# **ALERT REPORT**



Interference by German political foundations & sabotage of the French nuclear industry

**JUNE 2023** 



### **Preface**

At a time when the issues of energy independence and European unity are becoming increasingly salient, this report alerts public decision-makers, civil society, and experts to the harmful consequences of the actions of German political foundations - particularly with regard to the French nuclear industry.

Produced and published by the Ecole de Guerre Économique (EGE – French School of Economic Warfare), this document is the result of a new open-source information research project following on from the <u>J'attaque!</u> report of May 2021.

It also draws on the investigative report "How Germany is financing the weakening of the French nuclear sector", produced and published in April 2023 by the Comité d'Intelligence Stratégique pour la Souveraineté (CI2S - Strategic Intelligence Committee for Sovereignty). The CI2S has also authorized its work to be taken up by EGE students.



### **Executive Summary**

Despite the historic desire of its members to present a united front, the European Union (EU) is the scene of numerous antagonisms, illustrated by the respective energy policies of France and Germany.

Germany, through its political foundations, interferes in the political and economic affairs of its foreign partners, notably France. Since their inception, these organizations have proved to be agents of influence: in addition to their direct affiliation with German political parties, they are largely subservient to Berlin. Thanks to the soft power they deploy abroad, these foundations are useful in many ways: preparing the ground for more official cooperation, ideological propagation, shaping local socio-political elites, defending German economic interests, etc.

Political foundations resort to multiple and sometimes questionable influence strategies, while draping themselves in morality. Through the production of oriented content and the organization of meetings, these foundations alter civil society's perception of certain strategic subjects, in order to steer socio-political elites and ultimately influence policies in their favor.

With the aim of weakening the French industry and economy in general as well as to secure its own hegemony in these fields at European level, Germany destabilizes the French nuclear industry by blocking European institutions, exerting constant pressure on European politics and practicing cognitive encirclement on French territory.

The Heinrich Böll and Rosa Luxemburg Foundations are directly involved in slowing down the development of nuclear power in France through anti-nuclear lobbying on French soil and destabilizing the uranium supply chain abroad.

Not only do most of the political foundations' funding come from the federal government, reflecting government approval of their objectives, but Berlin is also sometimes the direct sponsor of their actions. These foundations offer various benefits to German officials such as: concealment of state involvement, access to otherwise inaccessible populations, unspoken defense of German economic interests, intelligence gathering, and so on. They are also formidable instruments in the service of German foreign policy, which is why their budget is constantly increasing.

In view of this situation, it is essential to set up an interministerial mission to monitor and combat the abuses of political foundations (MIVILUDEFOPOLE), along the lines of MIVILUDES, which deals with separatism. In addition to coordinating preventive and repressive action by the public authorities against the harm caused by political foundations, it would also be tasked with raising awareness among the public and, thus, limiting the impact of the actions carried out by these entities.



## Introductory statement

It is no longer possible to leave aside Europe's most vexing issues. In May 2021, the École de Guerre Économique published a "J'attaque!" dossier entitled *How Germany is trying to permanently weaken France on the energy issue*. At the time, the aim was to formalize an analytical framework integrating all the parameters on Germany's strategic path (political contradictions, Russian external pressure, energy choices to elaborate an industrial strategy, the federal government's public diplomacy maneuvers, the influence game at European Union level, the stakes of direct and indirect knowledge production). This offensive "J'attaque!" dossier preceded the public debate on the importance of nuclear power for our country's energy resilience.

This time, in June 2023, the EGE publishes an alert report that goes deeper into analyzing the influence techniques implemented by German foundations run by environmentalists and farleft activists. These actors, part of German civil society, are continuing the work of information warfare that has been going on in Germany for years.

We thought it would be useful to analyze the inner workings of such an approach, which claims to be legitimate on the grounds of humanist values, but which in reality is part of a discreet policy to increase Germany's power.

**Christian Harbulot** 

Director, École de Guerre Économique



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#### PART 1 – Breaking a taboo: European rivalries and power relations

Despite its ideal of peace, the European Union (EU) is not free of antagonisms. At the heart of these power struggles often lie **the divergent economic and political interests of member states**. These oppositions exist because security fears and the resulting geopolitical orientations are disparate, and because the economic development of states is often a zero-sum game. The result is a more or less open struggle waged by states to defend their political and economic interests, as well as their social stability. The disagreements between Paris and Rome over the distribution of refugees<sup>1</sup> are a case in point, as is the unilateralism of Germany's migration policy during the war in Syria, not to mention the tensions between EU member states over securing their respective gas supplies since the outbreak of hostilities in Ukraine<sup>2</sup>.

Of course, we could also mention Poland's almost Pavlovian reflex to compulsively buy American weapons, with EU money, to ensure Uncle Sam's protection at the expense of the European defense industry<sup>3</sup>. It is also true that **Berlin isn't shy when it comes to keeping non-European industries in business either**. The German company OHB's lobbying in favor of SpaceX over Ariane for a European satellite launch program bears witness to this<sup>4</sup>, as does Germany's purchase of some thirty American F-35 fighter jets to the detriment of European alternatives<sup>5</sup>.

And let's not forget the rigorous normative control of arms exports desired by Germany, which coincides very well with its customer base, which is not the case for France. While it is true that Berlin's historical guilt is sealed by its stinginess in granting export licenses (C-295, A330, A400, Eurofighter Typhoon, etc.)<sup>6</sup>, Berlin feels little remorse for its deleterious role visà-vis the European defense industry. Incidentally, this moralizing has never inhibited Germany's efforts to plunder French industrial secrets in the context of the "SCAF" European combat aircraft project<sup>7</sup>.

Let's talk about the Baltic States too, which want to monopolize Europe's attention on the continent's eastern flank to the detriment of the southern flank, which is of greater concern

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ouest France. A, Boisselier. Ocean Viking: Les tensions entre la France et l'Italie sur les migrants, résumées en 4 actes. (November 10th, 2022). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Le Grand Continent. R, Bloj. Les nouveaux accords énergétiques hongrois avec la Russie. (April 11th, 2023). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> M, Cabirol. La Tribune. Armement : la Pologne, ce pays européen qui achète « Made in USA » à tour de bras. (March 9th, 2020). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> V, Lamigeon. Challenges. Ariane 6: Le coup de poignard de l'allemand OHB. (March 21th, 2022). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> H, Meddah. L'usine nouvelle. L'Allemagne concilie l'achat de F35 américains et son engagement dans le futur avion de combat européen. (March 15th, 2022). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> L, Lagneau. Zone militaire. Airbus Defence & Space accuse Berlin de bloquer l'exportation de l'avion de transport A400M « Atlas ». (February 21th, 2023). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> M, Cabirol. La Tribune. Allemagne, la tentation du hold-up du siècle sur le SCAF. (February 6th, 2021). [online]



to Italy, Greece and France. Let's talk about the fact that Germany never hesitates to inflate its orders to obtain as much work as possible on its soil, before finally invoking budget cuts to order more limited quantities<sup>8</sup>. Let's talk about the wholesale role played by the Netherlands in importing and disseminating Chinese products on the Old Continent, to the detriment of European industrialization<sup>9</sup>. Let's talk about the thorny question of masks and vaccines, during the Covid19 pandemic, which so crystallized national egoisms.

But, above all, let's talk about Germany's trade surpluses, which for decades have been driving up the euro's exchange rate, increasingly undermining the meagre exports of the Latin part of the Old Continent<sup>10</sup>. All this is worth mentioning, because the messianic struggle waged by the Ayatollahs of wind and sun located across the Rhine against the atom is aimed precisely at **undermining French economic competitiveness**. Unable to bear watching its trade surpluses melt away, deprived of Russian hydrocarbons since the war in Ukraine, and unable to rely on nuclear power to produce cheap energy like France, there's only one solution left for Germany: **subvert public opinion to deprive France of the comparative advantage of nuclear power.** 

At the heart of this undermining are German political foundations such as Heinrich Böll and Rosa Luxemburg, heavily funded by Berlin to the tune of 500 million euros a year, in order to "influence the development of countries by steering their elites in a specific socio-political direction" perfectly in line with Berlin's industrial-economic interests. While there's no question here of questioning the construction of Europe, the point is to shed light on the internal struggles - too long overlooked - that are taking place within it. Such a thing is necessary regardless of the opinion of biased journalists who refuse to investigate it in order not to weaken the EU's image!

On the contrary, the aim is to provide a framework for the sometimes underhand and unacknowledged actions of German political foundations, which are also close to certain French political parties, such as Europe écologie les verts (EELV). The aim is to understand how these foundations operate, their links with foreign countries, their political and economic interests, as well as their relays, to denounce them and hinder their action. Ultimately, it's a question of naming the enemy, retaliating and, above all, lifting a taboo: that of power rivalries within the EU.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> E, Mawet. Smartrezo. Le couple Franco-Allemand et son rôle dans le déclin français. (April 16th, 2022). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> N, Ravailhe. Ecole de pensée sur la guerre économique. A la recherche des chevaux de Troie dans les relations entre l'Union européenne (UE) et la Chine. (November 7th, 2019). [online]

 <sup>10</sup> N, Renaud. Les Echos. Le moteur exportateur allemand n'a pas calé en 2022. (February 2nd, 2023). [online]
 11 EPGE, C. Harbulot. Rapports de force intra-européens : faut-il enfreindre les sujets tabous ? (June 8th, 2023). [online]



#### PART 2 – Energy policy: the German normative and cognitive offensive

Historically a little-known concept, cognitive warfare, is understood as the production of knowledge, disseminated indirectly, and designed to weaken the adversary's position. Its goal is to modify or alter the reasoning and thinking patterns of one or more individuals in order to impose one's will<sup>12</sup>.

