

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS DIALOGUEPERSPECTIVES PROGRAMME YEAR 2020/21

DIALOGUE/PERSPECTIVES

Discussing
Religions and
World Views

"Thanks to DialoguePerspectives I have encountered inspiring people who have completely changed my understanding of religion, engagement, and dialogue."

Till, DialoguePerspectives participant

"Through Dialogueperspectives, I have realised, for the first time, what it really means to live in a pluralistic society – and that it is exactly what I want!"

Whitney, DialoguePerspectives participant

"Through Dialogueperspectives, I have got out of my bubble and got to know people who would never have entered my life without Dialogueperspectives. The programme also opened doors to networks that have played critical roles in advancing my research and my career."

Nuriani, DialoguePerspectives participant

"DialoguePerspectives offers a unique change of perspective! The programme allows you to really grapple with current and highly societally relevant questions, to reflect on your own identity, and to get to know the diversity of European identities."

Ezgi, DialoguePerspectives participant

"Dialogueperspectives is, for me, a unique opportunity to really listen and understand, to feel what in-depth, earnest exchange means, and how painful, illuminating, and game-changing this is – for me, for the other person, and for our society as a whole"

Hannah, DialoguePerspectives participant



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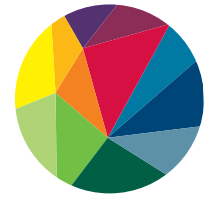
www.dialogperspektiven.de

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LEO BAECK
FOUNDATION
*die Stiftung wurde
im Jahre 1910
aufgegründet
L. Nauke*



Federal Foreign Office



Join a unique European network of future decision-makers! Seize the chance to shape the shared life of different religious communities in Europe, and our shared European society!

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You are a student or doctoral candidate in the European Union or the UK? You are active in the life of your university, your religious community, or in civil society organisations and institutions? You are interested in questions about the role of religions and world-views? You believe in the importance of inclusive and innovative inter-religious and worldview dialogue? You are seeking exchange and encounters with students and doctoral candidates from other countries and with a diversity of identities? You would like to get involved in a unique network for inter-religious and worldview dialogue?

THEN APPLY FOR THE DIALOGUE/PERSPECTIVES PROGRAMME!

Come and grapple with questions of religious, political, and societal plurality of European society with us. Formulate shared goals, forge new alliances, and get engaged with us: Against racism, anti-Semitism, and hatred of Muslims, and for a pluralistic European society!

As a participant of *Dialogue Perspectives*, you will take part in the following three events:

> AUTUMN SEMINAR 2020

"Challenging Europe—Challenges of Europe: Analysing European social, religious, cultural, and political landscapes (Post) COVID-19"

October 7th–11th 2020, Weimar/Germany

> SPRING SEMINAR 2021

"Luxembourg—religious diversity and the socio-political responsibility of religious communities in the centre of Europe"

March 10th–14th 2021, Luxembourg

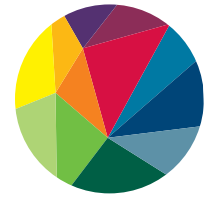
> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2021

June 17th–20th 2021, Berlin/Germany

COSTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The *Dialogue Perspectives* programme is made possible by contributions from Germany's Federal Foreign Office. The costs of the seminars, accommodation, and catering during all events, as well as a travel stipend per event, are covered by the programme.





THE PROGRAMME

Dialogue Perspectives. Discussing Religions and Worldviews develops and establishes new and innovative forms of interfaith-worldview dialogue. Its mission is to meaningfully contribute to European understanding and collaboration, to the strengthening and defence of European civil society, and to the shaping of a pluralistic and democratic Europe grounded in the principle of solidarity.

Since 2015, more than 200 students and doctoral candidates of diverse religious and worldview orientations have come together through the programme. With the support of the Federal Foreign Office, the program has been extended to a European platform for training future leaders in academia, culture, politics, and business to become experts in a new, societally-oriented interfaith-worldview dialogue.

The participants reflect the religious, political, and societal plurality of European society. They incorporate their diverse backgrounds and experiences to create a fertile ground for exchange, finding an urgently necessary space for encounter, exchange, and dialogue at *Dialogue Perspectives*.

