

RESHAPING
european cooperation

Sovereign Nations, a Common Europe

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CHAPTER I

Foreword: A Europe of Sovereign Nations as an Objective of German Policy

In 2029, something we have scarcely dared to hope for may become reality: a patriotic, right-wing majority in the European Parliament is coming within reach. For the first time, such a majority would offer a realistic opportunity to change Europe's fundamental political direction.

We must seize this historic window of opportunity. Not for a handful of cosmetic changes, but for a fundamental reshaping of European cooperation. The structural failings of the European Union and the common currency run too deep for a few isolated reforms to suffice. A patriotic, right-wing majority must therefore bring about substantial change. We want to renegotiate the European treaties! European competences should be confined to areas in which a common benefit is genuinely evident. Their primary purpose should be effective protection of Europe's external borders, the common single market, cross-border efforts to combat crime, and cooperation and coordination on security policy.

This reshaping must also have financial and institutional consequences: the budget at European level will be substantially reduced and the European administrative apparatus radically streamlined. Germany's role, developed over decades, as an excessively burdened paymaster must end! The structure of the common currency will also be fundamentally changed: the original stability criteria of the Maastricht Treaty, on which the euro was founded, will once again be demanded and enforced; and a country's permanent voting rights on the ECB Governing Council will be linked to its size. In view of its economic and financial weight, Germany will have voting rights commensurate with its economic importance. TARGET balances arising within the Eurosystem will be reduced and regularly settled using secure assets. An effective insolvency regime for member states will be established within the monetary union, and the ECB will return to neutrality in monetary policy.

Until this negotiating process is complete, opt-out arrangements – as already used by Denmark, Sweden, Poland and other EU member states – are the preferred means of averting harm to Germany (cooperative sovereignty). Such opt-outs can ensure that Germany does not have to participate in major policy areas that are particularly harmful to our country, notably the allocation to Germany of immigrants who are not entitled to reside here under the Dublin arrangements and jointly guaranteed EU bonds.

The year 2029 could therefore become a historic turning point. If, however, it becomes clear that even with the AfD in the federal government and favourable political majorities, substantial changes to the European Union in Germany's interests cannot be achieved, the decision must return to where ultimate political authority rests in a democracy: the people. The German people should then decide for themselves which path Germany should take in European policy. The historic year 2029 offers the chance to turn a Europe of increasing centralisation back into a Europe of sovereign nations!

CHAPTER II

The Division of Competences: European and National Responsibilities

The creeping expansion of European competences into areas of national self-determination and public services lies at the root of the loss of trust in the European Union. A Europe fit for the future therefore needs two things: a clear boundary between genuine common tasks and national responsibilities, and an effective instrument for enforcing those boundaries in disputes. That instrument is non-participation: the sovereign opt-out.

1. The Opt-out as a Corrective to the Division of Competences

Where the European Union exceeds its core tasks and unjustifiably intrudes upon national competences without any demonstrable common benefit, member states have the right not to participate. Denmark, Ireland, Poland and – until 2020 – the United Kingdom have shown that treaty-based special arrangements do not weaken European cooperation but stabilise it: they compel the Union to limit itself to matters that genuinely require common rules. Germany will henceforth use this instrument consistently – not as a retreat or an escape from responsibility, but as a corrective in the service of a shared Europe that acts only where it genuinely serves its peoples.

2. Core Tasks of Genuine European Cooperation

In the following areas, joint action is an expression of subsidiarity, not a violation of it. They are examples of fields in which European cooperation creates demonstrable added value:

- **The Single Market as an Area of Economic Freedom**

We support the free movement of goods, services, capital and people, provided it contributes to the prosperity of our peoples. The European single market must, however, be freed from restraints hostile to business. Instead of excessive bureaucratic regulation such as the Green Deal, REACH¹ or dirigiste ESG requirements, we stand for unleashing the economic strength of our entrepreneurs and workers and preserving our industrial base.

- **The Continent's Shield – Effective Protection of External Borders**

Sovereignty is inconceivable without the physical integrity of borders. Comprehensive protection of the EU's external borders is not an option but an existential duty. Only robust border protection guarantees internal security, the rule of law and our continent's cultural identity. It is the foundation on which trust and order in Europe rest.

- **Preserving Europe's Natural Heritage**

Protecting the air, bodies of water and biodiversity means preserving our natural homeland. Where natural environments do not stop at national borders – for example, when it comes to the cleanliness of our great rivers or the protection of fish stocks in our seas – we coordinate our actions decisively. We preserve Europe's natural assets as our shared heritage for generations to come.

