



The International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

For the Unity of Europe



**Charlemagne Prize
Laureate 2020/21
Klaus Iohannis**

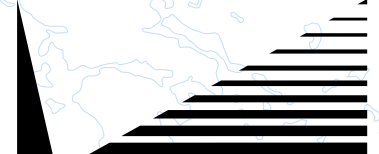
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A Modern Statesman and a Man for the People

2021 is an exceptional year in the long series of Charlemagne Prize awards. Romanian President Klaus Iohannis, who had already been cited as prize winner in late 2019, would normally have been honoured with the award in May 2020. Exactly one year later, because the Corona pandemic still precluded the event, it regrettably had to be postponed a second time. I am, therefore, all the more delighted that the award ceremony can now be celebrated on 2 October 2021 in Aachen's historic Town Hall.

Forty years after the first International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen was awarded, 1990 marked the first year in which a representative of Eastern Europe was honoured for their services towards the building of a united Europe. Since then, a further seven Charlemagne Prize winners from Eastern European countries have joined the current list of 62 laureates. In view of Europe's eastern enlargement, it was high time for an intensive look eastwards at the political developments there. But even without this geographical consideration, it is obvious why Romanian President Klaus Iohannis is now taking his place in the long line of Charlemagne Prize laureates.

Romania has been a full member of the European Union since 2007 and Klaus Iohannis has been its president for the last 7 years. He has guided his country – unlike other statesmen in Eastern Europe – towards a pro-European policy based on the rule of law. He values direct contact with the people and solves problems through discussion. He was not afraid to participate in a demonstration to stop his country's parliament from, essentially, decriminalising corruption and abuse of public office. He campaigned for gender studies to be allowed to continue being taught in Romanian schools. He believes in the power

and conviction of the people in his country. Iohannis is proud of Romanian society's pro-European attitude and, when formally accepting the offer of the Charlemagne Prize in February 2020, he declared: "I dedicate the International Charlemagne Prize to Romanian society, which, in last year's European elections, gave impressive proof of its support for the European project."

Klaus Iohannis maintains contact with the young people in his country. His early career as a teacher undoubtedly contributed to his great confidence in them. He believes in the power of youth. As the father figure of his nation, he feels a special responsibility for the coming generation, and, when formally offered the Charlemagne Prize in Bucharest, he emphasised that, "The young generation believes in Europe, in democracy. Their enthusiasm feeds optimism for the future of Europe." No wonder, then, that Iohannis has planned to spend a lot of time with the 2020/21 Charlemagne Youth Prize winners, with whom he will meet during the celebrations. The Charlemagne Youth Prize has been an integral element of the International Charlemagne Prize for many years. Its dedicated representatives from all over the European Union play an essential role in shaping our future and certainly deserve the special attention of the Charlemagne Prize laureate.

Yours
Sibylle Keupen
Lord Mayor

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Charlemagne Prize Laureate 2020/21

Klaus Iohannis



01

Citation by the Board of Directors of the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

to the President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis

The European Union today is divided and polarised on many fundamental issues while – in view of the enormous global challenges we face – what we really need right now is consensus, mutual respect and reconciliation. In the eastern part of the Union, one man in particular stands out as embodying our shared European values, our commitment to upholding the European rule of law and our shared vision of a European future: the recipient of the Charlemagne Prize 2020, the President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis.

Step by step, he has guided a country – one that succeeded in overthrowing a brutal dictatorship and yet, after the revolution in 1989, still had to deal with disappointments in terms of its expectations of the West – on its way towards becoming the most European country in South Eastern Europe.

While other Member States are adopting nationalist-conservative or even right-wing populist stances towards the European Union, Klaus Iohannis, with enormous dedication and success, has led Romania to espouse a pro-European policy committed to the rule of law. Iohannis strengthens the European Union, is committed to its objectives and promotes cooperation between its Member States. What he has achieved for Romania represents one of the greatest advances in integration since 1989. And he is a great proponent of fairness, of protection of minorities and of cultural diversity, as well as being a leading mediator and bridge-builder between Western and Eastern European societies.

It is due to his approach that a legal and efficient environment – such a vital factor for the community of values that is the European Union – has been established for a thriving national economy with which Romania can now present itself to the EU as a modern, forward-looking and optimistic country.

Klaus Iohannis was born on 13 June 1959 in Sibiu/Hermannstadt. A member of the Romanian-German ethnic group of Transylvanian Saxons, he describes himself as “an ethnic German and a Romanian citizen”. After completing his studies in Physics at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca in 1983, he worked as a high school physics teacher in Sibiu before becoming the Deputy General School Inspector of Sibiu County in 1997, and later, in 1999, the county’s General School Inspector.

Already a member of the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania (FDGR/DFGR) since 1990, in 2000 – a time in which Romania was torn by domestic unrest and polarisation – he was elected as the Forum’s candidate for the office of Mayor of his home town, Sibiu. The election result – a landslide victory with over 70% of the votes – was all the more remarkable considering the fact that only a small percentage of the local population actually belongs to the Transylvanian-Saxon ethnic minority.

He found himself in politics “quite by accident”, as he later remarked in retrospect. “What’s my secret? I think the answer is simply that, as a rule, I manage to find the right way to tackle issues.” Quite obviously, and above all with resounding success! The fact that he was re-elected as the Mayor of Sibiu in 2004, 2008 and 2012 – with overwhelming majorities of the votes well above the 75% mark – speaks for itself.

The main reason for his popularity was the impressive growth that Sibiu achieved under his leadership. Thanks to a skilful combination of liberalisation and promotion of capital investments in the millions – also from European partner states – the regional economy experienced such robust growth that, within just a few years, Sibiu was transformed from a relatively insignificant regional city into one of the most culturally diverse, best developed and most prosperous centres in the whole country, and into a highly attractive tourist destination, in other words: into a Romanian success story and role model. The renovation of the historic old town, the modernisation of the infrastructure, and, most significantly, the choice of Sibiu (alongside Luxembourg) as “European Capital of Culture” in 2007 were all largely due to the efforts and vision of Klaus Iohannis.

