

Table 1 Policy Prescriptions for Transatlantic Relations according to Mainstream IR Schools of Thought derived from the Academic Literature

IR school of thought	Policy prescription for TR	
	Optimist stabilizing factors of unity	Pessimist destabilizing factors of division
Realism	Create an alliance against a common adversary or even enemy	Beware of European balancing against the USA
Liberalism/institutionalism	Create and maintain a liberal international order with transatlantic partners at its core	Beware of political differences
Constructivism	Create and preserve a transatlantic identity	Beware of identity changes

sufficiently diverse to fulfil the saturation criteria and response variation recommended for qualitative sampling.²⁹

In the German sample, eight respondents were members of the executive branch. Twenty-two were elected parliamentarians (MdB), most of them members of the Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs. Seventeen were independent foreign policy experts from think tanks, academia, media, and research staffers from the parliament. Eighteen interviewees were older and retired diplomats and ex-politicians. Eighty-six per cent of the 65 respondents were males. The average age was 59 but ranged from 30 to 89 years. Almost half of the persons interviewed held a PhD, while the remainder had completed a specialized or university education. Forty-one per cent of the interviewees had no or an unknown party affiliation. Among the 38 party-affiliated interviewees, ten were members of the conservative Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU), six of the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP). The other participants belonged to the opposition parties at the time: 11 were Social Democrats (SPD), seven Green, and four Left Party members. Regarding their political leaning, 40 per cent of the 65 German respondents were categorized as left/centre, 43 per cent centre/right, and 18 per cent were undetermined.

The selection of the *Washington, D.C., 2017 sample* of 31 interviews used funds and networks from Hermann Kurthen's home university. Out of 111 contacted foreign policy experts, 37 persons agreed to be interviewed. As in the case of the Berlin sample, six non-US citizens were omitted. The US sample also was not representative because the overall population of foreign policy experts cannot be clearly determined. Nevertheless, US respondents' characteristics and beliefs captured a diverse spectrum, thereby fulfilling the previously mentioned saturation criteria.

Most US respondents came from 13 well-known foreign policy think tanks, among them four conservative, five centrist, and four liberal or progressive

²⁹ Janice M. Morse, 'Designing funded qualitative research', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994), 220–35; and Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 3rd ed. (London: Sage, 2013).

