Results of a representative survey on German attitudes to foreign policy commissioned by Körber-Stiftung

How strongly are you interested in German foreign policy?

- Very strongly: 16%
- Strongly: 53%
- Less strongly: 28%
- Not at all: 3%

Compared to other parties, the level of interest in foreign policy is the lowest among AfD voters (60 percent).

What are the greatest challenges currently facing German foreign policy?

1. Relations with the US / Trump: 19%
2. Refugees: 26%
3. Relations with Turkey / Erdoğan: 17%
4. Relations with Russia / Putin: 8%
5. North Korea (conflict): 10%
6. Syria: 6%
7. Cohesion in Europe / the EU: 5%

In contrast to last year, relations with the US are no longer viewed as the greatest challenge. The issue of refugees remains important. North Korea is named as a challenge for the first time.

International responsibility: Should Germany become more strongly involved in international crises?

2017: Become more strongly involved 43%
2016: Become more strongly involved 41%

Support for restraint in international crises was highest among AfD voters (78 percent), in comparison to other parties’ voters (between 42 and 48 percent).

In which areas is international engagement particularly important?

- Protecting human rights throughout the world: 64%
- Ensuring the security of Germany and its allies, and the fight against terrorism: 71%
- Improving living conditions in developing countries: 49%
- Protecting the environment and the climate: 67%
- Protecting Germany’s economic interests abroad: 41%
- Providing support to other states to introduce democratic forms of government: 24%
- Regulating and reducing illegal immigration to Germany: 54%

With the exception of people who voted for the Green Party or DIE LINKE, a large majority of the electorate – more than 75 percent – stress security issues as particularly important. AfD voters are the least likely to view protecting human rights, improving living conditions in developing countries and providing support to build democratic forms of government as very important.
Which country is Germany’s most or second most important partner?

France 63%, US 43%, China 11%, Russia 11%, Germany 7%, Great Britain 6%, Italy 6%, Poland 3%, Turkey 2%, don’t know 2%

In comparison to 2016, France has rolled past the US as Germany’s most important and second most important partner.

Which country is currently America’s most or second most important partner?

Great Britain 31%, China 24%, Germany 12%, Israel 12%, Canada 10%, France 8%, Russia 8%, EU 3%, a different Country 31%, don’t know, no answer provided 2%

Should Germany cooperate more or less with each of these countries in the future?

Cooperate less: France 3%, Russia 16%, China 22%, Great Britain 30%, US 34%

Cooperate more: Germany 90%, Russia 78%, China 69%, Great Britain 61%, US 56%

Results from Survey “Russia in Europe: A Cold War in People’s Minds?”

Should the United States cooperate more or less with each of these countries in the future?

Cooperate less: France 20%, Russia 44%, China 28%, Great Britain 15%, Germany 21%

Cooperate more: France 65%, Russia 43%, China 59%, Great Britain 72%, Germany 65%

Results from the US by Pew Research Center

Germany’s role in the EU

31% Germany should be more dominant within the EU and pursue its interests more strongly

51% Germany finds the right balance between compromise and pursuing its interests within the EU

15% Germany is too dominant within the EU and does not make enough compromises

Is the EU on the right track?

On the right track 36%, Not on the right track 59%

What will Brexit do to the EU? Will it...

Harm the EU very badly 8%, Be useful to the EU 10%, Be very useful to the EU 1%, Have no particular impact on the EU 37%

Which of the following partnership is of particular importance for Germany for the further development of the EU?

The partnership between the European Union’s member states as a whole 39%

The partnership between the European founding states: Italy, France, Benelux and Germany 40%

The tandem between France and Germany 12%

The Weimar Triangle consisting of Poland, France and Germany 4%

don’t know 4%, no answer provided 1%

Which of the following partnership is of particular importance for Germany for the further development of the EU?

France 40%, the European Union’s member states as a whole 39%, Poland, France and Germany 12%, the European founding states: Italy, France, Benelux and Germany 4%, don’t know 4%, no answer provided 1%

In comparison to 2016, France has rolled past the US as Germany’s most important and second most important partner.

a different Country 10%, don’t know 31%, no answer provided 21%
Which partnership should be the future priority of Germany’s defense policy?

- The partnership with the US: 30%
- The partnership with the European states: 54%
- Don’t know: 2%, No answer provided: 1%

In which regions should Germany be most active in the future?

- In the Middle East: 38%
- In Africa: 23%
- In Asia: 17%
- In Eastern Europe and Russia: 7%

- Spontaneous response: evenly in all regions: 6%
- Don’t know: 18%, No answer provided: 2%

Which country is Germany’s most important partner in the Middle East?