- **Armaments and Defence Technology**

True strategic autonomy requires us to move away from one-sided technological dependencies, especially on powers outside Europe. We therefore favour closer cooperation between sovereign states in the defence industry: through joint development in key strategic areas – such as drone systems or AI for security – and a preference for mutual procurement of European defence equipment, we pool our strengths to build a common arsenal of nations. Here, cooperation serves technological self-reliance and industrial scale, while command over soldiers must remain firmly in national hands.

- **Research and Technology**

If Europe is once again to shape its own history, it must break its technological dependence on powers outside Europe. We pool our strengths in cutting-edge research – from space exploration and groundbreaking medical innovations to the development of our own AI models and the energy supply of the future. Europe must be a centre of excellence that safeguards its freedom through technological breakthroughs.

1 REACH: Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals, as amended.

- **Preserving Europe's Christian and Western Heritage**

Our continent's identity is expressed through a unique wealth of intellectual and material heritage: it lives in the unmistakable diversity of its languages, the depth of its philosophy and legal culture, the grandeur of its music, and the cathedrals and historic sites in which our history has been set in stone. Protecting the full breadth of this heritage is a duty we owe to our history and our descendants.

3. National Non-participation: Where Germany Will Exercise Its Opt-out

In the following fields, the EU lacks the treaty-based and democratic legitimacy to exercise centralised powers. Germany will therefore work towards a fundamental renegotiation of the European treaties to return these competences permanently and with legal certainty to national level – in accordance with the EU-law principle of conferral, under which every competence not expressly transferred remains with the member states. Until such treaty-based reshaping is achieved, and whenever the institutions in Brussels nevertheless attempt to encroach on the core of national sovereignty, Germany will consistently exercise its right not to participate, through so-called opt-outs:

- **Taxation and Social Policy**

The organisation of the welfare state and the levying of taxes are inalienable elements of democratic self-determination. We reject every form of European social harmonisation. With us, there will be no European minimum wage, no EU unemployment insurance and no further supranational social fund. Preserving national collective bargaining autonomy and protecting our domestic economic structure take absolute precedence over welfare-state uniformity imposed by the European Union.

- **Migration and Asylum**

Deciding who may enter and reside within a country's territory is the most fundamental attribute of state sovereignty. We expressly support consistent European cooperation on comprehensive external-border protection and Europe-wide approaches to processing asylum applications in third countries. What we firmly reject, however, is the management of migration within Europe at the expense of national freedom of action. Germany will no longer participate in any European distribution mechanisms or asylum quotas. Following the Danish model, we call for an opt-out that guarantees the full restoration of national powers to refuse entry at the border. European cooperation at the external border is necessary – but the final decision at the German border must remain a sovereign one.

- **Security and Defence Policy**

Decisions on war and peace are the ultimate expression of state sovereignty and must never be delegated to supranational institutions. We firmly reject a centrally controlled EU army or the pooling of defence policy. The constitutional requirement for parliamentary approval and national command authority over the parliamentary armed forces are inviolable. Germany will not participate in any supranational military structures that undermine national chains of command or subject German soldiers to foreign operational doctrines.

- **Interference in Social Policy**

The European level has no mandate to impose normative changes on the historically and culturally evolved social orders of member states. We will not participate in programmes that use the guise of 'values' or 'civil society' to pursue ideological direction in climate, gender or family policy. Funding politicised networks and NGOs with EU money is a misuse of taxpayers' funds and will neither be supported nor tolerated by Germany.

- **Redistribution and Permanent Subsidies**

Genuine solidarity requires individual responsibility. We reject the creeping establishment of a European transfer union. There must be no automatic cohesion arrangements that conceal a lack of competitiveness behind permanent subsidies. Financial transfers without strict, measurable commitments and structural reforms entrench dependencies and will therefore be blocked by a German veto.

These reservations are not a collection of isolated demands, but the consistent application of a principle governing the division of powers: every competence that cannot demonstrably be counted among Europe's genuine core tasks must revert to the nation. To enshrine this principle of returning competences permanently in primary law, renegotiating the European treaties under Article 48 TEU is the decisive objective – if necessary, pursued by forceful political means and accompanied by a German opt-out during the transition. The roadmap in Chapter VII sets out how this instrument is to be legally anchored and implemented in key policy areas by way of example.

