

# böll 2024

Annual Report



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What we want  
How we work

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#### **Imprint**

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**Dear readers,** fifteen years ago, in the wake of the global financial crisis, sociologist Ulrich Beck published a small book entitled *Nachrichten aus der Weltinnenpolitik* (News from the World's Domestic Politics). This might well serve as the title of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung's *2024 Annual Report*, which, yet again, demonstrates the inextricable link between our work as a green political foundation in Germany and the activities of our international offices and global units. Our work is often demanding, sometimes pushing us and our employees to our personal limits as well as to the boundaries of the environments in which we operate. In many of the locations where we are active, the situation is precarious or even dire, and we worry about our employees and partners, be they in Kyiv, Ramallah and Gaza, Tel Aviv, Beirut, Beijing, or Yangon, to name just a few. Repression, violence, and suffering do not make us indifferent, they are always on our minds. In the face of difficult, even bleak situations, we are trying very hard to maintain personal contacts and room for political work – or perhaps even expand our scope in such challenging times. In January 2024, we partnered with the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) for a two-day conference on *Scenarios for Israel and Palestine* that gathered various regional actors – something not to be taken for granted, yet immensely important. We are grateful that our new office in Buenos Aires has rapidly evolved into an important place to go to for journalists and civil society. In October, we welcomed Claudia Roth, Minister of State for Culture and the Media, as our keynote speaker to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of our Turkey Office. Its story, like that of so many others, has been one of endurance and persistence.

And persist, we must. In the wake of Donald Trump's election as US President and the end of Germany's so-called "traffic light coalition" government, comprised of Social-Democrats, Liberals, and Greens, we, as part of the larger Green project, are facing political challenges as well as a need to reassess: Today, many people experience a fear of loss, and they are angry at "those at the top." Faced with such a situation, how do we convince people that change does not have to entail loss? Our 2024 *Leipzig Study on Authoritarianism* shows that while 90% of Germans favor democracy as an idea, only 42% still believe it is well implemented – and thus new notions and styles of politics seem to be emerging. Against this background, how may we build trust in democracy and its ability to act? How do we convince citizens that they can effectively advocate for their own legitimate concerns?

In all this, we face the dilemma that, while we must act immediately, we must also keep a long-term perspective. How do we respond to the desire for a different democratic political style in times of heated, frenzied debate? In the future, we want to focus even more on questions such as these.

In the fall of 2024, not least due to the German snap parliamentary election, our future financial situation was



The Presidents of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Dr. Imme Scholz and Jan Philipp Albrecht Photo: © Sibylle Fendt

yet unclear. We therefore decided to focus on risk management and how to best safeguard the good and important work we do at home and abroad. Thus, with a heavy heart and after much intense debate, also involving our Supervisory Board, we decided to abandon the plans for a new building on Berlin's Karl-Marx-Allee. This was a painful, yet necessary decision, as it would be too risky to commit to new, additional expenses in these uncertain times. Instead we will focus on modernizing and re-structuring our existing location on Schumannstraße. Still, we will continue to face budgetary challenges, which will require us to realign our priorities.

As we review our programs and continuously monitor the political situation and our financial framework, we greatly appreciate the loyal cooperation with the General Assembly, our Supervisory Board, our specialist boards, the board of the Green Academy, our fellows, and many others. We are in constant communication with our staff in Germany and abroad, as we require their feedback and guidance. We are very grateful to our employees for driving the work of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung with a keen sense for strategy, profound expertise, and great personal commitment, even and especially in difficult times.

Our goal is and remains to stand our ground and remain strong as we continue to advocate for ecology and justice, democracy, and human rights. With confidence and a clear vision, we stand for positive change, for community and solidarity, and a well-founded hope for a better future that we can shape together.

Best regards  
Imme Scholz and Jan Philipp Albrecht

# Protect the climate now: Stop fossil fuels, secure the future

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The climate crisis is one of the greatest challenges of our time. Floods, droughts, and storms of increasing severity are threatening the livelihoods of millions. Any further warming will exacerbate the risks to humans and nature. The only certain way to slow down global warming and preserve the very foundations of our life on this planet is to rapidly wean ourselves from fossil fuels and transition to renewable energies. We support building a climate-neutral economy and a society that tackles environmental and social issues in concert, rather than as two separate problems.



At Garzweiler open-cast mine, a photovoltaic system, operated by RWE, has been planted with berry bushes. Photo: IMAGO / Panama Pictures

## The UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi – big and inclusive, yet disappointing

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) took place from February 26 to March 1, 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya. It was the largest and most inclusive UNEA summit to date, bringing together 7,000 delegates from 190 countries, as well as representatives of indigenous peoples, international organizations, civil society, academics, and the private sector. The attendees negotiated multilateral actions to combat climate change, loss of biodiversity, and environmental pollution. Yet despite all efforts and the urgency of the global crisis, UNEA-6 fell short of expectations. Some of the resolutions were weakly framed from the outset, only to be watered down further, and precious few contained new or effective ideas. The assembly even relapsed on some vital issues that now need to be renegotiated.

The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung closely followed the UNEA, in particular the negotiations on our key focus areas of geo-engineering, mining, and the circular economy. Our Nairobi office co-hosted a side event offering best-practice examples for avoiding plastic and discussing how to modernize economies in a way that is both climate-friendly and gender equitable. Another event, held in cooperation with the European Environmental Bureau and Earthworks, was dedicated to sustainable resource policy in the metals and minerals sector.

### Peace with nature?

#### The COP16 Biodiversity Conference in Cali

“Peace with Nature” was the motto of the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Cali, Colombia, from October 21 to November 1, 2024. Negotiations focused on the technical implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted two years ago in Montreal, as well as on financing issues. Despite an extension, no agreement was reached, and the meeting was suspended because too few government representatives were present to constitute a quorum.

Nevertheless, some progress was made, notably the agreement on a procedure to identify and protect biologically valuable marine areas. In what attendees hailed as a historic moment, the conference established a body to represent the interests of indigenous peoples and local communities. The demand that local communities have a right to self-determination had been made by an alliance of Colombian civil society organizations and with the support of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. Prior to the summit, in order to protect biodiversity and the climate, the alliance had presented the Ministry of the Environment with recommendations on Colombia’s biodiversity plan and a list of demands for a sustainable, community-based management of commons.

## Debt relief for climate protection and sustainable development – a project

In specialist circles, the 2024 study *Defaulting on Development and Climate* received great attention. It was published as part of our project *Debt Relief for a Green and Inclusive Recovery*, launched in 2020. In June, former central bank governors and finance ministers penned an open letter, calling on the G20 to offer comprehensive debt relief to enable highly indebted countries to meet their development and climate goals. At the fall meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the study *Unleashing Africa’s Green Growth: Why Debt Relief is Essential for Climate Resilience* was released and presented in Washington, D.C. For COP29 in Azerbaijan, the project outlined the link between the debt crisis and the climate crisis in a video that received over a million views. These efforts made a real impact and, by the end of the year, had brought the topic of debt relief to the attention of leading economists, with even the World Bank’s chief economist, Indermit Gill, acknowledging that the “metastasizing solvency crisis” finally had to be dealt with.

↗ [boell.de/en/drgr](https://boell.de/en/drgr)

### Podcast (German only)

#### Markets, powers, and emissions, with Adam Tooze

Once a month, we are joined by economic historian and journalist Adam Tooze to discuss the crises of our time at the intersection of geopolitics, the global economy, and the climate crisis: How can we take a more comprehensive view of markets, the powers that be, and the climate crisis? In 2019, *Foreign Policy Magazine* named Tooze one of *Foreign Policy*’s Top 100 Global Thinkers of the decade. He is a co-editor of the business magazine *Surplus* and his newsletter *Chartbook* provides information on economic and political developments worldwide. ↗ [boell.de/podcasts](https://boell.de/podcasts)





A photo from our Thessaloniki Office's project *Beyond Destruction – Rhodes, Thessaly, Evros* that was exhibited in Athens. Photo © Ilir Tsouko

### Greece: resilience in the wake of climate disasters – a multimedia journey and photo exhibition

In 2023, Greece was hit by a series of devastating natural disasters. Wildfires caused by extreme heat and drought were followed by torrential rain. The fires and floods claimed many lives, destroyed homes, and devastated landscapes. A few months later, documentary photographer Ilir Tsouko and writer Anja Troelenberg traveled to the affected areas with support from our Thessaloniki Office. After media interest had waned, they set out to document the difficult period of reconstruction. The result is the project *Beyond Destruction – Rhodes, Thessaly, Evros*, a multimedia journey through contrasting emotions and experiences. Disasters do not just destroy, they also expose certain truths, thus forcing us to confront uncomfortable realities, namely, how we fall apart or come together when faced with the unthinkable. The project *Beyond Destruction* tells a story of survival, the meaning of community, and the indomitable human spirit. The exhibition was presented at the Goethe-Institut Athens in late December 2024.

[gr.boell.org/en/beyond-destruction-rhodes-thessaly-evros](http://gr.boell.org/en/beyond-destruction-rhodes-thessaly-evros)

### The hot-button issue of hydrogen – risks and opportunities for the energy transition

Green hydrogen and its derivatives will be key to energy transition. What opportunities and risks does this present for exporting countries in the Global South? The concise study *Political Instruments to Ensure the Sustainability of*

*Hydrogen Imports*, co-published by the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, the Wuppertal Institute, and Brot für die Welt, explores what political measures may facilitate compliance with environmental and human rights standards in the developing international hydrogen markets. The study showed that implementing sustainability criteria will require an effective mix of regulatory, market-based, and cooperative instruments. This includes binding criteria, transparent certification and verification systems, and a cooperative foreign trade and development policy.

Geogenic hydrogen, often called “white” or “natural” hydrogen, is gaining attention as an alternative energy source. Formed by geological processes deep within the earth’s crust and mantle, this naturally occurring gas promises to be a cheaper and less energy-intensive alternative to “green” hydrogen, which is produced using renewable electricity. In November, we published the study *Geogenic Hydrogen – a Contribution to the Energy Transition?*, which shows that geogenic hydrogen has great potential, especially as a locally available and emission-free energy source. However, we are still in the early stages of exploration and technical utilization, and large-scale implementation is unlikely before the 2040s – too late for this technology to play a key role in our current energy transition. The study also identifies significant knowledge gaps, emphasizing the need for a clear regulatory framework and further research, particularly on the environmental impact and social acceptance of this new technology.

[boell.de/en/2024/11/14/policy-paper-geogenic-hydrogen-contribution-energy-transition](http://boell.de/en/2024/11/14/policy-paper-geogenic-hydrogen-contribution-energy-transition)

## UN Climate Change Conference in Baku – no progress on climate justice

The 29<sup>th</sup> UN Climate Change Conference (COP29), motto “In Solidarity for a Green World,” took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, November 11–22, 2024. After Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, Azerbaijan was the third authoritarian, repressive petro and gas state in a row to host the COP presidency. Negotiations at the conference focused on a new global goal on climate finance, and a total of 300 billion US dollars per year were agreed upon – not nearly enough. Poor countries, in particular, struggle to modernize their economies in climate-friendly ways or adapt to climate change. It also remained unclear how these funds would be sourced and structured.

Another important topic was Article 6 of the Paris Climate Agreement, which was meant to introduce new mechanisms for global CO<sub>2</sub> trading. However, the rules adopted under this article are weak, creating new loopholes for fossil fuel emitters. Carbon markets are problematic, anyway, since fossil emissions are often offset by inadequate or even fake climate certificates that appear to provide for compensation while, in fact, they exacerbate the climate crisis.

The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung attended the event with a small delegation. In view of the challenging human rights situation in Azerbaijan, we partnered with Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the European Disability Forum to host an official side event on human rights and participation.

