001)
Annesusanne Fackler

Los Angeles (1983)
Luisa Rath-John

Mexico City (1966)
Pia Entenmann

Montréal (1962)
Nadja Furth

New York (1969)
Dr. Jörg Schumacher

Ottawa (1962)
Nadja Furth

San Francisco (1967)
Dr. Alexander Behrmann

Toronto (1962)
Berit Bein

Washington [R] (1990)
Klaus Krischok

EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA

Almaty (1994)³
Friederike van Stephaudt

Beijing (1988)
Robin Mallick

Bishkek (2025)
Friederike van Stephaudt

Hong Kong (1963)
Arendt Röskens

Kyoto (2011)
Enzio Wetzel

Seoul [R] (1968)
Dr. Clemens Treter

Shanghai (2003)
Dr. Evelin Hust

Taipei (1963)
Theresa Hümmer

Tashkent (1998)³
Maren Niemeyer

Tokyo (1962)
Melanie Bono

Ulaanbaatar (2009)
Leonhard Heydecker

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Abidjan (1971)
Rainer Hauswirth

Accra (1961)
Maximilian Röttger

Addis Ababa (1962)
Dr. Angelika Eder

Dakar (1978)
Dr. Stefanie Peter

Dar es Salaam (2008)
Mpangi Otte

Johannesburg [R] (1996)
Dr. Andreas Ströhl

Kigali (2008)
Anisha Soff-Ochieng

Kinshasa [VB] (2015)
Heike Friesel

Lagos (1962)
Dr. Nadine Siegert

Lomé (1961)
Edem Attiogbé

Luanda (2009)
Julia Schreiner

Nairobi (1963)
Cristina Nord

Ouagadougou (2008)
Martin Pockrandt

Windhoek (2016)
Dennis Schroeder

Yaoundé (1961)
Thekla Worch-Ambara

SOUTH AMERICA

Bogotá (1957)
Stephanie Maiwald

Buenos Aires (1967)
Friso Maecker

Caracas (2003)
Thomas Schaumberg

Córdoba (1967)
Gonzalo Oyola

La Paz (1965)
Isabel Kielian

Lima (1966)
Christoph Bertrams

Montevideo (1963)
Irene Müller

Porto Alegre (1965)
Stephan Hoffmann

Rio de Janeiro (1957)
Isabel Hölzl

Salvador (1962)
Friederike Möschel

Santiago de Chile (1952)
Verena Lehmkuhl

São Paulo [R] (1963)
Dr. Matthias Makowski

SOUTH ASIA

Bangalore (1961)
Dr. Michael Heinst

Chennai (1960)
Dr. Katharina Görgen

Colombo (1957)
Stefan Winkler

Dhaka (1961)
Frank Werner

Kabul** (1965)
–

Karachi (1957)
Andreas Schiekofer

Kolkata (1957)
Astrid Wege

Mumbai (1969)
Björn Ketels

New Delhi [R] (1957)
Dr. Marla Stukenberg

Pune (1962)
Markus Biechele

**SOUTHEAST ASIA/AUSTRALIA/
NEW ZEALAND**

Bandung (1969)
Constanze Michel

Bangkok (1960)
Johannes Hossfeld

Hanoi (1997)
Oliver Brandt

Ho Chi Minh City (2009)
Mailan Thai

Jakarta [R] (1961)
Constanze Michel

Kuala Lumpur (1962)
Michelle Wong

Manila (1961)
Julian Fuchs

Melbourne (1972)
Christoph Mücher

Singapore (1978)
Dr. Asma Diakité

Sydney (1974)
Christoph Mücher

Wellington (1980)
Anna Kalbhenn

Yangon (2014)
Mona Kriegler

Also part of the network:

- **Field offices**
Dubai (2007), Maskat (2007) –
responsible institute: Abu Dhabi
- **Franco-German Cultural Institutes**
*Partner networks: Atlanta (2022),
Palermo (2021), Ramallah (2022)*

Key
Institute location (year established)
Institute director
[R] Regional institute
[VB] Liaison office
* Institut Pierre Werner
** In abeyance

¹ Formerly Central Eastern Europe
² Formerly Northwestern Europe
³ Formerly Eastern Europe/Central Asia
⁴ Formerly Southeastern Europe
⁵ Formerly Southwestern Europe

LANGUAGE

WE PROMOTE
GERMAN
WORLDWIDE.

267,000



participants attended the Goethe-Institut's language classes around the world. The majority are learning German through in-person courses, but digital and blended-learning courses are also popular, accounting for 40% of course registrations. Burkina Faso and Colombia saw a surge in course participants, with registrations increasing by around 70% in the past year.

8,600



teachers of German as a foreign language took part in our certification programmes for teachers at Goethe-Instituts abroad and in Germany. goethe.de/dll

703



PASCH schools are supported by the Goethe-Institut, teaching 270,000 pupils German. In total, 2,080 schools have joined the Federal Foreign Office's Schools: Partners for the Future (PASCH) initiative.

7.2 MILLION



visits to the Goethe-Institut's digital learning platform were registered. It offers German courses, exam preparation resources, further training and youth camps. lernen.goethe.de

520,000



members make use of the free resources on the platform Deutsch for Dich (German for you). It is the biggest free learning platform worldwide for German as a foreign language. goethe.de/deutschfuerdich



1.1 MILLION

German exams were taken at Goethe-Instituts or with our cooperation partners. This is once again an increase of around 20% compared to the previous year. Approximately 88% of the exams were taken abroad, 12% in Germany. Almost half of the candidates passed the language level B1.

CULTURE

WE PROMOTE
INTERNATIONAL
CULTURAL EXCHANGE.