This report demonstrates that Germany is acting in the cognitive field in order to weaken France, particularly in the nuclear field, and to ensure the supremacy of its national energy model. Indeed, by taking the lead with the definitive phase-out of nuclear power by 2022, the country has long aspired and worked to ensure that all European states follow its lead. To this end, Germany is exploiting the fear of the atom as an instrument of normative influence.

Friction between Germany and nuclear power is nothing new. Indeed, **Germany's dogmatic aversion to nuclear power** began with the US bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War<sup>13</sup>. The creation of the political party Die Grünen (The Greens) in 1970 served as a catalyst for the spread of nuclear fears in German society. This **feeling of mistrust** was particularly reinforced by the 1977 Euromissile crisis between the West and the Eastern Bloc, and the 1986 Chernobyl disaster, which led to the ambitious *Energiewende* energy transition program.

The emergence of a **coalition between the Social Democrats (CDU-CSU)** and the German Greens in the 1990s enabled them to enter local parliaments<sup>14</sup> before reaching the federal level. In 1998, this coalition massively supported the two laws passed to phase out nuclear power and encourage investment in renewable energies. Over and above the electoral weight of this alliance, it also had a **reputational impact** by developing the image of a unifying party with an **"ecological-social" conscience** - originally absent from the CDU-CSU side.

However, the real turning point for the nuclear industry came in 2011 with the disaster at the Fukushima power plant. Germany, through the Green Party, **fueled the already deep-rooted popular fear** and **decided to phase out nuclear power early and for good**. As early as Thursday June 30, 2011, German MPs overwhelmingly passed the bill put forward by Angela Merkel's government<sup>15</sup>, involving the closure of the country's 17 nuclear power plants by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Militaire, L. R. d. (2022). *L'attaque des cerveaux : qu'est-ce que la guerre cognitive ?* La Revue d'Histoire Militaire. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ian Kershaw. (January, 2020). L'Âge global: Europe, de 1950 à nos jours. Editions Seuil. (p. 59 to 62).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Bade-Wurtemberg : vers une nouvelle coalition die Grünen-CDU". (April 1st, 2021). Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Le Monde, En Allemagne, l'accident de Fukushima a accéléré la sortie du nucléaire (March 21st, 2021), [online]



December 31, 2022, at the latest. A few months after the Fukushima accident, Germany became the first major industrial power to definitively shut down civil nuclear power, which then accounted for 22% of its electricity production.

One of the consequences of this orientation is the massive reliance on fossil gas (27% of German energy consumption in 2021, with 55% of supplies coming from Russia). Despite the conflict in Ukraine and the cessation of Russian supplies, this trend continues, and Germany continues to invest in gas-fired power plants and expand its import capacity. By the end of 2023, Germany's LNG import capacity will approach two-thirds of the volumes previously supplied by Moscow, with the aim of achieving an energy mix of 80% electricity from renewables and 20% from fossil gas by 2030<sup>16</sup>.

What's more, with its strategic role in Europe-wide gas distribution, Germany is seeking to position itself as the continent's gas hub and intends to become an indispensable energy player within the European Union, reinforcing its role as an economic powerhouse.

This perspective helps us to understand Germany's interest in defending fossil gas as a transitional energy<sup>17</sup> and refusing to call hydrogen produced from nuclear power "green"<sup>18</sup>.

To ensure the supremacy of its energy model and the success of its national measures, Berlin intends to shape European energy policy in line with its national, and particularly economic, interests. Indeed, the model promoted by the *Energiewende* is only viable with the cooperation of neighboring countries, capable of regulating German electricity production from renewable energies. For Germany, the challenge lies in its ability to influence European decision-making bodies in order to secure the long-term future of its energy model. In economic terms, Germany has three major companies in the renewable energies sector - Siemens, Enercon and Nordex - which benefit from numerous European subsidies thanks to German lobbying.

**Germany's offensive stance** is illustrated by a variety of hybrid actions, but above all by a long-standing effort to secure financial support for its power generation model (wind and solar), while excluding its pro-nuclear European partners from European subsidies. The aim is to monopolize **European Investment Bank' (EIB) subsidies** for energies recognized as "green"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Euractiv, L'Allemagne veut doubler la capacité de production de ses centrales au gaz, (January 25th, 2022), [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Euractiv, Taxonomie verte : l'Allemagne adopte une position ferme en faveur du gaz, (January 24th, 2022), [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Euractiv, EXCLU : l'Allemagne est intervenue pour retarder la réglementation européenne sur l'hydrogène « vert », (October 31th, 2022), [online]



by Brussels<sup>19</sup>, notably through Germany's almost systematic<sup>20</sup> opposition to European acknowledgement of the atom as a sustainable, low-carbon energy source.

To serve its interests, Germany relies on its extensive **lobbying network**. Well organized, Berlin's lobbying practices target German representatives in European institutions. A federal public document from August 2015<sup>21</sup>, which lists all the partners (public institutions, political groups, industrial unions, and civil society) in the *Energiewende*, illustrates the disparity in representation between renewable energies and the nuclear sector. Some twenty unions and associations represent Germany's renewable energy industries (solar, wind, biogas, etc.), while none are involved in defending the interests of workers in the nuclear sector<sup>22</sup>.

The country also exerts **constant pressure on European politics** to promote its model within the EU institutions, through a powerful **Trojan horse: the European People's Party (EPP), to which the CDU-CSU belongs**. Berlin uses this European party, along with its Social Democrat ally SPD and the European Green Party, to infiltrate the European Parliament and steer the institution's work. In addition, these national lobby groups welcome former European civil servants<sup>23</sup>, thus promoting the German federal government's entryism into the European Union.

Germany also holds - via the EPP, SPD and Greens - most of the European Union's key positions: the presidency of the European Commission (since 2004), the presidency of the European Parliament (since 2007) and the presidency of the Council. Within the EPP, 16% of the 175 MEPs<sup>24</sup> are German. By locking in Europe's strategic institutions, Germany exerts constant pressure on political decisions to ensure the survival of its industry<sup>25</sup>.

Germany exploits the energy transition as a political, industrial, and commercial tool. It runs destabilization campaigns to extinguish the nuclear industry in France, seen as the biggest obstacle to its hegemony in the low-carbon energy market. By way of illustration, it recruits activists who systematically denounce nuclear lobbies such as *Deutsches Atomforum* - arousing the hostility of local populations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Fiches thématiques sur l'Union européenne, Énergies renouvelables, Parlement européen, Matteo Ciucci, November 2020. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Claude Desama (November 18th, 2020). « Pourquoi cet ostracisme du nucléaire dans le green deal de l'UnionEuropéenne ? ». *L'Echo*. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "Who is Who of the Energiewende in Germany", Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, (August, 2015). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> EGE, J'Attaque : Comment l'Allemagne tente d'affaiblir durablement la France sur la question de l'énergie [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Anne Rovan, « Parlement européen : sous pression, Viktor Orban quitte le groupe PPE », Le Figaro (March 3rd, 2021). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> EGE, J'Attaque : Comment l'Allemagne tente d'affaiblir durablement la France sur la question de l'énergie [online]



In order to diversify its modes of action, Germany relies in particular on its political foundations, such as the Heinrich Böll Stiftung - affiliated with the Green party - to **intervene directly in France and to practice a cognitive encirclement of civil society via an anti-nuclear narrative<sup>26</sup>.** Over time, political foundations - directly financed by the German state - have become particularly effective and, above all, little-known instruments of foreign policy, diplomacy and influence.

These offensive practices on the part of its neighbor place **France in a delicate position, between the desire to unite Europe and the protection of its strategic independence.** While an initial proposal concerning the taxonomy had been made as early as May 2018, the European Parliament chose, under pressure from Germany, to exclude nuclear power from the equation in March 2019, before it finally obtained the "green label" in July 2022. Despite this unexpected rebalancing of the existing balance of power, France is proving to be particularly powerless and ill-prepared to defend its energy policy choices, even as German influence makes itself felt on national territory in an insidious and roundabout way.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Ibid



## PART 3 - How Germany is subsidizing the weakening of France's nuclear industry

#### 1. German political foundations: subversive proxies for the federal government

Founded in Germany at the end of the 19th century, political foundations were intended to act as spokespersons for "politische Bildung" or "political education". Used in the context of the "denazification" of West Germany, they then aimed to train the new elites in the practices of Western democracy<sup>27</sup> on behalf of the German government.

Similar to think tanks - autonomous bodies producing political expertise for decision-makers and the public<sup>28</sup> - according to the French typology, German political foundations also carry out activities characteristic of **transfer agents**, such as disseminating ideas and information in line with the ideological orientations of the parties they are close to, always in a logic of obedience to the German state.