Online dossier ↗ [boell.de/en/cop-climate-change-conference](https://boell.de/en/cop-climate-change-conference)

## Recommendations for a „global circular economy“

The EU and Germany are in the process of implementing and funding programs to facilitate the transition towards a circular economy, that is, a type of economy that conserves resources and protects the climate and the environment. Given the global nature of value and supply chains, such regulations will impact all countries that are part of these networks. The study *Global Circular Economy – Reflections for a Just Transition* explores avenues towards an equitable global circular economy. For example, if economies that currently depend heavily on recycling, in particular of electronic devices, were to lose this role, the prosperity gap could widen. The study makes numerous recommendations on how to achieve a just transition towards a global circular economy. This includes dialog, compensation, and the adaptation of raw materials diplomacy and trade policy to a circular economy, plus a drop in raw materials consumption.

↗ [boell.de/en/2025/03/07/global-circular-economy](https://boell.de/en/2025/03/07/global-circular-economy)

## AI: ever bigger instead of greener? – a sizable expert conference on the world’s hottest technology

The development of artificial intelligence (AI) is trending towards ever larger and more complex models. It is spearheaded by so-called foundation models that underpin popular platforms such as ChatGPT. Such AI models can be used for a wide variety of purposes, generating text, images, videos, and more. However, in many ways, the development

and use of foundational models is not sustainable: Complex AI models require immense amounts of training data and computing power, resulting in high resource and energy consumption, meaning, only a few large players will dominate the market. Moreover, the labor required to train the models is often performed under poor conditions in low-wage countries. Also, foundation AI models can result in discrimination.

At our expert conference *AI: ever bigger instead of greener?* on January 29, 2024, we discussed these challenges and explored solutions for more sustainable AI in keynote speeches, debates, interactive and impulse sessions. It became clear that, for tech companies, sustainability has so far merely been an afterthought. Regulation may help bring about the required shift in the corporate mindset, and the EU AI Regulation lays an important foundation for this process. However, regulations can only make an impact when implemented effectively. Additional measures will be required to make foundation models more sustainable. For example, AI companies will need to perform more thorough quality controls of their training data. They also need more diverse teams of developers to reduce AI-mediated discrimination, including in a global context.

Conference report *AI: ever bigger instead of greener?*  
↗ [boell.de/de/2024/02/15/ki-immer-groesser-statt-gruener](https://boell.de/de/2024/02/15/ki-immer-groesser-statt-gruener)

## 101 on energy transition 2.0 – energy efficiency and sufficiency

This series of 75-minute online sessions, which was launched in the fall of 2022, features experts on energy transition and its key issues, such as energy prices, supply security, nuclear energy, grid expansion, and electricity markets. Altogether, the installments present a comprehensive picture of the herculean effort that is the energy transition. The 2024 series addressed energy efficiency and sufficiency, that is, how to reduce production and consumption. Sufficiency has been recognized as one of the key strategies for achieving climate targets by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

In the session on energy efficiency, Antoine Durand and Markus Fritz from the Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research (ISI) explain how energy efficiency can help drive the energy transition, the efforts that are already underway, and what still needs to be done to help companies and households use energy more efficiently. It is important to keep in mind that the most climate-friendly kind of energy is energy we do not use in the first place.

In our session on sufficiency, Frauke Wiese from Europa-Universität Flensburg and Johannes Thema from the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy explained how policies with a stringent focus on sufficiency can help protect the climate, and how a combination of sufficiency, efficiency, and renewable energies offers a pathway towards climate neutrality. They also provided practical examples for sufficiency, which is – often and incorrectly – thought to be abstract and unappealing. For instance, after the banks of the River Seine were closed to motor traffic, the space became a popular promenade and recreational area in the heart of Paris.

↗ [youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQoUnPhwq7cxPGvvI4V0y9Hqhfwe61xaJ](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQoUnPhwq7cxPGvvI4V0y9Hqhfwe61xaJ)

# Diversity Instead of Over-exploitation: Protecting Nature and Human Rights

Along with the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity is the second major threat to our livelihoods. In order to preserve it, we must rethink global agriculture and use our natural resources more sustainably. Mining, in particular, has become a global business that often entails human rights violations and high secondary ecological costs. We advocate for the protection of biodiversity and support activists who drive a transition in the agricultural and raw materials sector.



Chuquicamata, the world's largest copper mine, in Chile's Atacama Desert. Photo: © IMAGO / Jochen Tack

## Healthy soils – vital, threatened, and contested

Intact soils are a basic prerequisite for producing healthy, diverse foods, protecting the climate, and preserving biodiversity. Yet our soils are in poor condition, and more than a third of the world's agricultural areas are classified as degraded. In the European Union, more than 60% of soils have been damaged by industrial agriculture and the effects of the climate crisis, such as drought and soil loss. At the same time, soils are becoming increasingly important in the international climate debate, which exacerbates conflicts over land distribution. To protect our soils, we urgently need coordinated political efforts that take into account all the various types of usage – efforts that have to be guided by human rights. Our *Soil Atlas 2024*, which we co-published in January 2024 with BUND and TMG Thinktank for Sustainability, explores some basic ideas. As the *Soil Atlas* shows, sustainable soil management practices will be able to preserve the basis of our food production long-term.

As part of our annual *Alternative Green Week* in January, the Network for Solidarity in Agriculture held a conference on the topic of soils. The focus was on facilitating access to arable land for young farmers in particular, and on curbing skyrocketing land prices, especially in eastern Germany. We also discussed ways to reform animal husbandry and how to better promote agroecology. Our celebration of the agricultural turnaround, which, each year, concludes the event, showcased inspiring examples.

## Poland: A school for agroecology – education and networking for a just food transition

For the second time, our Warsaw Office, together with the Agro-Perma-Lab Foundation, organized the *Polish School of Agroecology*, an event showcasing alternatives to industrialized agriculture. To preserve biocultural diversity, we depend on the knowledge and practices of farmers and local communities. The project is designed to promote exchange, expand knowledge, strengthen networks, and advance the agroecological movement in Poland. In 2024, for example, we offered a six-day course for a diverse group of farmers, activists, scientists, and representatives of local authorities, including a tour of small farms that practice agroecology. Interactive workshops offered a deep dive into agroecological concepts, discussed strategies to strengthen local food systems, and highlighted the role of agroecology in Poland and Europe.



## Soil Atlas 2024

As the most biodiverse habitat on earth, our soils store vast amounts of greenhouse gases and water. They feed humans and animals; they make flowers bloom and trees grow. Soil is a vital resource – and it is under threat. Our *Soil Atlas 2024* not only highlights the repercussions of the global loss of fertile soil, but also outlines the great potential of sustainable and fair land use for climate protection and biodiversity.

↗ <https://eu.boell.org/en/SoilAtlas-PDF>

## France: The Banlieues Climat association on a study trip to Germany

The mission of the association Banlieues Climat is to bring together, educate, and inspire young people in suburbs and working-class districts (especially in precarious circumstances), empowering them to inject their voices and projects into the debate on the environment, on climate, and social justice. In July 2024, our Paris Office organized a study trip to Frankfurt, Hanau, and Berlin to foster connections between Banlieues Climat and like-minded German NGOs and youth groups as well as politicians. Since one of our main goals was to start conversations on nutrition and food justice, the group visited the urban gardening project Gemüseheld\*innen in Frankfurt and the Himmelbeet garden in Berlin-Wedding. The group also met with Minister of State for Climate and Europe Anna Lührmann, representatives of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and city council members in Frankfurt and Berlin. To conclude the trip, the Banlieues Climat delegation met with the Ferhat Unvar educational initiative in Hanau, which trains young people to hold their own workshops on racism, right-wing extremism, and violence. The group also visited the sites of the right-wing terrorist attacks of February 19, 2020 with Serpil Unvar and Çetin Gültekin.



In 31 days, Simon Fischer ran 31 marathons all across Germany. His message – extreme draught and torrential rain endanger our water supply.  
Photo: © Ruben Hensel, WFD

### Blue Run – 31 marathons against the water crisis

On April 18, 2024, we co-hosted a special evening with the Weltfriedensdienst, the finale of the Blue Run. In 31 days, extreme runner Simon Fischer had run 31 marathons across Germany to draw attention to the water crisis faced in many parts of the world and inspire others to join the effort to protect this vital resource. Simon Fischer spoke not only about what he had experienced over the past 31 days, but also about his time as a specialist with the Weltfriedensdienst in Kenya. He was accompanied by Susanne Götze, who read from her book *Durstiges Land* (Thirsty Land). In Germany, too, the water crisis is now a reality. Agriculture, in particular, suffers as our summers become drier and our winters wetter. Following the discussion and the closing ceremony of the Blue Run, the documentary *Between the Rains* was screened in cooperation with the Human Rights Film Festival Berlin. This Kenyan production by Andrew Harrison Brown and Moses Thuranira documents the effects of a severe drought on the livestock farming community Turkana-Ngaremara in the north of the country.

### Asia: Geopolitics and vital raw materials – an expert workshop

Raw materials, such as rare earths, nickel, and lithium, are essential for LED lamps, wind turbines, and electric cars – and therefore crucial for our transition to renewable energies and climate-friendly mobility. Driven by both the climate crisis and global economic growth, demand for these metals will soar drastically in the coming years. China currently dominates many strategic production chains but, more and more, other Asian countries are entering the business. However, the extraction of these resources often causes massive problems for residents and the environment. At an event in September, experts from almost all of the Foundation's Asia offices joined peers in Germany and Europe to discuss a range of issues: How can critical resources be extracted responsibly? What are the biggest challenges in Asia? What does this mean for European and German regulatory efforts in the current geopolitical environment? And how do Asian countries address their own dependencies?

In addition to presentations, documentaries were screened on topics such as rare earths mining in Myanmar and the consequences of nickel mining on the Indonesian island of Halmahera. Visiting experts were invited to meet with members of the German parliament and ministerial officials for in-depth conversations.

### International law for the protection of nature – workshop and panel discussion

The concept of Rights of Nature (RoN) aims to have the natural environment recognized as a legal entity. This means that ecosystems and animals are no longer seen solely as resources and means of production but appreciated for their inherent value that needs to be protected. Spurred on by successes achieved by indigenous groups in Latin America and elsewhere, the idea is gaining traction worldwide. To advance the debate and build networks around the issue of RoN, we joined forces with Global Assembly to host an international workshop in Berlin on February 15, 2024. A group of 30 activists, scholars, journalists, NGO representatives, and experts in environmental protection, human rights, and environmental law from Europe, Latin America, and Africa discussed some of the most pressing issues: What is the vision behind RoN and how can it be implemented in different contexts? What are the most promising approaches, what the biggest challenges? There was also a debate about how RoN relate to the UN Convention on Human Rights and the concept of property. Speakers included Vanessa Hasson (MAPAS Brazil), Peter Doran (Queen's University Belfast), Lotte Leicht (Climate Rights International), Jérémie Gilbert (University of Roehampton), and Hermann Ott (Client Earth Germany). Intensified lobbying efforts on RoN are necessary at various political levels. RoN will also have to be linked more closely to other relevant issues such as degrowth, extractivism, and ecocide.

At a panel discussion on July 17, 2024, held jointly with the German Association for the United Nations and Stop Ecocide Germany, experts in international environmental

law discussed how a revised EU Environmental Crime Directive and the international debate on (re)introducing ecocide as a crime under international law will require a tightening of German environmental criminal law. The conference focused on how legislation can help stem the rapid loss of biodiversity and the worsening climate crisis.

