

Stiftung Mercator

Mercator Foundation

Stiftung Merc

Our vision is fairness and equal opportunities for everyone to participate in central areas of society's life. Fairness and participation are the basis and objective of all our endeavours. They are also the overarching aims that determine our efforts to prevent dangerous climate change, to promote integration and to strengthen arts education. Today's globalized world demands of us that we fight for these values on both a regional and a global level.

With our expertise in the academic system, in education policy and in the area of international affairs, we are committed to our themes and objectives. Our motto is "inspiring ideas", something we achieve by combining advocacy and practical work.

About us

About the work of Stiftung Mercator

To achieve our goals, we pursue a strategy known as “Mercator 2013 – Inspiring Ideas. Achieving Objectives” that we developed in 2008/09. This involves making the most of our strengths as a private foundation. Being an independent and private actor, we can take risks and use our reputation to take up positions and raise issues, win over majorities and bring different social groups together to talk to one another. We take an entrepreneurial, professional and international approach to our work.

We are convinced that the future lies in cooperation between foundations. If we make our voice heard together with others on key sociopolitical issues, we can attract far more attention than we ever could through unconnected activities, even if these aimed to achieve the same objectives. Thus we wish to use our resources and our attitude to attain the greatest possible impact for our goals.

We feel a strong sense of loyalty to the Ruhr Metropolis, the home of the founding family and the Foundation’s headquarters. We regard this growing metropolitan region as a laboratory for a whole host of ideas.

Thematic Clus

Integration, Climate Change and Arts Education are the three central themes, in the form of overarching clusters, that constitute our profile. We have set ourselves targets in each of these thematic areas:

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- // Integration 2020: To jointly shape Germany's immigration society and drive integration forward
- // Climate 2020: To prevent dangerous climate change
- // Cultural society 2020: To increase the importance of arts education in Germany

Integration 20

We wish to shape Germany's immigration society and drive integration forward

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Germany is a country of immigration whose society is becoming increasingly pluralized. To ensure that this society continues to thrive in the future, it is crucial that advantage be taken of the potential offered by everyone living in Germany. To achieve this, public and political discourse must change, becoming potential-oriented rather than problem-oriented. Everyone in Germany should have the same opportunity to take part in central areas of society's life. A key prerequisite for this is successful education. We are therefore committed to eliminating the educational inequalities which exist in Germany between people of migrant and German origin in terms of school and university qualifications.

Climate 2020

We wish to prevent dangerous climate change

If we do not succeed in slowing down human-caused climate change, it will bring about far-reaching environmental changes even within this century, making life for future generations considerably more difficult. Climate change therefore poses a particular challenge in terms of global solidarity and fairness. For Germany, this means maintaining and expanding its international forerunner role in the area of climate protection, while at the same time living up to its responsibility as an industrialized country by setting itself particularly high targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. We are therefore committed to reducing the human-caused emissions of greenhouse gases included in the Kyoto Protocol by 40 percent in Germany by 2020 and by at least 80 percent by 2050, measured against the 1990 levels.

Cultural societ

We wish to increase the importance of arts education
in Germany

ty 2020

Education must play a key role if our society is to continue to thrive in the future. Arts education, in the sense of general education within the medium of the arts, is an indispensable part of this, as it gives all children and young people access to art and culture, and thus to a comprehensive education.

Our goal is to anchor arts education as a core element of our education system and to bring about a new culture of teaching and learning. We believe in creative individual activity, active engagement with art and culture, and fostering of key competencies. We wish to increase the importance of arts education processes for learning and teaching, and to improve the quality of artistic and aesthetic courses. Our aim is to strengthen, expand and improve the arts in everyday German school life, thereby giving all students equal opportunities to achieve a successful education.

Centres

In addition to its management, communication and administration sections, Stiftung Mercator is organized into three centres: science and humanities, education and international affairs. Each centre focuses its work on selected fields of activity and tracks their modalities and developments.

The centres actively determine their own fields of activity, while at the same time contributing their expertise with a view to achieving the targets of the overarching thematic clusters.

Centre for Science and

The influence of science and humanities on almost every sphere of human life is constantly increasing, as are people's expectations of scientists and scholars. As a result, more and more scientists and academics are needed, and their impact is becoming stronger. This is because of their benefits for society and their potential – without pursuing specific ends – to develop solutions to the problems that we will face in the future, and because people's ability to take an active part in society depends more and more on their having been educated or trained in science and humanities. This is why we promote the sciences and academia in two specific ways.

Humanities

First, we are committed to the targets defined in our overarching clusters – the prevention of dangerous climate change, greater integration, and arts education – and seek to achieve these by promoting academic projects.

Second, we define three structural areas of academic focus:

- improvement of the quality of teaching and degree courses at universities,
- support for the institutional development of universities and the higher education system,
- development of promising “exploratory” fields of research that are seen as risky and have yet to receive broad support.

Centre for Education

Education is a basic civil right that should be enjoyed by everyone. It plays a key role in any society that is to continue to thrive in the future and believes that social justice goes hand in hand with protection of the natural environment and economic development. Equal access to education is therefore an essential prerequisite for greater participation and fairness. We are committed to ensuring that all young people have the opportunity to obtain education that allows individual and autonomous learning in groups and enables them to make full use of their potential.

In this context, our aim is to meet the targets we have set ourselves in our interdisciplinary clusters, while at the same time concentrating our efforts in the area of education on three fields of activity:

- teaching and learning as the core of the educational process, giving children and young people the chance to develop and test their culture, talents and individual skills, and to use these to help shape society and the environment,
- development of a culture of organization in educational institutions,
- establishment of professional leadership and management in schools and other educational institutions.

Centre for International

In today's age of globalization and international interdependence, it is becoming increasingly difficult to resolve the key challenges of our time, such as climate change or integration and migration, on a national or regional level. We therefore believe it is imperative to understand one another, learn from one another, and jointly overcome global challenges. Mutual understanding and trust are basic prerequisites for successful international cooperation. We thus see international relations as a means by which to work together to create a fairer and sustainable world for us all. This is the goal to which we are committed.

Besides working towards the targets in our interdisciplinary cluster, we have defined three regional areas of focus in our Centre for International Affairs that we believe are key regions for Germany in a globalized world:

Affairs

- Europe: Only a strong Europe will allow us to play an effective role in today's multipolar world. We are therefore committed to ever greater European integration, and to making young people in particular enthusiastic about a Europe of this kind.
- Turkey: We wish to take greater advantage of the potential offered by Turkey's strong domestic and foreign policy ties with Germany and Europe, and to face our joint future challenges as partners.
- China: China, a key economic and political actor, is a country with an important global position and huge potential with which Germany can and must cooperate in the interests of mutual benefit and to resolve global issues.

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