

Stiftung Verbundenheit mit den Deutschen im Ausland



German Minorities and German-speaking Communities
worldwide and opportunities for Future Cooperation with
South Korea

Hartmut Koschyk
Chairman of the Council
Stiftung Verbundenheit

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Conference “Diaspora of Germany and Korea:
Opportunities for Cooperation between the Two Countries”
organized by Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung Korea and the Overseas
Koreans Agency (OKA)



Part 1:
The work of the foundation
"Stiftung Verbundenheit mit
den Deutschen im Ausland"

Introduction to our Foundation

Mission and core objectives

Mission & Vision

- Fostering a global network of German minorities and German-speaking communities
- Promoting the german language and culture, preserving traditions, and supporting the civil society relations between Germany and the world

Core values

- Engaging strategically and professionally
- Applying innovative approaches
- Acting as committed promoters and empathetic advocates for German minorities and German-speaking communities worldwide

History

- Established in 2004 by the german entrepreneur Dr. Kurt Linster
- Since 2018 project activities in Latin America on behalf of the German Federal Foreign Office
- Since 2021 intermediary organisation for the German Federal Ministry of the Interior

Global Presence of German Minorities and German-Speaking Communities

Distribution and numbers worldwide

60 million people with a German-speaking background worldwide

Canada

-3 million people with a German-speaking background
-In Alberta and Manitoba, they make up more than 20% of the population

USA

-More than 42 million U.S. citizens of German descent

South America

-About 11 million people with a German-speaking background, including 1.5 million "Volga Germans" and Mennonites

Central and Eastern Europe and GUS-States

-1 million members of German minorities

Australia

-More than 1 million people of German descent

Namibia

-20,000-30,000 German-speaking people-1 million members of German minorities

South Africa

-1 million people with a German-speaking background

Israel

-200,000 descendants of German-speaking Jewish immigrants

Our Activities and Impact

- Advice and networking for German minorities and German-speaking communities worldwide
- Development of new projects in external media presentation, organizational and strategic issues
- Preparation of handouts, strategy documents and publications for and about German minorities
- Organizing conferences, workshops and events
- Political representation and lobbying towards politicians and the public in Germany and internationally



Our Activities and Impact

Intermediary Organisation for German Minorities

For the **Federal Ministry of the Interior of Germany** the foundation supervises the allocation of public funds for German Minority organizations Eastern and Central Europe, the former Soviet Union incl. Central Asia

Active in 19 countries

- Eastern and Central Europe (Croatia, Poland, Rumania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slowenia, Czech Republic, Hungary)
- Ukraine and Moldova
- Baltics
- Armenia und Georgia
- Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kirgiztan, Uzbekistan)
- Russian Federation



Our Activities and Impact

German-Speaking Communities in Latin America

- 400 German-speaking cultural associations with a high degree of self-organization and social networking
- Particularly represented in rural areas where the intermediary organizations of foreign cultural and educational policy (AKBP) of Germany have hardly any reach
- Until now not in AKBP's focus as potential strategic partners
- Argentina (2018), Bolivia (2020), Paraguay and Chile (2021), Venezuela (2022), Colombia, Peru and Uruguay (2023)
- **New approach of german citizen diplomacy** with a special focus on german speaking communities as **multiplicators**



Cooperation between the Stiftung Verbundenheit and the German Language School Conference (GLSC)

- Develop measures to strengthen the teaching of German through the GLSC
- Develop cooperations with the German-American cultural associations through the Stiftung Verbundenheit
- Implementation of a pilot research project on “German-speaking communities in the USA as partners of foreign cultural and educational policy”, which is planned for 2025.
- Regular exchange to expand strategic cooperation in the short, medium and long term with an annual meeting between the representatives of the GLSC and Stiftung Verbundenheit.
- Through a citizen diplomacy initiative “#JungesNetzwerk” create projects for **young generations** incl. alumni of the German Language Schools.



Cooperation between the Stiftung Verbundenheit and the Association of Israelis of Central European Origin

- Cooperation with the Association of Israelis of Central European Origin ("Jeckes") in developing and implementing projects that promote German cultural heritage in Israel
- Pilot research project on "German-speaking Jews in Israel ("Jeckes") for the Federal Ministry of the Interior of Germany
- Development of media and civil society contacts in Israel and Germany, with the aim of presenting the role of the "Jeckes"
- Preservation of the cultural heritage of the "Jeckes" in Israel as well as political recognition of the "Jeckes" in Germany



Cooperation between the Stiftung Verbundenheit and the Association of German-Austrian Compatriots in Austria (VLÖ)

- to support the German-speaking minorities in Central and Eastern Europe as well as the German-speaking communities in South and North America, especially in the countries of the former Danube Monarchy.
- to convey to the German minorities and German-speaking communities who feel connected to the Republic of Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany the moral and empathetic assurance that they are not forgotten by either country
- a closer exchange and stronger cooperation in supporting German-speaking minorities in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in further developing progressive minority rights within the European Union and in international law in general.