There are currently seven foundations, each one linked to a political party.

**Friedrich Ebert Foundation**. Founded in 1925 to keep alive the political legacy of the eponymous social-democratic president of the Weimar Republic between 1919 and 1925. Its primary objective was to finance scholarships for working-class children. Banned in 1933 by the Nazi regime, it was re-established in 1954. Still close to the center-left Social Democratic Party (SPD), it has been headed by former European Parliament President Martin Schulz since December 2020. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation boasts 670 employees, 15 national offices and over 100 foreign representations, assuming the role of international think tank and "partner of German foreign and development policy" 29.

**Konrad Adenauer Foundation**. Close to the Christian Democratic Union (CDU, center-right), was founded in 1955. It bears the name of the opponent of Nazism and West Germany's first Federal Chancellor, who held the post from 1949 to 1963. Since 2018, it has been chaired by Norbert Lammert, President of the Bundestag from 2005 to 2017. The Konrad Adenauer Foundation boasts over 1,000 staff in 100 offices, overseeing projects in more than 120 countries<sup>30</sup>.

**Friedrich Naumann Foundation**. Founded in 1958, is close to the Democratic Party (FDP, center). With a presence in over 60 countries and more than 500 employees, it aims to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> CI2S. Rapport d'investigation : Comment l'Allemagne finance l'affaiblissement du secteur nucléaire français, 2023. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Stone D., Capturing the Political Imagination. Think Tanks and the Policy Process, Londres, Frank Cass, 1996.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Über die FES, (accessed on May 2nd, 2023). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Organisation, (accessed on May 2nd, 2023). [online]



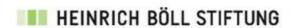
promote "the development of a market economy worldwide and constitutional structures so that more and more people can live in liberal, democratic societies"<sup>31</sup>.

**The Hanns Seidel Foundation**. Created in 1966 by the Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU, center-right, allied with the CDU nationwide), in reaction to the existence of foundations for every other party then present in the Bundestag. An integral part of the foundation is the *Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (Institute for International Cooperation). It manages 90 development projects in over 75 countries worldwide<sup>32</sup>.

**Rosa Luxemburg Foundation**. Founded in 1990, it is close to the left-wing Die Linke party, and takes its inspiration from the struggles of the eponymous Marxist activist and democratic socialism as an alternative to the capitalist system. With a staff of almost 300, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation is present in 16 national offices and 25 offices abroad (see Appendix 2 - Rosa Luxemburg Foundation offices abroad). Since November 2022, it has been chaired by Heinz Bierbaum, former president of the European Left Party from 2019 to 2022<sup>33</sup>.

**Heinrich Böll Foundation**. Created in 1996 to represent the voice of the Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (center-left, ecologist) party, it bears the name of the Nobel Prize winner for literature, known for his early support of the West German ecologist party, founded in 1980. It has offices in 35 countries (see Appendix 1 - Heinrich Böll Foundation offices abroad) and supports projects in over 60 countries worldwide<sup>34</sup>.

**Desiderius Erasmus Foundation**. The latest of Germany's political foundations, founded in 2017, the Desiderius Erasmus Foundation is close to the far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party. Due to this party's recent arrival in the Bundestag, it does not yet receive federal funding<sup>35</sup>.













Source: Bundesministerium des Innern und für Heimat, Politische Stiftungen, [accessed on June 19, 2023] [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Uber di Stiftung, (accessed on May 2nd, 2023). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Hanns Seidel Foundation, Weltweit aktiv, (accessed on May 2nd, 2023). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Annual Report 2021, 2022. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Heinrich Böll Foundation, Qui sommes-nous ?, 2016. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Desiderius Erasmus Foundation, home page. [online]



Foundation in name only<sup>36</sup>, these entities act as a relay between the German government and the population, to raise awareness of the importance of democracy and citizen participation and thus "contribute through their actions to defending and promoting democratic culture and values"<sup>37</sup>. Their status, however, prohibits them from "directly or indirectly supporting foreign political parties, participating in election campaigns and, more generally, interfering in the internal affairs of a third country"<sup>38</sup>.

In order to achieve their objectives, **90% of their funding is public**. They come from the German Ministries of the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Environment, Economic Cooperation and Development, Education and Research, and the Bundestag.

Voted annually in the Bundestag Budget Committee's Finance Act, they are distributed among the foundations according to the average results obtained by the parties with which they are affiliated in the last four Bundestag elections. German law, however, prohibits any direct endowment between foundations and their parties. The remaining 10% of their budget comes from local, regional or European subsidies, or from private donations.

In addition to this "statutory" annual funding, foundations may be granted additional credits for specific projects. The granting of such funds is conditional on the submission of a request to a federal ministry, which is free to decide whether or not to grant the sums requested. **The allocation of a supplementary budget thus reflects approval of the project concerned.** 

In addition, according to the website of the Paris office of the Heinrich Böll Foundation of the Bündnis 90/Die Grünen party, "around half of each foundation's budget is spent abroad". The website adds: "This part is financed in particular by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. They monitor and control foundation spending - which must be justified by the projects implemented and comply with precise regulations, similar to public spending"<sup>39</sup>.

What's more, the significant increase in the amounts allocated to them over the years bears witness to their essential place in the federal state's strategy of influence: "between 2000 and 2014, the total budget granted to political foundations almost doubled, rising from €295 million in 2000 to €466 million in 2014. In 2017, this figure rose again, to 581.4 million euros"<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> German political foundation (besides Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung) have the statuts of an association.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> « C'est quoi Stiftung ? » Les fondations politiques allemandes : un modèle unique au monde | Heinrich Böll Stiftung | Paris office- France. (November 16th, 2020). Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Les fondations politiques allemandes, acteurs spécifiques de la politique étrangère. (s. d.-b). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Les fondations politiques allemandes, acteurs spécifiques de la politique étrangère. (s. d.-b). [online]



0601-685 12	Globalzuschüsse zur gesellschaftspolitischen und demokrati- schen Bildungsarbeit			
	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung	5.612.117,00	5.927.817,00	-315.700,00
	Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit	4.077.258,70	4.210.000,00	-132.741,30
	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung	6.441.378,00	9.441.378,00	-3.000.000,00
	Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung	1.400.000,00	2.198.258,00	-798.258,00
	Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung	792.514,00	792.514,00	0,00
	Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung	4.062.739,00	3.331.596,00	731.143,00
0601-686 25	Fonds DDR-Dopingopfer	3.837.047,58	3.843.000,00	-5.952,42

Source: Extract from the German Confederation's 2019 management accounts in euros [online]

0601-685 12	Globalzuschüsse zur gesellschaftspolitischen und demokrati- schen Bildungsarbeit			
	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung	8.086.028,00	5.612.117,00	2.473.911,00
	Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit	3.926.597,99	4.077.258,70	-150.660,71
	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung	1.249.520,00	6.441.378,00	-5.191.858,00
	Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung	2.094.200,00	1.400.000,00	694.200,00
	Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung	991.014,00	792.514,00	198.500,00
	Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung	2.145.025,00	4.062.739,00	-1.917.714,00

Source: Extract from the German Confederation's 2020 management accounts in euros [online]

0601-685 12	Globalzuschüsse zur gesellschaftspolitischen und demokrati- schen Bildungsarbeit			
	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung	18.403.597,00	8.086.028,00	10.317.569,00
	Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit	3.406.242,52	3.926.597,99	-520.355,47
	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung	592.421,00	1.249.520,00	-657.099,00
	Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung	1.773.171,00	2.094.200,00	-321.029,00
	Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung	2.987.356,00	991.014,00	1.996.342,00
	Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung	2.966.311,00	2.145.025,00	821.286,00

Source: Extract from the German Confederation's 2021 management accounts in euros [online]

In the light of these factors, the way German political foundations are financed forges and reinforces their *de facto* state obedience.

#### 2. Questionable methods and contradictory practices

Bolstered by the historical and financial support of the state, German political foundations interfere in the political and economic affairs of foreign countries, in support of the interests they defend. To this end, they deploy direct and indirect strategies of influence, and adorn themselves with virtues whose tangibility, however, appears questionable.

#### A. History of an agent of influence

**Political foundations act as weapons of cognitive and informational warfare, in the service of Germany:** at the end of the Second World War, they first served to rid the country of Nazi influence, before familiarizing the new elites with Western democratic practices and values.

These foundations then **expanded their international reach**: initially involved in the fight against communist influence in East Germany<sup>41</sup>, they later helped to propagate the policies of the Federal Republic of Germany in the countries of the South. **Acting on a long-term, ecosystem basis, they serve both as intelligence structures and disseminators of useful** 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup>DAKOWSKA, Dorota. 1 Consolidating democracy to better disseminate it In: The power of foundations: Actors in German foreign policy [online]. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014 (generated on April 2nd, 2023)



**information to local elites.** The Friedrich-Ebert Foundation's work in South America in the early 1960s was so effective that it served as a model for the National Endowment for Democracy - a US-funded structure behind numerous operations to destabilize foreign regimes<sup>42</sup>.