CHAPTER III

Institutional Architecture: A Parliament of Nations

A division of competences that exists only on paper, without institutional foundations rooted in popular sovereignty, will remain ineffective. The European Union's present institutional structure is characterised by blurred responsibilities, an ever-expanding Commission, a legislative process that structurally privileges access for lobbyists, and a parliament with little connection to its national electorates. As a result, it has long since lost any genuine control. An institutional reshaping of the EU must therefore ensure that the boundaries between European and national competences drawn in Chapter II remain democratically enforceable.

1. Democratic Legitimacy Through National Parliaments

We want a Europe of sovereign nations. Accordingly, the European Parliament should no longer be elected directly, but instead be composed of delegates appointed by national parliaments. Each national representative assembly will elect its delegates in accordance with the balance of political forces in its own country, thereby bringing democratic legitimacy directly into the work of the European institutions. In this way, the Parliament remains accountable to the citizens of the nations rather than developing an institutional logic detached from them.

2. Clear Responsibilities: The Council Decides, the Commission Administers

The European Council will become the central decision-making body, where heads of state and government deliberate and decide directly. The Commission will be limited to a coordinating and executive role and will no longer act as a de facto government. The numerous directorates-general and agencies will be systematically streamlined, redundant structures dissolved and overlapping responsibilities consolidated. Regular review and the systematic repeal of unnecessary EU legislation will ensure that decision-making power remains with the member states in the long term.

3. Primacy of National Law

National constitutions will, as a rule, take precedence over secondary EU law where that law is adopted outside the genuine European core tasks defined in Chapter II. Within those core tasks – particularly the single market – EU law will, by contrast, apply uniformly and be binding on all member states; only this can keep a common economic area functioning. The primacy of national law will therefore apply specifically where the European Union exceeds the competences conferred on it by treaty or intrudes upon the core of national sovereignty – not where member states have deliberately conferred uniform regulatory powers on the EU in their common interest. The existing Court of Justice of the European Union will be transformed into a European Court of Arbitration which, as an intergovernmental dispute-settlement body, will adjudicate solely on clearly defined questions of European treaty law within those conferred competences, and not on national responsibilities or constitutional questions. Articles 4 and 5 TEU will be recast accordingly to safeguard this division of competences and national interpretative authority outside the core tasks in law.

4. Legal Framework for the Opt-out

To ensure that the national reservations set out in Chapter II do not remain mere declarations of intent, binding protocols are needed within the EU treaties, modelled on the Danish and Irish special arrangements. An opt-out is effective only if it is protected by treaty and cannot be withdrawn at the Commission's discretion. Institutional reshaping thus gives legal force to what the division of competences requires in substance.

With this architecture, we will end the era of Brussels centralism and lay the foundations for a Europe held together not by regulations but by the free will of its peoples. We are building a home in which freedom and sovereignty are not opposites but the preconditions for its continued existence.

CHAPTER IV

Financial Sovereignty: Responsibility Instead of a Transfer Union

Financial sovereignty is the foundation of every state's right to self-determination. A people that can no longer decide how the resources it has earned are spent loses its political capacity to act. The European Union's present financial system has departed from the principles of individual responsibility and integrity, replacing them with a system of collective liability and automatic redistribution. A new Europe demands a return to fiscal truth: freedom and liability must once again be inseparable.

1. Ending the Paymaster Role: A Budget With Limits

Ending Germany's role as paymaster is not merely a fiscal demand but an act of democratic self-assertion. We call for a structural cap on, and reduction of, the EU budget.

- **Sovereignty Over Contributions**

The logic of automatic redistribution will end. We call for the abolition of VAT-based and plastics-based own resources and a drastic reduction in Germany's net contribution. In future, Germany will release funds only for tasks that demonstrably offer European added value.

- **Administrative Efficiency**

The EU administration must not become an end in itself. We call for a strict freeze on staffing levels and the systematic dissolution of agencies without an essential practical purpose.

2. Investing in Convergence Instead of Funding Ideology

Public funds must not be misused for ideological re-education. The European level has no mandate to interfere with the established order of nations by funding politicised NGOs or social-policy programmes.

- **The Added-Value Principle**

EU programmes promoting 'values' or 'democratic education' which in practice serve one-sided political influence must be abolished without replacement.

- **Genuine Convergence**

Cohesion policy will be transformed from a system of permanent transfers into a model of measurable progress. Help for self-help rather than entrenching dependency: funding will in future be provided only against strict convergence indicators and with increased national co-financing.

