

GERMANY. EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE

Manifesto for the 2021 Parliamentary Elections



Ready because you are.

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An invitation

Dear Voters,

A society decides who it wants to be through elections. This holds particularly true for these parliamentary elections on 26 September. It is the end of an era, and a new one can now begin. However, the future is not something that just happens to us. You, dear voters, can decide yourselves which direction it will take, through your vote.

With this manifesto, we, BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN, present the content of our offer to you. We do this at a time of global emergency. The pandemic has affected us all right to the core. On the positive side, it showed us what kind of togetherness, innovation and resilience we humans can achieve. However, it also brutally exposed the weaknesses of our society, and did so in an already vulnerable world. The current global crises - first and foremost the climate crisis as a true crisis for humanity - affect all our lives and endanger freedom, safety and prosperity.

Nevertheless, we have a choice: we can decide whether these crises overwhelm us or whether we rise above them. The experiences during the pandemic show that we can overcome crises with a concerted effort. Through the solidarity with which our society gave the most vulnerable the strongest protection. Through the thoughtfulness that so many people have been exhibiting. Through science and progress. People have been surpassing themselves on a daily basis during the pandemic - in hospitals, in homes for the elderly, in the supermarket, in laboratories, children, parents and teachers in distance learning, young people alone at home, self-employed people, who have demonstrated exceptional adaptability. Now is the time for politics to surpass itself.

We can learn from mistakes. We have experienced how fragile the status quo is, how vulnerable an economy that is oriented purely towards profit is, but also how important basic rights are and how strong our society is. We have found out how limited national responses are to global issues, have seen how much uncertainty arises when we only go forward slowly and how necessary it is for politics to

have a vision and to work for peace. The better precautions we take, the more resilient we become, and the better we protect, the more freely we can live.

As a society, we have the key for so much already in our hands. We know how we can lead an industrial society safely into the age of climate neutrality. How we can speed up our exit from coal and guarantee security of supply, how much more power can be generated from wind and solar and how nature protection can be bolstered. We know how to develop a socio-ecological market economy that brings together sustainable jobs, social protection and fair competition in Germany and Europe, how to set clear rules for globalisation and tax multinational corporations appropriately. We know how we can invest in strong healthcare and modern infrastructure, in good schools and public spaces and in a well-functioning people-oriented state. It is possible to reduce inequality, to create equal living conditions in the village, town and large city and to place children at the centre of the picture. We can achieve full gender equality and create a diverse immigration society. We are able and firmly determined to democratically reinforce Europe as a community of shared values and to make it fairer and more able to act in systemic competition. This can be achieved by international solidarity and if we shape our way of living and doing business so that we do not exacerbate crises in other parts of the world. But words alone are not enough: we also have to do it. Now is the time for doing.

Reactive politics has tried to prevent the worst over recent years. But what we need is to enable the best. To become a climate-neutral society within a short time is an epochal task with inspiring power. We want to achieve a recovery that goes beyond the purely economic. A recovery that includes the whole of societal life in its strengths and diversity: education and culture, work and digitalisation, science and innovation.

This manifesto is a start. It proposes concrete, ambitious projects for political action in Federal Government for the coming four years. The tasks are major, and the obstacles likewise. However, recent years have shown that many people in society are far ahead of politics. So together, let us bring political work up to date. If you, dear voter, give us the mandate for this, and we are able to implement these projects step by step with you, together, we will achieve the foundations for a

decade of courageous advancement, of doing and succeeding. Power is only on loan in a democracy. This loan obliges us to engage in clean politics - politics that places the well-being of citizens above that of personal interest, that is accountable and places limits on itself. We will act in this spirit.

We will bring many good traditions to bear in a new way, establish many new things, remove many familiar things, but we will create security during the transition. After an era of short-termism in politics, we will bring in the staying power, the clear compass and the assertiveness to lead our country - in the heart of Europe, turned towards the world - into a better future. Yes, to lead it. For the first time in the history of Germany, we BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN are fighting for the political leadership in this country, in terms of content and people. We are standing on a firm basis of values and are deeply rooted in society. We have a clear goal in sight for this decade: climate-friendly prosperity.

We have grown and acquired strength through governing in local authorities, states and at federal level. We are going into this decade with experience and expertise, with our hearts and with a vision, with confidence and passion, open and adaptive. That is our offer and that is how we are campaigning for majorities for the next four years. We invite you to join us on this path.

Chapter 1: **Protecting the foundations of life**

The climate crisis is the existential issue of our time. As a result, climate protection is not something for the future: climate protection needs to happen now. If we take a consistent approach at the start of this century and bring about the socio-ecological transformation, we can still prevent the climate catastrophe and help create a climate-friendly world. Climate neutrality is a great opportunity to secure a better quality of life, more social justice and climate-friendly prosperity. We just have to seize this opportunity

In recent years, we have already felt the effects of the climate crisis, with hot summers, forest dieback, flooding and droughts. It is having dramatic consequences here in Germany and across the world. One impact is on human health – and it is primarily those with the lowest incomes and especially the people in the global south who pay the price for the fact that the richest have the biggest carbon footprint. Also affected are farmers, whose livelihoods are being eroded at an alarming rate. And it is also having an impact on social cohesion in our society. All these consequences will multiply if we fail to change course now. The more decisive we are in our actions, the more freedoms and alternatives we will secure for current and future generations. We will therefore move resolutely along the path to climate neutrality.

This requires skill, courage and action. In a future government, we will put the focus on the Paris Climate Agreement and ensure this informs the activities of all government ministries. We will put all our efforts into initiating measures that keep us on the 1.5-degree pathway. Climate justice is a political issue. We see it as our role to create better regulations, not better people. A clear political regulatory framework would also move some of the burdens for people in their everyday lives and create freedom

Naturally, climate neutrality means change, but this change will bring stability in the future. It will prevent us from passing tipping

points and allow us to lead better, climate-friendly lives. We will therefore bring electricity, heat, transport and industry together, put an end to energy waste and thus enable the efficient dovetailing of these sectors. Instead of relying on coal, oil and natural gas, the energy system will be based on solar and wind power. Instead of clinging to fossil fuel combustion engines, we will create a new mobility with railways, cycle paths, footpaths and emission-free cars. Instead of oil and natural gas, we will get our future heating from renewable energy. This will all make the future quieter, cleaner, healthier, cheaper and more socially just. Fewer cars in the city means more space for people. Quieter streets and cleaner air will be particularly beneficial for those who cannot afford to live in a peaceful suburb. More options for climate-friendly and environmentally-friendly transport, such as dial-a-bus or car sharing schemes, will make commuting easier and enable us to live well in rural areas.

With this great change, we will see the emergence of new areas of business, new branches of industry and new jobs. Other sectors will change, and some will disappear. For many people, this is also a major challenge, or even an imposition. We will only manage to achieve the socio-ecological transformation if we work together to minimise losses and build bridges. Everyone who needs new opportunities or training must get them. And it is our mission to ensure that the costs and burdens of this change are distributed fairly. Climate-friendly prosperity means combining our thinking about ecological and social issues and shaping the transition with care: for people in towns and cities and in the countryside. For tradespeople and for steel workers.

The loss of pristine nature and the environment is just as dramatic as the climate crisis and represents one of the greatest threats to a good and healthy life. If we want to protect our foundations of life, if we also want to curtail the second great ecological crisis of species extinction, we need more than simply a change of course: we need to strike out in a completely new direction. We will make planetary boundaries the guiding principle of our policies and thus also contribute to greater environmental justice. In line with this principle, we will change the economic model, as there cannot be infinite growth on a finite planet. We will set priorities. From now on, actions that protect people and animals, the climate and nature will be rewarded and promoted. Actions that have a destructive effect must carry the

relevant costs and new solutions must be found as quickly as possible. By putting the protection of oceans and rivers, climate and soil, flora and fauna at the heart of our economic and legal system, we can successfully ensure the stability of ecosystems and our foundations of life. And with that, we are laying the foundations for a good and peaceful coexistence.

We will create climate-friendly prosperity

A better quality of life through climate neutrality

The route towards climate neutrality offers huge opportunities for a better quality of life: cities with less congestion and fewer exhaust fumes, with space to walk and cycle safely, to play and to live. Villages that are finally connected to local public transport networks. Forests where our children can still discover the beauty of nature. Healthy food, produced in conditions that ensure animal welfare and environmental protection. Climate protection is so much more than a purely technological issue: it is an essential requirement for a healthy life on a healthy plane.

The energy revolution: renewable heating, living and business

Climate neutrality means turning our backs on fossil fuels. Not just electricity, but also the petrol in our cars, kerosene in aircraft fuel tanks, heavy fuel oil in ships, oil for heating and gas used in industry - these must all be converted to renewable energy. This is nothing less than an energy revolution. First and foremost, this requires a massive expansion programme for renewables, which must be put into practice as soon as possible. The future of our industrial base and our security of supply depend on this. The expansion will be limited by the power and capacity of industry and workers, but should not be constrained by the political framework conditions. We will therefore remove the obstacles to expansion in an ongoing process - in a way that is eco-friendly and that benefits our citizens. Our goal is an immediate annual increase of at least 5 to 6 gigawatts (GW) of onshore wind power, and of 7 to 8 GW from the mid-2020s. For offshore wind

power, we want to achieve 35 GW by 2035. In the area of solar energy, we want to increase the expansion from a starting point of 10 to 12 GW up to 18 to 20 GW per year from the mid-2020s. By introducing a comprehensive tax reform, we want to ensure that sector coupling is driven forward and electricity is available at reliable and competitive prices. We will reconfigure the energy market so that renewable energy is no longer stifled. We will place the focus on sun and wind and enable industry, commerce and trade to contribute particularly significantly to the integration of renewable energy via more flexible consumption. Peak generation times will be harnessed according to the principle of "use instead of switch off" for storage facilities and the production of heat or green hydrogen. We will abolish double taxation and other stumbling blocks. We will secure critical infrastructure with solar systems that are able to provide emergency power. Distribution networks and consumers will be equipped with intelligent technology so they can react flexibly at times when plenty of renewable energy is being generated.

Energy efficiency – less is more

In a world of renewables, energy is a valuable resource that we must handle frugally and efficiently. This is even more relevant as long as we are burning coal, oil and natural gas. Our goal is well-insulated buildings, low-consumption cars - even those that run on electricity - efficient commercial and industrial processes and the transfer and use of waste heat. We will set out clear regulatory requirements to achieve this. Discounts on electricity prices for companies facing international competition should be linked to the implementation of energy efficiency measures. After all, the less energy is needed, the faster we will create 100 percent renewable energy, reach our climate goals and save costs on the energy infrastructure. Climate protection pays off.

A regulatory framework for a socio-ecological market economy

We must align our economy with climate neutrality and the planetary boundaries and establish a circular economy. We want to combine the economic recovery in the wake of the coronavirus crisis with ecological modernisation. This requires a new, socioecological restructuring

of our market economy. We want to use ambitious guidelines in the form of limit values, CO₂ reduction targets and product standards to give the German and European economy planning security and create impetus for new investment. Fair prices will ensure that climate-friendly action pays off. We want to enhance support for research and innovation for climate-friendly economic activity. We will direct public procurement consistently towards the most resource-saving and socially beneficial products and services. In this way, we will put our economy at the forefront of cutting-edge technology and protect our natural foundations of life.

Green digitalisation

Whether it is networked vehicles, efficient industry, precise distribution of renewable energy or intelligent field irrigation: digital and data-driven innovations will enable us to better reduce our energy and resource consumption and to play a leading role in future technologies. We will therefore support and prioritise digital applications and solutions that contribute towards saving resources or are more sustainable than analogue alternatives. It is generally important to avoid rebound effects to support sufficiency. We will promote alternatives to critical raw materials such as rare-earth elements and advocate their extraction in line with human rights principles. Tendering and procurement criteria must be adapted to ensure that the most socio-ecological, sustainable technologies are prioritised for use. During IT procurement by the federal government, factors such as manufacturer dependency, subsequent procurement, technical openness, security, data protection, repair capability, sustainability and social criteria must be part of the evaluation process and certification schemes such as the Blue Angel must become standard for IT products. We want to make all federal government data centres sustainable, ensure they operate using renewable energy and deploy certified environmentally-friendly hardware. At the same time, it is necessary to create incentives to reduce the energy consumption of data centres, including converting to water cooling systems and supporting carbon-neutral data centres.

New jobs with good conditions

An ambitious climate protection policy and the climate-neutral restructuring of the economy represent the best opportunities to maintain existing jobs in Germany and other countries and to create new ones. Socio-ecological modernisation strengthens the competitiveness of domestic companies and can lead to a renaissance in industrial jobs. As we move towards climate neutrality, hundreds of thousands of new jobs will be created over the coming years – green jobs. They will emerge in manufacturing and construction, in new branches of industry and the circular economy, in the production of battery cells and the hydrogen industry as well as in new service areas. Where possible, we want these new jobs to be based on a collective wage agreement or at least equal conditions. We will also take this into account when supporting new areas of business.

Security in transition with a short-time work allowance for qualifications

We see it as our obligation to support companies and their employees on the path to a climate-neutral economic system, especially in areas where job profiles change fundamentally or jobs are lost. The ecological transformation needs a much better range of training and qualification possibilities. To that end, we want to introduce the right to education and to use a training allowance to create social security for workers undergoing qualification courses. With a new short-time work allowance for qualifications, we will enable companies undergoing transformation to keep their employees and offer them long-term qualification opportunities. We will ensure close links between the qualification short-time work allowance and the social partnership. In addition, we want to strengthen operational co-determination for decisions about the ecological transformation. Together, companies, trade unions and works councils are best placed to know how to shape the transformation

Transformation funds for the regions

The ecological modernisation process is a huge challenge, especially for many regions with a strong industrial heritage. In order to support the regions, and especially the small and medium-sized companies based there, we want to set up regional transformation funds. The funding will be targeted towards companies that are unable to master the necessary ecological structural changes by themselves, but who are firmly anchored in the region and want to remain there. It is important to involve regional players from academia, politics, business and trade unions to develop a shared vision of where the region should aim to be in the future, both socially and economically. At the same time, we want to promote new formats, such as real-world laboratories and experimentation spaces, in which civil society, academia, business and local authorities collaborate to research and find solutions for their particular local challenges

Launch of an emergency climate protection programme

The cornerstones of our policy are the Paris Climate Agreement and the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the 1.5 degree limit, which explains that every tenth of a degree counts when it comes to preventing the planet from exceeding the relevant tipping points in the climate system. It is therefore necessary to keep to the 1.5 degree pathway. Direct and substantial action in the next few years will be crucial in this respect. However, the expansion of renewable energy is currently limping along, the phase-out of coal has come too late, and there is not much progress being made in the transport and building sector. According to the climate ruling of Germany's Federal Constitutional Court, which also refers to the Advisory Council on the Environment, we need to focus our climate policy on the budgetary approach. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that the global carbon budget from the year 2018 for the 1.5 degree target is 420 gigatons of CO₂ with a 67 percent probability of achieving this target. The Advisory Council has calculated a remaining national carbon budget of 6.6 gigatons of CO₂ from 2020 onwards. If emissions were to continue at their present level, the German carbon budget would be used up in less than nine years, and with a linear reduction, by 2035. Increasing

the time to greenhouse gas neutrality requires disproportionately large reductions over the next few years. For that reason, we will launch an emergency climate protection programme that will immediately trigger effective measures in all sectors, remove existing barriers to expansion, implement obvious saving measures and reinforce climate and development partnerships as part of the global budget approach. We will strengthen the currently still inadequate Climate Change Act in terms generational and budgetary fairness, spell out annual and sector-specific measures, reinforce the role of the Council of Experts on Climate Change and increase the German climate target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 to at least 70 percent. It is our goal to achieve 100 percent renewable energy by 2035. This will enable Germany to become climate-neutral in 20 years.

Rewarding climate-friendly business

More effective and socially just climate protection also has to make economic sense. The costs of the damage caused by the emission of one ton of CO₂ are currently only estimated at a very low level. According to the latest calculations by the German Environment Agency, the emission of one ton of CO₂ causes damage worth around EUR 195. It is our goal to achieve an economy in which the most sustainable products are also the cheapest. We want to make this change through a clever mix of carbon pricing, incentives and support, as well as regulatory law and the removal of environmentally harmful subsidies. Any attempt to achieve the climate goals purely through carbon pricing would inevitably lead to considerable social imbalances. Some could buy their way out of the situation, others would no longer be able to participate. We therefore see carbon pricing as one tool of many – and will introduce it in a way that is effective and socially just. In light of the new EU climate target for 2030, the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) needs to be reformed to finally achieve its incentive effect in full. With a clear reduction in emissions certificates and the removal of excess certificates from the market, we will achieve a carbon price in the areas of electricity, industry and European aviation that ensures that renewable energy sources are used instead of coal and kerosene, while industry gets planning security and has the incentive to invest in decarbonisation and technology leadership. Under pressure from the

climate movement and from us in BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN, a carbon price has also been introduced in Germany for transport and heating - although its incentive effect still needs to be improved in terms of social justice. We want to bring forward the increase in the carbon price to EUR 60 to 2023. After that, the carbon price should rise in such a way that it ensures, in combination with the support measures and regulatory stipulations, that we reach the new 2030 climate target. The revenues from the national carbon price will be given back to the people as a per capita energy bonus.

Introducing an energy bonus

To ensure that climate protection goes hand in hand with social justice, we want to give the revenues from the national carbon price directly back to the people. To that end, we will strive, alongside a reduction in the Renewable Energy Sources Act levy, to give an energy bonus to every citizen. The energy bonus will be a transparent way of giving all additional revenues back to the people and easing their burden directly by issuing them with a per capita reimbursement. This will reward climate-friendly behaviour and create social balance within the system. The bottom line is that low earners and families will have their burden eased and people with high incomes will contribute more. Recipients of transfer payments such as Unemployment Benefit II or social security benefits will also benefit, as the energy bonus will not be offset against basic income. To support low-income commuters with the adjustment, for example, we will set up a climate bonus fund, which will provide generous assistance for changes such as a switch to buses, trains or a zero-emission car.

CO₂ brake for all laws

We want to systematically incorporate climate protection into our legal system. We want to enshrine the stipulations of the Paris Climate Agreement and the withdrawal from the nuclear energy programme in the Basic Law and strengthen ecology as a further basic principle of all government action. We will give the state more opportunities to reward resource-saving behaviour and put a price on the production of CO₂ through intelligent tax legislation. We will introduce a climate change audit for

approval processes. With a CO₂ brake, we will make climate protection a cross-sectoral task by reviewing laws for their climate impact, ensuring compatibility with the national climate protection targets and the carbon budget, and securing the possible use of climate-friendly alternatives.

We will create security of supply with renewables

Moving away from coal more quickly

According to the will of the Great Coalition, coal-fired power stations in Germany will continue to harm the climate and our health until 2038. That is not compatible with the Paris climate goals or the 1.5-degree pathway. We are therefore determined to complete the exit from coal by 2030. In this respect we will use all the options at our disposal – including at EU level. To avoid once more giving billions of taxpayer's money to coal companies, we will set prices in line with the massive damage done to the climate by coal-fired power generation. The best way to do this is via the EU emissions trading – with an incentivising carbon price. If this cannot be achieved fast enough at European level, we will back a national minimum carbon price in the ETS for industry and electricity of EUR 60 per ton of CO₂. An accelerated exit from coal requires a massive expansion of renewable energy to ensure security of supply and a reorientation of the energy market structure towards solar and wind power. At the same time, with health protection in mind, we want to tighten the limits on the emission of harmful substances, especially mercury, from large combustion plants. Nobody should ever again have to leave their home due to open-cast mining. The state of North Rhine-Westphalia must finally give those people threatened with losing everything and eviction by the Garzweiler brown coal open-cast mine planning and legal security for the preservation and future of their villages. Our aim is to support this in the federal government by providing the appropriate legal framework. We will fundamentally revise the mining laws and strengthen the rights of affected individuals as well as reinforcing environmental and nature protection. Natural wood is a hugely versatile raw material and too valuable to burn in large combustion plants.

Making solar roofs the norm

We want to see an energy transition that everyone can be part of – tenants and home owners alike. Our roofs, façades and balconies can be turned into power stations – every surface with solar panels on it helps to protect the climate. People can generate and use their own, decentralised electricity and heating energy. Our goal is for 1.5 million new solar roofs in the next four years. We will therefore promote solar roofs and make them the norm. Starting with new builds, public and commercial buildings and roof renovations, we want this new standard to spread throughout the housing stock going forward. Leasing, rental and contracting models can all play a supporting role here. Special solutions will be devised for historic buildings. We will simplify the tenant electricity supply rules and support tenant electricity supply projects. We want to reduce the bureaucratic hurdles for the use of electricity from your own roof and strengthen ownconsumption and direct marketing measures.

Photovoltaics in rural areas

We want to see photovoltaics not only on roofs but also on the ground, by improving the political and legal frameworks and making construction easier. Instead of being built on valuable agricultural land, the expansion should ideally happen on paved sites, such as car parks, alongside motorways and railways and on brownfield or post-mining land. We want to avoid the competition for land and will place the emphasis on multiple use for energy generation, biodiversity and agriculture. Agri-photovoltaic systems, i.e. electricity production alongside agricultural or horticultural use in the same area, can make an important contribution to climate protection and ecology. If properly set up, ground-mounted systems can become valuable habitats. Farms should receive money for creating ecological benefits, thereby generating additional income. It is also important to have the option to sign direct, long-term electricity supply contracts. During the planning process, local citizens must be informed and involved at an early stage. Local authorities must also benefit from the proceeds.

Securing Germany as an industrial location by expanding wind power

We must also progress faster with wind power, for example by strengthening the expansion outside of tenders. With the expansion of wind energy, it is crucial to minimise any conflict with nature conservation and species protection, to protect residents and to speed up the approval process, including by reducing bureaucratic hurdles and creating clear framework conditions. As a first step, we want to define renewable energy as essential for the security of supply and use 2 percent of the total land area of the country for it. All federal states have a role to play here. We reject any obstructive planning rules. Excessive, fixed minimum distances from residential areas do not help to increase the level of acceptance. We will get local residents involved at an early stage, designate clear priority and suitable areas for wind power, and create exclusion zones and targeted species protection programmes to ensure an eco-friendly choice of location that also works well for local residents. At the same time, we will strengthen protection measures for birds and bats. We will speed up the planning and approval process by making it simpler, employing more staff and standardising the evaluation criteria. We want to make repowering easier, so that old wind farms can be quickly replaced in the same location by more efficient ones. We want to make sure that installations that are over 20 years old can continue to operate. We want to support the building of wind farms in close proximity to industry and commerce in order to produce electricity where it will be used and where it is easier to ensure residents are protected from noise pollution. We will continue to expand our offshore parks and take advantage of the European Energy Union strategy to combine them with the solar parks of Mediterranean states plus the hydroelectric power of Scandinavia and the Alps. The more connected the network, the stronger it will be. A continent is a good size for the energy transition.

Getting citizens involved in the energy transition

We want as many people as possible to benefit from the energy transition. We therefore want to give special support to citizen projects for wind and solar parks and exploit to the full all opportunities for

Citizen Energy Communities, as guaranteed by European law. We will give local authorities a mandatory share of the income from the renewable energy facilities, so that rural areas in particular benefit from the proceeds. We also want to promote and develop the tenant electricity supply scheme and make it less bureaucratic so that tenants benefit more fully from the expansion of renewable energy.

Making our energy infrastructure climate-neutral

Climate neutrality in less than 30 years means that one fossil fuel infrastructure cannot simply be replaced by another fossil fuel infrastructure. We will therefore introduce the start of our exit from fossil fuels: the infrastructure planning for electricity, heating and hydrogen needs updating and must put climate neutrality at its core. New gas power stations or infrastructure that is needed to enable us to exit from coal should therefore only be allowed if they are absolutely essential at this point in time, and are already planned and built to be hydrogen-ready. We will establish the legal basis for ensuring that new operating licences are time-limited and contain the change from natural gas to renewable sources of energy. It should not be forgotten that natural gas also damages the climate so its use should be continually reduced in future. The emissions generated during the extraction and transport of natural gas are extremely damaging to the climate and we therefore want to reduce them as soon as possible. No new port terminals to receive liquefied natural gas should be approved. New natural gas pipelines such as Nord Stream 2, which are not geared up for green hydrogen, will over the decades cement our dependence on resources that damage the climate and hinder the energy transition. They must therefore be stopped.

A green hydrogen strategy

Hydrogen from renewable energy - so-called green hydrogen - is key to security of supply in a climate-neutral world. This is because hydrogen is easy to store and, when produced using electricity from renewable sources, is also climate-friendly. Germany is well ahead when it comes to hydrogen production technology. We want to expand our leadership role further and create the corresponding infrastructure.

Through market incentives and a comprehensive funding programme, we will create the capacity for hydrogen production in Germany. Although green hydrogen should be produced here as a priority, we will still have to import hydrogen to meet demand. Now is the time to establish the infrastructure for hydrogen imports. Where these imports are concerned, we will set up and expand fair cooperations with countries with plenty of wind and sun, and support these export countries during the energy transition. The success of these cooperations relies heavily on getting the local population involved, protecting human rights, focussing on the sustainable development goals and introducing relevant mandatory standards. For hydrogen to contribute to climate neutrality, it must be produced from renewable energy. The same applies to imported hydrogen. It is our goal to ensure that renewable energies are used efficiently and economically and electrolyzers are used in a system-beneficial way. Hydrogen and synthetic fuels should not be part of a delaying tactic but instead can make an active contribution to climate neutrality. The direct use of electricity via batteries or heat pumps is generally far more efficient. It is therefore important to deploy hydrogen and synthetic fuels in the places where they are really needed, such as in industry, shipping and aviation.

Creating a market for green electricity

The introduction of the Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG) over 20 years ago marked the start of the energy transition in Germany. Solar and wind power have since become two of the cheapest sources of energy. Now, however, with renewables making up almost 50 percent of our electricity, we need a market design that sets out the right framework conditions for a climate-neutral energy system: it must ensure the fast and cheap expansion of renewables, the economic operation of storage facilities, flexible producers and consumers and an adequate network expansion. To that end, we will drive forward a root and branch reform of the energy legislation. We will support sector coupling by strengthening the system-beneficial use of renewable energy and taking regional differences into account. The first wind farms and large solar parks have already dispensed with the need for EEG subsidies and the trend towards long-term supply contracts

between producers of green energy and consumers supports this development. Equally, in future it should be easier for end consumers to be able to buy electricity directly from green electricity producers. In this way, we will develop the EEG from a funding into a protective tool for the expansion of renewables. The EEG levy will thus automatically taper off in the long term.

Speeding up grid expansion

To bring about a successful energy transition, we need to expand the grid networks more quickly. They should enable energy to travel as quickly as possible from where it is produced to where it is needed. A clever mix of local production, storage and flexible consumers will reduce costs and increase the security of supply. The prerequisite for further grid expansion is that it happens in a system-beneficial way and exploits all the possibilities for making optimal use of existing grid networks and supplementing these with intelligent systems and storage facilities. It is essential to involve local citizens at an early stage. This increases the quality of the planning and has been proven to help clear up potential grounds for complaint at the start of the process rather than having to resolve them in court at the end. It is also clear that renewables must take priority in the grid. Since power transmission grids are natural monopolies and represent critical infrastructure, we want to strengthen public influence over them. To that end we want, where possible, to increase the state share in the four power transmission grid operators in Germany and turn them into a federal grid company in federal hands. We will also push for a reform of the network charges, which will strengthen transparency, ensure a fair distribution of the costs of the energy transition and avoid any disadvantage to rural regions – especially in the north and east – in relation to the funding of essential grid expansion costs.

Climate-friendly building refurbishment campaign

It is high time that all new builds and buildings, including the building materials, are designed to be climate-neutral throughout their entire lifecycle and that correspondingly comprehensive energy-based renovations are carried out. At the heart of this is the estab-

lishment of high building and renovation standards: KfW 40 for new builds, which roughly corresponds to the passive house standard, and KfW 55 for existing buildings after renovation – with the exception of historic buildings. We will develop the KfW subsidy scheme further, including with regard to the use of sustainable building materials. To reconcile building culture and energy renovation, we want to create clear regulations that are appropriate for both goals. The renovation rate must be rapidly doubled and further increased. The use of serial renovation is one option here. Public authorities must serve as a role model with their buildings. For existing building stock, it must be the case that a renovation plan is drawn up with every change of ownership. When implementing the renovation plan, subsidy schemes can provide additional support. Whenever the heating needs to be replaced or extensive renovations are being made in existing buildings, as well as in new builds, only renewable heating sources should be used where possible. To that end, we will set up an investment programme for two million highly efficient heat pumps by 2025. We also want to decarbonise district and local heating and link subsidies to climate-neutral solutions. Energy efficiency can only be achieved if we move away from individual solutions and towards connected systems in which heat is sourced and stored from various renewable sources such as waste heat, geothermal and solar thermal heat. We will also integrate industry and commerce into the heating systems. We will promote these connected, climate-neutral energy systems, especially in urban areas.

Ensuring fairness in the heat transition

The heat transition must go hand in hand with effective tenant protection and targeted funding. We want to use the so-called “third model” to distribute the costs of climate-friendly modernisations fairly between landlords, state and tenants so that they become affordable for all and economically viable for landlords. We want to impose strict limits on the modernisation levy so that costs cannot simply be passed on to tenants. With an addition to the housing benefit in the form of a climate housing allowance, we will also enable those on housing benefit to live in climate-friendly homes. Charging for CO₂ in the area of heating will create an incentive effect if paid for by those who also

make the climate investments: the home owners. After all, they are the ones who can make changes to the state of the building and the heating supply, while at the same time profiting from seeing property values rise as a result of the modernisation measures. For local authorities, regional heat and energy planning as well as integrated district planning should be binding. Here we will use the Fair Heat action programme to support the conversion to a climate-neutral heat supply through tax breaks, free advice and targeted funding programmes.

Completing the nuclear phase-out – successfully identifying a final repository

Nuclear power is not the right way to fight the climate crisis. We will complete the phasing out of nuclear energy in Germany. Although nuclear energy is a high risk technology, we are still enriching uranium and manufacturing and exporting fuel rods. It is our goal to close down the nuclear power plants in Gronau and Lingen as soon as possible. The operation of the Garching research reactor with highly enriched uranium should be shut down. The legacy of nuclear power generation is the search for a final repository. We commit to the agreed path of finding a suitable location with the highest safety standards while ensuring the greatest possible transparency and the participation of the population. The dismantling of existing nuclear power plants must be done as soon and as quickly as possible under the strictest safety measures. Here, too, it is the case that we cannot burden future generations with these contaminated sites. We must therefore arrange for the interim and final storage of low-, medium- and, above all, high-level radioactive waste according to the highest safety standards. This requires an overall concept. Above all, safeguarding the waste against terrorist attacks is essential, as even interim storage is a long-term prospect. We will ensure that the storage and transport are strictly monitored. We also want to encourage the EU to start phasing out nuclear power. We will advocate for a reform of Euratom, against any further privileges or new subsidies for nuclear power and in favour of mandatory safety standards for all nuclear power stations in Europe. In this way, old and unsafe reactors on Germany's borders can soon be taken offline. We want to make use of opportunities to object to the new construction or operating extension of nuclear plants in Europe and to opt out of the joint liability of states for nuclear accidents.

We will ensure sustainable mobility

Laying the foundations for the mobility transition

The path to climate neutrality means we need to fundamentally rethink our mobility in the 21st century. This presents us with a great opportunity: a better quality of life in towns, cities and villages, mobility without destroying the climate, no more traffic jams or road traffic fatalities, more freedom, participation and prosperity - all these are possible. We want to use a federal mobility law to lay a new foundation for our transport policy and legislation. Instead of being ruled by a single means of transport - the car -, we want to put people and their diverse needs first, especially the most vulnerable in our society: in other words, children, young people, old people and people with disabilities. Mobility policy will be consistently geared towards people's mobility needs, towards safety, climate protection, traffic avoidance, fair use of space, noise reduction and air quality, social participation and gender equality. Instead of preferring one single mode of transport, as we have done for decades, we will provide a fair balance – with an effective railway, a modern local public transport system and the best conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. The mobility transition does not just need a better legal foundation, but also a more rapid implementation. To that end, we want to launch a comprehensive education and research campaign.

Investment in strong railways

An efficient, reliable railway is the backbone of a sustainable transport revolution. We want to further develop and implement the synchronised timetable for Germany, with additional, more resilient and better coordinated rail options in urban and rural environments in order to provide people with attractive mobility options that everyone can afford. To that end, we want to connect all German cities to regular long-distance services, increase the frequency of regional transport services and restore the focus on rail transport. Disused railway lines should be reinstated as soon as possible. We want to enhance these services through fast sprinter trains and night trains that con-

nect all the major European cities to each other at affordable prices. We want to close gaps and remove bottlenecks in the domestic and international rail network and at railway hubs. We will work quickly to drive forward the expansion, new construction, electrification and digitalisation of the network. It is our intention to free the federal infrastructure from the pressure of having to make a profit and from chronic underfunding, and to create the relevant structures for this. We want to invest an additional EUR 100 billion, distributed over the years up to 2035, in the rail network and stations and, in cooperation with federal states, increase targeted regionalisation funds once more so that the per capita investment matches European levels. In order to reliably finance this investment in the long term, we will set up an infrastructure fund, which will also receive revenue from HGV tolls. We want to significantly reduce route prices in order to provide greater incentives for traffic to move onto the railways. We want to upgrade stations to make them modern, accessible mobility hubs. The combination of rail with bicycle and bus transport will thus be significantly enhanced, and the options for taking bicycles on the train are also to be expanded. We will also increase noise protection on busy routes and we hope to achieve a fully accessible railway network within ten years. We will ensure that train travel is affordable for all. In particular, we want to support young people at college or in apprenticeships by providing them with climate-friendly and affordable mobility. In future, we want all volunteers to be able to travel free of charge on Deutsche Bahn, as soldiers do. We want to make Deutsche Bahn more transparent and efficient and focussed on its core business: rail transport in Germany and neighbouring European countries. We will encourage a greater shift from road and air transport onto the railways. With us, the rail sector will become an even more strongly growing job creator offering secure jobs.

Expanding local public transport

Buses and trains are there for everyone, offer affordable mobility and reduce car traffic. We want to double passenger numbers on local public transport by 2030. To that end, local public transport must be made more attractive, more innovative and completely accessible. We also want make local public transport better connected – from long-

distance routes through to Bike & Ride – and to strengthen regional cooperations. Together with the federal states, we want to set up a future and expansion campaign, create comprehensive connectivity through a mobility guarantee, increase investment in vehicles and the local public transport network, and expand funding tools such as the Local Authority Transport Financing Act and regionalisation funding to achieve these goals. We want to promote the use of zero-emission buses through rising quotas and attractive subsidies for local authorities and, where possible, to prioritise support for the expansion and reinstatement of trams. Mobility should not depend on the size of your wallet: we want to support federal states, local authorities and associations in offering attractive pricing through to ticketless local public transport and tap into new sources of funding, such as a pay-as-you-go financing scheme.

Germany will become a cycling country and will encourage pedestrians

Bicycles offer huge potential for the mobility transition. The bicycle industry is already booming and creating jobs. In order to exploit this potential, we want to turn Germany into a cycling country. Cycling must be a safe and attractive option – everywhere. Bike lanes in cities, commuter stretches or connections between villages as well as tourist cycling routes should be characterised by high quality and high safety standards, such as a separate cycling infrastructure, as well as good signage and helpful maps. Our vision is a complete cycling network throughout Germany with connections in the border regions. We will implement the recommendations of the National Cycling Plan, which are aimed at the federal government, as quickly as possible; local authorities, federal states and companies will be offered comprehensive support in fulfilling their part of the task. The number of roads with cycle lanes and footpaths should be doubled by 2030. In order to achieve these goals, we want to significantly increase the per capita investment together with federal states and local authorities. We will strengthen federal funding and consulting services for the expansion and modernisation of the cycling infrastructure, create a powerful cycling skills centre and subsidise the procurement of work and cargo bicycles as well as S-pedelects. We will reform road traffic

legislation so that cyclists are better protected and have equal rights to space on the roads. Well-designed cycle paths should become the norm on all federal traffic routes, following the example of the Netherlands, both on existing roads and whenever new roads are built. With a national pedestrian mobility strategy, we will create accessibility, traffic safety and better conditions for pedestrians.

Introducing a mobile pass

Autonomous driving, networked mobility options, using not owning – digital advances will fundamentally change our everyday lives in the next few years. We want the German mobility sector to be a pioneer in new mobility solutions and to use digitalisation for the transport transition in ways that are sustainable, inclusive and balanced. Real time information and a uniform ticketing system must become standard in local public transport. To ensure that it is easy to get from A to B everywhere, we want to use a mobile pass to simplify and link the services offered by 120 transport companies and operators in Germany and to integrate sharing and ride pooling services in a way that eliminates social and environmental dumping. The open data principle and open interfaces must be taken into consideration in the networking process. We want to make the switch to cycling, bus and rail attractive to everyone and also support it financially. The mobile pass should also promote concessionary fares and ticketless use. All mobility concepts must be accessible and enable participation even for those without their own digital device. For autonomous driving, we will improve the legal framework with a focus on public transport. We want to strengthen passenger rights through automated compensation processes.

More safety through the mobility transition

Everyone should be able to move around in their everyday lives without fear and arrive safe and sound at their destination. Special attention must be paid to the needs of children, older people and people with disabilities during transport planning. Updated traffic regulations, a safe design of the traffic infrastructure and a redistribution of space are all crucial elements in encouraging more people to get

on their bikes or walk more frequently. Our goal is Vision Zero, i.e. no more deaths or serious injuries on the roads. To achieve greater safety on the roads, we want to reverse the rule versus exception ratio in built-up areas. A speed of 30 is the rule, yet speeds of 50 are recorded in the local area. We want to introduce a safe speed of 130 km/h on motorways. Where there are special circumstances, such as in cities or other urban areas and their suburbs, the maximum speed will be 120 km/h. In order to prevent the many accidents suffered by cyclists and pedestrians in city centres, we want to promote mandatory technical solutions such as HGV turn assist systems, fully automated assist systems or warning systems. We will work towards a reduction in unnecessary and deliberate noise, such as that emitted by excessively loud motorbikes and cars.

Making car transport climate-neutral

Car transport must, in the next ten years, finally play a major role in climate protection. Up to now, emissions have kept on rising in this sector, but now this trend needs to change direction. To achieve climate neutrality, car transport must be reduced and at the same time made zero-emission. We will ensure that, thanks to better trains, buses, cycle lanes and footpaths and other supporting measures, by 2030 more than half of the routes in the environmental network will have been completed. For many people, however, the car will continue to be important. As part of the move towards enhancing the quality of life for all, cars overall must be quieter, smaller, lighter and more digital, as well as being climate-neutral and easier to recycle. This will also include taking advantage of digitalisation, autonomous driving and the strengthening of new mobility services to use cars more efficiently. In this way, we can promote greater mobility with less traffic. From 2030, therefore, only zero-emission cars will be newly licensed for use; European CO₂ fleet limits and an increasing national quota based on the 1.5 degree pathway are paving the way here. By 2030, a relevant proportion of existing combustion engine vehicles already have to be replaced by electric cars, and that proportion should rise by 2030 to at least 15 million vehicles. In this way we will ensure we have clean air, can meet our climate and environment targets and that the automotive industry can plan its development work and invest-

ments with confidence. This will secure future-proof jobs and new business models. We want to convert subsidies for the purchase of zero-emission cars into a points system and open it up to light electric vehicles. Climate-friendly cars will get cheaper, those that damage the climate more expensive. We also want to encourage the conversion of existing combustion engine vehicles to zero-emission cars. In addition, we will use regulation, mandatory consumer information and incentives to make cars in general lighter and more efficient. We will gradually end diesel subsidies and design company car taxation to be more socio-ecological. We will speed up the comprehensive expansion of a universal charging infrastructure, especially in rural areas, including fast charging stations. Charging must be fast, green, cheap and convenient throughout Germany and Europe.

Modern transport infrastructure

For decades, the transport policy has been biased towards road building and car transport. This wipes out all climate and sustainability goals and instead leads to constant congestion issues. There is no future in this approach. Modern mobility for this century demands new priorities. Germany needs to develop an infrastructure that takes the 1.5-degree pathway into account and gives everyone access to future-proof and safe mobility. We will place the focus on the expansion of pedestrian, cycle and rail routes, an equal distribution of spaces, the repurposing of existing infrastructure and an intelligent, accessible network of environmentally-friendly modes of transport. We will also support measures that avoid the build-up of traffic and the resulting pressures. These will include creating better conditions for working from home and a return to local supply in towns and city districts. Along traffic routes, we want to see more trees planted and maintained as part of a green infrastructure. The existing Plan for Federal Traffic Routes does not come close to fulfilling these demands. Despite the climate and species crisis, and although Germany has one of the densest road networks in the world, the Plan for Federal Traffic Routes contains several hundred more road building projects, which will cut through our landscapes and natural habitats and endanger climate protection. Germany has no shortage of roads, and certainly no shortage of motorways. We therefore want to replace the Plan for Federal

Traffic Routes as soon as possible with a new federal network plan, which systematically focuses transport infrastructure planning on the requirements of the mobility transition and significantly reduces the planned number of new and expanded motorways and federal highways up to 2030. This requires a fundamental shift in the current standardised assessment process, calculation basis and criteria, taking into account the actual climate and environmental costs, a basic review of alternatives that includes other modes of transport, an improvement in the hitherto inadequate participation of citizens and associations, and a move away from the so-called road financing cycle. In this way, we will protect our residential areas, forests and waters, peatland and species diversity, and thus our own foundations of life. In the face of the climate crisis, we should not simply assume that just because things have always been planned a certain way, that's how things must now be done. We will also use the upcoming review of the current Plan for Federal Traffic Routes to carry out climate, environmental and needs assessments on all sections not currently under construction as well as road building and expansion projects that are particularly environmentally damaging, and thus greatly reduce them. Until this review has been concluded, no irreversible work should be undertaken on these projects. This is even more important given that the boom in new road construction ties up funds that are needed far more urgently elsewhere. We will therefore reallocate much of the funding set aside for road building and expansion projects and instead use it to renovate dilapidated infrastructure and expand the rail and cycle route infrastructure. This will also include a fundamental evaluation of the financial risks of road building and the new motorway operator. Road vehicles and trains should become quieter, in part through more active noise protection for existing stock. In places where we cannot reduce the noise directly at source, we will provide better noise protection.

