



For a Europe that is Free, Secure, Economically Strong, and Able to Act

An input on the future agenda of the EU and the European Commission's new work programme – our suggestions at a glance

Short version of the Position Paper of the
CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the German Bundestag

As per decision of 2 July 2024

Ensuring freedom and external security

- Substantially strengthening the EU's defence capabilities by creating a genuine Defence Union, including joint development and procurement wherever possible, a harmonisation of European arms export regulations, closer interlinking of national armed forces, and enhanced cooperation in matters of armament policy.
- Continue to support Ukraine with all political, economic, financial, and military means in order to help the country defeat the aggressor, Russia. Investments into victory, reconstruction, and EU accession prospects for Ukraine are investments into the long-term security of our continent.
- Implementation of the EU's Strategic Compass, the European Defence Industrial Strategy (EDIS), and the European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP).
- In the next Multiannual Financial Framework, resolutely pursue the objective of improving European defence capabilities and provide the corresponding programmes with the necessary financial resources.
- Establish an independent EU Council formation for defence issues.
- Appoint an EU Commissioner for defence issues with the sole tasks of promoting a stronger European defence industry and joint military development and procurement systems, as well as bundling activities to this end within the European Commission.
- Facilitate and expand the promotion of research and development in the field of dual-use technologies: abolish the exclusive focus on civilian applications in selected segments of the successor programme to "Horizon Europe", examine the possibility to establish a European agency for research projects in the security and defence sector, modelled after the successful U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).
- Promote freedom, human rights, democracy, and humanitarian aid around the globe – also in the interest of ensuring security; continue to resolutely fight antisemitism; strengthen the Council of Europe as an important institution to safeguard human rights.

Ensuring internal security and limiting irregular migration

- Expand Europol into a European FBI.
- Take decisive action to counter threats in cyberspace and hybrid interference by establishing a European Cyber Brigade and increasing defence measures against hybrid threats.

- Develop the European Border and Coast Guard Agency *Frontex* into a genuine border police and coast guard at Europe's external borders; effectively protect the EU's external borders.
- Fight Islamist terrorism and political Islam and push back foreign influence on European Muslims.
- EU migration and asylum policy: Swiftly implement the new Common European Asylum System (CEAS), introduce the concept of safe third countries for asylum seekers and implement it in accordance with international refugee law and refugee protection; harmonise standards for providing for people in need of protection across Europe as far as possible, conclude agreements with transit countries and countries of origin in a "Team Europe" approach.
- Until an effective protection of the EU's external borders is achieved, allow for the possibility to secure national borders without temporal limitation and make clear that it is possible to deny entry to persons who wish to enter the country from an EU member state or a safe third country but already have or could have applied for asylum there.
- Create the possibility to place severe offenders and individuals that pose a threat to public safety under arrest, where they will remain until they voluntarily leave the country.
- To combat human trafficking, introduce a transnational ban on purchasing sexual services across the EU.

Securing prosperity through a strong, competitive economy as a prerequisite for a strong and sovereign Europe

- Place a stronger focus on competitiveness and growth stimuli by means of a "Deal for Competitiveness" to complement the European "Green Deal"; ensure that all necessary regulation be designed and implemented in a practicable and affordable manner.
- Entrust an EU Commissioner, preferably at the level of (Executive) Vice-President, with coordinating and implementing a new "Deal for Competitiveness".
- A clear commitment to the market as a coordinating mechanism and the principles of the market economy.
- Practicable implementation of the European climate targets, particularly by means of expanding the market-based emissions trading system as key climate policy instrument, and by freeing up investments into innovation in clean technologies.

- Successfully launch the European Emissions Trading System for buildings and transport (EU-ETS 2) and gradually merge it with the Emissions Trading System for industry and energy (EU-ETS 1) into the key steering instrument.
- Consistently drive forward market-based approaches to the circular economy and harness the potentials of a circular economy for CO₂ through technologies for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) and Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCU).
- Deepen and develop the EU's internal market.
- Complete the Capital Markets Union.
- Accelerate approval procedures for so-called "Important Projects of Common European Interest" (IPCEI).
- Take further steps towards an Energy Union to ensure security of supply and sovereignty in terms of energy.
- Install a European Representative for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises with substantial rights and veto powers.
- A binding action plan to reduce bureaucracy and regulation: Commit to create no further burdens, implement the "One In, Two Out" principle, install an independent European Impact Assessment Council, introduce binding EU competitiveness checks, conduct robust impact assessments with internal and external focus before any regulatory proposal is tabled, substantially reduce red tape for science and research.
- Improve the effectiveness of EU Taxonomy and sustainability reporting in order to reduce burdens on businesses; refrain from pursuing the introduction of social taxonomy at this point.
- In our policies regarding the circular economy and the regulation of chemicals (e.g., regulation of perfluorinated and polyfluorinated chemicals/PFAS), prioritise a differentiated and risk-based approach over blanket bans.
- Facilitate public procurement.
- Align the EU's trade policy more closely with strategic interests, avoid overburdening trade policy with extraneous issues, lay a stronger focus on concluding future free trade agreements as "EU only" agreements, undertake renewed efforts at the European level to conclude free trade agreements, agree on commodity partnerships, support the protection of intellectual property.