87



translations of books into 36 languages were funded by the Goethe-Institut. The most popular languages were Italian, Spanish and English.

1.1 MILLION



visitors came to the Goethe-Institut's 87 libraries in 65 countries. As well as around 660,000 digital and physical media, the libraries offer a space for dialogue and exchange.

2,500



collaborations with around 8,100 creatives, organisations, businesses, experts and civil society associations took place worldwide.

130



artists took part in our residency programmes around the world. 58 stayed at our largest residencies: Tarabya Cultural Academy, Villa Kamogowa, Vila Sul and bangaloREsidency.

1.7 MILLION



visitors came to the in-person and hybrid exhibitions at Goethe-Instituts worldwide.

25,000



cultural events organised by the Goethe-Instituts reached 6.6 million people worldwide. Particularly popular were the Radiobrücke events in Kraków, with 880,000 attendees, and the Science Film Festival, which took place in 22 countries and drew around a million visitors.

GERMANY

WE PROVIDE
INFORMATION
ABOUT GERMANY.

254,000 

followers are reached by the TikTok channel Goetheinstitut.Deutsch. In 2024, over 2.5 million views were recorded. Four videos on the topic of German in the workplace were particularly successful, attracting over 200,000 visits.

6.9 MILLION

internet users worldwide followed the Goethe-Institut on Facebook, Instagram und X. At the end of 2024, the Goethe-Institut's central account on X was deactivated.

467,000 

loans were issued via the Onleihe online library portal. The portal was used particularly frequently in France, the USA and the Netherlands. Around 1,300 media are borrowed every day. goethe.de/onleihe

590,000 

visitors viewed the website Mein Weg nach Deutschland (My Way to Germany), which provides information in 30 languages about work and life in Germany. goethe.de/meinwegnachdeutschland

121 MILLION

Visits to goethe.de were recorded. That represents an increase of around 90% in the last three years.

17 

stakeholders, specialists and journalists took part in 65 information trips for foreign guests.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2024

A. THE ASSOCIATION - CONSOLIDATED FIINANCIAL STATEMENT*

Profit and loss account from 1 January to 31 December 2024

	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2023	CHANGE
	KEUR	KEUR	KEUR
Sales revenue	151,629	139,366	12,263
Revenue from grants	278,727	256,324	22,403
Income from the release of special items	-725	13,317	-14,042
Other operating income	7,418	7,105	313
Change in inventories	474	297	177
Total revenue	437,523	416,409	21,114
Cost of materials	-42,357	-35,503	-6,854
Staff costs	-215,452	-202,718	-12,734
Depreciation of intangible assets and fixed assets	-10,619	-10,516	-103
Other operating expenses	-166,178	-164,586	-1,592
Total expenses	-434,606	-413,323	-21,283
Financial result	-89	-241	152
Taxes on income	-674	-688	14
Result after taxes	2,154	2,157	-3
Other taxes	-2,154	-2,006	-148
Annual result	0	151	-151

From the financial year 2024 onwards, grant revenue will be shown as the amount actually received. The necessary balancing of the result is achieved through the release of special items. This improves the comprehensibility and transparency of the annual financial statements.

The consolidated financial statement of the Goethe-Institut e. V. is a consolidation of the two segments “Equity Capital” and “Public Funds”. Thus the statement is not purely an additive view, which is particularly evident in the sales proceeds from lan- guage work.

* Based on the auditor’s report for the fiscal year and in accordance with the HGB.

B. OWN CAPITAL – EQUITY CAPITAL*

Profit and loss account from 1 January to 31 December 2024

	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2023	CHANGE
	KEUR	KEUR	KEUR
Sales revenue	66,354	60,305	6,049
Revenue from grants	1,767	2,647	-880
Other operating income	1,525	1,580	-55
Change in inventories	474	297	177
Total revenue	70,120	64,829	5,291
Cost of materials	-13,024	-11,009	-2,015
Staff costs	-27,341	-25,792	-1,549
Depreciation of intangible assets and fixed assets	-766	-655	-111
Other operating expenses	-29,027	-27,325	-1,702
Total expenses	-70,158	-64,781	-5,377
Financial result	145	150	-5
Taxes on income	-52	-22	-30
Result after taxes	55	176	-121
Other taxes	-55	-25	-30
Annual result	0	151	-151

Income from sales revenue and equity capital increased in 2024 by KEUR 5,291 from KEUR 64,829 to KEUR 70,120. Total expenses increased by KEUR 5,377 from KEUR 64,781 to KEUR 70,158. The equity capital sector closes the financial year with a balanced annual result after taxes.

* Based on the auditor’s report for the fiscal year and in accordance with the HGB.

C. PUBLIC FUNDS*

Profit and loss account from 1 January to 31 December 2024

	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2023	CHANGE
	KEUR	KEUR	KEUR
Sales revenue	106,153	97,094	9,059
Grants from the Federal Foreign Office	243,847	229,863	13,984
Third-party donations	33,113	23,829	9,284
Income from the release of special items	-725	13,173	-13,898
Other operating income	16,796	15,115	1,681
Total revenue	399,184	379,074	20,110
Cost of materials	-40,079	-33,709	-6,370
Staff costs	-188,111	-176,926	-11,185
Depreciation of intangible assets and fixed assets	-9,853	-9,862	9
Other operating expenses	-158,187	-155,716	-2,471
Total expenses	-396,230	-376,213	-20,017
Financial result	-234	-214	-20
Taxes on income	-621	-666	45
Result after taxes	2,099	1,981	118
Other taxes	-2,099	-1,981	-118
Annual result	0	0	0

From the financial year 2024 onwards, grant revenue will be shown as the amount actually received. The necessary balancing of the result is achieved through the release of special items. This improves the comprehensibility and transparency of the annual financial statements.