Rural mobility through a mobility guarantee

The mobility transition faces its greatest challenges in rural areas, where many people rely heavily on their cars. At the same time, this bias towards a car-centric system reduces the autonomy of children, young people and non-car owners. We want to enable car-free and accessible rural mobility. We want to work with the federal states

to introduce a mobility guarantee with legally defined standards of connectivity across the network and at specific locations, develop a wider range of public mobility services in rural areas, support local initiatives and expand cycle paths. In economically underdeveloped regions, regular, reliable and accessible connections to local public transport services are required, for example via fast bus lines, and to mobility services such as ride pooling and on-demand transport options. However, the car will still be indispensable for many people in rural areas, particularly families. To address this, we will therefore also pursue the opportunities for switching to clean energy. The electric car is a future-proof solution, particularly in tandem with solar panels on the roof, a storage battery in the cellar and a wall charging station in the garage. At the same time, we want to make car sharing available nationwide and promote the establishment of car sharing stations, including in locations that are less immediately profitable.

The mobility transition in towns and cities

Nowhere is the mobility transition more fervently awaited than in inner cities: accidents, congestion, exhaust fumes, noise, too few places for children to play and for people to come together – the car-centric urban environment is not only damaging to the climate, it is also not a pleasant place to live. We want to make our towns and cities better places to live and thus provide them with targeted support for the mobility transition. We will make it easier to make streets multi-purpose spaces, set out attractive pedestrian and cycle routes, promote traffic calming measures and car-free zones in city centres and other districts and create more green spaces by removing paving. Temporary redesigns such as pop-up bike lanes should also be made easier in order to test best practice solutions. We want to give decision-making powers back to cities and local authorities when it comes to planning so that they can allocate their public spaces fairly, for example through stringent management of car parking, whereby cars are no longer permitted to park anywhere, but instead only in specifically designated areas, or by improving the opportunities to create bicycle parking spaces and turn car parking spaces into bicycle parking spaces. We also want to use appropriate fines to bring an end to illegal parking on cycle lanes and pedestrian paths and near

designated junctions. We will also increase the possibilities of financing, promoting and actively shaping the mobility transition through methods that have proved successful in Europe, such as congestion charges or local traffic levies. We will promote the spread of car sharing services, especially station-based models, as these will contribute to a reduction in the number of cars in our towns and cities.

Making air travel sustainable

Flying brings our world closer together, but is one of the most damaging means of travel in climate terms. After the pandemic, we do not want to return to the unlimited growth of aviation, but instead to gear it towards the goal of climate neutrality. From now on, we want to gradually reduce the number of short-haul flights and make them unnecessary by 2030 by massively expanding the rail network – especially direct and night services – and ensure fair competition between the different means of transport that reflect their environmental costs. It is important to reduce the number of medium and long-haul flights, for example by minimising public and private business travel through a switch to video conferencing. We want to make flying independent of fossil fuels in a way that is sustainable, future-proof and long-term. This can be achieved through strict European emissions trading, the promotion of modern aircraft technologies and an increase in the admixture quotas with a clear trend towards gradually replacing fossil fuel-based kerosene with electricity-based fuels made from renewables. By 2030, the quota should be at least 10 percent instead of 2 percent and should increase significantly in the following decade. We will therefore promote the expansion of production facilities. There must be an end to environmentally harmful subsidies and ongoing financial support for airports. We will also advocate for the introduction of a European kerosene tax. Until this is implemented in the EU, we will introduce a kerosene tax at national level for domestic flights within Germany. Wage dumping through cheap flights must be stopped. We reject any further expansion of the airport infrastructure. New developments in aviation, such as drones, must be measured against whether or not they can make a contribution to a sustainable mobility transition. The reduction in aircraft noise requires fewer aircraft, a requirement for active soundproofing for quieter aircraft, an effective

ban on night flights, the equal status of military and civilian airports and an amendment to the legal basis with stricter limits. For health protection, we also want to establish limits for ultrafine particles.

Sustainable freight transport

Millions of tons of freight are transported through Germany every day, mostly in the form of endless lorry convoys on our roads. In a climate-neutral Germany, freight traffic must also be sustainable, zero-emissions and less noisy. To reduce lorry traffic, we want to relocate the freight traffic from the roads to the railways. To that end we will make use of the combination of road, rail and waterways and reconnect industry and commerce to the railway network across the country. We will promote investment in modern freight transport technology, intermodal freight transport centres and transshipment terminals for combined freight transport. We will also focus on regional business cycles and the opportunities created by digitalisation and networking for the organisation of logistics. We want to regulate the boom in lorry traffic through a CO₂-oriented charge, so that the resulting costs are borne by the main polluters. Together with ambitious CO₂ fleet limits and quotas, the promotion of climate-friendly drive systems and the rapid expansion of the corresponding infrastructure, we also aim to make lorries local emission free. Greater safety in the HGV sector requires better enforcement of working time regulations. The working conditions of lorry drivers must also be considerably improved. To that end we will recruit more staff to the Federal Office for Goods Transport and give them more powers. In urban logistics, we want to promote the use of cargo bikes and cargo trams as well as new distribution concepts such as city hubs and freight carriage for the last mile through licensed carriers.

Making shipping environmentally and climate-friendly

For an export-oriented country like Germany, having an internationally competitive maritime economy is crucially important. We are committed to the development of a joint port concept by the federal government and individual states, which is based on cooperation rather than competition between locations. We want to make shipping

climate-neutral through mandatory emission reduction targets and by including it in EU emissions trading. We will create the political framework conditions for ensuring that shipping moves away from crude oil with its poisonous emissions as soon as possible and that instead, it uses shore-side electricity, low-emission terminals, alternative ship drive systems and climate-neutral fuels as well as offering fair working conditions for all those involved in sea transport. We will therefore push for higher standards worldwide. Modernised inland waterway vessels must in future make an important contribution to climate-neutral freight transport. We see ourselves as having a responsibility for ensuring the good ecological condition of all our waterways. Dilapidated waterways must be renovated in an environmentally friendly way, there should be a moratorium on river deepening measures and a fundamental review as part of the new federal network plan to reflect the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

We will protect nature and the environment for a good life

Preventing species extinction

Biological diversity safeguards life on earth. Ecological guiding principles must therefore define our actions – as a “barometer of life”. In order to overcome the biodiversity crisis and put an end to mass species extinction, above all we need to change the way we use land. As with climate protection, every day counts for nature protection. We therefore want to establish an emergency programme for species protection, which involves a clear reduction in the use of pesticides and a ban on the use of particularly harmful environmental toxins such as glyphosate. We want to stop the sale of naturally valuable federal land and the drainage of peatlands, and make former military land available for nature conservation. To ensure better connections between protected areas, we want to create nature conservation corridors. Together with the federal states, we will improve nature conservation in the Natura 2000 areas, increase the size of national parks and other protected areas where possible or create new ones and strengthen the

country's natural heritage. To ensure that nature protection finally gets adequate funding, we will chart a new course: 10 percent of the money from the Energy and Climate Fund should be set aside for climate protection through nature conservation measures. We will expand the Wilderness Fund so that at least 2 percent of the land area becomes genuine wilderness once more, where plants and animals can live undisturbed. We want to achieve a situation where the effects on the climate, nature and the environment are rigorously assessed and taken into consideration before planning any infrastructure project. A diverse cultivated landscape is also of key importance for the protection of our natural environment. We therefore want to provide better protection for - and create new - valuable elements of the landscape such as species-rich wildflower meadows, meadow orchards, vineyard terraces, avenues, individual trees and wildflower strips along roads and on municipal land. We will drastically reduce land consumption of natural and agriculture land – initially to less than 30 hectares per day well before 2030. To achieve this, we will work together with the federal states and local authorities to implement measures that limit construction on current farmland and natural areas.

Saving our forests

Our forests are under severe threat from the climate crisis – due to heatwaves, droughts and storms. We are currently experiencing a level of forest dieback that is causing far greater damage than that caused by acid rain in the 1980s. Unspoilt, species-rich and climate-stable forest ecosystems are more resilient than monocultures. They keep the water cycle in balance and the soil fertile, act as a carbon sink, purify the air, provide habitats for numerous endangered species of animals, plants and fungi, produce raw materials and serve as places for health and relaxation. We will promote the development of healthy forests that absorb more carbon than they release or is extracted from them. We want to establish legal minimum standards to ensure that forests are managed in the most natural way possible, alterations, new planting and reforestation are carried out according to green management specifications and forest owners are supported with expert support and advice. This will also help to create economic added value. Working hand in hand with nature protection and forest owner associati-

ons, we will support hunting methods that are compatible with forest protection, nature protection and animal welfare. The management of all public open spaces should be linked to ecological criteria – certified in forestry according to FSC or Naturland standards and in agriculture according to organic farming standards. As a first step, we want to turn at least 5 percent of our forests over to nature. In this way we will create the primary forests of the future. Further years of drought increase the risk of forest fires. Together with local authorities and federal states, we want to devise a nationwide fire prevention and control strategy.

Protecting biological diversity on land and in the ocean

Species decline and the destruction of natural habitats are also advancing globally. We will campaign for an ambitious United Nations agreement on the preservation of biological diversity and pledge to implement this in Germany. According to the European Union's Biodiversity Strategy, at least 30 percent of the land area and 30 percent of the oceans should be given effective protection. We want to embed the UN Sustainable Development Goals across the board as new guiding principles and make them part of a coherent policy. In the oceans, we will pursue a joint international marine strategy. We will commit to tightening marine protection by means of binding agreements, closing and focusing attention on enforcement shortcomings and regulatory loopholes so that pollution that has been legal up to now, such as tank cleaning at sea, is banned and overexploitation is prevented. We will support programmes to stop global deforestation and to protect or to reintroduce or repopulate species that are particularly at risk. Land users whose livelihoods are threatened by protective measures must receive compensation. We want to support targeted species conservation programmes run by zoos and scientific institutes while at the same time improving the conditions in which the animals are kept. Together with the federal states, we want to improve the protection and development of habitats for which we in Germany bear international responsibility, such as the Wadden Sea and ancient beech forests. When it comes to interventions in nature, unacceptable risks, such as the manipulation or eradication of entire populations or species through genetic modification – so-called gene drives – must

be banned. There is a need for a comprehensive biomass strategy so that the production and import of biomass for energy production or animal feed does not lead to the destruction of species diversity.

Protecting and renaturing rivers and peatland

The renaturing of rivers, wetlands and forests and the rewetting of peatland protects not only rare habitats and biological diversity, but also the climate. For that reason, we will launch a renaturing campaign. Pristine streams and the last free-flowing rivers such as the Elbe must be preserved and we reject any expansion of the Oder or the tidal Elbe. Measures that have a negative impact on the ecological status of our watercourses will not be permitted. We will implement these provisions from European law. Rivers with extensive wetlands and floodplains also offer the best protection against flooding and keep the water in the landscape. We will therefore redefine the remit of the Federal Waterways Administration in line with ecological criteria. We want to strengthen specific programmes for wild streams, pristine rivers, lakes, wetlands and marshland, such as the “Blaues Band”, and work together with federal states to finally ensure the consistent implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. Peatland protection is climate protection. We therefore want to see an end to peat usage and aim to rewet our peatlands as quickly and comprehensively as possible. To this end, we will set up a comprehensive and effective peatland renaturing programme, in conjunction with the federal states. In order to save still intact peatland from peat extraction, over-fertilisation and drainage, we will put it under strict conservation measures. For exploited peatland areas, we want to create economic prospects for sustainable wetland agriculture and strengthen extensive grazing and paludiculture.

Clean water is life

Water is our most important food. Fertilisers, pesticides, detergents and pharmaceutical residues do not belong in our water. To protect our groundwater, lakes, rivers and seas, we therefore want to lay down clear, legal guidelines, such as regulating the amount of land used for livestock farming and the use of pesticides and fertilisers,

and to improve our water treatment plants. A levy on polluters and a reform of the waste water levy should lead to a fair distribution of the costs of treating waste water and drinking water. We want to make manufacturers more responsible for their products. By measures such as improving the authorisation and disposal guidelines for medicines, we will thus reduce the build-up of resistance and other dangers posed by pharmaceutical residues in the water. Particularly dangerous and poorly degradable pollutants should no longer be allowed to enter the water cycle. We will finally implement the EU water law consistently and significantly reduce the amount of hormone-altering substances and microplastics entering the water. It is important to safeguard the priority of drinking water provision over commercial use. We also want to promote the reuse of waste water and the storage of rainwater and create incentives to save water. We will also apply the precautionary approach as a guiding principle in water conservation, and therefore want to change mining legislation to exclude fracking and future projects for extracting crude oil and natural gas.

Protecting the oceans, stemming the tide of plastic waste

Our oceans are in a catastrophic state – and this looks likely to get worse still as a result of further acidification, overfertilisation, overfishing, pollution and plastic waste. In order to curb the deluge of plastic waste, we want to initiate an internationally binding agreement to stop the flow of plastic into our oceans and establish an emergency programme with ambitious waste prevention targets. We want to promote technology that enables the recovery of old munitions in the North and Baltic Seas and the environmentally friendly removal of waste from the oceans. Oil rigs in the North Sea release toxic substances as a result of accidents, oily drilling mud and waste and gas flares. We are committed to putting an end to the extraction of fossil fuels. In the German Exclusive Economic Zone, we want to put an immediate stop to new oil and gas wells and cease production completely by 2025. At a European and international level, we are calling for an end to oil and gas production in the entire North and Baltic Sea regions. We also want to advance our withdrawal from gravel and sand harvesting in protected areas and at the same time prevent

overexploitation in countries in the Global South by imposing import standards. In order to end overfishing, stabilise fish stocks and give fishing communities new prospects for the future, we want to adjust catch quotas and fishing agreements, extend the closed seasons and convert the fishing industry to fishing methods that are good for the environment and the climate while also protecting fish species. This will include the earliest possible withdrawal from environmentally and climate-damaging bottom trawling and the eco-friendly regulation of bottom set gill nets. We want to orient fishing subsidies towards the ecological use of the oceans. We will support regional fishing companies in making these changes and in building up alternatives through environmentally friendly tourism services. An important step towards providing adequate rewards for green fishing and aquaculture is to introduce mandatory labelling that is fully transparent for the consumer. Vibrant oceans require the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, a moratorium on deep sea mining and the designation of extensive protected marine areas free of any exploitation.

Putting an end to waste

Plastic waste continues to increase and the percentage of reusable drinks packaging has been falling for years. Single-use cups are used for just a few minutes before being thrown away. Disused mobile phones and tablets collect dust in drawers, even though they could be reused or recycled. Our goal is zero waste. No more waste should be generated and we need to stop wasting resources. This will only be possible if manufacturers and those creating the waste assume more responsibility, and if the concept of the circular economy is taken fully into account in the design, manufacture, use and disposal of products. Unwanted advertising, often wrapped in plastic film, should not appear in our mailboxes. We will simplify the complicated deposit-based return system. Every bottle should fit into any deposit return machine, and we will make reusable takeaway cups standard by 2025. We will promote reusable packaging for transport, online trade, retail and food packaging. We will call for an EU-wide deposit-based return system. To ensure that valuable resources from old electronic items make their way back into circulation, we will start by creating a depo-

sit on mobile phones, tablets and energy-intensive batteries. We will turn the existing licence fee for plastic recycling into a resource levy. With regard to the arrangements for refuse collection, we want to strengthen the position of local authorities. The packaging legislation will become recyclable material legislation, which gives priority to all ecologically beneficial reusable products and promotes waste prevention and high-quality recycling. This means that the types of plastics and composites must be reduced and made toxin-free. Organic recyclable material should not be incinerated but instead recovered. Plastic waste should no longer be exported if it will not be recycled to a high standard. It will then become more economically viable to return materials into circulation than to throw them away. The circular economy will become the new normal.

Toxin-free products for everyday use

Plastic pollution and residual contaminants are now even being found in the bodies of children and young people. The World Health Organisation sees endocrine-disrupting chemicals as a global threat to health. We want to ban toxic chemicals that can cause illnesses such as cancer, diabetes or allergies and infertility from all everyday products by improving the EU chemicals laws and enforcing them quickly and consistently. The use of microplastics, which are already found throughout our environment, must be minimised as a matter of urgency. Microplastics have no place in cosmetics and care products. We will focus particular attention on toys, children's care products and other everyday items such as textiles, furniture and electronics. Germany should follow the example set by France and prohibit proven toxic chemicals, such as bisphenol A in cookware and food packaging or perfluorinated and polyfluorinated hydrocarbons in paper and cardboard. We want to give consumers better protection by working with the federal states to monitor imported goods more carefully for toxins, improve product labelling and make it easier to recall products. It is our goal to enable people to live healthy lives in a healthy environment.

Clean air to breathe

We all need clean air to breathe. But exhaust fumes from traffic, coal-fired power stations and old oil heating systems make us ill. Even worse: according to the calculations by the European Environment Agency, 70,000 people die prematurely each year in Germany alone from illnesses caused by air pollution. Ecological modernisation offers huge opportunities for improving air quality. Electric cars, solar and wind energy protect our air. We want to speed up this development and put the World Health Organisation recommended thresholds for air pollutants into practice as quickly as possible. We will also improve air quality in our cities by creating more green spaces there. In order to achieve these goals swiftly, we will look at all sources of emissions, such as traffic, industry and agriculture, and in this context allow the decision about whether and how in detail fireworks should be regulated to be made where it matters - on the ground locally.

Climate adaptation and more nature in towns and cities

The climate crisis is increasingly changing the framework conditions of our coexistence. The planet has already heated up by 1.2 degrees. The consequences of this change have also been felt in our country for a long time, with hot summers, floods and storms, and often fall hardest on those who are living in the most difficult circumstances. While we will continue to fight for every tenth of a degree less global warming, we must also adapt to these changes. In rural areas, we need to provide support in particular to help agriculture and forestry, tourism and the fishing industry adapt in order to reduce the damage caused by drought, crop failures and forest dieback. We want to enable our cities to cope better with heatwaves and heavy rainfall – through heat action plans and urban redevelopment on a large and small scale: more urban greenery, depaving, fresh air corridors, building greening, areas of water and public drinking fountains. They should be turned into sponge cities that are able to absorb more water, store it and use it for cooling purposes in the summer. This will also increase the quality of life for all those who cannot afford their own balcony or garden: roof gardens create natural air conditioning for apartments and offices, parks and woodland provide shade and fresh air. We want

to use improvements in building law and urban development funding to help urban and rural areas to implement all this on a local basis as quickly as possible. Our cities are also becoming increasingly important habitats for animals and plants. We therefore want to expand nature in our cities. We want to protect and ecologically enhance the green spaces that already exist, and win over gardeners and allotment holders as our allies in this task. We will stem light pollution, which harms people, animals and plants and plays a significant role in the disappearance of insects and birds.

We will support farmers, animals and nature

Making agriculture fit for the future

We want to reconcile the various interests of climate, environmental, animal and water protection and agricultural production. Making agriculture fit for the future – we see this as our task for the years ahead. This is only possible if we work with nature and with an understanding of nature that is based on circular principles and is committed to the conservation of resources. It means fertile soil that stores carbon, clean water and intact ecosystems, but also fair livelihoods for farmers and a good and healthy diet for all. We can and will only achieve this in collaboration with citizens and farmers. We want to support small businesses in particular through the necessary transformation and find pragmatic solutions for them. Our model is an evolving green agriculture based around the principles of animal welfare, no genetic modification and freedom from synthetic chemical pesticides. To that end, we want to provide extensive support for organic farming and create the conditions that enable more and more farmers and food producers to switch to organic in future. The target is for 30 percent organic farming by 2030. We will considerably expand agricultural research into the greening of agriculture. We will strengthen varied crop rotation and resilient cultivation methods such as agroforestry as well as encouraging the use of robust plant varieties and animal breeds. We will substantially reduce surplus nitrogen. Digital applications can in some cases also help make agriculture more environmentally and climate-friendly but they must also be open to and affordable for smaller bus-

inences – for example, via sharing concepts. Monocultures, pesticides and synthetic chemical fertilisers also lead to considerable damage to health and the environment in the Global South, while small farmers continue to be driven into dependency by European export dumping, patented seeds and land grabs. The right to food must be guaranteed, and we want to strengthen small rural farming structures. To that end, we will use our agricultural and development policy to support a global socio-ecological agricultural transition.

Public money for public services

The EU's Common Agricultural Policy should become an instrument for a socioecological agricultural policy and not – as hitherto – for the industrialisation of agriculture. This must be the starting point for a social contract between farmers, consumers and politicians for climate protection and nature conservation. We want to see a reform that enables the billions in public money to be used in future for public services such as climate, environmental and animal protection, thereby strengthening regional agriculture. To drive forward the sustainable conversion of agriculture together with farmers, it is important to use the national scope for the forthcoming funding period in the best possible way to achieve these goals. We want the system of direct payments to be gradually replaced by a public good bonus, which rewards social contributions. We are committed to innovative instruments of agri-environmental support, which can be used to combine climate protection and nature conservation with agro-ecological goals. By 2028, we want to have earmarked at least half the money for ecological purposes.

Reducing pesticides

There are many reasons for significantly driving down the use of pesticides in agriculture. Protecting human health is one reason. Above all, using fewer pesticides is the most important lever to stop the decline in species diversity. We want to make our departure from dependence on pesticides in agriculture as quick and feasible as possible: through a systematic pesticide reduction strategy and an immediate ban on particularly environmentally toxic substances and the pesticide gly-

phosphate, which is still widely used today. In order to reduce the overall use of pesticides, we will introduce a pesticide tax. For effective species protection and to protect our drinking water, we want to prohibit the application of pesticides in nature conservation areas and drinking water protection areas and introduce comprehensive pesticide monitoring. Affected farmers will be provided with financial support during the implementation. We will also end the export of pesticides that are not permitted or are banned in Germany or the EU due to environmental or health risks. We want to improve the approval process for pesticides by strengthening transparency and independence. For ecological crop protection, we will work in cooperation with the federal states to set up a comprehensive, combined research, implementation and advisory programme for non-synthetic chemical crop protection.

Diverse seeds without patents

Diverse, fair and sustainable agriculture begins with its seeds. In light of the climate and biodiversity crisis, we want to drive forward the cultivation of robust varieties and research into organic seeds, as well as strengthening research into alternative approaches based on traditional and organic breeding techniques. As with any technology, when dealing with old and new genetic engineering techniques, it is necessary on the one hand to safeguard the freedom of research, and on the other hand to exclude any risk to people and the environment in their application. The focus is not on the technology but rather on its opportunities, risks and consequences. We will therefore adhere to a strict approval process and to the precautionary European approach. This requires risk assessments based on a comprehensive scientific basis and regulations that exclude any uncontrolled distribution, as well as mandatory labelling, GMO-free production and the protection of consumer choice. This also involves strengthening research into the risks and evidence gathering. We want to adjust patent law so that there are no longer any patents on living things and their genetic make-up.

Fair income and working conditions for farmers

Farmers must be able to live from their work. We therefore want to take action against price dumping, the sale of foods below the production price and concentration in the food retail sector by making use of the options available through competition and cartel law as well as the EU directive against unfair trading practices. We want to support young farmers and new entrants and take measures against land speculation and the selling off of rural land. As part of this, land belonging to the federally owned land company “Bodenverwertungs- und -verwaltungs GmbH” will no longer be privatised but instead will preferably be leased to local farming operations and start-ups with the aim of cultivating the land in a climate-friendly and nature-friendly way. We will regulate share deals for agricultural operations to prevent land from being sold off to non-agricultural investors. Fair conditions must dominate in the food production and processing sectors too. Better health and safety at work conditions for those employed in agriculture and the meat industry are necessary, as are more rights for workers, collectively agreed wages and strong trade unions. When it comes to seasonal work, there is too much precarious employment with no social security protection. In this area, hard physical work is often rewarded by meagre wages and poor accommodation. We want to put an end to these social injustices.

Strengthening regional production, processing and marketing

The desire to buy more regional and artisan food - in bakeries, butchers and farm shops - is on the rise. At the same time, the coronavirus crisis has brought the importance of regionally operating supply chains to the fore. We want to strengthen regional production, processing and marketing and thus counter the demise of small businesses in recent years. This will include ensuring a level playing field compared to imported foods. In public institutions, we want to use more regional and ecological products, including goods from farms in the process of converting to organic production - in this way we can create demand and ensure fair prices. We support regional seals of approval and direct marketing for businesses through local shopping apps and regional advertising, and will provide protection from fraud by

giving a clear definition of regional products. Public funds and targeted advice on how to deal with obligations and labelling rules should primarily benefit small and medium-sized agricultural businesses and craft enterprises. We will support research and advice on regional marketing and on innovative and participative approaches such as producer associations, agricultural cooperatives or nutritional advice.

Promoting healthy eating - saving food

Healthy and ecologically valuable food should be easily accessible to all people in Germany. Access to a healthy diet should not depend on how much money you have. We want to focus on reducing diet-related illnesses. We will therefore make a change of course and will make a number of key adjustments - a good and healthy diet must be within easier reach for all. We will support nurseries, schools, hospitals, care homes, canteens and cafeterias to offer healthier, more regional and ecologically produced food; wholesome vegetarian and vegan food should also be part of the daily menu. All too often, healthy eating falls down due to an insufficient choice of products and a lack of transparency. In order to change this, we will put the onus on the food industry. We need mandatory reduction strategies against too much sugar, salt, fat and additives in ready meals and economic incentives to make healthier products. For food advertising aimed at children, we want clear regulations based on the criteria of the World Health Organisation. An environmentally friendly diet should form part of the curriculum in all relevant areas of education. The nutrition policy must also be oriented towards the goals set out in the Paris Agreement. Climate protection includes ensuring that we as a society produce and consume fewer animal products in future. We want to make vegetarian and vegan food more attractive and accessible to everyone. We intend to promote the market launch of plant-based alternatives and meat substitute products and offer better tax conditions for these. For example, VAT should be reduced on plant-based milk alternatives. We also want to reduce the tax on fair trade coffee. Overall, we want to take up the call by the EU Commission to take environmental costs into account when setting food taxation levels by carrying out an ecological tax reform, so that the price of plant-based and animal foods is both ecologically and socially just. We will take determined action to combat

food waste. We want to introduce mandatory waste reduction targets by means of a Save Our Food law, and require food retailers and producers to find suitable recipients for edible food instead of throwing it away. Taking food out of refuse containers must be decriminalised.

Clear food labelling

It should be easy to identify good, sustainable and healthy food. We want to achieve the necessary transparency with clear information about the ingredients, origin, production and the ecological footprint of food. We will introduce an obligatory animal husbandry labelling system with demanding criteria for meat and other foods made from or with animal ingredients and will advocate to make this mandatory EU-wide. This should also incorporate the further development of animal welfare standards. We want to further develop the Nutriscore nutrition labelling scheme and apply it to all convenience foods throughout the EU. We also want to improve the transparency around food origins. There must be better labelling of the allergens it contains. For the uniform labelling of vegetarian and vegan foods, we need an EU-wide, legally binding definition of “vegetarian” and “vegan”. Transparency must also apply to food hygiene, so the results of food audits must be clear for all to see.

We will enable animals to have a better life

More space for fewer farm animals

The system of “always cheaper, always more” has driven agriculture into a vicious circle: farmers are put under pressure by price dumping and have to keep producing more in order to survive, animals are bred more for performance and live increasingly shorter lives, and ecological and social problems keep increasing. Industrial factory farming and cheap meat exports across the world are not compatible with a climate-friendly future. We need to find a way out. Part of the solution is for there to be significantly fewer animals than before and for them to be able to lead a much better life. Animals need more space, access to the outdoors and activity – we want to bring in species-specific

regulations in this respect and work at EU level to bring about a significant increase in animal welfare standards. For animal welfare to become economically feasible, we want to support farmers: through a conversion subsidy, which is financed by an “animal welfare cent” on animal products, through fair prices and through a mandatory welfare labelling system for animal products. Animal husbandry should thus be linked to the space available and to upper limits per stall to guarantee they are managed in a way that is environmentally and animal-friendly. We will make sure that all stalls are made animal-friendly and fireproof in line with specific standards that all farmers must comply with. We will provide targeted support for this as well as for livestock grazing that preserves ecologically valuable grassland and uses it appropriately. It will no longer be permitted to build stalls in which animals cannot be kept according to the minimum standards set out by the EU regulations on organic farming. Instead of cruel breeding practices for high yields, we want to promote robust and dual-purpose breeds. We want to put an end to amputations, interventions without anaesthesia and cruel stunning methods as well as the use of cages and tethering. We will significantly reduce the use of antibiotics in animal husbandry. In order to use these drugs in a more targeted way and prevent resistance, priority must be given to treating individual sick animals. Reserved antibiotics should be kept for human medical use only. To avoid the transport of live animals, we will favour regional and mobile slaughterhouses over central abattoirs and will promote these accordingly. We want to limit animal transport to four hours and have better controls in place. The transport of live animals to third countries outside the EU should be completely prohibited.

Protecting and respecting animals

Animals are sentient creatures and they need protection. We will therefore improve the legal regulations around animal husbandry. We have a particular responsibility towards all animals that we keep. We want to give them a dignified, good and healthy life, free of pain, fear and stress. It is therefore necessary to enshrine effective sanctions for animal welfare violations into animal protection and criminal law and to work with federal states and local authorities towards effec-

tive enforcement. We will introduce a comprehensive right to take collective legal action for recognised animal protection organisations. The recognised animal protection organisations and an independent federal animal welfare officer should have the right to request information and access to files and be able to deal with any violations of the legislation. The animal welfare officer should also support the relevant federal authorities and be involved in legislative proposals and animal welfare issues. We want better rules for the breeding, keeping and trade of animals. We will put an end to wild animals being kept in circuses. We will work towards continuing to reduce animal experimentation in science and want to replace it as soon as possible with a clear exit strategy and innovative research methods. To that end, we will work with all players involved towards future-oriented animal-free research, promote investment in animal-free innovations and the further development of improved drug and safety trials and speed up the approval of processes that do not involve animal testing. We will finally translate the EU regulations on animal testing into German law.

Reining in the trade in wild animals

The Covid-19 pandemic has made it clear that the health of the environment, animals and people must be thought of as a whole and this planetary health approach must become the guiding principle of our actions. The overexploitation of nature has no future. The pandemic was caused by a zoonosis: an infectious disease passed from animals to humans. Such illnesses are becoming increasingly common, facilitated by the progressive destruction of nature and the encroachment of humans into the last natural habitats. This must be combated all across the world. Wild animals belong in the wild, the trade in such animals must be more strictly regulated and existing regulations must be rigorously enforced. In the countries of origin, economic alternatives must be established. The trade in wild animals via online portals and commercial marketplaces as well as commercial imports of animals captured in the wild and the import of hunting trophies must be completely banned. Keeping animals bred from wild animals should be linked to a positive list and a certificate of competence measured according to the difficulty of keeping each species. Inten-

sive animal farming can contribute to pandemics, as shown by the mink that were infected by the coronavirus. Animal husbandry must therefore also be oriented towards the need to contain possible zoonoses. We will work to ensure that the practice of keeping animals for fur and the trade in fur from fur farms is ended.

Chapter 2: **Doing business in the future**

Climate neutrality is a major opportunity for Germany as an industrial location. Green technologies from Germany are in demand worldwide. We Europeans are still the leaders in renewable hydrogen. For large parts of German industry, the Paris Climate Agreement has become an integral part of their planning, and business investment strategies are geared towards climate protection. Most businesses know that the markets of the future are climate neutral. They also know that Germany can do so much more. In companies, minds and structures lies the innovative strength and the determination to do business in the future. We can see the agility of entrepreneurs in developing new ideas or business models, while at the same time also wanting to live up to their social responsibility. And we are convinced that free, creative action, the dynamism of fair competition and the strength of social cooperation enable problems to be solved innovatively.

Digitalisation means another major transition that will shape our economy and society decisively. We want to shape digitalisation and make sure that the necessary innovations are developed and marketable in Europe. Germany and Europe should also be at the forefront of future technologies. To achieve this, we will also use the opportunity to shape the debate provided by the German G7 Presidency in 2022.

However, the German and European economy are under major pressure: our industrial nation has to assert itself in global competition with authoritarian state capitalism and largely unregulated tech giants. The pandemic has hit many sectors of the economy hard, and some sectors had previously slept through the transformation. The climate crisis and the finiteness of resources require a change of direction. At the same time, our understanding of what prosperity means is changing. However, if we now go about it in a smart way, we can recalibrate our economic and financial system. Then we can ensure that growth only takes place in alignment with the planetary

limits, instead of overusing our natural resources.

We will organise our social systems, the labour market and public finances so that they remain stable even when doing business within these limits. We can establish a social-ecological market economy in the interests of the common good in Europe, that reconciles prosperity with sustainability and equity and serves people. This is the starting point for a new economic dynamism that creates future-proof jobs, in skilled trades, start-ups or in the service sector, that ensures quality of life, enables us to develop freely as people and can create climate-friendly prosperity.

This requires determined politics that leads the way forwards and steers reliably. Not because the state is better at doing business, but because the economy needs clear conditions, reliable political framework conditions and incentives. Only then do businesses have planning security and know that climate-neutral, sustainable business pays off. And only then can the innovative strength of employees and entrepreneurs evolve into appropriate decisions for individual businesses to create sustainable prosperity.

Unregulated markets can cause a lot of damage. However, if we shape markets to be sustainable and social, they can unleash the innovations that we need for the transformation. For this to succeed, we will consistently lay the foundations for climate neutrality and a circular economy and create new scope for the economy within the planetary boundaries. We will create incentives, remove environmentally harmful subsidies and set regulatory standards for sustainable production, action and consumption. We will use concepts such as growth, efficiency, competition and innovation as a means to an end and reassess climate-friendly prosperity as the actual goal of politics. We will launch a comprehensive investment campaign, both in the public and private sector, to counter the huge investment backlog in our country and significantly strengthen climate protection, digitalisation and education. We will rely on a precautionary budgetary policy for this.

We will resolutely deal with the inequities in the tax system and use the incentive effect of taxes for climate protection and the circular economy. We will ensure that very wealthy and prosperous people and large corporations face up to their responsibilities more. Global corporations should not be more powerful than governments

– the primacy of democratic politics has to be asserted. We want to reduce the enormous gap between rich and poor, as societies in which inequality is low are generally happier societies. High incomes and assets should therefore contribute more to the financing of our community and take the pressure off lower ones. We also want to help reduce continuing serious economic imbalances in Europe and worldwide through more public investment in Germany and by enforcing good wages.

Economic and financial policy must be European. As Europeans, we can set international standards with our strong internal market and drive forward innovations. As long as there is distortion of competition, it is also necessary to protect the EU internal market and, above all, the critical infrastructure. At the same time, we advocate a joint strategic foreign trade policy that makes fairness a requirement of international competition and free world trade and promotes sustainable economic activities in accordance with human rights worldwide. As Europeans, we are investing jointly in climate protection, research and the prosperity of the future; a Green New Deal is paving the way for this. In a federal government, we will do everything in our power to make the European Union the first CO₂-free economic area.

This is how we are laying the foundations for Germany and Europe to remain successful industrial locations with productive medium-sized companies, high added value, a strong social state and good jobs – in traditional and innovative industrial companies, in machine engineering and in small and medium-sized businesses. With an active economic and industrial policy, we will indicate a direction and offer future-proof businesses good conditions. This is how we will turn the “Made in Germany” brand into a quality label for a future-proof economy in a climate-neutral and social Europe. In addition, we will promote a cooperative and caring economic system. This will create many jobs in regional value chains, oriented towards public welfare instead of being profit-driven. We need a diverse economy that is resistant to crises.

We will promote entrepreneurship, competition and ideas

A decade of investments for the future

After the coronavirus pandemic, our country needs a new economic start. The best thing that politics can contribute to this is to do what it has reprehensibly failed to do in the last ten years: invest in our common future. Only if the state also contributes its share, if public and private investments are jointly directed towards one goal, will Europe keep up in the area of modern future technologies and be able to assert itself in competition with the USA and China. We will launch an investment campaign in the next legislative period. With investment in high-speed internet, everywhere. Cutting-edge research, from quantum computers to the latest biotechnology. In climate-neutral infrastructure, in charging stations, the expansion of rail, pedestrian and bicycle traffic, zero-emission buses, energy storage technologies, renewable energies and modern urban development. We want Germany to go from being a straggler in terms of public investment compared to other industrialised countries, to becoming a frontrunner and to invest an additional EUR 50 billion per year in this decade. These investments should also be subject to gender budgeting. This is how the social-ecological transformation can succeed, how we can create sustainable prosperity and secure the competitiveness of our country in an empowered European Union.

A fresh start after the coronavirus crisis

Many companies were hard hit by the coronavirus pandemic. While some had to go deep into debt, others did not make it through the crisis and had to give up their business. Especially hard hit are restaurants, pubs, hotels, the tourism and events sector, the cultural industry, but also many retailers and self-employed people. A fresh start after the coronavirus crisis must therefore target help towards the sectors particularly affected - and at the same time send a signal for a change in direction towards climate neutrality. This is how we will secure liveli-

hoods, retain jobs and provide targeted economic stimuli. For this, we will above all extend the tax loss carryback for small and medium-sized companies, introduce attractive, time-limited depreciation conditions and help small and medium-sized companies to re-establish themselves more easily with simplified restructuring procedures, without having to file for bankruptcy. If coronavirus aid has to be paid back, companies require generous conditions. Secure contracts via empowered local authorities can support a fresh start for many self-employed people after the pandemic. We want to strengthen the art and culture sector via a coordinated cultural funding policy and a second opportunity to set up a business. Many public limited companies were supported by state assistance during the coronavirus crisis. Companies were saved from collapse by short-time working allowances, investments or other financial assistance. For any new aid, the following must apply: firms that receive state assistance will not be permitted to pay out any dividends.

Climate protection technologies made in Germany

Global competition for the technologies of tomorrow is in full swing. Made in Germany should not only stand for quality in the future, but even more for sustainable and innovative products and processes. The state and companies must work together to get to grips with digitalisation and climate neutrality. While the state is making more public investments, we also want to create incentives for more investments by companies. To do this, we will give companies additional targeted room for manoeuvre: investments should be able to be depreciated by at least 25% on a declining balance basis for a limited time. Tax incentives for research should be targeted more towards SMEs and start-ups in future, and we want to evaluate and increase its effectiveness. Public investment grants should provide start-up support particularly for new technologies; climate contracts help to provide permanent planning security for long-term climate investments.

Introducing start-up capital

To ensure the prosperity of tomorrow, we need a wave of new entrepreneurs. We want to ensure that no good ideas and no new start-ups fail due to a lack of equity by introducing a start-up capital scheme that guarantees a one-off amount of up to EUR 25,000 for company founders and successors. It is a condition that the funded start-up has to be oriented towards the UN sustainability goals and that a viability audit is carried out by experts. It should be made easy for company founders: instead of having to plough through a jungle of administration, they should be able to get information, advice and the opportunity to register at a central contact point – everywhere in Germany. They should be largely exempted from notification and reporting requirements for the first two years. Women are still under-represented in start-ups and as successors; we want to offer them targeted support with a state venture capital fund only for women. We will ensure parity in the awarding bodies and selection committees. Obstacles for people with an immigration background should also be dismantled; our country is letting huge potential go to waste here. We will involve start-ups more in public procurement and simplify the procurement procedure and rules for the eligibility assessments. We will facilitate employee participation and make it more widely accessible. An increasing number of start-ups want to support the common good with digital solutions. We will therefore integrate more social-ecological criteria into the existing start-up financing.

Fair competition for climate-neutral industrial technologies

The energy-intensive industries - steel, cement, chemicals – are responsible for 15 percent of German CO₂ emissions. At the same time, they offer hundreds of thousands of good jobs and are also cornerstones of our prosperity. We want to turn these industries into technology pioneers in the development of climate-neutral processes. The machine engineering sector can take on a key role in the worldwide application of green technologies made in Germany. In this way, we will combat the climate crisis and contribute to safeguarding German as an industrial location. To enable investments to start flowing into long-term climate-friendly plants immediately, we will directly

support the transformation with investment grants and declining balance depreciation. We will drive the decarbonisation of processes forward by removing obstacles to self-supply with green electricity and increasing the use of green hydrogen. Climate contracts (Carbon Contracts for Difference), which fund the difference between the current carbon price and the actual CO₂ avoidance costs will ensure investment security. And with quotas for the share of CO₂-neutral raw materials, we will create lead markets for CO₂-free products. We particularly want to support pilot plants for low-emission technologies that are not yet market-ready. And as far as possible, the goal should be for new industrial plants to be built or exported that can already be operated with zero emissions. For the transformation of the chemical industry, we will focus on new innovative products, processes and techniques that not only promote greenhouse gas neutrality, but also the circular economy, that increase efficiency, avoid emissions and waste from the outset and make us independent of fossil raw materials such as crude oil or natural gas.

