

Article – “Together for Europe’s recovery”: Germany takes over Council presidency



We asked German MEPs what they expect from the German presidency.

[Daniel Caspary](#) (EPP): “The EU multi-annual budget for 2021-2027 and the recovery fund will determine whether the EU emerges stronger from the corona crisis. The German presidency of the Council and Chancellor Angela Merkel can bring experience and expertise on European issues, a positive sign for the controversial and hard discussions.” Berlin can also provide an “important impulse” for the success of the negotiations on the EU-UK agreement, he said.

[Jens Geier](#) (S&D) sees potential for change in the Covid-19 crisis: “The federal government’s strong proposal for a recovery fund is an opportunity to make Europe fairer, more social and sustainable. In line with the European Green Deal, the recovery fund should promote sustainable investments in renewable energy and digitalisation. The fact that regions in need should also receive grants rather than just loans for reconstruction is a major step towards a strong Europe.”

“Europe now needs the courage to rebuild,” said [Nicola Beer](#) (Renew Europe): “Germany will be measured, among other things, by whether it can quickly kick-start the economic recovery, relying on innovation and small and medium-

sized enterprises." On Brexit, she said there was a need "not to slide into a no-deal scenario". The EU should also "finally live up to its geopolitical aspirations, externally with a strong common voice for peace, disarmament, human rights and trade, internally by releasing the blockage in asylum and migration policies".

For [Sven Giegold](#) (Greens/EFA), climate protection remains a priority: "The climate crisis is not taking a corona break. The German presidency of the Council must therefore become a climate presidency in corona times. During the German presidency, we need to conclude the negotiations for an EU climate law with improved greenhouse gas reduction targets."

German interests should not come second, said [Jörg Meuthen](#) (ID). "It is already the debt presidency," he said. Germany should "reduce the EU to its core tasks and the budget to the minimum necessary, prevent EU taxing competence and instead include, as a sign of genuine solidarity, the per capita wealth of member states in the calculation of financial redistribution".

[Helmut Geuking](#) (ECR) hopes that the German presidency of the Council will "finally fulfil the [Child Guarantee](#) and launch a European child benefit". "Only with strong families can a strong and social Europe emerge that can hold its own in the globalised world in the future."

The presidency could "lay the foundations for a solidarity-based EU," said [Martin Schirdewan](#) (GUE/NGL). "Everyone should contribute their fair share to the social and economic recovery and revival of society. This means the introduction of a digital tax, a comprehensive financial transaction tax and a one-off wealth tax for the super-rich."