- Promote the EU's role as a democratic community of values in development cooperation: Strengthen the "Global Gateway" initiative and the "Team Europe" approach, including a special focus on mobilising private sector investments.
- Support technological openness and competition; ensure that new cars with clean combustion engines can still be registered beyond 2035; advocate practicable limit values and emission standards in order to safeguard mobility.
- Create better investment conditions for the pharmaceutical industry; pursue the creation of a European Health Union, support joint activities for more health security and international crisis preparedness.
- Place a stronger focus on research, innovation, and key technologies to promote technological sovereignty in Europe; finally achieve the target of investing three percent of the gross domestic product in research and development.
- Strengthen entrepreneurial spirit and start-up mentality in Europe and position our continent as a prime location for venture capital and start-ups by improving framework conditions.
- Take action to make Europe strong, competitive, and sovereign in the digital space, allowing for as much freedom as possible and only as much regulation as necessary in the digital economy and in technological developments.
- Further simplify, digitise, and coordinate recognition procedures and transparency instruments for vocational education and training – also with a view to securing the supply of skilled workers for our economy and reducing youth unemployment; promote STEM education (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) at all levels of the educational system across Europe.
- Strengthen the EU's Erasmus+ programme, also with a view to helping young people develop the international and intercultural skills that are essential for a strong European economy; expand European youth exchange.
- Create new pathways for legal labour migration from non-EU countries to strengthen our economies and make the EU more attractive for (highly) qualified professionals and skilled workers.
- Support a Cohesion Policy that promotes the competitiveness, innovative strength, and steady development of all European regions.

In favour of efficient agriculture in Europe

- Make food security and reliable economic prospects for farmers priorities of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).
- A moratorium on bureaucracy for agriculture and forestry.
- Lower the protection status of the wolf.
- Support investments into agriculture as a high-tech sector; harness the benefits of new genomic techniques such as CRISPR/Cas9 for food security, climate resilience, increased yields, and resource efficiency by adapting the European legal framework without delay.

In favour of a sound and stability-oriented fiscal policy

- Consistently prioritise the financial resources required to fulfil EU tasks in the regular EU budget and the Multiannual Financial Framework; use expenditures in a strictly impact-oriented manner and in the framework of existing regular funds.
- Create better framework conditions for mobilising private capital, also with a view to facilitating investments via the European Investment Bank (EIB).
- No further communitarisation of debt and budgetary risks within the EU.
- Apply the new rules of the Stability and Growth Pact without exception and as early as 2024; ensure that the methodology for analysing debt sustainability create no new leeway for member states to incur debt.
- We call on the European Commission to present a repayment plan for debt already incurred under the European Recovery Fund “Next Generation EU”.
- Continue to maintain the independence of the European Central Bank (ECB) and keep monetary stability its prime objective.

Driving forward internal reforms of the EU to strengthen its capacity to act and to absorb new members; reorienting the EU's enlargement policy

- Limited extension of qualified majority decisions in the Council of the EU concerning specific foreign and security policy issues, such as the imposition of sanctions.
- Strengthen the principle of subsidiarity, including early consideration of the system of local self-government.

- Make more use of the principle of enhanced cooperation in the spirit of a “Europe of pioneers” and the concept of a “Multi-Speed Europe”.
- Make the discontinuity principle binding at EU level.
- Reorganise the EU’s enlargement policy by systematically pursuing a gradual approach to integration without compromising on accession criteria.

This publication of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the German Bundestag is for information purposes only. It must not be used as advertising material during an election campaign.

Published by:
CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the German Bundestag
Thorsten Frei MdB
Alexander Hoffmann MdB
Platz der Republik 1
11011 Berlin