A future-proof car industry

The car industry is facing huge upheavals. Competition for the zero-emission, digital car of the future is happening worldwide. After years of stagnation, the German car sector has also finally made a move in this direction. Now, determination and cooperation are required to create future-proof jobs and climate-friendly added value in the car industry. The transformation of the automotive industry into an important player for sustainable mobility is essential. Politics has a key role to play here; it must establish the framework and shape the transformation process. One thing is clear here: the combustion engine has no future. From 2030 onwards, we only want to register zero-emission new cars. In addition, we also want to set standards in the car industry for a circular economy and climate-neutral production, as well as decarbonisation in the steel sector, so that the ecological footprint of vehicles is increasingly reduced. We will support this transformation with research and innovation funding for all technology options and want to promote the rapid development of the charging station infrastructure and the expansion of the market for emission-free vehicles via a cost-neutral points system. As part of

this, we want to exploit the potential of new mobility services and of autonomous driving on industrial sites and also for climate protection and road safety. In addition, it is also necessary to consider the opportunities for added value and jobs in the mobility transition: from new jobs in local public transport to vehicle production. It is also important for Germany and Europe to catch up quickly in the area of battery cell production. Particularly for the next generation of batteries, that are cheaper and more resource-efficient, we want to create our own sustainable battery production in Europe, which includes an effective recycling system as well as research and development into the next generation of batteries. For this, we will back clear guidelines for ecological standards and a comprehensive research and funding programme. We want to support the automotive regions particularly affected via regional transformation dialogues and funds. In this way, we will preserve the value chain of medium-sized companies and secure local jobs. We want to support employees in the car industry and their suppliers by providing options to gain qualifications and further training.

Strengthening the European semiconductor industry

A successful and far-sighted industrial policy will only work if it is conceived of in a pan-European way. Particularly with a view to any necessary sectoral structural support, such as the development of hydrogen infrastructure, the production of solar modules and battery cells or supporting the semiconductor industry, a European orientation is crucial. To reduce critical dependencies, we are committed to European cooperation with open standards. EU capacity in the area of semiconductor technology should be expanded to 20 percent of worldwide production as proposed by the EU Commission. This applies above all to the areas in which we already have a strong European position in semiconductor technology for industrial applications or in which particularly dynamic development can be expected in future, such as renewable energies. For this to happen, investments need to be increased all along the semiconductor value chain.

Renewable energies made in Europe: a key branch for climate protection

To become climate-neutral, we need one thing above all: a very large amount of renewable energy. To build the plants for this, we do not want to be entirely dependent on suppliers outside Europe and end up in another situation of import dependency. The good news is that there are still manufacturers of key components such as wind turbines and inverters in Europe and there are also once again initial investments in production capacities for the extremely important PV module production. Various innovations in photovoltaics are indicating that the potential of this technology has not been exhausted to the full by any means. The German solar industry should become a driving force. We want to support this development with targeted investment assistance.

Making the circular economy standard and driving forward the repair and recycling industry

Rubbish is a design error and a waste of important resources and raw materials – which are finite and make us dependent. We need a new policy for raw materials as we move to a circular economy, one which reduces the use of primary raw materials, replaces fossil raw materials with renewable ones and ties global raw material extraction to high transparency, social and environmental standards. In the area of domestic raw material extraction, we want to step up dialogue between the players involved. Whether it's packaging, buildings, cars or laptops – we will create the legal framework conditions and economic incentives so that all products can be used for a long time, reused, shared, repaired and recycled into high-quality materials. Ultimately this means by 2050 at the latest: no more rubbish and an end to planned obsolescence, instead, more local green jobs in a new European repair and recycling industry that reduces dependency on finite resources and raw material imports. We will point the way with mandatory obligations for manufacturers, ambitious recycling quotas, tax and levy rules, norms and standards and targeted funding programmes. By 2030, we will provide all goods and materials that enter the market with a digital product passport that gives companies

and consumers all the important information on the design, carbon footprint, repairability and materials that is necessary for a climate-neutral circular economy. Efficient use of materials and a circular economy reduce energy consumption and will make a significant contribution to the success of the energy transition.

Putting research results into practice and stimulating the start-up culture

Research is conducted according to the highest standards at our universities and research institutes. However, promising research results – including, in particular, findings from basic research – must be put into practice more often. The success of the vaccines is encouraging in this respect: an entirely new technology enabled the development and production of several coronavirus vaccines in record time. However, structural barriers are still preventing spin-offs. The existing funding programmes for translating research into applications are not sufficient. We want to drive forward the expansion of funding programmes for high-tech start-ups, start-up centres and training for entrepreneurs. Silent participation by public institutions should become the new standard for spin-offs. In addition, we want to give stronger support to the development of vaccines, drugs and medical products. If they are researched and developed with a significant share of public money, clear conditions must be attached to the funding in relation to the transparency of research costs, fair pricing and equitable access opportunities worldwide. We are likewise committed to a medium-term standardisation of incorporation and company law within the European Economic Area.

Making management boards more diverse

Germany is diverse; its boardrooms are not (yet). However, diverse teams lead companies more successfully. Therefore, the diversity of German society must urgently also be reflected in boardrooms and governing bodies as well as business. Although women are at least as qualified as men, they are absent at that level. Our goal is and remains: for women to have half the power. Voluntary regulations have achieved nothing. That is why we need quotas that really

create the critical mass to reach our goal of a 50 percent proportion of women. Thus in future, it will be a mandatory requirement that at least a third of the new appointments to board positions at larger and listed companies should go to women. To make this easier we also want to eliminate barriers such as the lack of parental leave provisions in company law. The supervisory boards of these companies should aim for a mandatory proportion of women of at least 40 percent when making new appointments. Companies owned by the federal government or in which the federal government has a stake, ministries and public authorities should set a good example with clear plans for parity in their operational structures. Career promotion is not only about those at the top. Therefore, we are committed to dismantling obstacles to the advancement of women in companies and organisations. Going forward, the aim is for women to make up 50 percent of the management positions in ministries, administrations, public agencies, municipal associations and municipal companies. We want to make business development more gender-equitable and support women where they are under-represented with targeted measures, for instance, through a state venture capital fund only for start-ups founded by women.

Combatting the shortage of skilled workers

Due to demographic changes, the number of people of working age will shrink by six million in the next 15 years. At the same time, the jobs of the future require entirely new skills. The labour shortage and shortage in skilled workers will increase. We want to counteract this. For this, we will invest more in vocational and in-service training. Dual vocational training should be enhanced by further development and modernisation; especially with regard to course content and facilities. The funding needs to be adjusted. The master craftsman certificate should be free of charge, like university study. We will not let any potential go to waste: we will dismantle obstacles often still standing in the way of women, older people, people with disabilities, young people from low-income homes and people with an immigration background and we will counteract gender stereotypes. We will make immigration into our country easier by introducing a talent card and faster recognition of foreign educa-

tional and professional qualifications, including reciprocal arrangements within the EU. Generally, we want to speed up the recognition of foreign educational qualifications and make the recognition procedure less expensive. To guarantee fair procedures for all in the recognition of academically recognised university degrees not recognised by the state up to now, we want to examine possible adjustments required and improve recognition practice. Refugees should have the opportunity to change their status, giving them more legal certainty while training, studying and working, thereby also providing employment prospects for them in Germany. We will support businesses that give refugees and immigrants an opportunity for training and employment, if necessary by providing contact persons, qualifications, advice and guidance.

A medium-sized enterprise policy targeting innovation

The German medium-sized enterprise segment is versatile, innovative and internationally competitive. It is here that the solutions for the challenges of the future are emerging and it is they that create added value in the regions and for them. Our medium-sized enterprise policy is based on the triad of a reduction of bureaucratic burdens, an innovation-friendly tax policy and a wide-ranging research landscape. We will support the medium-sized enterprise segment in terms of innovation and transformation through quicker planning and permits and efficient, digital administration. Reporting obligations should be simplified. To achieve this, proposals should be tested and improved together with users from the administration and companies of all sizes. This will require consistent application and improvement of so-called SME tests at the national and European level, along with the expansion of public procurement more oriented towards innovation. To support and take pressure off solo self-employed people and micro-enterprises, the profit threshold for the requirement to keep accounts will be raised. We are committed to good conditions for small businesses and self-employed people so that they get fair chances in competition. We want to make funding programmes and investment grants sustainable and ensure that it is primarily SMEs that benefit from them. For this, they should be significantly easier to apply for and document. In addition, tailored advice on climate protection and digitalisation

should be supported, including over longer periods. We want to systematically strengthen the promotion of regional innovation ecosystems consisting of universities, the medium-sized enterprise segment and civil society by founding an independent innovation agency (D.Innova). Oriented towards global sustainability goals, D.Innova should systematically, proactively and flexibly promote these types of innovation networks – from Aachen to Anklam and from Flensburg to Füssen. We want to strengthen the regional economy via the companies, value chains and products operating locally and back clearly defined regional labels and promotion concepts.

Affordable rents for small and medium-sized enterprises

Property speculation has caused commercial rents to rise in many cases to economically unsustainable levels, and there is no end to this trend in sight. Many small traders and business people are being pushed out. We want small and medium-sized companies, just like social institutions, to have permanently better protection against eviction and more rights to extend fixed-term rental agreements with reasonable conditions. Furthermore, we will work for the introduction of commercial rent control, allowing a cap on commercial rents in cities with a pressurised commercial space market.

Competition law for the 21st century

Strong competition law is a fundamental requirement for fair economic relationships, prevents monopolies and protects consumers. Environmental protection and social standards cannot be allowed to become collateral damage of competition. Therefore, we want to adapt national rules on unfair competition so that a breach against environmental and social standards can be prosecuted as unfair competition. In addition, we want to incorporate the consideration of environmental protection aspects into German and European merger control procedures at a fundamental level. We want to make consumer protection an objective of the Act against Restraints of Competition and effectively reinforce its public enforcement. We want to adapt the controversial ministerial permission process in the context of merger controls so that opposing parties have access

to their full legal remedies again. Data protection authorities should be consulted when a merger control process is being carried out by the Federal Cartel Office and their opinions should be taken into consideration in the decision on the merger.

Securing the future viability of a strong skilled trade sector

Skilled trades are present everywhere in our everyday lives and are indispensable. They are characterised by their great variety: from heating installation businesses to bakeries, from medium-sized companies with hundreds of employees to micro-businesses. The sector is one of the most important economic factors in Germany. Skilled trades provide crisis-proof jobs in a sustainable economy and contribute significantly to the ecological transition. They also provide prospects for young people in rural areas. Particularly for them, the ecological transformation offers huge opportunities – from building renovation to replacing heating systems. We want to improve the framework conditions by reducing bureaucracy, supporting successors and providing targeted support for training in the skilled trades. The primary goal is the preservation and future viability of businesses. A significant increase in the number of trained and further trained people is also required in various sectors, such as the building sector. To make skilled trade occupations more attractive, we are committed to stronger collective bargaining agreements, sector-specific minimum remuneration and more equivalence between vocational and academic training. The ability to transfer from university into the skilled trades and back should be a given, as should international exchanges and access to scholarships.

Culture creates prosperity

The cultural and creative industries are one of the most undervalued sectors in Germany. Before coronavirus, the over 1.2 million creatives and cultural workers achieved a turnover of nearly EUR 180 billion in 2019 alone – more than, for example, the chemical industry or financial service providers. However, the cultural and creative industries have been existentially threatened by the coronavirus crisis, including in particular small businesses such as independent publishers, private

theatres, arthouse cinemas, small clubs and event venues. We will only be able to save large parts of our cultural life from collapsing by targeted protection and improved support. We will expand the definition of innovation in the programmes for promoting business start-ups so that the cultural and creative industries also benefit from these. We will specifically tailor funding programmes to the needs of the cultural and creative industries and we will expand start-up support to take people out of unemployment as needed.

Helping the tourist industry get back on its feet sustainably

The travel and tourism industry – a central economic factor that employs millions of people – has been hard hit by the coronavirus crisis. We want to help it get back on its feet and, at the same time, make tourism after coronavirus more climate-friendly, ecological and socially sustainable. Ecologically and socially blind mass tourism with climate-damaging cruise ships, an endless production of waste and huge consumption of resources has no future. Rather, the cruise industry must finally also play its part by means of new propulsion systems, the use of shore-side electricity and better environmental standards. On the other hand, sustainable tourism offers huge opportunities. We will support the targeted development of sustainable or soft tourism especially in rural regions, for example by expanding tourist cycle routes and waterways. We want to make nature something everyone can experience with a shelter system like the one in Denmark. At the same time, national parks, biosphere reserves and nature protection areas should be protected long-term by means of regulated tourism. The train should become the number one mode of transportation for tourism – via a European overnight train network and the targeted connection of tourist regions to the rail network. In this way, tourism can help to preserve a world that is still worth visiting in the future.

We will provide a socio-ecological framework for the market

Reassessing prosperity and entrepreneurial success

Prosperity is not only defined by the growth of the GDP, but can be understood in much broader terms as quality of life. We want to measure the success of Germany and its companies not only on the basis of economic criteria, but also based on inclusive, social, ecological and societal criteria and reorient the political guiding principles such as incentives and economic development accordingly. To do this, an annual prosperity report should be published in future alongside the annual economic report. This will also consider, for example, the contribution nature protection, an equitable distribution of income or good education makes to prosperity in our society. Accordingly, we will change the performance measurement at company level and add social and ecological values to the accounting rules, such as for instance their greenhouse gas emissions, and we will also advocate for this for international regulations. In this way we will finally achieve uniform rules for measuring sustainable entrepreneurial success and make an important contribution to sustainability not being punished as it is today, but rather positively encouraged.

An ambitious design for the European Green Deal

In the European Green Deal, the EU Commission has presented a programme to make the European Union the first climate-neutral continent. It includes proposals for legislation in the areas of climate and environmental protection as well as for increased competitiveness, energy security and innovative dynamism in a decarbonised European economy. We will advocate for an ambitious design and bold implementation at all levels. We will continue to push for the ecological transition to contribute to reducing inequality. For this, we want to top up and expand the Just Transition Fund. In agricultural policy, we are fighting for the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and its implementation to be included as one of the objectives of the Green

Deal and the Paris Climate Agreement as they will have enormous effects on environmental and species protection. In trade policy, we want to make the environment and social sections of future trade agreements legally binding and enforceable.

Using the power the EU internal market for the transformation

The EU internal market is a success story that is based on its high standards, particularly in global competition: in consumer and data protection, in environmental and health protection as well as for social security and product safety. We want to preserve and expand these high standards as part of a socio-ecological transformation of the internal market because they increase the innovative strength of companies, enable economies of scale to be exploited and foster international trade. To shape digitalisation, we must regulate the services of platforms and their market power. Platforms must be obliged to guarantee European quality and security standards, including in online commerce. We want to increase the global steering effect of the internal market by ensuring that companies in the European market also take responsibility internationally for their production and distribution methods along the entire value chain. We want to expand the scope for action of local authorities in the European Union and protect public services from the pressure to liberalise.

Strengthening social enterprises and cooperatives

We want to strengthen the areas in the economy in which long-term sustainability counts more than short-term profits and that often contribute to the democratisation of the economy. We therefore support cooperatives on the one hand as they are more crisis-proof and more oriented towards the common good than other legal forms. On the other hand, we will promote social enterprises as they combine a social purpose with entrepreneurial activity directly via socio-ecological goals. And we welcome the concept of the economy for the common good because it spreads broad-scale awareness of the idea of the common good across the private sector. We will create funding tools for specific target groups and we want to expand the programmes for traditional start-up and innovation funding. Our goal is a wave of new cooperatives and socio-

ecologically inspired company start-ups oriented towards the common good. To achieve this, we will systematically improve the framework conditions under which they do business and eliminate existing disadvantages. We want to make the start-up grant from the employment agencies dependent not only on economic profit but also on socio-ecological impact criteria. We want to use unused balances in abandoned accounts – provided there are no inheritance claims on them – for a fund that specifically invests in sustainable and social innovation.

New types of company for sustainable entrepreneurship

We are committed to introducing a legal company form for responsible ownership. An increasing number of entrepreneurs do not regard their company as an individually consumable asset. They do not want their company to serve the interests of short-term shareholder value, but instead they want it to be oriented towards the long term and to serve the common good. For this, they need a legal form that enables a one hundred percent commitment of the assets to the company. Profits are reinvested or donated. Voting rights can be held in trust by employees collectively or by individuals – they are not sold to the highest bidder, but instead, similar to the arrangement in partnerships of lawyers, always passed on to people actively linked to the company.

We will drive digitalisation forward

A European cloud infrastructure

Data is a key resource in the digital world, especially for artificial intelligence applications. We want to create new approaches, especially in the industrial sector, to improve and provide legal certainty for the joint, voluntary use of both non-personal and personal but anonymised data, for example from development and production processes. The medium-sized company segment will benefit in particular from this. This requires clear legal rules of play for cooperative and decentralised data pools and data trust models such as data cooperatives, for example, that enable the joint use of this data, verifiable by competition authorities. We want to set our own European standards and

rules. We want to protect our own critical infrastructure and create a joint European cloud infrastructure based on open source technologies. Europe must invest in its own expertise in the area of processing large amounts of data for artificial intelligence.

Enhancing our position as a high-tech location

The rapid development of the coronavirus vaccine by scientists and entrepreneurs from Mainz has shown the innovative strength inherent in our research and corporate landscape. Innovative strength that the state must support with speed and determined investments. We want to particularly support the areas of artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing, IT security and communications technology and biotechnology, as well as the further development of ecological battery cells in order to secure our technological sovereignty and play a leading role in global competition. Here, we will place a particular focus on exploiting the ecological and social potential of these technologies. In this way, innovations will improve people's living conditions and ensure prosperity for tomorrow. For this we also need private risk capital, which we want to strongly leverage with state funds. A strong European network of cutting-edge research is required to be able to keep up in international competition against other locations. We will invest in cutting-edge research and the formation of clusters in these fields. We want to lay the foundation stone today for European sovereignty in relation to other AI trends, for instance by supporting a European ecosystem for testing artificial general intelligence. However, enhancing our position as a high-tech location also means attracting the urgently needed talent. This means adequate funding for research.

Giving start-up venture capital a direction

We have to not only show excellence in technology, but also be able to convert groundbreaking technologies into new business models, markets, services and products. Funding opportunities and networks for start-ups and young enterprises at the national and European level can make the difference between a good idea on a flip chart and a globally successful company. A state venture capital fund can

help give our start-up entrepreneurs a permanent home. We are calling for even more, even faster investment. This future fund should combine scattered funding offers and leverage significant amounts of private funds. At the same time, a functioning secondary market for direct investment and shares in venture capital funds should be set up, for example through a co-investment platform. The mission of the future fund will be sustainability. It will finance projects in areas such as green tech, artificial intelligence, sustainable mobility, bioeconomy and the circular economy in particular, as these do not easily obtain financing on the market due to their risk profile. We want to adapt forms of financing specifically for founding start-ups in the green economy and to dismantle barriers in accessing public procurement contracts. We want to promote regional green tech hubs to facilitate cooperation between start-ups and established companies.

Regulating internet giants

We advocate functioning, fair competition in the digital markets. This is being restricted, or even removed, by the excessive market power of a few internet and tech giants. Relevant acquisitions by tech companies should be examined by the Federal Cartel Office to prevent the strategic purchase of budding competition ("killer acquisitions"). In the process, data protection authorities should have an opportunity to provide an opinion. The interoperability of their software and digital services as well as data portability and open interfaces should be required to be guaranteed wherever possible by market dominant companies. We will advocate for an appropriately ambitious implementation of the Digital Markets Act at the European level. Therefore we want to establish a European digital supervisory authority under the umbrella of an independent European cartel office to act as an early warning system and be able to impose sanctionable cooperation and transparency duties. Companies should be able to be split, irrespective of any malpractice, when their market power is becoming too great or is already too great.

Gender diversity in the digital economy

Everyone should be involved in shaping the digital transformation and be able to contribute their capabilities. Therefore, we will put forward and implement a Women in Digitalisation strategy. Girls should be inspired by digital topics early on at primary school and grow up without gender stereotypes in relation to technology. We need teaching that is sensitive to gender, targeted approaches to encourage women onto STEM courses and into skilled occupations as well as more women in the committees where these strategic decisions are made. In addition, we will promote family-friendly training paths for women with other occupational backgrounds to access the digital sector. A change in culture is needed in the digital sector, and also to realise our full innovation potential. Both voluntary and mandatory measures for companies are necessary to enable discrimination-free jobs and equal access to positions of influence in the digital transformation. When allocating funding and public investments, the proportion of women in an organisation or a start-up must be taken into consideration. Diversity should be a guiding principle for all digital strategies in government institutions.

Transparent algorithms

Data processing and algorithmic decision systems have the potential to generate new knowledge and thereby enable more sustainable action. Data-driven systems are not neutral as they are a product of their underlying data and can therefore be discriminatory and prejudiced. Therefore, we want to promote quality criteria as well as the European efforts for transparency and verifiability so that algorithmic decision systems do not operate in a discriminatory way. We will advocate for a European regulatory framework, tiered according to risks, for the use of automatic systems with clear rules on traceability, data protection, employment law and data quality to allow monitoring and provide accountability, but also to provide legal certainty for the companies concerned. Here, we want to more strongly define and implement the same standards at the European level. For public monitoring of these rules, public authorities must be well-trained and in a technical position to do this. This also means updating the

General Act on Equal Treatment as well as strict criteria for the use of algorithmic and automatic decisions, especially in public administration. Platform providers must also make their automated decisions, comparisons or prices transparent and be able to explain these

IT security as a location factor

Good IT security and clear standards based on the rule of law safeguard basic rights and are a prerequisite for the digital transformation to succeed. It is the duty of the state to guarantee these. In particular, critical infrastructure such as our power grids must be specially protected. Good IT security has been an important location factor for a long time. Anyone who wants to be digitally sovereign must act accordingly and must not undermine the security of everyone. Effective, up-to-date data protection protects human dignity and looks more closely at society as a whole to design collective defence measures, including against supra-individual risks. We will provide incentives for good data protection and the best IT security and we want to expand innovative, technical approaches for effectively protecting privacy and press ahead with audits and uniform European certification. SMEs especially should be much more strongly supported by a decentralised and independent IT advisory network. The state itself must set a good example, increase its support for the important work of the supervisory authorities and improve their cooperation in federal and European interactions, right up to the joint performance of tasks and enforcement. We will strengthen the independence of the Federal Office for Information Security. IT security must be planned and implemented right from the beginning in state IT projects. In addition, we want to specifically promote the development of secure hardware. To improve the sustainability of digital products, we will introduce an obligation for the adequate, risk-based and user-friendly provision of security updates. During the roll-out of digital infrastructure, such as 5G, for example, we want to safeguard our critical infrastructure, the digital sovereignty of Europe and adherence to human rights such as the right to privacy. This requires the highest IT security standards for components used in digital infrastructure first of all. And secondly, we want to strengthen Europe's technological independence by increasing developments and production within the EU and through diverse

digital ecosystems and open standards. To be able to assess specific threats, legal, constitutional, security and geostrategic aspects have to be subject to scrutiny as well as technical aspects. We reject any participation in the critical infrastructure by untrustworthy companies, especially from authoritarian states.

We will fight for fair and sustainable trade

A fresh start for good trade agreements

Trade is an important basis for our prosperity: fair trade helps to deepen international partnerships and thereby also to make the world safer. Especially in times that are increasingly marked by systemic competition between democratic and authoritarian states, we are committed to a proactive trade policy. We want multilateral world trade and trade agreements that help to provide prosperity for everyone, call for environmental and climate protection as well as adherence to human rights and strengthen the relationships with our partners working for democracy and freedom. Fragmentation of trade relations makes international cooperation more difficult. A sustainable and fair reformed World Trade Organisation (WTO) must contribute to real global partnership. As a first step, we want to revive the WTO Appellate Body for dispute settlement to curb the growing number of trade conflicts conducted according to the law of the strongest. We want to seize the opportunity to resolve trade conflicts with the new US administration and create a transatlantic market for climate-neutral products. We reject agreements with negative consequences for the environment or food sovereignty, such as the EU-Mercosur agreement with Latin American states. The European Union can enter trade negotiations confidently due to its large common internal market. European trade agreements must be binding and contain enforceable human rights, environmental and social standards and principally only regulate market openings in the service industry via positive lists. This includes making the Paris Climate Agreement as well as the ILO core labour standards an enforceable condition. The European precautionary principle must always be upheld. Good trade policy must adequately protect local authority public services and the possibility of

bringing them back into public ownership. Trade agreements should not only regulate the rights of companies, but also their duties. We therefore advocate a multilateral trade court at the United Nations that covers both aspects. International corporations must not become even more powerful through trade and investment lawsuits; therefore we reject lawsuit privileges or preferential justice for foreign investors. We want the EU and its member states to pull out of the completely outdated Energy Charter Treaty, in part so as not to endanger the goals of the EU's Green Deal. We reject trade agreements that do not adequately protect the climate, the environment and consumers. Therefore, we will not ratify the CETA agreement in its present form. In this way, we will ensure that the dangerous investor-state dispute settlement courts do not come into effect. We are also severely critical of the currently provisionally applied sections of CETA. We want to further develop the agreement together with Canada and thereby reorient it. We particularly want to improve the democratic control of regulatory cooperation. Here, the European Parliament must be better integrated in the future. In addition, stronger regulations are required on environmental, climate and consumer protection and safeguarding the European precautionary principle. The EU-China investment agreement that has been moved ahead significantly by the German federal government is inadequate in the areas of a level playing field and human rights. We cannot agree to it in its current form.

An active foreign trade policy and fair competition

To protect legitimate security interests and implement equal competitive conditions for all market participants, the EU must react if parties from third countries operate on the EU internal market using unfair means, and must also pursue an active foreign trade policy. Anti-dumping and anti-subsidy instruments must be further developed to achieve a level playing field on global markets. Die anti-dumping rules must be even more strictly applicable than before, including in relation to dumping due to low ecological and social standards. A reform of the EU state aid law can prevent distortions in competition by state funded corporations from other regions of the world. The EU review mechanism for foreign direct investment must be improved to prevent European companies being taken over

by highly subsidised foreign firms, and a new EU instrument against economic coercion should help the EU to defend itself against unlawful economic pressure from outside. German foreign trade promotion and its instruments must support hidden champions in future – instead of fossil installations and power plants – such as, for example, those that produce high-tech equipment for better environmental and living conditions. To do this, they must be resolutely geared towards the 1.5-degree target, the Agenda for Sustainable Development and human rights. Together with the EU Commission, we will advocate for a border adjustment of CO₂ costs so that ambitious climate protection does not become a competitive disadvantage. We will campaign for the EU to also support poorer trading partner countries with decarbonisation with the proceeds from this border adjustment.

Fair trade for sustainable development in the Global South

The development opportunities for the countries of the Global South strongly depend on how fair trade policy is. Fair trade must become the standard, and is also necessary to break with continuing postcolonial legacies. It must be oriented towards the Paris Climate Agreement, the Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN core human rights treaties. Existing fair trade initiatives must be fostered. In terms of a sustainable global structural policy, an equitable trade policy with the countries in the Global South is urgently required, one that fosters regional value creation, regional trade and integration and gives them enough space to protect their markets with duties and quotas and to restrict the export of domestic raw materials through export taxes. This will promote the expansion of domestic industries. Duties on processed products should be reduced or eliminated for countries in the Global South. We reject any exploitation of development cooperation to keep out refugees.

Implementing a supply chain law across Europe

Far too often, we buy things manufactured on the basis of overexploitation of humans and nature, even though this is not our intention. To ensure that companies implement environmental and social

standards, human rights and climate and species protection along the entire international value chain in future, a binding and effective supply chain law is required at both the national and European level. In addition, this type of binding framework creates equal competitive conditions in the market and creates legal certainty. Civil liability represents the core of such regulation and is the basis on which companies can be called to account in the event of damage. Improvements to the German Supply Chain Act are urgently required, for example an expansion of the companies included, but also an extension of the environmental due diligence obligations. In addition, we also advocate ambitious, binding regulation in international supply chains at the European level. Goods that are manufactured in the context of serious human rights violations such as child labour or forced labour should be denied entry to the EU internal market. At the EU level, we will also push for a ban on imports of agricultural products that are linked to illegal deforestation and human rights violations such as displacement. Throughout the world, forests, especially tropical, virgin and mangrove forests are being cleared and burned at an increasing rate – primarily for agro-industrial production such as the cultivation of soya and palm oil or for mining or logging. The EU imports a large part of these goods. We want to reinforce the EU Timber Regulation, stop the use of soya and palm oil as fuel now and push ahead with strategies to reduce palm oil and soya in other areas. We will protect forests here and around the world, promote the reforestation and renaturation of destroyed areas and want to establish treaties and partnerships for this purpose with relevant countries. We are also committed to GMO-free supply chains. At the international level, the preparation of a legally binding UN treaty on business and human rights (Binding Treaty) must be pushed forward.

We will make the financial markets more stable and more sustainable

Green financial markets

In the fight against the climate crisis and in the socio-ecological restructuring of our economy, the financial system plays a significant role. Billions are still being invested in fossil fuels and business models that are built on the destruction of ecosystems and violation of human rights – and thereby against our future. We will ensure that the public sector withdraws entirely from these investments if there continue to be no reliable steps introduced for a sustainable transformation of the underlying companies. Public sector banks, insurance companies and pension funds as well as the federal government as an investor and co-owner of companies must play a pioneering role in the green financial transition and transformation financing. Climate and environmental risks should be disclosed and, in the case of banks and insurance companies, should be backed by capital and taken into account in ratings. All investments, not only green ones, must have a sustainability assessment that is transparent for all investors. In addition to the climate goals, this should also take into account other environmental effects, human rights, labour standards and development goals. The Federal Financial Supervisory Authority needs robust ESG supervisory competence in accordance with the sustainable finance regulation. This assessment must also be included in investment advice. To protect the climate, but also to protect investors, we need a uniform certification of sustainable financial products at the European level. In this way, we will ensure that capital is redirected away from dirty investments into green and sustainable investments. Nuclear power is not a green investment.

Clean balance sheets on the German capital market

In the Wirecard accounting scandal, the responsible auditors and the state regulator failed in their task. Only after a new company looked at the balance sheets was it properly examined, while in the preceding

years, the balance sheets were repeatedly waved through to cover up the omissions of the previous years. We want companies in general to have to change their auditors after six years. Auditing firms must not simultaneously advise companies that they audit. The detection of accounting fraud must be legally enshrined as their goal. Auditing firms must be effectively supervised by the state. The personal liability of decision-makers in companies must actually come into effect in the event of legal violations. Supervisory boards also need to be strengthened and members should have relevant skills and expertise. The remuneration of management board members must be based on long-term company success rather than the short-term stock market price.

A financial supervisory authority with teeth

We need a financial supervisory authority with teeth that points out irregularities rather than enabling them. In the case of Wirecard, the German financial supervisory authority (BaFin) failed miserably, as so often before. As the regulator, BaFin banned short selling of Wirecard shares and denounced journalists who uncovered irregularities. This was equivalent to a clean bill of health for Wirecard. As a result, investors not only lost their money, but also their trust in Germany as a financial centre and its supervisory authority. Financing will thus be more difficult and more expensive for honest companies in the future. The culture and self-conception at BaFin need to change completely. An error culture is required within the supervisory authority, as well as a culture of scepticism and questioning. We want to create a financial police force with comprehensive auditing rights that exchanges information with all the relevant authorities at home and abroad. Customs has an important role as a federal authority in the area of combatting financial crime, tax evasion and money laundering. Currently it is not in a position to fulfil this role in terms of staff and organisation. We will equip it better and give it the necessary powers established under the rule of law so that it can effectively combat serious financial crime in the future.

Banking needs to become boring again

Even over ten years after the financial crisis, there is still a risk to the economy coming from the banks. It has still not been ruled out that, in the event of a collapse, taxpayers will have to foot the bill. Therefore we want to go back to “boring banking”. Banks should not speculate, but instead should finance the real economy. Instead of the ever more opaque flood of regulation, we want simple, hard rules. We will close the regulatory loopholes relating to shadow banks, payment service providers and fintechs: every product and every player must be regulated. We will make the debt limit (leverage ratio) for banks binding and incrementally increase it to 10 percent. Risky investment business must be separated from the deposit and lending business (separate banking system). Investment banks must also be strictly supervised and business areas that lead to conflicts of interest must be hived off. Strong merger control is required and banks that are too large should be broken up. In contrast, there should be simpler rules for small banks that do not represent a risk to the financial system. We will make speculation and a short-term orientation unattractive, among other things, via an EU-wide financial transaction tax with a broad tax base. To increase the stability and predictability of the financial markets, we will curb damaging high-frequency trading.

Seizing dirty money

Our country is currently a paradise for money laundering. We will introduce a comprehensive strategy to crack down on money laundering. There must be comprehensive transparency about the beneficial owners for all companies, foundations and other constructs. We are in favour of reducing the threshold for the identification requirement to 10 percent. Gaps and workarounds in relation to the Transparency Register will be closed. The financial supervisory authority must play an active role in combatting money laundering instead of only passing on suspicious activity reports. Money laundering often remains undetected in the non-financial sector, especially in real estate. We will enforce national minimum standards for supervision, audits, resources and staff. Responsibility for combatting money laundering should be completely transferred to the federal government. We will

comprehensively confiscate illegal funds and assets. We want to make it easier to freeze suspicious financial transactions and extend the duration of transaction bans to ensure prosecution. We will examine the introduction of a high upper limit for cash payments, as proposed by the EU Commission.

Introducing the digital euro

Digital payment is becoming increasingly important in our everyday lives. It is convenient, quick and should become even more secure. We are in favour of the initiative by the European Central Bank (ECB) to create a digital euro. This will ensure data security and legal certainty for consumers and companies and increase the efficiency of euro transactions. It will help to counter unjustified costs by oligopolies. Private firms will be able to develop products and apps based on it. A digital euro will not replace traditional cash, but rather complement it. We strictly reject the undermining of the money and currency monopoly by private currencies of powerful large corporations. For all digital payments and cryptocurrencies, the actual beneficial owners must be identified above a certain threshold, similar to the regulations for cash. Combatting crimes such as money laundering, portraying child sexual abuse, tax evasion and financing terrorism requires clear rules, including in relation to digital payment. We want to expand existing cooperation duties of crypto exchanges and adequately train the investigating authorities in this area. We want to respond to the rapid developments in the area of decentralised financial applications and explore the opportunities and risks of cryptocurrencies and blockchains in a differentiated way.

We will complete the European Economic and Monetary Union

Investing in Europe's future

Europe's societies and companies rely on strong public infrastructure. Therefore it is all the more dangerous that it has deteriorated so

much in recent years where no investment has taken place. We want to expand the European Monetary Union into a social union. In important future-oriented areas such as digitalisation or battery production, Europe is in danger of getting left behind. We will consistently invest in climate protection, digitalisation, research and education in the EU. To do this, we want to consolidate the newly created recovery instrument and convert it into a permanent investment and stabilisation instrument under the control of the European Parliament. The EU would use it to invest in important future areas and it could also have a stabilising effect during crises. At the same time, we will strengthen the EU budget by providing it with its own revenue. The EU should receive the revenue from the CO₂ border adjustment. The taxing of plastic and digital corporations and, if possible, financial transactions should also strengthen the EU budget. Together with our European partners, we want to reform the Stability and Growth Pact to prevent excessive pressure for cuts and privatisation and allow future investments to be further increased in all member states. Essential public services, good healthcare provision and education must be reinforced in all European member states.

Completing the monetary union and establishing a crisis-proof Europe

It was a mistake that the conservatives prevented Europe from having its own fiscal policy for decades. We want to ensure that the EU obtains an instrument for its own permanent fiscal policy in the form of a sustainable investment fund. The fund will provide stability in the event of a crisis and invest in European public assets such as climate, research, digital infrastructure, railways and education. It must be designed so that it cannot be blocked by individual countries in a crisis and to guarantee strong monitoring by the European Parliament. The European Stability Mechanism will be further developed into a European monetary fund. This will enable countries to obtain a short-term credit line without conditions. In this way, speculation against individual states will be averted in advance. The banking union will be completed with a joint deposit guarantee scheme as extra insurance so that every euro is equally safe everywhere. We will take the pressure off the Central Bank by means of a joint, strong countercyclical fiscal policy and ensure that it does not have to put out future fires on its

own again. Moreover, we welcome the fact that the ECB is fulfilling its responsibility for the stability of the euro in all member states by keeping interest rate differences within the eurozone within limits. We stand by the independence of the European Central Bank. At the same time, we welcome the debate within the ECB about its new monetary policy strategy. The climate crisis is having massive repercussions on our national economies; therefore it is sensible for all monetary policy measures to take into consideration the impact of the climate crisis on monetary and financial stability. In addition, the ECB has the task of supporting the EU's general economic policy. How it strengthens the European Green Deal with its ecological and social goals as the EU's guiding strategy in economic policy is its own independent decision.

Making the euro a lead currency

We want the euro to develop into a credible, international lead currency so that Europe preserves and expands its sovereignty. In the long term, a stronger and more stable euro should find its place in a cooperative global world currency system. The euro is an essential component of a comprehensive strategy that reinforces and asserts European values at the global level. We will create safe European assets for the world to save in. The euro should become the international means of payment in future markets such as investments in climate protection. However, strengthening the international role of the euro also requires intra-European solidarity: we want to work together to reduce disparities in surplus and deficit countries and make decisions on economic and fiscal policy as a community.

We will budget soundly, far-sightedly and fairly

Federal budgets fit for the future

We want to make the federal budget more sustainable, fairer and more transparent. It will become more sustainable when we finally end the environmentally damaging subsidies. The country's public finances are still subsidising climate-damaging behaviour by over EUR 50 billion. We will gradually remove these subsidies and make the federal

budget climate-friendly. As a first step, this will enable us to raise over EUR 15 billion annually that we can use to fund climate protection and social justice. We are aiming for a climate and biodiversity quota for federal spending that should increase incrementally. We will rely on green bonds for financing this sustainable expenditure. Gender budgeting will enable us to achieve consistent consideration and involvement of equality aspects in decisions on fiscal and budgetary policy. This will make the budget fairer. By designing the federal budget according to the principles of double-entry bookkeeping, we will make it more transparent and provide more intergenerational fairness. We want to gradually remodel our tax system so that environmental impact and resource consumption are more heavily taxed and, in exchange, taxes and levies on work are reduced or the revenues are given back as a carbon fee and dividend, for example.

Careful handling of tax money

In recent years, a large amount of federal budget money has been wasted. The passenger car toll was a predictable disaster. The Ministry of Defence sank millions into expensive consulting contracts. Poorly structured public-private partnerships have proved to be lucrative for private companies and expensive for taxpayers. We will handle taxpayers' money carefully. This and removing superfluous expense items takes priority for us before borrowing and revenue increases. We will establish transparency in the future and publish all PPP contracts. We basically only want PPPs to be allowed to come into consideration if they result in added value or reduced costs for taxpayers, reliably and in the long term. We want to legally exclude PPP projects from the transport sector. The control of construction projects and major public procurements will be improved. We reject any further privatisation of publicly-owned companies in the area of statutory public services.

Reforming the debt brake and introducing investment rules

Germany has viable public finances, even after the coronavirus crisis. Interest rates are historically low and confidence in German government bonds is high. However, we have a problem for the future. The Earth is heating up, schools are falling into ruin, and Germany ranks

among the last countries in the EU in terms of high-speed internet. We are investing too little in our country. These are debts that are not on the books, but which endanger our prosperity. We want to update the debt brake in the Basic Law for the federal government and the states so that the sustainability of the future interest burden is guaranteed and, at the same time, to enable the investments that are so urgently needed. The current strict regulations will remain in place for consumption expenses; for investments that create new public assets, we will allow limited borrowing equal to the net investment. In this way, we will create public assets that belong to all of us, as the return on public investments is high, while the federal government does not pay any interest on its loans.

Creating fairer taxation

Taxes are the basis for the funding of our community and the key lever for fairness. We want to make it fairer and more transparent for citizens. In view of the coronavirus crisis, the situation in the public budgets will be very strained in the coming years. Therefore, all changes in tax law must be revenue-neutral at least. The goal is for everyone to make a fair contribution. However, today those on the top 10 percent of incomes contribute relatively less via taxes and levies than those on medium incomes. We will change this by increasing the basic tax-free allowance for income tax to reduce the burden on those on small and medium incomes. On the other hand, we want to raise the top tax rate moderately. Starting from an income of EUR 100,000 for single people and EUR 200,000 for couples, a new tier will be introduced with a tax rate of 45 percent. Starting from an income of EUR 250,000 or 500,000 respectively, a further tier will follow with a top tax rate of 48 percent. In addition, high management salaries above EUR 500,000 will no longer be deductible as operating expenditure. Capital gains will be taxed at the individual tax rate while maintaining the saver's tax allowance. Banks and other financial institutions will continue to withhold capital gains tax which represents an advance payment of personal income tax. For income that is already taxed at the company level, such as dividends, the partial income rule will again apply in general, which partially exempts capital gains from taxation at the investor level. We will thus markedly reduce the burden on small investors in shares and come closer to

the ideal of financial neutrality in the tax system. We will abolish the tax exemption applicable up to now after a ten-year period for capital gains on land and property. We will also abolish the tax exemption for other capital gains, for example with regard to trade in precious metals, commodities and crypto assets. We will reduce the burden on those on lower and medium incomes through the introduction of a guaranteed child allowance and through our carbon fee and dividend, among other things. If costs arise for employees due to mobile working, these must be reimbursed by the employer or be tax deductible as income-related expenses. Wealth inequality in Germany has risen sharply and lies well over the EU average. This is due, among other things, to rich people being able to almost completely evade taxation of their assets through tax planning, for instance in the case of inheritance tax. We want to remove these types of tax planning opportunities and tax large assets more again. There are various instruments for this such as, for example, inheritance tax or wealth tax. The introduction of a new wealth tax for the states is our preferred instrument. The states should use the income from this tax to finance the growing educational requirements. The wealth tax should apply to assets exceeding two million euros per person and amount to 1 percent annually. We will introduce tax incentives for business assets to the extent that it is constitutionally lawful and economically necessary. In this process, we will aim for solutions that will create additional incentives for investment and take into account the special role and responsibility of the medium-sized company segment and family enterprises. We will eliminate unjustified exceptions in the area of sales tax, thereby ensuring more fairness here too with regard to the financing of government tasks.