Drawing on links forged abroad with socio-political elites, but also with populations otherwise beyond the reach of conventional bodies, political foundations **prepare the ground for more official cooperation.** In this way, they develop long-term links with local economic, trade union, scientific and cultural elites, and encourage their accession to power. In so doing, they contribute to the creation of transnational networks with a political, albeit not exclusively partisan, dimension. This is soft power in the strict sense of the term.

The Heinrich Böll Foundation, for example, has contributed to the creation of environmental parties in several countries. In particular, it encouraged and financed the creation of the Polish Green Party in 2004. By the 1990s, German political foundations had already penetrated the country<sup>43</sup>: acting as an ecosystem, they contributed to the "Europeanization" of civil society<sup>44</sup> and accompanied the process of accession to the European Union<sup>45</sup>. To achieve this, roles were carefully allocated between the various foundations, in line with their own interests and those of their parent parties:

The Heinrich Böll Foundation was involved, among other things, in the issue of "gender equality and minorities". Deploring the candidate countries' lack of interest in the EU's policy of promoting equality, it worked to strengthen the relationship between the goal of accession, and the need to meet gender equality standards. Preparing for accession thus became an opportunity for the foundation to intensify its policy-oriented work in EU candidate countries, to the point of declaring: "The policy objective should be to make decision-making processes within the EU visible to politically active people in NGOs, and to members of Green parties, and to link these decisions to processes at national and international level. These people should familiarize themselves with the EU's internal and external policies, so as to be able to influence decisions and developments in a direction favorable to civil society, and to become mediators in their own countries."46;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> NED, David Lowe, *Idea to Reality: NED at 25,* [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> On this subject, see Dorota Dakowska. German party foundations in the context of enlargement: institutional transfer and the dissemination of European narratives. International Journal of Comparative Politics, 2006, 13 (4), p.717 to 733 [online] or DAKOWSKA D., Les fondations politiques allemandes dans la politique étrangère : de la genèse institutionnelle à leur engagement dans le processus d'élargissement de l'Union européenne, Thèse de doctorat en science politique, IEP de Paris, 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Dorota Dakowska. German party foundations in the context of enlargement: institutional transfer and the diffusion of European narratives. International Journal of Comparative Politics, 2006, (p.8)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> BMZ, Die Tätigkeit der politischen Stiftungen in Mittel- und Osteuropa sowie der ehemaligen Sowjetunion (MOE/NUS), Bonn, may 1995, ministerial report, non- published, (p.7).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> HBS, Brussels Office, Annual Policy Report mid-2003/mid-2004, p.3, (accessed on July 14th, 2005) by Dorota Dakowska).



- **The Konrad Adenauer Foundation** worked to promote economic liberalization, linking up with various local think tanks such as the Polish Institute for Market Economy Research (IBnGR)<sup>47</sup>;
- **The Friedrich Ebert Foundation pursued a strategy of ideological propagation through dissemination**, rather than support. Thus, it "focused its activities on economic and social policies. By publishing the results of the conferences it organized, the FES promoted the dissemination of knowledge on health insurance systems, the evolution of social policies in a context of globalization, employment policies, the banking sector and migration"<sup>48</sup>.

These foundations have also been active in the field of **political consulting and matchmaking**: "they organized visits to Germany for opposition leaders Viktor Orban, the Hungarian conservative, in 1998, and Leszek Miller, the Polish social democrat, in 2001, to familiarize them with the workings of the Federal Chancellery and the coordination of government work, on the eve of their predicted election victory."<sup>49</sup>.

A report by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development confirms this in the following terms: "The state provides certain private German organizations with different political and ideological profiles with funding to implement training projects and consultancy measures with partners in developing countries, who also have different political and ideological views and pursue different political objectives in their home countries. The aim of these training projects is to influence the development of these countries by orienting their elites in a specific socio-political direction"<sup>50</sup>.

Thus, in the context of the Arab Spring, seeing an opportunity to consolidate its influence or even gain a lasting foothold in crisis-hit regions, the Federal State allocated these foundations an exceptional envelope of 5.4 million euros, in addition to their usual funding, to "support"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Its leaders, Jan Szomburg and Janusz Lewandowski (Minister of Privatization in the successive governments of T. Mazowiecki, J. K. Bielecki and H. Suchocka) were behind the first privatization programs. J. Lewandowski was elected Member of the European Parliament in 2004 and served as Chairman of the Budget Committee between 2004 and 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Dorota Dakowska. German party foundations in the context of enlargement: institutional transfer and the diffusion of European narratives. International Journal of Comparative Politics, 2006, (p.10)
<sup>49</sup> Ibid (p.11)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> BMZ, Förderung der politischen und rechtlichen administrativen Rahmenbedingungen (Positivmaßnahem) im Rahmen der bilateralen staatlichen EZ, hier: Hinweise für die Regionalreferate für den Bereich "Positivmaßnahmen",Bonn, August 21st 1996, section 130, p. 3. In: DAKOWSKA, Dorota. 3. Non-state actors? Foundations in foreign policy In: The power of foundations: Actors in German foreign policy [online]. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014 (generated June 18th, 2023).
[online]



their commitment in the countries of the region" (Egypt, Algeria, Jordan, Turkey, Bahrain/Yemen, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia<sup>51</sup>).

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Foreign Office (FDFA) are also the foundations' main foreign donors - structures that reflect the dual mission of political foundations: to initiate cooperation and to participate in a country's development, with all the repercussions this implies in terms of German influence on the international stage. The Foreign Office regularly involves foundations' directors in the preparation of strategic documents. For its part, the Ministry for Cooperation even acknowledged in a 1973 internal report that, without these foundations, Germany "would not have a network of contacts and elements enabling it to forge links with social groups in other countries" 52.

As a result, the various German ministries regularly dispute the prerogatives of the political foundations: when the Federal Government was seeking to redefine the foundations of its foreign policy in the early 1960s, the two aforementioned ministries (Economic Cooperation and Development & Foreign Affairs) allied themselves against the Ministry of the Interior, when the latter proposed "involving the Federal Intelligence Service rather than the political foundations in foreign work"<sup>53</sup>.

Although the German state is an indirect backer of their activities, particularly those of a pronounced political nature, it seeks to distance itself from them. In so doing, it **preserves the facade of independence** that guarantees the effectiveness of the political foundations.

It is, therefore, in the interest of the German state to **gain discretion by using these foundations** as a screen for its involvement in the affairs of foreign countries<sup>54</sup>. The Foreign Office states: "Certain tasks in developing countries with a pronounced political character (e.g. promoting democratic thinking, strengthening leading forces in politics and trade unions) may, in some cases, involve contacts with opposition forces or subsidies to trade unions or political parties; consequently, such decisions must be taken by the ministry responsible for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Dorota DAKOWSKA, « Les fondations politiques allemandes : des courtiers de la politique étrangère », CERISCOPE Puissance, 2013, [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> BMZ Report, 1973, p.13, 14, quoted and translated p. 80 in Dorota Dakowska, « Le pouvoir des fondations, des acteurs de la politique étrangère allemande », Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014. DAKOWSKA, Dorota. 1 Consolidating democracy to better disseminate it In: The power of foundations: Actors in German foreign policy, Towards the empowerment of the BMZ: support for NGOs, based on an interview with Winfried Böll, conducted by Patrick von zur Muehlen, (2004, August 23), Bonn. [online]. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> DAKOWSKA, Dorota. 1 Consolidating democracy to better disseminate it In: The power of foundations: Actors in German foreign policy, Towards the empowerment of the BMZ: support for NGOs, based on an interview with Winfried Böll, conducted by Patrick von zur Muehlen, August 23, 2004, Bonn. [online]. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> DAKOWSKA, Dorota. 1 Consolidating democracy to better disseminate it In: The power of foundations: Actors in German foreign policy, Towards the empowerment of the BMZ: supporting NGOs, [online]. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014.



foreign policy with the utmost discretion. **The implementation of front-line projects by institutions such as the Eichholz Academy, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation or the Friedrich Naumann Foundation is essential, so that the federal government does not appear as a direct donor<sup>1155</sup>.** 

In the 1960s, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation's scholarships for foreign students were described as an opportunity "to influence the present and future leaders of these countries in our direction"<sup>56</sup> by MP Heinrich Ritzler, who called for their increase. In 1992, Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker set up the Commission of Independent Experts on the Financing of Political Parties, whose report concluded that foundations were an important part of the political and economic culture of the Federal Republic of Germany<sup>57</sup>. In 1996, Federal President Roman Herzog declared that he considered **political foundations to be** "one of the most effective and proven instruments of German foreign policy, if one does not limit oneself to the traditional methods and knowledge of diplomacy"<sup>58</sup>.

