

Germans think Trump is a bigger problem than North Korea



Not so close. (Michael Kappeler/Pool Photo via AP)

The once-close relationship between the US and Germany has undergone a shakeup since Donald Trump won the 2016 presidential election. Over the course of this year—particularly during Germany’s own election campaign—politicians including Chancellor Angela Merkel herself—have urged Germany to emancipate itself from the US and focus on building up the European Union.

A recent survey from the Körber Foundation found a similar sentiment in a poll of Germans on their country’s foreign-policy challenges.

The poll found that 88% of Germans think defense cooperation with other EU states should take priority over its partnership with the US. When asked to describe the current relationship between the US and Germany, 56% described it as somewhat or very bad.

While 26% of those surveyed said that refugees are the greatest challenge right now for German foreign policy (more than half said the country should set a limit to the number of refugees it accepts), 19% of them said Germany’s relationship with Trump and the US is the biggest problem.

Trump is more of a concern for the 1,005 poll respondents than Germany’s strained relationship with Turkey and its president Recep Tayyip Erdogan—although nearly three quarters are in favor of breaking off EU accession negotiations with Turkey. And only 10% cited the North Korea situation as the greatest foreign-policy challenge.

German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, speaking at the foundation’s Berlin Foreign Policy Forum today (Dec 5.), echoed the belief that the US is a problem for Germany.

“The US no longer sees the world as a global community, but as a fighting arena where everyone has to seek their own advantage,” Gabriel said, adding that Germany “can no longer simply react to US policy but must establish its own

position.”

Gabriel said Germany should still invest in its trading partnership with the US while being assertive in representing its own interests. “The withdrawal of the United States under Donald Trump from its reliable role as a guarantor of Western-led multilateralism accelerates a change of the world order with immediate consequences for German and European interests,” Gabriel said.

Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/tillerson-gets-chilly-reception-from-european-allies/2017/12/05/c494318c-d7b4-11e7-9ad9-ca0619edfa05_story.html

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