Robust action against tax evasion and tax avoidanc

Every year, taxpayers lose billions due to tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance. We want to introduce a comprehensive strategy to crack down on this. The EU-wide obligation to report on tax planning arrangements must be broadened to include a reporting obligation for purely national planning arrangements. We will advocate at international level for a global alliance against tax evasion. In addition to the existing tax liability based on residence, a tax liability based on nationality will also be introduced for people with a high income,

similar to that in the USA, in order to prevent purely tax-motivated changes of residence. We will have the tax gap assessed regularly. The tax authorities need to be significantly reinforced. To rectify the lack of enforcement in combatting tax avoidance by major corporations and wealthy citizens, we will create a special unit at the federal level. We will penalise tax evasion more heavily: the avoidance of real estate transfer tax via share deals must finally be stopped. We will end cum-ex and cum-cum deals wherever they are still possible and will deal emphatically with the rigorous recovery of the resulting damage via the states.

Taxing corporations appropriately

Using accounting tricks, large corporations shift their profits into tax havens, out of Europe and also out of many poor countries. This is why billions are lacking for our infrastructure, and the firms gain unfair competitive advantages over smaller companies. We are therefore fighting for an internationally binding regulatory framework that sets minimum standards for the tax obligations of companies and states, as well as the reinforcement of the UN Tax Committee. We want to ambitiously implement the international minimum tax rate for large companies in Germany and Europe. Europe should not undercut the minimum tax rates in America. but rather fight for higher minimum tax rates transatlantically. In addition, we need strong EU rules against the misuse of letterbox companies for tax avoidance. We will also take action at home: we want to ensure that corporations are required to publish their profits, turnover and tax payments extensively by state. In the EU, we will introduce a common tax base for company taxes and a minimum tax rate of 25 percent in the medium term, without exceptions. Google, Facebook and other similar companies will finally be taxed appropriately with a digital corporate tax. We will examine an excess profits tax for other sectors. We will ban banks and tax consultants from doing business in tax havens or acting as a broker in this respect. We will also advocate a move to majority voting in the EU with regard to tax issues. If European agreements are not successful, we will move forward with increased cooperation or together with individual states. Nationally, we will take action against profit shifting with stricter interest and licence barriers and with source taxes.

Chapter 3: **Securing solidarity**

The pandemic has shown us what makes a society strong – people standing together and trusting one another. It has made us realise how precious a sense of community is for our individual happiness, how much we need other people and how great the danger is when a society drifts apart. This age-old but now newly experienced knowledge is a mandate for translating solidarity and protection into tangible and improved policies. We want to do everything possible to create the conditions for a good life – from childhood onwards: guaranteeing material security, opportunities and participation, and promising security for every life circumstance, a safety net that gets stronger as more support is needed. Civil liberties remain a privilege of the few if the social conditions for that security are not guaranteed for all. Societies without existential need are better able to withstand crises; mutually supportive and fair societies are stronger.

The coronavirus has opened our eyes unflinchingly to the strengths and weaknesses of our social state: how important it is to have a robust healthcare system for all, how crucial it is to have economic strength that brings social prosperity and thus a social state, and that protects people from becoming homeless if they lose their jobs or the economy collapses. At the same time, the pandemic has also aggravated existing inequalities. The poor are the first to fall ill. Women bear the brunt in key professions in the fields of healthcare, education and retail, but are much lower paid and less well represented in decision-making processes. Freelancers and the self-employed, who already take greater risks, experience money pressures or find themselves struggling to survive financially if their earnings fall away. Single or separated parents raising children or teenagers find it especially hard to cope with the challenges of childcare, home schooling and working from home. The pandemic has reflected back to us our individual life circumstances. The whole situation is exacerbated if you live in a small flat with no garden and the local swimming pool is closed. Loneliness increases.

Now is the time to learn the right lessons. Our way out of the pande-

mic must lead to a new promise of social security. We want to change the social systems step by step in such a way that they give security and stability to all people, even in times of personal and social upheaval, and enable them to participate in society. Our libraries and playing fields, sports clubs and music societies, theatres and youth centres – in short, our public and social places – should become the boldest and brightest spaces for coming together.

Happiness and opportunity should not depend on whether you live in the north or the south, the east or the west, the city or in the countryside; ensuring fair and equal living conditions is a founding principle of our constitution. We will do everything possible to turn this often unfulfilled aspiration into reality. People living in rural areas need just the same access to doctors, broadband and public services as city dwellers. And those who live in urban areas must be able to find good, affordable housing there too. Housing is the social issue of our time and for many people and families, even well into the middle classes, one that affects their very existence.

Our healthcare system should guarantee equal healthcare provision for all, but there are some glaring gaps: health authorities have been cut to breaking point, hospitals and hospital administrations lack staff, and those that are there are being pushed to the limit. We want to reverse this trend and make preventative care a guiding principle: clinics should be financed according to their social mission, the rural population needs access to maternity care and emergency medical assistance. In healthcare, we are committed to better working conditions, more staff, security for people who need care and for those who provide care for relatives or friends.

Digitalisation, global competition and the necessary restructuring of the economy will mean great changes for many people, accompanied by the fear of loss. But fear is a paralysing force that wears people down. During a transition, people still need security. It is important to protect against risks and offer prospects, for example, through unemployment insurance and ongoing training and education. Strong social partners, strong trade unions and democratic co-determination can also contribute to overcoming together the major challenges of the transition to a socio-ecological market economy. We will show that transformation and digitalisation with the aim of achieving climate-friendly prosperity create sustainable jobs with good working conditions and a fair distribution of labour.

We support children, young people and families

Focus on children

Children must be able to develop freely and in the best possible way. As part of this, they have a right to special protection, support and participation. Children are people with their own needs, who must be recognised and empowered. We will ensure that the rights and well-being of children are given more weight and taken into greater consideration in government decisions. For that reason, strong children's rights must be enshrined in the constitution in line with the basic principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We will introduce a National Action Plan for Children and Young People's Participation with the aim of ensuring that all children and young people are informed about their rights and can experience age-appropriate and easily accessible participation, regardless of their socio-cultural background or their residency status. Youth work plays a key role here, which is why we want to strengthen youth organisations by giving them the right to take collective legal action against local authorities. Democracy cannot be an abstract concept, but instead must be able to be experienced and tested in everyday life. Future democrats need participation and media skills as well as political education, for which we will provide conceptual and financial support in nurseries, schools and youth welfare services on a cross-sectoral basis. We also want to reinforce the independence of the Federal Agency for Civic Education. In all activities in the social sphere, and all construction and residential measures that affect children and young people, we will involve them, safeguard their welfare and take this into account in the Building Code and the Federal Immission Control Act.

A guaranteed child allowance against child poverty

In a rich country like Germany, no child should grow up in poverty – yet especially in single-parent families, those on low incomes with children, or families with more than two children, the money often simply does not go far enough. Child poverty also means exclusion, discrimination and inferior educational opportunities. Every child

deserves our support, as future opportunities should not depend on social background. That is why we will develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for preventing and combating child poverty. In addition to excellent infrastructure, we will support families with a fair and simple child and family allowance: the guaranteed child allowance. Our plan: to combine child benefit, child allowances, child supplements, income support for children and the requirements for education and participation in a new, independent benefit. With the guaranteed child allowance, every child will get a fixed, guaranteed sum, while children in families with low or no income will get an additional "guarantee plus" amount. The lower the family income, the higher the guarantee plus allowance. After a one-off application when the child is born, the amount of guaranteed child allowance will be calculated automatically and paid by the Family Benefits Office. This guarantees that every child receives the guaranteed child allowance and step by step we can put an end to child poverty. It is a fair system, as children who need more will get more. Alongside the guaranteed child allowance, we will recalculate what children need to live.

Dedicated welfare services for all children and young people

Whether it is nursery, day care, after-school care, family counselling, educational support or youth work services – the public and independent providers of child and youth welfare services support families with raising their children. Social workers and educational support staff do a fantastic job despite the time pressures and the high workload. Through statutory provisions for personnel planning, we want to ensure better resources for youth welfare offices and to ease the burden on qualified staff. We want to establish binding quality standards across the board in child and youth welfare and develop these further in collaboration with organisations, service providers and academics. Benefit entitlements for children and young people with physical and mental disabilities have in the past been governed by a separate social code for people with disabilities. A Federal Inclusion Law should ensure that all services provided for child and youth welfare are in future designed such that they are also aimed specifically at children and young people with disabilities and their families. The existing legal entitlements will continue to apply to them. We want

to speed up our progress along this path towards an inclusive Social Code VIII. To that end we will support those federal states and local authorities that already, even before the implementation of the Federal Inclusion Law, want to combine all children under the umbrella of youth welfare, by providing them with a federal model programme. This will help us gain valuable insights for the nationwide restructuring process. We want to abolish the cost contribution of young people in a residential establishment or foster home.

Self-efficacy and co-determination – reinforcing youth as an independent phase of life

Teenagers and young adults must be able to develop freely and with self-determination. Responsible, self-confident and mature young people should be involved in the decisions about all the situations that affect them and have safe places for learning and leisure that they themselves help to shape. To enable young people to effectively contribute and lay claim to their ideas and rights, we want to strengthen low-threshold access to participation forums such as child and youth parliaments, especially at local level. We will offer reliable support for youth work, youth organisation work and democratic education. We will secure open child and youth work, youth social work, early childhood intervention and all forms of support for child-raising together with federal states and local authorities, and demand the long-term provision of facilities for young people. In an era of globalisation, policies with and for young people need an international focus. That is why we will strengthen international encounters and exchange programmes.

Participation and protection in the digital world

Many children and young people are growing up with tablets, smartphones and other such devices – we must ensure that they grow up in the digital world in a way that is safe, healthy and under their own control. We will reinforce digital education as a shared task for parents, educational establishments and youth welfare services with further training for specialist staff and support services for parents. Everyone should be able to acquire digital skills, which is only possible with the relevant hardware and Internet connection: children who live in poverty

will get a digital end device for school where necessary. We also want to tackle the potential for addiction and the health risks associated with excessive use of digital applications. Children and young people need particular protection online from crimes such as hate speech, cyber grooming and sexual abuse. We want to put an end to cyber bullying. To that end we are focused on creating a prevention strategy with obligatory and secure default settings for platforms and age-appropriate sources of information and complaints mechanisms that are easy to find and use. The Federal Agency for Child and Youth Media Protection should be boosted in terms of its expertise. We will protect children from the commercial collection of their data by private providers.

Protecting children from abuse

For many children and young people, mental, physical and sexual abuse and neglect are a painful part of everyday life. We are taking a hard stand against this – with stronger prevention, more consistent action and prosecution as well as other measures for quality assurance and child protection in the family courts. The main priority is to prevent these crimes. That requires clarification, qualification, age-appropriate prevention programmes and effective safety concepts as well as the cooperation of all those involved in settings where children and young people live and are looked after. Basic knowledge of children's rights, in particular participation, awareness and protection in cases of sexual abuse or any threat to child welfare, should be part of the curriculum for lawyers, healthcare professionals, teachers and police officers. It is important to lay down clear legal requirements for the ongoing training of family judges and the qualifications required for children's legal representatives. All civil society and political levels and authorities must make the fight against child sexual abuse a central issue. Organisations that look after children have a special responsibility in this matter. We will create a statutory framework for the important work of the Independent Commissioner for Child Sexual Abuse Issues and thus give it permanent status, while also adequately anchoring the responsibilities of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. We will build up a nationwide network of specialist counselling centres and provide guaranteed funding for telephone and online support services.

More time for families

Being able to focus on family and children, even when they are ill; that is our goal. The issue of work-life balance is a responsibility for society as a whole, and one which we must tackle in collaboration with business and public institutions. It should be straightforward for all parents to take parental leave. With the “KinderZeit Plus” scheme we want to extend parental allowances to 24 months: eight months for each parent and a further eight months to be divided flexibly between them. If the KinderZeit Plus is applied to part-time work, the payment period is extended accordingly. It can be taken up to the child’s 14th birthday, as sometimes even older children can sometimes be in need of more care and attention. The needs of families of children with disabilities should be given additional consideration. We will support parents in finding a balance between family and work with a new working time culture and a flexible full-time working hours corridor, sharing family work and household chores in partnership and avoiding the traps of part-time work. Nobody should have to choose between child and job, education or study, which is why the entitlement to child sick pay should be increased to 15 days a year per child and per parent, with single parents entitled to 30 days. Since many infections are picked up in the early years in particular, there should be an additional increased entitlement to child sick pay during this time. We want to raise the age limit here to 14, with a medical certificate only required from the fourth day of the child’s illness. For the special time immediately after the birth of a child, alongside maternity leave, we want to establish a 14-day leave of absence for the second parent. The rules governing maternity leave should also apply to a stillbirth after the 20th week of pregnancy.

Additional support for single parents

Single-parent families contribute so much and yet more than one third of them are at risk of poverty. With the guaranteed child allowance, we will help in a multitude of ways: the recalculation of the minimum requirements of children and young people also brings an increase in the minimum amount of child support. And unlike today’s child benefit, only half the amount should be offset against advanced

maintenance payments. After a separation, no extra financial strain should be placed on separated parents in looking after their children. This means that additional costs incurred for the proper exercise of contact and childcare services should be taken into account. For separated parents on basic income support, we want to introduce an increased contact element. The support model should be oriented towards the welfare of the child in individual cases rather than being schematically defined. Whether it’s an important evening work meeting, a counselling session or a visit to the doctor – children cannot and should not always be present. It is necessary to increase family support services, such as for additional childcare or household support services. This is particularly important in the case of illness, when the children and the household must still be provided for.

Assurance for all kinds of family

Single-parent, patchwork, step or rainbow – families are diverse and this diversity must be reflected in modern family law. This includes modern and liberal naming rights. Social parents often take over responsibility within the family and are important figures in a child’s life. In the eyes of the law, however, they are still seen as having no parental responsibility for the child, even after years: in nurseries, school and medical practices, they are not permitted to take decisions for their children. With the further development of “limited custody” to become a legal institution for parental co-responsibility, which - even before conception – can be transferred to up to two additional adults in addition to the biological parents upon application to the youth welfare office, we will give all parties concerned more security and strengthen multi-parent families and social parenting. Two-mother families should no longer have to go through the process of adopting a stepchild, which is why we are striving to reform the law of descent so that the co-mother is automatically viewed as a second legal parent in the same way as fathers in marriages between a man and a woman. The law of descent must also take into account the parenthood of non-binary people. All couples and single women who want to have children should be able to have the cost of in vitro fertilisation reimbursed. All children need a clear legal status; the rights of the individual to know their parentage must be granted to all children. Responsibility

does not just apply to families with children. With the cohabitation agreement, we will create a new legal status, which extends legal protection to the cohabitation of two people who take responsibility for each other, independent of marriage.

We will ensure good work and fair pay

Raising the minimum wage

Work must be paid fairly. And people need good working conditions. But in our wealthy country, millions of people in the low-pay sector still work for poor wages and in unsafe employment conditions. Women and people with an immigrant background are most often affected in this respect. We want to change that. We will immediately raise the statutory minimum wage to EUR 12. After that, the minimum wage will need to rise further to provide effective protection against poverty and at least keep pace with trends in collective wage agreements. We want to reform the Minimum Wage Commission and task it with this undertaking. We will abolish the existing exceptions for under-18s and the long-term unemployed. Temporary workers should get the same pay for the same work as permanent employees from the first day – plus a flexibility premium. Companies that pay fair wages should not suffer any competitive disadvantages. During the coronavirus pandemic, it has become even clearer that the short-time work allowance for employees on low pay is too little. There is therefore the need for a minimum short-time work allowance across all sectors. Fixed-term employment contracts will no longer be allowed without objective grounds. We will use regulatory policy to combat the frequent misuse of work contracts and the abdication of corporate responsibility by means of subcontractor chains. We want to strengthen safety at work so that it provides effective protection from stress, burnout and the blurring of work boundaries. Bullying and discrimination in the workplace are something we take seriously. We want to provide better protection against such behaviour through clear sanctions and by the mandatory setting up of contact points.

Creating full employment

We want to enable all people to participate in working life, as a good job is an important source of income, recognition and self-fulfilment. To that end, we must create good, secure jobs. We want to increase employment further and in so doing also prevent any lasting damage to the labour market in the wake of the coronavirus. With permanently higher public investment, more entrepreneurship and research and innovation, we want to create an environment that brings many new jobs. The German labour market has been split in recent years, with a skills shortage and clear wage increases for highly qualified personnel in some sectors, and precarious employment, involuntary part-time work and stagnating real wages in others. We want to counter this with a socially equitable employment policy. In that way we will ensure good wages and cause the low pay sector to dry up in the medium term. Self-employed people need good framework conditions and better social security provision. We want to fight against the structural causes of long-term unemployment. For people who are unemployed for a long time, we will create a permanent social labour market that provides meaningful employment.

Strengthening social partnerships, increasing the number of collective wage agreements

Social partnerships, wage agreements and co-determination are cornerstones of the social market economy. They have made our country strong. Wherever they apply, they tend to bring decent wages and good working conditions. We want to make sure that collective wage agreements and strong co-determination once more apply to more rather than ever fewer employees and companies. In line with European law, public procurement should favour those companies that are bound by collective wage agreements, or at least pay negotiated wages. To that end we intend to bring in a law governing compliance with collective wage agreements. We also want to make it easier to make collective wage agreements generally binding, so that they apply to all players in a particular sector. Companies should not be able to benefit from abandoning collective wage agreements. We want to oblige companies to disclose whether they have signed up to

collective wage agreements. Where companies are restructured, the previous collective wage regulations should apply until a new collective wage agreement has been signed. There should in future be parity co-determination in companies with more than 1,000 employees and we want to introduce an arbitration process for decisions that have a particularly big impact on employees. Works councils that stand up for their employees also need more protection themselves. The same applies to employees who want to set up a works council for the first time. We want to expand and modernise the co-determination rights for works councils, staff councils and also youth and education representatives in relation to issues such as personnel development, training and education, relocation overseas, support for women, promotion of diversity and improving the carbon footprints of companies. A stronger financial involvement of employees in companies, in addition to wages and salaries, can lead to more active participation. The transformation of the world of work as a result of digitalisation and ecological transformation must be shaped in collaboration with the employees of the company.

More autonomy at work, exploitation of digital opportunities

We want to support employees in work making their work fit in better with their family and personal life. For us, a modern world of work also means having a greater say about the place, location and scope of the work. In the coronavirus crisis, working from home became widespread. For many people this led to greater independence and less stress, for example, by cutting out the daily commute. For others, however, it was a real endurance test due to the lack of work space, occupational safety and colleagues, or if they were no longer able to separate working hours from family time. The option of autonomy at work is one we want to keep and strengthen by introducing the right to mobile working – keeping operational possibilities in mind, but also providing strict safety criteria and ensuring interests are properly represented. Mobile working can take place in a home office or in a nearby co-working space, but the move must always take place voluntarily and with the right to return, as well as being associated with sufficient time at a company workplace.

More leeway around working times

Whether in offices, in a care setting or on the assembly line – many people have experienced an increase in the physical or mental pressure of their work. At the same time, having time – for oneself or one's family – is becoming more valuable for many people. Shorter working hours, for example as proposed by IG Metall as a way of managing the structural shift in the automotive sector, are something we welcome, as they offer the opportunity to distribute work more fairly, secure jobs and lighten the load for some employees. We want to support employees in sectors where the workload is especially high by ensuring they have better working conditions. Furthermore, the options for all employees to determine their own working hours with more flexibility – to make it easier to combine family and work and to have time for themselves – should be improved. To that end we want to transform fixed full-time work, perhaps by means of a flexible working time corridor, and in particular to support social partners to enable the development of flexible working time models for the benefit of employees. We reject any attempts to weaken the Working Hours Act to the detriment of employees. The working hours should be documented in future, as ruled by the European Court of Justice. We support better monitoring of existing regulations in order to support employees whose actual working hours regularly exceed 40 hour.

Employment insurance increases opportunities

We want to orient labour market policy towards the future and turn unemployment insurance into employment insurance. Key features here include a legal right to training and education and the strengthening of vocational qualifications. In a world in which frequent changes of job are the norm for many people and people no longer automatically work at the same company for 40 years, everyone needs places to go for help and support so they can shape their working life with a degree of autonomy. Wherever there is an employment agency, educational agencies should become key points of contact providing support for people through the career change process. This would simplify the process of providing further training advice and

funding. The promotion of lifelong learning for people with disabilities is another area we want to expand. We want to make access to employment insurance much easier and introduce an entitlement to unemployment benefit after just four months of any employment subject to social security contributions. Self-employment must also have better social security provision. To that end, we will simplify the access to voluntary unemployment insurance and make access possible for all self-employed people, including a choice between two tariffs. Self-employed people should, alongside the entitlement to unemployment benefit I, also be entitled to a short-time work allowance in special emergency situations, such as during a pandemic. We want to provide better support for start-ups in periods of unemployment and offer those job entrants who have been knocked back by the crisis a bridge into the labour market by giving them an introductory allowance.

Better protection for work arranged online

From tradespeople to software developers and cleaners – more and more services are arranged via online platforms (gig working) or even take place in the cloud independent of location (crowdwork). The digitalisation of activities and digital placement of work both hold many new opportunities. But employment law and occupational safety must be adapted to the online world to prevent the emergence of new forms of exploitation and dependence. We want to regulate work that is done or arranged online in order to guarantee people working in that environment the same protection as those working in analogue form. We want to prevent bogus self-employment by providing more legal and planning security around the demarcation between self-employed work and dependent employment. If the contractor claims to have employee status, in future the employer must prove that is not the case. Unfair price dumping must be eradicated by introducing a minimum fee for time-based services. Employee-like and solo self-employed workers should in future find it easier to organise themselves in terms of collective wage agreements, and individual sectors should be able to agree binding minimum fee limits that can also be declared generally binding. Platform operators bear a responsibility towards their contractors. We want to

use clear minimum standards for employment and data protection and for general terms and conditions, with strong data protection for workers and a digital right of access for trade unions to ensure fair play in the platform economy and in the digital world of work overall.

Fair working conditions for workers from European neighbour states

Being able to work in any European neighbour state is one of the great achievements of our united Europe. While this has brought a great deal of freedom for those in highly qualified professions, in many service areas it has led to an exploitative working reality. Grievances in Germany's abattoirs have highlighted this issue. But exploitative conditions also often prevail in other sectors, such as construction and healthcare. We want all workers – however long they work here – to be just as well paid and insured as their German colleagues. That requires an effective crackdown on illegal work and bogus self-employment, a right for trade unions to take collective legal action, a European social security number, higher minimum standards of accommodation for posted workers, the eradication of short-term employment with no social security liability, better regulation of employment agencies and more control via a strengthened European Labour Authority. Employees from other EU states must be better informed of their rights and we will act at European level to ensure better social security provision for EU citizens seeking work.

We will achieve gender equality

Same pay for equivalent work

Same pay for equivalent work - we are still a long way off making this self-evident concept a reality. On average, over their entire working life, women earn only about half as much as men, especially if they care for children or dependants. This is also evident in their inadequate old age pension provision. That is why we will advocate at European level for an ambitious EU directive for equal pay and nationally, we will introduce an effective equal pay act that also applies to small businesses

and obliges companies to report the pay of women and men and the measures taken to close their own pay gap. This law must also contain an effective right to take collective legal action, so that where there are structural disadvantages, organisations can take on the litigation and those affected do not have to deal with it on their own. Pay checking procedures can reveal discrimination. For that reason we will oblige social partners and companies to check all pay structures for discrimination and make the range of their pay and fee structure accessible to employees in anonymised form. We will work to ensure that jobs done primarily by women are valued more highly than they have been up to now, especially in the form of better working conditions and better pay. Achieving a good work-life balance must be made easier for all.

Strengthening the economic independence of women

Economic independence is an indispensable factor in being able to live a self-determined life. Any hindrances to this must therefore be removed. Women continue to take on the majority of care work, which is of systemic importance to our society. We want to ensure independent security in all phases of life – from the choice of career through to pensions. With the exception of students, school pupils and pensioners, we want to make mini-jobs subject to social security contributions and regulate household-related services. The limited choice of career brought about by narrow role expectations is something we want to tackle through gender-sensitive careers advice. We want to break the glass ceiling that hinders women's career advancement. This can be done through a clever time policy that also makes it easier for partners to take on responsibility within the family and for work to be divided fairly between the genders. We want caring within the family to be carried out jointly and equally, and see this as being a prerequisite for equal opportunities and gender equality. To that end it is necessary that fathers, in particular, take equal responsibility and provide equal care within the family. Single parents should not be disadvantaged in this respect compared to couples. We want to support those affected by discrimination in the labour market, for example by introducing the right to take collective legal action, extending the corresponding legal advice and ensuring a genuine right to return to full-time work which also applies to smaller businesses. To ensure

that parents are not disadvantaged in the world of work due to the fact that they have children, we will take the necessary measures, including any changes to the law that this might entail.

Equality in taxation

The German tax laws are still stuck in the last century. While many couples divide up family work and gainful employment more equally than was the case many years ago, taxation is still based on the model of a male breadwinner and a wife who at most earns a small amount extra and is primarily takes care of the household and children. This model is unfair because it favours married couples, leaves out single-parent families and unmarried couples, limits the participation of women in the labour market and at the same time does not truly give women full security. In crises, it is women who are most heavily disadvantaged, for example, through lower short-time working allowances or unemployment benefits. Together with mini-jobs and free co-insurance, these measures have a negative effect on the participation of women in the labour market. We therefore want to introduce individual taxation with a transferable tax-free allowance for newly married couples. In the case of income tax, the second earner, who currently bears an undue tax burden, will have this burden relieved by making the so-called "work-factor method" the rule and scrapping tax class 5 for second earners. In this way we will ensure that equal life plans are no longer disadvantaged. Couples who are already married can decide whether they want to be assessed individually or continue to split their taxation. At the same time we will strengthen families with the guaranteed child allowance. Single parents, who are currently the hardest hit by poverty, will be supported with tax credits.

We will secure the social safety net

Security guarantees instead of Hartz IV unemployment benefit

Everyone has the right to social participation, and to a worthwhile life without fearing for their financial survival. We therefore want to move on from Hartz IV unemployment benefit and replace it with a security

guarantee. This protects from poverty and guarantees, without sanctions, the socio-cultural subsistence minimum. It thus strengthens people in times of change and, in light of major changes to the world of work, can offer security and open up opportunities and prospects for a self-determined life. The green security guarantee is basic social security that carries no stigma and is awarded simply and on an equal footing. The socio-cultural subsistence minimum will be recalculated and the current cuts ended. In an initial step, we will increase the standard rate by at least EUR 50, which will make a noticeable difference. We will personalise the benefits of the security guarantee on a step by step basis. We will devise more attractive models of income allowances so that additional economic activity always leads to a tangibly higher income. Young people in families on benefits should be able to earn money without tax deductions. In future we want to assess wealth in a less bureaucratic way using a simple self-declaration. The limit on protected assets will be raised. We will strive to gradually further simplify social security by amalgamating social security benefits that guarantee subsistence and integrating their payment into the tax system. We welcome and support model projects to research the effects of an unconditional basic income. By eliminating the bureaucratic and degrading sanctions, the security guarantee will free up time and space in job centres so that they can focus on genuine job placement and support. We need a change of perspective when it comes to promoting employment, with sufficient personnel to do justice to the diversity of long-term unemployed people. What is needed is intensive support and individual attention. Instead of a preference for placements in precarious jobs, we want to see priority given to training and qualifications. It is vital to ensure social participation through a permanent social and inclusive labour market, which is set up to have a low threshold for access and to be needs-oriented, and from which the long-term unemployed can benefit in many different ways due to good support.

Self-determination and equal participation for people with disabilities

People with disabilities have the right to equal participation and protection from discrimination in all areas of society. Based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the

principle of self-determination, we want to promote inclusion and accompany its mandatory implementation with a Study Commission. Services to promote participation must be ensured in every phase of general, vocational and higher education. We want to create an inclusive labour market and to that end, provide better support for employers who employ people with disabilities. We will strengthen and safeguard the self-representation structures. Conversely, employers who do not employ sufficient people with severe disabilities should pay a higher compensation levy, which we will invest in the promotion of inclusive employment. We want to develop the current workshop system into a system of inclusive companies, in which people with disabilities are enabled to get employment subject to social security contributions, at least at minimum wage level, by using needs-appropriate ways of compensating for disadvantages. We will guarantee worker's rights and promote the change in the general labour market. We want to involve day centres in this process. We will expand the Budget for Work and provide security for people using it through unemployment insurance. Trainees and students with disabilities will get a grant for overseas stays to cover their needs corresponding to the benefits they get in this country. It is our aim to further develop the Federal Participation Act and to guarantee participation – no pooling of benefits against the will of those affected, a genuine right to individual wishes and choice, benefits independent of the income and assets of those entitled to the benefits, and a federal participation allowance. Applications for participation benefits should be simple and non-bureaucratic and decisions should be made quickly in the case of people with disabilities.

Common minimum social standards in the EU

We call for a European Union that guarantees social security and minimum standards across the EU. Social rights must be accorded the same value as the economic freedoms of the internal market. To that end, common European work and social standards are essential. We will campaign for a European basic income directive which establishes minimum social standards for each country, adapted to the economic situation in each case. Country-specific minimum wages across the EU should ensure that people can live from their work. The

European short-time work scheme introduced during the coronavirus crisis is something we want to perpetuate. In order to create stability in the event of future crises, we are in favour of the introduction of a European unemployment reinsurance scheme. We want to strengthen European works councils and further secure co-determination in international companies through reinforced information rights and tighter sanctions. It is our long-term goal that the social rights laid out in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights become enforceable as fundamental rights against member states in the European Court of Justice.

Reliable old-age pension provision for all

The long-term securing of the pension level at a minimum of 48 percent is a high priority for us. If this were to drop any further, more and more people would be dependent on the basic pension, putting the general acceptance of statutory pensions at risk. In order to secure pension levels, we want to increase the participation of women in the labour market, among other things by introducing the right to return to work full-time, to create a genuine Immigration Law and improve the employment situation of older employees. Tax subsidies should be increased where necessary to limit the burdens on those insured and employers. Precarious employment must be tackled, as only poverty-resistant wages lead to an adequate pension. We want to gradually develop the statutory pension insurance scheme into a citizen insurance scheme which will include all citizens going forward so that everyone is well covered. As a first step towards a citizen insurance scheme, we will ensure that self-employed people with no mandatory insurance, such as in professional pension schemes, and members of parliament are obliged to be included in the statutory pension insurance scheme. This would take existing private forms of pension provision and age limits into account. In order to prevent old age poverty, we will overhaul the basic pension and develop it into a genuine guaranteed pension which includes far more people than before and puts them in a better financial situation. Furthermore, we will introduce a minimum contribution basis of assessment financed by employers, which will give low-income full-time workers an adequate pension in old age

after many years of employment. We will keep the retirement age at 67. However, we want to make it easier for people to decide themselves when they wish to retire, even if this is beyond the statutory retirement age.

A citizens' pension fund

The pay-as-you-go system would benefit from the addition of a capital-based old age pension provision. The Riester pension has proved to be a complete failure and the Rürup pension has serious weaknesses. The products are expensive and lack transparency and, in some cases, have a lower rate of return than stuffing the money under the mattress. They are often only profitable for the insurance industry or due to public funding. For this reason, a significant proportion of people have not signed up. We want to replace the Riester and Rürup pensions with a publicly administered citizens' fund. We want to reform the publicly funded incentives for private pension provision and focus on low and middle incomes. People with an existing Riester contract will be offered portfolio protection if they wish. The fund will be able to provide long-term-oriented capital for the economy. Everyone who does not actively opt out will pay into the citizens' fund. The ensuing volume will keep administration costs low, spread the risks widely and remove the need for expensive guarantees. The citizens' fund will be administered publicly and independently of political influence and will invest on the basis of ESG sustainability criteria. It will invest in the long term and thus help counter the short-term focus of the markets. In this way it offers the potential for good returns. Employers should in future offer a company pension, make their own financial contributions and be able to use the citizens' fund as standard for this. In order to make it easier for small companies to offer a company pension, we want to introduce the contribution-only guarantee for small companies, remove their liability and thus ensure a greater prevalence of company pensions. In addition, we want to give self-employed people comparable opportunities to generate an adequate old age pension to those of company employees.

We will place greater value on health and healthcare

Prevention as a guiding principle

We want to guarantee access to good healthcare from childhood through to old age – but good health policy includes so much more than this. Anyone who works in precarious conditions in the meat industry, is housed in a mouldy apartment or on a busy street, or lives in poverty on Hartz IV unemployment benefit, is hard pushed to remain healthy, has a higher probability of becoming ill and often has poorer access to healthcare. A healthy society needs a policy that is preventive, that fights the causes of illness, funds research into prevention and acts with foresight. Instead of merely reacting to the next crisis, more attention should be focused in future on the causes of illness and the status of healthcare provision by means of common health goals and the expansion of health reporting. Prevention, health promotion and healthcare provision are three areas we want to pursue fundamentally across the board in all political areas.

Preparation for pandemics

The coronavirus crisis has shown that our healthcare system must be better prepared for future pandemics. That is why we are calling for a comprehensive analysis of the way the pandemic was managed. Now is the time to introduce long overdue change, for example, by reforming hospital and emergency care and driving forward digitalisation as a matter of urgency, especially in the health authorities. In order to combat future pandemics effectively and transparently, it is necessary to define steps to contain pandemics in the Infectious Diseases Protection Act, to update pandemic protection plans and to set up an independent, interdisciplinary pandemic board. The measures taken must be evidence-based and proportionate. A clear communication strategy should be employed to make the data foundations, decision-making rationale and methods transparent to all citizens. We will invest in health research; for example, in medicines, vaccines and

the development of new test procedures. Where there are insufficient incentives to develop treatments, such as in the case of antibiotics or antiviral drugs, we will create alternative incentive systems. The production of drugs and medical products should also be expedited – in cooperation with Europe - while supplies, for example, of respiratory masks, should be guaranteed by having our own production sites. Given its important role in combating the pandemic, we will continue to strengthen university medicine – from cutting-edge research, data networking and digitalisation to the provision of remote consultations in rural areas. At a European level, there need to be more joint strategies and coordination, perhaps through the joint planning and use of medical emergency capacities or through a European early warning system and the joint collection and use of relevant data. We therefore call for the rapid expansion of HERA, an EU body which should allow better coordination of state and private sector activities in future. We want to strengthen the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and strive to ensure closer cooperation with national health authorities.

Strengthening health authorities

It was already clear before the coronavirus pandemic that as a society, we need to make more effort to strengthen public health and enable people to lead a good life. Whether it is the mobile dentist visiting a school or vaccination campaigns in care homes – the promotion of health in a way that is easy for all people to access requires a strengthening of the public health service. It is our goal, working together with the health services of individual states and local authorities, public healthcare structures at universities and other higher education institutions and a new Federal Institute for Health that will be set up, to build up a strong pillar of public healthcare. The Federal Institute should develop joint, long-term health goals, report on the functional capacity of the healthcare system, secure the quality and coordination of healthcare services and, as a central public health organ, contribute to the improvement of healthcare provision by bundling together existing federal structures. In the past, health authorities have been chronically underfunded and understaffed. Staff recruitment and technical equipment must be permanently improved. We therefore

want the federal government and individual states to work together to ensure that the funding for the public health service is gradually raised to at least 1 percent of health expenditure so that it can fulfil its remit to protect and promote health in the long term. We want to integrate healthcare services more strongly into health promotion and prevention in local communities. Employees in the public health service, especially public health officers, must be paid a comparable salary to other healthcare roles. Nursing expertise should also be integrated more strongly – as so-called Community Health Nurses or in school healthcare.

Good healthcare provision in urban and rural areas

Health is a public service. We want people across the country to have access to good and reliable healthcare. Many registered doctors, midwives, therapists and other medical professionals work hard every day to provide that care. However, if in some places it is hard to find a midwife, paediatric wards have to turn patients away or doctor's surgeries in rural areas have to close due to a lack of general practitioners, this puts healthcare at risk. We want to further strengthen the primary healthcare provided by general practitioners and other healthcare professions. In order to guarantee provision in both urban and rural areas, we want to ensure overarching planning of outpatient and inpatient services in future and the promotion of regional healthcare provision groups with close links to local authorities. Going forward, there should be a common invoicing system for outpatient and inpatient services. We would also remove the strict separation of the EBM (statutory health insurance) and GOÄ (private health insurance) outpatient fee schedules. Standard dental care under the GKV (Statutory Health Insurance system) must also be regularly updated in line with scientific advances. At the same time, we want to strengthen the interdisciplinary cooperation between the healthcare professions. This is because all healthcare must be viewed from the point of view of the patient. To that end, we want to provide particular support for setting up regional public health centres in which all healthcare professionals work together as equals with shared responsibility. The distribution of tasks in healthcare is an area we will reform such that non-physician healthcare and nursing professionals can take on more

activities and be responsible for prescribing medicines and care products. Where there is established competence, we want direct access for therapists. The working conditions in and remuneration of therapeutic professions must be urgently adjusted to reflect their key role in healthcare and the fees for training and education in these fields must be abolished. There must be regular options for training and education in therapeutic professions.

Funding hospitals according to their social mission

In hospitals, everyone should get the care they require. Yet poor political strategies and the ensuing economic pressure have led to disincentives at the expense of patient welfare and to cost savings at the expense of staff. A more binding state hospital planning policy is required that defines the public care interests in terms of basic, specialist and maximum care provision. The federal government should be able to define common nationwide principles for hospital planning. The services available in a particular area should not depend on what is profitable or what providers can afford, but must instead be based on what is needed. Universal access to basic healthcare for the entire population has its own value. The focus on the common good in healthcare should be strengthened and the trend towards privatisation reversed. The concentration on profitable services must come to an end. In future, therefore, clinics should no longer only be financed based on case numbers, but also according to their social mission. This requires a new financing system that contains a strong pillar of structural financing so that decisions are made according to what is best for the patients and staff – and bureaucratic cost controls no longer run counter to this. Guidelines governing personnel allocation, treatment quality and care quality will ensure high-quality, needs-based healthcare provision. We want to close the gap that has been growing for years in public investment funding by sharing the funding between the federal government and individual states. Organ donation saves lives. We want to continue to improve the structures surrounding the organisation and quality of organ donation in clinics and the transplant register.

Reforming emergency healthcare

The effectiveness of a healthcare system is often only really evident in an emergency situation – at which point it is frequently serious. If Germany's emergency healthcare is to function better, a few things need to change. This starts with the ambulance service, who can nowadays offer more comprehensive medical treatment in an emergency and therefore must be legally regulated in line with other healthcare provision. The emergency control centres for the numbers 112 and 116117 must be organised under a single roof so that in case of doubt, it does not matter where people call. They are always asked the same, standard emergency questions and then get the appropriate assistance. We therefore want to combine these emergency control centres into health control centres which provide a reliable guidance role around the clock. In emergency centres at central clinic locations, there should be a seamless interlinking of the hitherto separate outpatient and inpatient care options for emergency care. Particularly at night and at weekends, these should be staffed in a way that means patients in less serious situations can also receive good outpatient care. By providing dedicated budgets for emergency and intensive care medicine and standard levels and guidelines for emergency healthcare provision, we want to ensure that people in need, in both urban and rural areas, always get the reliable care they expect.

Improving care for mental illness

Strong prevention and appropriate care – we want to set the right course for both of these, as mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness: it is fundamental to our quality of life, social participation and physical health. It is not acceptable that many people experiencing a mental crisis have to wait months for treatment. Anyone suffering from a mental illness needs rapid and easily accessible help to prevent their condition from getting worse. Stigmatisation, for example in the workplace, must be prevented. Comprehensive and needs-based care with outpatient and inpatient treatment, support and counselling services, including suicide prevention or in cases of addiction, is crucial. We want to create outpatient psychotherapy places by increasing health insurance accreditations for psychothera-

pists. Community-based, person-centred care is required alongside improved, cross-sector collaboration. Here, the special features of care for children and young people, LGBTIQ, refugees and traumatised people as well as women who have suffered abuse must be taken into account. Forced treatments must be reduced to the minimum absolutely essential. This requires systematic documentation and the consistent orientation of the treatment services towards the patient. Practical assistance must become more flexible between outpatient and inpatient treatment and the various professional groups within a team must be able to offer mutually agreed treatment. When it comes to the inadequate reform of psychotherapy training, improvements must be made, including ensuring that prospective psychotherapists can finally benefit from good training conditions.

