

**For a Germany  
that is good  
to live in.**

Gouvernement Programme by CDU and CSU 2017 – 2021

Summary

**CDU**

## **A good country in a changing world – Germany’s responsibility**

Germany is a great place to live and work:

- For the vast majority of our citizens, life has never been better.
- Our economy is growing. The employment rate in Germany is at a record high. The number of people who are out of work has fallen to its lowest level since 1991, and the unemployment rate is lower than it has been in decades.
- Wages and pensions have increased substantially and are continuing to rise. The social security system is well funded.
- In Germany we enjoy a high degree of national and international security. As a result, we are able to live in freedom and have control over our lives.

Of course, Germany still has its problems and there are people who are struggling and need our help. We are, and always will be, committed to resolving these problems.

In a world that is changing rapidly and constantly bringing new challenges, we constantly have to fight and defend our achievements and elevate them to the next level. We take a systematic approach to this task.

## **Good jobs for today and tomorrow – full employment for Germany**

Unemployment in Germany is at its lowest level in more than 25 years. At the present, 44 million people are employed, more than ever before. In June of this year, unemployment was below 2.5 million, corresponding to an unemployment rate of just 5.5 percent. We have set ourselves an ambitious target: to achieve full employment throughout Germany by 2025.

- We will ensure that non-wage labour costs and social security contributions remain stable, and that Germany has greater fiscal fairness than many other countries in Europe and the rest of the world.
- Our regulations on environmental protection and climate change must not lead to jobs being outsourced to countries with lower environmental standards.

- We will double our efforts in the area of education and training. We intend to help more women gain employment in jobs that qualify them for social security benefits. We will also help young people aged 25-35 without job certifications to obtain them.
- Germany needs a “Skilled Workers Immigration Act” to manage immigration in the labour market so that it responds to the needs of our economy.
- We will make clear improvements in training, placing and reintegrating the long-term unemployed into the labour market.
- We will maintain the statutory minimum wage. However, our aim is to reduce unnecessary regulations at an early stage of the next parliament (2017-2021).
- We will modernise labour laws pertaining to working times, so that collective bargaining agreements have more latitude to instate flexible working hours, in accordance with the EU Working Time Directive.
- We will continue to improve the conditions for venture capital funding. We will also provide tax incentives so that it is easier for start-ups to access venture capital. There should be tax relief for people who are involved in start-ups.
- We are committed to the dual education system in companies and schools and will work to strengthen it further. We will maintain the Master certification.
- The EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is one of our priorities. We are committed to continuing the CAP and maintaining the two-pillar model. We also support the continuation of direct payments after 2020.
- We aim to reduce the number of new bills in the next parliament (2017-2021) by at least 10 percent.

- We will steer the energy transition to a successful outcome by gradually bringing renewables onto the free market. One of our key priorities is expanding the grid and eliminating bottlenecks.
- We will increase research and development spending to 3.5 percent of GDP by 2025. We will provide tax concessions for research activities in the amount of 2 billion Euros.
- Wherever possible, we will reduce the length of planning procedures for infrastructure projects by passing an accelerated infrastructure planning act.
- In order to manage globalisation, we will work with other countries as part of the G7, G20, European Union, United Nations, OECD, World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.
- We are committed to international and multilateral cooperation and will seek to sign more free trade agreements.

### **Focus on families and children**

Anyone who is responsible for children and their upbringing is making a valuable contribution to our common future. It is very encouraging to see that the birth rate is increasing. We believe supporting marriage and families is one of the government's key tasks. We want young families to be in a better position to buy a home for themselves and their children.

- In the next parliament (2017-2021) we will introduce a right to day care for children of primary school age.
- We will tangibly improve the financial situation of young families by increasing the child tax exemption in two stages to the level of the adult tax exemption, and increase child benefit accordingly. The first step will be to increase the child

benefit by 25 Euros per child per month while simultaneously increasing the child tax exemption.