His sober and pragmatic summary at the end of his time in office as Mayor of Sibiu: “Those who have invested in Sibiu have come to know and appreciate this location, and almost all of them have expanded their operations. The majority of them have doubled their capacities over the past ten years. Major German companies are continuing to expand. All this goes to show that the city is also capable of supplying an appropriately qualified labour force.” In early 2013, Iohannis, who had already been in discussion as a possible candidate for the office of Prime Minister back in 2009, decided to join the National

Liberal Party (PNL), and was shortly after elected first Deputy President of the party. In June 2014, he advanced to the position of President of the PNL and was nominated to run for the Presidency of Romania in the same year as the candidate of the “Christian Liberal Alliance”, an electoral alliance of the PNL with the Democratic Liberal Party (PDL).

The run-up to the presidential election was accompanied by a never-ending series of corruption scandals involving high-ranking political office-holders and members of parliament from a range of parties. In response to this, Klaus Iohannis’s core message was clear-cut:

“I represent a Romania of things well done, without corruption and nepotism [...]. I am the guarantee for an independent judiciary and for conflict resolution through dialogue. I will work for the benefit of the citizens, and will not be pushing policies on TV talk shows. What has been achieved on a small scale in Sibiu can also be achieved for all of Romania [...]. People have had enough of empty promises and lies; they want to see facts.”

In the first round of the election, he lagged about 10% behind the Prime Minister at the time, Victor Ponta, but in the second ballot – much to the surprise of many observers – he prevailed over his opponent with over 54% of the votes. On 21 December 2014, he was officially sworn in as the President of Rumania.

A “structured worker”, rational, diligent and hands-on, firm, credible and sincere, down-to-earth, upstanding and correct – these are the attributes, almost Prussian in quality, one might be tempted to say, with which the man from Sibiu is most commonly characterised. Even his supporters sometimes bemoan his lack of the more aggressive approach so typical of Romanian politics. But, in fact, the character traits that Klaus Iohannis embodies are exactly what his compatriots have sorely missed for such a long time.

Moreover, the President has also proved to be absolutely unwavering in his stance on two issues: his resolute pro-European course (in many cases “with no ifs or buts”) and – closely associated with this course – his fight against corruption and cronyism, and for the separation of powers and the rule of law. It soon became crystal clear that Iohannis’s first term of office was destined to be dominated by an on-going conflict between

the – nominally social democratic – government at that time, which was on a confrontational course with the EU regarding the independence of the judiciary and the fight against corruption, and the Head of State with his agenda of a “Romania of things well done”, a Romania firmly based on the rule of law, on transparency and on freedom from corruption.

This conflict began escalating when, shortly after it came into power, the Grindeanu government signed off on plans to radically weaken Romania’s anti-corruption legislation by means of emergency decrees to amend the penal codes in order to exempt cases of corruption and abuse of office when the budget damage incurred was under (approx.) 50,000 euros, and to pardon persons serving prison sentences of under five years and thus clear the way for convicted criminals to (re-)enter public office. In response, on 18 January 2017, Iohannis presented himself at the seat of government and, for the first time, exercised his constitutional right as President to preside over a cabinet meeting in cases where exceptionally important issues – for example relating to national security – were on the agenda. In the presence of the media, he made his position clear: “There are two elephants in the room and no one is talking about them: the emergency pardoning decree and the decree that changes criminal codes.”

The public response was immediate. Just a few days later more than 10,000 people mobilised to demonstrate against the government’s planned decrees – a demonstration which the President himself attended, in an exceptional show of solidarity, and, to great applause, expressed his opinion in unusually clear and harsh words: “A gang of politicians who have problems with the law want to change the legislation and weaken the state of law ... Romanians are rightly indignant.” Two days later, on 24 January, in an address commemorating the Day of Unification of the Romanian Principalities, he made his stance even clearer. After honoring those responsible for founding the modern state and establishing the criminal code, he then switched over to a criticism of the current attempts of some politicians to “rummage around in the law” and “purge their own criminal files“, and announced his intention to call a referendum so that the Romanian people could have their say on the continuation of the fight against corruption.

When the government nevertheless went ahead with its plans and, on 31 January, ratified the proposed legislative changes per emergency decrees, the President immediately announced that he would take the decrees to the constitutional court. After further mass demonstrations in which up to a half a million Romanians participated, the government revoked the decrees on 5 February, before they were due to come into effect.

In the following period, President Iohannis remained steadfast, refusing to endorse already passed laws that contained systematic changes to the judiciary and attempts to dilute the corruption law, submitting them instead to the constitutional court for intense scrutiny. In early 2019, he finally made use of his presidential power of initiative to call a referendum “in questions of national interest”. The referendum was held concurrently with the European election, and over 86% of the voters confirmed that they were on his side in the fight against corruption and for the rule of law.

Just a few days earlier, Iohannis, on the occasion of Romania assuming the rotating Presidency of the Council of Europe, had convened the members of the EU Council in his home city to “discuss and plan the future of Europe together”. In a joint statement issued at the end of the summit, the heads of state and government emphasised, among other things, their resolve “to protect our way of life, democracy and the rule of law. The unalienable rights and the fundamental freedoms of all Europeans were hard fought and will never be taken for granted. We will uphold our shared values and principles enshrined in the Treaties.” For Klaus Iohannis, the fact that this document bears the title “Declaration of Sibiu” is certainly a well-deserved validation of his political course.