In the same vein, the Paris branch of the Heinrich Böll Foundation states on its website: "The sum allocated in the federal budget to political foundations is increasing over time [...] testifying to the consensus in the Bundestag on the importance of foundations and the funding of their work"<sup>59</sup>. Indeed, the overall allocation for political foundations has risen steadily - by 50% between 2000 and 2014, from €295 million to €466 million, peaking at almost €700 million in 2019. After the slowdown linked to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the Bundestag has, for example, allocated 690 million euros to German political foundations for 2023<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> PAAA, B 58, III B2, 295, Entwicklungspolitische Förderung im allgemein; Zuständigkeit - und Aufgabenabgrenzung, a) allgemein; b) BMZ 1963-64, note from dep. III concerning difficulties in the relationship with the BMZ, in preparation for a meeting between the state secretaries of the two ministries, Bonn, February 16, 1963. Quoted and translated in DAKOWSKA, Dorota. 1 Consolidating democracy to better disseminate it In: Le pouvoir des fondations: Des acteurs de la politique étrangère allemande [online]. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014

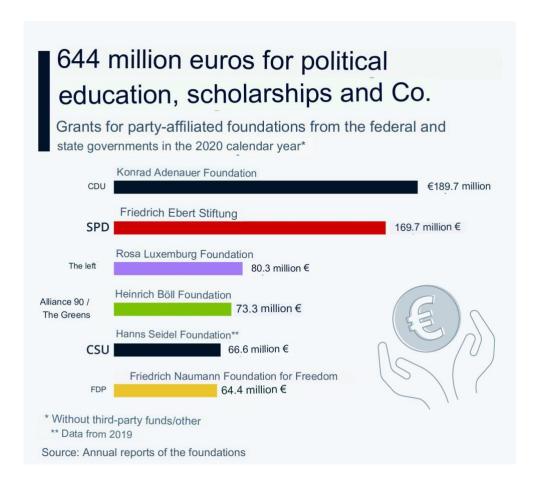
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> PAAA, B 94, vol. 994, 1959-1962, Letter from Deputy Heinrich G. Ritzel to Ministerial Director Dr. D. Sattler, AA, September 22, 1960. Quoted and translated DAKOWSKA, Dorota. 1 Consolidating democracy to better disseminate it In: Le pouvoir des fondations

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Peter Massing, Politische Stiftungen, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2015, [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Cited in Fondation Robert Schuman, Les fondations politiques allemandes, acteurs spécifiques de la politique étrangère, 2003. [online].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Fondation Heinrich Böll, « "C'est quoi Stiftung ?" Les fondations politiques allemandes : un modèle unique au monde », 2020. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Online, F. (2023, 14 avril). 137.000 Euro für Baerbocks Visagistin und 1,3 Millionen Euro für Frisuren-App. FOCUS online. [online]



Source: Statista, 644 Millionen Euro für politische Bildung, Stipendien und Co., October 26th, 2022 [online]

#### B. Direct and indirect maneuvers, at informational and cognitive levels

These foundations pursue both direct and indirect influence strategies, both at home and abroad, and particularly **in France**.

#### The direct approach of these foundations takes various forms:

- Drafting and distributing documents aimed at the general public, politicians and the media - representing two-thirds of the Heinrich Böll Foundation's expenditure in 2021<sup>61</sup>.
- The orientation of elites in a determined socio-political direction<sup>62</sup>, through training (doctoral scholarships, masterclasses...) and advice abroad (visits and meetings with political leaders...).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Heinrich Böll Stiftung. (2021). Jahresbericht 2021. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> BMZ, Bericht über die Förderung der gesellschaftspolitischen Bildung in Entwicklungsländer, Kap. 2302, Tit. 686 04, Bonn, June 1969, p. 2. Archives of the BMZ.



- The construction and encouragement of a narrative that denigrates<sup>63</sup> and emphasizes the risks and costs of the public policies they are fighting.
- The anchoring and propagation, within French public opinion<sup>64</sup>, of paradigms contrary to national interests.
- The support, or even creation, of political parties or transnational networks with a political dimension<sup>65</sup> in foreign countries.
- The establishment of a dynamic partnership<sup>66</sup> with other hostile organizations, sharing their ideas and capable of acting as an ecosystem.

These direct influence strategies have two objectives: firstly, to influence civil society's perception of an issue, in order to orient socio-political elites and, ultimately, to influence policies in favor of their objectives.

They are also complemented by **indirect approaches**, which mainly involve providing material and/or financial support to third-party structures. These structures offer German political foundations a number of **advantages**, such as:

- The implementation of lobbying operations by organizations registered as interest representatives and claiming an advocacy function with elected representatives<sup>67</sup>;
- The implementation of sometimes "hard-hitting" militant actions, compensating for the foundations' operational shortcomings in terms of staff and positioning, and enabling them to redirect those concerned towards the foundations' doctrinal production.

These indirect strategies enable political foundations to hide behind their relays, while taking advantage of their assumed ability to influence the legal framework.

From this perspective, German political foundations seek to steer decisions on a range of issues, including foreign and security policy, participatory and inclusive democracy and social rights, as well as ecological and social transition.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Collective work, Nucléaire : la France à l'heure du choix, Alternatives économiques, 2021 [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Mattias Corrasco, Marine Tondelier veut mener la « bataille culturelle » au nucléaire, Libération, 2023, [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Dorota Dakowska, « Le pouvoir des fondations, des acteurs de la politique étrangère allemande », Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014 [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Heinrich Böll Fundation, Rapport mondial sur les déchets nucléaires, Focus sur l'Europe, Partenaires et sponsors, 2020, [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> CI2S. Rapport d'investigation : Comment l'Allemagne finance l'affaiblissement du secteur nucléaire français, 2023, [online]



#### C. Criticism of transparency and integrity

In recent years, the Heinrich Böll Foundation has been the subject of much criticism regarding the integrity and transparency of its practices, relayed mainly by the German media.

Back in 2017, the foundation launched an online encyclopedia of antifeminism called *Agent\*in*. This project aimed to gather knowledge and data on the influence of antifeminist actors on politics and public opinion. Leading German media criticized the Heinrich Böll Foundation for offering a platform for "public denunciation"<sup>68</sup> with the character of a "pillory"<sup>69</sup>, prompting it to suspend the project<sup>70</sup>.

Two years later, a German tabloid headlined: "Does Green money feed Palestinian terrorists?"<sup>71</sup>, referring to the troubled links between the Heinrich Böll Foundation and its Palestinian partner Addameer. Already suspected of affiliation with the terrorist group Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, this NGO then employed the alleged mastermind of the bomb attack on August 23, 2019, which killed a 17-year-old boy<sup>72</sup>.

In 2020, Taz, a well-known daily newspaper with close ties to the German Green Party, published an article denouncing the treatment of employees at the Heinrich Böll Foundation<sup>73</sup>. The article puts into perspective the **militant rhetoric of justice and freedom, and the reality of the organization's internal practices, particularly with regard to employees abroad**. The latter are entirely dependent on the local director, appointed by Berlin, whose prior approval they must obtain to communicate with headquarters. The local director is both their superior and their sole contact: as employees of the foreign offices, they are not subject to German law, and are therefore denied access to the foundation's employee representation bodies. At the Warsaw office in Poland, there have been cases of unjustified warnings and illegal dismissals. One employee even undertook to refuse any interview that had not been approved by an internal vote. Within the Heinrich Böll Foundation, these cases are far from isolated: Taz points out that similar cases have been reported in recent years in the Foundation's offices in Serbia and Pakistan.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup>Schwartz, C. (August 14th, 2017). Online-Pranger abgestellt: Die verlorene Ehre der Böll-Stiftung. Neue Zürcher Zeitung. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Schwarz, C. (July 27th, 2017). Antifeminismus-Liste der Böll-Stiftung: Aber doch nicht so! TAZ Verlags- Und Vertriebs GmbH. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Neu: Agent\*In – ein kritisches Online-Lexikon zu Anti-Feminismus | Gunda-Werner-Institut | Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. (July 17th, 2017). Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Schippmann, A. (October 4th,2019). Vorwürfe gegen Böll-Stiftung in Ramallah: Fließt Geld der Grünen an Palästina-Terroristen? | Politik. bild.de. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Groß-Lobkowicz, S. (July 15th, 2021b). Böll-Stiftung: Nicht erst seit Baerbock ist die grüne Stiftung in der Kritik. FOCUS Online. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Kreutzfeldt, M. (October 21st, 2020). Kündigungen bei Böll-Stiftung: Rauswurf leicht gemacht. TAZ Verlags-Und Vertriebs GmbH. [online]



In 2021, a new scandal hit the Heinrich Böll Foundation: **Annalena Baerbock, the German Green Party's candidate for chancellor, was accused of illegal use of a doctoral grant awarded by the Heinrich Böll Foundation.** She had in fact devoted more than 50% of her working time to her activity for the German Greens (chairwoman of the Brandenburg State Greens from 2009 to 2013), in contradiction with the directives of the Federal Research Ministry. At the request of the German media, the foundation announced that it was examining the need to reimburse the 40,000 euros allocated<sup>74</sup>. Despite these irregularities, the foundation concluded that the doctoral grant was appropriate. This decision was widely criticized by the German media, which accused the foundation of **having delayed the decision in view of the election campaign for the September federal elections<sup>75</sup>**. The media also criticized the **lack of transparency regarding the reasons** and facts that led to these conclusions, as the files relating to Baerbock's doctoral project had been destroyed by the Free University of Berlin<sup>76</sup>.

#### D. Fundamental contradictions

The Heinrich Böll Foundation, though directly affiliated with the German Green Party, is not far from a fundamental political contradiction: it allows itself, through its representatives in particular, to take positions that contradict its raison d'être, as well as the ideals of its supporters.