- In order to make it easier for parents to return to full-time work, we will give employees of companies above a certain size the right to work part-time for a limited period.
- In order to make young families' dreams of owning their own home more achievable, families who are building their first home will receive an extra annual benefit of 1,200 Euros per child for a period of 10 years.
- We will introduce adult and child allowances on real estate transfer tax. The jurisdiction of Germany's federal states will remain intact. This will apply to first-time purchases of property for owner-occupation.
- We plan to create a helpdesk and information centre for all family matters so that young families do not miss out on the wide range of government support offered to them.

### **Equality of living conditions throughout Germany**

Germany is a land of huge diversity with many different traditions and mindsets. This diversity is a treasure that we seek to preserve and enhance. This requires equal living conditions in all of Germany, so that every part of Germany remains a place worth living.

- We will ensure that rural areas have adequate medical resources. We will support the establishment of medical treatment centres. The interests of rural areas should be taken into account in medical school admissions.
- The establishment of government agencies, schools, universities and research institutes in rural areas is an appropriate instrument for increasing the attractiveness of these regions.

- It is also essential to ensure that rural areas have full access to fast broadband and mobile networks. The CDU and CSU will ensure that every region is provided with super-fast internet.
- Volunteering is often particularly important in rural areas. Volunteers and voluntary organisations require special support given the shrinking rural population. We will set up a foundation to aid volunteer work.

## **Prosperity and quality of life**

Over recent years we have balanced the federal budget while substantially increasing government spending on education, research and infrastructure. We have not taken on any new debt since 2014. Since 2011, we have met the 3 percent criterion set by the European Union's Stability and Growth Pact. We will continue to ensure that we keep our finances on a sound footing and create good living conditions for all our citizens.

- We will continue to avoid any increase in government debt, and we plan to repay all existing debts in the medium-to-long term. If possible we will begin this process during the next parliament (2017-2021).
- We will use the disposable funds in our budget to meet the government's responsibilities at home and abroad, invest in education, research and infrastructure, support families and children, and cut taxes.
- No tax increases are planned, as these would hit skilled workers and small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs), slow down investment in our future and thus cause more harm than good.
- In 2020, we will begin phasing out the solidarity surcharge on income tax for all taxpayers. In the next parliament (2017-2021), we will begin this process by providing tax relief of around 4 billion Euros.

- We will reduce income tax by approximately 15 billion Euros. This tax relief will primarily benefit the middle class, so families with children, employees, tradespeople, and small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs).
- The top income tax rate is increasingly being paid by skilled workers, tradespeople and the middle class, so we will raise the income threshold to 60,000 Euros.
- We remain committed to working with other EU Member States to introduce a financial transaction tax.
- We want 1.5 million new homes to be built in Germany between 2017 and 2021. We will not introduce any measures that make it more expensive to provide new housing. We will examine the possibility of reducing costs by abolishing superfluous regulations.
- We will introduce adult and child real estate transfer tax exemptions. The jurisdiction of Germany's federal states will remain intact.
- We will ensure that people who are sick, in need of care, or who have suffered an accident continue to receive good medical and nursing care, regardless of their income or where they live.
- We will continue to push forward with the expansion of hospice and palliative care.
- With a focus on generational equity, the pension reforms of 2007 successfully laid the groundwork for gradually increasing the retirement age to 67 by 2030 and set the level of pensions and pension contributions. In recent years, pensions have outpaced inflation and employees' pension contributions have been capped going beyond 2020.
- In the new parliament (2017-2021) we will introduce further enhancements for people who have to take early retirement for health reasons.

After 2030, changes to pensions will be managed by a process of consensus that involves all political parties, parliamentary factions and society as a whole, including social partners. To this end we have set up a Pensions Commission, which will present its proposals by the end of 2019. We remain committed to preventing poverty amongst senior citizens.