Dialogue Perspectives allows its participants to work across disciplines and to encounter multipliers of diverse religious and non-religious affiliations. During the seminars the participants reflect upon societal and political frameworks and their meaning for the respective religious communities in Europe. Topics include commonalities and differences in the shared lives of religious communities, constitutional prerequisites on the relationship between state and religion, the socio-political and personal implications resulting from them.

Through practical, outcome-oriented, and pluralistic dialogue processes and formats we equip our participants with concrete tools for taking on the challenges of our pluralistic and increasingly fragmented and polarized society. They learn to use their diverse sets of expertise to strengthen their communities and formulate their needs for the whole of society. They develop strategies against nationalism, right-wing extremism, anti-Semitism and (anti-Muslim) racism and for a pluralistic, democratic, society based in solidarity that they can apply and perpetuate long-term in their own alliances and in their academic and professional lives.

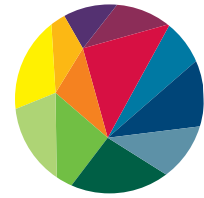
RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

Joint religious practice during the events is, alongside the topical work, a further focal point of the programme. *Dialogue Perspectives* creates a space to both live out your own practices and to get to know the practices of other religious communities and worldviews. Participants create morning inputs in which they can introduce and share with each other their religious and spiritual practices. They forge shared forms of expressions that open up new religious and spiritual approaches.

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EVENTS

AUTUMN SEMINAR 2020: “CHALLENGING EUROPE—CHALLENGES OF EUROPE: EUROPE’S SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE (POST) COVID-19”

7TH TO 11TH OCTOBER 2020, WEIMAR, GERMANY

Europe is a site of diversity, a space of possibilities and of societal collaboration. Europe is characterised by a religious/worldview pluralism that has long since overtaken societal cohesion in the sense of a uniform national or religious homogeneity. Pluralization does not only mean the multiplication and differentiation of identities, but also the strengthening of religious/worldview communities. In Europe’s diverse communities, critical self-confidence is being tested, societal inclusion demanded, and participation in public discourse encouraged.

Europe is, at the same time, characterised by political fragmentation and polarisation. The shift to the right in Europe and the increasing restriction of civil society freedoms in individual EU countries is calling into question—not only—the pluralism of religions and worldviews. Nationalist governments’ position supposedly Judeo-Christian values against Islam and European values, considered to be the foundation of the European Union, seem to end at the barbed wire of the EU’s external borders.

Addressing the various aspects, chances and challenges of European pluralism, we thus turn to the nagging questions of the plurality and pluralism of European societies, political participation, alliance building, and shared, inclusive modes of shaping our environments in spite of—or, perhaps, because of—the ambivalences and interdependence of linguistic, religious/worldview, and political diversity. We challenge you to join us in considering these questions, to experience European diversity, and to grapple with your own ambivalent perspectives.

SPRING SEMINAR 2021: “LUXEMBOURG—RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND THE SOCIO-POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE CENTRE OF EUROPE”

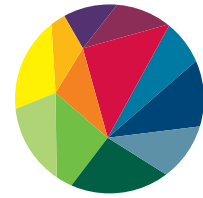
10TH TO 14TH MARCH 2021, LUXEMBURG

Luxembourg is home to many EU institutions and has traditionally been a builder of bridges between European societies. The country is currently a site where various discourses on the relationship between religion, state, and society are playing out: traditionally Catholic, Luxembourg is today a diverse, multi-religious society. With more than 50 percent of its residents being of foreign nationality, the majority of the population belong to religious and cultural minorities. Dialogue between these communities is—in part due to the tight quarters—more intensive than in almost any other European state. In the course of the constitutional reform of 2015, the centuries-old close relationship between the state and the Catholic church was changed, while the relationship between

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state and religion, on the one hand, and the relationship of religious communities to one another, on the other, was renegotiated. At the Spring Seminar we would like to discover the diverse religious and inter-religious society of Luxembourg with local political and civil society actors and representatives of religious institutions while analysing and discussing questions of religious and worldview diversity, the relationship between state and religion, and the responsibility of religions in socio-political discourses.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2021 18TH TO 21ST JUNE 2021, BERLIN