### Exit Plastic and Plastic transition now! – a conference and a manifesto

On February 6, 2024, we partnered with the Exit Plastik alliance to host a conference on solutions to the plastic crisis. Civil society organizations held a roundtable on marine debris, chemicals in plastic, and the limits of recycling, discussing ways to implement zero-waste, reusability, and avenues towards a global plastics agreement. In a public panel discussion, Dr. Axel Borchmann (Federal Ministry for the Environment), Anja Krieger (Plasticsphere Podcast), André Lang-Herfurth (Reusable Packaging Association and zerooo), and Jane Muncke (Food Packaging Forum) discussed the role of the UN Plastics Convention, currently under negotiation, and the ban of hazardous chemicals used in plastics. In April 2024, in the run-up to the fourth round of negotiations on the UN Plastics Convention, the alliance published the manifesto *Plastics transition now!*, which demands a reform of the Packaging Act and an ambitious UN Plastics Convention that bans hazardous chemicals and stipulates a reduction in the production of new plastics. By July 2024, more than 110 organizations and individuals had signed the manifesto.

↗ [boell.de/en/2024/04/18/exitplastic-now](https://boell.de/en/2024/04/18/exitplastic-now)



Photo: Richard Carey

## Western Balkans – lithium mining in Serbia

In 2024, we also addressed the resource policy situation in the South Caucasus and Western Balkans. In Serbia in particular, the political mood surrounding lithium mining came to a head when German Chancellor Scholz visited the country in June. To provide our partners in Serbia with a platform to voice their concerns, we held talks with decision-makers in Berlin and Brussels, as well as an event at the European Parliament. Our report *From Boom to Burden: Perpetual Impacts and Mining*, which we presented at the EU Raw Materials Week, is a further contribution to the debate on resource policy.

Report *From Boom to Burden*

[boell.de/sites/default/files/2024-12/from-boom-to-burden\\_perpetual-impacts-and-mining\\_preview\\_small.pdf](https://boell.de/sites/default/files/2024-12/from-boom-to-burden_perpetual-impacts-and-mining_preview_small.pdf)

## Brazil – environmental and social consequences of mineral extraction

The Brazilian government hopes to turn the country into an important supplier of minerals. However, extraction already has a very negative impact on Brazil's ecosystems and traditional communities. It is very alarming that the Brazilian government is pushing ahead with mineral extraction in an effort to meet international demand, yet blatantly disregards the rights of its people. The ongoing dispute over oil exploration in the Amazon estuary is along similar lines. Various

factions within the government criticized the Brazilian Federal Environmental Agency for rejecting the project in 2023. Important political allies of the Lula government are pushing for exploration to be approved prior to the UN Climate Change Conference COP30 in November 2025. Our project partner Reporter Brazil investigated mineral production chains, in particular of gold, which is mostly mined illegally on indigenous land. The investigative reporters took a closer look at companies that profit from this activity and documented the social and environmental cost.

## The price of bread – policy proposals to stem inflation

Everyone noticed the recent rise in bread prices – nearly 35% between 2019 and 2023. In cooperation with the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung and the TMG Thinktank for Sustainability, the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung commissioned renowned economist Isabella Weber to author a policy paper, compiling information on the precipitous rise of food prices and on possible political measures to counter it. We propose that countries monitor and regulate food prices more systematically, including setting up buffer stocks for staples that would allow to stabilize prices by strategically buying and selling stock. We discussed this proposal publicly with representatives of the UN World Food Program and the World Trade Conference (UNCTAD), as well as with numerous members of the German Bundestag and the EU Parliament.



Gabriel Boric, President of Chile, and Dr. Imme Scholz, President of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, met in Berlin. Photo © Ole Schwarz

The project also included *Stories about Bread*, a three-part scroll story retracing the history of bread as a key symbol of various momentous uprisings in history, illustrating the monopolization of today's global grain trade, and showcasing initiatives in Lebanon and Germany that face up to powerful agricultural corporations with artisanship and with seeds they own and produce themselves.

Policy paper *Buffer Stocks Against Inflation*

↗ [boell.de/en/2024/06/18/buffer-stocks-against-inflation](https://boell.de/en/2024/06/18/buffer-stocks-against-inflation)

Scroll story *Stories about Bread*

↗ [boell.de/en/stories-about-bread-art-baking-uprisings-power-and-prices](https://boell.de/en/stories-about-bread-art-baking-uprisings-power-and-prices)

## A green development model for Chile



Together with its partner organizations, our office in Santiago de Chile is promoting a green development model for Chile. The aim is to unite forces that advocate a socio-ecological transformation, protect the environment, promote sustainable economic practices, and strengthen democracy and human rights. The publication *Nuevo Modelo de Desarrollo: Diálogos para una propuesta inclusiva, de futuro justo y sostenible para Chile* (A new development model: Proposals for an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable Chile) introduces a development model that includes not only economic and social but also environmental components for future-oriented raw materials, energy, and green policies. In Berlin, on June 11, 2024, Foundation President Dr. Imme Scholz presented the publication to Chile's President Gabriel Boric on the occasion of his visit to Germany.

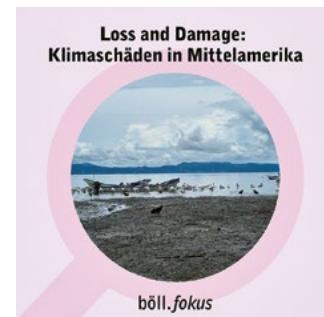
The proposed model emphasizes opportunities for processing Chilean raw materials locally, using the revenue to promote social justice and participation. Copper and lithium deposits, as well as the huge wind and solar energy potential for green hydrogen should not only be used for export but also create added value domestically. At the same time, extraction and processing must comply with ecological and social standards. This will also strengthen Chilean democracy: Citizens should be included in the decision-making process and educated on how they may benefit from the implementation. Together with our partners, we aim to put new, participatory proposals on the political agenda.

↗ [cl.boell.org/es/2024/05/07/nuevo-modelo-de-desarrollo-dialogos-para-una-propuesta-inclusiva-de-futuro-justo-y-sostenible-para-chile/](https://cl.boell.org/es/2024/05/07/nuevo-modelo-de-desarrollo-dialogos-para-una-propuesta-inclusiva-de-futuro-justo-y-sostenible-para-chile/)

## Podcast

### Climate loss and damage in Central America

Climate-related disasters affect the entire world to varying degrees. While, as a region, Central America's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is negligible, its population suffers disproportionately from drought and the rising temperatures of the world's oceans. We talk to experts from the region and experts on global climate policy about issues and possible solutions, such as the newly created Loss & Damage Fund, which is meant to provide direct financial aid to those who need it most. ↗ [boell.de/de/media/podcast-episode-podigee/loss-and-damage-who-pays-climate-change-central-america](https://boell.de/de/media/podcast-episode-podigee-loss-and-damage-who-pays-climate-change-central-america)



# Defending Democracy – Securing Freedom and Human Rights

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Democracies draw strength from openness and their ability to correct mistakes. Democracy is the only way to tackle the climate crisis, address geopolitical upheavals, and control technological risks. Stability does not come from oppression but from defending human rights. By protecting democracy, we defend the freedom and dignity of every human being against detractors from within and without. We work with our partner organizations around the world to assert human rights and protect human dignity, including policies for gender equality.



Youth meeting in Senegal, Photo: © Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung

## Senegal: Youth meeting on notions of liberalism, held in cooperation with our Vienna Office and the Cluster of Excellence “Liberal Scripts”

Every year, up to 200,000 young Senegalese enter a labor market devoid of prospects. A decent income, education as an opportunity for advancement, or starting a family – for many, all of these aspirations are bound to remain unfulfilled. Driven by the hope for a better life elsewhere, tens of thousands leave the country on dangerous migratory routes. Those who stay are becoming increasingly outspoken in their protest against policies that are perceived as disenfranchising and patronizing. What can a new generation expect of a system that calls itself democratic, but fails to deliver on key promises, such as economic participation, political freedom, and social justice? This question was the focus of the *Pencum Ndawyi* – the Plenum of Youth, held in Dakar, which brought together young people from all regions of Senegal. Co-hosted by our Dakar Office, the SCRIPTS Cluster of Excellence, and the Global Unit for Human Security in Vienna, this multi-day event was a place for sharing, networking, and for visions. Debates were varied: some vocal, some quiet, many of them angry – but all of them underpinned by hope. On the Island of Gorée, the largest historical center of the slave trade on the African coast, participants reflected on how global power relations shape their lives and what changes are needed. “We are not against France or the West – but we are calling for a new order of North-South relations that guarantees us fair opportunities, a say, and social participation.” This and other statements were heard at the plenary session, making it clear that the youth of Senegal demands change – and that they are determined, questioning, and full of expectations for the future.

## Santiago de Chile – International Press Freedom Day

The 31st UNESCO International Conference on Press Freedom Day was held in Santiago de Chile from May 2–4, 2024. The conference titled *A Press for the Planet: Journalism in the Face of the Environmental Crisis* focused on the media's role towards sustainable development in the face of growing anti-democratic forces in Latin America. Our Santiago de Chile Office is working with partner organizations to strengthen freedom of expression and ensure access to reliable information. The conference introduced the Coalition for the Strengthening of Freedom of Expression (COFLE) – a network of journalists and activists that oppose anti-democratic narratives and fight for human rights. There, the *Joint Civil Society Report on Freedom of Expression* was presented, as was an alternative report regarding Chile's review by the UN Human Rights Committee. The conference included side events on digital violence, disinformation, the role of feminist journalism, and the media's responsibilities in face of the ecological crisis. Our office also held a regional networking meeting with forty feminist journalists, discussing the situation of human rights advocates.

## Feminist Media Lab – network meetings and workshops

The first *Feminist Media Lab* took place in Berlin from November 20–22, 2024. Fifteen FLINTA\* (women and gender-diverse people) journalists from Europe used this safe space to talk about threats and pressures in the public and digital space. Workshop topics ranged from feminist cybersecurity, gender, disinformation, to stress management, clearly showing the need for better networks in the face of similar challenges throughout Europe. The format will therefore continue as a series of digital feminist roundtables meant to promote exchanges and help develop long-term counter-strategies.



## Democracy – diverse avenues towards a common goal

Around the world, liberties, the press, voting rights, and the judiciary are being targeted by authoritarian and far-right forces. Still, many remain undaunted and continue to fight for human rights, equality, climate protection, and a fair economy. They are calling on the courts to dispense justice and they are publicizing their grievances as well as possible solutions. In this edition of our magazine, as a token of our solidarity and encouragement, we want to showcase some of these people. Without dedication and action, there will be no democracy – and without democracy, everything is for naught.

↗ [boell.de/en/boellthema-22024-democracy](http://boell.de/en/boellthema-22024-democracy)

## Thessaloniki: Democracy today – our world tomorrow, a conference

In 2024, Greece celebrated the 50th anniversary of the restoration of democracy. After the fall of a military dictatorship that had lasted seven years, Konstantinos Karamanlis became prime minister on July 24, 1974, ushering in the Third Hellenic Republic. To mark the occasion, our Thessaloniki Office held a conference in Athens in October, focusing on dwindling voter turnout. To thrive, democracy needs active citizens, yet five decades after its restoration, Greek democracy is under pressure: Anti-democratic voices are gaining influence, the rule of law is eroding, and political participation is at a low. Instead of celebrating the successes of the past, the conference discussed current crises and the country's outlook. One panel highlighted policy failures, for instance in reducing social and geographic inequalities, or the slow progress in gender equality. It also addressed restrictions on freedom of the press and the rise of the extreme right.

Representatives of civil society also presented local approaches: energy cooperatives that use resources collectively, or projects that involve children in urban planning. Their message: Democracy can only thrive when it is palpable in everyday life.