Improving maternity care, strengthening women's health

Good maternity care puts the focus on the welfare of the mother and child. To create the necessary cultural shift, midwives and other players should hold a maternity summit to develop quality standards oriented to the health goal "Health around Birth". This would include, alongside 1:1 care, the freedom to choose the place of birth, the guarantee of local care provision, raising awareness of abuse in maternity care and establishing continuity of care before, during and after the birth. In order to guarantee the security of care provision and reinforce the profession of midwifery, there also needs to be a reform of the liability of healthcare professions, the inclusion of the flat rate for on-call services in the catalogue of health benefits, easier acquisition of subsequent academic qualifications for trained midwives and the expansion of midwife-led delivery rooms and birthing centres. There should be no financial incentives for medically unnecessary Caesarian sections. We want to make the healthcare system gender-equitable. Gender-specific aspects of research and training and in medical practice are not accorded sufficient consideration, for example in drug research. This threatens the health of women as well as of transgender and intersex people. Research into gender-specific drugs and care as well as women's health must be guaranteed, translated into medical and healthcare practice and anchored in the training. Similarly, there must be more targeted investment in the research and development

of contraceptives for all genders. With the help of an equal quota of women in leading positions in healthcare and through better working conditions, we will get more women onto the executive committees of our health system.

Ensuring access to the healthcare system, putting an end to discrimination

The health system is another area where we want to fight discrimination. For example, people with disabilities often do not receive all the health services, assistance or home care that they urgently need, and are thus limited in terms of their participation. For that reason, we want to dismantle these obstacles across the board via an inter-departmental inclusion plan, target healthcare services towards individual needs and reduce bureaucratic processes as far as possible. This also includes mandatory specifications for accessibility in needs planning and a reform in the supply of medicines and medical devices. The health system overall must be designed to be inclusive, including in the training and education of its staff. For LGBTIQ people, too, healthcare provision must be free of all discrimination. To that end we will enshrine in law the entitlement to medical measures for transgender and intersex people. We will close the existing gaps in the ban on so-called “conversion therapies”. We want to put more emphasis on educating doctors on issues around HIV and the latest treatment and prevention options in order to prevent stigmatisation. Access to healthcare provision must be guaranteed to people without health insurance and the homeless, regardless of their residence status. This also applies to EU citizens who live in Germany without papers, perhaps through an anonymous health insurance certificate, by abolishing the obligation to report and provide information to public authorities or by strengthening the advisory networks for people without papers. To ensure that language is never an insurmountable hurdle, we want to include the entitlement to qualified language mediation in Social Code V. We want to revoke the easier deportation of ill and traumatised refugees and make it possible once more to include psychotherapeutic assessments in the process.

Moving towards a citizen insurance scheme for health and care

People with statutory health insurance wait longer for appointments with specialist doctors and many privately insured people can no longer afford the high premiums. A few people benefit from this two-class medical system, to the disadvantage of many. Our goal is to establish a citizen insurance scheme financed on the basis of solidarity in which everyone receives the care they need, regardless of income. We intend to lay the foundations for this in the next parliamentary term. With the citizen insurance scheme, we want to involve everyone in the funding of an efficient insurance system and thus ensure that, even against the background of future cost increases in the health service, we ensure the stable and solidarity-based sharing of the financial burden. Civil servants, the self-employed, employees and members of parliament will also make income-related contributions, with no fictitious declarations of minimum income. The contributions should be levied on all types of income, for example, as well as wages and salaries, also on capital income. We will improve the care of those with statutory health insurance – for example, by reimbursing the cost of glasses. We also want to end the disadvantages felt by civil servants with statutory health insurance through an eligible tariff and provide better insurance for privately insured individuals who can only afford the basic tariff. For people with statutory health insurance who owe contributions, we want to make it easier for them to return in full to the health insurance scheme and we want to improve the health insurance cover of low-earning, self-employed people so that they are not financially overburdened by excessively high premiums.

Strengthening patient rights

For us, the needs of the patients and those in need of care and the benefits for them are key. Instead of being mere onlookers, they should be participants in our health service. We therefore want to expand the opportunities for representation of patients and health insurance policyholders in health service bodies, especially through a specific impartial member on the Federal Joint Committee, more rights for involvement and information, and a reform of social elections. Patients should have self-determination and an informed basis on which

to make decisions, and be able to assert their rights promptly and effectively if problems arise, for example against their health insurance fund. We want more quality transparency in the health service and will aim to set up a foundation supported by patient and self-help organisations, which will provide a reliable, non-profit new home for independent patient advice. We want to promote patient safety. Victims of medical negligence must find it easier to claim compensation and comprehensive structures should be put in place to avoid such errors.

Digitalisation to improve healthcare provision

We want to exploit the opportunities of digitalisation – whether it's robotics to support care, remote consultations or electronic patient files – to make the healthcare system fit for the future. Patients should be able to use apps to gain secure access to digital vaccination certificates, health information such as their blood group, their medical history or their latest blood values. To coordinate all these plans, we want to work with all users of the health service to devise a digitalisation strategy. In order to ensure that they bring genuine benefits to patients, electronic patient files must be developed further and made easily accessible and comprehensible for all patients; a communication campaign should reach patients regardless of their social circumstances or digital health literacy. As part of this, patient organisations should be more engaged in the process. Health data should be anonymised and, where necessary, pseudonymised before being made available to science in order to improve healthcare provision in Germany. No data will be passed on without the consent of the patient. Medical confidentiality and patient secrecy must also be safeguarded at all times when it comes to digital health data. Patients must have secure and accessible access to their own health data. A decentralised research data infrastructure is required. The results that are obtained from disclosed health data should be made generally available in line with open data principles. All digital services funded by the solidarity-based association must be accessible and meet the highest standards of data protection and data security. We are calling for an independent assessment of the benefits of digital healthcare applications. We will support the expansion of digital infrastructure and technical

assistance systems in the care sector. In order to guarantee security and interoperability and thus, for example, to reduce the administrative cost of medical and care staff, manufacturers of medical products and software should offer open interfaces that are oriented towards international (interface) standards.

Climate protection is health protection

The health service has particular significance in dealing with the climate crisis, for example due to the need to adapt to a changing spectrum of illnesses and more extreme weather conditions such as heat waves. Already, it is mostly older people and those at risk of poverty who suffer more from such events, and allergies and other diseases such as skin conditions are also more prevalent in these groups. This is a challenge for the health service, which we want to confront through more prevention, better emergency healthcare provision and increased assistance for particularly vulnerable people such as those with chronic illness. We will also set up a special fund to implement heat action plans. At the same time, the health service must also make a contribution to reducing CO₂ emissions. For example, we will support investments in green hospitals and health centres. Environmental and climate protection should also be taken into greater consideration in the production of medicines and become a quality criterion in health insurance contracts. The link between climate protection and health can thus become a driver of the transformation towards greater sustainability.

Improving outpatient care

Anyone in need of care deserves the best possible care and support to be able to live an autonomous and dignified life. In an ageing society it is even more necessary to have a range of nursing care services across the country that are tailored to local demand and that serve the individual needs and biographical backgrounds of those in need of care. Instead of more large establishments, it is necessary to create more outpatient residential and care options, such as day, short-term and respite care or residential care communities – embedded in an environment which supports people in old age or

in need of assistance and enables them to play an active role in the social life of their community. In rural areas in particular, community health nurses can be a valuable support. Their presence also makes it easier to care for relatives. To that end, we want to create the legal framework conditions for local community nursing care and enable local authorities to undertake binding care planning to design appropriate care services in the local area. A federal programme should provide start-up funding for local authorities who wish to go down this route. Long-term care insurance benefits should be needs-based, independent of the type of housing and available as a personal budget. Caring for someone deserves our recognition and the support of society in general. For that reason, we want to provide particular support for people who take on the responsibility of caring for relatives, neighbours or friends in the form of the “Pfle-geZeit Plus”. With this scheme, we will enable all working people to receive an earnings replacement benefit for a three-month full withdrawal from work and a three-year partial withdrawal from work. This should provide a financial cushion for the reduction in working times as a result of providing care.

A double care guarantee

People in need of nursing care and their relatives are increasingly having to spend more of their own money for their care. We want people in need of nursing care to receive the care services they need without being threatened with poverty. With a double care guarantee, we want to quickly reduce the level of co-payments and cap it permanently. In that way, we will ensure that individuals can reliably plan for the costs they need to cover themselves. The long-term care insurance should then cover all the costs above this amount for needs-based (outpatient and inpatient) care. With a long-term care citizen insurance scheme based on solidarity, we want to ensure that everyone participates in funding the long-term care risk by making income-related contributions.

Improving working conditions in nursing care and healthcare provision

Nursing care workers make an invaluable contribution to our society. People who require support in old age due to disability or illness quite rightly want to be looked after by professional, caring staff. At present, it is too often the case that medical professionals have to work beyond their limits. Understaffing, long hours, physical and mental overload are problems faced on a daily basis, and not just during the pandemic. Patients and staff alike suffer as a result. We want to improve these working conditions. It is not just a question of more pay, work protection and recognition – but above all, more colleagues and more time. We want to use the mandatory, needs-based allocation of staff – including in the long-term care sector – to secure a better work-life balance, more independence for specialist staff, the elimination of unnecessary bureaucracy and the opportunity to introduce new working time models, such as the 35-hour week in the care sector without reducing salaries, creating working conditions which mean that many people – new, existing or returning – are happy to work in the care sector. We want to limit the exceptions for the healthcare sector in the Working Hours Act in order to prevent overload and stem the exit of staff in the medical and care sector. Increased psychosocial support for all healthcare professions must be provided for potentially traumatic events. Appreciation must also be reflected in salaries – ideally via good collective wage agreements. We want to oblige social care insurance schemes only to work with providers who pay collectively agreed wages. In order to increase the appeal of nursing care professions in the long term, we want to strengthen training, self-organisation, opportunities to influence professional nursing care and its structures at federal level, for example, via a Federal Nursing Chamber and above all, by giving nursing care staff a stronger say in the Federal Joint Committee and in other decision-making bodies. We want to provide financial and structural support for the study of nursing sciences and research into nursing care. We want to develop a legal framework for the work done by immigrant domestic staff and care workers, which defines the rights and obligations for both sides (domestic staff and care workers).

Expanding palliative and hospice care, regulating the right to die

Dignity in life should also include dignity in death. Patients and their relatives must be given clear and detailed information about their illness and the treatment options so that they can make decisions they feel comfortable with. To that end we want to launch national information programmes covering living wills and powers of attorney. Needs-based palliative care for the seriously and terminally ill of all ages must be universally guaranteed. We will strengthen and expand inpatient hospices and specialist outpatient palliative care teams for adults and children. Ensuring self-determination through to the end of life includes the right to die. We are committed to ensuring that the federal parliament holds a free vote to regulate access to euthanasia in conjunction with the necessary protections in line with the decision of the Federal Constitutional Court.

In favour of a responsible drug and addiction policy

We want to see a change in the drug policy which puts the focus on the health and protection of young people and the ability to take an autonomous attitude to risk. Green drug policy is based on the four pillars of prevention, assistance, harm reduction and regulation. The current law on narcotics is in need of reform. There is no protection for young people and consumers on the black market. Addicts need help rather than prosecution. The regulation of drugs should be fundamentally geared towards the actual health risks. We want to enable local authorities to carry out model projects and support them in expanding target group-specific, low-threshold services for drug users and addicts. These could include outreach work, drug checking, substitution and diamorphine programmes (including in prisons and detention centres) and services for the homeless as well as better referral to outpatient and inpatient treatments. We want to dismantle obstacles to substitution programmes offered by doctors and outpatient departments. We will also strengthen addiction prevention using modern approaches and digital media, with the involvement of the target group, not only for drugs but also alcohol, prescription medication and tobacco. We want to strengthen protections for non-smokers.

There should be no drug advertising. The current ban on cannabis causes more problems than it solves. For that reason, we will undermine the black market and introduce a cannabis control act based on strict youth and consumer protection to regulate the sale of cannabis in licensed retail outlets as well as introducing clear regulations on driving under the influence of drugs. We want to improve the supply of medical cannabis and support research in this field.

We will create affordable housing

A right to housing enshrined in the constitution

All people require the adequate housing. Housing is a human right. But it is becoming increasingly hard to find somewhere to live. And in many places, rents and property prices are continuing to rise. Big cities are becoming increasingly divided into income districts, with city centres losing their vitality. Many cities need to be realigned towards a housing market focussed on the common good. It is therefore necessary to act in such a way that families, students, people with disabilities, older people and those on low incomes do not get into difficulties but can instead live well and in safety. We want the right to housing to be enshrined in the constitution. Estimates suggest there are currently around 700,000 homeless people in Germany, 40,000 of whom live on the streets with no shelter. More and more of these are young people, women and families. In order to put an end to this state of affairs, we want to establish a national action programme for the prevention and management of homelessness. The Housing First approach is a key element of this policy. It enables homeless people to move into a flat without having to first “qualify” for assistance. Nobody should be without shelter and permanent, decent accommodation. We also want to call a housing and rent summit which generates a genuine dialogue on an equal footing between tenants’ associations, the housing sector and federal, state and local authorities so that together they can develop new, sustainable and social concepts.

Preventing crisis-driven homelessness

We want to remove the burden on tenants and families as well as cohabiting people in owner-occupier properties and prevent them from losing their homes due to a crisis situation. The opportunity to pay rent or mortgage instalments later should help to prevent the termination of contracts and evictions. It should not be possible to evict people onto the street. We want to expand free tenant and debt advisory services in local authorities. In the event of a crisis-related drop in income, a programme by the KfW Bank (the “Safe Housing Programme”) should ensure financial support for tenants and borrowers. Tenants who are reliant on these rental payments should then get state-funded support.

New non-profit status for social housing

We want to create new housing – with a focus on housing that is family-friendly, open to all and geared towards the social environment and the common good. Instead, right now we are losing a vast amount of social housing – around 100 units each day. Rather than cutting funding, we will therefore ensure a significant increase in the funding for social housing and make this a permanent change. We will support local authorities in their efforts to strengthen and rebuild their existing housing associations and public benefit housing cooperatives. To this end, we will provide one million additional rental properties, guaranteed and permanent, by means of a new non-profit status for social housing. Existing state-owned housing stocks should no longer be sold to private investors, but should instead be surrendered at a reduced rate to local authorities and permanently committed to use as social housing. In this way, we want to increase the stock of social housing by one million in the next ten years. We also want to enable local authorities to establish more social housing in their development planning.

Strong tenants, fair rents

Many people are spending an increasing proportion of their income on their housing, and many can no longer afford to pay their rent. It is

therefore our goal to ensure fair and affordable rents and strong rights for tenants. A nationwide overall concept is required that ensures by federal law that maximum rent limits can be imposed on housing stock and that the cap on rent is extended indefinitely and made much more effective. We will abolish unnecessary exceptions, for example for furnished properties. Regular rent rises should be limited to 2.5 percent a year within the rent index. To that end, we want to strengthen and circulate the qualified rent index and ensure it is legally watertight. The calculations should be based on rental contracts of the last 20 years. We will endeavour to continue to reduce the modernisation surcharge and limit it to a maximum of EUR 1.50 per square metre so that energy-based renovations are possible where the costs are offset by the energy savings going forward. Within such an overall concept, it should be possible under the BGB (German Civil Code) to make federal state regulations in regions with an overstretched housing market, providing they at least correspond to the specifications of the overall concept. This must, of course, be constitutional. We will abolish the ability to charge tenants a property tax. We will also promote space-saving living to make better use of the existing housing stock. In this way, we want, for example, to make it easier for tenants to exchange properties together with their existing contracts. A conversion ban in the Building Code and the extending the protection of local environments are additional tools. To that end we will strengthen the purchase options of local authorities based on an earnings value that ensures affordable rents and prevent speculative value increases. Exorbitant rents must also be properly prosecuted in line with § 5 of the Economic Criminal Law. Termination of a lease for the owner’s own needs should also be restricted more clearly than today to actual owner occupation or that of the owner’s close family in order to prevent abuse. We will test to what extent it is possible to exclude such terminations in an overstretched housing market for groups that are at particular risk. In order to strengthen tenants’ associations and promote an orientation to the common good on the housing market, we want to develop genuine co-determination rights and tools.

Putting an end to property speculation and money laundering in the housing market

Housing is a social right and the housing market should not be a place for speculative investors. All too often, property is used for money laundering purposes, and that must be stopped. We plan to introduce transparency through a property register of owners, which also makes land register information accessible free of charge for journalists, non-governmental organisations and residents of the properties, and to ban cash property purchases. We also want to end the abuse of so-called “share deals” for tax avoidance purposes and will aim to introduce a pro rata taxation on property ownership in the case of company sales. Capital gains from private property business must be taxed appropriately. Speculation on building land should be outlawed. When a local authority finds itself in dire need of housing, there should be an obligation on owners to build on vacant plots instead of speculating on higher prices. We will also take stronger action against the incorrect use and speculative vacancy of housing space. In addition, we want to open up the opportunity in the Building Code of a compensatory levy to be paid to local authorities.

Land for the common good

Land is unlike other assets because it cannot be increased, while at the same time being indispensable. Rising land prices lead to rising construction and housing costs, which in turn lead to displacement. In the case of undesirable developments, there is a particular obligation for the state to intervene. We want to ensure that the state sector once again operates a strategic and fair land policy. The federal government should no longer sell its own property to the highest bidder, but rather demand the creation of affordable and sustainable housing, and cultural and social establishments designed to serve the common good. To that end, we want to transform the Institute for Federal Real Estate into a not-for-profit land fund. The fund will strategically buy new plots and hand them over to developers with public service obligations. These plots should ideally be given as leasehold land to ensure the long-term provision of social housing. Where applicable, local authorities and local authority housing associations should have the right of first refusal. The income of the fund would not go into the budget but instead be used to purchase more land.

Making it easier to buy residential property

Many people dream of owning their own home, but exploding property prices in most regions of the country is making this increasingly hard to achieve. We want to make it easier to buy residential property – both new and existing. The principle of “whoever commissions the estate agent, pays the fees” should be introduced for property sales, in the same way as it already applies to estate agent commissions on rental properties. We will try to reduce commissions considerably so that they don’t lead to higher sale prices by the back door. To that end, we want to reduce the additional costs of house purchases still further, for example, by enabling federal states to increase the tax rate for land transfer tax on large housing companies, and to lower it for those buying a property to live in. We want to promote lease-purchase agreements for owner occupied residential property via federal states and local authorities, and we will also support the purchase and modernisation of empty flats and buildings for affordable housing. We want to support participation in cooperatives and joint purchases by tenants, for example via apartment block syndicates and other joint projects, such as by providing non-bureaucratic, cheap credit or guarantees.

Promoting resource-efficient, recycling-oriented construction

We can only achieve our climate goals if we ensure a consistent shift in the building industry towards more resource-efficient and sustainable construction. In future, every urban development and construction plan must take into account the entire consumption of materials and energy for building, operating and later dismantling the property. All building measures should require a lifecycle assessment, with the renovation and extension of existing housing stock given priority over new buildings. The aim is to recycle or reuse all materials used. We will therefore press for a change to the economic framework conditions, a building resource law and mandatory climate protection standards for all legal requirements, standards and building regulations as well as a sustainable timber construction strategy, so that future buildings are built in a way that saves energy and resources and is non-toxic. The state must act as a role model in this. We want to strengthen research

into and the market launch of sustainable, climate-friendly building materials. Wood is a valuable raw material, so we will focus on its targeted and efficient use to make our houses more sustainable without over-exploiting our forests. We will also promote the digitalisation of planning and construction. In order to plan, build and modernise buildings with a focus on recycling, we will introduce a digital building materials passport with all the relevant information about the materials used – our buildings and construction waste landfill sites will thus become sources of raw materials. The reduction of land usage for housing developments plays a key role in the protection of nature and species. With the corresponding legal requirements and incentives, we will ensure that priority is given to brownfield development and space-saving construction. Plots that are no longer needed for residential purposes will be rewilded. In future, housing will be built higher rather than wider and traffic areas will be reduced. Plots that are to be turned into residential areas must be offset by removing areas of hard paving. In this way, we will create a circular land economy that ultimately no longer requires a net land consumption. Furthermore, we will work to ensure that § 13 b of the Building Code is not extended beyond the year 2022.

We will invest in towns and villages that people want to live in

Strengthening regional public services

For a good, self-determined life in all regions, we need equality of living conditions. There are restrictions in many places, and they often vary from region to region: villages lack centres, local authorities see their swimming pools close, and the internet is still far too slow in many places. It is our goal to see that individual development, democratic participation and social engagement are possible everywhere across the country. We need good infrastructure and access to public goods in local authorities. For that reason, we want to enshrine a new joint remit of “regional public service” in the constitution. Regions that are currently facing major supply problems should be able once more

to invest in and shape the future. The aim is to use regional indicators in the federal states to select certain regions to support and help reinforce the local authorities in these regions. With regional budgets, we will give citizens and key players in those regions the opportunity to develop and shape their own towns and villages. We want to formulate the necessary minimum standards for key supply areas such as health, mobility and broadband. An inclusive society based on solidarity needs places where people can come together, places that combat loneliness, places of social cohesion. These can be marketplaces or family centres, youth clubs or skate parks, town libraries, cultural centres or open public spaces. We will work together with experts and citizens to create a national strategy against loneliness. And we want to launch a federal strategy of “places of cohesion” in conjunction with local authorities and local initiatives. With federal facilities in East Germany and the targeted positioning of new research institutes, we will create important momentum in economically underdeveloped regions. We also support the idea of establishing a “Future Centre for German Unity and European Transformation”.

Solid funding for local authorities

Strong self-government by local authorities and resilience in the provision of public services require solid financial backing. Many local authorities cannot even manage to undertake the obligations already within their remit, such as repairing municipal roads or renovating school buildings. Even before the coronavirus they were in a weak financial state or in debt and their scope for action is getting smaller all the time. This is felt directly by local people. If there is no spare funding for so-called voluntary services such as the establishment and running of sports or cultural facilities, there is a knock-on effect on community life in the local authorities and trust in the state. We want to structure local authority finances in a way that is better and more crisis-proof. If the federal and state governments give local authorities new remits, they must also provide the necessary funding. We will introduce fair support for existing local authority debts and local tax income losses due to the crisis in order to give even those local authorities with large debts some kind of prospect. The local authorities should be able to turn to the federal government for support

with their debt management where necessary. We therefore want the 2021 and 2022 business tax losses to be completely absorbed by the federal and state governments. We also want coverage of the costs of accommodation and heating for people with tolerated stay status. We want to enable more local authority investment, for example in climate protection, green transport, start-up infrastructure and cultural facilities. To that end, and as a first step, access to funding should be made simpler and less bureaucratic and the obstacles to participation, especially for financially weaker local authorities, should be reduced. We want the federal and state governments to support local authorities with a joint competence agency for funding policy and investment, and to enable them to implement projects. In the medium term, however, there is a need for a fundamental reorganisation of local authority funding: away from more and more individual funding programmes and towards a higher level of basic funding, so that decisions can be made locally about what spending to prioritise.

Redesigning city centres

City and town centres, which are popular destinations for spending time and meeting people, play a huge role in our quality of life. They offer cultural exchanges and provide a platform for life in urban and rural areas. With a good building culture, we want to make city and town centres more liveable, more attractive and also safer for all through new housing, commerce, education and culture. A smart city development policy, sustainable transport concepts and an urban construction emergency fund are the best prerequisites for ensuring that retail and tradespeople also have a future there. We therefore want to reorientate urban development funding: for more attractive cities, more green spaces and expanses of water, so that city living is still possible even as our summers grow hotter. With additional funding for smart city projects, we will support the development of independent digital platforms, which provide an opportunity for owner-managed stationary retail outlets, in particular, to offer attractive services. In this way we will work to counter displacements and vacancies. One million new social housing apartments should be built in our cities in the next few years. With the “100,000 Dächer und Häuser” (100,000 Lofts and Homes) programme, we will

invest in loft conversions and the modernisation of empty housing. This requires sufficient planners in local authorities and capacity in the construction industries. We want to promote smaller businesses such as specialist craft firms, social and cultural projects and clubs through a commercial tenancy law and use the Federal Land Utilisation Ordinance to preserve and reinvigorate central locations in towns and cities. State-owned property should in future only be sold to not-for-profit, public or other social providers.

Living in the countryside, working digitally

Countryside and village life has a lot to offer. Entrepreneurs, families and freelancers – they all need fast, reliable internet for their lives. Sufficiently fast broadband and mobile phone provision have become essential public services. Every citizen must be able to assert their rights in this respect quickly and without excessive bureaucracy. We will create conditions for young and old to come and stay. Via the Joint Task for the Improvement of Agricultural Structure and Coastal Protection, we will promote housing projects for all generations, co-working, the activation of vacant properties and communal and cooperative types of housing. We will create incentives for the revitalisation of old building stock instead of building new homes on greenfield sites, and support programmes and initiatives for reusing vacant buildings, for example as co-working spaces, social and cultural facilities or re-establishing grocery stores in small communities. We want to redevelop station buildings as community-oriented spaces that are attractive and inviting mobility hubs. In this way we will connect the railways with the towns and villages. We will support the state “Markttreff” (Market Meeting Point) programmes: when, for example, supermarkets redevelop their spaces to integrate a café, bank and post office services. Local authorities should get grants when they bring together public facilities, such as a sports hall, library, playground, working space or cinema under the umbrella of a cultural centre.

Superfast broadband everywhere

For urban and rural living, mobile working, innovative businesses and lessons, high-speed Internet is an essential prerequisite for social participation as well as equal living conditions, and in our view should be classed as a public service. With fewer than two million active fibre optic connections, however, Germany lags far behind in all European and international comparisons. Yet fibre optics are the future. Our goal is fast, cheap and reliable fibre-optic broadband (FTTB) in every home. We will ensure that the funding gets where it is most needed with no unnecessary red tape. We will strengthen open access to existing fibre broadband and remove blockages to speed up the expansion. The comprehensive roll-out of fibre broadband should also be driven forward and secured in the long term within the framework of operator models. In order to enable people to get faster Internet access in the short term, we want to design a legal entitlement to a fast basic Internet service in such a way that it is non-bureaucratic and easy to enforce. With minimum bandwidths oriented towards people's usage habits. In this way we will ensure that any white spots are soon covered. We want to continue to ensure and consistently enforce net neutrality. And we will put an end to false bandwidth claims: if telecommunications companies do not provide the promised download speeds, there should be simple, flat-rate compensation and high fines. Where the expansion of mobile phone networks is concerned, it is important to guarantee full coverage, regardless of which network you are using. Where providers do not enter into cooperative agreements to cover dead spots, local roaming must be arranged as required, naturally with the relevant compensation. In any future frequency auctions, the coverage requirements for the area must be adjusted to keep up with rising demand – especially along railways and roads.

Self-determination in old age, in urban and rural areas

We want to enable self-determination in old age too. We want to provide greater financial support for dismantling barriers in housing and the residential environment and thus enable older people to live independently in their familiar surroundings for longer. Social participation enables self-determination. We will pursue the genera-

tion-friendly approach of "Age-friendly Cities and Communities" set out by the World Health Organisation – including for older people in urban and rural areas and in the digital sphere. We want to promote this with a programme in which community centres and hubs provide information about age-appropriate housing, options for further education, healthcare and social security as well as opportunities to get involved in the village or district. In order to improve participation in the digital world too, we want to promote initiatives for practical training and application in the social environment and in the places where older people come together, such as neighbourhood centres and libraries. Self-determination also means being sufficiently mobile for one's own needs, independent of a private car. This means extending local public transport in cities and in the countryside and using intelligent networking and intelligent on-demand systems such as dial-a-bus services. There is a need for comprehensive barrier-free access to all types of public transport and the routes to local transport and local services should have enough places for people to rest and regain their strength.

Chapter 4: Enabling education and research

Education enables. Education gives children, young people and adults the opportunity to evolve right from the beginning and up to old age. To question the old and discover the new. Education and inclusion create the foundations to be able to independently go our own way in life. There is endless potential to make this country fairer, more modern and more crisis-proof in future-oriented education policy, training and further education and in visionary research and smart science policy. This is why we need socially diverse and inclusive schools in which young people learn together for as long as possible. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as well as traditional environmental education are the key to the necessary social transformation. It enables people to think and act in a sustainable way, to shape and participate in a democratic and plural society and to understand the effects of their own actions on the world. ESD enables people to actively participate in shaping an ecologically compatible, economically efficient and socially equitable society.

A good education system is essential for equal life chances and cohesion in a diverse society. However, in Germany, a person's career still depends too much on their family, name or where they live, instead of on their own capabilities. And the pandemic is exacerbating the already too great social inequality: where children and young people can expect little support from home, where access to laptops or tablets is lacking and no parent can help, they risk becoming permanently disconnected. The children and young people who are most strongly affected by the crisis therefore need the most support. However, the school closures also led to an educational gap overall across all age groups and students missed out on joint learning, discussions and being together in the school playground,

which can also affect cognitive and social development in children and young people. Children and young people made particular sacrifices during the pandemic – the restrictions on contacts impacts them in terms of their development opportunities more than adults. We owe it to them to put them at the centre of politics at last.

Equal life chances for all children means that we advocate joint learning and individual support for all children from the nursery (nursery and daycare) until they leave school. We want to overcome the social division between schools and nurseries, including through targeted investments by the federal government that are distributed locally. Because we want nurseries and schools that children and young people, but equally childcare workers and teachers are happy to attend. Regardless of whether they are in the country or the city, whether in poorer or richer neighbourhoods. Childcare workers and teachers are always key workers: our appreciation should be reflected in their work, their pay and equipment. Schools should be attractive places. For this, they not only need fast Internet and clean toilets, but also up-to-date space concepts with enough room for varied and inclusive learning methods. Multi-professional teams should offer children the best possible support with their different needs. For this they require good training and continuing education, secure careers and a good wage. Cultural education has to become a fundamental part of our educational system. As the course is set from the beginning, it is there that the most resources should also flow. We will significantly increase investments, especially in nurseries and at primary level, and also to eliminate the backlog of school building refurbishments. A simple application for funds by the schools is required to support school students throughout Germany without the bureaucratic hurdles of the federal government.

Education is a right for every age and every path in life. A career cannot be planned on a drawing board; therefore our educational paths have to remain flexible and open. The opportunity for mature students to take the higher education entrance qualification, starting an apprenticeship in your mid-30s or the first ever degree in the family – all this has to be possible and must not depend on whether there is financial support from home or not. Whether it is full-time school or night school, or dual vocational education, further education or a degree course it is all the same, whether you want to be a

tradesperson in construction, an office employee, freelance or self-employed in your own business: we support diverse life paths and the corresponding educational pathways. We want to work against the trend of a growing number of school students leaving school without a qualification.

Trainees and students are also suffering from the effects of the pandemic. Apprenticeships they thought were secure have been cancelled and some students have never been inside a lecture theatre. Precisely because this is a decisive life phase of reorientation, we have a duty to create security and prospects. All students who have got into financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic should receive support in the form of emergency aid under the Federal Training Assistance Act. We do not consider student loans to be a suitable method of support due to the risk of debt. We want to guarantee a good trainee position and good training for everyone seeking an apprenticeship.

Creativity, an enquiring spirit and the transformation of our educational and academic system are the basis to curb the major crises – the climate crisis and pandemic. For innovations to benefit the general population, there must also be public infrastructure available for development. A good life will also be possible in future because scientists, artists and researchers in companies, universities and non-university establishments are constantly, passionately working on new ideas and on answers to questions that we have not even asked yet. However, they can only develop new types of vaccines or alternative fuels, new economical concepts for prosperity or sustainable business models if they have a well-equipped research environment and can explore and try out new things with an uncertain outcome. They need optimal, reliable conditions for their work; we should reduce unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles. Academic cooperations with European partners, especially between universities, contribute significantly to the attractiveness and innovation dynamics of the German academic system, which is why we want to give these stronger support. We want to connect up thinking on education, research and innovation policy more to invigorate the European Research and Higher Education Area and establish sources of future prosperity.

Science constantly reveals new horizons of thought and opportunities, thereby changing the course of things. It provides a central

orientation for political action, as demonstrated by the climate crisis and the pandemic. However, at a time of information filter bubbles and conspiracy theories, scientific insights are openly being called into question. What is required is an easily comprehensible and interdisciplinary scientific dialogue that brings science and society closer together - through participative formats and funding for scientific communication.

We support good education right from the start

A nursery place in a good nursery for every child

No matter what part of Germany you are from and who your parents are, all children need the opportunity to grow up securely and well. Nurseries have a decisive role in this. As places for early education, they create stability, arouse curiosity, impart the joy of being together with children of the same age and support children as they grow up. The curiosity and love of discovery nurtured here lay the foundations for learning and acquiring skills. They are the first step in the educational system. Each individual child has their own needs and requires individual support, and nurseries respond to these. We will ensure top quality in the facilities which we entrust our youngest to, with a federal quality law. This top quality also has to be reflected in appropriate infrastructure. Children need exercise and sufficient spaces to run around and play. The time that skilled workers have for children is decisive for the children to feel at ease and to be able to be individually supported. That is why we want to guarantee as a minimum standard that childcare workers and other educational staff take care of a maximum of four children under the age of three at the same time or nine children from the age of three. Inclusive facilities require a better childcare ratio depending on the support needs of the children. In addition, they need to have enough time for preparation and follow-up, cooperation with families, networking in the social environment and further training. We will back the skilled workers in nurseries with expert consultation, supervision and mentoring programmes, cooperation between learning venues and support for professional development within the nursery system. We want to

continue and strengthen the commitment of the federal government to expanding places so that all children can get a place in a good, inclusive nursery. A childcare place makes participation in social and working life possible for parents, especially single parents. The nursery place has to be appropriate for the living and working realities of parents. Options should also be available for shift and weekend work.

More skilled workers in nurseries, daycare centres and schools

The educational staff in nurseries, daycare centres and schools have a high level of responsibility as they have a decisive influence on the life path of children during their very early years. However this responsibility is not yet sufficiently reflected in the wages of these skilled workers. Childcare workers, teachers and other educators need a good wage and good working conditions for the important work they perform in the educational system and in the youth welfare service. In addition, we want to ensure fair pay for trainees, further development opportunities and good working conditions with an effective skilled worker initiative; at the same time, no one should be prevented from training to be a childcare worker due to tuition fees. To overcome the shortage in educational staff and teachers in the long term with well-qualified staff, we want to promote high-quality education for career changers with a federal and state programme and reinforce existing further training and qualification opportunities, while protecting common quality standards.

The right to an all-day place for every primary school child and good learning conditions at secondary schools

Schools should be strong places for education, encounters and inspiration. For this, they need motivated skilled workers, well-equipped barrier-free spaces and time. Time for learning and playing together, researching and discovering, shared cultural, social and democratic experiences, promotion of language and exercise, individual support and care. In this respect, all-day places at a primary school or daycare centre and good learning conditions at secondary schools are important. Our goal is to implement an individual legal entitlement for every primary school child to all-day education and care with

quality standards – with enough skilled workers in multi-professional teams, inspiring spaces and school playgrounds, a healthy lunch and wide-ranging cooperation with associations, music schools and other players on site. We want to financially support these types of cooperation. The youth welfare service is an important partner of schools in designing all-day provision as informal education is an essential part of all-day provision in addition to school learning. The guiding principle is integrated all-day concepts for comprehensive personal development. What is important is to enable all-day and good secondary school provision for all children, those with disabilities and those without. We are committed to the physical activity target of the WHO to reduce the physical inactivity of children, young people and adults by 15 percent by 2030. There should be at least one choice of exercise on offer every day in all-day provision. The entitlement to integration assistance by the youth welfare service has to be valid everywhere – via individual assistance or via a pool solution, both in all-day schools and in daycare centres. The working conditions and wages of the integration assistants should reflect their demanding and responsible occupation. No additional costs should arise for parents of children and young people with disabilities. The implementation of this legal right will be an all-German feat. This has to be reflected in the federal government's participation in the costs. To support all primary schools on their path to inclusive places for all-day education, we will launch an accompanying programme for the promotion of an integrated school development spanning all professions and thereby support coordination offices. In the long term, we want to expand school social work and anchor this as a component of all-day provision across the board.

Corona-Rettungsschirm für Kinder und Jugendliche

The pandemic has left deep marks, especially for children who already had it harder at home before. Summer camps and extra tutoring in the core subjects alone will not be enough to overcome the effects of the crisis. We want to put children and young people centre stage. They now need a helping hand, a listening ear and clear spaces to find their way back to normal life. To address this, we will expand sports, outdoor activity and cultural offerings and increase advice and individual help

for students as well as sharing knowledge about mental health and crises at schools. We will build a secure network of broad support with mentors, education guides, school social workers and psychologists to better protect the mental health of our children and young people in the long term. Any additional offering for crisis management should promote the quality of nurseries, daycare centres and all-day schools in the long term.

Programme for schools in socially disadvantaged regions and districts

Educational opportunities are opportunities for the future. Every child has a right to a good school, regardless of where they live. But the everyday world looks different. We want to create permanent funding channels for greater educational equity to bolster regions and districts with special support requirements. Lasting educational success will only come about through the coordinated cooperation of all the institutions and people involved and through long-term funding channels. We support multi-professional teams in which teachers, school social workers, childcare workers, school psychologists and other skilled workers employed in the school or region complement and enrich each other with different perspectives in order to be able to support the students and their families in the best possible way. This includes systematic prevention work, closing learning gaps and promoting German as well as mother tongue language skills. Multilingualism should be seen as a resource rather than a deficit. All players cooperate on an equal footing. This way the participation of students and cooperation with parents will also be improved, and schools will become places of support for the whole family. We want to protect the mental health of children and young people better in the long term. Students should be able to feel comfortable and safe at school. Not only in the classroom but also in the school playground, the corridors and bathrooms. That is why we want to invest in a better learning environment and higher quality education. Measures to promote educational equity that work well, including by international comparison, should be scientifically investigated more intensively and recommendations for action provided.

Bringing education up to date

Education in the digital world is much more than knowledge transfer; it is the key to future skills. Digitalisation has changed our way of life, so our way of thinking about schools also has to change. Obviously, this also includes vocational schools and colleges. With teachers who place skill orientation at the centre of learning, students who playfully, for example through game-based learning, and cooperatively access new content and schools that are technically optimally set up for this. Here, it is necessary to address both basic technical understanding as well as the social dimension of digital development. However, the pandemic has shown that even the basics are missing, including in comparison to other countries. We want to change this: with up-to-date, data-protection-friendly digital facilities and with structures that effectively support schools in digital teaching and learning – with ongoing advanced and further training offers for the educational staff as well as a central place for advice and discussion about education in a digital world. Full-time administrators are required to develop and maintain the technical infrastructure at schools. We want to promote this in the context of federal powers. Together with the states, we want to improve the digital training of teachers. We want tablets and laptops to be learning tools as a matter of course. Our goal is to enable new types of learning for all students and to prepare them for autonomous and healthy participation in a digital world. For this we want to comprehensively promote applications such as open-source and secure learning platforms or video conference systems, and we are committed to introducing the right to delete personal data for children. Skills of the future, such as cooperation, communication, creativity and critical thinking are becoming more and more relevant. We want to promote these future skills in the most educationally effective way, whether that is digital or analogue. This also includes promoting the STEM subjects in schools. Due to digitalisation, education is less bound to a particular location: new scope for nationwide and international cooperation with educational and cultural institutions is emerging. To implement all this, we also want to further develop the Digital Pact on a long-term, permanent basis into a real joint project – with clear goals and time horizons, which are to be achieved together under the respective responsibility of the federal government, the states and local authorities.

Strengthening Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

We support the implementation of the UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development programme, which aims to drive forward the integration of ESD worldwide in all educational networks and at local level. ESD should therefore be anchored in all phases and areas of education according to the ESD national action plan. To create incentives for local authorities, local and regional educational networks will be set up and supported in cooperation with the states. The federally funded ESD competence centre already assists around 50 of the 10,000 local authorities in Germany. This must be strengthened to be able to provide more services for local authorities.

Educational cooperation between the federal government and the states

Our goal is an educational system that ensures good starting conditions everywhere and for all, for free, future-oriented and inclusive education and that guarantees, independent of gender, origin, residency status or disabilities, equal and fair opportunities. On the one hand, this requires sufficient financial resources for the states; on the other hand, we want to constitutionally ensure cooperation between the federal government, the states and the local authorities. In this way, schools should become places which – anchored in the local community – are geared towards developing the individual potential of every child. To do this, schools need the scope to make their own decisions. However, the basis for all this is smart, forward-looking educational financing that enables more flexibility, especially in primary schools and nurseries as it is here that the foundation is laid. In agreement with the states, we are campaigning for up-to-date, sustainable and more standardised educational goals and the implementation of the segregation ban provided by the constitution. In nurseries as well as in all types of schools, children and young people must be able to develop freely and be protected from discrimination. For this they need contact people, and it requires educational programmes on anti-discrimination, diversity, LSBTIQ* issues and an understanding of democracy.

