

EU POLICY IN THE 2021 GERMAN ELECTION MANIFESTOS



European party family / parliamentary grouping	European People's Party (EPP)	The Greens / European Free Alliance (EFA)	Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D Group)	Renew Europe	European United Left (GUE) / Nordic Green Left (NGL)	Identity and Democracy (ID)
Election manifesto title	The Manifesto for Stability and Renewal. Together for a modern Europe.	Germany. Everything is there. The German Federal Election Manifesto 2021.	The Election Manifesto of the Future. What we stand for. What we strive for.	There was never more to do. The Free Democrats' Election Manifesto.	Time to act: For social security, peace and climate justice!	Germany. But normal. The Election Manifesto of The Alternative for Germany for the 20th Bundestag Election.
Publication / approval date	21 June 2021	13 June 2021	9 May 2021	16 May 2021	20 June 2021	20 May 2021
Where is the EU (sub)chapter in the manifesto? How long is it?	Separate chapter at the beginning of the manifesto; 2nd out of 10 chapters. 16pgs.	Separate subchapter dedicated to the functioning of the EU, in the 5th chapter out of 6. 3pgs. (Subchapters on various EU policies can be found across the manifesto.)	Separate chapter at the end; 4th out of 5 chapters. 12pgs.	Separate chapter at the end; 4th out of 5 chapters. 12pgs.	Separate chapter at the end of the manifesto. 5pgs.	Separate chapter at the beginning of the manifesto; 3rd out of 21 chapters. 2pgs.
Title of EU (sub)chapter	New <i>Weltpolitikfähigkeit</i> – with passion for a strong Europe	We're continuing to build Europe	A sovereign Europe in the World	A future-oriented and strong European Union	For a Europe based on solidarity	EU and Europe
Is the EU present elsewhere in the election manifesto?	Yes, several subchapters deal with the EU, most prominently the chapter on foreign policy. Other policy fields which include EU policy are climate and energy policy, the economy and trade policy.	Yes, the election manifesto addresses the EU in every chapter of the manifesto extensively. Only the chapter on education and research mentions the EU only once, in relation to Erasmus+.	Yes, Europe is mentioned in more general terms in the introduction and closing chapters of the election manifesto, as well as selected policy areas, such as the economy and health.	Yes, the EU appears in other chapters, mostly on competition, economic and trade policies, as well as digital policy, mobility and transport.	Yes, the EU is mentioned in chapters related to climate and energy policy, agriculture, foreign affairs, migration & asylum policy and democracy, although references are not extensive.	Yes, a limited number of EU perspectives are provided throughout other chapters, focusing on fiscal and monetary policy and migration.
What is the general approach towards the EU?						
1. Integration method	"More Europe": European cooperation and integration instead of nationalistic isolation. More joint action proposed in several policy fields, such as climate, security and defence, education.	"Further integration" in several policy areas (e.g. climate, economy, justice and home affairs). Future vision is the establishment of a "Federal European Republic" and a European Constitution.	"Further integration" in some policy fields (e.g. defense policy, asylum and migration, economic and financial policy, health, mobility, transport).	"Multi-speed integration": Creating a federal and decentralised European state as a counter-model to Europe's reliance into small nation-states or a European 'superstate'. Until such a model is established, multi-speed integration is envisaged.	No clear preferences: Leaning towards an intergovernmental approach in some policy fields (e.g. security and defense), while advocating for further integration in other fields (e.g. migration).	Intergovernmental approach: Bringing the EU back into a confederation of sovereign states. Leaving the EU is seen as necessary.
2. Franco-German cooperation	Germany and France are seen as the engine of European integration.	Strong Franco-German cooperation is seen as important.	No mention of Franco-German cooperation.	No mention of Franco-German cooperation.	No mention of Franco-German cooperation.	No mention of Franco-German cooperation.
3. Enlargement	A deepening of the Union is seen as a priority before enlargement.	Strengthening the EU's "capacity to act" is perceived as necessary to succeed in further enlargement rounds.	Enlargement is desired ("We will integrate the countries of the Western Balkans").	No mention of future EU enlargement policy, except the need to put an end to the accession talks with Turkey.	No specific position on EU enlargement is offered, except the need to adhere to democracy and human rights in candidate countries.	"Strict disapproval" of further EU enlargement, including the need to end accession negotiations with Turkey.
What are the priorities in EU policy?	A very general approach that corresponds to the CDU's self-understanding as the main governing party. Policy fields mentioned are foreign policy, climate, competition and economic stability, security, innovation and digitisation, democracy and youth.	The policy priority clearly lies on climate and environmental policy. Other fields related to the EU are justice and home affairs, trade, financial and economic policy (incl. the circular economy), digitisation and R&D.	Explicit focus on European solidarity and sovereignty, to strengthen the EU in the world. This includes proposals in social and economic policies, EU values and foreign policy.	Focus on typically 'liberal' issues (e.g. economic and financial policy, trade, digital affairs). Other priorities are foreign and security policy, as well as democracy and rule of law.	Focus on solidarity in connection with several policy fields, such as financial and investment policy, social and labour policy, environment and climate, foreign and security policy, and democracy and human rights.	Few concrete proposals. Manifesto mostly questions the question of Germany's membership in the Union. It also deals with EU affairs in financial and trade policy, as well as issues concerning the EU's "democratic deficit".
