

Essay Prize

Keeping the light on...the future of our British German friendship

The Brits. Being almost neighbours and sharing a complex history, our countries were once connected by love, Queen Victoria, who had chosen her partner for life, Prince Albert, from Hanover itself. Created through love, our friendship has endured many challenges, with the newest obstacle yet to face. Due to two horrible world wars, our friendship has suffered tremendously, and was (nearly) destroyed, owing to our actions.

Since then examples such as „Dinner for one“ or „Bert Trautmann“ had an influence on each other's culture and decreased the hate, that was caused by the world wars. Through the EU, exchange programs and many other efforts, we have luckily been able to restore the bond of brotherly love and friendship.

The Brexit. Many Germans hadn't actually expected it to happen, so the shock was even bigger, when the media announced that our dearest friends the Britains would leave our EU home, to go back on their island. Due to the worldwide pandemic, everyone was kind of dealing with their own issues, so the question of our friendship's future in this difficult time occurs just now in our heads. How shall we be able to keep the light on?

Through the Erasmus program, many students got to experience the British kindness and hospitality. School exchange programs happened all the time and it was normal to go for a semester in university on the British isles. However, it seems like all of this happened a while ago in the past. It appears, that all of the programs have stopped drastically and there is no more exchange happening. All of that, just because of the Brexit. Frustration is the first thing, that comes to mind, when thinking about the Brexit, but a friendship doesn't mean to share the same opinion all the time. Having different point of views is natural and we have to accept it, because we can't change it anyway. So the first thing that is crucial for keeping the light on is tolerance. Tolerance let us grow together

When starting to realise and accept the situation, the next question pops up automatically in your head. How can this friendship survive this change? Keeping the light on is way harder, than it sounds...

It's key, to have interactions and exchanges with each other, like an essay competition. Thus is this essay prize a move towards a strong friendship in the future. Nevertheless, essays just aren't solving the problem of the lack of clarity for our future. Reminding ourselves of the long history and the importance this bond is connected with is the evidence, that we should really work on creating a mutual understanding for the relevance of our future. Therefore its necessary, to do exchange programs not only on a language, but also on a cultural basis. It's important, that students can grasp the significance of the British German future. Nonetheless, this can only be achieved in school, by doing projects, but also through learning more about the historical background, on which this friendship was founded. I desperately hope, that school and university exchange programs will still take place in the long future and that we will cherish our British German friendship.