In 2021, the Heinrich Böll Foundation co-published a series of strategic documents, notably entitled "Transatlantique? Dare!"<sup>77</sup> calling for closer ties with NATO's strategic partners. In short, the authors called for an increase in the conventional defense capabilities of European NATO countries, including Germany, in order to relieve the United States and enable it to concentrate on the Indo-Pacific. Added to this is the unlimited storage of US nuclear weapons in Germany, and the acquisition of nuclear-powered combat aircraft for the Bundeswehr.

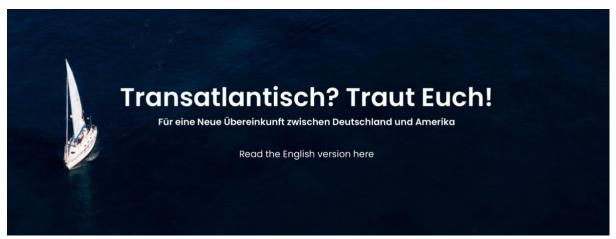
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Groß-Lobkowicz, S. (July 15th, 2021c). Böll-Stiftung: Nicht erst seit Baerbock ist die grüne Stiftung in der Kritik. FOCUS Online. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Schattauer, G. (August 5th, 2021). Baerbocks fragwürdiges Stipendium: Aufklärung erst nach der Bundestagswahl? FOCUS Online. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Müller-Neuhof, J. (September 1st, 2021). Baerbocks Promotionsstipendium: Böll-Stiftung und Grüne schweigen zu den Details. Tagesspiegel. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Vereinbarung - A new agreement. (February 18th, 2021). A New Agreement. [online]





Source: Vereinbarung - A new agreement. (2021, February 18). A New Agreement. [online]

Alongside the German Marshall Fund and the Aspen Institute, this document was co-signed by the director of the Heinrich Böll Foundation at the time, Protestant theologian and church official Ellen Ueberschär. Yet these neo-conservative, pro-rearmament demands were in direct contradiction with the humanist, pacifist ideals of which the writer Heinrich Böll himself was the symbol. Once again betraying the program of the German Green Party, the Foundation follows its own foreign policy agenda, regularly provoking irritation among its supporters<sup>78</sup>.

This rewriting of the foundation's very raison d'être has its roots in the foundation's previous term of office: in the 2010s, Ralph Fücks, then president of the Heinrich Böll Foundation and married to German Green MP Marieluise Beck, incurred the wrath of the more left-wing German Greens<sup>79</sup> for criticizing Protestant Church Council President Margot Käßmann's statement demanding a rapid withdrawal of German troops from Afghanistan. Fücks was asked to resign - without success.

In 2017, the Beck/Fücks couple, often criticized within their own party, set up the transatlantic think tank "Zentrum Liberale Moderne". The latter is also criticized for its complacency with the Ukrainian regime. Reporting on his visits to Ukraine, Manuel Sarrazin, the Greens' spokesman for Eastern Europe, allegedly failed to report on the ultranationalist excesses taking place there<sup>80</sup>.

In line with these interventionist positions, Stefan Meister, director of the foundation's office in Georgia, called in 2020 not only for more **weapons**, **but also for their use independent of UN objections**: "If Germany wants to impose a ceasefire agreement in Libya, it must also be prepared to protect it militarily within the framework of the EU or NATO. The same applies to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Groß-Lobkowicz, S. (July 15th, 2021c). Böll-Stiftung: Nicht erst seit Baerbock ist die grüne Stiftung in der Kritik. FOCUS Online. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Denkler, T. (October 12th, 2012). "Der falsche Mann." Süddeutsche.de. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Koppold, R. (March 2nd, 2021). Grüne Aufrüstung: Die große Böllerei. KONTEXT: Wochenzeitung. [online]



Syria... Similarly, in Ukraine, an agreement for a robust EU mission with German participation could effectively increase the pressure on Moscow"<sup>81</sup>. This is a position echoed verbatim<sup>82</sup> by Annalena Baerbock, the German Greens' chancellor candidate and former foundation-funded doctor who became Federal Foreign Minister at the end of 2021.

Co-Chairwoman alongside Ellen Ueberschär for 20 years until 2022, Barbara Unmüßig justified these contradictions in an interview with Taz as a desire for the foundation's "independence" from the German Green Party and is pleased to be able to offer a diversity of perspectives on the world now that the German Green Party is in government<sup>83</sup>. However, her positions are largely shared by members of the German government, and Annalena Baerbock in particular.

<sup>81</sup> Das Ende der Ostpolitik. (n.d.). DGAP. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Baerbock plötzlich für mehr Rüstung: Grüne machen sich hübsch für die Union - doch das Dilemma naht schon. (December 1st, 2020). [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Schwab, W. (April 10th, 2022). Leiterin der Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung: "Mut fördern, Optionen erkennen". TAZ Verlags- Und Vertriebs GmbH. [online]



## PART 4 - The French nuclear industry, the scapegoat for these foundations

#### 1. Reasons for German interference

"We are the first major industrial nation to make the transition to renewable energies"84. It was with these words on March 13, 2011, two days after the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan, that German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced her decision to take Germany off nuclear power as quickly as possible. The objective was clear: 14 of the country's 17 reactors would be decommissioned by 2021. The remaining three will continue to operate until the end of 2022.

By pulling out of nuclear power, Merkel is acceding to the demands of over 80% of the German public, who are frightened of the atom, largely because of the action of environmental activists. At the same time, this allowed Merkel to be ahead of the environmentalists who were trailing her in the polls. This decision represents a decisive acceleration of the *Energiewende* - an energy transition policy centered on renewable energies theorized in the early 1980s<sup>85</sup>.

This being said, the fear of nuclear accidents does not entirely explain Germany's patent antinuclear activism outside its borders. Berlin's reasons for subverting public opinion by demonizing the atom are more economic in nature. Indeed, at the heart of these reasons lies Germany's desire to save its economic competitiveness, which was jeopardized by its nuclear phase-out in 2011. It is inconceivable for Berlin to let one of its main rivals, French industry, enjoy cheap energy and the competitive advantages that go with it. Germany is therefore intent on damaging the French nuclear industry in order to deprive France of its main asset in the economic competition between the two countries.

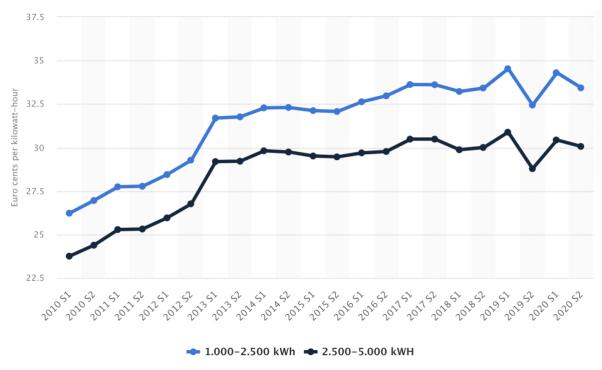
Germany's decision in 2011 to accelerate the phase-out of nuclear power is not without cost. At the time, nuclear power represented 22% of its energy mix, and was still the cheapest source of energy. Abandoning it could only lead to a considerable rise in the cost of electricity for households, but especially for businesses<sup>86</sup>. Already at the time, experts were estimating that the cost of shutting down the power plants would be between 90 and 200 billion euros. Fully aware of the impact of its ideological decision on its industrial fabric, Germany immediately announced the opening of a 500 million euro "fund"<sup>87</sup> for companies whose activities would be "electricity-intensive". However, this derisory measure alone will not prevent the industrial catastrophe that is threatening Germany.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Le Point, L'Allemagne annonce l'abandon du nucléaire en 2022 et veut faire école, Le Point, 2011. [online]

<sup>85</sup> Frédéric Lemaître, Le mouvement antinucléaire, une histoire allemande, Le Monde, 2010. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> AFP, L'Allemagne adopte le projet de loi d'abandon du nucléaire, 20 Minutes, 2011. [online]

<sup>87</sup> Le Point, L'Allemagne annonce l'abandon du nucléaire en 2022 et veut faire école, Le Point, 2011. [online]



Source: Statista, Electricity prices for households in Germany from 2010 to 2020, [online]

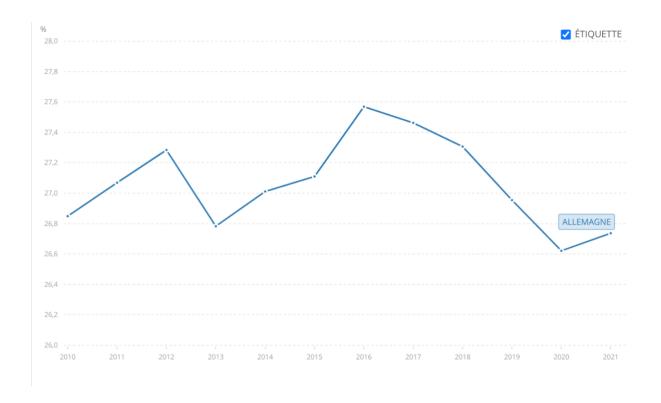
While this sustained rise in energy prices is problematic for households, it is dramatic for German industry, which is on the verge of seeing its competitiveness plummet<sup>88</sup> in relation to other countries, notably neighboring France, which, having not abandoned the atom, is not about to suffer a drastic rise in production costs.