Election promises in the main EU policy fields						
1. Economy and budget	Reinforce and develop fiscal rules of the SGP and the EU Fiscal Compact.	Reform the SGP. Strengthen the EU budget with own resources (e.g. digital and plastic tax, CBAM).	Make the SGP a more sustainable mechanism.	Reform the SGP ("Maastricht 2.0").	Reform the SGP "away from neoliberal policy". Set up minimum taxation rules.	No mention of the SGP.
2. Eurozone	Further develop and accomplish the ESM. Promote a digital euro; Reject a European deposit insurance scheme.	Convert the ESM into a European Monetary Fund. Focus on sustainable finance. Promote a digital euro.	No mention of the ESM. Introduce an unemployment reinsurance scheme as an automatic stabiliser; Establish a European deposit insurance scheme.	Convert the ESM into a European Monetary Fund. Reject a European deposit insurance scheme.	No mention of the ESM. Adjust deficit and debt policies. Promote treaty change to allow state funding by the ECB and increase its democratic control.	No mention of the ESM. Limit the power of the ECB. Refuse "ideological economic policy" through the European Green Deal. Reject a digital euro.
3. Trade policy	Ratify FTAs, such as CETA, EU-Mercosur and TTIP. Modernise EU public procurement.	Reject free trade agreements which cause "negative effects on the environment or food sovereignty". The EU-Mercosur deal is mentioned as an example. Improve supply chain management.	Ratify FTAs, such as EU-Mercosur, but only if it includes provisions on strengthening environmental, human rights and social standards. Focus on supply chains tracing.	Ratify FTAs, such as EU-China. Strengthen the EU's capacity to conclude FTAs by excluding national and regional governments' say on EU trade.	Reject FTAs, such as CETA, EU-Mercosur and TTIP.	Support FTAs and fair competition.
4. Environmental and climate policy	Transfer the European Green Deal into a real growth strategy ("a new sustainable growth engine for the EU"). Expand the EU ETS to the transport and heating sectors. Create an EU High Representative for climate protection. Establish and reinforce sanction mechanisms for violations of sustainability and climate protection.	Strengthen the European Green Deal and expand the Just Transition Fund. Reform the EU ETS. Transform the EU ETS into "the first CO ₂ -free economic area". Implement the EU water legislation and establish a new European repair and recycle industry.	Germany should become the "leader in climate protection" and climate neutral until 2045. But limited policy action proposed for the EU level on environmental and climate, except proposals for more sustainable mobility and transport across Europe.	No mention of the European Green Deal. EU ETS should cover all sectors and expand geographically. EU should introduce a WTO-compliant "carbon leakage" protection mechanism under EU-ETS. The EU promotes carbon capture and storage, and carbon dioxide removal technologies.	No mention of the Green Deal nor the EU ETS. Make the EU climate neutral by 2040. Better align initiatives of the ECB with the view of promoting socio-ecological transformation in the EU (e.g. through loan programmes).	Reject the Green Deal and "all other forms of planned economy". Refuse a complete shift to renewable energy sources. No mention of European Green Deal nor EU ETS. Policy field is discussed exclusively from a national or regional perspective. Generally climate-sceptic views: 'climate hysteria infringes liberties'.
5. Foreign and security policy	Establish an EU army under the framework of the Permanent Structured Cooperation, and a European Defence Union. Step up the development and implementation of joint armament projects with more uniform guidelines; Establish a permanent EU seat at the UN Security Council.	Create an EU military command and more joint initiatives through the Permanent Structured Cooperation. Stronger control of EU foreign missions through the European Parliament. Establish an "EU Security Union" and a common arms export policy with strict, enforceable rules and sanction options. Halt the Nord Stream 2 project, which is against the EU's geopolitical interests.	Strengthen the EU's autonomy in security and defence policy (e.g. through a common EU army). Increase synergies through joint armament and disarmament projects at the EU level. Establish an EU army. Against unanimity in foreign policy decisions.	Develop military capabilities in the Common Security and Defence Policy, including a European army. But the "wish for strategic sovereignty cannot lead to protectionism or self-isolation". Strengthen the role of High Representative in EU foreign policy. Promote qualified majority voting in foreign policy decisions instead of unanimity.	Reject the consolidation of an EU Defence Union. No further military cooperation through the Permanent Structured Cooperation. Abolish the EU Defence Fund. End all EU military programmes and invest in social cohesion, climate protection and global justice instead. Promote disarmament.	"Germany must take its role within Europe seriously". But no joint cooperation under the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy, including joint military initiatives at the EU level. "Germany's foreign policy must align itself to German interests". Advocate for Germany's permanent seat at the UN Security Council.