## achtzehn – exhibition and event

As they transition into adulthood, the young generation is confronted with a multitude of global crises: Their prospects are shaped by climate change, pandemics, geopolitical conflicts, and social change. At the same time, there is a lack of places where young people can share their perspectives, experience social participation, and be taken seriously. This is where the exhibition *achtzehn*, held at the Berlin Museum für Werte, came into play. Instead of talking about young people, it gave them the floor. Photographer John Kolya Reichart accompanied 35 eighteen-year-olds from all parts of Germany for a day, visiting venues of their past and future lives, and listening to what they had to say about their dreams, hopes, and fears. These portraits and interviews were displayed in a multimedia show at Berlin's Zeiss Major Planetarium. During its six-week run, *achtzehn* not only offered insights into young people's realities, but also space for intergenerational dialog. Around 25,000 visitors, including numerous school groups, saw the exhibition. One of its highlights was the "common ground" event: One hundred participants came face-to-face to discuss the big and small issues of our time – from fighting climate change to fear of the future.



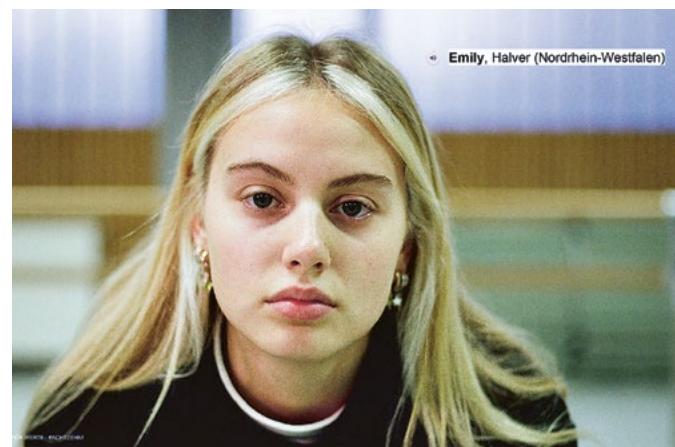
Chris, Ulm (Baden-Württemberg)



Lene, Rostock (Meck.-Pomm.)



Tim, Köln (Nordrhein-Westfalen)



Emily, Halver (Nordrhein-Westfalen)

## United in resentment: authoritarian dynamics and right-wing extremist attitudes – the Leipzig Authoritarianism Study 2024

The current *Leipzig Authoritarianism Study* points to a marked gap between democratic ideals and political practice in Germany. While 90% of respondents rate “democracy as defined in the constitution” positively, only 42.3% express satisfaction with “democracy as it works in the Federal Republic of Germany.” In the West, 45.5% of respondents expressed satisfaction, while in the East, it was only 29.7%. For the first time, the survey included a comment section where respondents could enumerate reasons for their dissatisfaction: The most frequently mentioned issues were “politicians,” “parties,” “government,” and “bureaucracy.” It is obvious that skepticism about the effectiveness of democratic institutions mounts in times of crisis. In addition, there is a widespread sense that citizens wield very little political influence.

While the percentage of respondents with a hermetic right-wing extremist world view is declining, the danger remains, with xenophobic attitudes still common and, in western Germany, on the rise. Anti-Semitic attitudes are also firmly anchored in society, regardless of the respondents’ declared political affiliation. The study also reconfirms close links between anti-Semitic and anti-feminist attitudes, as already seen in the 2022 survey. The bottom line is sobering: While approval rates for democracy as an ideal are high, its actual implementation is questioned. At the same time, discriminatory attitudes remain a serious social problem that undermine our democratic culture in the long term.

*Leipzig Authoritarianism Study* (German only)  
[↗ boell.de/leipziger-autoritarismus-studie](http://boell.de/leipziger-autoritarismus-studie)

## Education as a right for all!

In Germany, around 2.2 million students are considered “educationally deprived,” meaning they do not meet minimum standards for German and maths. The 2018 PISA study had already documented that, on average, children from low-income families lag up to three and a half years behind their peers from affluent households. The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung has long been committed to leveling the educational playing field and strengthening social participation. One example is our five-part podcast series *Bildung als Recht für alle!* (“Education as a right for all,” German only), which showcases approaches towards greater equality of opportunity. Experts such as Petra Stanat and Aladin El-Mafaalani highlight the challenges posed by unequitable learning conditions – and the importance of investing in early childhood education, elementary schools, and teacher training.

## Kyiv Office – the Sunny Bunny LGBTQ+ Film Festival

The *Sunny Bunny LGBTQ+ Film Festival*, co-hosted by our Kyiv Office, is one of the major platforms for queer cinema in Ukraine. It features films that challenge stereotypes, promote dialog, and celebrate the diversity of queer experiences in Ukraine and around the world. In a country that is fighting the Russian invasion and its homophobic colonial policies, *Sunny Bunny* is much more than just a film festival: It is an act of resistance. It started in 2000 when the Kyiv international film festival *Molodist* first introduced an LGBTQ+ section. In 2022, in a courageous signal of defiance and under the shadow of war, *Sunny Bunny* became an independent event. The year 2024 brought both opportunities and obstacles. On the one hand, the festival gained international recognition, attracting filmmakers and audiences from many countries and sparking important debates on human rights. On the other hand, holding an event under wartime conditions is dangerous and fraught with logistical problems, security concerns, and financial uncertainty. Still, thanks to the team’s commitment, *Sunny Bunny* continues to grow. With around 60 screenings of short and feature-length films, accompanied by discussions and special events, the festival offers a safe space for encounters and exchanges. *Sunny Bunny* proves that culture remains a strong symbol of diversity and freedom, even in times of war.

### Podcast

## Our Voices, Our Choices

*Our Voices, Our Choices* is an international podcast series on gender politics. It tells stories of women’s and LGBTQ+ human rights, that is, of people whose voices often go unheard and whose rights are being curtailed. The four 2024 episodes revolved around feminism and war, addressing sexualized violence in war, pregnancy in wartime, feminist solidarity despite war, and a gender-equitable peace. [↗ boell.de/de/podcasts/our-voices-our-choices](http://boell.de/de/podcasts/our-voices-our-choices)



Illustration: © Arinda Craciun



A historical breakthrough in Colombia. Causa Justa: green banner, clear message – a symbol that is catching on in Latin America,  
Photo: © Victoria Holguín

### Colombia: decriminalizing abortion

In February 2022, the Colombian Constitutional Court, in its ruling C-055, decriminalized abortion for a period of up to 24 weeks of pregnancy. Women, girls, trans men, and non-binary people now have the right to have an abortion without providing justification or meeting any preconditions. After 24 weeks of gestation, abortion is still legal, and no time limit pertains, provided at least one of three conditions is met: danger to life or health, serious malformation of the fetus, or pregnancy resulting from rape or incest. The ruling is considered a great success for the feminist movement in Latin America, especially the platform Causa Justa, which, in 2017, emerged from the association La Mesa por la Vida y la Salud de las Mujeres. Today, the platform includes nearly one hundred organizations from over twenty regions of Colombia. Its central mission is to defend women's rights, physical self-determination, and sexual and reproductive rights – in particular, the legalization of abortion.

Like many feminist movements, Causa Justa uses the green scarf as its symbol, which goes back to the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo and was adopted by women's organizations in Argentina in the 2000s. Since 2018, the green scarf has stood for greater visibility, influence, and the recognition of feminist struggles throughout Latin America.

### Listen and look – on the public debate in Germany since October 7

The Hamas terrorist attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023, and the war in Gaza, which continues to this day, have brought great suffering to the people in the region as well as to the Jewish, Israeli, and Palestinian diaspora in Germany. In this moment in time, we should acknowledge and address the complexity of the issue and the fact that anti-Semitism and racism, grief, pain, and disappointment all exist simultaneously. However, what we see instead is a lack of empathy on all sides and a public debate that is polarized, divided, and dogmatic. We invited a number of authors to highlight different aspects of the German debate in the wake of October 7, as well as its blind spots. All participants are united in their desire that social discourse should be open, democratic, and based on solidarity.

↗ [heimatkunde.boell.de/de/zuhören-hinsehen](https://heimatkunde.boell.de/de/zuhören-hinsehen)

### History of the present / history and the present

The importance of history in public debate has been on the rise. History is being appropriated to explain a present that is riddled by wars and crises, and thus history is highly politicized – in social media, by right-wing populist parties, or in response to the political shift to the right. The habitual narrative, which holds that 1945 was a decisive turning point towards a democratic, just, and united Europe, no longer suffices to explain our world in the 21st century. Today, other periods are coming into focus: the 1970s and 1990s, as well as the first half of the 20th century. Issues such as climate change, digitization, and the rise of right-wing movements can only be understood when viewed from a broader historical perspective.

Under the header "History of the present / history and the present," we address this changed approach and explore, which historical processes may help us interpret our complex present. However, we also address the political dimensions of this approach, asking: How can history become an asset for democracy?

# United We Are Strong: Europe's Future Needs Our Solidarity

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War in Europe, the climate crisis, and ever fiercer attacks on democracy are putting the European Union to its greatest test in decades. In the midst of geopolitical tensions and social polarization, common European values are under threat. Yet it is at this very moment that Europe is showing its mettle – by safeguarding peace, defending freedom, and by continuing to act on a global scale. Europe is not a finished product but a living promise that requires courage and solidarity. Our future depends on our ability to master such challenges together – and to harness the power of the Union for a common democratic future.



Photo: © AdobeStock

## European elections 2024 – a shift to the right

The 2024 European elections have reshuffled the political balance of power within the EU. This will have major consequences for key policy areas such as democracy, climate, the economy, and social policy. In the immediate wake of the elections, our EU office in Brussels held an online seminar featuring renowned political scientist Simon Hix, in which over 350 participated. Alongside others, experts from our offices in Warsaw, Prague, Berlin, Paris, and Thessaloniki discussed the election results and their far-reaching implications for the EU. Our 15th *European Democracy Conference* on July 2, 2024 in Berlin also focused on the European elections. Recurring themes were the shift to the right in both the European elections and the first round of the French parliamentary elections. Despite strong gains by right-wing parties, there still is a democratic and pro-European majority, yet it is diminished and far more vulnerable. A look at countries such as Poland, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland, and France clearly shows that, across the EU, right-wing populist and far-right parties are gaining in strength. Populists are skilled at picking up on negative sentiments, stoking fears about the future and resentment about growing social inequalities. In breakout sessions on topics such as energy, agriculture, fiscal policy, and gender equality, participants explored how inequality, a lack of participation, and a loss of trust are threatening democracy. On March 5, 2024, in a joint effort by our international offices, and coordinated by our Brussels Office, we published an online dossier on the European elections. Among other things, it provides information on the electoral systems of the EU member states and the distribution of seats in the European Parliament after the election, including progressive perspectives on the European elections and the many others that took place in the “super election year 2024.” In cooperation with the independent online media platform *Voxeurop*, we also published a series of articles on the rise of far-right movements in various European countries as well as on counter-strategies for civil society.

Online dossier on the European elections:

↗ [eu.boell.org/en/EP2024](https://eu.boell.org/en/EP2024)

## Actually European!? 2024 – a study

In the run-up to the 2024 European elections, the sixth edition of our long-term study *Actually European!?* examined how Germans view the European elections and their country's role within the EU. Among the results, 66.1% of respondents expressed a very or fairly high level of interest in the election, while only 11% showed very little interest. When asked about key issues, respondents mainly mentioned those that require European solutions, namely, migration, security and defense, the economy, climate and energy, and inflation. Many are in support of Ukraine's defense, with over 60% stating that support for Ukraine should be increased (41.8%) or maintained (18.3%). When asked about the benefits and advantages of Europe, results were mixed: 56.9% of respondents feel that the advantages of EU membership continue to outweigh its disadvantages, and 57.3% felt that the current crises are better solved at the European rather than at the national level. However, only

45.2% believe that the economic benefits of EU membership outweigh its costs. Nevertheless, a clear majority is in favor of increasing the latitude for future joint European as well as national investments. For Germany's European policy, this means that the government must do a better job of highlighting the Union's advantages and prioritize investments in future challenge areas. The Foundation contracted polling organization Civey to survey 5,000 people online in February 2024. The results are representative of the population of the Federal Republic of Germany aged 18 and older.