Part 2:
Bilateral Relations
between the Republic of
Korea and the Federal
Republic of Germany

Bilateral Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Korea

Historical background

- 1883: The Korean state of Joseon and the German Empire signed the Germany–Korea Treaty, establishing the first official diplomatic relations
- In 1955, the Federal Republic of Germany officially recognized the Republic of Korea as a sovereign state
- Germany and South Korea: Close cooperation since the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany
- In 2024, Germany and South Korea celebrated 140 years of diplomatic relations, reflecting their longstanding and close partnership



Bilateral Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Korea

Political and Economic Relations

Political Relations

- Germany's humanitarian aid during Korean War; establishment of consular and diplomatic relations
- The 1960s and 1970s saw high-level visits and exchanges; despite temporary strains, both nations found common ground in their shared experience of national division
- Deepened cooperation since German reunification; dialogue on unification, peace, and global partnership

Economic Relations

- Strong bilateral trade and investment: South Korea is Germany's third-largest Asian market; Germany is Korea's largest European trading partner, with bilateral trade reaching €33.9 billion in 2023. German companies employ ~100,000 workers in Korea.
- Longstanding cooperation: since 1883 Trade, Friendship, and Shipping Treaty; German-Korean Chamber of Commerce (1981) supports businesses
- Key sectors & initiatives: EU-Korea FTA boosted trade; focus on automotive, technology, energy, renewable solutions, and SME innovation projects



Life's Good

Bilateral Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Korea

Cultural Relations

- **Shared experiences:** Division of homeland, Germany's reunification as a model, Germany supports Korea's efforts toward a policy of reconciliation and rapprochement in many ways
- **Strong exchange:** Korea as guest country at Frankfurt Book Fair (2005); focus country at Berlin Asia-Pacific Weeks; ~5,500 Korean students at German universities
- **People & culture:** 33,000 Koreans living in Germany, cultural influence through Goethe-Institut, academic exchange, Korean cinema & K-pop



Hartmut Koschyk an Ambassador S. E. Lim Sang-beom



The Role of the Korean and German Minorities in Central Asia – Economic Cooperation, Transformation, and International Understanding

- Korea and Germany are connected not only by the shared fate of the division of their nations, but also by the deportation of both Germans and Koreans during the Stalinist era in the former Soviet Union.
- Therefore, cooperation between Germany and Korea should be pursued in supporting their respective minorities in the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.
- This initiative could be implemented on the German side by the Stiftung Verbundenheit and the foreign offices of the Hanns Seidel Foundation in Korea and Kyrgyzstan; on the Overseas Koreans Agency (OKA) on the Korean side, the could serve as the cooperation partner.



The Role of the Korean and German Minorities in Central Asia – Possible first steps

Conference in Kazakhstan with governmental and civil society actors

- Conference of the Hanns Seidel Foundation and the Stiftung Verbundenheit, together with the Overseas Koreans Agency (OKA), which could be jointly organized with the Hanns Seidel Foundation offices in Korea and Central Asia.
- Exchange between leading representatives of the German and Korean minorities from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan with government officials, representatives of the Stiftung Verbundenheit and the Overseas Koreans Agency (OKA), as well as government representatives and parliamentarians from Korea, Germany, and Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan .



Possible Topics

- Current political situation of the respective minorities
- Current economic situation of the respective minorities
- Role of the minorities in foreign investment as well as in the political and cultural relations of the Central Asian countries
- Roundtable: joint projects of both minorities to create synergies

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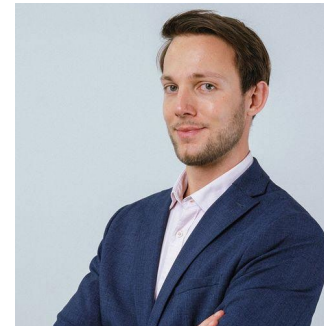
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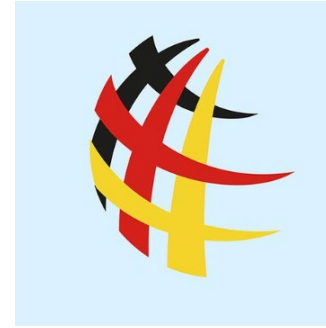
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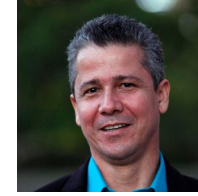
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Thank you very much for your attention