6. Asylum and migration policy	For fair and managed migration (e.g. labour migration). Expand and "transform Frontex into a real border police at the external borders". Introduce stricter asylum procedures and restrict immigrants' rights to stay.	Increase EU competences in asylum policy. Enforce the rule of law at the EU's borders, which means ending the criminalisation of civil sea rescue. Ensure that the EU resettlement program is based on UN Refugee Agency criteria. Reject the concept of a safe or third country of origin at the European level. Strengthen Frontex's parliamentary control.	For joint cooperation in EU asylum policy, based on humanitarian and solidarity principles. Reform the Dublin system towards a distribution mechanism based on solidarity. No mention of Frontex.	Transform the current asylum system into a less bureaucratic one. Develop the Common European Asylum System further, including linking relocations to EU budget cuts in the case of a member state's non-compliance. Expand and transform Frontex, specifically increasing transparency and staff up to 10,000.	Against the European Commission's New Pact on Migration and Asylum. Strengthen migrants' social rights, including a "nationwide hardship fund" and better access to healthcare. Abolish Frontex and create a civil European sea rescue programme instead. Abolish European refugee camps like Moria in Greece.	Re-establish a purely national migration and asylum system and reject all asylum seekers upon entry. Reject the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. Considers EU migration policy and international conventions that protect migrant rights as part of a left-wing, extremist "one-world utopia".
7. Democracy and rule of law						
• Rule of law	Establish "new dialogue formats" on the rule of law. Ensure consistent sanctions of violations (e.g. cutting EU funds, withdrawing voting rights in the Council).	Strengthen the Rule of Law Mechanism to sanction violations of "authoritarian member states". Progress on the Article 7 procedure. Make the Charter of Fundamental Rights enforceable against national law.	"Make the EU the most modern democracy in the world". Implement and strengthen sanction mechanisms for rule of law breaches. Promote the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.	Strengthen the rule of law by implementing the conditionality clause in the EU budget, as the Article 7 procedure has proven ineffective in addressing rule of law breaches.	Demand more commitment from member states for rule of law and human rights. Make the EU accede to the European Convention on Human Rights.	Combat "shrinking democracy" as the powers of EU institutions are too centralised, thereby contradicting the EU's "original idea" as an alliance of sovereign states.
• Institutional reforms	Strengthen the European Parliament through the right of legislative initiative. Introduce a threshold clause at the next European election.	Strengthen the European Parliament's position via transnational lists and the right of initiative. Change EU decision-making from unanimity to majority voting. Allow EU citizens living in Germany to participate in national and regional elections.	Expand the European Parliament's rights to oversight and decision-making. Better involve representatives of trade unions and civil society in EU trade negotiations.	Re-establish the <i>Spitzenkandidaten</i> system and implement transnational lists to make the European Parliament more transparent and effective.	Give the right of initiative to the European Parliament. Lower the threshold for citizen initiatives. Establish a new EU constitution.	Advocate for Germany's exit from the EU and promoting the founding of a new European economic community based on national interests only. Against qualified majority voting, as this would give the EU more powers.
• Conference on the Future of Europe	The Conference is an opportunity to implement fundamental reforms in Europe.	The Conference is an opportunity to strengthen EU civil society and launch citizen initiatives. It should be used to move towards a "European Federal Republic" and treaty changes.	The Conference "should become a success", initiate a nation-wide debate on European democracy and promote CSO cooperation. Its results should be implemented.	The Conference should bring the EU closer to its citizens, leading to potential institutional reforms, including treaty changes. Establish a new constitutional convention to move towards a federal state post-Conference.	No mention of the Conference.	No mention of the Conference.
Changes from the 2017 election manifesto?						
1. Form & length	Same structure as in 2017: one separate chapter on EU policy. But the 2021 chapter is significantly longer, with 16pgs instead of 5.	Several EU subchapters in different parts of the 2021 programme, in contrast to the 10-page long chapter in 2017.	While both chapters in 2021 and 2017 are placed at the end of the manifestos, the 2021 one is twice as long as that of 2017 (12 pgs compared to 6).	No changes to the length of the EU chapter.	No major changes in form nor length.	No major changes in form nor length.
2. Policy priorities	More focus on sustainability in EU policy and youth and diversity policies. Less focus on Franco-German cooperation in the current election manifesto.	No major changes in the general support for the EU. While the 2017 manifesto deals extensively with populism and authoritarian tendencies, the current one shifts its focus to the rule of law and EU fundamental rights.	More focus on sustainable and socio-ecological transition. The 2021 manifesto drops the proposal of a European constitution.	No significant shifts in position, but a changed tonality. While the 2017 subchapter had a forward-looking title, that of 2021 focuses more on challenges.	No significant changes in positions on EU policy.	No significant changes in positions on EU policy.

* The order of the political parties is independent of the parties' positions in the polls and their likelihood to govern after the German election.