Study *Actually European!?*

↗ [boell.de/en/actually-european-long-term-study-germanys-role-eu](https://boell.de/en/actually-european-long-term-study-germanys-role-eu)



## Europe – A Promise

The European Union is facing historic challenges: a war in Europe, an exacerbating climate crisis, Europe's position in the global power structure. Current polls indicate a rise of right-wing populist parties, which are stoking fears and stirring anti-Brussels sentiment, yet fail to offer any solutions to the problems we face, at a time when Europe urgently needs positive and bold ideas. With contributions from Robert Habeck, Anna Lührmann, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Timothy Garton Ash, Agnieszka Holland, Joanna Maria Stolarek and many more.

↗ [boell.de/en/2024/03/26/boellthema-124-europe](https://boell.de/en/2024/03/26/boellthema-124-europe)

## Reform and EU enlargement – e-paper and anthology

The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has shown that the EU's enlargement and neighborhood policies need to be adjusted. The revitalized enlargement process urgently requires a reform of the EU, otherwise it will lose its ability to act. We invited experts from various policy areas to provide input into the debate on EU reform. Based on the current challenges, they outlined goals for effective policymaking and made recommendations for institutional reforms that would give the EU greater agency and make it more

democratic, ecological, and socially equitable. In this, we did not just look at the interaction of EU institutions, but we also reviewed some policy areas that are central to the future viability of the EU, namely, European foreign policy and security, energy, agriculture, fiscal policy, and enlargement. The results were published in a series of six policy papers, some of which propose pragmatic solutions, while others suggest that completely different approaches should be chosen. The articles are available in German and English.

Policy Paper European Union: How Can Reform and Enlargement Succeed? ↗ [boell.de/en/european-union-how-can-reform-and-enlargement-succeed](https://boell.de/en/european-union-how-can-reform-and-enlargement-succeed)

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### Defending Europe in uncertain times: Green visions for European security and defense – The 24th Annual Foreign Policy Conference

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Our 24th Annual Foreign Policy Conference took place on February 1, 2024 against the background of three overlapping geopolitical crises – in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia. It focused on the future of EU security and defense policy with special emphasis on the outlook for a post-national European Security Order, including an EU army and an independent EU nuclear deterrent. In three panel discussions, decisionmakers and experts from Europe, the USA, and the Global South discussed key aspects of the present and future European security order. Topics mooted were a green European security architecture and fallback options in case transatlantic cooperation should falter. Also discussed were Europe's foreign policy for the Middle East as well as a new strategy for West Africa. In her keynote speech, Minister of State for Europe and Climate at the Foreign Office Anna Lührmann emphasized: "We must be in a position to defend ourselves and our allies against Russia." Anton Hofreiter, Member of the German Bundestag and Chairman of the Committee on EU Affairs, was concerned that Europe might only "wake up when Russia attacks the next country." Sergey Lagodinsky, MEP, emphasized: "We will only survive in this globalized and increasingly multipolar world (...) if we do not try to muddle through as individual nations but face it as the European Union."

Online dossier Annual Foreign Policy Conference

↗ [boell.de/en/24th-foreign-policy-conference](https://boell.de/en/24th-foreign-policy-conference)

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### German-Polish Roundtable – an exchange on security policy

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The German-Polish Roundtable, which was established in 2019, invites experts, politicians, media representatives, and NGO activists from Germany and Poland to share their views on key international and security policy issues. In recent years, debate has focused on Russia's war against Ukraine and its consequences for Europe – which is why, this year, we invited participants from Ukraine. In 2024, the roundtable focused on Ukraine's major supporters in Europe; anti-Ukrainian and/or pro-Russian sentiment in Poland, Germany, and the EU; and civil defense, social resilience, and strategies to combat disinformation in Poland and Germany. In addition, we also published the report *Poland, Germany, and Ukraine at a Turning Point: Making or Breaking the Western*

*Alliance*, as well as a podcast series featuring Ukrainian security policy experts. The project is a collaboration between our Warsaw Office and the Jan Nowak Jeziorski Foundation.

German-Polish Roundtable

↗ [pl.boell.org/en/6th-polish-german-round-table-eastern-europe](https://pl.boell.org/en/6th-polish-german-round-table-eastern-europe)

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### Israel and Palestine – workshop and panel discussions

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In the light of the Hamas attacks on October 7 and the ongoing war in Gaza, prospects for a political settlement in the Middle East seem more elusive than ever. The influence of extremists is mounting, while those who advocate for democracy and human rights are marginalized – both in Israel and in Palestine. In Berlin, on January 30–31, 2024, we and the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), held an international workshop to promote communication, dialog, and envision a shared future. Fifty senior experts from Israel, Palestine, Europe, and the US met in a safe space and, together, we developed scenarios for how Israel and Palestine may coexist over the next decade, with a particular focus on possible pathways towards a viable two-state solution. Subsequently, the results were discussed with decisionmakers in the German government and parliament. The experts agreed that only swift, decisive, and concerted political action by the international community and by progressive forces in Israel and Palestine can stop a further escalation of the conflict and the spread of illiberal dynamics. Both attendees and policymakers responded very positively to the event, and to the constructive dialog between Israeli and Palestinian experts in particular, something that is nearly impossible in any other setting. To mark the first anniversary of the Hamas massacre, we organized an exchange with Jewish and Palestinian activists and experts from Israel in cooperation with the New Israel Fund (NIF) Germany. At a public event in Berlin on November 5, 2024, the Israeli guests discussed the state of Israeli civil society one year after October 7, 2023, and how it can have an impact on a society haunted by trauma, fear, confusion, and polarization. We also partnered with a feminist organization from the Gaza Strip to hold a public panel discussion on women's rights in Palestine on June 25, 2024.

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### The long shadow of the US election – events and online dossier

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In 2024, we held a series of events on the US elections, mainly focusing on the future of transatlantic relations and the domestic political situation in the USA. We relied heavily on the expertise of our Washington Office to analyze the political situation. Just one week after Donald Trump's surprisingly clear election victory, Dr. Ella Müller and Hannah Winnick predicted the emergence of a powerful political apparatus of persecution and authoritarianism in the country, emphasizing the need for courage and grit to defend the democratic project against a radical right intoxicated with victory. Analyses and publications on the elections as well as recordings of our events can be found in our dossier on the US elections.

Dossier *The US elections 2024*

↗ [boell.de/en/us-elections-2024](https://boell.de/en/us-elections-2024)

## Tbilisi Office – Boell Talks in the Southern Caucasus

Since the pandemic pushed events online, our Tbilisi Office and our branch in Yerevan have routinely held *Boell Talks*. These events aim to strengthen dialog between the region, Germany, and Europe, and put urgent political issues in and around the South Caucasus on the agenda in Brussels, Berlin, and other centers of power. In particular, we try to make voices and perspectives from the region heard, including from our many partners among democratic and environmental activists. In 2024, our focus was on the political crisis in Georgia, and Armenia's foreign policy shift towards Europe. The events were often well attended, exceeding 100 and sometimes even 200 attendees, and feedback was very positive.

Boell.Talks

[ge.boell.org/en/boell-talks](https://ge.boell.org/en/boell-talks)



Baran Örnek, Yonca Verdioğlu, Nevzat Taşçı, and Berfin Hanalp (left to right) led a panel on *Generation Z in Turkey – How to Shape Our Future*.  
Photo: © Caner Ozkan

## Turkey – 30th anniversary of our Istanbul Office, exhibition and conference

Our Istanbul Office was one of the first to open. Founded in 1994, during a period marked by both extreme political violence and a flourishing civil society, a small team, lead by Fügen Uğur, got started. To mark the anniversary, we put together an exhibition featuring posters, flyers, magazines, and photos from the last 30 years. To commemorate the many achievements of our Istanbul Office, we documented in texts and pictures how our work relates to the political developments in Turkey and what impact it has had on civil society. We also held a conference featuring, among others, Prof. Hartmut Rosa from Jena, where we discussed how new ways of thinking may emerge in Turkey – during times of growing authoritarianism and with politics that uses fear as a political tool, thus depriving people of their voices and agency. There are no simple answers, and wishful thinking alone will not be able to counter repressive populism. It became clear, however, that there is a growing desire among the younger generation to break with such rigid structures and create “resonance spaces,” to use Rosa’s term. As a foundation, we will try to support them in such an endeavor, and we will also continue to work with the Turkish government, be it as part of the EU accession process or via other channels,

while also putting pressure on the powers that be. This sentiment was confirmed in keynote speeches by Jan Philipp Albrecht, President of the Foundation, and Minister of State Claudia Roth.

Exhibition [tr.boell.org/en/heinrich-boll-stiftung-istanbul-1994-2024-30-years-civil-society-and-politics-turkey](https://tr.boell.org/en/heinrich-boll-stiftung-istanbul-1994-2024-30-years-civil-society-and-politics-turkey)

## Global Unit for Human Security

Our Vienna-based Global Unit for Human Security has enriched our international network since 2023. Its mission is to promote a global security policy that protects the safety and well-being of individuals and their communities. In order to enhance the broad spectrum of perspectives on this topic, the unit contributed to international and European forums in 2024, including the *Munich Security Conference*, the *European Forum Alpbach*, and the *Africa Facts Summit*. It also initiated the *Human Security Salons*, a format that discusses security concepts and political developments. One event, for example, focused on the negative impact of targeted disinformation on the rights and freedoms of the LGBTQ + community in Uganda.

The unit also supports research projects on key security policy challenges, including disinformation, cybercrime, and climate security. By integrating concepts such as feminist foreign policy and climate security, the unit promotes a “green” and more equitable understanding of security. With its expertise and international connections, our Global Unit for Human Security contributes significantly to our mission to promote human rights, democracy, and sustainable development worldwide.

## GreenCampus – Practicing successful politics

GreenCampus – the political training academy of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung and its Co-Foundations at the state level – pools our diverse spectrum of advanced training programs in the field of political management. GreenCampus offers skills development, capacity-building, and management consulting for people active in politics – whether they work as volunteers, in political parties, or in organizations. In this way, we make a key contribution toward building and upgrading the skills that people need to engage in successful political work and effective social participation. [greencampus.de](https://greencampus.de)

# Art as Mirror and Driver of Social Trends

Art can anticipate, simulate, or critically observe developments in society. It triggers emotions, raises questions, and often helps us look beyond the narrow confines of our everyday lives, thus enriching our communities. We therefore promote art and culture as expressions of social self-exploration.



Yulia Tverirtina



Mariano Garcia Calatayud

## Art for Freedom: Unseen Civilians

Art for Freedom: Unseen Civilians is jointly run by the Ukrainian organizations Common Sense Communications and PR Army. Backed by our Kyiv Office and curated by the artist community Pictoric, this project showcases ten works by artists from Ukraine, Germany, France, and Portugal, which explore the fate of Ukrainian civilians who have been illegally detained by the Russian armed forces. Using various techniques, such as graphics, comics, and illustrations, the artists have visualized the stories of a bus driver, a glass factory worker, and a mayor. These artistic depictions of the harrowing Russian occupation aim to keep international attention on Ukraine and are an antidote against waning empathy.

The exhibition premiered at the Ukrainian Crisis Media Center in Kyiv, where leading human rights defenders and documentarians of war crimes spoke on the topic. It then traveled to Lisbon, Paris, Lviv, and at the Berlin Story Bunker. Supporting programming included panel discussions, media interviews, and an international online campaign.

