



20 years 1989

Democracy and free markets: Outdated ideals?

Date

Thursday and Friday, March 19 and 20, 2009

Conference venue

Beletage of the Heinrich Böll Foundation
Schumannstraße 8
10117 Berlin-Mitte

Conference languages

There will be simultaneous interpretation of all conference presentations from German into English and vice-versa.

Project management and information

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Questions

"The phase following the Cold War was an unusual and laudable decade in European history. It expanded the borders of freedom and democracy and made the reunification of Europe possible. Today, we are facing a completely different reality. Even though we have seen the triumph of the capitalist revolution, the democratic revolution is on the decline." Ivan Krastev, Centre for Liberal Strategies, Sofia

The events of 1989/90 paved the way for democracy in Central and Eastern Europe and simultaneously accelerated the spread of capitalism around the world, albeit in very different forms. **Democracy and free market economy** were considered the shining stars that countries around the world would strive for as fast as they could. Associated with this was a fundamental shift in the global power structure as well as the model for interpreting world events. The European democratic revolutions in 1989 were thus nothing less than a global turning point.

The bipolar world order of the Cold War became obsolete. Europe once again became a united political and cultural realm even if it was in no way uniform. For many Eastern and Central European nations, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the implosion of the Soviet Union created an opportunity to "return to Europe" in the sense of a shared political past and present. A struggle is underway to create a **common Europe** which has to answer the question of how democracy can be pushed beyond the limits of the nation state. In this context, the EU doesn't represent all of Europe but it does put Europe in the international spotlight as a political subject.

To what extent are democracy and free market economy still, 20 years later, the undisputed cornerstones of a future political order for Europe and beyond? Liberal democracy, as a guiding principle, is not undisputed today in many countries of the world. In the European Union, the political institutions of the new member states have been more or less successfully transformed. At the same time, **developing a democratic political culture** is an ongoing process that is by no means linear. This also applies to a certain extent to Western European countries whose party systems are currently in upheaval and facing challenges from right- or left-wing populist movements.

The recent international financial crisis also put the free market economy to the test as a liberal economic order. It strengthens the forces in Europe that demand, with increasing success, more government economic control and monitoring. In this respect, protectionist efforts that aim to fend off global competition are also gaining momentum. The issue of how to bring social security into line with economic and political freedom is moving more and more into the center of the public debate.

This international conference will thus focus, on the one hand, on **an overall assessment of the last 20 years**: To what extent have the hopes and expectations of 1989 been fulfilled? Where are we in the process of economic, social and democratic transformation? At the same time, we should also **look to the future**. What are the guiding principles for the future of the European societies?

AGENDA

1st day of conference, Thursday, March 19, 2009

- 6:00 p.m. **Registration**
- 6:45 p.m. **Introductory remarks**
Ralf Fücks, President, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin
- 7:00 p.m. **Welcome address**
Renate Künast, MdB, Chairwoman, Alliance 90/ The Greens in the German Bundestag, Berlin
- 7:10 p.m. **Personal political review 1: My 1989**
Pavol Demes, Director, Central and Eastern Europe, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Bratislava
- 7:25 p.m. **Personal political review 2: My 1989**
György Dalos, Author, Co-editor of the german weekly journal „Freitag“, Berlin
- 7:40 p.m. **Retrospective 1989**
By comparison: East-German and East-European transformation experience
A discussion with
Pavol Demes, Director, Central and Eastern Europe, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Bratislava
György Dalos, Author, Co-editor of the german weekly journal „Freitag“, Berlin
Chair: **Ralf Fücks**, President, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin
- 9:00 p.m. **Reception**

2nd day of conference, Friday, March 20, 2009

- 9:00 a.m. **Registration**
- 9:30 a.m. **Keynote speech**
Where To Now? Europe after the Fall of the Wall
-Where does Europe stand 20 years after the transformations of 1989?
-Which achievements and which conflicts involved the European integration?
-Which challenges does Europe face today?
Adam Krzemiński, Publicist and editor at the journal "Polityka", Warsaw
- 10:00 a.m. **Panel 1: 20 Years Democracy–A Political Assessment**
-Did the dream of political freedom and democracy in Europe come true?
-What lessons can we learn for the future of Europe?
Werner Schulz, Member of foundation board, Federal Foundation for the Reconciliation of the SED Dictatorship; Former Member of German Bundestag, Berlin

Pavol Demes, Director, Central and Eastern Europe, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Bratislava

Robert Misik, Journalist and non-fiction author

Chair: **Bastian Hermissen**, head of department EU/North America, Heinrich Böll Foundation

11:30 a.m. **Coffe Break**

12:00 **Panel 2: 20 Years European Market Economy: Economic Freedom versus Social Security? A Social-Economic Assessment**

- How successful have the reforms of 1990ff in the economic sector been?
- Is there a new „social question“ in the transition countries?
- Social market economy: Water under the bridge or the future model for Europe?

Antje Hermenau, Chairwoman, Alliance 90/ The Greens in the Saxonian Landtag, Dresden

Philippe Nemo, Professor (Ordinariat), Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Paris and Director, Centre de Recherche en Philosophie Economique, ESCP-EAP, Paris

Helmut Wiesenthal, Professor em. for social sciences, Berlin

Péter Ákos Bod, Professor, Economic Policy Department & Management Training Centre, Corvinus University of Budapest

Chair: **Eva van de Rakt**, Director of the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Prague

1:30 p.m. **Lunch break**

2:30 p.m. **“Café Europa”: Discussion roundtables for conference participants**

- What are our visions of the European Union in 20 years time?
- How can political and economic freedom and social security be permanently guaranteed in the European Union?
- What role can and should the EU play in the world in the future?

3:30 p.m. **Coffee break**

4:00 p.m. **Introduction/Summary of the outcomes of Café Europa**

Ralf Fücks, President, Heinrich Böll Foundation

Closing panel: Lessons learned –Quo Vadis EU?

- What lessons should we learn from 20 Years 1989?
- Vision 2029

Rebecca Harms, Member of the European Parliament and Vice-Chairwoman of the Greens/EFA Parliamentary

Martin Mejstřík, former 1989 student leader, former Czech Senator, Prague

Heidi Hautala, Member of Parliament, The Greens, Helsinki

Jeffrey Gedmin, President, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Prague

Chair: **Ralf Fücks**, President, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin

6:00 p.m. **End of conference**