The total budget of the public funds segment amounted to KEUR 399,184 in the reporting year. The total revenue is essentially characterised by revenue from language courses, institutional funding from the Federal Foreign Office and project funding from the Federal Foreign Office. The Goethe-Institut achieved earnings of KEUR 106,153 through its own activities in the field of language work as well as income of KEUR 33,113 from third-party donations. Total revenues are offset before interest and taxes by total expenditure of KEUR 396,230. The financial result is chiefly a result of interest on current accounts. KEUR 2,099 were paid as other taxes. Due to shortfalls in financing, the public funds segment closes the fiscal year with the annual result of KEUR 0.

* Based on the auditor’s report for the fiscal year and in accordance with the HGB.

ORGANISATIONAL CHART

As of 31.03.2025

REGIONS

- GERMANY** Munich
Dr. Imke Mohr
- EUROPE I** Athens
Sonja Griegoschewski
- EUROPE II** Amsterdam
Dr. Elke Kaschl Mohni
- NORTH AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST** Cairo
Lilli Kobler
- NORTH AMERICA** Washington
Klaus Krischok
- EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA** Seoul
Dr. Clemens Treter
- SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA** Johannesburg
Dr. Andreas Ströhl
- SOUTH AMERICA** São Paulo
Dr. Matthias Makowski
- SOUTH ASIA** New Delhi
Dr. Marla Stukenberg
- SOUTHEAST ASIA/AUSTRALIA/
NEW ZEALAND** Jakarta
Constanze Michel

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President
Prof. Dr. Gesche Joost

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Secretary General,
Chair of the Executive Board
Johannes Ebert

Executive Director
Rainer Pollack

GOETHE MEDAL COMMITTEE

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD

EXPERT ADVISORY BOARDS

WORKS COUNCIL

LOCAL STAFF COMMISSION

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES OFFICER

DISABILITY OFFICER

HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

COMPLIANCE, INTEGRITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT OFFICER

DATA PROTECTION OFFICER

IT SECURITY OFFICER

ANTI-CORRUPTION OFFICER

HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER

CORPORATE SECURITY OFFICER

INTERNAL AUDIT

Stephan Zellner

STAFF DIVISION 02 MARKETING AND SALES

Birgit Weckerle

STAFF DIVISION 03 COMMUNICATIONS

Katrin Sohns

STAFF DIVISION 10 STRATEGY

Rebecca Cordes

STAFF DIVISION 04 COOPERATIONS AND THIRD-PARTY FUNDING

Dr. Wenzel Bilger

DEPARTMENT 20 INFORMATION

Jakob Racek

- 21 Libraries
Stefanie Kastner
- 22 Internet
Nico Sandfuchs
- 23 Visitors' service
Susanne Sporrer

DEPARTMENT 30 CULTURE

Dr. Katharina von
Ruckteschell-Katte

- 31 Education and Discourse
Anna Schüller
- 33 Literature and Translation
Funding
Katharina Göring
- 34 Film, Television and Radio
Marina May
- 35 Theatre and Dance
Manfred Stoffl
- 36 Fine Arts
Eva Schmitt
- 37 Music
Dr. Reimar Volker

DEPARTMENT 40 LANGUAGE

Verena Sommerfeld

- 41 Examinations
Mareike Steinberger
- 42 Language Courses
Katrin Grünke
- 43 Language Teaching
Katja Kessing
- 44 Educational Programmes
Matthias von Gehlen
- 45 Educational Networks
Christoph Mohr

DEPARTMENT 50 HUMAN RESOURCES

Philipp Sinner

- 51 HR Strategy
Tino Höfler
- 52 HR Management
Karin Benkelmann-Zhang
- 53 HR Service
Melanie Steinwider-Gerle

DEPARTMENT 60 FINANCE

Thomas Albert

- 61 Financial Controlling
Bernward Brügge
- 62 Financial Accounting
Katrin Noack
- 63 Budgetary Management
Eva-Maria Stockburger
- 64 Accounting and Annual
Financial Statement
Ludwig Eglmeier

DEPARTMENT 70 CENTRAL SERVICES

André Augustin

- 71 Information Technology
Thomas Buck
- 72 Properties
Stephanie Wymer
- 73 Internal Services
Marcel Ott
- 75 Legal Services
Dr. Renate
Vondenhoff-Mertens

BOARD OF TRUSTEES, GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ADVISORY BOARDS

As of 31.03.2025

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Prof. Dr. Gesche Joost
President of the Goethe-Institut,
Berlin University of the Arts
Michael Schwarz
1st Vice President of the Goethe-Institut,
Baden-Badener Unternehmer Gespräche
Dr. Tessen von Heydebreck
2nd Vice President of the Goethe-Institut,
formerly of Deutsche Bank
Ralf Beste
Federal Foreign Office
Prof. Tulga Beyerle
Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg
Saba-Nur Cheema
Anti-racism trainer, publicist
Dr. Thomas Oberender
Author and curator
MR Jürgen Rinne
Federal Ministry of Finance
Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheytt
KULTUREXPERTEN Dr. Scheytt

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES
Sophie Engel
Goethe-Institut in Belgrade
Anja Geissel
Goethe-Institut in Warsaw
Bettina Lantz-Okoye
Goethe-Institut in Düsseldorf