Even before the start of Romania’s turn at the Presidency of the EU Council, Iohannis had emphasised the pro-European consensus firmly anchored in Romania’s people and politics in his speech to the European Parliament: “11 years ago, when Romania joined the great European family, I, a Romanian, felt extremely proud of experiencing such an important moment for my country. Next year, when Romania takes over the Presidency of the European Union Council for the first time, the Sibiu Summit will represent a milestone for our European family. It is our duty and our responsibility to shape the future of

Europe. National pride and European pride are not obsolete concepts. Europe is Romania and Romania is Europe. One of the most important lessons we have learned is the democracy lesson. This is why we cherish so much the values of the European family. Romania is deeply attached to the European project. We have a vibrant and dynamic society, continuously developing. We are a young democracy and we own the resources available to improve. The Romanians are actively connected to civic values. They have clearly proved it; they made their voice heard in defence of the rule of law and democracy. It is our ambition to overcome any obstacle to remain anchored in the great European family we fundamentally belong to. The young generation believes in Europe and is involved in debates on our future in a positive and, more importantly, optimistic manner.”

Ultimately, Romania’s turn at the EU Council Presidency turned out to be far less overshadowed by internal political differences than people in many places had feared. Donald Tusk formally expressed his gratitude to President Iohannis “for an energetic and successful EU Council Presidency” during which major legislative proposals were made, including on border protection, on reduction of CO2 emissions and on building a digital Europe.

In June 2019 – well before the end of the EU Council Presidency – the Romanian government announced that it had abandoned its course of judicial reform. After a successful vote of no confidence in November, it was replaced by the new, liberal government under the leadership of Ludovic Orban.

On 24 November 2019, in a landslide victory at the polls, Klaus Iohannis was re-elected for another term as Head of State. His – typically unassuming – comment on the election result: “A modern, European, normal Romania won today.”

The Board of Directors of the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen have elected to honour the President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis, as an outstanding proponent of European values, of freedom and democracy, of the protection of minorities and of cultural diversity, as a man who has rendered significant service in the interests of the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary – a fundamental precondition for further deepening of integration.



The award of the prize is meant as an encouragement to Klaus Iohannis to continue with determination on his European course, and as an encouragement to us all to embrace, espouse and advance the idea of European integration.



Text of the Certificate of Honour

On 2nd October 2021, in the Coronation Hall of the Aachen Town Hall on the site of the former Imperial Palace, the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen for the year 2020 was awarded to the President of Romania

H.E. Klaus Iohannis

in recognition of his outstanding achievements as a proponent of European values, of freedom, democracy and the rule of law, and as a bridge-builder between East and West.

Inscription on the Medal

International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen 2020/21

Klaus Iohannis

A Europe of values, freedom and the rule of law



02

Klaus Iohannis:

A convinced and convincing supporter of the European idea



“The European Union is the best political project of our time.” In view of the right-wing populists in Hungary or Poland, this statement – coming from the mouth of an Eastern European president – is soothing to the ears of every pro-European. Especially since such words, when they come from Klaus Iohannis, are more than mere lip service. The Romanian President is a convinced and convincing supporter of the European idea. As the designated winner of the Charlemagne Prize assured us in an interview with Medienhaus Aachen in May 2020, “The values of the EU – peace, freedom, the rule of law, freedom of the individual and free economic initiative – are what we wanted. Romanians are pro-European, and this will continue to be the case.” The award ceremony had to be postponed due to the Corona pandemic, but this 62-year-old shows no signs of tiring in his commitment to promoting Europe.

A German without a German passport

Klaus Iohannis is not your classic career politician. His election as president in April 2017 was regarded as a sensation. Born on 13 June 1959 in Sibiu in Transylvania, this son of a technician and a nurse did not join the Communist Party in the era of Nicolae Ceaușescu, nor did he take part in the uprising against the dictatorial system. Instead, he studied Physics at the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca from 1979 to 1983 – where he also met his future wife Carmen – and subsequently took a teaching post in his home town.

If you want to understand how Iohannis came to be in politics, you need to know more about Sibiu. The two are closely connected. Sibiu is a city near the Southern Carpathians that was founded by German settlers in 1150. The Habsburgs gave it the name Hermannstadt. Even in 1918, when Hermannstadt became part of the newly-founded State of Romania and was renamed Sibiu, the majority of the inhabitants were German. When the Red Army marched into Romania in 1945, deportation of the able-bodied German population to the Soviet Union for forced labour began. At the latest from that point on, the German minority in Sibiu lived their lives under the constant shadow of reprisals. After the Romanian Revolution of 1989, many of them emigrated. Iohannis’s parents and sister moved to Würzburg. Iohannis remained loyal to his home country – as a German without a German passport. The experience left an enduring impression on him.

The opposite of nepotism and corruption

It seems, then, like a logical step that, in 1990, he joined the newly founded Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania, a political party representing the interests of the German-speaking minority. The Forum even went on to elect him their president – the first directional decision towards a future political career. After all, Iohannis did epitomise traditional German virtues: diligence, a sense of duty, discipline – the exact opposite of the nepotism and corruption rampant in Romanian public offices. Not surprisingly, in 2000 he was elected Mayor of Sibiu with an overwhelming majority – the first mayor of German origin in a very long time. This was when Klaus Iohannis’s political career really took off.

The former teacher went on to win three re-elections as Sibiu’s mayor in a row. “The German”, as he was called, had shown that he could lead his native city to a prosperity much hoped for, but hardly expected. He had attracted foreign investors and engaged in the fight against ubiquitous corruption. Foreign tourists suddenly began to find the once-dilapidated town of Sibiu attractive. Some felt reminded of the words of the writer Kurt Tucholsky, who – while stationed as a field policeman in Romania in 1918 – wrote this in a letter home: “Hermannstadt is delightful, the best of good old Germany. Narrow, winding streets, a wonderful population, very good food, unforgettable.” And Iohannis’s good contacts with EU authorities in Brussels had helped Sibiu to become European Capital of Culture, along with Luxembourg, in 2007.