## Ruta 2024: Re(kn)own – region(s) from the inside

In June 2024, our Kyiv Office supported the initial conference of the RUTA Association, held in the Western Carpathians, title *Re(kn)own: region(s) from the inside*. RUTA wants to take us beyond current views of Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Baltic states, and Central Asia. While, in the West, these regions are often treated as mere objects of scientific observation, RUTA is putting them center stage, showcasing them as active players in the production of knowledge. RUTA developed out of networks that formed in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and it aims to scrutinize colonial legacies in science and culture. In 58 panels, 198 participants from almost 30 countries discussed colonization, decolonization, post-colonialism, imperialism, gender, the environment, and Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine. The keynote lectures addressed anti-colonial thinking and gender-specific imperialism. Remarkably, 65% of the attendees were women, and participants from Ukraine had open access to the conference, creating an inclusive environment that amplified diverse voices and encouraged active participation. The newly established RUTA Advisory Board will set the future course of the association and hold annual meetings to help establish the region(s) as active contributors to the global academic and cultural discourse.

## United in diversity – the Eurovision Song Contest and the power of utopia

Against the background of the European elections, we took a closer look at the pop cultural phenomenon that is the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) – a dazzling parallel world celebrating freedom, equal rights for all, and the European spirit, while also holding up a mirror to Europe. With an annual audience of almost 200 million viewers worldwide, the ESC has a real-life impact on tolerance, diversity, and international understanding. It is a glittering bulwark

against right-wing conservative restrictions of all kinds. A panel discussion on May 7, 2024 focused on the political and cultural history of the ESC and what it means to us today. In her welcoming address, Katarina Szécsi Åsbrink of the Swedish Embassy in Berlin put it thus: "While war sows hatred, division, and destruction, the Eurovision Song Contest is a forum where people meet and swap ideas. It promotes openness and creates a shared foundation, a sense of unity."

Dossier

↗ [boell.de/en/the-eurovision-song-contest-and-the-power-of-utopia](https://boell.de/en/the-eurovision-song-contest-and-the-power-of-utopia)  
Recording ↗ [youtube.com/watch?v=XQy\\_JCBOgSU](https://youtube.com/watch?v=XQy_JCBOgSU)

## The Museum of Stolen Art – preserving culture in the metaverse

In 2024, our Kyiv Office backed the Museum of Stolen Art, a seminal digital initiative documenting and preserving cultural heritage that was stolen or destroyed in Russia's war against Ukraine. The project's first virtual gallery is dedicated to Mariupol, featuring over 15 newly digitized 3D exhibits. It includes works from the Kuindzhi Art Museum, archaeological artifacts, and monumental mosaics. The multi-lingual online gallery is accessible to all, and viewers may browse sections dedicated to visual and monumental art, archaeology, everyday life, and architecture. The museum has already evolved into an effective instrument of cultural diplomacy that combines remembrance, resistance, and education. Future plans include expanding the galleries to other affected regions, such as Kherson and Crimea, and integrating the platform into university curricula to preserve this cultural heritage forever.

↗ [museumofstolen.art/en](https://museumofstolen.art/en)



A team discussion in Okombahe, Namibia, in the run-up to the ARCK show. Photo © Willem Vrey

## The ARCK project – a path towards decolonial cultural renewal in Namibia

The project *Artistic Research and Communal Knowledge* (ARCK), sponsored by the National Art Gallery of Namibia (NAGN) with support of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, went along with the return of 23 objects from the Ethnological Museum Berlin to the National Museum of Namibia. The artifacts in question had been taken during German colonial rule (1884–1915). The ARCK project used artistic interven-

tions, storytelling, and field-based research to bring the artworks back into dialog with their communities of origin. The project served to correct colonial misinterpretations and told hidden narratives that revealed the artifacts' true names, functions, and meanings. An interactive multimedia exhibition at the National Art Gallery of Namibia attracted a predominantly young audience. Installations invited visitors to participate, reflect, and make their own contributions. The project shows, restitution is more than just the act of handing over objects; it also means recovering knowledge, agency, and dignity – thus contributing in important ways to Namibia's post-colonial story.

The ARCK project

↗ [dialogue-on-namibias-past.org/event/arck-exhibition/](https://dialogue-on-namibias-past.org/event/arck-exhibition/)



Petra Kelly, 1980 Photo: Unknown photographer, © Archiv Grünes Gedächtnis

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### **Special screening: Act Now! – a documentary on Petra Kelly**

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*“Start where you are. Don’t wait for better circumstances. They will come automatically the moment you start.”* Petra Kelly

Petra Kelly (1947–1992) did believe that a single person could change the world. As co-founder of the Green Party and a figurehead of the peace movement in Europe, she tirelessly campaigned for the environment, peace, and human rights, exchanging ideas with civil rights advocates from East Germany and fellow activists from around the world. Her extraordinary life was cut short by her untimely death. The German-language documentary *Petra Kelly – Act Now!* shows previously unreleased archival images and features commentary from close friends and companions that shed light on Kelly's motivations and her inner strife. To this, our Green Memory Archive contributed numerous texts, audio-visuals, as well as images from Petra Kelly's estate, and it opened its collections for filming and interviews. To mark the film's release in September 2024, we hosted a special screening, featuring director Doris Metz; the event, held at Filmtheater am Friedrichshain in Berlin quickly sold out. An English-language virtual exhibition retraces the Petra Kelly's life and accomplishments.

↗ [environmentandsociety.org/exhibitions/petra-kelly](https://environmentandsociety.org/exhibitions/petra-kelly)

The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung awards a number of prizes and co-sponsors various additional honors, most importantly the Anne Klein Women's Award and the Peace Film Prize.

## Anne Klein Women's Award for Yuliya Sporysh

To promote sex education and prevent gender-based violence, Ukrainian feminist and women's rights activist Yuliya Sporysh launched her Kyiv-based NGO Girls, whose director she has been since its inception in 2019. When Russia invaded her country, her organization was faced with a flood of new tasks, a challenge that the sociologist has been tackling with energy and courage. The jury also highlighted Yuliya Sporysh's firm belief in a better future, as well as her commitment to a feminist post-war order in Ukraine, and a gender-sensitive approach to the country's reconstruction. She regularly attends national and international conferences and events to emphasize the importance of involving women in the process of reconstruction (such as *UN Women* in March of this year, or *Women Deliver* in Rwanda). In Ukraine, she is a member of the Steering Committee for the Platform of Humanitarian NGOs. Its main goal is to amplify the voices of Ukrainian civil society and combat corruption in order to ensure a fair and efficient distribution of financial support for Ukraine.

With the Anne Klein Women's Award, the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung honors women who courageously and persistently stand up for human rights, gender equality, and sexual self-determination. It is endowed with 10,000 euros. The ceremony for the 13th Anne Klein Women's Award took place on March 1, 2024 in Berlin.

[boell.de/en/anne-klein-womens-award](http://boell.de/en/anne-klein-womens-award)



Ruth Beckermann (via video), Photo: Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung

## 39th Peace Film Prize for Favoriten by Ruth Beckermann

Over a span of several years, filmmaker Ruth Beckermann documented life in an elementary school in Vienna's Favoriten district, a diverse area with 200,000 inhabitants. Her documentary *Favoriten* focuses on the children and their fears, hopes, and dreams. We follow Ilkay Idiskut, a very dedicated teacher, who not only covers the curriculum but also teaches the children how to get along peacefully. An Austrian-born daughter of Turkish immigrants herself, Idiskut teaches a class with virtually no native German speakers among its students. *Favoriten* frankly points out the difficult conditions at this elementary school, which struggles with a shortage of teachers, social workers, and psychologists. At the same time, the film is a welcome change to the cliché narrative that children with a history of migration are inherently problematic. "Beckermann impressively shows that edu-

tion is peace work," the jury stated. The film is a powerful tribute to the teaching profession and an implicit call to reform an education system that is all too straining for staff. The Peace Film Prize is awarded by the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung in cooperation with the Weltfriedensdienst e.V. (World Peace Service). An independent jury, appointed by both institutions, views around 20 films from all sections of the Berlinale. The award, endowed with 5,000 euros, has been an integral part of the festival for almost 40 years. A bronze sculpture by Otmar Alt is presented at the award ceremony, followed by a screening of the winning film.

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Favoriten\\_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Favoriten_(film))



## Countering anti-feminism – strengthening democracy

Anti-feminism is a central mindset and ideology of right-wing populism, the New Right, right-wing extremism, and other anti-democratic movements. It helps normalize extreme views in society and stirs prejudice against diversity. We are sponsoring the joint project *Countering Antifeminism – Strengthening Democracy*, which is supported by Demokratie leben! We were impressed by the great response to our last network conference that took place in Dresden in October 2024. Eastern Germany is home to many very dedicated activists who push back against anti-feminist and right-wing extremist influences, and who work to strengthen democracy by fighting discrimination and promoting greater equality.

## Feminism for a post-migrant society

For years, the GWI has been hosting international conferences on queer refugees in Europe, aiming to improve the situation of these particularly vulnerable groups. Our partner in this is the international network QUEAN; in 2024, we also cooperated with netzforma\* e. V. In June 2024, our *The digitization of the EU's external borders and the production of vulnerability* explored how digitization impacts border management, and how AI and other technologies are used to support the EU's political agenda. What is the impact on human and fundamental rights, if refugees are primarily seen as a threat?

[gwi-boell.de/en/Digitizing-the-EUs-External-Borders](https://gwi-boell.de/en/Digitizing-the-EUs-External-Borders)

## Reproductive justice

Reproductive rights play an important role in today's feminist struggles – and, regarding participation and gender equality, they are a canary in the coal mine. The reproductive justice approach combines reproductive rights with social justice, advocating for the right to parent children in a safe environment. In addition, access to contraceptives and abortion must be guaranteed to ensure that no one is forced to have and bear children. In 2024, the Gunda Werner Institute (GWI) has held many inspiring events. Highlights were the Repro Tech Lab conference, where experts and Green MPs discussed intersectional-feminist views on egg donation and surrogacy and a workshop on issues surrounding abortion.

[gwi-boell.de/en/2023/08/04/broschuere-reproduktive-gerechtigkeit](https://gwi-boell.de/en/2023/08/04/broschuere-reproduktive-gerechtigkeit)

## Feminist digital policy

The mounting threat of cyberattacks increasingly also affects civil society actors, yet the specific danger of gender-based digital violence is often ignored. By focusing on this subject, the GWI seeks to boost feminist outlooks on cybersecurity, thus supporting marginalized groups. Feminist views on cybersecurity do consider structural inequalities and advocate for comprehensive, inclusive security strategies.

## Democracy Needs Feminism!

With its gender-political and feminist programs, the Gunda-Werner-Institut (GWI) at the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung examines power structures and relations of dominance between genders, as well as the effect of power relationships on gender relations. The goal is to achieve a just, non-violent, and gender-democratic society. The GWI offers platforms and debates for a variety of feminist and gender-political approaches. It serves as a hub between science, politics, and activists, providing intersectional, feminist inputs for Green policy development and gender politics. Its work is organized according to the following focus areas: strengthening feminist public spheres – combating anti-feminism; feminism for a post-migrant society; sexual self-determination and reproductive justice; feminist internet policy; and feminist foreign policy. [gwi-boell.de](https://gwi-boell.de)

Since 1989, the Fellowship Program Haus Langenbroich has been supporting authors and artists who suffer political and economic difficulties in their home countries, impeding or even preventing the publication of their works.

In the spirit of a democratic and human rights-oriented culture, the program facilitates international cultural exchanges in Germany. At readings and public events, the fellows interact with the German public. The house in the Eiffel region, purchased by the Böll family in the 1960s, has become a peaceful haven for authors from all over the world where they are able to focus on their work and make valuable contacts.