## **Opportunities in the digital age**

The digital revolution has affected every area of government and society. We must ensure that new digital technology and innovations benefit the people and serve to improve working conditions, protect the environment, enhance healthcare, and increase quality of life. Digitalisation creates extraordinary opportunities for Germany, its citizens and its economy.

- In light of its importance, we will create the post of Junior Minister for Digital Policy in the Federal Chancellery. The Chancellor will set up a National Digital Council to ensure that politicians work closely with experts from Germany and other nations.
- The broadband network will be expanded throughout Germany by 2018. We will take it a step further with the creation of the “Gigabit Society”. Germany will be a country where anyone in any location will be able to access data in real time. This will involve the installation of a countrywide, state-of-the-art fibre optic network by 2025.
- Germany and Europe must be the key market for the new 5G mobile technology. We are laying the groundwork for expanding the network by 2020 and completing it by 2025. We will quickly establish and provide the necessary frequencies. We aim to be the first to allocate 5G frequencies, and will invest the proceeds in the fibre optic network.
- We will set up an online portal and accounts for citizens so that all administrative services can be quickly and easily accessed online throughout Germany.

- Citizens should be able to deal with their administrative issues from any location. We will also provide the option of feasible, legally admissible digital signatures so that citizens and businesses are able to identify themselves easily and securely.
- Germany leads the world in the networking of machinery and people in manufacturing technologies (Industry 4.0). We will extend our lead in this respect and expand it to all sectors, including services and administration (Economy 4.0).
- We will draft a data protection law that will govern access to data for commercial purposes, the powers of the security services, and citizens' data privacy rights.
- We want to ensure that Germany remains at the centre of the automotive industry and takes the lead in developing new technology for autonomous driving and connected vehicle systems.
- We will examine the possibility of establishing a special one-stop shop for start-ups.
- We will ensure that all schools and universities in Germany have high-speed internet access. We support the creation of an innovative new education cloud.

## **For a strong Europe**

The CDU wants to see a strong, confident and dynamic Europe. A Europe that is in a position to defend its interests and shoulder its global responsibilities. A free, secure, and prosperous Europe that, if necessary, can come together to defend itself.

- We support the proposed European Defence Union and European Defence Fund. We are committed members of NATO, but the EU must also be in a position to defend itself.
- Europe must effectively secure its external borders against illegal immigration, strengthen the Frontex border agency, and complete the European Asylum System.

- Europe must use the EU-Turkey Refugee Agreement as a model for signing treaties with other countries in the region and North Africa.
- Europe has a shared responsibility for refugees who have a right to protection if they are threatened with persecution or serious hardship. Every country in Europe has to accept its responsibilities in this respect.
- The EU must establish an entry/exit register as soon as possible. The EU also needs to take urgent action to improve information-sharing between member states' security services, as Islamist terrorism and organised crime are threats that transcend borders.
- In the spirit of solidarity, we are prepared to help certain EU states deal with their high youth unemployment problems, because we want the whole of the EU to thrive. However, this depends on full compliance with rules mutually agreed upon such as those set out in the Stability and Growth Pact.
- We want lasting stability for the Eurozone. We do not support the collectivisation of debt. We are ready to work with the new French government to gradually move forward with reforms of the Eurozone, for example by setting up a European Monetary Fund (EMF).
- If Europe is once again to be a driver of growth, it has to dismantle remaining barriers in the Single Market.
- We will breathe new life into the Franco-German friendship in order to provide Europe with fresh impetus. We will intensify cooperation between Germany, France and Poland in the context of the Weimar Triangle.
- We are also keen to maintain close ties with the UK after Brexit, but it has to be clear that any country that leaves the EU can no longer benefit from the advantages of membership.

- We would like to strengthen relations between the European Union and Turkey. However, we do not support full membership for Turkey because it does not meet the required conditions. We view recent developments in Turkey with great concern.

