
40th Annual Conference of the Franco-German Institute

Rethinking European Sovereignty

Europe between Autonomy, Alliance and Social Cohesion

Ludwigsburg, 2-3 July 2026

PROGRAMME

Thursday, 2 July 2026

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| From 13:00 | Arrival of participants |
| 13:30 | Lunch |
| 14:20 – 14:30 | Welcome
Isabell HOFFMANN, director dfi |
| 14:30 – 15:45 | Plenary I
Setting the scene: European security at crossroads
Nicole KOENIG, Head of Policy, Munich Security Conference (MSC)
Alex LHERITIER, Co-Founder and Chairman, Koaloo.Fi
Sebastian PŁÓCIENNIK, Director, Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation

Moderation: Isabell HOFFMANN, director dfi |
| 15:45 – 16:15 | European Sovereignty: Reality or mirage? |
| 16:15 – 16:45 | Coffee break |
| 16:45 – 18:00 | Plenary II
Defence industry: Building a truly European market?
Hélène CONWAY-MOURET, Senator, Vice-President of the commission for foreign affairs, defence and armed forces

Samuel B.H. FAURE, Institut de recherche stratégique de l'École militaire (IRSEM)
Ronja KEMPIN, Senior Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP)

Moderation: Stefan SEIDENDORF, deputy director dfi |
| 18:00 – 19:30 | Dinner |

**20:00 Public evening event (in German)
Europe, strong and independent: Strategies to pursue, mistakes to avoid**

Discussion with

Sven ASTHEIMER, Senior Business Editor at Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (tbc)

Sylvie GOULARD, President dfi

Nils SCHMID, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister of Defence

Hagen ZIMER, Chief Executive Officer Laser Technology, Trumpf SE + Co. KG

Moderation: Isabell HOFFMANN, director dfi

Friday, 3 July 2026

**09:00 – 10:15 Plenary III
Strengthening digital resilience: from word to deeds**

Annegret BENDIEK, Senior Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP)

Karine CAUNES, Director, Centre for AI and Digital Humanism

Sofie SCHÖNBORN, Digital Sovereignty Manager at Schwarz Digits Institute for Cybersecurity and Digital Sovereignty

Moderation: Eileen KELLER, senior researcher dfi

10:15 – 10:30 Coffee break

**10:30 – 11:45 Plenary IV
Towards European deterrence: France's role**

Sascha HACH, Postdoctoral Researcher, PRIF - Peace Research Institute Frankfurt

Eckhard LÜBKEMEIER, Ambassador ret., Visiting Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP)

Paul MAURICE, Secretary General, Cerfa, Ifri

Moderation: Stefan SEIDENDORF, deputy director dfi

**11:45 – 13:00 Plenary V
European energy security: approaches, risks and costs**

Michel DERDEVET, President, Confrontations Europe

Carmen DESCAMPS, German Association of Energy and Water Industries (BDEW)

Sarah JILIBERT-SCHABRAM, deputy director, Franco-German Office for the Energy Transition (DFBEW / OFATE)

Moderation: Dominik GRILLMAYER, senior researcher dfi

**13:00 Lunch
Farewell of participants**