The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung co-finances the fellowship program for persecuted artists in partnership with the city of Düren. Each year, the Foundation proposes one candidate from its own networks.

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## Guests in 2024

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Iranian-born **Esmaeil Pirhadi** studied traditional Persian music, yet after performing political protest songs, he was banned from appearing in Iran. For many years, Pirhadi leveraged his career as an artist and music teacher for his social activism, for which he has been internationally recognized. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in ethnomusicology at the University of Hildesheim.

**Shahrokh Giva**, born in 1977 in Tehran, Iran, published his first novel in 2003. His second book, *Mona Lisa Published*, was well received by the Iranian public and won several awards. Since then, Giva has written more novels, children's books, and screenplays. The constraints of censorship made him resign from a permanent position at an Iranian publishing house.

**Stanislav Ostrous**, born in 1972 in Schmerynka, Ukraine, began his career in photography at the age of 38. As a member of UPHA – Ukrainian Photographic Alternative – he participated in the group exhibition MYPH at CTRL ART Studio (2019) in Wrocław, Poland, the Batumi Photodays festival (2016–2019), and others. He was also short-listed for PhotoCULT 2019. Ostrous lives and works in Kherson, Ukraine.

**Mojgan Ataollahi**, born in 1981 in Tehran, studied architecture, design, and interior design. She is the author of short stories, poetry, as well as screenplays and stage plays. Her only Iranian publication to date is the poetry collection *Passers-by Before a Dreary Window*, as other story and poetry collections have not been approved for publication in Iran. Resistance to censorship and self-censorship is a central element of Ataollahi's writing. Her first international publication was the German translation of her novel *Ein leichter Tod* (An Easy Death, Residenz-Verlag 2015).

**Amirata Joolaee**, born in Iran, studied philosophy and theater studies at the Soore Art University in Tehran, receiving her doctorate in cultural philosophy in 2022. He has taught film and theater studies at various faculties in Iran and Istanbul and has published numerous books and articles as a film and theater critic; he has also worked as a radio journalist. He currently lives in Dubai.

Due to censorship, **Andisheh Karami** was unable to appear publicly as an author in her home country, Iran. In the first months of the 2022 uprising, she wrote articles and spent weeks protesting against the regime in front of Düsseldorf Central Station. She resides in Berlin as a recognized political refugee. Karami writes poems and short stories and is currently working on a novel about the rule of the mullahs.



Members of the Studienwerk's Fellows' Council, Berlin, October 10, 2024. Photo: Stephan Roehl

We support students and doctoral candidates of all disciplines from Germany and abroad. In addition to scholarships, we offer varied programs that educate politically and help students develop key skills.

Our goal is to discover talent and promote our fellows' personal, political, and professional growth. We want to attract multipliers who will champion the Foundation's goals in all parts of the world, namely democracy, solidarity, environmental action, sustainable politics, and human rights.

## Whom we support

In 2024, we selected 298 new fellows in a three-stage process involving 2.142 applicants. We have funded a total of 1.492 fellows, including 1.302 undergraduates, 188 doctoral students, and two international post-docs for research visits to Germany. We focus on a number of target groups: 63% of our fellows are women; 12% study at technical, art, or music colleges; 27% (55% of whom are women) major in STEM subjects. Among the postgraduate fellows, the proportion of PhDs in STEM fields is relatively high at 18% (of whom 65% are women).

## Where do the funds come from?

A total of 1.390 fellows, 174 of them doctoral candidates, were sponsored with funds from the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR). Of the fellows who were funded by the BMBF, 25% are of non-German heritage and 33% are first-generation academics. There are also 39 Syrian and three Ukrainian fellows who have resident status in Germany. With support from the Foreign Office, we sponsored 102 international fellows from 30 countries (outside the EU). 35% of the recipients of Foreign Office funding are first-generation academics. The largest groups, by nationality, are Russian (13), Egyptian (11), Brazilian (9), Iranian (9), Colombian (7), Syrian (7), and Ukrainian (6).

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### Non-material support: advice – training – networking

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The cornerstone of our non-material support is our event program. We host events on current political topics, teach key skills, support interdisciplinary dialog, prepare students for their careers, and encourage our fellows to get involved with social issues. In doing so, we follow the UN guidelines for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

An important skill we seek to instill in our fellows is their ability to take creative ownership, which is why our events are not only designed for but also in cooperation with our fellows. They particularly enjoy organizing their own working groups – from choosing a topic, requesting a project, and drawing up a program, to holding three meetings a year.

The annual *SummerCampus* in Bad Bevensen is the highlight in our program. In 2024, the topic was “Value-oriented foreign and security policy.” Participants discussed various topics with Foundation President Jan Philipp Albrecht, for example what it takes to create an effective international community. The campus thrives on the fellows’ personal commitment. They enriched the program by holding their own seminars, contributing to the forum, and with music ranging from Johannes Brahms to ABBA at a concert in Medingen Monastery.

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### Support for doctoral candidates

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A highlight for our PhD candidates is the annual Doctoral Students’ Forum, where participants discuss science and higher education policy and present their dissertation projects to each other. The 2024 edition, topic “AI in Science and Research – Opportunities and Threats,” took place from May 10–12. There participants’ debated with Foundation President Jan Philipp Albrecht and other experts on scientists’ responsibility in the development and use of AI and its social and political implications.

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### Our network

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Our mission statement about “Diversity and anti-discrimination at the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung” emphasizes that we all have to treat each other with respect. No one should suffer discrimination or be disadvantaged on the basis of gender, a racist or anti-Semitic attribution, religion or ideology, disability or chronic illness, age, sexual or gender identity, or social status. The Studienwerk has developed an anti-discrimination policy that came into effect on October 1, 2024. It covers all matters pertaining to our support for undergraduate and postgraduate students, including the selection procedure and the alumni program. [↗ boell.de/en/scholarships](http://boell.de/en/scholarships)



Participants at the Summer Campus on *Value-Based Foreign Policy*, Bad Bevensen, August 17, 2024. Photo: Belen Pardo

## Good reads

The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung is the only political foundation named after a writer. Throughout his life, Heinrich Böll advocated for the freedom of art. This year, we would like to present former fellows who are making a stir as writers. While their works address a wide range of topics, they all share an international perspective and an attitude that questions power and discrimination.



**Necati Öziri** (student fellow from 2009 to 2014) is a freelance author, playwright, and dramatist. He won the Audience Award and the KELAG Prize at the 45th *Days of German-Language Literature in Klagenfurt*. His debut novel *Vatermal* (Father's Mark), a portrait of a German-Turkish family spanning several generations, was published in 2023. The novel was shortlisted for the German Book Prize and awarded the Ruhr Literature Prize in 2024. The work premiered on stage at the Maxim Gorki Theater in Berlin in December 2024.



**Ronya Othmann** (fellow from 2016 to 2020) studied at the German Literature Institute in Leipzig. She works as an author and journalist, writing poetry, prose, and essays. Her second novel *Vierundsiebzig* (Seventy-Four) was nominated for the German Book Prize and awarded the Düsseldorf Literature Prize, the Award of the SWR Top List 2024, and the Erich Loest Prize 2025. Her documentary-style novel deals with the genocide of the Yazidis.



**Katharina Mevissen** (fellow from 2010 to 2017) is currently pursuing a doctorate on spoken literature and acoustic archives at the Freie Universität Berlin. She worked with the initiative "handverlesen" to create the documentary *Text kommt in Bewegung* (Getting Texts Moving), in which deaf and hearing artists translate and perform sign language poetry. Her debut novel *Ich kann dich hören* (I Can Hear You) was published in 2019. It was awarded the Kranichsteiner Literaturförderpreis and adapted as a radio play by Westdeutscher Rundfunk in 2021. She received the Meersburg and Bremen Literature Prize for her second novel *Mutters Stimmbruch* (Mother's Voice Breaking), published in 2023.



**Ali Fathi** (doctoral fellow from 1992 to 1995) taught law and politics at Tehran University until 1984. He fled to Germany and was recognized as a political refugee in 1985. He studied journalism, sociology, and political science. In 1995, he completed his doctorate on Germany's immigration practices as compared to Great Britain and France. Since 2018, he has been a member of the association Therapists & Counselors Critical of Power and Racism. His autobiographical novel *Gomnam – Reflexionen in der Diaspora* (Reflections in the Diaspora) was published in May 2024.

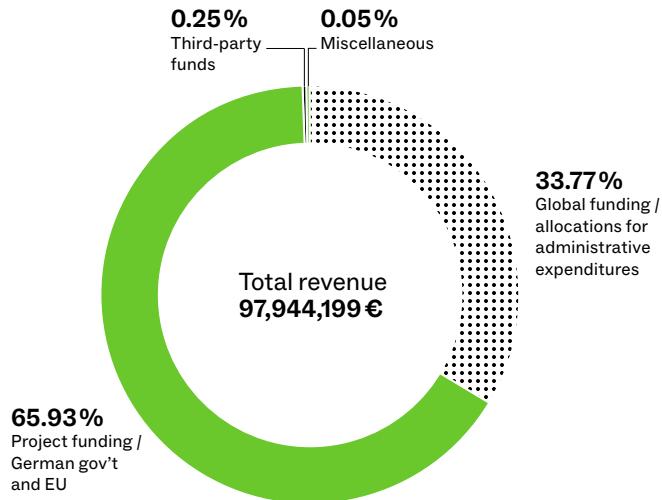


**Dorothee Riese** (student fellow from 2009 to 2016) came to the German Literature Institute Leipzig as a Master's student in 2015. Her 2024 debut novel *Wir sind hier für die Stille* (We're Here for the Silence) was nominated for the Fulda Literature Prize. Dorothee Riese is part of "other writers need to concentrate," an authors' group that campaigns for more visibility for writing parents in the literary world. Since 2021, she has been working at the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO) in Leipzig where she is pursuing a doctorate on the literature and culture of the Romnja\*Roma emancipation movement in Romania since spring 2025.

The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung is an incorporated association registered with the district court of Berlin-Charlottenburg and tax-exempt as a non-profit organization. Our work is largely financed through public grants. Transparency about how we use our funds is of utmost importance to us, which is why our financial reporting goes beyond the legal requirements. We are a member of the Transparent Civil Society Initiative and committed to an anti-corruption code of conduct. In addition, we voluntarily prepare an annual financial report, which is guided by the rules of Germany's Commercial Code, and we have it audited independently. In addition to public monies, the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Association receives income from membership fees, donations, and the business operations of GreenCampus, its further-education academy.

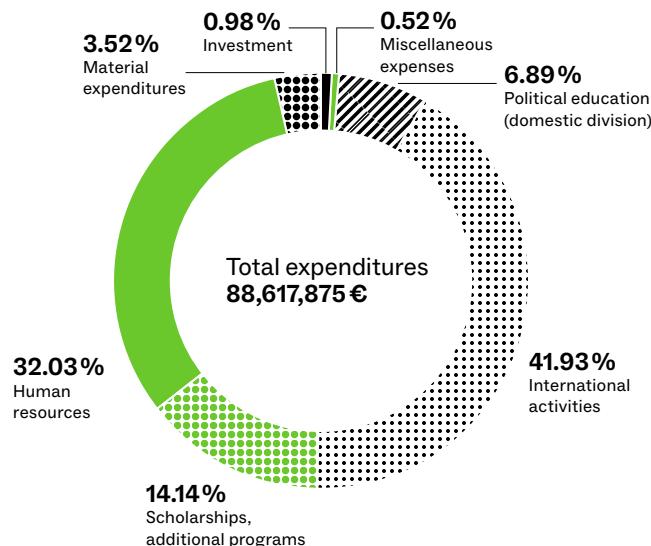
## Revenue in 2024

The Foundation's revenues totaled approximately 98 million euros in 2024. Compared to the previous year, this represents an increase of around 0.8 %, which is mainly due to higher income from general funds.