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ORDINARY MEMBERS
Dr. Inke Arns
HMKV Hartware MedienKunstVerein
Simone Baumann
German Films Munich
Prof. Tulga Beyerle
Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg
Federal Republic of Germany
Federal Foreign Office
Saba-Nur Cheema
Anti-racism trainer, publicist
Ferenc Csák
Chemnitz Department of Culture
Dr. Ibou Coulibaly Diop
Curator, scholar and lecturer
Olga Grjasnowa
Author
Dr. Ingrid Hamm
Global Perspectives Initiative
Prof. Manuel Hartung
ZEIT STIFTUNG BUCERIUS
Philipp Haußmann
Ernst Klett
Prof. Dr. Gesche Joost
President of the Goethe-Institut,
Berlin University of the Arts
Dr. Annekathrin Kohout
Pop. Kultur und Kritik, author
Michael Krüger
Formerly of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts
Janina Kugel
Manager and Supervisory Board Member,
Boston Consulting Group

Christian Kullmann
Evonik Industries
Prof. Dr. Henning Lobin
Leibniz Institute for the German Language
Dr. Ulrike Lorenz
Klassik Stiftung Weimar
Jagoda Marinić
Author
Dr. Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
Haus der Kulturen der Welt
Prof. Dr. Susan Neiman
Einstein Forum
Dr. Thomas Oberender
Author and curator
Dr. Nicolas Peter
Chair of the Board of Trustees, BMW Foun-
dation Herbert Quandt
Prof. Dr. Ulrich Raulff
Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen
Prof. Dr. Sandra Richter
German Literature Archive
Prof. Dr. Michael Schart
Friedrich Schiller University Jena
Viktor Schoner
Stuttgart State Opera
Michael Schwarz
Baden-Badener Unternehmer
Gespräche
Arla Siegert
Choreographer and opera director
Karl Ernst Tielebier-Langenscheidt
Publisher

EXTRAORDINARY MEMBERS
TBA
German Bundestag

TBA
German Bundestag
TBA
German Bundestag
TBA
German Bundestag
TBA
German Bundestag
StS Tom Scheidung
Secretary of State Tom Scheidung
Ministry of Education and Daycare
Facilities for Children,
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
MD Martin Wunsch
Bavarian State Ministry for Education and
Cultural Affairs

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS
Sophie Engel
Employee representative in the Board of
Trustees, Goethe-Institut in Belgrade
Anja Geissel
Employee representative in the Board of
Trustees, Goethe-Institut in Warsaw
Dr. Tessen von Heydebreck
2nd Vice President of the Goethe-Institut,
formerly of Deutsche Bank
Bettina Lantz-Okoye
Employee representative in the board of
trustees, Goethe-Institut in Düsseldorf
Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheytt
KULTUREXPERTEN Dr. Scheytt

GOETHE MEDAL COMMITTEE

Olga Grjasnowa
Writer
Julia Grosse
Contemporary And (C&)
Anna Henckel-Donnersmarck
Berlinale Shorts
Matthias Lilienthal
Dramaturge and festival organiser
TBA
–
Antje Rávik Strubel
Author
Andrea Zschunke
WDR3

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Dr. Thomas Oberender*
Author and curator

FINE ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

Prof. Ulf Aminde
Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weißensee

Prof. Dr. Inés de Castro
Linden-Museum
Julia Grosse*
Contemporary And (C&)
Dr. Mahret Ifeoma Kupka
Museum Angewandte Kunst
Prof. Dr. Susanne Leeb
Leuphana Universität Lüneburg
Dr. Matthias Mühling
Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus
und Kunstbau
Dr. Ellen Strittmatter
Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen
Prof. Dr. Ines Weizman
Bauhaus-Universität Weimar

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Bettina Lantz-Okoye
Goethe-Institut in Düsseldorf
Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheytt
KULTUREXPERTEN Dr. Scheytt

FILM, TELEVISION AND RADIO ADVISORY BOARD

Themba Bhebhe
European Film Market
Dr. Catherine Colas**
ZDF/ARTE
Marcus Gammel
Deutschlandfunk Kultur
Dr. Till Grahll
Deutsches Institut für Animationsfilm
Narges Kalhor
Filmmaker and video artist
Hannah Pilarczyk
Kulturressort SPIEGEL ONLINE
Thorsten Schaumann*
Internationale Hofer Filmtage
Anna Schoepppe
Hessen Film & Medien
Prof. Jürgen Schopper
University of Television and Film Munich

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheytt
KULTUREXPERTEN Dr. Scheytt

INFORMATION AND LIBRARIES ADVISORY BOARD

Ute Engelkenmeier
Berufsverband Information Bibliothek
Heike Gleibs
Wikimedia Deutschland
Holger Krimmer
German Library Association

Elisa Lindinger
SUPERRR Lab Berlin
Johannes Neuer
German National Library Leipzig
Çiğdem Uzunoğlu
Grimme-Institut
Thorsten S. Wiedemann
A MAZE Festival

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Bettina Lantz-Okoye
Goethe-Institut in Düsseldorf

LITERATURE AND TRANSLATION FUNDING ADVISORY BOARD

Lars Birken-Bertsch
Deutscher Literaturfonds
Karoline Bofinger
Le Monde diplomatique
Elisa Diallo
S. Fischer Verlage
Tanja Graf
Literaturhaus München
Elżbieta Kalinowska
Culture manager, publisher and translator
Dmitrij Kapitelman
Writer and journalist
Dr. Kathrin Kunkel-Razum*
Dudenverlag
Dr. Holger Pils
Lyrik Kabinett Foundation
Dr. Michael Schmitt
3sat Kulturzeit

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Saba-Nur Cheema
Anti-racism trainer, publicist

MOBILITY AND MIGRATION ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. Elizabeth Beloe
Bundesverband Netzwerke von
Migrant*innenorganisationen (NeMO)
Prof. Dr. Petra Bendel*
Friedrich-Alexander University of
Erlangen-Nürnberg
Dr. Ulrike Hornung
Department for Migration, Refugees and
European Harmonisation, Federal Ministry
of the Interior
Dr. Nicolas Keller
Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen
Arbeitgeberverbände (BDA) e.V.