3. Sovereignty Over Investment: Private Capital and Strategic Alliances Instead of Brussels Debt Funds

Europe's dramatic weakness in global industrial and technological competition stems from a glaring shortage of private venture capital and equity. The constant creation of new debt-financed EU funds merely conceals the real causes of capital flight from Europe. Genuine financial sovereignty requires abandoning this state-debt logic in favour of unleashing the creative potential of private enterprise.

- **A Deregulated Capital Market**

European capital must once again be free to flow into industrial and technological innovation instead of being channelled by political directives into unproductive green financial products.

- **The New Europe as a Coordinator of Strategic Investment**

Instead of ideological redistribution, we call for a framework for intergovernmental investment consortia. In this arrangement, the EU acts as an administrative coordinator for major industrial and technological projects whose funding is decided sovereignly by the member states. In this way, we pool national resources to achieve economies of scale across the continent and make the Union a coordinator of our strategic independence.

4. A Stable Monetary Order for Free Citizens

True financial sovereignty also includes protecting individual assets from state interference and erosion through inflation. The euro system needs fundamental reshaping to restore fiscal soundness.

- **Monetary Discipline and ECB Neutrality**

We call for an end to indirect government financing by the ECB and for TARGET2 balances to be settled annually using valuable collateral such as gold or Bitcoin. Voting rights on the ECB Governing Council must in future be based on capital shares. The ECB must strictly confine itself to its original price-stability mandate; we reject the incorporation of climate, social or economic-cycle objectives into its monetary-policy decisions as a breach of its neutrality and independence as enshrined in the treaties.

- **Freedom of Payments**

The right to use cash must be enshrined in the European treaties as an expression of individual freedom. We reject the introduction of central bank digital currencies (CBDCs), as they have the potential to enable total surveillance and control of private payment flows.

- **Competition Between Currencies**

We regard decentralised cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin as a milestone in a free monetary order. Rather than technological overregulation (MiCA)², we favour a framework that fosters innovation and protects individual financial sovereignty in a digital world.

5. The Fundamental Question of Monetary Union: Consistent Reform Instead of a Flawed Structure

The euro, in its current form, suffers from a fundamental structural problem: a monetary union of economically diverse national economies without fiscal mutualisation has in practice led to a debt and liability union through the back door. The reforms set out in this chapter – ending indirect government financing by the ECB, settling TARGET balances, capital-weighted voting rights and a credible insolvency regime for member states – are our proposed way of correcting this flawed structure and placing the euro on a sound foundation of individual responsibility and liability.³

As explained in the foreword, the decision on Germany's future European and monetary-policy path must remain with the sovereign people themselves.

6. The Fiscal Veto as a Safeguard

The reshaping of Europe's finances is non-negotiable for us. Germany will relinquish its role as guarantor of last resort for a failed policy of redistribution. If fundamental reform of the EU's financing system is blocked, Germany will pursue parliamentary obstruction of future own-resources decisions. Those who respect the freedom of peoples must also respect their financial sovereignty.

2 MiCA: Regulation (EU) 2023/1114 on markets in crypto-assets, as amended.

3 The reforms presented should be understood in the context of the reorganisation of European monetary policy envisaged in the AfD's 2025 federal election programme. This leaves open the possibility of retaining the euro or a flexible ECU-like unit of account as a possible parallel component. Even in that case, however, the euro would have to be reformed accordingly. Programme of Alternative for Germany for the election to the 20th German Bundestag, p. 62.

CHAPTER V

Sovereignty Over Production and Supply: Economy, Energy and Agriculture

The material foundation of our political freedom is a strong, independent economy. A new Europe must aspire to become one of the world's leading centres of industry and innovation again, rather than resigning itself to being a regulated open-air museum or a global sales market with no productive capacity of its own. Genuine sovereignty requires control over our own energy supply, the protection of domestic production and the safeguarding of our food sovereignty.

1. Industrial Capacity and Technological Freedom

We support a Europe that unleashes the creative forces of its entrepreneurs and skilled workers instead of paralysing them with dirigiste requirements.

- **Cutting Bureaucracy**

We call for a moratorium on new EU regulations. Existing burdens, such as the REACH chemicals regulation or bureaucratic supply-chain laws, must be reduced to what is necessary or abolished.

- **Technological Openness**

Innovation must not be stifled by bans (such as the ban on combustion-engine cars)⁴. As already emphasised in Chapter II, we coordinate our research where this strengthens our strategic autonomy – particularly in artificial intelligence, robotics, aerospace and modern nuclear research.

2. Energy Sovereignty: A National Mix as a Competitive Advantage

Energy supply is the nervous system of every industrialised nation and must remain a national responsibility. We therefore call for an end to the EU Green Deal, whose centrally imposed planning requirements threaten our security of supply and drive up prices.