Seeing something good in defeat

The call from Bucharest was not long in coming. When Romanian Prime Minister Emil Boc was removed from office in a vote of no confidence in October 2009, various minority parties urged the Mayor of Sibiu to run for office. The plan failed, but this did not stop Iohannis’s continued rise. It is in keeping with his nature to see something good in defeat, as he would write years later in his autobiography “Pas cu pas” (Step by Step): “As far as my public image was concerned, I don’t think the crisis affect me much. On the contrary: it forced me to appear in public much more often than before, and that gave many more people the opportunity to get a more complete picture of the politician Klaus Iohannis.”

The office of state president

In 2013, the city council leader joined the then co-ruling National Liberal Party (PNL). He knew that, without the help of a major party, he could not achieve enough for his home country. And, once again, coincidence came into play. A power vacuum that emerged in the PNL after the disaster in the European elections led to Iohannis becoming party leader in June 2014. Shortly afterwards, he ran for the office of president on behalf of the Christian-Liberal Alliance, which included the conservative PNL and the democratic-liberal PDL.

His path forward seems almost to have been preordained. This impression is corroborated by an anecdote Iohannis relates in his autobiography. In 2007, the Spanish singer Julio Iglesias had predicted: “You will become the President of Romania. I have met hundreds of politicians in my life. I know what a future president looks like.” And yet he continued to be regarded by the population as rather staid, stiff and taciturn. This did not detract from the great popularity he enjoyed.

In fact, it was probably the success of his endeavours in Sibiu that recommended him for the office of president, coupled with his pledge to promote the democratic rule

of law. The ruling Socialist Party (PSD), under whose umbrella a range of nationalist “clientele parties” were gathered, did not make it easy for Iohannis to achieve his goals. Most importantly, the PSD viewed his unwavering efforts to achieve a corruption-free Romania as a declaration of war. Nevertheless, or perhaps precisely because of his tireless advocacy of European values, Iohannis went on to be confirmed in office as the Romanian President for another five years in December 2019.

Since the end of 2020, Romania has been led by a pro-European government of three centre-right parties – a government from which Iohannis can finally expect the kind of support he has longed for. The tasks he faces are diverse and challenging. Young people, in particular, are leaving the country. But Klaus Iohannis is the right man for the job of stopping this “brain drain” – in order to turn his visions for a prosperous Romania into reality and to add a new chapter to the European project.

Anja Clemens-Smicek

Head of Service and Member of the Editor-in-Chief
Aachener Zeitung





03

The International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

For the unity of Europe

The beginnings

The story of the International Charlemagne Prize begins on 19 December 1949 in the Suermondt Museum in Aachen. In a meeting of the reading circle “Corona legentium Aquensis”, Aachen businessman Kurt Pfeiffer holds a speech in which he argues the case for more intensive cooperation between the “West European Community of Common Destiny”. He rounds off his speech by proposing the foundation of “an international prize to be awarded annually for the most valuable contribution in the service of Western European understanding and community work and in the service of humanity and world peace”. In Pfeiffer’s own words, this suggestion is to be presented “to the public with unassuming reserve”.

Representatives of the City, Church and University, along with representatives of the business community, eagerly adopt the initiative and establish the “Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of the City of Aachen”.

Pfeiffer’s historic speech is followed by the issuing of a proclamation. It is based on the western concept of understanding, and emphasises the special role of the city, as the former “focus of the entire occidental world”, and has always “fought against national prejudice and assumed interests to find and unite occidental space and culture”. Nominees for the prize are to be commendable personalities “who have encouraged political, economic and intellectual ideas on western unity”. By awarding the prize, the founders of the Society “not only aim to continually highlight the unsolved problem of European unity, but [...] will try to also indicate practical solutions to this pressing issue”.

On 18 May 1950, the first Charlemagne Prize is awarded to Richard Count Coudenhove-Kalergi. This founder of the pan-European movement is followed in successive years by Hendrik Brugmans, Alcide de Gasperi, Jean Monnet, Konrad Adenauer and Winston Churchill. And, by 1957, the Charlemagne Prize has already garnered enough acclaim and political prestige for Paul-Henri Spaak to observe “with emotion” that he is now on a list that comprises “the most famous names in politics in Post-War Europe”.

Further development

Although the original intention of the Charlemagne Prize was to address society as a whole – including philosophy – the primacy of politics had already begun to crystallise as early as the 1950s. At the same time, the Charlemagne Prize - through its laureates - increasingly became a mirror of European political developments.

The founding fathers of the ECSC were followed by torchbearers of hope for enlargement and consolidation, by personalities responsible for democratic institutions, by major players in the process of reunification of East and West, by European thinkers, doers and initiators, as well as by critics and crisis managers.

In the meantime, the prize, originally conceived for Western Europe, now applies to all aspects of European integration, to the spreading of community values, to the protection of natural resources, to the North-South divide, and to action both within the Union and towards the now globalised world beyond. But culture – as a link between the multitude of member states – is becoming increasingly important.

The ideals of the prize are reflected in the personalities who joined the founding fathers in the growing list of laureates – like Simone Veil, Leo Tindemans, François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl, Václav Havel, Jacques Delors, Jean-Claude Juncker, Angela Merkel, Donald Tusk – or Pope John Paul II, who, in 2004, became the first person to be awarded an Extraordinary Charlemagne Prize in recognition of his outstanding life’s work.

The Charlemagne Prize is not political, but the Society awarding this prize does want to influence political decision-makers to advance European integration as quickly and as effectively as possible, to address issues of the future and to find solutions that are in the interests of the people. Today, these are, above all, Europe’s self-image in the globalised world, the Union’s internal constitution, the EU’s geopolitical role, partnerships with neighbouring regions and continents, multilateral cooperation, issues of migration and protection of the climate and the environment, and digital development. In short: the future of the European model of life. These topics have prompted the Board of Directors in recent years to honour – among others – Pope Francis, Timothy Garton



Ash, Emmanuel Macron and Antonio Guterres. In this respect, the award is not meant merely as an expression of grateful acknowledgment for services already rendered, but first and foremost as a message of encouragement, hope and expectation to the laureates, and often also to their political environment, to face the pressing questions of the future.

