

## Implementation of the Treaty of Aachen and new projects

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Our two countries have actively worked on the implementation of Treaty of Aachen:

1. The **“twinning” of the German and the French presidency in the UN Security Council** took place in March/April 2019. Both countries continue to support effective EU cooperation in UN fora. A **new joint Franco-German UN Junior Professional Officers pilot programme** was launched in 2021 and is to be expanded in the coming years. France continues to support a permanent seat for Germany in the UN Security Council.
2. The integrated **German-French Cultural Institute in Palermo** is expected to be opened in June. Further integrated institutes in Rio de Janeiro, Erbil and Bishkek will follow in the near future.
3. **Two complementary digital platform projects have been launched:** "The European Collection", by the Franco-German cultural broadcaster ARTE and its partners, and the online platform "ENTR" by Deutsche Welle, France Médias Monde and European partners.
4. **An increase in governmental contributions to the Franco-German Youth Office (DFJW/OFAJ)** allowed it to strengthen German-French **youth mobility programs**. The DFJW/OFAJ is developing a plan for the period 2021 to 2023 in order to “restart” youth and school exchanges after the pandemic.
5. **ProTandem**, the Franco-German Agency for Exchanges in Vocational Education and Training, is expanding its scope thanks to new opportunities for applicants in Germany and France and thanks to the introduction of digital formats and solutions for the exchange of apprentices and vocational students between vocational training centres. Furthermore, it will aim at promoting mobility in the border region.

In the field of higher education, the Franco-German University (DFH-UFA) provides a framework for the continuous development of the longstanding and successful cooperation between German and French universities.

5. The **Franco-German Citizens Fund** was set up in April 2020 to promote citizens’ initiatives and town twinnings. It has reached new civil society target groups and successfully funded more than 300 projects. We remain committed to provide low-threshold funding to foster innovative ideas.
6. The **Franco-German Committee for Cross-border Cooperation** was constituted on 22 January 2020 and is **developing concrete solutions for the specific challenges emanating from the integration of life in the border-regions**. It has proven to be a very valuable forum during the pandemic, bringing together relevant actors of all levels of government from both sides of the border. The committee has **held a plenary session and brought its first set of recommendations** to the attention of this Franco-German Ministerial Council. The Committee has made specific recommendations to tackle challenges regarding cross-border healthcare, vocational training, sport events, environmental protection, railway connections and taxation issues. The Franco-German Council of Ministers has taken note of the committee’s recommendations.
7. In **Fessenheim**, we launched several projects to develop a **common future-oriented, sustainable and carbon-neutral economic region**, following the decommissioning of the local

- nuclear power plant. A joint public-private entity will support the development of a **Franco-German business park** with an enhanced infrastructure.
8. In order to improve **cross-border connections**, we are examining the feasibility of reactivating the rail connection between **Freiburg and Colmar** (with a first economic review expected by 2022); we will also examine the feasibility of the reactivation of the railway link between **Rastatt and Hagenau**, as a way to make the two European corridors along the Rhine more robust, including for freight. We will set up a Franco-German project group, with all railway undertakings concerned, to work on the establishment of a direct rail link between Strasbourg and the Frankfurt airport.
  9. The **Franco-German Meseberg Climate Working Group** has met three times since its creation in 2018 and **met again today ahead of the publication of the Fitfor55 package**. It has generated joint positions on the European Green Deal and on key policy areas to mainstream climate protection across sectors. The joint initiative Make our Planet Great Again, MOPGA, is an important element of the German-French collaboration in in climate, energy and earth system research.
  10. To increase our **cooperation on Artificial Intelligence**, we have strengthened the networking between economic and research actors, including the **German AI competence centres and French AI institutes**. Joint **research projects, exchanges of personnel and two shared calls** for proposals have been launched.
  11. We have set up a joint **High-Level Working-Group on Space** to advance our work on launchers, European space policy, space traffic management, New Space and space exploration.
  12. We support the **ethical principles of the "Berlin Declaration on Digital Society and Value-Based Digital Government"**, which aims at the socio-political dimension of digital change as well as the pioneering role of the public administration for a value-based digital transformation.
  13. We have created a **Franco-German expert group on the future of work**, including social partners, to shape the digital and green transformation and identify policy solutions, including **continuing education and training, platform work and artificial intelligence**.
  14. We have closely cooperated in the area of **financial services and financial markets at the EU level** and on a Franco-German-Dutch initiative „Next Capital Markets Union “. We also **brought forward discussions on climate benchmarks, taxonomy and transparency in sustainable finance**. We have jointly contributed to shaping the **discussions on stable coins**.
  15. The **Franco-German Forum for the Future** was established in 2020 and aims at comparing transformation processes in both countries and at learning from local experiences and stakeholders. The Forum’s first work cycle deals with analysing the ecological transition as well as economic and social resilience.