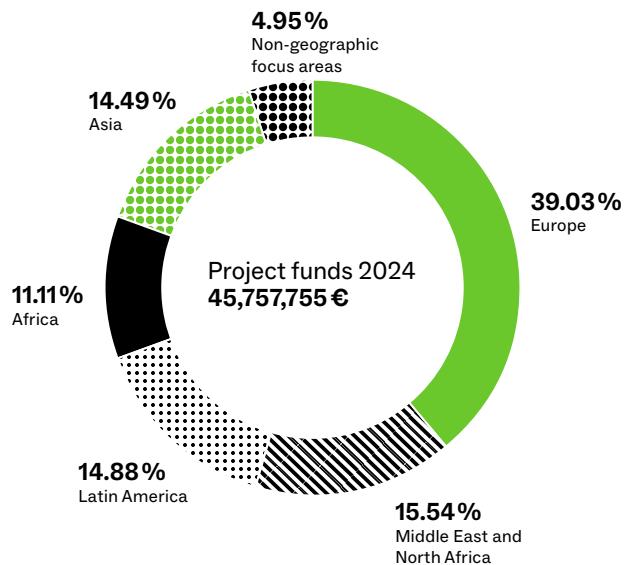
## Expenditures in 2024

In 2024, about 63% of the Foundation's expenditures (approx. 55.8 million euros) were dedicated to program work and in support of undergraduate and postgraduate studies. This share increases to approximately 85.5 % when we include personnel costs for Foundation staff who work directly on our programs. Administrative expenses increased slightly, as did expenditures for investments.



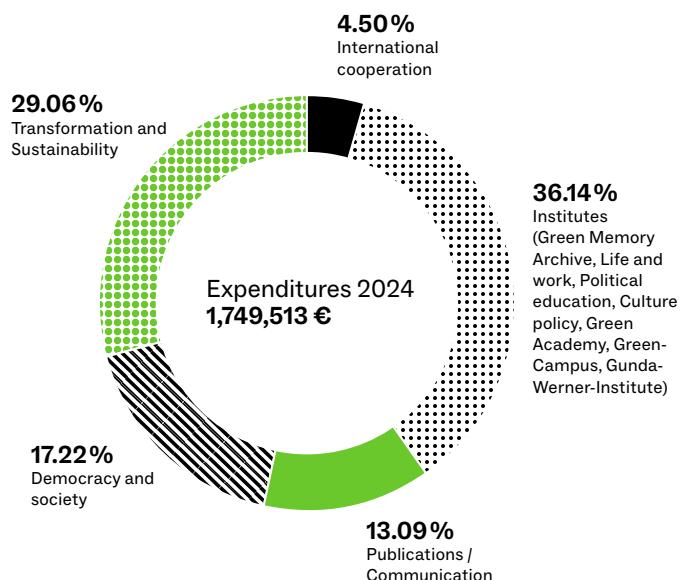
## International cooperation

Project funds for international cooperation amounted to a total of approximately 45.7 million euros. Funds decreased slightly by approximately 260,000 euros compared to the previous year.



## Political education (in Germany)

The Heinrich Böll Foundation spent a total of 1,749,513 million euros from global funds and third-party funds on political education work in Germany in 2024. These funds were used for project work (events, publications, dossiers).



**Preliminary cash-basis accounting 2024\***

Reporting year: January 1 to December 31, 2024 (as of August 26, 2025)

|   | <b>2024</b><br>figures preliminary | <b>2023</b>       |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Revenue towards global budget**</b>                        | <b>32,321,447</b>                  | <b>30,089,362</b> |
| <b>Revenue towards investments</b>                            | <b>754,115</b>                     | <b>1,514,146</b>  |
| <b>Project funding</b>  |                                    |                   |
| <b>International cooperation</b>                              | <b>45,757,755</b>                  | <b>45,987,234</b> |
| BMZ   | 36,837,994                         | 37,372,302        |
| German Foreign Office   | 8,805,776                          | 8,467,033         |
| EU  | 0                                  | 0                 |
| Other / Third-party funds for international cooperation       | 113,985                            | 147,900           |
| <b>Studienwerk</b>  | <b>12,846,696</b>                  | <b>13,322,449</b> |
| BMFTR   | 11,468,039                         | 11,933,454        |
| German Foreign Office   | 1,283,446                          | 1,366,467         |
| Other   | 95,212                             | 22,528            |
| <b>Domestic division</b>                                      | <b>6,215,195</b>                   | <b>6,176,980</b>  |
| BMI   | 5,669,004                          | 5,606,691         |
| Third-party funds   | 546,191                            | 570,289           |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b>  | <b>48,991</b>                      | <b>60,135</b>     |
|   | <b>Total revenue</b>               | <b>97,944,199</b> |
|   |                                    | <b>97,150,306</b> |
| <b>Specialist expenditure</b>                                 | <b>1,749,513</b>                   | <b>1,648,012</b>  |
| <b>Transfers to regional foundations</b>                      | <b>3,948,313</b>                   | <b>3,991,914</b>  |
| <b>Project funding expenditure</b>                            |                                    |                   |
| International cooperation                                     | 37,097,731                         | 36,900,480        |
| Studienwerk   | 12,504,355                         | 12,992,570        |
| EU  | 0                                  | 0                 |
| Third-party funds   | 487,495                            | 499,111           |
| Personnel (salaries, including management of foreign offices) | 28,381,024                         | 25,708,644        |
| Operating expenditure   | 3,117,938                          | 3,273,062         |
| Investments   | 869,648                            | 1,554,823         |
| Miscellaneous   | 461,857                            | 632,334           |
|   | <b>Total expenditure</b>           | <b>88,617,875</b> |
|   | <b>Annual result</b>               | <b>9,326,323</b>  |
|   |                                    | <b>9,949,355</b>  |
| <b>Association revenue</b>                                    | <b>180,748</b>                     | <b>174,690</b>    |
| <b>Association expenditure</b>                                | <b>152,739</b>                     | <b>165,818</b>    |
| <b>Association result</b>                                     | <b>28,009</b>                      | <b>8,872</b>      |

\* all figures in euros

\*\* including carryovers from the previous year

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# Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung worldwide



## Africa

- 1 Cape Town (South Africa)
- 2 Abuja (Nigeria)
- 3 Nairobi (Kenya)
- 4 Nairobi (Horn of Africa)
- 5 Dakar (Senegal)

## Asia

- 6 Bangkok (Thailand)
- 7 New Delhi (India)
- 8 Beijing (China)
- 9 Phnom Penh (Cambodia)
- 10 Seoul (South Korea)

## Europe

- 11 Belgrade (Serbia)
- 12 Berlin (Germany)
- 13 Brussels (Belgium)<sup>1</sup>
- 14 Istanbul (Turkey)
- 15 Kyiv (Ukraine)
- 16 Paris (France)
- 17 Prague (Czech Republic)
- 18 Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina)<sup>2</sup>
- 19 Tbilisi (Georgia)
- 20 Thessaloniki (Greece)
- 21 Tirana (Albania)
- 22 Warsaw (Poland)
- 23 Vienna (Austria)<sup>3</sup>

## Latin America

- 24 Bogotá (Columbia)
- 25 Mexico City (Mexico)
- 26 Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)
- 27 San Salvador (El Salvador)
- 28 Santiago de Chile (Chile)
- 29 Buenos Aires (Argentina)

## Middle East and North Africa

- 30 Beirut (Lebanon)
- 31 Ramallah (Palestine)
- 32 Rabat (Morocco)
- 33 Tel Aviv (Israel)
- 34 Tunis (Tunisia)

## North America

- 35 Washington, D.C. (USA)

At these locations we maintain a different type of office:

- 1 Global Unit for the Support of Democracy
- 2 Global Unit for Feminism and Gender Democracy
- 3 Global Unit for Human Security

# Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Mission Statement

The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung is part of the Green political movement that has developed worldwide as a response to the traditional politics of socialism, liberalism, and conservatism. Our main tenets are ecology and sustainability, democracy and human rights, self-determination and justice. We place particular emphasis on gender democracy, meaning social emancipation and equal rights for women and men. We are also committed to equal rights for cultural and ethnic minorities and to the societal and political participation of immigrants. Finally, we promote non-violence and proactive peace policies.

To achieve our goals, we seek strategic partnerships with others who share our values. We are an independent organization, that is, we determine our own priorities and policies.

We are based in the Federal Republic of Germany, yet we are an international actor in both ideal and practical terms.

Our namesake, the writer and Nobel Prize laureate Heinrich Böll, personifies the values we stand for: defense of freedom, civic courage, tolerance, open debate, and the valuation of art and culture as independent spheres of thought and action.

Commitment, expertise, social skills, creativity, and flexibility describe our employees, both in Germany and abroad. They are highly qualified, team-oriented and, with their high level of motivation, they constitute the most important asset of the Foundation.

Equality of opportunity and respectful dealings between women and men of different ages, religions, ethnic origins, and sexual orientations are constitutive for the Foundation. Intercultural competence and a productive engagement with diversity are part of our corporate culture.

Mutual respect and trusting cooperation among ourselves and with our partners are the bases of our business relationships.

We constantly evaluate and improve our work. We undertake and take seriously both internal and external evaluations. We handle the funds at our disposal economically and efficiently and assure transparent operations.

We work in close cooperation with our co-foundations in all of Germany's 16 states.

We are a reliable partner for volunteer work and for cooperation with third parties. As a political foundation, we act independently; this also applies in respect to our relationship with the German Green Party.

We are autonomous in selecting our executive officers and staffing our committees.

## We are a green think tank

- ▶ We promote democratic reforms and social innovation.
- ▶ We work on ecological policies and sustainable development on a global level.
- ▶ We provide space for presenting and discussing art and culture.
- ▶ We transfer knowledge and skills from experts to political actors.
- ▶ We provide a forum for open debate and promote dialog between politics, business, academia, and society.
- ▶ We support talented students active on sociopolitical issues both in Germany and abroad.
- ▶ We document the history of the Green movement in order to promote research and provide political inspiration.

## We are an international policy network

- ▶ We are part of the global Green network and promote the development of the Green political movement on all continents.
- ▶ We focus especially on the broadening and deepening of the European Green movement.
- ▶ We work actively for the development of a political European public.
- ▶ We support the participation of civil society in politics and, within the framework of multilateral organizations, take part in conferences and negotiations.

## We are active on ecology, democracy, and human rights worldwide

- ▶ We consider ecology and democracy to be inseparable.
- ▶ We therefore support individuals and projects that are committed to ecology, human rights, democracy, and self-determination.
- ▶ We support respect for the rule of law and democratic participation in all parts of the world.
- ▶ We promote the abolition of conditions of dominance, dependency, and violence between the sexes.
- ▶ We consider ethnic and cultural diversity to be an essential part of democratic culture.
- ▶ We encourage civic and civil society activism.
- ▶ We train activists so that they can successfully self-organize and participate in political processes.

**What we want** Fostering democracy and upholding human rights, taking action to prevent the destruction of the global ecosystem, advancing equality between women and men, securing peace through conflict prevention in crisis zones, and defending the freedom of individuals against excessive state and economic power – these are the objectives that inspire the ideas and actions of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. We maintain close ties to the German Green Party (Alliance 90 / The Greens) and, as a think tank for green visions and projects, we are part of an international network encompassing partner projects in approximately 60 countries.

The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung works independently and nurtures a spirit of intellectual openness. We currently maintain a worldwide network with 38 international offices at 35 locations. We cooperate closely with the Böll Foundations in Germany's federal states, and we support talented, socio-politically engaged undergraduate and graduate students in Germany and abroad.

We gladly follow Heinrich Böll's exhortation for citizens to get involved in politics, and we want to inspire others to do the same.