In 1997, the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen was established. Its mission: to provide pro-European impulses through a wide range of events and to help win the hearts and minds of citizens, especially young people, for the European idea. Since 2008, the Foundation, in cooperation with the European Parliament, has annually awarded the European Charlemagne Youth Prize, as a complement to the International Charlemagne Prize. The prize is awarded to young people who strengthen the unity of Europeans and – through the outstanding projects they carry out – exemplify the integration process of our continent.

While the Charlemagne Youth Prize focuses on highlighting very practical examples of how Europeans can live together, the Charlemagne Prize's latest project explicitly addresses young academics. In 2019, the Charlemagne Prize Academy of Europe went into operation. Within the framework of this (virtual) academy, future EU issues will be defined, and approaches will be developed to solutions for the challenges that lie ahead. To support this endeavour, the Foundation awards five research grants per year, each in the amount of €25,000.

The signal that the award of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen sends out – year after year – represents an ideal and at the same time an inspiration for the future society of Europe and the coexistence of all citizens on our continent. In their acceptance speeches when receiving the Charlemagne Prize, numerous laureates have used the Charlemagne Prize Award ceremony as a platform from which to develop ideas beyond the order of the day and to introduce them into the European debate.

The award ceremony in special times

Unfortunately, in recent years, the Charlemagne Prize award ceremonies have – at least superficially – been increasingly overshadowed by crises: the sovereign debt crisis; the refugee crisis: and, especially, the crisis of confidence which – particularly now during the pandemic – seems to be spreading ever outwards. The outcome: public opinion is being shaped less and less by the achievements of the Union and more and more by its problems. During these same years, the Charlemagne Prize has also been overshadowed by the key question as to how we can successfully meet the challenges of the future, and as to what sort of Europe will be able to recapture the confidence and the conviction of its citizens.

Internationale Preis zu Aachen Freiheit Europas



For the Charlemagne Prize Society, the EU is a model characterised by common principles and common values: democracy and the rule of law, freedom, tolerance and solidarity. It is also a regional organisation that seeks, politically, to stabilise peace, to improve people's living conditions and to eliminate social differences between regions. And, finally, it endeavours to provide businesses and institutions, and thus the people of the Union, with more opportunities in global competition.

For a Europe of values, democracy, freedom and the rule of law

It is for this idea of Europe that the International Charlemagne Prize – through its award events – aims to attract media and public attention in order to make it clear to the people that there is no alternative to the European Union. The winner of the Charlemagne Prize 2020, Klaus Iohannis, typifies this model of life and society.

Iohannis embodies the values enshrined in the European Treaties, in the legal system of the Union as well as in the legal systems of the individual Member States. He knows that the functioning of the Union as a whole fundamentally depends on the rule of law in all EU states, and that protection of common values and rights is one of the most important duties of all.

At a time when the rule of law is coming under increasing pressure in parts of Europe – not least in parts of Central Eastern and South Eastern Europe – and the European Court of Justice has on several occasions had to demand corrections to national laws, the example set by Klaus Iohannis gives us cause for hope. For it is this Romanian president who, like no other, champions the fight against corruption, against patronage and against the dismantling of the rule of law – and who, with tireless commitment, a clear compass and, above all, steadfastness, has managed to win over the vast majority of the Romanian population for pro-European, democratic policies based on the rule of law. In this way, he is convincing them to commit themselves to Europe. He is a stroke of luck for his country, and a stroke of luck for Europe.

In this sense, our Charlemagne Prize Laureate from 2020 could not be more topical – even a year later, in 2021. We are delighted to finally be able to present him with this long-deserved accolade.

Dr. Jürgen Linden
Chairman of the Charlemagne Prize Board of Directors



Der Internationale Karlspreis zu Aachen

Für die Einheit Europas



04

The Charlemagne Prize Laureates

1950 – 2019



1950
Richard Graf Coudenhove-Kalergi
 Founder of the Pan-European Movement



1951
Prof. Dr. Hendrik Brugmans
 Rector of the European College in Bruges



1952
Alcide de Gasperi
 Prime Minister of the Republic of Italy



1953
Jean Monnet
 President of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community



1954
Dr. Konrad Adenauer
 Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany



1955
Sir Winston Churchill
 Former Prime Minister of Great Britain



1957
Paul Henri Spaak
 Secretary General of NATO



1958
Robert Schuman
 President of the European Parliament



1959
George C. Marshall
 Former Secretary of State of the United States of America



1960
Dr. Josef Bech
 Honorary State Minister, President of the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies



1961
Prof. Dr. Walter Hallstein
 President of the Commission of the European Economic Community



1963
The Rt. Hon. Edward Heath
 British Lord Privy Seal



1964
Prof. Dr. Antonio Segni
 President of the Republic of Italy



1966
Jens Otto Krag
 Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark



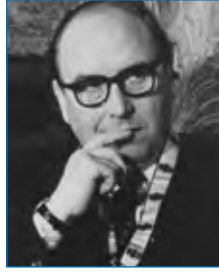
1967
Joseph Luns
 Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