4 “Combustion-engine ban”: Regulation (EU) 2019/631 setting CO₂ emission performance standards for new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles, as amended in particular by Regulation (EU) 2023/851.

- **Freedom to Choose the Energy Mix**

Every nation decides sovereignly on its own energy mix. Germany must be free to use nuclear power, coal, gas and renewable energy according to the needs of its economy. Affordable energy is the fundamental productive force that determines whether our industrial base survives.

- **Preserving Competitiveness Instead of Imposing Bureaucratic Burdens**

Affordable energy and a strong industrial base underpin our prosperity. We reject all bureaucratic instruments that undermine these foundations, such as mandatory CO₂ allowances and carbon border tariffs (CBAM)⁵. Instead of ideological direction, we call for an energy policy that preserves member states' freedom of choice, safeguards industrial production and enables our economic and industrial capacities to flourish.

3. Agriculture: Stable Funding and Strategic Food Sovereignty

Our farmers are the guarantors of our strategic food sovereignty and the custodians of our cultural landscape. Recognising that agriculture is not simply one economic sector among many but vital to the survival of our nation and our continent, we want to protect our high-quality domestic food production.

- **Securing Stable Funding for Farmers**

In the short term, we call for all proposed cuts under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to be withdrawn. Degressivity and capping threaten farms and endanger security of supply in Germany. In the long term, we advocate returning agricultural subsidies to national control.

- **Trade Agreements**

We support international trade as a driver and engine of our prosperity. Diversified trade relations create new sales opportunities and strengthen the resilience of supply chains. At the same time, economic agreements must not be concluded at the expense of citizens and their democratic rights. Trade agreements should be signed only when there is no doubt about the quality of imported agricultural products. We must be capable of feeding ourselves if we do not want to be vulnerable to coercion. As a matter of principle, we consider it democratically necessary that trade agreements receive the consent of the relevant parliaments.

⁵ CBAM: Regulation (EU) 2023/956 establishing a carbon border adjustment mechanism, as amended in particular by Regulation (EU) 2025/2083.

- **Reducing Bureaucracy**

The desire for international trade is thwarted by excessive bureaucracy from Brussels, which leaves German and European agriculture little or no breathing space to prepare for the global agricultural market and compete internationally on equal terms. The European Union's excessive agricultural bureaucracy must therefore be reduced and EU agricultural policy reformed. Only then can fair competitive conditions be created within the EU. Farm data should be recorded only once, and requirements should be adapted more closely to the size of farms and practical realities. Approvals should be quicker and excessive regulation reduced so that farms can invest more easily and respond more closely to the market. This will make our excellent agricultural products even more internationally competitive. At the same time, both European quality standards and the long-term viability of domestic agriculture can be secured.

CHAPTER VI

Intellectual Life and the Public Sphere: Education, Culture and Media

Our European identity is not the product of decrees from Brussels but a heritage that has developed over time and lives in the diversity of our peoples, languages and traditions. As Europeans, and heirs to a tradition of freedom of speech and thought, we believe we have a particular duty to stand up against paternalism, censorship and surveillance. Defending this heritage against technocratic uniformity and the suppression of opinion is therefore not merely an 'education, media or culture issue' for us, but a core task of our politics. The fundamental prerequisite for protecting Europe in its diversity and unity is that responsibility for intellectual life and identity remains firmly in the hands of the nations.

1. Cultural Policy: Space for Preservation and Creation

Europe's cultural vitality comes not only from preserving its heritage but also rests on the shoulders of creative people who understand the past and present and make them visible and audible. This requires freedom to develop, not ideological prescriptions and rules. We want such a space for free exchange that protects cultural creativity, and we reject any political conditionality attached to funding. True European identity grows where we regard our heritage as a living contribution to a shared Europe and continue to develop it.

2. Education: Sovereignty Over Our Own Minds

Nurturing education, language and history is a prerequisite for civic identity and therefore for democratic self-determination. We accordingly reject every attempt to level out national curricula or cultural identities through European requirements. Sovereignty over educational content is inviolable: each nation decides for itself how to preserve and develop its heritage.

3. Media: Freedom of Debate as a Lifeblood

A Europe of free nations needs competition between arguments, not the enforcement of centrally imposed narratives. Media pluralism and freedom of expression are the lifeblood of democratic participation. We firmly reject extending European sanctions mechanisms to journalists and any use of the law as a weapon against dissenting political positions. A democratic order sustains itself through free speech, not politically correct censorship. European institutions must not be misused either to steer public opinion or to stigmatise critical debate.