Laura Kolland
Head of Societal Participation, Federal
Chancellery
Prof. Dr. Andreas Pott
Osnabrück University
Prof. Dr. Silke Übelmesser**
Friedrich Schiller University Jena
Dr. Hans-Jürgen Völz
Bundesverband der Mittelständischen
Wirtschaft
Marko Walde
German-Australian Chamber of Industry
and Commerce

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Sophie Engel
Goethe-Institut in Belgrade

MUSIC ADVISORY BOARD

Prof. Mark Andre
Composer
Yesim Duman
Curator and moderator
Margareta Ferek-Petrić
Musikbiennale Zagreb
Julia Hülsmann
Composer
Prof. Dr. Jin-Ah Kim
Musicologist
Lydia Rilling
Donaueschinger Musiktage
Dr. Thomas Schäfer**
International Music Institute Darmstadt
Andrea Zschunke*
WDR3

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Prof. Dr. Oliver Scheytt
KULTUREXPERTEN Dr. Scheytt

AMATEUR MUSIC AND EMERGING
MUSICIANS ADVISORY BOARD

Matthias Balzer
Bundemusikverband Chor und Orchester
Prof. Martin Maria Krüger*
German Music Council
Lorenz Overbeck
Bundemusikverband Chor & Orchester
Stefan Piendl
German Music Council
Prof. Dr. Jutta Schnitzer-Ungefug**
Konferenz der Landesmusikräte

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Anja Geissel
Goethe-Institut in Warsaw

LANGUAGE ADVISORY BOARD

Prof. Dr. Olaf Bärenfänger*
Leipzig University
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gerhard de Haan
Freie Universität Berlin
Prof. Dr. Karim Fereidooni
Ruhr-Universität Bochum
Prof. Dr. Petra Gretschn**
Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg
Dr. Sarah Henkelmann-Hillebrand
Netzwerk Digitale Bildung
Dr. Christina Kuhn
Friedrich Schiller University Jena
Prof. Dr. Kai Maaz
Leibniz Institute for Research and Informa-
tion in Education
Prof. Dr. Niels Pinkwart
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Roth
Universität zu Köln
Prof. Dr. Katrin Wisniewski
Leipzig University

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Anja Geissel
Goethe-Institut in Warsaw

THEATRE AND DANCE
ADVISORY BOARD

Eva Behrendt
Theater heute
Yvonne Büdenhölzer
Suhrkamp Theaterverlag
Julia Dina Heße
Assitej international
Bettina Masuch
Festspielhaus St. Pölten
Tobi Müller
Freelance culture journalist
Barbara Mundel
Münchner Kammerspiele
Tim Sandweg**
Schaubude Berlin
Carena Schle Witt
HELLERAU – European Centre for the Arts
Franziska Werner*
Impulse Festival
Julia Wissert
Schauspiel Dortmund

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES
Sophie Engel
Goethe-Institut in Belgrade

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY
ADVISORY BOARD

Prof. Dr. h. c. Roland Berger
Roland Berger
Dr. Christian Hartel
Wacker Chemie
Dr. Immanuel Hermreck
Bertelsmann
Dr. Stefan von Holtzbrinck**
Holtzbrinck Publishing Group
Christian Kullmann*
Evonik Industries
Dr. Helena Melnikov
German Chamber of Commerce and
Industry
Dr. Michael Niggemann
Deutsche Lufthansa
Dr. Nicolas Peter
BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt
Dr. Ariane Reinhart
Continental
Hauke Stars
Volkswagen
Angela Titzrath
Hamburger Hafen und Logistik
Stephan Winkelmeier
BayernLB
Bettina Würth
Würth Group
Dr. Reinhard Zinkann
Miele

* Chair
** Acting Chair

goethe.de/gremien

EVERYONE LISTEN UP!

A broad range of topics, in-depth content, multiple languages: Goethe-Instituts
around the world produce a variety of podcasts exploring different subjects.
We introduce four of them here.



DREAMLAND DEUTSCHLAND?
The podcast *Dreamland Deutschland?* provides liste-
ners with insights and personal accounts of people
from South Asia who dream of living and working
in Germany or who have already made this dream a
reality. As well as stories, it features useful tips and
anecdotes about daily life in Germany.



CYCLE UP!
The podcast *CYCLE UP!* is part of the Prague-based
EU project with which it shares a name. It explores
the connection between cycling culture and sustaina-
ble artistic production. Inspiring conversations with
artists and policy-makers illuminate how creative
approaches foster cycling in cities and thereby help
to reduce pollution.

goethe.de/podcasts



KANT TALK 2.0
What would Immanuel Kant say? To mark what
would have been the philosopher's 300th birthday,
the Goethe-Institut Cyprus developed the podcast
series *Kant Talk 2.0*. Philosopher Dr Christos Had-
jioannou and comedian Charalampos Damianoï (aka
Champis) decode, with international guests, Kant's
ideas about ethics, reality, freedom and aesthetics
and link them to current topics like artificial intelli-
gence, the metaverse and social media.