- Turkey: 15%
- Egypt: 4%
- Saudi Arabia: 16%
- Iran: 7%
- Israel: 30%

- Spontaneous response: evenly in all regions: 8%
- Don’t know: 18%, No answer provided: 2%

Do you support the development of a European economic and financial policy and the establishment of a European Minister of Finance?

- Support the proposal: 39%
- Reject the proposal: 54%

Don’t know: 6%, No answer provided: 1%

Should Germany advocate breaking off EU Accession negotiations with Turkey?

- Yes: 74%
- No: 21%

The overwhelming majority of respondents want accession negotiations to be broken off, irrespective of population group or party affiliation.

Don’t know: 4%, No answer provided: 1%

Do you support enlarging the EU to include the Western Balkans?

- Yes: 66%
- No: 30%

Don’t know: 3%, No answer provided: 1%

Do you support a common European army?

- Desirable: 58%
- Undesirable: 38%

Don’t know: 3%, No answer provided: 1%

For German respondents:

- Should Germany increase its defense spending?
  - Increase its spending: 32%
  - Maintain its spending at the current level: 51%
  - Lower its spending: 13%

For US respondents:

- Should European allies increase their defense spending?
  - Increase its spending: 45%
  - Maintain its spending at the current level: 37%
  - Lower its spending: 9%

Approval for increased spending is highest among AfD voters (48 percent) and FDP voters (40 percent).

Don’t know: 3%, No answer provided: 1%

Results from the US by Pew Research Center
In which Middle Eastern conflict should Germany be most actively promoting a solution?

- The fight against Islamic state: 46%
- The conflict in Syria: 21%
- The conflict involving Israel and Palestine: 15%
- The conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran: 6%

Are you aware of the reasons behind this mission?

- Yes: 69%
- No: 30%
- Don’t know: 1%

Support for the limit is strongest among AfD-voters (97 percent), non-voters (75 percent), CDU/CSU (62 percent) and the FDP (58 percent). Voters of the Green Party and Die Linke, reject a limit (79 percent, 73 percent). SPD voters are divided on this issue with 50 percent in favor and 50 percent against.

Are you in favor of placing a limit on the number of refugees who can stay in Germany?

- Support a limit: 56%
- Reject a limit: 41%
- Don’t know: 3%

How should Germany act on the refugee agreement amid tensions with Turkey?

- Adopt a hard line and towards Turkey, even if this jeopardizes the agreement: 19%
- Comply with Turkey so as not to jeopardize the agreement: 75%

There is again a clear consensus towards a tough attitude, irrespective of population group or party affiliation.

What is your perception of Russia’s role in international politics?

- Constructive: 35%
- Destructive: 48%
- Don’t know: 4%

The EU has imposed sanctions on Russia in the course of the Ukraine crisis. Should these sanctions...

- Be maintained / tightened: 46%
- Be lifted / relaxed: 45%
- Don’t know: 9%

What is more important for Germany ... ?

- Having close relations with the US: 42%
- Having close relations with Russia: 32%
- Spontaneous response: both 6%

Respondents living in eastern Germany as well as AfD and DIE LINKE voters in general consider closer relations with Russia as more important than closer relations with the US.

Be maintained / tightened
Be lifted / relaxed
Both
Don’t know

Having close relations with Russia
Having close relations with the US
Spontaneous response: both
Don’t know
How would you rate the current relationship between Germany and the US?

- Very good: 41% (Germany), 9% (US)
- Somewhat good: 59% (Germany), 52% (US)
- Somewhat bad: 18% (Germany), 4% (US)
- Very bad: 4% (Germany), 4% (US)
- don’t know: 1% (Germany), 1% (US)

What is the most important basis for US-German relations?

- Economic and trade ties: 45% (Germany), 33% (US)
- Shared democratic values: 35% (Germany), 21% (US)
- Security and defense ties: 16% (Germany), 34% (US)

What is your view of China’s growing influence?

- Positive: 34% (Germany), 13% (US)
- Negative: 51% (Germany), 47% (US)
- Neutral: 18% (Germany), 4% (US)
- don’t know: 1% (Germany), 1% (US)

Do you feel threatened by North Korea?

- Yes, I feel threatened: 52% (Germany), 47% (US)
- No, I do not feel threatened: 4% (Germany), 12% (US)
- don’t know: 1% (Germany), 1% (US)

Survey Period: 4–18 October 2017; Sample Size: 1,005 Respondents; Detailed results are available at www.theberlinpulse.org