In view of the progress achieved, we have identified **new projects of cooperation**:

1. **Develop a strategy to promote the partner language**, involving German and French experts, to sustainably improve language education in terms of numbers and quality, as well as to anchor and disseminate existing models.
2. **Jointly contribute to the Conference on the future of Europe**, by adding a Franco-German dimension. The Franco-German Youth Office will organize a **youth consultation event in autumn 2021**, which will bring together 60 to 80 young French and German citizens between the age of 18 and 25. More broadly, we encourage the **participation of French and German citizens to events in the partner country**.
3. Launch a **joint Working Group on Gender Equality, Families and Social Cohesion**, which shall meet annually at Ministerial level.
4. Work for a **closer partnership with Africa**:
  - Advocate at EU-level and vis-à-vis African partners for a strong EU-Africa Partnership, including in the areas of African Continental Free Trade Area, investments, migration cooperation, Green Energy and Digitalisation.
  - Together with West African partners, jointly fight climate change in the region, by providing support for capacity-building measures and research and innovation.
  - together with **the G5 Sahel states, foster good governance, decentralisation and anti-corruption reform** in the region, by providing support for capacity-building measures and financing infrastructure.
5. **Further strengthen cross-border cooperation**, including through the work of the Franco-German Committee for Cross-Border Cooperation, by:
  - Initiating a **German-French expert dialogue, including Santé Publique France and the Robert Koch-Institute**, to improve health crisis management and prevention in the border region;
  - Establish a **joint survey on the living situation in the border region** in order to improve cross-border policy-making.
6. Develop a **German-French network programme for young leaders** in close cooperation with partners from civil society and the private sector.
7. Work together to **honour victims of the two World Wars** at additional sites. We will begin by working to establish a memorial site for the so called Winterberg tunnel (Craonne, in the French Department of Aisne), where more than 250 German Soldiers were buried alive during the First World War, and by realizing a Franco-German study on the Germans killed after the Second World War when clearing sites in Alsace from mines.
8. Further strengthen **the bilateral dialogue to solve the issue of partial unemployment benefits** earned by cross-border workers, with a view to preserve those workers' interests.
9. Work together to **create a Joint Working Group on a digital Euro** comprised of the ECB, Member States and the Commission.
10. **Establish overnight train connections between France and Germany, including between Paris and Berlin**, within the framework of the TransEuropExpress strategy.

11. Coordinate closely to **develop more pan-European industrial cooperations** and stimulate private investments, including on the “IPCEI hydrogen” and its derivatives, the IPCEI “microelectronics and connectivity” to bolster the European electronics and telecom ecosystem and develop hardware and software for 5G/6G telecommunication equipment; and the “IPCEI Next Generation Cloud Infrastructure and Services” to develop a self-determined, efficient and secure ecosystem of cloud and edge providers; on innovation in health, to improve Europe’s strategic positioning in the sector while improving quality of and access to care for patients. The possibilities offered by the **Important Projects of Common European Interest** will be considered for these projects.
12. To strengthen our digital sovereignty, in particular in the area of **cybersecurity**, we have initiated and started co-funded research projects. They will develop highly innovative solutions for data protection and data privacy in the areas of industry, health care and automotive. A certified, effective national and European ICT industry is of strategic importance in terms of security as well as technology and industrial policy. Furthermore, the topics of 6G (esp. joint research projects to develop the new 6G standard) and Future networks will be included in the future research-cooperation.
13. In June 2021, Germany will join the French UNESCO category II institute **CIMPA** (International Center for Pure and Applied Mathematics) that supports North-South cooperation with developing economies in the field of mathematics.