We will bolster training and studying

Secure training prospects

Despite an enormous shortage of skilled workers, the number of young people starting vocational training is falling. At the same time, more and more are ending up in the queues waiting for help from the “transitional system”. Dual training has to be put onto a secure footing. We want to enable all young people to start a recognised training course and ensure the right to training with the training guarantee. In this respect, we will promote more collaborative training and, where necessary, also use external training. We support companies that want to train, with pay-as-you-go financing. This can succeed in encouraging businesses to continue to train and increase training, and young people – particularly in rural regions – are given the prospect of remaining there. With the expansion and improvement of inclusive assisted training and training-related assistance, we want to support more young people in training. The aim is to make it possible for individual training modules to be recognised and certified as partial qualifications so that none of the work leading up to a full professional qualification is wasted. In addition, we want to work with the relevant authorities to ensure that exams are increasingly available in plain language. We support the expansion of nationwide employment agencies for young people so that all young people get good advice during the transition from school into work and good support in the initial phase of their training from a single source under one roof. We will combine careers advice and services to promote vocational training until people get their first job and bolster these together with the Employment Agency.

Equal opportunities through professional and academic education

There are high-quality educational paths in Germany, in universities as well as in the dual vocational training system. We want vocational and academic training to offer the same opportunities for autonomous life planning and a successful working life and there to be

true freedom of choice for young people. Both training and studying impart valuable, varied applicable skills. In this respect, all vocational schools must be well-equipped, and training must enable an independent life above the poverty line. That is why we back a minimum training allowance of at least 80% of the average collectively agreed training allowances. We want to make the qualification requirements for the classification into pay categories for the higher and senior levels of the civil service more flexible at federal level and reinforce the equivalence of vocational and academic education in tenders issued by federal bodies. In addition, we will expand talent scouting programmes as well as scholarship programmes regardless of the educational path. Training and studying are a time to discover new things. This is why more opportunities should be available for trainees and students to spend time abroad. Likewise, we want to make studying and training easier for people from abroad. We support stepping up the European funding programmes such as ERASMUS+ and want at least 10 percent of trainees to be able to spend time abroad. This will help to bring an international dimension to both vocational and academic education.

A basic income while training and studying

We want everyone to be able to afford school education or studying, regardless of the income or financial status of their parents. In this respect, we want to redraft the Federal Training Assistance Act and adapt it to provide a basic income for all students and trainees. As a first step, it should consist of a guaranteed sum and a top-up according to need which substantially increases the total amount in comparison to today's Federal Training Assistance Act and benefits the majority of the group of people in question. Students and trainees get the amount transferred directly. Going forward, it should be designed to be independent of parents. As not every educational path is linear or may sometimes be part-time, we want to design educational financing to be even more independent of age. A step in this direction is the introduction of a Federal Training Assistance Act for further training. People with disabilities will receive additional unbureaucratic support. We reject tuition and administrative fees at state universities. We want to further develop student health insurance, especially in

view of the age and semester limits. As long as the standard period of study is relevant for student financing, engagement by students should be promoted through improved skills crediting options from voluntary work. We want to involve students and their representatives at the federal level more and expand their opportunities to contribute on university and academic policy issues. For this we want to, for example, pave the way for introducing representation for all students at the federal level. It should be entirely self-administered by students and act independently of other institutions.

We will enable lifelong learning

A legal right to further training

The possibility to change career path and the scope to learn new things are essential in a modern knowledge society and working world in a time of transition that should offer opportunities. Equally, the coronavirus pandemic made it necessary for many people to seek out new fields of work. We want everyone, whether unemployed, self-employed or employed, to be able to autonomously develop new professional prospects in the future. We therefore make the case for an individual legal right to further training and qualification. To ensure social security, adequate continuing education benefits are needed for further training and qualifications related to the labour market; for all others who want to develop professionally developing or change careers, a Federal Training Assistance Act for further training is required. This will also benefit those who have up to now been overlooked, for example, women, people with a migration history or disabilities and all those in precarious employment. To allow dependent employees the time for vocational and further training, we want to introduce the right to a leave of absence with the right to return on the previous number of working hours. In addition, we will set up educational agencies for improved, combined advice and support. The aim is for relevant regional providers of further training to network in these. We back good working conditions and fair pay in further training and want to support adult education centres and similar public and non-profit educational institutions as important partners for further training.

Promoting literacy

It is still the case that more than six million people in Germany over the age of 18 cannot read and write adequately. This means that they have difficulties understanding entire texts and are thereby impaired in respect of their participation in society. These figures are unacceptable 100 years after the introduction of general compulsory schooling and in one of the richest industrial nations in the world. We want to provide money and course capacity – for adults, but also for children. Because the causes can often be traced as far back as pre-school age. We want to define and evaluate specific reduction targets for illiteracy. We want to support barrier-free communication in public areas to enable everyone to participate in society.

We will improve the conditions for science

More space for big ideas

We can only overcome the major challenges of our time, such as the climate crisis, pandemics, as well as a more efficient use of raw materials, with the aid of innovative solutions and progress. The market cannot do everything on its own here. When it comes to solving such major tasks, the state has to drive innovation in a mission-oriented way. It should lay out clear objectives, create incentives, organise cooperations between companies, universities and civil society and spark dynamism through targeted research funding and strategic industrial and procurement policies. A university campus which is strongly networked with its environment and develops a strong reputation in the entire region will become a space for experimentation for real changes. Major problems can only be solved comprehensively and in a joint effort. Therefore, we want to orient the federal funding policy towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A civil orientation of science is key. Technical, social and ecological innovations which are also tied to socio-ecological research are of equal value to us. We want to drive forward the urgently needed sustainable transformation also through the establishment and expansion of research partnerships and infrastructure in Germany and Europe. The “Federal

Agency for Disruptive Innovation” (SprinD) should be more flexibly organised so that it can concentrate on its core tasks. Overall, we want to strengthen the expertise in science and research in all the ministries as well as the key highest federal authorities and improve inter-agency cooperation in relation to the major research challenges. Our public authorities should enable sustainable change, not inhibit it. It is also important to maintain our independent access to space where space flight is gaining important insights on fundamental issues. This is why we want to bolster the European Space Agency (ESA) as well as the New Space sector and we support a European and new international legal framework which also regulates private protagonists.

Adequate funding for science

We want to take on the responsibility of advancing Germany as a knowledge society, creating the best conditions for research and innovation and bolstering the diversity of the academic system. This includes outstanding non-university research institutions as well as broad-based universities with top-level research. We want to reach a situation where the state and companies invest at least 3.5 percent of economic output in research and development overall by 2025 and further expand investment going forward. This is how we can enable more creativity, freedom, even to step into uncharted territory, and international networking and create planning certainty for the research landscape. Furthermore, we need adequate basic funding in science in order to once more curb the dependence on external funding which has risen sharply in recent years. To enable the external funding used to unleash additional dynamism, we want to draw up public external funding for longer than the usual three years and orient the overhead costs covered towards the actual costs incurred. Internationally visible cutting-edge university research should also benefit students more, and we want to cooperatively further develop the Excellence Strategy. Together with the states, we want to stabilise and qualitatively advance the Future Contract for Strengthening Studying and Teaching as well as the Pact for Research and Innovation. Adequate and sustainable funding also increases the academic system’s ability to respond to future crises. Because the future of our country also depends on how flexible and free our research landscape is.

Science for all

At this time of information filter bubbles and conspiracy theories on the one hand and epochal new challenges on the other, scientific advice and easily comprehensible communication of scientific methods is more important for democratic debate than ever. The skills for correctly dealing with information and scientific knowledge are fundamental for an enlightened society. Stronger involvement of civil society through participative, networked formats, secure access to information for all, as well as easy-to-understand communication of scientific knowledge are prerequisites for a constructive, mutually stimulating relationship between science and society. In addition, we want to strengthen scientific communication and promote the training and further training of scientists in this area. Through more participative formats such as real-world laboratories, citizen science and experimentation spaces, society can better participate in research projects. This brings in further perspectives and helps real processes of change to be supported by science. In the context of science-led politics, we want to involve inter- and transdisciplinary scientific expertise in policy development earlier on – for example, through “legislation laboratories”. Assessing the impact of technology and monitoring the social consequences of political measures should be expanded to support decision-makers.

Making universities fit for tomorrow

We want to enable the sustainable, climate-friendly and barrier-free modernisation of universities, also including the digital infrastructure and IT security. We will support them in developing new solutions for climate protection and to enable them to trial ideas in practice on site as real-world laboratories for climate neutrality. Furthermore, we will strengthen the IT infrastructure at universities via a digitalisation grant and call for IT accessibility, enhance training and further training for teachers and expand advisory and support services for students. Access to research and education data should be made easier and FAIR data become the core principle. In addition, we want to establish open access as the norm for publications and more strongly promote this as a central academic theme, driving this forward together with

the academic world. The reform of the funding of academic publications arising from this must not be at the expense of researchers or their institutions. Universities are laboratories for the future for academia, the economy and society. As key players in our innovation and education ecosystem, they bear responsibility for the education of the shapers of our future and for academia and society’s capacity for renewal. We want to strengthen the national research data infrastructure and embrace the opportunities for academia and research provided by the European Cloud. Future-proof infrastructure at universities includes modern libraries, teaching and learning rooms, climate-friendly refurbishment of outdated university buildings and sustainability and climate protection in new academic buildings. We also want to fully implement the Education for Sustainable Development national action plan and likewise support the development of new teaching and learning formats in universities to be able to confront the major social challenges of our time. We want to enhance the cohesion between research and teaching at universities. To guarantee good teaching for all students, we want to improve supervision ratios and strengthen the Foundation for Innovation in University Teaching to bring best practice to the field. For us, good teaching is student-centred, research- and project-oriented, based on a variety of methods and perspectives; it enhances curiosity and skills to shape a sustainable future. Together with the states, we want to work towards students having access to good advisory services. We will promote and ensure low-priced accommodation for students with an initiative for student housing.

Better working conditions and secure career paths

Secure working conditions and equal career opportunities for all are the prerequisites for a lively and innovative academic landscape which is also attractive for academics from abroad. However, there are hardly any predictable secure career paths for junior researchers, especially in universities. This endangers the spirit of research and squanders potential in terms of innovation, performance and quality. And it is unreasonable for those affected. We want to expand the Academic Fixed-Term Contract Act and substantially increase the share of permanent employee posts, especially for non-professorial academic staff. Permanent tasks should also be guaranteed by permanent positions. To that end,

permanent career paths besides professorships, are required, to dismantle hierarchies and strengthen cooperative working methods in academia. We want to clearly define what qualifies as an objectively justified fixed-term contract and make the family policy components binding. The collective bargaining restrictions should be dropped. We want to further develop the Tenure-Track Programme so that secure career paths emerge early after the doctorate. In teaching in particular, many tasks are still being covered by poorly paid teaching positions. We want to increase the status of teaching and create permanent posts. The academic and university landscape is still predominantly male, white, West German and characterised by people from academic family backgrounds and therefore does not sufficiently represent the diversity of the society. As a result, important potential and perspectives are lost. We want to change this by the targeted promotion of diversity at universities and academic institutions, funding formats for diversity and anti-discrimination policy, equal access, equal opportunities, inclusion and diversity of perspectives so that social diversity is also reflected on campus. Only a quarter of all professorships in Germany are occupied by women. Furthermore, many young academics are only employed on fixed-term contracts. These are structural barriers that should be dismantled. We want a proportion of women of at least 40 percent at all levels through the introduction of specific target ratios, a strategy for better compatibility of family and career in the academic sector, the introduction of a binding cascade model as well as the expansion of the Programme for Women Professors. We want to enable flexible working time models in all employment contracts that allow care and family work to be carried out. More diversity in the academic world also helps to reduce gender-specific information gaps and introduce new perspectives.

Defending academic freedom

Political action in the intellectual tradition of the Enlightenment and orientation towards scientific knowledge are increasingly under pressure, including in Germany. Our position is to counteract this, and we want to work with academic organisations to develop strategies to combat misanthropic, discriminatory and conspiracy theory-based hostility against academics. We want to better protect persecuted

academics and students worldwide here in Germany and at the EU level and offer them prospects in exile. To this end, we want to fund and coordinate the existing federal programmes and initiatives better and set up a joint European fund. The recognition of foreign professional qualifications and granting of visas should be simplified. We will consistently object to attacks on academic freedom in other EU states, for example in Hungary, and advocate sanctions in the context of the rule of law mechanism. The reinforcement of academic freedom must be a central aspect of foreign policy. In this respect, we want to extend the Research and Academic Relations Initiative and provide better funding for the intermediary organisations involved in foreign cultural and educational policy. We want to protect sensitive data and researchers who use it for their work from access by the authorities. There must be effective protection from hostility, such as that now often experienced by researchers and foreign students. A critical discourse and diversity of opinions within universities and academia are a prerequisite for a democratic, pluralistic society. At a time of increasing polarisation of social debates, we rely on academia as a factual, rational space for discourse. Even controversial topics and issues must be able to be discussed constructively in this space.

Chapter 5: Living together

Our diverse society is strong. Because people are actively engaged, in sports, in the voluntary fire brigade, in music schools, in religious communities or on helplines, young for old, old for young. Because there is a broad range of cultural offers and a multifaceted media landscape. Because young people get involved, because people take on responsibility in local parliaments, and citizens contribute to forums and take the destiny of their locations into their own hands.

However, democracy is never finished. Our democratic coexistence in Germany and Europe is a pledge we have to keep on renewing. It promises equal development opportunities and rights for all those who live here. Brave people took to the streets for democracy, freedom and tolerance in the past: civil rights activists, environmentalists, peace activists and women's rights activists. And today too, people are fighting for a diverse, open and tolerant society. BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN policy builds on this with an all-German view that recognises the specific features of the regions. It is often challenging, and to some extent an unreasonable demand when other points of view and values have to be accepted and respected if this is moving forward too fast for some and too slow for others. But above all, strength lies in: listening, seeking dialogue and wrestling with the substance. This is how, as a democratic society, we have mastered the challenges of recent decades. Now, the issue at hand is to strengthen our liberal democracy with full equality and more participation, in Germany and in Europe, in the streets and in parliaments, and to make our institutions fit for the tasks of this decade.

People are different but equal in terms of their dignity and rights. Only when dignity and equal rights are non-negotiable, when all the people in our society, in our Europe have the same protection and opportunities and can exercise their rights, only then do freedom and security emerge – individual and social – and equity is fostered. However, this aspiration has not yet been fully realised. When, in the case of

women, half of the population does not have equal participation and is not equally represented and paid, and people still experience discrimination, racism and antisemitism, democracy is not perfect. More avenues, more participation more self-efficacy and more representation are required, for example for people in precarious living circumstances, people with an immigrant background or with a disability. An equitable society needs policies that change the structures.

Racism does not affect us all, but it is everybody's business. If we, as a society, learn to see diversity as a cultural, social and economic resource, we protect each other from violence, incitement, marginalisation, misogyny, homophobia and racism. But that is still not enough. We know that discriminatory words become actions. The attacks by enemies of democracy, especially from the right, affect our democratic society right to its core. They target people while they are praying, during high-spirited get-togethers or within the institutions of the state. They have to be clearly confronted with an antiracist and antifascist stance. Our democracy has to defensively put up resistance, with a strong civil society, confident parliaments, a well-equipped, community-oriented police force and an independent judiciary capable of quick action. It is the task of politics to create the conditions for this.

How we shape the way we live together strongly depends on the interaction between citizens and the state. When people are involved and listened to, planning is achieved more quickly. When young people also have a say, decisions are better and more future-proof. When equality and diversity prevail, they become more balanced and sustainable. We therefore want to create more opportunities for people to get involved.

More and more challenges are both European and global. We can only manage these in a strong European Union, which brings together the will to act and the capacity for action, and which its citizens are actively and democratically involved in shaping. This is why we think of our democracy as resolutely European, we want to consolidate and strengthen it and structurally overcome paralysing blockages – and thereby approach issues of the future in a determined way. Our guiding star for the future development of the European Union is a Federal European Republic with a European constitution.

The fight against the pandemic has all too clearly revealed a number of shortcomings: fax machines in permanent operation, a lack of

staff and excessive bureaucracy prevent effective government action. Our goal is a modern, committed state that, with an efficient and accessible administration, is transparent, open and able to effectively manage crises and ensure digital participation, while generally making it easy for citizens to manage their daily life and exercise their rights. Familiar traditions and principles have to be reconsidered, as inclusive digital transformation and modernisation of procedures are central building blocks to fortify democracy, participation and cooperation. To manage this task, better structural embedding of digitalisation at all administrative levels is necessary. We want to govern with integrity and transparency. Equality, cooperation and cohesion in diversity are benchmarks to realise a state that is closely connected to its citizens.

We will make the state more effective and more closely connected to citizens

Speeding up of planning and investment: better quality for quicker implementation

Germany needs a modernisation campaign in the coming years. The rail infrastructure, renewable energies and energy networks need to be expanded, schools, roads and bridges repaired and digital infrastructure established. However, currently it often takes far too long to realise these types of projects; investment resources are not flowing. We want to change that. To speed up planning, we will create more public planning capacity. We will launch a recruitment campaign at all levels in planning authorities and the relevant courts. Processes will be streamlined by combining permits and the existing approaches of “concentrated permits” will be extended to all key infrastructure projects. Apart from this, we will introduce internal deadlines within the authorities and pay attention to inclusion in all planning projects. In addition, the federal parliament should take on more responsibility in infrastructure projects if solutions to conflicts can be reached more quickly this way. The early involvement of citizens on location also generally enables projects to be finalised more quickly and effectively. The goal is to halve all planning and implementation times.

Digital offices – service-oriented, fast and helpful

Every day, well-trained professionals accomplish their work in the authorities to keep the country running. However, for many people, contact with German authorities is uncomfortable and outmoded. One reason for this is inadequate technology and outdated and obsolete procedures. We want to modernise our administration with accessible e-government services, secure digital participation formats and open government and dismantle unnecessary bureaucracy such as requirements for the written form. Administrative procedures should always be conceived and designed to be digital, especially when working with companies. At the same time, it must be ensured that the doors of the state also remain open for personal contact with citizens and are supplemented by mobile services. The use of digital administrative services should occur via a central access point. The exchange of documents between authorities must be possible with the relevant consent and in compliance with data protection. The administration itself has to be digitalised so that it can accomplish all this. Together with the states, we will work to ensure that the administration is equipped with the most up-to-date technology nationwide, from health offices through to local citizens’ offices. Digitalisation will change the basis of the relationship between state and citizen. In this respect, we will pursue the vision of a digital, application-free and proactive social state. In this, state benefits will be checked and automatically provided to those entitled, without complicated applications.

The identity card on smartphone

If you are equipped with a digital identity, you can comfortably authenticate yourself and communicate safely. We want to achieve what has already been practised for a long time in the Scandinavian countries – being able to deal with the authorities easily with your smartphone – and, at the same time, also think holistically about possibilities for the state, economy and society right from the beginning. We want to understand digital service offers by the administration as a platform for the state, business and civil society and create added value for all by means of modular, secure components. We want to open up existing systems more and enable public offices to also be

able to confirm identity. This is how we want to create an identity infrastructure that allows natural and legal persons to use their digital identity by means of smartphones, online services or identification documents. With transparency and technological neutrality, we want to make EU-wide interoperable digital identities a basic infrastructure of our digital community. For communication with the public sector, we want to create an open system which enables the end-to-end encrypted exchange of messages. The aim is to provide citizens with the right to digital delivery of official documents. In this respect, people who are not yet digitally literate need support in the form of training and assistance. Every person should be provided with a digital identity free of charge to be able to digitally identify themselves and sign digitally. This type of smartphone mobile wallet can be used in all sectors. As part of an integrated e-government strategy, we want to enable a mobile pass for various mobility services, administrative services, e-health and e-justice infrastructures and digital participation formats. At the same time, we want to create the legal basis for this so that the economy can also use this process across all sectors, for example for secure log-in procedures, financial and insurance services or for digitally authorised access to public registers, for example to verify driving licences. The EU and Germany must be pioneers with regard to sovereign digital identities and use their authority to create trust.

Transparency law for open data

Access to government databases enables innovative, electronic services as well as new democratic participation opportunities. Regulated access to open data from government databases is also important for new technological applications. We will submit a federal transparency law to make government databases available to the general public according to the principles of open data. In this way, we will open up the treasure chest of non-personal data generated by public funds. We want to expand the existing data portal GovData into a central, user-friendly, open-government and e-government portal. To ensure comprehensive equitable participation and sovereign administration, we want to, wherever possible, use open standards, interfaces and software, publish the emerging software under a free licence and we will include this as standard in the tendering and contract regulations for public funds.

Renewal requires good data

The coronavirus crisis has also once again shown that Germany lies far behind comparable countries with regard to data availability. While in the USA, large amounts of data were available almost in real time, allowing political measures to be evaluated promptly, in our case, there is a lack of sufficient, quickly available data. We want to change this and make data promptly available to researchers, political decision-makers and civil society. We will establish a public data institute with a legal research mandate to deal with basic questions around the better provision and anonymisation of data and drive forward networking, the development of standards and licence models. The goal is to broaden research in this area, test new approaches, foster exchange between different projects and support data consolidation by providing advice; the aim here is also to prevent misuse and support conciliation processes. A paradigm shift is required towards common standards instead of enclosed data silos and, for example, the possibility of enabling simple, data-protection-friendly sharing of data via data custodian models. We will also strengthen the Federal Statistical Office to improve data availability for politics, the public and research and make the data available more promptly.

A climate-neutral federal administration

Climate protection needs pioneers and role models. We want the federal administration to finally become both of these. The federal administration must become climate neutral. This includes the use of green energy and the vehicles operated by the federal authorities as well as the federal buildings, which will be equipped with renewable heating and cooling systems and fully modernised in terms of energy. The roofs of the federal authorities will become power stations with the introduction of a solar standard beyond new buildings. For official missions, the aim is to reduce air travel to a minimum. In addition, we will make sure that the federal government orients its purchasing and funding criteria towards adherence to ecological, human rights and social standards. We want the profitability calculation used for tendering and funding public projects to be based on the CO₂ shadow price. Politics will thus lead the way by setting a good example.

The learning state

The coronavirus and climate crisis bring home the huge scale of the challenges the government and administration have to deal with today. We want the public administration to be in a position to act with foresight and, at the same time, to be able to adapt quickly and consistently to its respective tasks. This requires a culture of official cooperation and the facilitation of innovative approaches. Innovation units and agile project teams in public authorities should foster this culture change and, at the same time, ensure cooperation at all levels. Flexible working hours and a positive error culture will promote acceptance of new behaviour patterns. Public authorities should work closely and transparently with academia, business and civil society, network with each other and test new ideas. Artists and other creatives should be brought in to help stimulate ideas and provide impetus during transformation processes. In addition, the expertise and creativity of employees and civil servants should be fostered and reinforced, for example through further training. We will also work to ensure more cooperation between the ministries in pursuing common goals.

Reducing the workload and digitalising the judiciary

Courts and law enforcement authorities contend with heavy workloads. Legal proceedings take too long. Here, there is an urgent need to reduce the workload through more staff, the out-of-court settlement of disputes, by decriminalising petty offences and by equipping the judiciary with the necessary technology nationwide. We want to design the judiciary to be fundamentally more service-oriented and will look for new ways to do this. We will provide sufficient funding to implement the digitalisation of the judiciary and meet its staffing needs through a federal-state digital justice pact, which will continue and substantiate the Pact for the Rule of Law due to expire at the end of 2021. The police and the public prosecutor's office must be able to cooperate digitally, and to this end, standardised programs and sufficient bandwidths are required. We will promote and simplify electronic communication between citizens and the judiciary. This includes easy access to the law through fast online procedures for simple legal matters and the strengthening of consensual dispute resolution pro-

cedures. We want to restrict the external ministerial right to issue instructions to the public prosecutor's office in individual cases and make this transparent and to enable the states to test models of judicial self-administration.

Reinforcing and modernising the civil service

The civil service, the millions of people who work in the administrations, ministries and authorities, are the backbone of our democracy and the foundation of our community. However, in recent decades, too many savings and cuts have been made in the civil service – and we are all feeling the consequences today. In order for our state to keep up with the major challenges we face, public employees have to be put in a position to be able to do this. Therefore, we want to restrengthen the civil service and modernise it at the same time. More jobs, especially in IT and the planning sector, good wages, flexible career paths and more transparency will make the civil service fit for the 21st century. To this end, we will launch a major further training campaign for the public administration and make digitalisation the focal point of all administrative training.

Diversity in the administration

Diversity in society must also be reflected in its administration. This strengthens state institutions and contributes to trust and a close connection to citizens. However, a diverse, anti-discriminatory administration does not come about on its own, but instead requires funds, structures and targeted support. In the civil service sector and companies with government ownership, the state has the opportunity to set a good example in terms of diversity and to introduce diversity mainstreaming throughout the administration. This includes, for example, promoting multilingualism in the administration and paying attention to gender equality as well as social diversity in recruitment and promotion, carrying out anti-discriminatory organisational development in public authorities and companies and embedding the goal of equality and the representation of discriminated groups in company mission statements, as well as offering diversity training. This applies particularly to those closely involved in the application

process, such as the human resources department or interview panels, which should be appointed in a way that is as gender-equitable and diverse as possible. We will introduce binding targets to increase the proportion of people with an immigrant background at all levels. We want to drive forward diversity budgeting, in other words the deployment and evaluation of budgetary resources in a way that particularly promotes diversity.

We stand for diversity, recognition and equal rights

Unity in diversity

We are all different, but equal in terms of rights and dignity. Cohesion in diversity requires that we are respected, recognised and heard, able to cocreate and participate, to live freely without fear and encounter each other as equals, seeing what we have in common as well as our differences. Therefore, we will enshrine the mission statement “Unity in Diversity” in law to create an antiracist and equitable immigration society. In order that the perspectives and expertise of those who are affected by discrimination and structural disadvantages are heard and they have the opportunity to participate as equals, we want to introduce a participation council similar to the German Ethics Council, as a legally enshrined and independent committee with representatives from the (post-)migrant civil society, academia and research, who represent the different dimensions of diversity. To systematically dismantle discrimination and promote social cohesion, we want to combine topics and competences that affect equality and participation in an open and diverse society in one ministry. For this, we will remove the tasks relating to the immigration society from the Federal Ministry of the Interior. To improve representation and participation, we will present a federal participation law and reform the Federal Act on Appointment to Bodies. Government action should be oriented towards our diverse society and guarantee equality. Anyone who permanently has their main place of residence here must have the opportunity to partici-

pate equally in elections, votes and all other democratic processes; in a first step, we want to introduce the right to vote in municipal elections for third-countries nationals.

Systematically working against racism

Racism is a reality in everyday life, on the street, on the Internet and in institutions. It does not affect all of us equally, but it is everybody’s business equally. The fight against racism and its different forms, such as anti-black and anti-Asian racism is a task for the whole of society with the goal of strengthening the individual rights of all people. Racism and all forms of discrimination not only represent a great danger for those affected, but also threaten equitable and peaceful coexistence as well as security in Germany. We want to enshrine protection from and elimination of discriminations and structural and institutional racism in the constitution with a state guarantee right, in addition to the overdue replacement of the term „race“. The Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA) should be upgraded to the highest federal authority – with more staff, funding and competences. Its leadership should be elected as the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner by the Federal Lower House of Parliament. We want to further develop the General Act on Equal Treatment into a real federal anti-discrimination law that finally closes protection gaps, simplifies claims against discrimination for those affected and includes a comprehensive right to take collective legal action, enabling discrimination to be tackled structurally and sustainably. The network of advisory centres in civil society should be developed nationwide and be funded in a way that enables them to reliably and continuously fulfil their tasks. Contact points and complaints offices should be created in government institutions. We want to promote the empowerment of people affected by discrimination. The Black Lives Matter protests have made it clear that racism against black people must be comprehensively combated, including in Germany. We therefore want to promote the UN Decade for People of African Descent. Crimes against black people should be explicitly identified in reports on protection of the constitution. In addition, we advocate that anti-Asian racism is named in the National Action Plan Against Racism. We will develop independent research on post-colonialism, discrimination and racism, regularly collect data on anti-discrimination and equality and carry out scientific studies in relation to govern-

ment institutions and the effectiveness of anti-discrimination measures. We want to embed anti-racism, anti-discrimination and post-colonialism in teacher training and in curricula.

Empowerment and security for Jewish people in Germany

We will consistently promote Jewish life in all its diversity in Germany and make it visible. We support projects and initiatives that reinforce Jewish secular life as well as Jewish religious life, Jewish culture and Jewish education. We want to make political and cultural educational offers accessible to all citizens to transmit knowledge on Jewish life generally as well as contacts and experiences with Jewish people and institutions in Germany. Jewish people in Germany must be able to feel safe. Their safety and the protection of Jewish institutions and communities must be comprehensive. Antisemitic attacks in the present, especially the attack in Halle in 2019, remind us how strong hostility against Jews and antisemitism still is, as well as how extensive ignorance about the reality of Jewish life in Germany is. It is our joint responsibility to confront antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech – also in everyday life and regardless of the motives – with full resolve. For this, better analytical capacities are required and determined sanctioning and documentation of antisemitic incidents. Antisemitic narratives, Israel-related antisemitism and conspiracy theory narratives – including in the context of demonstrations by pandemic deniers – must be preventively addressed in a wide variety of locations, including and especially in the digital space. This requires specific awareness-raising and prevention projects in associations and civil society organisations, for which we want regular funding. The prevention and confrontation of antisemitism should also be embedded in curricula as a guiding principle, beyond history lessons. We want to expand further training in this area, especially for employees of the security agencies and law enforcement authorities, as well as the courts. Guidelines are required for the effective protection of Jewish institutions and the Jewish communities must be involved in developing these. We want to strengthen the social security of the older generations of Jews in Germany, most of whom are survivors of the Holocaust or their descendants, many from the former Soviet Union. They must be treated in the same way as the immigrant ethnic German resettlers from the states of the former Soviet Union in terms of their pension.

Protecting and empowering Muslims

Muslim life in all its diversity is part of our social reality in Germany. At the same time, Muslims are particularly affected by structural discrimination and violent attacks. The continuing threats to Muslim institutions show how urgently prevention programmes and comprehensive protection concepts are required for individuals and spaces perceived as Muslim. Victims must be protected, advised and empowered, and a stronger focus must be placed on the root causes. The state must not discriminate against or unjustifiably favour any religion. The heterogeneous structure of Islam, perceived as a strength by Muslims, which does not recognise religious or structurally embedded hierarchy, must therefore not put them at a disadvantage in terms of the legislature. Real equality requires legal equality. We therefore support state treaties with Islamic religious communities with no structural dependence on a state, party or political movement or its or their respective governing policies and which self-define themselves as religious. We also want to integrate liberal, Muslim representatives who stand up for values such as gender equality, LSBTIQ* rights and feminism and practise a living faith within the spectrum of Islamic religion. Likewise, we show solidarity with critics of fundamentalist political forces if they are seriously threatened. For the independent and confident practice of religion for Muslims, training for imams is urgently required in Germany. For this, we want to establish and support Islamic theology and practice-oriented training and further training programmes for imams and Islamic officials in cooperation with the institutes for Islamic theology across the Federal Republic. In the long term, the aim is to meet the Muslim communities' need for religious staff through people trained in Germany.

Resolutely combating antiziganism

People with a Roma background are still being discriminated against in Europe and Germany due to deep-seated racism that goes to the heart of society. Members of the largest minority in the European Union are still disadvantaged in terms of access to education, health, housing and work. Hence, we want to implement the new EU Roma Strategic Framework (post-2020) and achieve the ambitious inclusion goals of the EU. For this, a "national coordination office" with sufficient

financial funds and powers is required to undertake the implementation and monitoring of the German strategy in coordination with the federal states, administrations and self-help organisations. Minority rights such as the preservation of the languages, history and cultures of the Sinti and Roma people must be guaranteed. We want to establish an independent civil society monitoring and information office for the documentation and processing of racist incidents and to support those affected, and to review and implement the recommendations of the independent commission on antiziganism. We will promote the establishment of a student union for Sinti and Roma people and support the creation of a museum on the history and cultures of the Sinti and Roma people in Germany. Roma people are still being deported from Germany even if they have lived here for decades and suffer discrimination in their countries of origin. More attention should therefore be paid to the situation of Roma people in their countries of origin in asylum procedures and when checking the right of abode independent of asylum.

For an inclusive, accessible society

We stand for an inclusive society in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in which people with disabilities can autonomously contribute their skills and talents. Steps, doors that are too narrow or hard-to-read websites – in our daily life. there are many different things which represent a barrier for people with a disability, but also for older people, parents with a pushchair or injured people with a cast on their leg. It is laborious and sometimes impossible to use services that others take for granted. We want to create accessibility so that people with different disabilities, including mental illnesses, can participate equally in public life and live, learn and work independently alongside non-disabled people. We want to achieve this with an “accessibility law”, which obliges private and public providers of publicly accessible offers and services to ensure comprehensive accessibility and the federal government to make its buildings accessible within ten years. Small businesses will be protected by an excessive demands clause but obliged to implement reasonable measures. Through an increase of the federal funding, the proportion of accessible housing should be significantly

increased. To enable autonomous mobility and independent living, we also want to strengthen urban development funding for inclusive city districts and tie social housing development funding to accessibility. Accessibility should become standard on public transport, which everyone with severe disability should be able to use free of charge, in public establishments, shops, commercial and office buildings. We want to continue to deal with the crimes of German history towards people with disabilities and adequately compensate the victims.

Further developing the relationship between the state and churches

The Christian churches and communities are important players in civil society. They invest our society with varied impulses and contribute to social cohesion. Church-based organisations are also of major importance for work with people in need of care, people with disabilities and children. Their energetic support in the areas of sea rescue and the integration of refugees is an important social contribution. We want to further strengthen the basic right to religious freedom, freedom of conscience and freedom of belief and protect those persecuted for their religion or belief. We will safeguard religious communities' right to self-determination and seek cooperation and dialogue with all religious and ideological communities that respect the Basic Law, at the same time always standing for the secular state and its principle of neutrality. Non-religious people also have a right to comprehensive consideration of their interests and to equitable participation. We want to preserve the established relationship between the state and the Christian churches and, where necessary, adapt it to the social reality. In this respect we want, for example to reform ecclesiastical employment law, promote trade union participation and repeal the exception clauses for the churches in the Works Constitution Act and the General Act on Equal Treatment. The area of religious preaching remains unaffected by this. We support the many believers who are committed to the necessary modernisation of Christian churches and who are pushing for a complete clarification of cases of sexual abuse. We will implement the completion of the constitutional obligation on the removal of state payments. We want to remove Section 166 of

the Criminal Code (Defamation of religions, religious and ideological associations) and support the establishment of an independent academic institution to carry out research into the religious and ideological landscape.

We will renew the democratic foundation

For more transparent politics

Democracy is based on the trust of citizens; any appearance of political corruption is damaging. We want to strengthen trust in democratic institutions and elected representatives and protect the primacy of politics from opaque influence. We are convinced that transparent, comprehensible politics reinforces the common good. Hence we want to make lobbying more transparent and make the influence of organised interest groups and by lobbyists visible. We want to tighten up the lobby register for the federal government, federal ministries and the Federal Lower House of Parliament and eliminate the many exceptions for key players. We will create clarity on who has an influence during the creation of laws with the legislative footprint. We want to put a stronger focus on conflicts of interest and allow scrutiny of the transition from government offices to business for a period of two years. For members of parliament, an independent mandate is central to their work. In future, earnings from additional work will be published down to the euro and cent, there will be stricter rules on company investments and share options and donations to members of parliament and lobbying by members of parliament will be banned. The application of these measures should be evaluated. We also want a compulsory declaration of the relevant sector with respect to the additional income of members of parliament. Independent controls strengthen transparency and integrity. To effectively combat cases of corruption requires a reformulation of the criminal offence of bribing members of parliament and a revision of the standards of proof. Donations to parties must be made more transparent. We therefore want stricter disclosure rules. Party donations should be restricted to natural persons and capped at an annual maximum amount of EUR 100,000 per donor. From EUR 5,000, donations should be named in the statement of accounts and

from EUR 25,000, the obligation of immediate disclosure should take effect. As long as there is no legal regulation, we will apply the regulations of our Donations Code which goes beyond the Political Parties Act. For party sponsorship, we finally want to introduce legal regulation and disclosure from the first euro and an annual maximum limit per sponsor. We will strengthen the Political Parties Act and independent monitoring so that concealed election campaign funding can be better combated. Political advertising and campaigns on the Internet must become more transparent – as long as there are no binding regulations, we will lead the way with our voluntary commitment.

Making parliament stronger and reforming electoral law

The Federal Lower House of Parliament is the key place for open debates, discourse and objections and for making decisions in our democracy. Good legislation requires adequate consultation and the reinforcement of the monitoring rights of parliament. We want to extend the role of the Federal Lower House of Parliament in the legislative process. The aim is to guarantee and strengthen its ability to work. We therefore advocate a reform of electoral law which significantly reduces the size of parliament by, among other things, reducing the number of constituencies, and which is also fair and constitutional and in which every vote has equal value. In the context of this reform, the aim is to examine the extension of the legislative period and a term limit for the office of Federal Chancellor among other things. The sessions of the specialised committees should take place in public as a rule and be streamed. Members of parliament should be strengthened in their monitoring rights in relation to the government, with a right to inspect files. We want to make complex legislative procedures easier to understand by publishing text comparisons of the changes to the law.

Sharing power fairly, including in the parliaments

It is high time for a fair sharing of power. Our representative democracy must become more diverse, our parliaments need a variety of backgrounds and life paths and the debates need the perspectives they provide. We will dismantle obstacles so that queer people, non-academics, people with disabilities and people with an immigrant

background are equally represented as a matter of course. Sharing power fairly also means that more women are urgently required in the parliaments and local councils as they make up 51 percent of eligible voters. Equality for women is a historic and constitutional mission for us all and should be reflected as early as in the nomination procedures. Examples from other European countries show that parity by law is effective and appropriate. Rulings by constitutional courts in two federal states have shown that there are major constitutional obstacles. These obstacles should be dismantled to find legally sound solutions. We therefore advocate a parity law, including at the federal level, and will introduce corresponding changes to the law. To make political engagement easier for women requires measures and provisions that facilitate the entry into politics and the shaping of politics by women.

Voting rights for young people

Democracy lives by being shaped by and through the commitment of all citizens, from childhood up to old age. Many political decisions today are decisive for the future of young people, and many young people take on responsibility for society early on. If young people have democratic experiences in their daily life and can exercise their rights, this strengthens democracy and makes it more future-proof. To be able to forge the broadest possible alliances for a constitutional reduction in the voting age, we want to reduce the voting age for elections for the Federal Lower House of Parliament and European elections to 16 in the coming legislative period. On the basis of an evaluation of the voting age of 16, we want to possibly reduce the voting age further.

Citizens' councils for more participation

Direct participation opportunities enrich democracy and strengthen representation. With citizens' councils, we will create the opportunity to integrate the everyday life experience of citizens into legislation in the case of selected topics. In a first step, we will ensure the creation of a legal basis for citizens' councils and that parliament has to address the results. In the coming parliamentary term, we want to examine further options for a stronger institutional framework for citizens' councils, including direct democratic procedures for individual consultation results. Randomly selected people who live in Germany and are at least 16 years old will provide advice on a specific issue in a defined period at the initiative of the government, parliament or a citizens' initiative. They will develop recommendations for action and feed into public debate and decision-making in parliament. Free, equal and fair advice must be guaranteed through advice from civil society and academia, among others. Furthermore, we will introduce a digital portal, such as is already successfully in use in Baden-Württemberg, for active participation in the legislative process and develop the right of petition into an easily accessible instrument for better involvement in the democratic process. We want to promote participation and political education as an important interdisciplinary task, including at the local level.

Public service broadcasting for all and a varied media landscape

Critical independent journalism is a pillar of our democracy. We stand for pluralistic, critical public service broadcasting for all that is independent of the state and, likewise, for quality and diversity in the private and non-profit media landscape. To ensure that public service broadcasting is set up to be strong and future-proof, we will work for functional funding that follows a defined broadcasting mandate. Because it is funded by everyone, it must also reach everyone. Coming from its special position and the requirement to depict the variety of living environments, opinions and interests of the population, the need to reform it also arises. The digitalisation of public service broadcasting must be driven forward and its existing services need to be examined. For this, we want to launch an initiative together

with the states and start a social debate. We advocate public service broadcasting councils that better depict the diversity of our society today and are more assertive and more removed from broadcasters and the state. Public service media libraries should be linked within Europe and permanently accessible, while adequately remunerating creators. Local media need funding that is coordinated with the states and arranged independently of the federal government. Quality journalism needs better framework conditions, for example through improvements as regards source protection and the right to information or the opening up of the Artists' Social Security Fund to journalists along with a requirement for media platforms to make contributions. Non-profit journalism requires legal certainty.

Combatting online hate crime

Digital platforms and applications must serve people and not the other way round. It is important to us to strengthen user rights and democratic discourse and at the same time maintain the balance between the protection of personality right and freedom of speech. We want to combat online hate crime and the deliberate spreading of fake news more effectively. We want to develop an effective legal framework for this. Those affected must be able to defend themselves quickly and effectively against online attacks. We want to achieve this by the ambitious design and then quick implementation of the EU Digital Services Act. We stand for effective handling of user complaints, an improvement in investigations and prosecutions and the enforcement of civil rights. For this, we need law enforcement authorities to be provided with the best possible staff and technology. Staff must be well-trained and be able to work on the basis of clear legal requirements. Platform operators must live up to their major responsibility, across Europe. They must not undermine existing rights, are liable for content and must safeguard basic rights when moderating content. An option with regards to decisions on what content must have no place on digital platforms could be the targeted use of representative civil society platform councils. Major providers should contribute to the independent advisory services for those affected by hate and incitement by paying a levy. We want to combine this into a law for protection against digital violence which includes the possibility of proceeding against accounts if the

perpetrator cannot be determined. Each person has the right to their own opinion, but not to their own facts. Special due diligence must apply to pornographic platforms that host user-generated content to protect people whose image is shown there against their will. To deal with disinformation, but also for legal control of the providers as a whole, we want to better structure oversight nationally and in Europe, with a joint media authority for the federal states. We reject any obligation to use upload filters.