4. The Family as the Foundation of Society

The family consisting of man, woman and children is the irreplaceable basic unit of every society. It is where responsibility is practised, solidarity between generations is created and cultural continuity is secured – and therefore the prerequisite for everything that makes education, culture and community possible in Europe. Protecting marriage and family is thus not a secondary area of social policy, but a supporting pillar of our understanding of society. We affirm the family as a natural and constitutionally protected institution, and oppose every attempt to relativise its importance through arbitrary forms of living or dissolve its guiding role in society. This includes the protection of life, from conception to its natural end. This protective function also entails rejecting any ideological remoulding: we firmly oppose the institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming, as well as any LGBTQ propaganda and premature sexualisation in educational institutions and public spaces. Children must be guaranteed a protected environment for natural development, free from ideological influence. Supporting families and children is a national responsibility; the European level has neither competence nor mandate in this field.

CHAPTER VII

The Future and Implementation: Reshaping Europe

With an AfD-participating federal government, Germany will enter a phase of responsibility in which the direction and future of the European Union are renegotiated in the interests of Europe's nations and their citizens. The central objective of this reshaping is a comprehensive renegotiation of the European treaties, permanently enshrining in primary law the vision of a federation of sovereign European nations developed in this paper. The reshaping will take place in three successive phases, with increasing time horizons and legal depth.

1. Measures Within the Existing Legal Framework

Immediately upon taking office, all steps possible under existing law will be initiated:

- Dissolution of unnecessary agencies and directorates-general; reduction of the Commission to core portfolios.
- Introduction of a brake on expenditure in the Multiannual Financial Framework.
- Establishment of a national right of veto in cases of breaches of subsidiarity.

Qualified majorities in the Council and simple majorities in Parliament are required.

Time horizon: two to three years.

2. Measures Requiring Treaty Amendment

At the heart of this reshaping lies a comprehensive renegotiation of the European treaties under the procedure in Article 48 TEU – a unanimous decision in the European Council followed by ratification by all member states. This renegotiation pursues two objectives at once: institutional reshaping (Chapter III) and the permanent, irrevocable enshrinement in treaty law of the national reservations specified in Chapter III as binding protocols modelled on the Danish and Irish special arrangements. In detail:

- Transformation of the European Parliament into a chamber of nationally appointed delegations.

- Clarification of Articles 4 and 5 TEU to enshrine the primacy of national law outside genuinely European core tasks, while confirming the uniform primacy of EU law within those core tasks – particularly the single market (Chapter V).
- Enshrinement of a debt brake and an expenditure brake in primary law.
- Enshrinement of binding opt-out protocols for the areas specified in Chapter II.3, which the Commission cannot unilaterally suspend or revoke.

Time horizon: five to seven years.

3. Budgetary Sovereignty as Leverage

Since every amendment to the EU own-resources decision requires unanimous ratification – and therefore approval by the Bundestag and Bundesrat – Germany has an effective veto. If Brussels refuses the path of reform, this veto will be used to block future EU financing legislation and drastically reduce Germany's contributions. Germany is no longer prepared to finance a system that refuses to reform.

4. The Opt-out Package: Identifying Shortcomings, Demanding Reshaping

For us, an opt-out is not an end in itself, but the consequence of a clearly identified failing in existing cooperation and the necessary transitional instrument until the treaty revision described in point 2 has been achieved. Wherever we withdraw, we also propose where genuine European cooperation should take its place – following the examples of Denmark, Ireland and Poland, which demonstrate that special arrangements and European added value are not mutually exclusive. The following measures illustrate how our opt-out strategy can make it possible to reshape European cooperation:

- **Financial and Budgetary Policy**

Shortcoming: Joint liability and a banking union undermine individual responsibility and distort competition between member states.

Reshaping: Instead of mutualising liabilities, we call for a transparent convergence and early-warning mechanism that exposes adverse developments without financing them with other countries' taxpayers' money.

- **Monetary and Currency Policy**

Shortcoming: The digital euro and a transfer union erode citizens' monetary sovereignty.

Reshaping: Instead, we call for the right to use cash (Chapter IV.4) to be enshrined jointly at European level as a fundamental right for all Europeans – genuine cooperation to protect individual freedom rather than central control.

- **Migration, Asylum and Border Protection**

Shortcoming: The common distribution of asylum seekers has failed in the face of differing national realities and has damaged trust in the Schengen area.

