

Table of Contents

Editorial	1
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Our 2017 Topics	3
With Confidence into the Future	4
Freedom and Security – The Future of Europe	6
We Choose Freedom – The Adenauer Year	8
Migration and Integration	10
Reformation and Freedom of Religion	12
Democracy, Elections, and Young Political Talent	14
The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung	16
About Us	17
The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Figures	18
Our 2017 Laureates	22
Departments of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung	23
European and International Cooperation	24
Academic Promotion and Culture	26
Politics and Consulting	28
Reference and Research Services, Archives of Christian-Democratic Politics	30
Civic Education	32
Communication	34
Names, Facts, Annual Accounts	36
Annual Accounts	37
Joint Declaration on State Funding of Political Foundations	40
Board of Directors of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.	41
Members of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.	43
The Villa La Collina in Cadenabbia	47
Academic Promotion Committees	48
Publication Information	49

Dear Reader,

The year 2017 was characterized by turmoil not only in international relations, but also in European and German domestic politics. During his first year in office, American President Donald Trump has held the world in suspense as a result of his fundamental reshaping of trade, immigration, and foreign policies.

Multilateralism and alliances are increasingly being called into question. This is also the case for the European Union, which, in the wake of Brexit, separatist aspirations, and disagreement among member states on key issues such as the refugee crisis, finds itself confronted with a crucial test. In addition, populist political parties and movements have been gaining strength in many countries and have acted to exacerbate the crisis. By contrast, the French have clearly expressed their support for Europe by electing Emmanuel Macron as their president. The consequences of the Syrian civil war can be felt far beyond the boundaries of the Middle East. And 2017 has also seen series of devastating terrorist attacks both within Europe and abroad.

Germany cannot insulate itself from these changes to the international order. This has led many to become apprehensive, while others, in turn, have intentionally taken advantage of the situation to promote their own aims. Our country, however, is well prepared for future challenges. Employment is at a record level, the budget is on a solid footing, and investment in education and research is greater than ever before. Germany is a successful democracy, a reliable ally, committed to European integration, and a respected partner.

As such, the work of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in 2017 can be summarized under the leitmotif of "With Confidence into the Future". As part of our work in Germany, Europe, and throughout the world, we provide analyses necessary for policy making, conduct research on historical and political themes, advise domestic, European, and international decision-makers on politics, the economy, and society, support talented young people, and promote literature, art, and culture.

We will continue to engage in discussions focusing on the future. We concern ourselves with the state of democracy and with the central theme of education. We inquire into what binds us together as a society and the driving forces behind it. We seek answers that are as close as possible to the concerns of citizens in order to encourage a willingness to change wherever necessary.

This annual review highlights a selection of the various activities of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. Taken together with additional information provided on our web site (www.kas.de), it reflects the high level of commitment, competence, and dedication of our staff and contributors both in Germany and abroad. We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to them all.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the committee members for their constructive cooperation, as well as to the *Freundeskreis* (Friends of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung), our donors, sponsors, and partners for their support. We will continue to make every effort to justify the trust placed in us.

We hold the future in our own hands. Let us vigorously work together in a combined effort to write the next chapter in the story of our country!

Berlin/Sankt Augustin,
August 2018

Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert

Michael Thielen

Dr. Hans-Gert Pöttering