Berlin is therefore faced with both the political impossibility of reversing course and reintroducing nuclear power, and the technological limits to the development of an energy source that is as reliable and affordable as the atom. As it stands, what saves Germany from a major industrial cataclysm can be summed up in the common electricity market and its mechanisms. While these mechanisms may help to curb price rises, they are not guaranteed to last (as current debates over the ARENH<sup>89</sup> show).

Industrial downgrading is inconceivable for a Germany where industry accounts for over 20% of gross domestic product. Berlin must therefore find a way to save the competitiveness of its industrial sector, or risk severe economic consequences.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> AFP, L'Allemagne adopte le projet de loi d'abandon du nucléaire, 20 Minutes, 2011. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> LCP Assemblée Nationale, Marché de l'électricité : "Le dispositif de l'Arenh est à bout de souffle", estime le PDG d'EDF, February 28th, 2023. [online]



Source: World Bank, Share of the industrial sector in German GDP, [accessed on June 19, 2023], [online]

The strategy seems obvious: if it is impossible for Germany to offset the productive advantage of its French competitor, it is imperative to eliminate that advantage.

This analysis is shared by Henri Proglio, Honorary Chairman of Électricité de France (EDF), in his December 13, 2022, hearing before the Commission of Inquiry into the reasons for France's loss of sovereignty and energy independence: "How do you expect this country, which has based its wealth, efficiency and credibility on its industry, to accept that France has such a powerful competitive tool as EDF on its doorstep? For thirty years, Germany's obsession has been the disintegration of EDF - and they have succeeded!".90

**Berlin wants to scuttle the French nuclear sector at all costs, particularly within European bodies**. Germany is doing its utmost to exclude nuclear power from any subsidy system - including the European taxonomy<sup>91</sup> - on ecological grounds. The aim is, in fact, to deprive the nuclear sector of European funds, as a guarantor of the low-cost electricity that Berlin is slyly jealous of.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Compte rendu - Commission d'enquête visant à établir les raisons de la perte de souveraineté et d'indépendance énergétique de la France. (December 13th, 2022). Assemblée Nationale. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Euractiv, Taxonomie verte: l'Allemagne adopte une position ferme en faveur du gaz, (January 24th, 2022). [online]



However, the German state is not confining its action to the European level and is stepping up the pressure at national level. To this end, Germany can rely on one of its main foreign policy assets: its political foundations, its *Stiftung*.

#### 2. The Heinrich Böll Foundation's influence on French territory

The Heinrich Böll Foundation has had a physical presence in France since 2016. Based at 80 quai de Jemmapes in the 10th arrondissement - the same address as the Sherpa association<sup>92</sup> - the Paris branch conducts influence operations against French nuclear power in several fields: public, media and political. **The aim of its presence in these fields is to create an unfavorable environment for the deployment of nuclear power in France, with the support of other anti-nuclear relays.** 

Initially, this presence has manifested itself in the recurrent production of content between 2018 and 2021. Publications included:

- "L'Atlas de l'énergie<sup>93</sup>", published in 2018, which takes the French nuclear sector directly to task. The report focuses on Europe's ecological transition and the importance of investing in renewable energies. An entire section entitled "Time to choose" targets France. The authors are alarmed by the "uncertainties surrounding the technical and economic feasibility of extending the operating life of nuclear power plants", and also deplore the 55 billion euros invested in reactor refurbishment, an amount which, in their view, could have been "invested in renewable energies". Nuclear power is portrayed as an energy of the past, a money pit with real safety risks that must be abandoned in favor of renewable energies, which are resolutely forward-looking. As such, the report advocates a Franco-German rapprochement to accelerate the ecological transition.
- The "World Report on Nuclear Waste: Focus on Europe<sup>94</sup>", published in 2020, is also highly critical of France. Published in partnership with mainly German organizations, this report focuses exclusively on the issue of nuclear waste. One section is again devoted entirely to France, which is stigmatized for its production of nuclear waste. The document also calls into question the viability of the French system for dealing with this waste, stressing its current cost as well as its potential increase. The aim here seems to be to emphasize the hypothetical lack of economic viability of the nuclear

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> The Sherpa association conducts advocacy, strategic litigation, and legal research in the fields of ecological and social transition, social justice, and human rights. It is particularly active in France against major corporations (Total, etc.). It is funded by other major international foundations such as the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humankind, the Open Society Foundations, and the Ford Foundation.

<sup>93</sup> Fondation Rosa Luxemburg, Atlas de l'Uranium. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Fondation Heinrich Böll, RAPPORT MONDIAL SUR LES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES Focus sur l'Europe, 2020. [online]



**sector**. It is particularly interesting to note that, on several occasions, the authors refer to a reluctance on the part of French public opinion on this issue. This reluctance is expressed by various associations that receive funding from the Heinrich Böll Foundation (see below).

- The 2021 dossier "Nucléaire: la France à l'heure du choix", in partnership with Alternatives économiques<sup>95</sup>, brings together a series of indicting articles on several of the country's nuclear players and sectors<sup>96</sup>. This dossier paints a vitriolic portrait of the nuclear sector, while praising renewable energies. It includes the following articles:
  - o Reactors: a high-risk extension.
  - O Nuclear waste: when the dustbins overflow.
  - o Nuclear power, an industry with little future.
  - o 100% Renewable, it is possible.
  - Nuclear power: EDF's mad stubbornness.
  - o Getting out of coal and nuclear power: the German example.
  - o To advance the transition, citizen energy.
  - o Nuclear power: "the debate must take place".

The above examples are just some of the publications produced by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, often in partnership with other anti-nuclear players in France and abroad.

At the same time, the Heinrich Böll Foundation is strengthening its **ties with French political circles and associations**. Jules Hébert, the Foundation's Vice-Chairman, spoke at the EELV party headquarters in March 2023, following the adoption of the bill to accelerate procedures for the construction of new nuclear facilities. The conference was intended to mark the start of a "cultural counter-offensive" by ecologists against the return to favor of nuclear power in France<sup>97</sup>. During his speech, Mr. Hébert praised the German model of energy transition. It is particularly interesting to note that the Heinrich Böll Foundation, a structure financed by a foreign power, is regarded by France's main ecologist party as the spearhead of opposition to nuclear power.

This format was repeated on May 23 and 24, 2023 in Bordeaux, this time on the theme of "Renewable energies for climate and democracy". Through thematic workshops 98 led by anti-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> Although Alternatives Économiques is a supposedly independent and neutral magazine, it is financed by foreign foundations such as the Swiss-based Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humankind

<sup>-</sup> to the tune of CHF 54,809.50 between 2021 and 2023 (The foundation's 2021 annual report).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Dossier collectif, Nucléaire : la France à l'heure du choix, Alternatives économiques, 2021. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Mattias Corrasco, Marine Tondelier veut mener la « bataille culturelle » au nucléaire, Libération, 2023. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Appel à candidatures : Master Class "Les énergies renouvelables au service du climat et de la démocratie" (April 23rd, 2023). [online]



nuclear players (IDDRI, Greenpeace, Negawatt), selected participants had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with activist advocacy and mobilization techniques.

Finally, the Heinrich Böll Foundation seeks to **ensure that its anti-nuclear narrative is disseminated by funding relay structures in France**. Among these indirect influence strategies, the foundation funds the Climate Action Network (RAC), a federation of 27 national and 10 local associations, including Greenpeace France, Les Amis de la Terre and the Sortir du Nucléaire network (see Appendix 3 - Members of the Climate Action Network). In its 2021 Activity Report, the Climate Action Network no longer presents itself as funded by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, but directly by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. This is a surprising choice, and reveals a new contradiction between vocation and action, since political foundations are precisely the means of creating a smokescreen between the federal government and the operative and tactical levels.







Source: Réseau Action Climat, Nos financements, RAC, 2022, [online]

For the Foundation, the benefits of funding the Climate Action Network are threefold.

Firstly, it indirectly contributes to the publication of other stigmatizing reports and articles written by these associations against French nuclear power. For example, in March 2022,



Greenpeace published a report<sup>99</sup> expressing alarm at the Russian stranglehold on French nuclear power. Coincidentally, this publication came out two days<sup>100</sup> before the French National Assembly began examining the bill to accelerate the construction of new reactors.

Secondly, this funding **consolidates an anti-nuclear lobbying structure in France**. Indeed, Réseau Action Climat is already registered with the Haute Autorité pour la Transparence de la Vie Publique (High Authority for the Transparency of Public Life) as an interest representative<sup>101</sup>, notably in the energy sector. While the association does not directly conduct this activity on behalf of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, it does so on behalf of the members of its network - including the Réseau Sortir du Nucléaire.

Lastly, the funding of these structures makes it possible to **resort to activism through proxies**. Indeed, the Foundation's small size and positioning mean that it cannot carry out militant actions in the field on its own. The proxies used produce "hard-hitting" actions with a strong media and public opinion impact, which stigmatize the industry for a long time to come. This was the case when a team of fifteen Greenpeace activists infiltrated the Flamanville EPR (pressurized water reactor) to block access<sup>102</sup> to the site in 2022. The aim of the maneuver was to challenge the government's decision to revive nuclear power plants. In the past, members of the NGO had also entered certain French power plants to highlight the inadequacy of safety systems<sup>103</sup>.