Reshaping: Where distribution fails, cooperation at the external border must increase. We advocate strengthening Frontex, common return agreements and transferring asylum procedures to third countries – genuine European cooperation where it works.

- **Climate and Agricultural Policy**

Shortcoming: The Green Deal and centrally imposed regulatory requirements weaken Europe's industrial and agricultural base. They must be abolished.

Reshaping: Instead of dirigiste control, we call for cooperation that protects Europe's productive capacities. We support joint protection of the single market against imports produced to lower standards (food sovereignty), together with technological cooperation in nuclear and energy research (Chapter V). Genuine European cooperation protects production rather than strangling it with bureaucracy.

- **Industrial and Infrastructure Policy**

Shortcoming: Existing EU funding is bogged down in bureaucratic minutiae and an indiscriminate distribution model that allocates resources according to proportional shares rather than strategic impact – leading to growing technological dependence on powers outside Europe.

Reshaping: Germany will use an opt-out to clear the way for national resources to be channelled into the investment-consortium model established in Chapter IV. Here, we explicitly use a reformed Brussels as a central platform and architect: the European Union coordinates the scaling-up of these major projects – from independent energy infrastructure and our own satellite navigation to semiconductor production – across national borders. In this way, we combine our national economic and industrial strengths in a continent-wide endeavour under a 'Plan for European Strength'.

- **Supply Chains and Securing Raw Materials**

Shortcoming: The EU supply-chain law⁶ weakens our competitiveness through boundless monitoring bureaucracy and moralising liability risks.

Reshaping: Germany will consistently halt this package of burdens through an opt-out. We call for a European ‘Alliance for Security of Supply’: rather than disciplining our own companies, the EU must use its diplomatic and economic weight to secure access to critical raw materials directly in partner countries. Here, genuine European cooperation means securing raw materials geopolitically instead of imposing bureaucratic surveillance on our own value chains.

These opt-outs should be invoked together with partners who want to follow the same path of self-assertion and constructive reshaping. In this way, individual withdrawals become a common European project.

CHAPTER VIII

Guiding Vision: A Federation of European Nations

Our Europe of the future is not a centralised federal state, but a federation of sovereign nations. In this model, every nation remains the holder and guarantor of its own sovereignty. Common policy is pursued only where it demonstrably creates added value that a nation-state could not achieve alone. This cooperation rests on two immutable principles: subsidiarity and responsibility.

1. Subsidiarity as a Bulwark Against Centralism

Subsidiarity is not merely an administrative buzzword, but a fundamental principle of European statehood in which power is always understood as flowing from the smaller unit to the larger. Decisions must be taken where their effects are felt: within families, municipalities, regions, federal states and nations.

By returning decision-making power to citizens, we defend the European ideal of freedom and responsibility against the present drift towards all-encompassing administration. Subsidiarity means having the courage to assume personal responsibility: where EU institutions seek to regulate every area of life, we place our trust in organic development and the judgement of our peoples. We are not advocating retreat into narrow national parochialism, but recognition that Europe is strong only where it respects the freedom of its constituent parts.

⁶ EU Supply Chain Law: Directive (EU) 2024/1760 on corporate sustainability due diligence, as amended in particular by Directives (EU) 2025/794 and (EU) 2026/470.

2. Responsibility as an Imperative of State Sovereignty

For us, the principle of responsibility is inseparable from state sovereignty. A community of sovereign states is founded on the principle that freedom and liability are two sides of the same coin. Every state is answerable for its own actions, economic decisions and finances.

Ending joint liability for debt and compulsory redistribution is therefore not merely an economic necessity, but a matter of political integrity. Action without liability corrupts the character of political communities. Genuine European solidarity is expressed not in anonymous transfer payments, but in mutual respect for each other's financial sovereignty and economic achievements. Responsibility means putting one's own house in order so as to be a reliable partner in a shared European village.

3. The European Nations as a Community of Shared Destiny

A new Europe will grow not through enforced uniformity, but through mutual recognition as a community sharing a common destiny. We reject any form of national chauvinism that exalts itself above others, just as we reject the rootless universalism that declares peoples non-existent or seeks to dissolve them. Our path is to recognise the dignity of every people: only those firmly rooted in their own identity possess the inner strength to respect the distinctiveness of their neighbours. Genuine European solidarity springs not from abstract regulations, but from the pride of sovereign nations united in their differences.

