



France-Germany – A special friendship with a European dimension

April 8th, 2022

The reunification of Germany has been a key event in recent European history, a turning point in the construction of the EU. German unity may seem 'natural' today, but in 1990, the prospect of a reunification between East and West Germany aroused strong reactions from its neighbors. At first, Western European politicians were hesitant while newspapers swayed between euphoria and distrust. On their side, citizens were waiting to see how the historical events of that time would unfold. The process of reunification was finally set in motion very quickly by German authorities, and quickly accepted by the neighboring states, both at political and societal levels. And the story goes on.

France is evidently a special case as it has a very specific relationship with its direct neighbor. In the past few centuries, France and Germany have experienced a tumultuous relationship – to say the least. And in this context, Strasbourg played a very specific role as a city which has been switched from side to side. Because of this heritage, Strasbourg and its surroundings are an obvious laboratory for the construction of the Franco-German friendship and the development of bilateral relations, at all levels. That without forgetting that this modern relationship has been established in a broader context: that of the European Union. And here again, Strasbourg has a special place.

This conference is part of the Europe for Citizens project rEUnify: A comparative Study of National Perceptions regarding German Reunification, co-funded by the European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). The project investigates the German reunification in a European context, through a comparative analysis of historical memories and diverging perceptions in Germany and several of its neighboring countries – Poland, the Czech Republic, France and the Netherlands.

AGENDA

- **16 :30 – 16 :40** – Welcoming words
 - Romain Le Quiniou (Euro Créative)
- **16 :40 – 16 :50** – Academic Introduction
 - Marie Krpata (Institut Français des Relations Internationales - IFRI)
- **16 :50 – 17 :00** – Brief outlook at French election and potential scenarios for French-German relations
 - Romain Le Quiniou (Euro Créative)
- **17 :00 – 18 :00** – Citizens' roundtables
 - 'Learning to trust each other' (+50 years old panel)
 - 'Building Europe together' (30-50 years old panel)
 - 'Remembering the past to ensure a common future' (-30 years old panel)
- **18 :00 – 19 :00** – Interactive citizen's discussion – Thinking about Franco-German cooperation in the context of the war in Ukraine