A REVOLUTION LIKE THIS
The podcast series *Uma Revolução Assim / A Revolu-
tion Like This* emerged from the project of the same
name initiated by the Goethe-Institut in Lisbon in
collaboration with Rádio Antecâmara and Mensagem
de Lisboa. It examines the historical background of
the Carnation Revolution in Portugal and its influ-
ence on social housing, as well as current housing
challenges and potential solutions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend our sincere thanks to the following foundations, companies, institutions and individuals who supported us in 2024.

goethe.de/foerderer

ALLIANZ
FOUNDATION



DIETER SCHWARZ
STIFTUNG

Ford
Foundation

GD Giesecke+Devrient
Stiftung

Körber
Stiftung

OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS

PIAC Patronato
de la Industria
Alemana para
la Cultura, A.C.

Adalbert Stifter Verein e.V.
AÉSIO mutuelle
AG Kurzfilm e.V.
AHK Irland
Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S.
Allianz Foundation
Amsterdams 4 en 5 mei comité
ARTE
Asociación Amigos del Goethe-Institut
España (Allianz Compañía de Seguros
y Reaseguros S.A., BMW Ibérica S.A.,
Deutsche Bank S.A.E. España, Deutsche
Schule Madrid, Friedenskirche Madrid,
Dr. Frühbeck Abogados S.L.P., Haribo
España S.A.U., i-bau arquitectos y con-
sultores S.L.P., Kreis deutschsprachi-
ger Führungskräfte, Lime XL Communi-
cation S.A., Monereo Meyer Abogados
S.L.P., Savitar Consulting S.L., Schweizer
Schule Madrid, TRUMPF Maquinaria
S.A., Verena Batschkus, Silvana Buljan,
Jean René de Lafond, Josef Frühlings-
dorf, Francisco Lozano Winterhalter,
Carsten Moser)
Association des amis du Goethe-Institut
Lyon – aagil
Association pour le Développement de
l'Enseignement de l'Allemand en
France, ADEAF
Association Roudel
Axos Bank
Bartholomäus-Brüderschaft der Deutschen
in Lissabon
Bertelsmann Foundation North America
Bildungsnetzwerk China gGmbH
BMW AG*
Boonrawd Trading Co., Ltd.
Börsenverein des Deutschen
Buchhandels e.V.
CBK Rotterdam
Mounir und Brigitte Chahine
Condor Flugdienst GmbH
Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec,
CALQ
Crespo Foundation
Crossings e.V.
Das Rauhe Haus
Défense de la langue française, DLF
Deutsche Bank AG*
Deutsche Börse Photography
Foundation gGmbH
Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus Paris
Deutsch-Französischer Bürgerfonds
Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk
Deutsch-Türkische Jugendbrücke
DFB-Kulturstiftung
Dieter Schwarz Stiftung
Ernst Klett Sprachen GmbH
Espace Pandora
European Cultural Foundation
EVO Event Co., Ltd.

Excelsior German Center Oakland
Familienstiftung Geschwister Ilse und
Werner Lechtenberg
FC Bayern München AG
Film Europe, s.r.o., Prag
Flow Inter Co., Ltd.
Ford Foundation
Förderverein des Lions Club Essen-
Assindia e.V.
Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung, Bukarest
Friends of Goethe New York
Friends of Goethe Southern California
Friends of the Goethe Institut United
Kingdom (Bayerische Landesbank,
Siemens Energy, Pan Macmillan)
Fundacja Współpracy Polsko-Niemieckiej
Gauff GmbH & Co. Engineering KG
GDSI Limited
Gerda Henkel Stiftung
German Films Service+Marketing GmbH
Giesecke+Devrient Stiftung
Familie Grohs
Hannsjana GbR
Hans Herrman Voss-Stiftung
Holtzbrinck Publishing Group*
Hueber Verlag GmbH & Co. KG
Impact Services & Public Relations
Joachim Herz Stiftung
KfW Stiftung
Kino Atlas, Prag
Körper-Stiftung
Krutón, z.s.
Kulturstiftung des Freistaates Sachsen
Kunststiftung des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt
Kunststiftung NRW
Lebenshilfe Kunst und Kultur gGmbH
Ligue Internationale contre le Racisme et
l'Antisémitisme, LICRA
Lucerna-Barrandov, spol. s.r.o.
Lufthansa AG*
Maison des Européens Lyon
Max Kade Foundation
Meister Technik Co., Ltd.
Mellon Foundation
Mercedes-Benz of San Francisco
Merck S.A. de C.V.
Münchner Kammerspiele
Musicboard Berlin GmbH
Muzeum umění Olomouc
National Science Museum, Bangkok
Netflix Worldwide Entertainment LLC
New Zealand Association of Language
Teachers
Nordisk Kulturfond
NRW Kultursekretariat
Open Society Foundations
Patronato de la Industria Alemana para
la Cultura, A.C. PIAC (Allianz México,
B. Braun Aesculap de Mexico, BASF
Mexicana, Beckhoff Automatío, Blue
Point Management, BMW de México,