Where Brussels centralism regards the distinctiveness of Europe's peoples as an obstacle and seeks to level it out through 'harmonisation', we see it as the source of our cultural and intellectual strength. European unity is founded not on regulations, but on the shared conviction that our ethnocultural identity and Western cultural heritage are the most precious assets to preserve in an increasingly anarchic international order. Only a federation that defends national distinctiveness as part of Europe's common heritage will find the strength to assert itself.

Our guiding vision is an association of European states that preserve their independence and freedom of decision. Every nation retains full sovereignty over its internal affairs and participates in common policies solely on the basis of clearly defined convergence of national interests. Cooperation takes place where necessary and mutually beneficial – for example, in security, trade, research and protection of shared conditions of life.

4. Fundamental Principles of the New Europe

- **Subsidiarity**

Subsidiarity means that political decisions should be taken as close to citizens as possible, at local or national level. Only where a problem clearly exceeds the capacity of an individual nation should it be addressed at common level. Take migration: control over immigration remains in national hands; coordinated European measures of an organisational nature should be considered only where cross-border challenges or dangers arise. Such common measures must never undermine the sovereign competence of nation-states or serve as a pretext for shifting financial burdens. Subsidiarity ensures that citizens' real needs are reflected and prevents harmful developments caused by higher-level institutions.

- **Responsibility**

The principle of responsibility requires every state to accept full responsibility for its own conduct and economic decisions. There is no joint liability for debt and no compulsory redistribution of risks: mismanagement or political mistakes by individual nations must not be borne by taxpayers in other countries. Action without liability breeds irresponsible conduct. In financial policy, for example, national deficits must not be offset using common funds.

- **Europe as a Federation of Sovereign Nations**

The existing EU apparatus is characterised by overregulation, opacity and centralism. Bureaucratic rules and pressure towards ever deeper integration have left many citizens feeling alienated and deprived of control. This model will be scaled back to a flexible, cooperative association that respects Europe's historically evolved diversity, strengthens the distinctive character of its nations and confines cooperation to what is essential: working together where it makes sense, rather than subordination to a centralised apparatus.

- **Organic Diversity as Europe's Strength**

In the new Europe, cultural richness is not a weakness, but a source of dynamism, innovation and stability. Different political systems, historically evolved cultures and national interests coexist and enrich the alliance as a whole. A Europe of nations grows through respect, subsidiarity and individual responsibility. Only in this way can it endure together and meet the challenges of the present and the future. Cultural independence and national freedom of decision are the foundations of a vibrant Europe.

CHAPTER IX

The New Europe: Our Political Mission

The European project has failed in its present form. Instead of enabling our continent to shape its own future freely and confidently, centralism, bureaucracy, technocracy and mistrust of its citizens are suffocating our economies, our cultures and our political independence. Knowing that Germany lies at the heart of Europe, we refuse to stand by while our continent is robbed of its spirit, its will and its future, not least by the Brussels bureaucracy. Our Europe is a Europe of nations and peoples, of history and the future, determined to assert its own place in the world.

The following five pillars form the foundation of our European policy:

1. **Identity as the Basis of Life:** Preserving the cultural identity of Europe's peoples is our paramount goal and forms the foundation of every political order on our continent. Europe is not a business location, a transport hub or a marketplace, but a historically evolved cultural community of related peoples. Protecting our heritage is our highest European task.
2. **Opting Out for the Common Good:** Sovereign nations are prepared to set aside particular national interests where the welfare of the entire continent makes common action imperative. Yet because the European Union in its current form systematically places ideological objectives above genuine common benefit, the German opt-out becomes a necessary corrective. Through a comprehensive package of opt-outs, we safeguard our sovereignty not for selfish reasons, but as an emergency brake against harmful developments that threaten the stability, prosperity and diversity of the entire continent.

3. **Subsidiarity Instead of Centralism:** The European nations form Europe's backbone and must be preserved. European-level action has a role where peoples must combine their strengths to hold their own in an era of global-scale politics – particularly in maintaining the single market and protecting external borders.
4. **Financial Discipline and Sovereignty:** Germany must no longer be Europe's paymaster. We will end automatic redistribution and contribute only where a clear common benefit justifies the use of German taxpayers' money.
5. **Democratic Legitimacy:** Europe does not exist for its own sake; it is founded on its nations. The European Union must once again be close to its citizens and subject to effective control. We call for the European Parliament to be restored to a chamber of nationally appointed delegations and for strict observance of the primacy of national constitutions over secondary EU law.

This is our roadmap for the consistent reshaping of Europe – for the benefit of our peoples and the preservation of our freedom.

POSITION PAPER

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