1969
The Commission of the European Communities,
 Represented by **Jean Rey**
 President of the European Commission



1970
François Seydoux de Clausonne, Former French Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany



1972
The Rt. Hon. Roy Jenkins, P.C., M.P. Politician



1973
Don Salvador de Madariaga Philosopher, sociologist, historian



1976
Leo Tindemans Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium



1977
Walter Scheel Federal President of the Federal Republic of Germany



1978
Konstantin Karamanlis Prime Minister of the Republic of Greece



1979
Emilio Colombo President of the European Parliament



1981
Simone Veil President of the European Parliament



1982
H.M. King Juan Carlos I of Spain



1984
Prof. Dr. Karl Carstens Federal President of the Federal Republic of Germany



1986
The People of Luxembourg



1987
Prof. Dr. Henry A. Kissinger Former Secretary of State of the United States of America



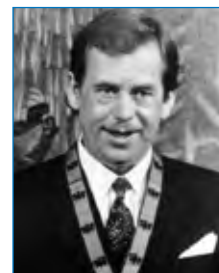
1988
François Mitterrand President of the French Republic and **Dr. Helmut Kohl** Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany



1989
Frère Roger Founder of the Communauté of Taizé



1990
Dr. Gyula Horn Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary



1991
Václav Havel President of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic



1992
Jacques Delors
 President of the Commission of the European Communities



1993
Felipe González Márquez
 Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Spain



1994
Gro Harlem Brundtland
 Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway



1995
Dr. Franz Vranitzky
 Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria



1996
H.M. Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands



1997
Prof. Dr. Roman Herzog
 Federal President of the Federal Republic of Germany



1998
Prof. Dr. Bronisław Geremek
 Foreign Minister of the Republic of Poland



1999
Anthony Charles Lynton Blair
 Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



2000
William Jefferson Clinton
 President of the United States of America



2001
György Konrád
 President of the Academy of Arts Berlin, writer and sociologist



2002
Der Euro
 Represented by **Wim Duisenberg**
 President of the ECB



2003
Valéry Giscard d'Estaing
 President of the European Convention



2004
His Holiness Pope John Paul II
Extraordinary Charlemagne Prize



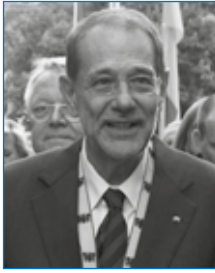
2004
Pat Cox
 President of the European Parliament



2005
Dr. Dr. Carlo Azeglio Ciampi
 President of the Republic of Italy



2006
Dr. Jean-Claude Juncker
 Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg



2007
Dr. Javier Solana
Madariaga High Representative for the Common Foreign & Security Policy and Secretary General of the Council of the EU



2008
Dr. Angela Merkel
 Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany



2009
Prof. Dr. Andrea Riccardi
 Historian and Founder of the Community of Sant'Egidio



2010
Donald Tusk
 Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland



2011
Dr. h.c. Jean-Claude Trichet
 President of the European Central Bank



2012
Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble
 Federal Finance Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany



2013
Dr. Dalia Grybauskaitė
 President of the Republic of Lithuania



2014
Herman Van Rompuy
 President of the European Council



2015
Martin Schulz
 President of the European Parliament



2016
His Holiness Pope Francis



2017
Prof. Timothy Garton Ash
 Historian and author



2018
Emmanuel Macron
 President of the French Republic



2019
António Guterres
 Secretary-General of the United Nations





05

Proclamation

of 1949

The city of Aachen, once the centre of the entire Western world, becoming thereafter a border town, has always been aware of the historical task of true border-existence: "To mediate and communicate, and to overcome boundaries". The inhabitants of our city were joined by blood-ties to the people of the neighbouring states, and in Aachen there have always been men of superior mind and vision, who in the face of all national parochialism and supposed interests have endeavoured to find the common and binding elements of the Occident and Western civilization.

After two world wars during which the effects of the border situation of our city were especially detrimental and in which the honest efforts of several generations to overcome imaginary national antitheses proved futile, our city, submerged in its own rubble, has striven for its right to survival. But with the broader perception deriving from its dreadful experience, it is more willing than ever actively to engage in the cause of Western unification, and that of economic unity as the indispensable preliminary stage. Since human progress has always been initiated by individual personalities of genius who despite all opposition totally dedicated themselves to their idea, it must indeed be useful and beneficial to point to these men as examples, and to urge emulation and realization of their ideas.

A number of citizens of our city of Aachen, forever bound to it by birth or by fulfilment of their life vocation, have therefore decided to establish an International Prize of the city of Aachen which in memory of the great founder of Western culture is to be named the "Charlemagne Prize of the City of Aachen".

It will be awarded annually to deserving personalities who have fostered the idea of Western unification in political, economic and intellectual-spiritual regard.

With the participation of the Mayor, the Oberstadtdirektor (Chief Municipal Director), the Bishop of Aachen, the Rector of the Technical University and eight other representatives of the business and intellectual life of our city, a Society has been founded which shall be the executive body implementing the tasks in connection with the awarding of the "Charlemagne Prize of the City of Aachen". This Society, which will speak and act on behalf of our great historic tradition and commitment, will in 1950 nominate an award-winner and after the election will announce his name to the public. It aims thereby not only to point in repeated admonition to the unresolved problem of European unification; it will also seek to indicate approaches to the practical solution of this urgent question. In so doing, it seeks the sympathetic cooperation not only of the citizenry of Aachen but the entire Western world.

Aachen, Christmas 1949

Dr. Albert Maas
Mayor

Albert Servais
Chief Municipal Director

Dr. Johannes Josef van der Velden
Bishop of Aachen

Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Müller
Rector of the University of Technology

Dr. Kurt Pfeiffer
Merchant

Hermann Heusch
President of the Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Franz Krauß
University Professor

Ludwig Kuhn
Mayor

Dr. Peter Mennicken
University Professor

Carel Nieuwenhuysen
Company Director

Erasmus Schlapp
Textile Manufacturer

Dr. Jean Louis Schrader
Company General Director



06

Declaration of the Aachen City Council and the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen 1990

In respect for the founders of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen and in recognition of the historic proclamation of 1949, the Aachen City Council and the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen declare:

Like the founders of the Charlemagne Prize, we believe that the City of Aachen, by virtue of its age-long border situation, its history, and its current situation in the heart of Europe, has a special commitment to our continent's growing together, to the overcoming of borders and to the friendship of the peoples of Europe.