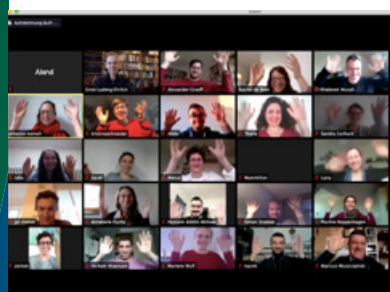
We will close the programme year in June 2021 with a four-day international conference. The programme participants will be actively involved in the planning and implementation of the event, interact with European actors from politics, academia, civil society, and religious communities and have the opportunity to actively and visibly position themselves in political and social discourses. At the conference, the results of the joint work of the program year are discussed and presented to a broad public.

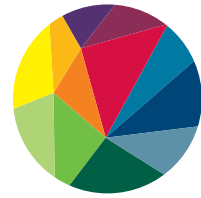
APPLICATION

We kindly request that you submit the following application materials (English or German) via e-mail to application@dialogueperspectives.org by **August 15th 2020** as a PDF document:

- > Completed application form
- > Letter of motivation (max. one page)
- > CV
- > Enrolment certification from your university

How can we enter into a shared dialogue across national, cultural, and religious/worldview boundaries? How can we position ourselves within existing discourses as an image of the increasing pluralization in Europe? Which new forms of discussing questions at the intersection between religions, worldviews, politics, and society can be developed together? How can antagonisms and conflicts in peoples' personal life-paths be addressed, while forming shared positions at the same time? How can we deal with the shared challenges of a pluralistic and increasingly fragmented and polarized European society, with attacks on religious minorities, and with the questioning of interfaith dialogue by right-wing extremism and nationalism? Which values are the foundation of the EU, and to what extent do these values actually inform European societies? How can joint societal action in Europe be shaped?





FUNDAMENTAL GOALS

1. To create a European, globally-acting and robust network of future European leaders, with the goal of training them to become competent shapers of European discourses at the intersection of religions/worldviews, academia, politics, culture, business, and social responsibility.
2. To further develop a constructive, societally-oriented dialogue between religious and worldview-based communities in Europe with the goal of strengthening these diverse European communities across national boundaries, creating new European alliances, kindling a feeling of mutual protection and solidarity between individual religious and worldview communities, and to translate this feeling to a shared European responsibility to take action for one another.
3. To create a robust European network of renowned academic, civil society, political, religious/worldview, and corporate partner institutions and organizations in European partner countries to facilitate the transfer of *Dialogue Perspectives'* insights and methods with the goal of actively strengthening European cooperation.
4. To actively participate in shaping current and future European discourses at the intersections between religions/worldviews, academia, politics, and societal responsibility using practical, outcome-oriented, and pluralistic dialogue processes and formats.

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FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTUAL ASSUMPTIONS

- > Religions and worldviews fundamentally shape the lives and actions of individuals and society. *Dialogue Perspectives* works on a foundational assumption of religious pluralism. All dialogue partners are entitled to equal participation in an inclusive, contemporary, and thoughtful dialogue.
- > When speaking of religions and worldviews, following the social structure of pluralistic societies, we mean not only the three Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) but also all other institutional religions, and non-institutional, privatistic and new religious movements, orientations, and convictions as well as atheistic and anti-theistic worldviews.
- > No position is favoured within the programme.
- > *Dialogue Perspectives* prioritises the encounter between different individuals, above and beyond their convictions. These individuals represent diversity not only in terms of their religious/worldview orientations, but also in terms of other attributes that shape identity such as, for example, sexual and gender identities and ethnic origins.
- > Relationships are the focus of the programme: interpersonal, inter-religious/worldview, and intercultural. The encounter has the relationship as its goal. The programme lives on intensive exchange with one another, from constructive confrontation and from shared experiences of religious practice. Individual beliefs and attitudes relating to their worldviews are often seen by the participants as highly intimate aspects of their selves. This exchange thus requires a framework that makes possible deep discussions – with the goal of crafting resilient personal alliances out of the relationships that develop after a year of working together.