Bocar, Cámara Mexicano-Alemana de
Comercio e Industria (CAMEXA), Carl
Zeiss de México, Colegio Alemán Ale-
xander von Humboldt, Italian German
Exhibition Company Mexico, Lufthansa
Global Business Services, Macdonel,
Uribe, Cuesta, Llaca y Esquivel – Abo-
gados, Merck México, Nyssen Consul-
tores Asociados, Protección Dinámica,
Schwabe Mexico)
PiNA Association for Culture & Education
Pro Helvetia
ProTandem (Deutsch-Französische Agentur
für den Austausch in der beruflichen
Bildung)
Richard Stury Stiftung
Rolls-Royce Singapore Pte., Ltd.
Saudi Liebherr Company Ltd.
Siemens AG
Skills e.V.
Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung und
Zukunft (EVZ)
Stiftung Erlebnis Kunst
Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner
Schloss
Stiftung Kunst und Natur
Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz
Stiftung Vera und Volker Doppelfeld
Stiftung Verbundenheit mit den Deutschen
im Ausland
Studio 170@Goethe-Institut Boston
Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau
Thonet GmbH
TIC Brno, příspěvková organizace
V2_Lab for the Unstable Media
Vector Stiftung
Vega Scene AS
Verein der Freunde des Goethe-Instituts
Schwäbisch Hall e.V.
Vincent van Gogh Huis
Volkswagen Stiftung Slovakia
Wirtschaftskreis des Goethe-Instituts
Tokyo (Continental Automotive
Corporation Japan, Lufthansa German
Airlines, Mercedes Benz Japan Co., Ltd.,
Merck Ltd. Japan, Würth Japan Co., Ltd.)
Yamaoka Memorial Foundation

* Member of the Goethe-Institut's Business
and Industry Advisory Board

LEGAL NOTICE

Press date
31.03.2025

V. i. S. d. P.
Katrin Sohns

Editorial Director
Katrin Figge

Editors (in alphabetical order)
Katrin Figge, Dagmar John, Emrike Knoche

Image Editor
Eva Schrot

Project Manager
Dagmar John

Provision of figures
Franz-Josef Bauer, Katharina Puppe
Unless otherwise specified, figures refer to the period 01.01.2024 to 31.12.2024.

We thank our colleagues around the world for their support!

Copyediting and proofreading
Antonie Hertlein

Translation into English
Emma Lawson

Design
Rose Pistola GmbH

Lithography
w&co MediaServices München GmbH & Co KG

Printing
Bonifatius GmbH

PUBLISHER

Goethe-Institut e.V.
Communications Division
Head Office
Oskar-von-Miller-Ring 18
80333 Munich, Germany
Tel.: +49 89 15921-0
Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit@goethe.de

© 2025, Goethe-Institut e.V., Munich, authors, photographers.
Reproductions, even in part, are not permitted.
All rights reserved.



Dieses Druckerzeugnis wurde mit dem Blauen Engel gekennzeichnet.



PRESS

14, 15 Courtesy of: *Berliner Zeitung* ("Dienstleisterin für den Standort Deutschland", 19.11.2024 by Susanne Lenz); Deutsche Welle ("Deutschlands größter Sprachwettbewerb: die Deutscholympiade", 16.07.2024 by Christina Burack); *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* ("Wir werden Personal abbauen müssen", 18.10.2024 by Paul Ingendaay; "Kulturelles Erbe ist kulturelles Kapital", 20.02.2025 by Paul Ingendaay); *Frankfurter Rundschau* ("Auf der Suche nach Zuversicht", 29.08.2024 by Michael Hesse); *Kreiszeitung Harpstedt* ("Es geht um mehr als die Sprache", 03.12.2024); ntv ("Heil will mehr indische Fachkräfte nach Deutschland lotsen"; 16.10.2024), rbb ("Zweitägige Konferenz des Goethe-Instituts in Berlin", 10.06.2024); *Süddeutsche Zeitung* ("Zweitägige Konferenz des Goethe-Instituts in Berlin", 10.06.2024; "Partner gegen den Terror", 17.07.2027 by Paul-Anton Krüger; "'Kultur wirkt' - Carola Lentz bei Carolin Emcke über die Kraft der Goethe-Institute", 04.05.2024 by Carolin Emcke and Johannes Korschei); *Tagesspiegel* ("Jahresbilanz des Goethe-Instituts: In der Krise present", 03.12.2024 by Rüdiger Schaper); *The Guardian* ("'Es bereichert den Geist': Der Einsatz, Deutsch in Großbritannien lebendig zu halten", 17.08.2024 by Kate Connolly).