Given the developments in Germany and eastern Europe since 1989, a comprehensive form of joining together is no longer a utopian venture. In addition, a special role will accrue to Europe in the settlement of the North-South antithesis; and the problem of conserving our vital natural resources by the protection of the environment in Europe and our overpopulated earth will loom ever larger.

The City of Aachen and the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize therefore reaffirm their resolve to award, on Ascension Day in the historic Coronation Hall of the Aachen Town Hall,

the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

to personalities and to organizations fostering in a special way the aforementioned goals. The prizewinners will be selected by the Board of Directors of the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, an independent organization.

Aachen, 14th November 1990

Dr. Jürgen Linden

Mayor of the City of Aachen

Konsul Hugo Cadenbach

Spokesman of the Board of Directors
of the Society for the Conferring of the
International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

07

Agreement 2021

between the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen and Aachen City Council

1. Based on the Proclamation of the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen (hereinafter „the Society“) and its joint Declaration with Aachen City Council (hereinafter „the City“) of 14 November 1990, the Society and the City reaffirm their resolve to continue awarding the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen as a memorable appeal to the citizens of Aachen for European integration – but also for freedom, humanity and peace. The partners agree that the award ceremony shall take place annually on Ascension Day.

2. The City and the Society shall support the Charlemagne Prize Foundation in its efforts to award the annual European Charlemagne Youth Prize as a symbol of shared European identity, thereby raising awareness, particularly among young people, of the need for European unity.

3. The City and the Society shall jointly promote the activities of the Charlemagne Prize Europe Academy, the supporting programme and the development of event formats that conform to Charlemagne Prize ideals and pursue pro-European goals.

4. The Charlemagne Prize is intended as a demonstration of solidarity between the City of Aachen, its European and Euregional neighbours and the European Cities Networks. The Charlemagne aspect only has symbolic significance with respect to the accomplishment of tasks in the spirit of a united Europe.

5. The necessary cooperation for the events shall be handled in well-established manner between the administrative office and officials of the Charlemagne Prize institutions and the responsible administrative departments of the City. This shall apply in particular to the consensual regulation of all diplomatic and organisational activities.

6. The cooperation between the City and the Society is manifest in the composition of the Charlemagne Prize Board of Directors, which is regulated by the Statutes of the Society. The Lord Mayor can accept a seat on the Board of Directors as an „ex officio“ member.

The City shall have the right to present the Board of Directors with a list of nominees for election to the Board of Directors. Nominees shall be chosen by resolution from the different parliamentary parties represented on the City Council to serve on the Board of Directors for the duration of the term for which the City Council has been elected, or, respectively, for the duration of their membership in their respective parliamentary parties. Nominees shall be members of their parliamentary group or active on behalf of their parliamentary group in a committee, or on a board of the City’s municipal investment management company.

From this pool of nominees, the Board of Directors shall then select the number of board members provided for the City in accordance with the Statutes of the Society.

7. In the same manner, the City shall nominate two reputable persons who are not council members and who are not citizens of the City of Aachen for election to the Board of Directors.

8. The persons proposed by the City as members of the Board of Directors shall be demonstrably pro-European and shall support the aims of the Charlemagne Prize Society.

9. [...]

Aachen, 11th May 2021

Sibylle Keupen

Lord Mayor of the City of Aachen

Dr. Jürgen Linden

Chairman of the Charlemagne Prize Board of Directors

08

Members of the Board of Directors of the Society for the Conferring of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

Ex officio members:

Sibylle Keupen

Lord Mayor of the City of Aachen

Rolf-Peter Cremer

Dean of Aachen Cathedral

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Rüdiger

Rector of the RWTH Aachen
University

Elected members:

Dr. Jürgen Linden

Chairman of the Charlemagne Prize
Board of Directors

Gisela Kohl-Vogel

President of the Aachen Chamber
of Industry and Commerce

Dr. Angela Maas

Journalist, moderator

Dieter Philipp

Honorary President of the German
Confederation of Skilled Crafts (ZDH)

Christoph Schmallenbach

Member of the Board of
Generali Deutschland AG

Irene Schulte-Hillen

President of the German
Foundation for Musical Life

Ferun Wolf-Böttcher

Lecturer

Members nominated by the Parties represented in the Aachen City Council:

Hermann Josef Pilgram

Member of the GREENS party
in the Aachen City Council

Dr. Margrethe Schmeer

Member of the CDU party
in the Aachen City Council

Fabia Kehren

Member of the SPD party in the
Aachen-Eilendorf District Council

Georg Helg

Chairman of the FDP party
in the Aachen and City Region
Aachen Council

Members (“Citizens of the World”) nominated by the Aachen City Council:

Sabine Scholt

Head of the Programme Group
Current Affairs, Europe and Abroad,
WDR Television

Hon.-Prof. Dr. Hans-Gert Pöttering

President of the European Parliament
(ret.); Chairman of the Konrad Adenauer
Foundation (ret.)

Delegates of the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen:

Prof. Dr. Thomas Prefi

Spokesman of the Executive Committee

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Hermann

Chairman of the Foundation Council

09

Foundation

of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

Excerpts of the Statutes

Preamble

Proclaimed in 1949 by citizens of Aachen and since 1950 awarded to great Europeans in spirit and in deed, the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen is to be enhanced in its importance for international understanding and the life together of the citizens, peoples, nations and states in Europe; and is to be fostered spiritually and materially in all political, economic, academic-scientific, intellectual-cultural and social sectors as an arousing and inspiring signal.

To this end the undersigned, the Mayor of the City of Aachen, Dr. Jürgen Linden, and the former Spokesman of the Board of Directors of the Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, Consul Hugo Cadenbach, Aachen, hereby initiate the establishing of the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen with headquarters in Aachen.[...]