Software for the general public

Our everyday lives are increasingly characterised by participation in and access to software. Free and open software forms the basis for countless applications, whether they are digital learning platforms, secure applications for homework, for strengthening IT security with good encryption or secure and simple voting methods for association and party work. It plays a decisive role in more and more socially relevant areas and is the basis for our requirements in terms of openness, participation and security. However, the developers often lack support to keep these permanently up to date in terms of the latest standards of technology and design them to be user-friendly, accessible and inclusive. We therefore advocate the creation of an independent, public support foundation that promotes socially relevant, free and open software, the results of which are available to society, academia, schools, business and the administration and are fully accessible to all. Continuous end-to-end encryption protects basic rights, creates trust in digital applications and must become standard in all public IT projects.

A democracy promotion law for a strong civil society

A lively civil society is fundamental to political debate in our democracy. Dedicated people involved in initiatives, organisations, associations or NGOs strengthen cohesion, help to put important issues, such as the fight against racism, on the public agenda and also play their part in policy formation. We will make every effort to ensure that they are able to carry out their work well-protected, without intimidation or criminalisation. With a law for the promotion of democracy, we

want to safeguard their dedication and that of democracy enhancing initiatives and organisations in the long term with non-project-related, non-bureaucratic financial support. We want to regulate the work of the political foundations in a more binding way. We want to ensure that they are oriented towards the values of the Basic Law and create transparency, including in their relationships with the parties. We will create a separate legal basis for this.

Reforming non-profit status

All citizens should be able to participate equally in policy formation in our society. Non-profit status is an important status as it generally opens up access in the first instance in many places. We will therefore provide clarity and legal certainty in the law on non-profit organisations to ensure that initiatives and organisations remain independent. They should also be able to realise their non-profit goals through political statements and activities such as studies and demonstrations. Not only promotion of the democratic state but also the promotion of fundamental principles should be clearly not-for-profit. We want to recognise and strengthen the non-profit status of additional purposes, such as peace, the enforcement of national and international basic and human rights, the rule of law, the enforcement of the social state imperative and, in general, equal participation and the combatting of discrimination. We will ensure that associations can actively participate in social debates with the introduction of a democracy clause. We want to repeal the reversal of the burden of proof in Section 51(3) of the Fiscal Code. We will ensure more transparency with a non-profit register and easily manageable transparency obligations as well as with rules on the disclosure of the donation structure.

Civic engagement and volunteering as a pillar of our society

Civic engagement and volunteering support our society in a multitude of ways. The task of the state is to enable, promote and strengthen civic engagement and volunteering. This also increasingly includes digital forms of volunteering, as they enable networking over long distances or if something else stands in the way of physical engagement. To this end, we want to dismantle the bureaucratic obstacles

to civic engagement and expand educational opportunities for civically engaged people, as well as reorganising funding policy. We want to further develop the German Foundation for Civic Engagement and Volunteer Work into a real support foundation that supports organisations locally, in a decentralised manner. Together with the states and local authorities, we want to introduce a civic engagement card that provides discounts on visits to swimming pools and cultural institutions or the use of local public transport. We want to gradually align the tax allowances for trainers and volunteers.

Expanding voluntary services and making them possible for all

Voluntary services strengthen cohesion and promote active participation in our society. Anyone who wishes to, should be able to have guaranteed entry into a voluntary service in Germany or Europe. We want to double young people's voluntary services (such as the Voluntary Social Year and the Voluntary Ecological Year) and the Federal Voluntary Service to 200,000 annual places. Voluntary services should be more fully funded so that young people can take part regardless of their parents' income. To achieve this, we want to raise the pocket money rates to a standard level and allow free local public transport. The framework conditions should become more inclusive so that anyone, regardless of whether young or old, can find a suitable voluntary service placement for themselves, whether as an orientation period at the start of their working life or after they have finished working.

We will shape the diverse immigration society

Making naturalisation easier

Citizenship ensures a permanent bond of legal equality, participation and belonging. Anyone who is born in Germany should receive German citizenship if one parent lawfully has their habitual residence in Germany. Citizenship must not be revoked, as also shown by the lesson of the injustices of National Socialism. For people who have lived here for many years and have become part of this society, naturalisation should be possible earlier. Everyone should be able to

make an application for naturalisation after five years of residence in Germany; a speedy and simplified naturalisation procedure is also needed for recognised refugees. We want to abolish the requirement to choose in the Nationality Act and recognise multiple citizenship. We want to reverse the hollowing out of the Nationality Act and make the naturalisation process less bureaucratic. Obstacles in establishing identity that are not in the hands of the persons to be naturalised must not be held against them. We want to make entry for binational families and couples, regardless of whether with or without a marriage certificate, unbureaucratic and fair. Long-term prospects are needed to build a life in Germany.

A modern immigration law for a diverse immigration society

Germany is a country of immigrants; however an active immigration policy is still lacking, as well as an immigration law that actually promotes immigration rather than making it more complicated. We want to enact a modern immigration law that creates new entry routes for educational and work immigration – even for people who cannot provide evidence of their talents and skills through formal or recognised educational qualifications – one that offers transparent, unbureaucratic and fair procedures and that takes global and regional needs into account. For this, the aim is to introduce a points-based talent card based on the annual labour requirements. We will simplify educational immigration via grants and training visas and also the requirements for a permanent residence permit and the recognition of professional qualifications acquired abroad. In addition, we will end the automatic loss of the residence permit after a six-month stay abroad. For people who are in Germany without secure residence status, but who are integrated into the German labour market or whose qualifications match the needs of the labour market, there should be the opportunity to move onto a different track. We will expand and consolidate well-functioning concepts for work immigration, such as the Western Balkans Regulation.

Integration only succeeds if you're on the inside – language, access and participation right from the start

Arriving in a diverse immigration society is a two-way process with the goal of creating equal access and participation opportunities in all areas of life. It puts requirements on those who come to us as well as on those who have already lived here for a long time and only succeeds when everyone comes together and treads the same path. The basis for living together is the values of the Basic Law. Access to and participation in language courses is essential, which is why we stand for all newly arriving migrants and refugees having the right to free-of-charge access to tailor-made, easy-to-reach and federally funded language and integration courses. In particular, we want to ensure the accessibility of courses for women and also develop offers for people with learning difficulties. This is because, at the moment, this is only possible with difficulty and at a cost for many people, for instance, for family members arriving later or EU citizens. In addition, we want to preserve the expanded range of advanced language courses developed after 2015. Just as important for successful integration are decentralised accommodation and an autonomous life in one's own home, a broad range of advice services, especially for families, as well as non-discriminatory access to health and social benefits and to nurseries, educational institutions, training and work, in other words participation in cultural and social life. In this way, targeted support strengthens cohesion in society as a whole. We want to set up a local integration fund at the European level so as to directly support arrivals in local authorities throughout Europe. This should be used, among other things, to strengthen and develop immigration advice centres, to fund interpreting services in the community, to promote civil society support structures and to secure structural relief in the EU for the local authorities that are willing to accept refugees. Businesses that give refugees the chance of training or employment need corresponding support and funding. For recognised refugees, we want to reduce the hurdles in terms of freedom of movement within the European Union.

Fair and transparent asylum procedures

We want asylum procedures in Germany to be set up to be fair and transparent with legal certainty and for decisions to be reached within a reasonable time. For this, the identification of special protection needs must occur before the hearing. In particular, consideration of gender-based persecution suffered and associated advice must be guaranteed in the asylum procedure. We want to ensure that a decision on residence status is made quickly so that people can have certainty at an early stage. This includes having sufficient staff in the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees as well as effective quality management. We want to ensure independent non-governmental advice on the asylum procedure for all asylum seekers, from arrival up to the conclusion of the asylum procedure and reverse the increased length of stay of refugees in reception centres, which was extended to a possible 18 months, to a maximum of three months. We reject the AnkER (arrival, decision-making, local distribution and repatriation) Centres in their current form. Afterwards, decentralised living should always take precedence. We want to guarantee the right of children, regardless of their prospect of staying, to have access to nurseries, schools and other educational opportunities. We will end the extensive unwarranted revocation checks by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and optimise asylum process legislation. Applications for family reunification in the context of the Dublin Regulation must be approved quickly. We want to abolish the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act – and thereby the constitutionally unjustified unequal treatment of refugees, that makes it more difficult to truly arrive and participate. We want to abolish anti-integration legal provisions such as work bans and blanket residency requirements as well as benefit cuts. We want to reverse the undermining of the right to residence and right to asylum carried out in recent years. In particular, we want to guarantee the protection of refugees who have experienced human rights violations or are severely ill. We reject the designation of “safer” countries of origin or third countries – including at the European level. We want to eliminate airport proceedings and immediate refusal of entry at the German internal borders. A loss of work, training or study places due to the pandemic must not lead to disadvantages in terms of residence rights.

Moving away from tolerated stays

More than 200,000 people – among them many children and young people – are living in a state of lack of prospects and legal uncertainty because they only have tolerated status. This is not good either for those affected or for social cohesion. Legal uncertainty and a lack of participation opportunities make it extremely difficult to properly arrive and find a home in Germany. We want to reduce the number of people who have to go from one temporary suspension of deportation (or tolerated stay) to the next, to zero if possible. These people need a secure right of residence after five years of residence. Adolescents, young people and families with under-aged children should get a residence permit after three years. In cases in which people cannot get a national passport despite proven serious efforts, we want to issue a passport replacement identity card if those affected are born in Germany and their identity has been established. By converting tolerated stays for training and work into rights of residence, we will provide people with reliable access to training and the labour market and ensure planning security for businesses. Victims of human trafficking should be given a secure right of residence. People who are not granted a right of residence after careful examination of the legal asylum and residence requirements and after all the legal protection options have been exhausted and in whose case there are no obstacles to deportation, must leave the country quickly. We want to provide comprehensive, independent advice and support during this process. Every deportation is linked to major human hardship. Deportations, for example via readmission agreements, are the last resort if repatriation is rejected; voluntary departures always have priority. Detention without a crime for the purpose of enforcing departure is a major infringement of the constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom. Therefore, due regard for the division of authority principle (Trennungsgebot) and the granting of legal assistance must be guaranteed. We will end deportations to war and crisis countries and reinstate the ban on deportations to Syria and Afghanistan nationwide. We stand for no cooperation with Syrian authorities with regard to deportations and ending the deportation partnership with Afghanistan. The designation of safer areas must not serve as a basis for justifying repatriations to unsafe countries. No deportations must be permitted to countries for which the Federal Foreign Office has issued a travel warning due to Covid-19.

We will put a strong focus on feminism, queer politics and gender equality

Equality in all areas of life

Feminism takes everyone into account and creates autonomy, participation and equity. The goal is a society in which everyone can live autonomously, regardless of gender and women can also equitably cocreate everywhere – from the world of work to the parliaments. This is a mission for all genders. This also requires men who stand up for a society in which power, opportunities and responsibility are shared equally and sexism is resolutely combatted. Gender equality is an interdisciplinary task that we think of intersectionally. We want to examine whether a measure or law advances gender equality and intervene accordingly where it stands in contradiction. The awarding of public contracts should also take into account gender equity criteria. We will develop the newly created Federal Foundation for Equality to an effective, reliably funded and independent institution that provides verified knowledge on the living circumstances of all genders and develops and combines effective measures for equality, and makes them available to business, politics and the public. The social sciences and gender studies make an indispensable contribution in this respect. We need a binding equality strategy that encompasses all areas of life and politics, works across agencies and translates its insights into realisable goals. It is time for a feminist government in which people of all genders stand up equally for gender equality.

Combatting gender-based violence

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersex and queer people should be able to live their lives with self-determination and free of discrimination. To this end and to combat legal discrimination as well as disadvantages and hostility in everyday life, we will send a strong signal and ensure the protection of people based on their sexual and gender identity by means of an extension of Article 3 Paragraph 3 of the Basic Law. Together with community organisations, we will

present a nationwide cross-agency “Living Diversity!” national action plan for the acceptance of sexual and gender diversity – with the aim of guaranteeing equal LGBTIQ* participation in social life to promote the acceptance of diversity. This also includes measures for LGBTIQ*-inclusive social policy and institutional and project funding for LGBTIQ* associations, organisations and foundations. We want to remove the discriminatory ban on donating blood for gay and bisexual men and transgender people. LGBTIQ* people are particularly affected by sexual violence. We will resolutely fight hate crime directed at LGBTIQ* people. To protect and empower queer young people, especially in rural areas, we want to provide information for young people about the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities with a nationwide awareness campaign and raise awareness of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and queerphobia. Together with the states, we will ensure that gender and sexual variety and diversity are reflected in curricula and education plans and that these are implemented consistently. Queerphobic crimes should be recorded separately in the statistics.

Securing women’s shelters

Each person has the right to physical integrity. It is the duty of the state to protect women from gender-based violence. Women’s shelters play a key role in this. Therefore, significantly more women’s shelter places must be created, including in rural areas. Because every woman affected by violence, whether with or without children, needs a place to go to and protection – regardless of her legal residence status, her living situation or whether she has an impairment. We will provide security for those affected with a legal entitlement to protection from gender-based violence via a cash benefit from the federal government, regardless of their income, and will improve access to protective facilities and their services for all women. For their part, states and local authorities must continue to fulfil their financial responsibility. Affected women who receive social benefits should not be put in a worse position for the time spent in a women’s shelter. We need women’s shelters that can take in children, even if they are older. Men who have become the victim of partner violence also need support and a safe refuge. We want to expand this provision. In addition, inter-

sectional protection concepts and refuges, including in particular for queer and non-binary people, must be developed and provided. We will promote accessibility in women's shelters and counselling facilities so that protection options are also available for women with disabilities affected by violence.

Protection from coercion and exploitation: enabling autonomy

Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is an abhorrent crime that we will resolutely combat using the means available under criminal law, but also preventively through joint European action, as well as information, protection and help for the victims. To this end, we also want to establish a national action plan against human trafficking. Simply deporting victims of human trafficking is wrong. Instead, their willingness to report and testify would be increased by a permanent right of residence and prosecution of the perpetrators would be made easier. Forced marriages are human rights violations. Everyone who is threatened by this needs help and protection as well as good advice from reliably funded advice centres. Female genital mutilation is a massive violation of physical integrity. It is crucial that we help those who are affected and protect them, including through international awareness and assistance campaigns. However, in Germany too, we need a strategy to combat it. We want to better support civil society organisations that are engaged in this area; the girls' contacts as well as teaching staff and social services should be made aware and trained. People working in prostitution need rights and protection – including from stigmatisation and criminalisation. We will evaluate and revise the Prostitute Protection Act with the goal of improving working conditions in legal prostitution. To enable them to carry on their work safely, prostitution sites must be more strictly monitored. We will expand and financially support voluntary, low-threshold and multilingual advice services. We will support people who want to get out of prostitution with individual help and advice during the reorientation. This can succeed through further training, financial support and help with a placement in gainful employment outside prostitution.

Self-determination through healthcare provision

All people must be able to make decisions for themselves with regard to their body and their life. For this, good healthcare is necessary, including secure access and comprehensive information on abortion. The decision of whether a woman terminates a pregnancy or not is hers alone. At this time, good advice and healthcare structures are crucial. We are fighting for ample local provision of doctors, practices and clinics that carry out abortions. The topic must be integrated into the training of doctors in line with internationally recognised standards. In addition to professional medical care, good advice services are also important. We will therefore protect the broad range of family planning and advice centres and expand voluntary advice services. Destigmatisation and decriminalisation of voluntary terminations of pregnancy is required to permanently guarantee provision, as well as a general assumption of costs. This is only possible if voluntary termination of pregnancy is no longer regulated in the Criminal Code (Section 218 and Section 219), but elsewhere instead. Pregnant women who seek advice, as well as the advice centres and doctors, must be protected with nationally embedded protection from hostility and pavement harassment. In the case of an unwanted pregnancy, the best possible access to information must be guaranteed. To protect doctors from the threat of charges, it is especially necessary to remove Section 219 a from the Criminal Code as quickly as possible. As a first step, the costs for contraceptives prescribed by doctors to recipients of government transfer payments and low earners must be covered with minimum bureaucracy. Going forward, free-of-charge and easy access to contraceptives should apply for everyone. The easiest way would be to regulate this access via the health insurance funds.

Combatting queerphobia

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersex and queer people should be able to live their lives with self-determination and free of discrimination. To this end and to combat legal discrimination as well as disadvantages and hostility in everyday life, we will send a strong signal and ensure the protection of people based on their sexual and gender identity by means of an extension of Article 3 Paragraph 3 of the Basic Law. Together with community organisations, we will present a nationwide cross-agency “Living Diversity!” national action plan for the acceptance of sexual and gender diversity – with the aim of guaranteeing equal LGBTIQ* participation in social life to promote the acceptance of diversity. This also includes measures for LGBTIQ*-inclusive social policy and institutional and project funding for LGBTIQ* associations, organisations and foundations. We want to remove the discriminatory ban on donating blood for gay and bisexual men and transgender people. LGBTIQ* people are particularly affected by sexual violence. We will resolutely fight hate crime directed at LGBTIQ* people. To protect and empower queer young people, especially in rural areas, we want to provide information for young people about the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities with a nationwide awareness campaign and raise awareness of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and queerphobia. Together with the states, we will ensure that gender and sexual variety and diversity are reflected in curricula and education plans and that these are implemented consistently. Queerphobic crimes should be recorded separately in the statistics.

Guaranteeing self-determination and repealing the Transsexuals Act

With a law on self-determination, we will ensure that the outdated Transsexuals Act is finally repealed. We will make it possible for people to change their gender classification and name at the request of the person concerned without the need for obligatory psychological reports. We will reinforce the disclosure ban and penalise deliberate violations against this. We commit to prohibiting all unnecessary operations and treatments on intersex children and closing loopholes in the corresponding laws. Operations

that were carried out as medically necessary should be recorded centrally, based on strict data protection, to achieve better traceability for those affected and a better data basis. With regard to healthcare services as well as gender reassignment surgeries and hormone therapies, self-determination has to be ensured. We want to enshrine the right to gender reassignment measures in law and ensure that the costs are covered by the healthcare system. We will set up a compensation fund for the victims amongst the group of transgender and intersex people whose physical integrity was violated or whose marriages were compulsorily annulled.

We will strengthen security and civil rights

Security for all and a well-equipped police force closely connected to citizens

Germany is basically a safe country. This is partly due to the good work of the police. We want it to stay that way. However, theft, burglaries, violent offences, hate crimes and organised crime place a heavy burden on victims. We want to strengthen the police in their tasks such as prevention, awareness-raising and prosecution as well as the protection of basic rights, in both urban and rural areas and by both analogue and digital means. We want to reverse the previous staff reductions in the Federal Police and the Federal Criminal Police Office with a campaign to fill vacancies and, at the same time, enable specialised training and study courses. We want the police to reflect the diversity of the population. Police officers deserve our appreciation, along with good working conditions and efficient structures within the public authorities. Secure and efficient data processing combined with mobile IT and clearly regulated competences are basic requirements for modern police work. However, good police actions cannot be a replacement for solving social problems. We will therefore support and expand cooperation with civil bodies and external experts.

The special responsibility of the police

We want a society in which everyone can live freely and safely. Safety must be guaranteed equally everywhere. We do not treat freedom and civil rights as aspects of domestic policy that can be ignored, but as its key protected assets. Safety must not be a question of social class, origin, gender, sexual identity, appearance or place of residence. For the police to accomplish their complex tasks, they must be able to rely on the trust of the entire population. As an executive organ of the state monopoly on the use of force, the police also have a special responsibility. This is consistent with the introduction of an individual but anonymised identification system for the Federal Police and the creation of a new post of independent federal police commissioner with comprehensive competences, to whom the police as well as citizens can turn in the event of problems or identified grievances. Crimes in office and deaths in police custody must be clarified with no ifs or buts. We will shape the powers of inspection of the Federal Police so that they no longer lead to racial profiling and test out the introduction of so-called ticket systems to make the reasons for police inspections transparent for those affected. Police officers should be able to and obliged to undertake further training, even after their initial professional training. Important further training areas are, for example, dealing with people with mental illnesses as well as anti-discrimination and the risk of racial profiling. Particular stress factors while in service should be followed up regularly, for example in the context of supervision. A nationwide, external specialist agency for pastoral care and ethical training should be established. The already existing ZeBuS (Centre for Ethical Education and Pastoral Care for the Police in NRW) could serve as a model here. Independent academic studies on right-wing extremism, antisemitism and racism in the security agencies and law enforcement authorities are long overdue. We want to make it easier to carry out police research and open up the police more for this. Rational security policy requires a solid evidence base and clear responsibilities. For this reason, we will reintroduce the periodic security report, which provided valuable information in the past.

Creating a European criminal investigation office and pursuing organised crime

Numerous crimes take place across borders; organised crime and Islamist and right-wing extremist terror networks in particular do not stop at national borders. To protect citizens and defend our freedom, we need stronger cross-border cooperation by the police and the judiciary: through joint European police teams, by upgrading Europol to a European criminal investigation office, and through closer judicial cooperation between the member states, as well as with the help of Eurojust and, to combat fraud involving EU funds, with the European Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF, and the European Public Prosecutor's Office, using the most up-to-date analysis methods. Due to the increasing networking of European databases, high data protection standards and an improvement in cross-border legal protection are essential. This cooperation requires an independent judiciary and fair criminal procedures in all EU member states.

Reorganisation of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution

A great deal of trust in the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution has been lost in the past, especially in relation to the NSU-Complex. Changes have been seen here, especially in terms of new staff; however a new structure must also follow that will provide an improvement in the analytical capacity of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution. The expertise on anti-constitutional activities already existing today in academia and civil society must be used more systematically. This expertise should be incorporated, and strengthened nationwide and permanently promoted by a law for the promotion of democracy. We want to structurally reorganise the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution: on the one hand with an independent Institute for the Protection of the Constitution working academically from public sources, and the other hand, creating a reduced Federal Office for Threat Identification and Counterintelligence, which works with intelligence gathering means compliant with the law, clearly demarcated from police tasks. This also requires closer and more effective parliamentary scrutiny. To win back trust, we will reinforce the oversight of the work of the intelligence agencies and legally regulate the use of human sources.

Combatting right-wing extremism and breaking up the networks

There are more than 32,000 right-wing extremists in Germany, who are networking more and more, including transnationally, despite their exclusionary nationalistic ideology. Combatting right-wing extremist structures - including within the security agencies - must be a priority for all security services. This requires a combination of prevention, protection and sanctions. Through a nationwide networked prevention strategy, we want to significantly expand prevention work and also focus on the anti-feminist and nationalistic dimension of right-wing extremism. The latter includes, for example, the right-wing extremist and violent Ülkücü Movement, commonly known as the "Grey Wolves", which we want to push back with all available political and legal means. Civil society groups carry out important work in providing information about and pushing back against right-wing extremist structures. They should be supported structurally and in the long term through a law for the promotion of democracy. We will initiate independent academic studies on racism and right-wing extremism in the various security agencies, record hate violence and deal with it robustly. Right-wing extremists must be removed from security agencies more consistently and quickly than has been the case up to now. We want to create the legal conditions for this. The series of murders by the right-wing terrorist NSU as well as other racist and right-wing extremist terrorist acts - for example the murders in Hanau - have still not been fully processed. For this reason, we will establish an archive about right-wing terrorism, modelled on the Stasi Records Agency, in which the documents and results of the 13 parliamentary investigation committees on the NSU will also be evaluated and which will be accessible to academics, journalists and civil society in the long term. We stand in solidarity with all victims and people affected by right-wing terrorist, right-wing extremist and racist attacks. We therefore want to establish a fund at the federal level for victims and people affected, in particular, by right-wing extremist, racist or Islamist violence.

Protection from terrorism

Any type of politically motivated violence endangers our constitutional state. Public safety in Germany is threatened in particular by terrorism by violent right-wing extremists and Islamists. To protect an open society, our democracy and its people, we must resolutely fight terrorism - by means of effective, intersectionally oriented prevention work, better networking of the security agencies and rigorous monitoring of so-called "potentially dangerous persons". This requires an agreed European definition of the term "potentially dangerous person" with legally verifiable classification and non-classification criteria. Potentially dangerous persons must be closely monitored. The goal is for open arrest warrants against potentially dangerous persons to be consistently enforced and ongoing procedures to be merged across national borders. Cooperation and communication between the security agencies, including across national borders, must be reformed, and this includes creating legal bases for the counterterrorism centres, GTAZ and GETZ. We reject infringements of basic rights on the basis of classification as a so-called potentially dangerous person outside the field of counter-terrorism. We will also expand exit programmes for people from the right-wing extremist and Islamist scenes as well as support and counselling services for victims and their relatives. A national, professional prevention and deradicalisation network is required - similar to the civil-society organisations that have already achieved better networking than the political levels in the federal government and states. We want to reinforce prevention and deradicalisation in prisons. To make attacks more difficult, we will increase efforts to track down the sale of illegal weapons, including and especially in online marketplaces.

Fewer guns for more safety

There are over five million legal guns in Germany. Every year, people die at the hands of legal guns, either while handling them or as a result of criminal offences. These range from domestic violence to mass shootings, and right up to extremist attacks. These types of criminal offences are not necessarily committed by the legal gun owners, but also by people who unlawfully gain access to these weapons because

they have the relevant access to these, for example in a shared household. Getting a valid picture about the dimensions and causes of these types of criminal offences requires improved collection of criminal statistics. It must be documented whether a criminal offence was committed with a legal or illegal firearm, whether a shot was fired during the offence and whether the suspect was entitled to own the weapon or not. Everyone who dies by a gun is one too many. This is why we want to gradually end the availability of lethal firearms – except in the case of hunters who could not fulfil their duties without these weapons. In the area of shooting sports too, we are in dialogue with sports shooters regarding the migration to non-lethal firearms.

Making civil protection crisis-proof

Germany has an outstanding network of players who are capable of acting in a crisis. The mainly voluntary members of the aid organisations, fire brigades and the Federal Agency for Technical Relief form the backbone of this. The climate crisis and the challenges of our modern society are putting this system under pressure. Cross-border disasters in particular, such as pandemics, floods, forest fires or extensive power outages have enormous potential for damage and require coordinated action when individual states reach their limits. We want the Federal Government to engage more here and for the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance to be given more competences. We want to further strengthen the engagement of voluntary and impromptu helpers and make it fit for digital areas, for example via a cyber aid organisation. In addition, we are committed to strengthening public health protection to ensure interdisciplinary combatting of future pandemics.

Protection for whistleblowers

Emissions manipulation, irregularities in care institutions, the sale of Facebook user information – hardly any of the major business scandals from the past few years would have become public were it not for the evidence provided from within the companies. Irregularities in companies, public authorities and other areas, such as doping in sport and criminal activities in companies and public authorities require

brave people to bring them to light. These whistleblowers must be better protected, in the interests of us all, from reprisals at home and abroad as well as the health, financial and social ramifications of providing the information. We will achieve this with a Whistleblower Protection Act that implements the EU Whistleblowing Directive ambitiously and comprehensively across all national law. This defines a two-step reporting procedure as well as a compensation fund which will minimise personal risk. The aim is to reduce the fear of economic and personal damage as an obstacle to whistleblowing and to encourage potential whistleblowers to come forward. We want whistleblowers like Edward Snowden, whom we have to thank for exposing worldwide spying and mass surveillance by numerous intelligence agencies, to be able to live freely and safely in a democratic country and offer this to them in Germany too.

Targeted defence against specific threats

A functioning, democratic constitutional state must guarantee safety and safeguard the civil liberties that constitute it. We stand for a rational security and criminal policy that protects legal interests from real interference, protects against specific threats in a targeted and event-driven manner and guarantees proportionate prosecution instead of placing the population under general suspicion by means of sweeping mass surveillance. Security laws must be subject to scrutiny, and in future based on valid empirical evidence, and must be independently evaluated regularly with regard to their effectiveness. We will set up a total account for surveillance, which will be carried forward on an ongoing basis. We reject the use of biometric identification in public spaces, such as for example face recognition, as well as the indiscriminate expansion of video surveillance, groundless data retention, general back doors in digital appliances and applications and the infiltration of technical devices (computer and network surveillance and source telecommunications surveillance). In addition, an obligation to report security gaps and actively work to remove them should be introduced. Companies must not be obliged to endanger IT security and network integrity at the expense of the general public. We will argue for targeted police work, well equipped both in terms of technology and staff, based on a clear legal basis.

This will also provide greater legal certainty for the work of the public authorities and create trust. We want to strengthen digital expertise in the security agencies so that the existing possibilities for crime prevention and investigation are applied effectively.

We will guarantee the rule of law and strengthen consumer protection

Robust action against corruption

Corruption, tax evasion, money laundering and manipulation of the financial market are legal violations that can have devastating effects on competition and the free market, as well as for the environment, people and human rights. Economic crimes make up the bulk of financial injuries recorded by the police. We will therefore hold companies to account more effectively in future if they break the law. The aim is to merge and supplement the already existing dispersed regulations into one distinct law against economic crime. To prevent legal violations by companies going unpunished due to organised irresponsibility, it should in future also be possible to link this to organisational culpability. We want to strengthen the duty of proof of the legal source of large payments. Penalties must be effective, appropriate and act as a deterrent, in accordance with EU requirements, for example by allowing unlawful profits for recovery to be estimated and providing the necessary resources for this. We want to extend the list of penalties to include further measures, such as disqualification from public procurements, damage reparation, as well as mandatory precautions for companies to prevent criminal offences, and to introduce a public penalty register.

Legal protection for everyone, introduction of class actions

People have to be able to effectively assert their rights, even in relation to economically stronger parties, for example in cases like Dieselgate. To this end, we will introduce class actions so that people can effectively obtain justice and, for example, receive compensation,

even in cases where the damage is relatively minor but takes place on a massive scale. The collective legal action procedures introduced up to now, such as the Model Declaratory Action, which is only available to consumers, and the Capital Markets Model Case Act, are insufficient. The increasingly favoured and often effective assertion of legal rights through legal tech companies can, on the other hand, help many people to obtain justice quickly and in an uncomplicated manner. We therefore want to integrate collective legal protection into the Code of Civil Procedure in a generalised and standardised manner and enable individual claims to be combined in a class action. For better enforcement of the law, entry barriers should be reduced, the procedures simplified and advisory assistance and legal aid reinforced. We will promptly implement the EU Class Action Directive in national law, in a consumer-friendly manner. The effects of differences in the financial strength of the parties, possibilities for legal delays and the influence of actually affected third parties (insurance companies, for example) on judicial proceedings must be minimised.

Reasonable and proportionate criminal penalties

In family law proceedings, decisions are made that can have significant consequences with respect to the future lives of children and their families. Domestic violence must be taken into account in decisions on visiting rights and custody. We have to strengthen child protection in court and take into account the opinions of children. Hearings must be designed to be child-friendly and, where possible, repeated questioning must be avoided. Family law proceedings require suitable interdisciplinary services, such as the Barnahus children's houses, for example. We will make advanced training compulsory for family judges, but this will also be taken into consideration in the judges' workload. We also want to create an option to lodge an appeal at the Federal Court of Justice in parent and child cases. In criminal proceedings, we want to further strengthen children's rights as victims. Sexual abuse of children must be rigorously investigated and prosecuted, primarily through more staff – including, in particular, those specialising in online crime – in the police and in public prosecutor's offices.

Improving child protection in court

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Protection from hidden costs, just one click to cancel online

You can conclude online contracts with a click, but cancellation must be in writing. Also, long minimum terms and automatic renewal of contracts by a year are anything but consumer-friendly. Consumers are still being taken by surprise on the telephone or at the door, and unwanted contracts are being foisted on them. We want to protect consumers from contract traps and make online cancellation as simple as online ordering. Just as there is an order button, there must also be a cancel button as well as a mandatory confirmation of receipt for online or email cancellations. Contract durations and automatic renewals must be reduced – for the benefit of consumer protection and competition. We want to halve the maximum minimum contract term of two years, and reduce tacit renewals from one year to one month. Contracts concluded by telephone should only be valid if they are subsequently confirmed. We also want to protect consumers better from dubious door-to-door selling.

The right to repair

From washing machines to mobile phones – many appliances end up in the rubbish after only a short time because they break quickly, cannot be repaired, or software updates are no longer offered. This is annoying for consumers, wastes valuable resources and causes mountains of electrical waste. We are therefore standing for quality and durability. With the right to repair, we want to avoid electrical waste in the first place. This will be based on compulsory design specifications so that electronic devices are designed in a way that makes them as durable, repairable and recyclable as possible. At the same time, it must not only be a question of a device's hardware. Replacement parts and software updates must be available at a reasonable price for the duration of its expected lifetime at least. A label should indicate how long replacement parts and software updates will be provided for comparison. By doubling the guarantee periods to four years, extending the reversal of the burden of proof to two years and requiring manufacturers to specify the expected lifetime, we want to ensure that devices are built to have a longer lifetime. In this way, we will make full use of the scope of the EU guidelines and, at the same time, commit to more consumer protection in the EU. Additionally, we will introduce the reduced VAT rate for repair services and advocate for the extension of this to the repair of electrical devices at the EU level.

Financial advice in the interests of customers

Often, financial and insurance products are sold to customers that do not meet their personal needs. These products are often good for the profits of banks and insurance companies but bad for customers. We want to turn financial consultancy on its head. To do this, we will create a standard, transparent job description for financial advisers. All agents and advisers should be overseen in future by the Federal Financial Supervisory Authority (BaFin). We want to get away from commission-based advice and gradually move over to independent fee-based advice. We will create a statutory fee structure for this that strengthens financial advisers and makes them more independent. Together with the consumer advice centres and the sector, we will develop fee models (instalment payments, flat rates) that match

people's life situation and preferences, and we will reduce costs with standard pension plan products, especially for people on low and medium incomes. Financial supervision should make more use of the possibility of prohibiting the sale of detrimental misleading financial products and ensure more financial education. In addition, we want to strengthen the competences of BaFin in the area of consumer protection and extend the participation rights of the Consumer Advisory Council. We will limit excessive overdraft interest rates and charges, especially for basic accounts.

We will promote culture, the arts and sport

Crisis-proof structures for culture

The arts are independent and do not have to fulfil any purpose. At the same time, they are of central importance for reflecting society back to itself, cohesion and the personal development of the individual. We want the cultural landscape to find new vibrancy, diversity and richness after the pandemic with its months-long closures and for culture and cultural education to finally become a natural component of public service provision. Consequently, we want to enshrine culture as a national objective in the Basic Law. A long-term (recovery) strategy must strengthen local government finances as an important basis for cultural life, reform the law on public funding, enable more cooperation between the federal government, the states and local authorities in the funding of cultural institutions and projects and establish a fund for the protection of cultural institutions from eviction and demolition which safeguards cultural venues such as clubs in the long term. In future, public cultural funding should be coordinated in a participatory, inclusive and gender-equitable way, and should be awarded based on transparent criteria. Likewise, this requires equal value to be assigned to the funding and framework conditions for all cultural forms and branches, for the independent scene as well as institutionally unded cultural institutions.

Better security for cultural workers and creatives

The coronavirus crisis shows the kind of precarious working conditions experienced by many cultural and media workers. A diverse cultural landscape requires security that offers scope and enables artistic and cultural creativity. We are committed to good working and training conditions and fair pay to eliminate precarious employment contracts in private and, especially, public cultural institutions. Solo self-employed people and cultural workers should be protected by a basic income of EUR 1,200 per month for the duration of the coronavirus crisis. However, protection is also required beyond this. The Artists' Social Security Fund (KSK) must be financially strengthened, legal certainty provided for membership of the KSK, including for artists who are only intermittently employed in productions with compulsory insurance, and optional continued insurance in the unemployment insurance system for self-employed people must be simplified. It must be ensured that creators receive fair remuneration for their works. An appropriate participation, especially in the profits of distribution platforms, will ensure that cultural and media workers can earn money from their works. In the case of digital content, users should not be put in a worse position than with non-digital goods when loaning and reselling these. For this reason, libraries should be able to lend e-books under the same conditions that have proved successful for physical books, without having to conclude licensing agreements for this.

Culture in society

Active cultural life is the basis of democratic societies. This is where discussion on how we want to live takes place. Therefore, society must be visible in all its diversity in cultural works. We want to open and strengthen cultural facilities so that everyone has easy access to them and can use and shape what they offer. Existing social, financial or building obstacles have to be dismantled for this to happen, for example through free entry for schoolchildren to public museums, through opening public libraries on Sundays or through a cultural pass for people on low income. We want to especially promote, continually and nationwide, the types of cultural offers that consider the

needs of their town or community and that see this as their central task for the future. In rural regions, but also in urban centres, cultural institutions should become hubs for encounters and so-called “third places” that also offer access to culture to people who have not previously benefited from it. In filling directorship posts, in the composition of state-funded cultural organisations, in the awarding of grants and commissions and in state juries, we want to introduce a quota regulation to guarantee gender-equity and promote flat hierarchies and participatory structures. In addition, appropriate representation of the diversity in society must be ensured. Topics such as sustainability, diversity and inclusive participation must be a firm component of training for cultural careers. We also want to promote cultural diversity as well as transculturality, in other words the mutual intermingling of cultures.

Making the cultural sector more environmentally friendly

The cultural sector and the arts can play an important role in managing the climate crisis. There are many highly committed initiatives and players who are attempting to work in a way that is more resource efficient and to orient the cultural sector towards an ecological approach. We will support this commitment by means of a central advice centre, the Green Culture Desk and establish a Green Culture Fund as a funding instrument. Artists also provide important stimuli for long-term transformation. We want to create an instrument for interagency transdisciplinary funding in the form of a fund for aesthetics and sustainability, which will enable the development of long-term structures and create free spaces for experimentation and action. By this, we also mean hybrid models of cooperation between artists, academics and players in civil society.

Strengthening film and cinema culture and leading them into the digital age

We want to reinforce films as a defining medium of the moving image and reinforce cinemas as public cultural sites in view of the rapid change in forms of production and distribution. To increase the artistic quality and attractiveness of German and European film, we will

simplify decision-making processes: we will disentangle the structure from television stations and a multitude of committees in favour of criteria-based automatic funding, and direct our attention more to funding subject matter and scripts as well as the next generation. Mandatory quotas will ensure that women have equal opportunities in film. Minimum social standards and fair exploitation routes will improve the economic position of film professionals. Environmentally friendly production will be rewarded with financial incentives. We will support cinemas and festivals with reliable funding instruments.

Strengthening and opening up remembrance culture

Remembrance culture contributes decisively towards self-understanding and cohesion and is a fundamental prerequisite for protecting our democracy. However, there are still gaps in terms of dealing with Germany’s criminal history. We have to resolutely continue to process National Socialism. We want to honour little considered victim groups such as so-called “asocial people”, “career criminals” and “euthanasia” victims and recognise them through appropriate compensation. Their life stories and the crime sites of their murders should be researched and identified. Financial support for research work, further development of teaching and academic work at the memorial sites as well further processing and restitution of Nazi looted art are central issues here. This also includes fulfilling our other obligations towards countries that suffered under German occupation. The SED dictatorship should also be further analysed by continuing the research and political educational work at the regional offices of the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records. We will support remembrance sites relating to the peaceful revolution of 1989, German Reunification and the profound transformation processes that followed in East Germany through federal sponsorship. We also want to support regional initiatives for processing the past more in their work and are committed to unbureaucratic, higher compensation for the victims and persecuted people of the SED dictatorship. We also want to create legal regulations for the restitution of the stolen art from the Nazi and GDR eras. We will raise awareness of the continuing legacy of colonialism by establishing a central remembrance and learning site, thereby supporting a social debate around our colonial heritage that enables an

antiracist perspective on history and society. Critical analysis of colonial crime and decolonisation of public spaces is central to this and requires comprehensive research of provenance, digitalisation as well as transparent disclosure and mandatory regulations for the restitution of cultural heritage from colonial contexts. This can only succeed through close cooperation with the descendants and civil society initiatives of formerly colonised and damaged people worldwide. At the same time, the German remembrance culture must open up to the diverse experiences and stories of people who have migrated to Germany or whose history is interwoven with German history, and the memorial concept must be further developed accordingly. We will also ensure an active remembrance culture in all public institutions.

