

German-Italian Young Leaders Dialogue – Spinelli Forum “Our Future in a Sovereign Europe”

Call for Applications – Deadline December 15, 2019

The *German-Italian Young Leaders Dialogue – Spinelli Forum* is a joint initiative of the German Federal Foreign Office and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in partnership with the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) and the Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI).

It offers a future generation of Italian and German leaders in the fields of politics, business, academia, civil society, media, and culture the opportunity to discuss the challenges faced by the German-Italian partnership as it shapes the future of the European Union (EU).

We are looking for young Italian and German candidates who would like to take part in the first edition of this dialogue format, which will take place in Berlin on March 5–6, 2020. Participants will have the unique opportunity to discuss relevant issues concerning the future of the EU and relations between the two countries in a stimulating environment, as well as to become the first members of a lasting network of young German and Italian leaders.

Thematic Focus

The EU and its member states face an increasing number of challenges that require close cooperation at European level. These include fulfilling and preserving the promise of prosperity for the benefit of all European citizens, securing the global competitiveness of European economies, successfully transforming European economies to adapt to climate change and the digital revolution, and enhancing European security in the face of increasing geopolitical competition. As close partners and founding members of the EU, both Germany and Italy have a key role to play in promoting European cooperation to meet these challenges.

Against this background, the first edition of the *German-Italian Young Leaders Dialogue – Spinelli Forum* on **March 5–6, 2020** will discuss the overarching theme ***Our Future in a Sovereign Europe***. In four workshops, participants will discuss important aspects of the EU’s internal and external capacity to act from a German and Italian perspective. They will discuss differences in perception in order to reach a better understanding of the respective positions and to identify synergies and priorities. Finally, they will develop policy proposals for joint European action. These four workshops are:

I. *European Foreign and Security Policy*

The changing international environment and mounting external challenges have given new momentum to further developing the EU’s foreign and security policy. Promoting European interests and values on the global stage and increasing the EU’s capacity to act autonomously are among the main priorities of the European Council’s new strategic agenda for 2019–2024. This workshop aims to explore ways of reforming the EU’s governance structure in this field in order to better address its external challenges and unleash its foreign policy potential.

II. *European Economic Sovereignty*

Global powers, particularly China and the United States, are increasingly using their international economic connections – for example in trade, cyberspace and finance – to gain a geopolitical advantage or to serve their geopolitical goals. As a result, the EU’s economic sovereignty and its ability to preserve economic independence are at stake. This workshop will discuss ways to improve the EU’s capacity to wield economic power without advocating increased protectionism or a retreat from globalization.

III. *A Social and Prosperous Europe*

Almost a decade after the outbreak of the European economic and debt crisis, which had catastrophic consequences for economic growth, employment and the fiscal position of many member states, the EU economy has finally recovered. Today, however, traces of this crisis persist, with a widening economic gap between and within EU countries that is fueling a growing sense of social injustice. This workshop aims to explore ways to strengthen the EU’s internal coherence in fostering employment, education and social equality.

IV. *A European Green Deal*

In response to citizen movements across Europe that are calling upon governments to take ambitious action against climate change, the incoming European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has decided to make a European Green Deal a key priority in the next five years. Aiming to make the EU a climate neutral continent by 2050 will require immediate and far-reaching decisions. This workshop will shed light on the steps required to bring about a fair and just economic transition and to foster sustainable investment.

Target Group

Young German and Italian leaders and high potential candidates from the fields of politics, business, academia, civil society, the social sector, media, and culture with a strong interest in European cooperation.

Requirements

- Aged between 25 and 37 years
- First university degree (BA or MA) or equivalent vocational qualification
- Strong interest/expertise in European cooperation, particularly in the fields of foreign policy, economics or social and climate policy
- Excellent command of English (working language will be English)

How to Apply

Applications will only be accepted via e-mail and should include the following information:

1. A completed application form
2. A letter of motivation answering both of the following questions (2.500 characters each):
 - (1) Why do you wish to take part in the *German-Italian Young Leaders Dialogue – Spinelli Forum*?
 - (2) Choose one of the four workshops in which you intend to participate (see below) and describe what the EU should prioritize in this field and how your country could contribute to this end:
 - Common European Foreign and Security Policy
 - Economic Sovereignty
 - A Social and Prosperous Europe
 - A European Green Deal
3. A CV (max. two pages, including information on the applicant's education and relevant work experience)

Application Deadline

December 15, 2019

Travel expenses and accommodation will be covered by the organizers.

Contact

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Disclaimer: The selection of candidates is carried out at the sole discretion of the Steering Committee consisting of representatives of all partner organizations.