## **Security at home and abroad**

Security is the prerequisite for a free and autonomous life. We need a strong state that protects its citizens. We do not tolerate legal vacuums. We also need a strong state that can protect Germany and its citizens in an uncertain world and contribute to a world order that is characterised by lasting peace, stability and justice.

- We will once again increase federal and state police forces by 15,000.
- We will increase the use of intelligent video technology, including also for investigative purposes, and introduce a minimum data retention period.
- We will make it easier for the security services to access existing databases in order to prevent or solve serious crimes.
- We have helped many people in distress during the largest movement of refugees since the post-war period. We must not allow a repeat of the situation that arose in 2015.
- We want Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia to be declared as safe countries of origin so that the number of asylum seekers is significantly reduced. We will also intensify our efforts to repatriate, or if necessary deport, people who have been refused asylum.
- We will work with international organisations to improve the living conditions of refugees in their countries of origin. We want the number of refugees who come to Germany to permanently remain low. This makes it possible for us to meet our humanitarian obligations through resettlement and relocation.

- The USA is and remains our most important non-European partner.
- Israel's security and right to exist is part of Germany's *raison d'état*. We are committed to the two-state solution.
- We call on Russia to permanently uphold and implement the Minsk Agreement and we will continue to steadily engage in dialogue.
- We will increase the size of the Bundeswehr (German armed forces) and ensure it is supplied with more modern equipment and adequate funding. The Bundeswehr will increase its ranks by 18,000 by the year 2024. Along with international deployments, it is also necessary to refocus on NATO and national defence measures.
- As agreed at the 2014 NATO summit in Wales, we will gradually increase defence spending to meet the goal of approaching to the 2 percent of GDP by 2024.
- These increases in military spending will be accompanied by increased funding for development aid in a ratio of 1:1 until the ODA ratio of 0.7 percent of GDP has been achieved.
- We propose a Marshall Plan with Africa to boost investment in entrepreneurship in Africa. We will work with the African Union to help create a new culture of entrepreneurship and self-reliance.

### **A healthy climate today and tomorrow**

Protecting the environment is a key priority for the CDU. Many regions of the world are beset by major problems, and it is also in our own best interests to help them find solutions. This requires cutting-edge technology. We are committed to creating both a healthy environment and a healthy economy.

- We are in favour of upholding the 2015 Paris climate agreement and working to ensure its success.
- We will adhere to our existing energy and climate goals. This also applies to the Climate Action Plan that was adopted in 2016. We do not support state intervention in this area but are committed to the use of market-based instruments.
- We are committed to the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development. We have produced a National Sustainability Strategy to ensure that Germany achieves the Agenda's goals.

### **What holds our country together**

Germany is characterised by wonderful unity in diversity. This has grown over hundreds of years and is the result of many developments, that have accelerated in recent decades. Like every country, Germany needs a common bond: our *Leitkultur*, the culture that defines us as a nation.

- Whatever their background, every single person in Germany is expected to abide by our laws. There will be no exceptions in this respect. Integration is beneficial to both sides and prevents the emergence of parallel societies.
- Where possible, we want everyone who comes to Germany seeking long-term residency to be in a position to earn their own living as quickly as possible. It is therefore essential that they learn German and are prepared to undergo vocational training. Our approach is one of “challenge and support”.
- We want to help a peaceful Islam that is prepared to integrate and to organise itself in accordance with the German constitution so that it can work with government and society as a partner for negotiation and dialogue.

- We join all peace-loving Muslims in rejecting the abuse of Islam for the purposes of hate, violence and terrorism. Mosques that allow the preaching of hate and violence must be closed down. All those involved must be pursued with the full force of the law and, if possible, deported.
- Anyone who refuses to integrate and who breaks our laws will have to face the consequences, which may involve losing their right to stay in Germany.
- Permanent dual citizenship must remain an exception. In future it should no longer be passed down from one generation to the next. To achieve this, we will introduce a cut-off point between generations for non-EU citizens.