IMAGE CREDITS

Cover image: Goethe-Institut Bulgarien/Stefan Zdravevski **2** iambucks photography, Goethe-Institut/Andreas Dahn **3** Anika Zachow, Goethe-Institut/Caroline Lessire **4** Goethe-Institut/Loredana La Rocca **5** Goethe-Institut/Bernhard Ludewig, Goethe-Institut/Loredana La Rocca **7** Goethe-Institut/Caroline Lessire **8** Goethe-Institut/Bernhard Ludewig **9** Goethe-Institut/Bernhard Ludewig **10** Goethe-Institut/Bernhard Ludewig **11** Nastya Telikova, Goethe-Institut/Bernhard Ludewig, Barak Shrama Photography **12** Heike Martin **13** Wendy Dray, Loredana La Rocca **15** Goethe-Institut Senegal **16** iambucks photography **17** Goethe-Institut Philippinen/Daryl Pangod, Ewa Wetzel, Goethe-Institut/Taruman Corrales **18** Stelio Macedo **19** Stelio Macedo, Emrike Knoche **20** Jasper Meiners **21** Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan Bangalore **22** Tim Gassauer, Barry McCall, Jurnasyanto Sukarno **23** Elif Baris, Goethe-Institut Villa Kamogawa/Noriko Sawai, Leonel Henckes **24** Scilla Forti **25** Johanna Bernklau **26** Yuriy Artikov **27** HKW/Alexander Steffens, Emrike Knoche **29** Goethe-Institut/Bernhard Ludewig **30** Goethe-Institut/Bernhard Ludewig **31** Goethe-Institut/Bernhard Ludewig, EEF Erneuerbare Energien Fabrik **32** Sina Bahr **34** Sina Bahr, Johanna Bernklau **35** Goethe-Institut/Loredana La Rocca **36** Goethe-Institut/Andreas Dahn **37** Goethe-Institut/Andreas Dahn, Jurnasyanto Sukarno **38** Goethe-Institut/Loredana La Rocca **39** Emrike Knoche **40** Anika Zachow **41** Jurnasyanto Sukarno **42** Ecological Futures/Petra Roggel **43** Ecological Futures/Eva Schmitt, Goethe-Institut/Loredana La Rocca **44** Thomas Müller **47** Horváth Judit/Örkény Színház, Goethe-Institut Athen/Alexandra Masmanidi **48** Goethe-Institut/Caroline Lessire **49** Goethe-Institut/Caroline Lessire, Goethe-Institut/Loredana La Rocca **50** Han Lu **51** Emrike Knoche **53** GoetheVRsum-Team, Jurnasyanto Sukarno **54** Thüringer Staatskanzlei/Antje Lange **55** Goethe-Institut/Willie Schumann **56** Jurnasyanto Sukarno, Kunstfest Weimar/Candy Walz **57** Goethe-Institut/Willie Schumann **58** Goethe-Institut New Delhi, Goethe-Institut Villa Kamogawa **60** Bundesregierung/Marvin Ibo Güngör, Goethe-Institut Finnland, Maressa Andrioli/Museu Judaico de São Paulo, Akim Karpach, Goethe-Institut Brüssel/Eric Berghen **61** AIFF 2024/Kyriaki Fragkiadaki, Goethe-Institut/Deepak Yatri, Bundesregierung/Steffen Kugler, Goethe-Institut London/Jayne Lloyd, Goethe-Institut New York/Katherine Lorimer **63** Goethe-Institut/Andreas Dahn, Goethe-Institut Frankfurt/Elisa Rivera **65** Goethe-Institut Litauen/Dominyka Gurskaitė, Goethe-Institut Tschechien/Lukáš Procházka **67** Goethe-Institut Alexandria/Hossam Ezzat, Goethe-Institut Kairo/Dorothea Tuch **69** Barak Shrama Photography, Goethe-Institut Boston/Mark Römisch **71** Goethe-Institut London/David Poultney, IN-PRESS Photography LTD, Goethe-Institut Irland/Alicja Hoppel **73** Goethe-Institut Mongolei/Chinbold Lkhagvasuren, Goethe-Institut Shanghai, Shanghai International Dance Center, Body On & On/Feng Yuehong **75** Goethe-Institut Georgien/VarYox, Goethe-Institut Usbekistan **77** Goethe-Institut Nairobi/Humphrey Gateri, Goethe-Institut Nairobi/Humphrey Gateri **79** Artlab/Dante Claros, Goethe-Institut/Anita Ekaman **81** Goethe-Institut Kolkata, Addiction Media & Print, Deepak Yatri Photo **83** Goethe-Institut Hanoi, Goethe-Institut Indonesien/Davian Akbar **85** Goethe-Institut Athen & Institut français de Grèce/Alexandra Masmanidi, IKSEV/Kutsal Enger **87** Goethe-Institut/MBrunoCloseUp, Ana Lessing Menjibar/Synthtati

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

With our work, we support the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2024, around 4,000 language and cultural programmes took place at Goethe-Instituts worldwide that made a concrete contribution to these goals. The goals Quality Education (SDG 4), Partnerships (SDG 17), Gender Equality (SDG 5) and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10) received particular focus. Programmes that work towards SDGs are identified in this annual report with the SDG logo and the relevant number.

“It is thanks to the Amharic translation of Franz Kafka’s short work – facilitated by the Goethe-Institut – that I first encountered this author and have now discovered other texts of his in English in the Goethe-Institut library.”

Meheret Andarge, visitor to the Kafka exhibition in Addis Abeba, 2024

“Observing the interactions between Latvian students and emerging artists from other European countries has once again convinced me of the importance of this exchange of ideas and experiences. It’s like opening a window in spring and feeling the fresh air come in . . . This is no time for lies; you have to be honest.”

Kristians Brekte, professor, artist and Project Manager for Riga, project of the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) and the Art Academy of Latvia

“I don’t want to just be a German teacher; I want to be a teacher who can design lessons where pupils learn the language effectively and have fun doing so.”

Ilze Kuduliņa teaches German at a primary school. Organised jointly by the Goethe-Instituts in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the project Get Started with German: German as a Foreign Language (DaF) promotes the language in the Baltic countries, May 2024

“My favourite word in German is *Licht* (light). The Goethe-Institut has in many ways brought light into a difficult life . . .”

Eka Shaverdashvili, Professor of Foreign Language Didactics at Ilia State University, attends the Goethe-Institut Georgia’s 30th anniversary celebrations

“For 70 years the Goethe-Institut Izmir has been furthering cultural understanding between Germany and Turkey. It creates space for dialogue, promotes the German language and brings people together across borders. As a cooperation partner in the cultural sphere, a reliable contact on the ground and an important destination for many official visits by delegations from Bremen, the Goethe-Institut makes an outstanding contribution to our partnership with Izmir.”

Dr Andreas Bovenschulte, Mayor and President of the Bremen Senate, marks the 70th anniversary of the Goethe-Institut Izmir

“This festival is far more than just a homage to the film; it is a call to recognise the essential role of culture – as a bridge that creates empathy and promotes peace.”

Zhanna Leshchynska, Charge d’Affaires of the Ukrainian Embassy in Beijing, at the opening of Memory and Future: A Century of Ukrainian Cinema at the Goethe-Institut in China, August 2024

**Communicating
with the world.**

**For diversity,
understanding
and trust.**