

## KEY RESULTS OF THE INSIGHTS CAFÉ

# “REGULATING CONFLICTS IN INSTITUTIONS: MIGRATION, CLIMATE, IDENTITY POLITICS”

**Panelists:** Jens Martin Gurr (University of Duisburg-Essen, DE), Patrick Cramer (Max Planck Society, DE), Simone Schwanitz (Max Planck Society, DE), Metin Sitti (Koc University, TR)

**Moderator:** Sabine Lehmann (German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, DE)

In pluralist democracies, institutions such as universities and research organisations are increasingly grappling with deep-seated conflicts. These conflicts can stem from fundamentally different worldviews on issues like migration, climate change, identity politics, and geopolitical tensions. They often arise from incompatible values and are not always fully resolvable but can be regulated to maintain institutional functionality.

The panel emphasised the importance of finding ways to ‘agree to disagree’, promoting a culture where diverse perspectives can coexist without impeding the institution’s mission. Compromise was highlighted as a crucial yet underutilised tool in conflict regulation. With the capacity for compromise seemingly on the decline in pluralistic societies, there is a pressing need to re-emphasise and develop this skill.

## THE EXPERT PANEL ARTICULATES THE FOLLOWING CALLS TO ACTION:

### Foster a culture of open and respectful debate.

**1 —** Proactively create environments where open dialogue is encouraged and guidelines for respectful debate are established. Promote forums and workshops that teach debate skills, emphasising active listening and the understanding of diverse perspectives.

### Embrace compromise as a tool for conflict regulation.

**2 —** Recognise compromise as a valuable method for managing conflicts arising from deeply held values. Encourage training and research on the conditions that facilitate effective compromise within institutional settings.

### Maintain institutional neutrality while upholding core values.

**3 —** Ensure that institutions remain neutral on political matters to prevent polarisation, yet actively protect their core values such as academic freedom and inclusivity. Develop clear policies that delineate acceptable discourse and actions within the institution.

### Provide support for individuals affected by conflicts.

**4 —** Offer psychological counselling and other support services to members directly impacted by conflicts. Establish communication channels to understand their challenges and address their needs empathetically.

## CONTACT

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**Utilise indirect approaches to address sensitive topics.**

- 5 —** Employ methods such as discussing the historical context or literary representations of conflicts to engage with sensitive issues indirectly. This can facilitate understanding and reduce tensions without confronting the conflict head-on.

*This event is supported by the Landecker Foundation and assembled in the framework of the Falling Walls Science Summit 2024 in Berlin. The Falling Walls Science Summit is a leading international, interdisciplinary, and intersectoral forum for scientific breakthroughs. It commemorates the fall of the Berlin Wall and aims to promote dialogue between science and society.*

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