§ 2 Purpose of the Foundation

1. The purpose of the Foundation is the promotion of the unification of Europe, understanding and communication among the states, the peoples, and the citizens, in particular also
 - › the promotion of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen: its importance, its independent conferment, and the further development of its tradition,
 - › the collection, preservation and study of the documents of the Charlemagne Prize awards, in an archive to be established for this purpose; and the founding of a scholarly library covering European topics,
 - › cooperation and shared sponsorship in arranging programmes and events accompanying the award ceremonies of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, especially as relating to the person of the Charlemagne Prize awardee, his homeland and his activity in European politics and policy,
 - › the organizing and holding of meetings and events promoting the European cause and instilling public awareness of Europe in the political, economic, scientific-academic, cultural and social sectors,
 - › the awarding of grants for the elaboration of topics concerning Europe's future, the promotion of the European idea, and the

deeper anchoring in the minds of the citizens of a European awareness in the realms of politics, economics, culture, science and society.

2. The Foundation pursues solely and directly public service aims as defined in the relevant tax-relief laws.
3. The Foundation's activities are altruistic and not primarily for its own economic ends. Its funds may be used only for purposes in accordance with the statutes.

§ 5 Organs of the Foundation

1. Organs of the Foundation are: the Executive Committee and the Foundation Council.
2. The Foundation has a management body.

§ 6 Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee consists of four persons.
2. [...] The term of office is five years. Reappointment is permissible. The Executive Committee appoints its Spokesman and Deputy Spokesman itself.

§ 12 Foundation Supervisory Authority

1. The Foundation Supervisory Authority is the Cologne Regional Administration; the highest Supervisory Authority is the Interior Ministry of North-Rhine-Westphalia.
2. The Supervisory Authority is to be informed upon request about the affairs of the Foundation at any time.
3. Information about changes in the make-up of the Executive Committee and of the Foundation Council, as well as the annual accounts and report of activities, are to be submitted automatically to the Foundation Supervisory Authority. [...]

10

Patrons and Members of the Executive Committee and the Council of the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

Patrons:

H.M. King of the Belgians Philippe

H.M. King Felipe VI of Spain

H.R.H. Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg

Members of the Executive Committee:

Prof. Dr. Thomas Prefi
Chairman of the Advisory Board of umlaut SE; Spokesperson of the Executive Committee

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dr. h.c. mult. Dipl.-Wirt. Ing. Walter Eversheim
Deputy Spokesman of the Executive Committee

Baron Dr. Jan Huyghebaert
Deputy Spokesman of the Executive Committee

Dr. Bettina Leysen
Deputy Spokeswoman of the Executive Committee

Members of the Foundation Council:

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Hermann
Member of the Administrative Board of Next.e.GO Mobile SE; Chairman of the Foundation Council

Michael Breuer
Minister (ret.); President of the Savings Bank and Giro Association of the Rhineland

Angelika Diemann
Managing Partner of the publishing group Verlagsgruppe Passau

Dr. Tim Grüttemeier
Councillor of the City Region Aachen

Hubert Herpers
Chairman (ret.) of the Board of the Sparkasse Aachen

Dr. Stephan Holthoff-Pförtner
Minister for Federal, European and International Affairs of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia

Dr. Werner Hoyer
Minister of State (ret.); President of the European Investment Bank

Dr. Michael Jansen
Secretary of State (ret.)

Sibylle Keupen
Lord Mayor of the City of Aachen

Marija Kolak
President of the National Association of German Cooperative Banks (BVR)

Wolfgang Kopf
Head of the Central Unit for Political and Regulatory Affairs of German Telekom

Dr. Kurt Liedtke
Chairman (ret.) of the Board of Trustees of the Robert Bosch Foundation

Dr. Jürgen Linden
Chairman of the Charlemagne Prize Board of Directors

Drs. René van der Linden
Honorary President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

H.E. Ricardo Martínez Vázquez
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to the Federal Republic of Germany

Dr. Frank Mastiaux
Chairman of the Board of the EnBW Energie Baden-Württemberg AG

Chevalier Yves Noël
Chairman of the Management Board of NMC S.A.

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Hans-Werner Sinn
President (ret.) of the Ifo Institute – Leibniz Institute for Economic Research at the University of Munich

Dr. h.c. Roger de Weck
Publicist; Director General (ret.) of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SRG SSR)

Klaus Welle
Secretary General of the European Parliament

Alexander Wilden
CEO and owner of the company schwartz GmbH

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Publishing information

Published by

The Lord Mayor
City of Aachen – Press and Marketing Department

Society for the Conferring of the International
Charlemagne Prize of Aachen

Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize
of Aachen

Responsible (in accordance with German Press Law)

Dr. Jutta Bacher

Editor

Evelin Wölk M.A.

Layout

Dipl.-Des. Sarah Kmita

Artwork

NECK + HEYN Werbeagentur GmbH

Translation

Peter Bereza

Photo credits

Title: www.presidency.ro

p. 3: picture alliance/NurPhoto | Nicolas Economou

p. 5: picture alliance/REUTERS | PIROSCHKA VAN DE WOUW

p. 6, 10, 11, 18-19, 33: Andreas Herrmann

p. 12, 15: www.presidency.ro

p. 16: www.stock.adobe.com/rcfotostock

p. 20: Andreas Steindl

p. 23-24: Michael Jaspers

p. 25: Jörg Hempel

p. 26-27: Krentz Photography/Ulf Krentz

Production

PRINZ-DRUCK Print Media GmbH & Co KG
Idar-Oberstein

With the kind support of



provincie limburg



Mercedes-Benz
Niederlassung Aachen



stadt aachen





Charlemagne Prize

Awarded on 2 October 2021
in the coronation hall of the Aachen town hall