These "shock" actions bring the subject of nuclear power into the public debate from an unfavorable angle, helping to instill fear. What is more, they help to "steer" people wishing to find out more about the subject towards the documentation produced by anti-nuclear players such as the Heinrich Böll Foundation. By funding the RAC, the foundation encourages the occurrence of these media actions and, consequently, the spread of its anti-nuclear paradigm.

#### 3. Rosa Luxemburg Foundation's destabilization operations abroad

The Rosa Luxemburg Foundation does not have an office in France but works to undermine French interests abroad. It defines itself as a "non-profit, progressive and international civic education institution" whose mission "focuses on democratic and social participation, empowerment of disadvantaged groups, alternatives for economic and social development, conflict prevention and peaceful conflict resolution"<sup>104</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Greenpeace France, Le nucléaire français sous emprise russe, Greenpeace France, 2023. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Capital avec AFP, Greenpeace affirme que le nucléaire français est « sous emprise » de la Russie, Capital, 2023. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> Registre de la HATVP, fiche RAC-F. [online]

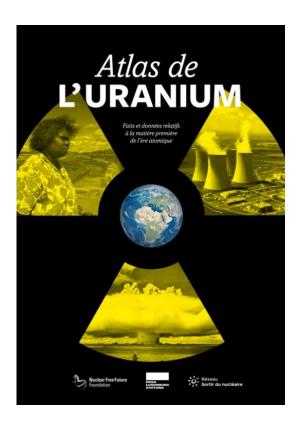
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> Greenpeace France, A Flamanville, intrusion et blocage du chantier de l'EPR, Greenpeace France, 2022. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> Le Monde, Les militants de Greenpeace qui s'introduisent dans des centrales nucléaires sont-ils des « lanceurs d'alerte » ?, May 22nd, 2018. [online]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> Fondation Rosa Luxemburg, A propos de la Fondation, publication date unknown. [online]



Like Heinrich Böll, its actions are sometimes extremely virulent against the French nuclear industry. A case in point is her participation in the publication of the "Atlas de l'Uranium" <sup>105</sup> in 2022. The dossier is a joint production financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, with the participation of the *Réseau Sortir du Nucléaire*, the Nuclear Free Future Foundation, *Le Monde Diplomatique* and the German branch of Friends of the Earth -BUND.



Source : Réseau Sortir du Nucléaire, Atlas mondial de l'Uranium, January 2022 [online]

Addressing uranium-producing countries in particular, whom it seems to want to stop or at least reduce their activities, the report also focuses on the health hazards associated with extraction and the neo-colonial aspect of exploiting the resource. Particularly virulent regarding France, which is the subject of three articles and cited in several others, the Atlas targets head-on Paris's relationship with one of its main suppliers: Niger.

The Atlas likens the uranium mining model to a vestige of *Françafrique* and accuses the French government of **enriching itself on Niger's behalf while orchestrating an ecological, human and social catastrophe in the country**. The French company Orano - formerly Areva - which mines and produces uranium in Niger for French power plants, is a particular target.

The French state's stake in this company means that France's sovereignty is under attack. In addition to damaging France's economic competitiveness, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Fondation Rosa Luxemburg, Atlas de l'Uranium, [online]



intends to undermine French interests in Africa and call into question the legitimacy of France's presence there.

The German government's funding of such a document, whether it shares the views expressed therein, is undoubtedly a contribution - indeed, a commission - from Berlin to the maneuvers to weaken France's nuclear industry.



#### PART 5 – Vigilance and supervision: MIVILUDEFOPOLE

In light of these findings, and with a view to countering their effects, we have called for the creation of an interministerial mission to monitor and combat the abuses of foreign political foundations (MIVILUDEFOPOLE).

For more than two decades, the government has been examining the risks associated with sectarian aberrations, and in 1998, the first inter-ministerial mission to combat sects (MILS) was created. The actions initiated by the MILS have led to the development of a genuine information policy on sectarian aberrations and their effects on civil society.

The aim is for MIVILUDEFOPOLE to "observe and analyze the political foundation phenomenon, coordinate preventive and repressive action by the public authorities against the aberrations of foreign political foundations and inform the public about the risks and dangers to which they are exposed". This statement is inspired by the official objective of MIVILUDES, announced on the website of the French Ministry of the Interior<sup>106</sup>.

As there is no legal definition of "foreign political foundations" in France, we need first to define the boundaries of this concept in French law.

In addition, it is necessary to establish upstream certain **criteria of dangerousness**, enabling us to establish a **scale of levels of risk and threat to French sovereignty** (influence, interference, meddling, intrusion, capture, treason, etc.). This step is essential if we are to prepare **an appropriate response**. In order to respond to the full range of challenges in terms of national sovereignty, these criteria will have to be sorted and thought through in relation to strategic sectors for which vigilance and control represent a key issue: energy, environment, defense, etc.

Based on this characterization, MIVILUDEFOPOLE would seek to analyze the unconstitutional nature of their actions, as well as the resulting impact on national interests, while imposing vigilance and regulatory framework measures to anticipate and guard against negative effects.

To this end, MIVILUDEFOPOLE's main missions would be:

- Identify and observe structures that meet the definition of "foreign political foundations".

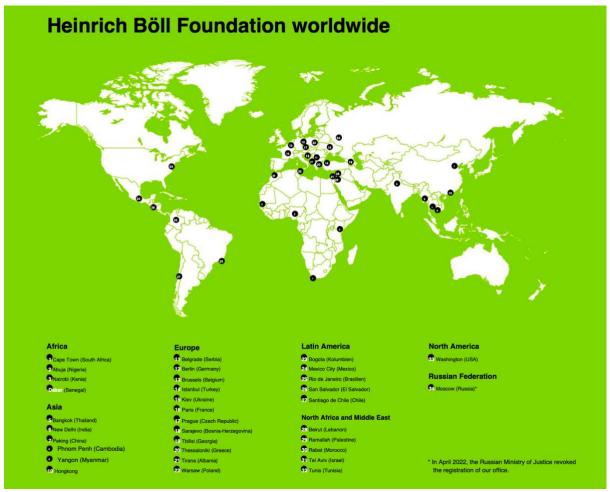
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Gouvernement. Miviludes, (accessed on June 14th, 2023). [online]



- Analyze their modes of action, which undermine France's freedom of action and economic competitiveness, as well as the legitimacy of French institutions and the durability of the strategic State at home and abroad.
- Characterize their level of threat to French sovereignty according to established criteria of dangerousness.
- Equip France with defensive weapons appropriate to the level of threat, by coordinating preventive and repressive action by public authorities against the excesses of political foundations.
- Inform civil society about the risks and dangers to which it is exposed and facilitate the implementation of actions to help the victims of abuses by foreign political foundations.

Coordination is also required between public and private partners, including local authorities, government agencies, independent administrative authorities, associations, and certain professional bodies.

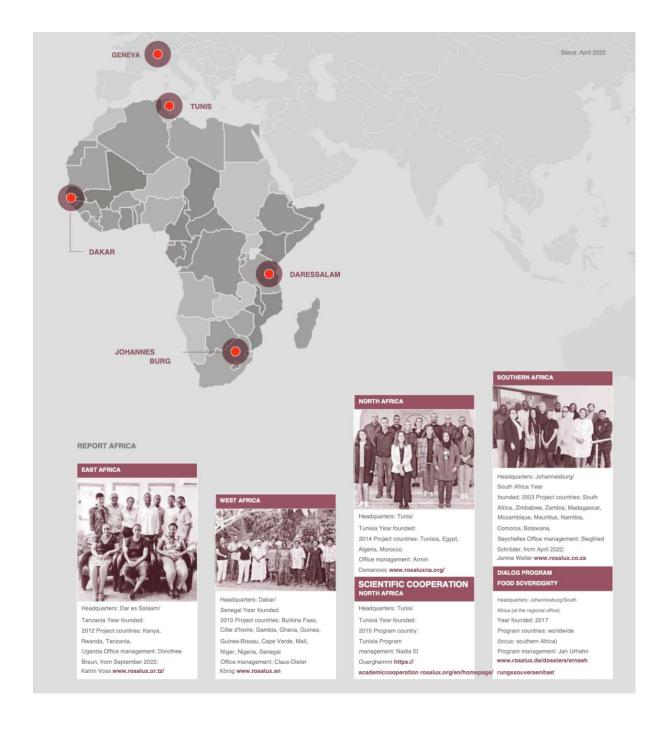
Appendix 1 - Heinrich Böll Foundation offices abroad



Source : Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Annual report 2021, July 2022, [online]

## Appendix 2 - Rosa Luxemburg Foundation offices abroad









Source: Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, Annual Report 2021, April 2022, [online]



## Appendix 3 - Members of the Climate Action Network



Source : Climatomètre, Le Réseau Action Climat, [consulted on June 19, 2023], [online]



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Christian.harbulot@ege.fr

196 rue de Grenelle 75007 Paris