A development plan for sport

In sport, the largest promoter of organised civil society and voluntary civic engagement, democratic values such as community, tolerance, integration, inclusion, civic engagement and preventative healthcare are lived and communicated every day. Sport thereby takes on a prominent role for living together in society. We will support this and create better framework conditions for it. We are committed to ensuring that the participation of women in sports and the diversity of sportspeople and athletes is also reflected in the composition of decision-making bodies. We want to combine ideas and energies and draw up and implement a sports development plan – similar to the Golden Plan from the 1960s – together with sports associations, states, local authorities, academia, and with the participation of citizens. Here, there has to be a special focus in particular on economically underdeveloped regions, especially in East Germany, as the discrepancy between East and West is still a problem in popular sports, even 30 years after the peaceful revolution. Sufficient accessible sports facilities and exercise spaces are a public service in cities and rural areas. We therefore want to firmly embed spaces for exercise and sport in housing policy and district planning and enable renovation of the existing facilities by the local authorities in accordance with the energy regulations. This also includes in particular swimming facilities as our aim is for every child to be able to learn to swim. We want to achieve this with a federal programme for the renovation and maintenance

of public swimming pools. Major sport events should be enabled to be climate-neutral, social, sustainable and in conformity with human rights and their costs should be transparently presented so that they also create a lasting infrastructure benefit for local citizens. This requires a nationally coherent, federally coordinated overall strategy in which citizens play a part in the planning right from the start. The principle is that prevention is the best medicine. Therefore we want to support public exercise spaces accessible to all that also enable people on a low income to engage in sport. Esports are no longer a niche topic and are inspiring more and more people. We want to enable new paths in sports clubs and youth clubs – by granting esports non-profit status, we will strengthen voluntary civic engagement. We want to inspire and promote the recruitment of the next generation in IT and the creative industries. We will support the development of esports and gaming, especially in relation to diversity, sustainability, youth protection and media literacy, and shape these together with gamers, associations and academia. Together with all protagonists we will stand against discrimination and hate speech.

Elite sport needs popular sport

Strong popular sports need role models. In competitive sports, the aim should be the best possible promotion of talents rather than just concentrating on a specific number of medals. That is why, in promoting elite sports, we want to put the central focus on conditions and prospects for competitive sportspeople, especially for the next generation. The previous state employment opportunities for competitive sportspeople will be augmented by civil alternatives. We want to enhance the important social and educational work of trainers in both a voluntary and a professional capacity. With regard to doping prevention and the fight against doping, we will strengthen NADA and, at the international level, call for far-reaching reforms of WADA, which must perform its tasks fully independently and enable real participation by athletes. Past doping has to be fully investigated; we will support doping victims appropriately. Corruption scandals involving sports officials at the highest level as well as increasing commercialisation are also threatening elite sports. Particularly in the case of football, as a spectator sport, it is important to increase the participation opportunities for

fans and embed the sport more firmly into society again. It is therefore necessary to boost transparency and good governance in sport. Adherence to human rights must be enforced by sports associations on the basis of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and be made a condition for awarding major sporting events. We are committed to a national strategy against mental, physical and sexual abuse in sport, whereby the establishment of an independent centre for safe sport is an integral component. We will work to combat right-wing extremism and other forms of group-related hostility in sports with a long-term financially strong federal programme which will be advised by an independent body. We will ensure reliable framework conditions for the socio-educational football fan projects and their coordination centres. We will protect the civil rights of fans and will protect them from escalating data collection and collective punishment. Still existing sexist structures must be broken up, and sports facilities must be planned in a way that is sensitive to gender.

We will continue to build Europe

Democratically shaping the future of the EU

We see Germany as having a key and historic responsibility for the cohesion and further development of the EU. Recently, however, the strategy adopted in Berlin was at best to administer and often to act as a brake. We want to shape European policy actively and in a coordinated manner – with a clear compass of values, along the lines of strong German-French cooperation in collaboration with our European partners. Our goal is a democratically strengthened EU that pulls together, moves forward and throws all its weight into fighting the climate crisis and species extinction. We stand for a unified Europe without barriers, as freedom of movement is one of greatest achievements of the European project. In certain areas, we are only progressing at different paces. Stronger cooperation in the context of the treaties offers good opportunities here and must always occur with the aspiration of everyone finally being able to endorse it, and with full parliamentary rights. We regard the further development of European institutions as closely connected to the development of

social cohesion in the EU. In the coming months, the Conference on the Future of Europe offers a major opportunity to strengthen the European public and develop EU reforms collectively with citizens. We want to use it for the next phase of European integration on the way to a Federal European Republic and to formulate European answers to the major challenges we face. The results of the Conference should be implemented in the context of European legislation up to and including treaty changes.

Strengthening the European Parliament

The history of the EU is a story of the increasing legitimacy of the European institutions. Our goal is to strengthen the parliamentary democracy of the European Union: with a parliament that makes decisions on an equal footing with the Council and is given a full right of initiative for legislation and strong budgetary authority. It should be able to elect the Commission at the recommendation of the Commission President and also be able to dismiss it by a constructive vote of no confidence. For European Parliament elections, we are committed to citizens also being able to determine the next President of the EU Commission with their vote for a top candidate from the parties. A portion of members should no longer gain seats in the European Parliament via many national lists, but rather via EU-wide transnational lists. We will advocate for the Union citizenship to be further developed into a European citizenship so that Union citizens enjoy the same rights and duties in the member states in which they live. We want all EU citizens whose main place of residence is in Germany to be allowed to vote, not only in local and European elections, but going forward also in state and federal elections.

Eliminating blockages with majority voting

The European Union needs more capacity to act to keep pace with today's challenges. We can no longer afford for individual states to block action in areas such as foreign and security policy, tax issues as well as in the energy and social spheres. As long as national interests can thwart the common good in Europe, the EU will not be able to take on a more active role, for instance for fairer taxation, or more

responsibility for democracy and human rights in the world. Hence, we will advocate for the introduction of majority voting in the collective decision-making of the European Parliament for all remaining policy areas in which decisions are currently still made on the principle of unanimity. This is also important to ensure the capacity of the EU to act in the event of further EU enlargement. Our goal is to further develop the European institutions into a bicameral system.

A European law on associations and non-profit organisations

The European polity includes the formation of civil societies. This is why we will advocate for an EU-wide law on associations and non-profit organisations. A European association status with clear rules on foundation, non-profit status and dissolution would put associations under the protection of the EU and avoid national arbitrariness. In addition, we want to strengthen the European Citizens' Initiative as a key instrument for the participation of citizens and civil society. This should enable citizens to request the convocation of European future conferences or citizens' councils by which a reform of the treaties could also be proposed. If a citizens' initiative is successful, at the latest after one year and following examination of its compatibility with the EU fundamental rights, a legislative proposal should follow and a plenary vote should take place in the European Parliament on the goal of the initiative.

Making influencing of EU legislation more transparent

More transparency strengthens European democracy and the trust of its citizens in politics. To make what the governments of the member states are advocating for in Brussels more comprehensible, we are committed to deadlines in the context of legislation by which time a public debate in the Council must have taken place. Here, all governments will have to submit their current position on the proposal to the President of the Council. We will lead the way on this in a German federal government, thus providing a good example. We also want to substantially further develop access to EU documents. The EU is already working in a more transparent way than the Federal Lower House of Parliament in relation to representatives of interest groups.

We want to go a few steps further – with a mandatory lobby register for all EU institutions, stricter waiting periods when moving between politics and business and a “legislative footprint” which will make influence on legislation more verifiable, monitored by an independent ethics body with the power to issue penalties.

Making European basic rights enforceable

The EU is a community of values and law. We want to make the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights enforceable against the national states in the long term, to strengthen all EU citizens in terms of their rights. With the EU Mechanism on Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights, we are committed to a stronger instrument to penalise infringements by authoritarian member states. Specific measures should follow from the annual Rule of Law Report up to and including infringement proceedings and non-payment of subsidies. The newly created rule of law mechanism must come into operation immediately. Local authorities and regions as well as non-governmental organisations should then be able to be directly supported by the EU. The Article 7 procedure on the rule of law requires substantial progress. All member states should join the European Public Prosecutor's Office if they want to receive new EU funds and submit a public account on subsidy recipients. One in seven Europeans is part of a national or language minority. We support the Minority SafePack Initiative and want to strengthen minority rights, such as the preservation of language, culture and identity, as well as naming practices, in the EU.

A public service media platform in Europe

A Europe growing together needs its own public digital spaces in which its citizens can come together to get information, participate, talk to each other and engage in political debate. Up to now, the only option has been to use commercially operated digital platforms. We are committed to a European digital platform with public funding as an answer to this, in keeping with the times. It will combine qualitatively high-value content across Europe – advertisement-free, open and multilingual. Furthermore, based on technical openness, interoperability and the best data protection standards, it can also serve as a

communication platform, including in particular for civil society and educational institutions, to provide content and bring the EU closer to its citizens through information campaigns. It will be based on a public service mandate. It will work together with the national public broadcasting corporations to make their content accessible across Europe and act free of any political influence.

A Europe of local authorities and regions

A democratic, diverse EU with a close connection to its citizens lives from the strength of its local authorities and regions. True to the principle of subsidiarity, the EU should provide support where local authorities are stretched to their limits – but not regulate every area of life. The competition rules of the internal market must not force local authorities to privatise public goods. There have to be exceptions in EU trade agreements for the provision of public services by local authorities as well as for state public and social services. To increase cooperation across Europe, we want to strengthen city partnerships, extend Interreg programmes for cross-border cooperation and promote euroregions and eurodistricts by reducing bureaucracy and increasing flexibility. We want to strengthen European cooperation in higher education and further develop this via the concept of European Universities. Local authorities and regions need to have more of a say at the European level, including via a strengthened Committee of the Regions. We are committed to the partnership principle for the implementation of the Green Deal and in the design and awarding of funding programmes and we will support local small and medium-sized businesses in making their contribution here. We want to reduce bureaucracy by increasing digitalisation. EU budgetary resources should also increasingly be provided directly to local authority and local civic society players in future.

Chapter 6: Working together internationally

The biggest challenges of our time are global: pandemics, the climate and biodiversity crisis, famine, urbanisation, migration and the special challenge of the socio-ecological transformation. These challenges can only be overcome if we work together. For years, however, in Europe and in the world, Germany has at best moderated, often hesitated and finally gone to ground. It is now time once more to pursue a cooperative and active policy and to forge ahead as a shaping force with a multilateral, proactive, coherent and values-led policy – always European and alongside a reliable German-French cooperation, with our partners inside and outside Europe, transatlantic and as part of the United Nations.

Based on the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Climate Agreement, international human rights standards and an international order based on the rule of law, we are committed to an outcome-based global structural policy which comprehends the protection and provision of global common goods, a fair distribution of resources and wealth, and development opportunities for all as the best precaution against the climate and biodiversity crisis, conflicts, violence and the immeasurable suffering caused by famine, forced migration and displacement. To this end, we also want to promote a European policy of global networking and connectivity and welcome corresponding partnerships.

The starting point for our policy is a strengthened, crisis-proof and effective European Union. We want to defend the fundamental values of the EU within our borders and resolutely champion these values outside our borders: human rights, democracy, freedom and the rule of law. The EU as a force for peace is not just the response to a long and painful history of war and enmity on our continent, exported around the world, but above all a promise for the future that must be honoured. It is our unique home, and one worth protecting. It is precisely because we are staunch Europeans that we fight for its

constant ongoing evolution. We will work for a European community of values, which reduces its dependence on third countries in critical areas and expands its sovereignty and strategic capacity to act – balancing cooperation, where possible, and independence, where necessary. Such an EU is in a position to provide and protect critical infrastructure and global common goods, and to stand up for international law and universal human rights at a global level. An important foundation for this is to oppose splits and antidemocratic endeavours within Europe. With the largest internal market in the world, the EU has considerable economic influence. We want to use this leverage to shape the global transformation fairly and to set ambitious standards

We are conscious of the considerable obstacles and dilemmas this entails. With their authoritarian hegemonic ambitions, not only do states such as China and Russia, which systematically nullify human and citizens' rights, force other states into economic and political dependence; they also want to divide Europe. At the same time, a global socio-ecological transformation is not possible without China, or without Russia and Brazil. This in itself shows that the global systemic competition with authoritarian states and dictatorships is real, putting us between a rock and a hard place - and leaves us facing such huge tasks that any form of solo effort would be sure to fail. We intend to counter this trend with a democracy offensive and thereby strengthen the global cooperation between democracies and democrats everywhere. In any partnership for democracy, it is important to involve the federal states, civil society groups and parliamentarians who profess to having ambitious democratic standards. In addition, we want to better coordinate and expand the strengthening of the democratic rule of law, regional integration, civil society and human rights across all ministries and departments. We prefer rule-based, multilateral cooperation over informal formats

We cannot dispel the many contradictions and limitations of foreign, development and security policy action. Defending human rights, democracy and the clear commitment to freedom movements takes us to the limits of our political capacity to act. At the same time, we cannot shy away from this responsibility. This makes it even more essential to have European cohesion and political alliances with all other states, and also regions, local authorities and civil society or intergovernmental players for whom the value of cooperation and the

strength of the law are also the basis for international relationships. We want to strengthen and confidently help to shape these alliances. We want to improve the position of Germany's representation in international organisations and strengthen its engagement. We are only sovereign when we work together.

We are committed to an honest balance of interests, a feminist foreign policy, respect for the rights of marginalised groups, cooperation and the rule of law, freedom from violence and coordinated crisis prevention and rule-based, primarily civil conflict management in a closely networked world. Our goal is a world order in which conflicts are not solved by the rule that might is right, but rather round the negotiating table. And we will reach out our hand to everyone who wishes to take part. We will orient our policy in a way that is post-colonial and anti-racist, knowing Germany's responsibility in the world and in full awareness of the crimes of National Socialism.

As a highly developed, export-oriented industrialised country, Germany is one of the main perpetrators of global warming and acts as a key player in a globalisation that does not just mean prosperity and development, but which also leads to the exploitation of people and the environment. This responsibility, especially towards countries in the Global South, is something we see as a driver for ambitious change and decisive action with the goal of global fairness, and we will start with ourselves.

This also means that we not only demand that others observe and protect human rights, but also measure ourselves against the same standards. Human rights are an obligation under international law and the unshakeable foundation of a values-led international policy. "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights": Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the guiding principle of our engagement – and that includes the European refugee policy. This is Europe's biggest failure. In no other field do European governments fail to such an extent to live up to their own standards of morality, human rights and international law.

Yet we have the possibilities and regulations to deal with forced migration appropriately and according to clear principles of human rights. These regulations exist, and there have been many moments in our history when they have been acted upon. Following on from this, we want – if not with all of Europe, then in a humanitarian coalition

of willing partners inside and outside the EU – to drive forward a paradigm shift towards the resolute prevention of the causes of forced migration and the humane treatment of refugees. Our focus is on rationality and a willingness to act, on humanity and responsibility – and on the indispensable pragmatism of emergency aid

The size and complexity of the international challenges that lie before us should be the yardstick for our national and international political actions. The global tasks are considerable. Let us venture the necessary responses.

We will drive forward the socio-ecological transformation

Boosting global transformation

More than ever, climate changes and the loss of species diversity are posing a real threat to human safety and freedom and to sustainable development – everywhere in the world. Time is running out. That is why we need to give the socio-ecological transformation an energetic boost in the next few years. The Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement were a breakthrough. All countries have since been obliged to start putting their own houses in order and making their contribution to the shared task. Ultimately, it is our decisions in business and trade, agricultural or arms exports that have major global effects on climate, species protection and global justice. We want to align all areas of policy in Germany with the transformation and set up a National Council for Peace, Sustainability and Human Rights to ensure strategic and coherent action in all ministries, departments and areas of policy, and to introduce a sustainability and human rights version of the TÜV (Technical Inspection Association), which would check the relevant draft laws for compliance with the UN sustainable development and climate goals as well as human rights agreements. On an international level, we want to bring new momentum to the socio-ecological transformation by working towards a binding transformation quota and, in particular, supporting the countries of the Global South through this process. We will combine the expenditure for development

cooperation, international climate financing and certain aspects of humanitarian aid to fund a global transformation in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement. At the same time, we will adhere to our international commitments towards development cooperation, climate financing and biodiversity. Germany's contribution here is to achieve the ODA quota - i.e. the percentage of gross national income spent on official development assistance - of 0.7 percent by 2025 and provide a further EUR 10 billion for international climate financing.

Climate foreign policy and global climate justice

We will pursue an ambitious and sustainable climate foreign policy that conforms with human rights and campaign for global climate justice: we will make climate neutrality and tackling climate impacts an inter-ministerial strategic priority of our international political action. In this way we also want to do justice to the historic responsibility of Germany and Europe. International cooperation for climate justice is an essential aspect of climate policy, pursues the achievement of the sustainable development goals, prevents conflicts over resources and secures peace. The countries of the Global South have growing energy needs. We want to use climate and development partnerships to drive forward innovations for climate neutrality, support the massive expansion of renewable energy and strengthen adaptation so that the world community can get on the 1.5-degree pathway. We want to create win-win situations for Europe and its neighbouring states as well as for countries with great potential for renewable energy and thus, while remaining sensitive to post-colonial issues, secure our requirement for green energy: green hydrogen instead of imported oil and gas. We will increase the human and financial resources devoted by Germany and the EU to climate foreign policy and global climate justice and direct our diplomatic efforts specifically towards a policy of climate justice. We want to provide better support for the existing international funds for climate adaptation and climate protection and we will advocate for the establishment of an additional fund to compensate for damage and losses as a way of funding initiatives such as climate risk insurance. We will end the subsidies for fossil fuels in our development and export funding. Development and investment banks such as the World Bank and the KfW should be converted into transformation banks.

**Protecting the climate and the environment,
respecting human rights**

Protecting human rights requires us to protect the climate and the environment; conversely, climate and environmental protection measures also protect human rights. We will stand up for binding mechanisms to protect people who lose their livelihoods and have to leave their homes as a result of extreme weather events or gradual environmental change. In particular, we will support regional approaches that enable those affected to migrate of their own accord and in a dignified manner and that create prospects for residence. At the same time, we want to oblige those states that have historically made the greatest contributions to global warming to take responsibility for international environmental law and to support home and host countries affected by climate-related migration. We want to strengthen the structure of the Task Force on Displacement set up by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC, and will work to ensure that their recommendations are implemented, along with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. It is also necessary to strengthen the rights of indigenous communities. We will support initiatives to strengthen the legal process, including against multilateral investment banks, and the instrument of climate litigation. We will take up the French initiative to codify and consolidate international environmental law and, as a first step, push for the right to a clean environment to be certified in a UN General Assembly resolution. Since crimes against the environment do not stop at international borders, it is in the global interest to ensure that the international community creates a jurisdiction that pursues such crimes independently and across international borders.

Fighting poverty and inequality worldwide

The coronavirus pandemic has led to a dramatic rise in poverty and inequality worldwide. Combating poverty and equal participation in society are core aims of our international engagement. We support countries in pursuing a socially-oriented economic and taxation policy. We will strive to ensure that people around the world have social

security, including through social cash transfers, and that children and young people have access to high-quality school and vocational education. Together with our partner countries, we want to promote the expansion of sustainable and rights-based social security systems. Social security programmes should on principle be easy to access and reach the most vulnerable groups, establish gender equality and reinforce social cohesion. In order to increase the effectiveness of all the measures, we want to strengthen impact evaluation, transparency and the exchange of knowledge with academia.

Strengthening humanitarian aid

We will use humanitarian aid to support people around the world who are caught up in humanitarian emergencies. The number of humanitarian crises is increasing, both as a result of armed conflict and due to extreme weather events linked to the climate crisis. More and more people are having to leave their homes, and humanitarian crises are lasting longer. We want to address this by continuously adjusting the funding for humanitarian aid. This will be allocated based on need and increasingly on a multi-annual basis. This will enable us to provide a degree of predictability and flexibility for the implementing organisations and to provide people in need with rapid and appropriate assistance. We are committed to respecting humanitarian principles and will tackle the structural causes by means of better links with civilian crisis prevention and development cooperation.

We will strengthen multilateral cooperation

Reforming the United Nations

Without the United Nations, the multilateral cooperation towards a socio-ecological transformation cannot be achieved. Its institutions care for millions of refugees all over the world, providing educational opportunities, food and healthcare. They mediate in countless wars and conflicts and are the framework in which the two most important multilateral agreements of recent years have been negotiated: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate

Agreement. We will substantially strengthen the financial, personnel and diplomatic commitment of Germany and the EU to the United Nations, coordinate it better and implement international agreements consistently in national and European policies. In this way, we will create the right conditions for the necessary reforms of the UN system. The Security Council and other organs of the United Nations need to be adapted to the realities of the 21st century. This requires a fairer representation of the regions on the Security Council. The concept of the power of veto is no longer fit for purpose. We will work towards removing the power of veto in the long term. As an interim step, in the event of the most severe crimes against humanity, a veto in the Security Council should be backed up with a justification and an alternative proposal. If the Security Council is persistently blocked in the event of the most severe human rights violations, the General Assembly should follow the example of the “Uniting for Peace” resolution on measures to enforce peace and adopt diplomatic measures, sanctions or military measures in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter, with a qualified majority.

Increasing resilience against epidemics – strengthening the WHO

In order to protect against new diseases and combat existing ones, we will call for increased international cooperation and solidarity under the umbrella of a reformed World Health Organisation as a specialised agency of the United Nations. The WHO should be the coordinating organisation for global health. We therefore want to empower it through much higher contributions and a clear mandate. It should be able to strengthen healthcare systems around the world in order to guarantee better healthcare provision for local populations and improve the prevention of communicable and non-communicable diseases, their diagnosis and the response to them. We want to further strengthen its key role in preparing for and fighting pandemics. We will work to give it a formal seat in the G20. With a view to fighting the coronavirus pandemic, the priorities are to increase the existing production capacity for Covid-19 vaccines and to supply vaccines to low-income countries via the COVAX alliance. In addition, we are committed to ensuring the active transfer of technology and knowledge with regard to the manufacture of essential drugs. Ensuring open, fair

and flexible global supply chains is a prerequisite for this, as is the lifting of worldwide export restrictions on Covid-19 vaccines. Where voluntary production partnerships prove insufficient, we will support requests for licences for Covid vaccines in exchange for compensation and thus advocate in the negotiations at the WTO for a temporary suspension of patents for technologies to combat Covid-19. Monopolies on intellectual property relating to the fight against diseases should not be allowed to block access to vital protective materials, vaccines and drugs. We will support the involvement of Taiwan in the WHO, including observer status.

50 percent women in international negotiations

We want to provide new impetus for multilateralism through greater cooperation. Transformation can only happen through cooperation, and that can only happen by involving the societal groups affected. The equal and intersectional participation of women is still the strongest indicator of this. We want to gradually enforce a 50 percent quota for Germany and Europe in all diplomatic and multilateral negotiations, both for postings to international organisations and at the implementation level. This will require a 50 percent quota for women in selection procedures, for staff in international deployments, in ministries working internationally and at the intermediate and senior levels of the European External Action Service. Comparable criteria, standards, indicators and time frames are required for the equality plans of ministries, similar to the Gender Equality Plan set up by the Swedish government.

We will foster good relationships in a multipolar world

For an active European policy with our neighbour states

Above all, the EU must take more responsibility in its immediate neighbourhood. The EU enlargement policy has been a success, and one we want to perpetuate. That is why we will argue the case for

concrete progress to be made regarding the European integration of the countries of the Western Balkans. We want to actively support the necessary reforms including on issues of democracy, the rule of law, the fight against corruption and the inclusion and protection of minorities, especially the Roma people. Visa liberalisation for Kosovars is essential as the next step, as are advances in the dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo, the opening of the first EU accession chapters for Albania and North Macedonia, and the creation of a civil society with equal rights for all citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Reconciliation processes and the political and juristic processing of war crimes must be reinforced. We will categorically reject ethnic boundary shifts and discrimination. In Eastern Europe, many brave people in countries such as Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine or Belarus are fighting for democracy, the rule of law and human rights. We will stand by them and will promote democratic and socio-ecological transformation processes in the region within the framework of the EU's Eastern Partnership and bilaterally, such as by creating stronger links between funding and the lasting implementation of reforms. We will support democratic civil society and independent local media. We want to enable a greater exchange between East and West and to drive forward judicial reforms. We want to keep the way clear for EU-associated countries of the Eastern Partnership to join the EU. The south needs a new Mediterranean policy which realises the shared development potential for the region while also facing up to the huge challenges: terrorism, authoritarian regimes, state disintegration. Together, we want to work within the framework of ambitious energy partnerships to turn the Mediterranean region into a positive energy region. Meanwhile, to our great regret, the United Kingdom has become the first country to leave the common home of the EU. It is good that the Trade and Cooperation Agreement has laid the foundation for a new beginning. However, further efforts are required to prevent European standards from being undermined. The Good Friday Agreement and the open border guarantee peace on the island of Ireland. This fragile peace must not be put at risk. We want to keep alive the exchange of students, researchers and vocational training between the EU and the UK after Brexit.

The USA

The transatlantic partnership remains a central pillar of Germany's foreign policy, but it must be renewed, applied at a European level, and oriented multilaterally and towards clear common values and democratic goals. At the heart of a renewed transatlantic EU agenda, we want to see a strong joint impetus for a global climate policy, based on the Paris climate goals. Particularly by establishing a strong climate partnership, the transatlantic partnership can be both an inspiration and a driver for a socio-ecological transformation that sets the highest standards around the world. We are also committed to ensuring a good cooperation with the USA in order to strengthen multilateralism, on issues of trade and health. We want to work together to ensure the worldwide protection of human rights, the development of international legal norms, global arms control and disarmament, a rule-based world order and the strengthening of a responsible trade policy. This includes an agreement over the way we deal with authoritarian states. The security policy focus of the USA will still not be directed first and foremost at Europe even with the new US government. The EU and its member states must take more responsibility for their own foreign and security policies. This applies in particular to the security of the Eastern neighbour states of the EU such as the Baltic States and Poland. We want to lead the transatlantic debate at many levels, including at federal and local level, as well as in civil society forums – and thereby establish lasting, diverse societal networks.

China

China is Europe's competitor, partner and systemic rival. We demand that China puts an end to its blatant violations of human rights, such as in Xinjiang and Tibet, and increasingly also in Hong Kong. There is also a need for constructive dialogue with China which looks for cooperation in areas where China is prepared to enter into constructive cooperation, and includes clear counter-strategies in areas where China systematically tries to weaken international standards. In particular on climate policy, we will strive for joint political, economic and technological efforts as well as adherence to sustainable production standards and a transparent roadmap for combating the climate crisis

in China, for example through a withdrawal from coal. Cooperation with China must not be pursued at the expense of third countries or human and civil rights. We will adhere to the “One-China policy” of the European Union and emphasise that unification with Taiwan must not be forced through against the will of the population of Taiwan. At the same time, we want to expand political exchange with Taiwan. We want to use our trade relationships with China to call for fair market access for foreign investment, legal certainty and a level playing field. We expect China to ratify the crucial core standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and end all forms of forced labour. The EU supply chain law must, in light of human rights violations - such as those in Xinjiang – deny access to the internal market for goods produced by forced labour, as well as making companies liable for their products. Germany should also campaign for a fact-finding mission to Xinjiang within the framework of the UN Human Rights Council and designate the oppression of the Uyghurs as international crimes. We cannot agree to the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, or CAI, in its current form. We will work towards closer European and transatlantic coordination with regard to China.

The Indo-Pacific

We are committed to a free and open Indo-Pacific region based on global norms and international law. We want comprehensive cooperation with the region, especially in the areas of the rule of law and democracy, strengthening multilateralism, and in the fields of digitalisation and climate protection. We view Australia, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and Taiwan as important partner countries and equally, we want to expand our strategic partnerships with India and ASEAN. Strengthening civil societies is an integral part of our Indo-Pacific strategy. We will develop an Indo-Pacific trade policy that stipulates sustainable bilateral trade relations with like-minded partners in a multilateral framework, is achieved in a democratic and transparent way, and supports global common interests such as climate protection, social standards and human rights. We will endeavour to engage in intensified dialogue on peace and security with partners in the Indo-Pacific region. Those people who are worst affected by rising sea levels deserve our increased, concrete support. Germany should

also become actively involved in developing a global EU connectivity strategy in order to bring about shared infrastructure development in line with high-quality international standards according to the needs of our partners.

Russland

Russia has been turning into an increasingly authoritarian state whose foreign policy threatens the democracy, stability and freedom of the EU and the shared neighbourhood increasingly aggressively by military and hybrid means. At the same time, the democracy movement is gaining ground in Russia. We want to support the brave civil society that is defying the increasingly harsh repression by the Kremlin and fighting for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and sexual self-determination, and to intensify cultural, political and academic exchanges with it. The EU has formulated clear conditions for a loosening of sanctions, which were imposed on Russia due to the annexation of Crimea in violation of international law and the military action in Ukraine. We will retain these and intensify the sanctions if necessary. We demand that the Russian government implements its commitments from the Minsk Agreement. The Nord Stream 2 pipeline project does not contribute to climate protection, runs directly counter to the energy and geostrategic interests of the European Union and endangers the stability of Ukraine and must therefore be stopped. It is also essential to enter into a constructive climate dialogue with Russia, whereby for individual steps it will be necessary to protect human rights.

Turkey

Turkey and the EU have far more in common than that which divides them: socially, culturally and economically. The relationship between Germany and Turkey, in particular, is close and multi-faceted, not least because of their shared migration history. We stand beside all those who are fighting for democracy, the rule of law, equality and human rights in Turkey. We condemn human rights and rule of law violations, call for the immediate release of all political prisoners and the return to a political dialogue and peace process on the Kurdish question.

We totally reject the aggressive foreign policy of the Turkish government and urge it to return to a multilateral foreign and security policy. This must also become a matter for discussion within NATO, not least with a view to the military offensive of Turkey in Northern Syria, which contravenes international law. We condemn the withdrawal of Turkey from the Istanbul Convention and urge them to reverse this decision. The resumption of talks on accession to the EU is our political goal. However, this can only happen if Turkey makes an about-turn back to democracy and the rule of law. Turkey has taken in more refugees – especially from Syria – than all the 27 EU member states put together. Yet the existing EU-Turkey deal undermines the international right to asylum. It has broken down and must be ended. We urge Turkey to implement the Geneva Convention on refugees in its entirety. Turkey is not a safe third country. A new German federal government must use the negotiations on a new agreement, initiated by the Commission, to learn from the mistakes of the past. The new agreement must comply with national and international law. Rather than combating forced migration, it should aim to improve people's prospects. It should therefore guarantee the necessary financial and logistical support on the ground, support Turkey in taking in refugees and introduce binding quota commitments for the resettlement of vulnerable refugees in the EU. In return, Turkey must guarantee that it will take good care of refugees and integrate them into society. Refugees should not become pawns. Such an agreement must be debated and decided in Parliament. People in Germany must not be exploited, kept under surveillance or threatened by the Turkish government and its supporters. Especially in these difficult times, we want to expand exchanges with human rights-oriented and democratic civil society in Turkey and youth exchange programmes.

The Middle East

Partnerships with the states and societies of the Middle East and the southern European neighbourhood are a key part of our foreign, climate and human rights policy. We are committed to multi-faceted forms of cooperation, such as through a strengthening of civil societies in their efforts for greater participation, collaboration in coping with the challenge of climate change, and the promotion of indepen-

dent and sustainable economic structures, especially for young people. Mediating an agreement between Iran and the Arab Gulf states is one of the tasks of European foreign policy, as are efforts to mediate in ongoing conflicts, such as those in Syria, Libya and Yemen, as well as preventing state disintegration, corruption, social upheavals and displacements in the entire region. The preservation and revival of the nuclear deal with Iran (JCPOA) can prevent a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Peace, security and humane living conditions for all people in the Middle East are a central focus of German foreign and security policy, also and especially with a view to lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The security of the State of Israel is part of Germany's *raison d'état*. The existence and security of Israel as a national home for the Jewish people with equal rights for all its citizens are non-negotiable. We are committed to the continuation of close German-Israeli relations. We condemn the ongoing threat to the State of Israel and its sovereignty in its neighbourhood and the terrorism against its population. We criticise both the escalation of violence and measures that contravene international law such as the annexation of occupied territories or the expansion of settlements, as they are contrary to the goal of a peaceful and political solution to the conflict and an ending of the occupation. Achieving peace and security requires a two-state settlement based on the 1967 borders with two sovereign, viable and democratic states for Israelis and for Palestinians. We will advocate for elections, a process of democratisation and the development of structures based on the rule of law in the Palestinian territories. To this end, Europe should coordinate closely with the new US government.

Neighbourhood and partnership with the African states

The African states have close regional and historic ties with Europe. We will adopt a differentiated approach to the African continent and its regions in all their diversity. European Africa policy must free itself from patriarchal attitudes, assume European responsibility and reconcile all relevant interests. Germany should take on a more active role in this respect within the EU. The cooperation between the EU and Africa should focus on climate protection, digitalisation, technology transfer, civil crisis prevention and the socio-ecological transforma-

tion as well as enabling fair and safe migration routes from Africa to Europe. We want to work more closely with the civil society and the cultural and academic sectors in Africa and increase the involvement of the diverse African diaspora in Europe. We reject the continuation of a unilateral policy, which is based to a large extent on hostility to refugees, unfair trade and agricultural policies and the exploitation of raw materials, and we will focus on developing a jointly developed EU-Africa strategy. We support the African Union and the regional organisations in the implementation of their Agenda 2063, the African Free Trade Zone and the regional development and peace agendas.

Latin America

We are committed to a well-balanced German and EU Latin America and Caribbean policy which promotes the socio-ecological transformation and protects human rights. Many states in Latin America have in the past relied on an economic model based on the exploitation of raw materials, which has caused harm to people, nature and the national economies. Furthermore, most Latin American states have been very badly hit by the coronavirus crisis. Latin America is home to vital civil societies and strong social movements. Social inequalities, corruption, entrenched power structures, patriarchal societal models and a way of doing business that destroys the natural foundations of life are increasingly being questioned and progressive alternatives put forward. At the same time, authoritarian styles of government are increasing in many countries and the exploitation of nature continues to expand. Indigenous, environmental, LGBTQ*, women's rights and human rights activists are under serious threat and require international awareness and support. The ecosystems of Latin America play a key role in the protection of global common goods such as the climate and biodiversity. Trade policies such as the Mercosur Treaty must be oriented towards binding guidelines for the protection of human rights, the climate and the environment. Ecological sustainability, democratic participation, peace and gender equality are the cornerstones of our cooperation with the states and civil societies of Latin America. The removal of many Latin American states as partner countries of German development cooperation is short-sighted and something we want to change.

We will defend human rights

Protecting human rights defenders

Human rights defenders are true heroes. All over the world, they are at the vanguard of the fight for compliance with human rights, often putting themselves and their families at risk in the process. They need our protection, our solidarity and active support – at all levels. Human rights officials should therefore be established as an additional point of contact at German diplomatic missions that are especially affected, and cross-departmental, systematic reporting on the human rights situation in the country should be introduced. We want to provide human rights defenders who cannot stay in their own country because they are in acute danger there with humanitarian visas quicker and more frequently than has been the case to date, and we intend to expand the newly established Elisabeth-Selbert-Initiative for their temporary admission. At an international level, we will advocate for the expansion of support opportunities for civil society initiatives and the financial strengthening of the relevant protective instruments and institutions, such as special rapporteurs. We will implement the latest declarations and recommendations at UN level on the protection of human rights defenders. Furthermore, we are also committed to the protection and targeted support of human rights defenders from EU member states.

Bringing war criminals to justice

Crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes must not remain unpunished – as a sign of justice to the victims, as a signal of deterrence and as a prerequisite for peace and reconciliation. German criminal law also offers the possibility of convictions here in Germany. To that end, we will expand the capacities of the Federal Criminal Police Office and the Public Prosecutor's Office. Investigations in cases of sexual violence must be improved and the Code of Criminal Procedure should be reformed wherever it does not take into account the particular features of international criminal proceedings. In addition, we are committed to ensuring the civil liability of companies for the most serious human rights violations. Internationally, we will

advocate for long-term financial support for civil society organisations and the networking of relevant players in this area as well as for the political and financial strengthening of the International Criminal Court and other institutions such as the United Nations mechanism for the investigation and prosecution of the most serious war crimes in Syria (IIIM). We will work towards ensuring that all states accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. In particular, children and young people who have experienced sexual and gender-based abuse, abductions or recruitment as child soldiers are left badly traumatised. If this trauma is not processed, it can affect the lives of these people and their families as well as the entire social cohesion over generations. We want to significantly expand individual trauma therapy by means of more qualified personnel and safe trauma centres locally, including with our international partners, and also in Germany.

No surveillance technology for dictators and autocrats

Encrypted communication saves lives every day. On social media, human rights violations that used to go undiscovered are now there for all to see. And without satellite images, it would not be possible to trace incidents such as the displacement of entire village communities in war zones. At the same time, it is often European surveillance tools that enable autocratic regimes to pursue undesirable activists. Biometric identification systems, such as facial recognition software, pose an additional threat particularly to human rights defenders, media professionals and persecuted minorities in authoritarian states. We will aim for a ban on the export, sale and transfer of surveillance instruments to repressive regimes. We want to anchor the corresponding protective clauses in German and European export regulations. We will promote the decriminalisation of encrypted communication, oppose any weakening of encryption technologies and standards and aim to strengthen the multi-stakeholder governance of the internet at international level. Within the framework of our international cooperation, we will advocate for free access for all to digital technology. It is important to promote and protect free access to information as a global public good. By supporting training, we will strengthen the secure digital networking of civil society organisations worldwide.

For the self-determination of women and girls worldwide

Gender equality is a human right. Without gender equality, it is not possible to combat poverty effectively. In many of the poorest countries and those troubled by conflict, women and girls are particularly affected by poverty, hunger and violence. We will stand up consistently for the rights of women and girls worldwide, for a life of self-determination, and we will use all diplomatic means to seek the full application of the Istanbul Convention. Education and health are key factors here. We will work towards securing the unrestricted access of women and girls to an equal education and protecting their sexual and reproductive rights. We will ensure that women and girls worldwide have unrestricted access to contraception. There is a need for innovative education services such as compact remedial basic education for women or vocational training in crisis and post-conflict contexts. Our international cooperation will therefore be aimed both financially and conceptually at this task, and we will embed into all projects the achievement of gender equality as an interdisciplinary task, as well as reproductive health and the right to education.

Implementing human rights conventions, strengthening institutions

In order to implement human rights in fact and in law, international human rights conventions must be ratified and consistently implemented, and human rights institutions strengthened. It is particularly important to complete the implementation of the ILO Convention on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to ratify Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights relating to anti-discrimination, the Optional Protocol to the UN Social Pact and the UN Migrant Workers Convention as well as the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants. This has been long overdue for Germany for many years. We want to support and actively drive forward the process for a UN treaty on business and human rights (the so-called Binding Treaty). Furthermore, we want to create a separate criminal offence of “enforced disappearance” in Germany to reduce the deficit in the implementation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. At European level, we

will advocate for the implementation of the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights. We will endorse the instrument of targeted EU sanctions against human rights violators. We want to create better structural provision for the Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Assistance and at least double the financial support of the National Agency for the Prevention of Torture and the German Institute for Human Rights, so that they can adequately fulfil their statutory duties. At international level, we will work to strengthen the UN special committees and special rapporteurs. Human rights and the promotion of democracy are the cornerstones of our developmental work.

Protecting the rights of minorities

The treatment of minorities is a yardstick for human rights protection in a society. We are committed to strengthening the rights of minorities at an international level – including within the EU. Individual states continue to implement minority protection into national law as stipulated by the United Nations, but there is no standard monitoring to check whether this is sufficiently comprehensive. This means that the protection is patchy. In terms of foreign policy, we will advocate the worldwide implementation of the Yogyakarta Principles on the protection of LGBTQ* rights. In development policy, we want to introduce a new focus here and significantly increase our commitment. Even within the EU there are major differences: there are no joint EU minimum standards and no uniform legal framework that provides protection and support for minorities. We want to change that. We will advocate for the adoption of the 5th anti-discrimination Directive, so that internationally recognised human rights are given a legal framework in the EU and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is legally implemented at European level. We will drive forward the EU Anti-racism Action Plan at national and international level.

We will protect refugees

Implementing a refugee policy in Europe based on human rights

We will advocate for a European Union that adheres to its humanitarian and legal obligation to guarantee access to the fundamental right of asylum and the need to carry out procedures fairly and swiftly in line with standards of international law. However hard that may currently be in the EU 27. Germany has a key role to play here. The new federal government must defend human rights and the right to asylum. Conditions such as those in the camps on the Greek islands, on the Mediterranean or on the border with Croatia represent a break with European values and human rights. The blockade of a joint and humane refugee policy between the member states is something we will counter with the following plan: refugees should be registered in registration centres located in EU states with external borders that are governed by constitutional and European law and jointly run by the European institutions. Here, an initial check would be carried out to see whether there were any corresponding entries in the security databases. We would then know who is coming to us, and would at the same time fulfil our humanitarian responsibilities. The people who come to Europe must receive medical and psychological first aid and accommodation that is in accordance with their human rights. Taking into consideration their personal situation, such as family ties or language skills, the EU Asylum Agency would choose the host member state to conduct the asylum process as quickly as possible. The rapid distribution mechanism on which the system is based will initially rely on the willingness of member states, regions and cities to voluntarily take in refugees. Those that do will receive assistance from an EU integration fund. If there are not enough host places, all member states will be obliged, according to their gross domestic product and size of population, to increase their offer or pay at least an equivalent contribution to the overall costs. The asylum process will then take place in the host member state. Early asylum checks at external borders are not compatible with this approach. The Commission will ensure that the joint rules and standards are adhered to and applied

to all people. We will lead the way with countries and regions that are willing to take action in order to end the current disastrous situation on our external borders. We reject camps that are unsuitable for human occupation and closed institutions, transit zones and external European camps in third countries.

Creating safe and legal escape routes

Nobody should have to risk their own life or those of their family for the right to seek asylum under international law. And yet that is today's bitter reality: there are still insufficient options of safe access routes and refugees are therefore forced to take dangerous routes through the desert or across the sea. We want to create safe and legal access routes – so that people find protection and to prevent people smugglers from profiting from the need and suffering of refugees. Here, we are bound by the special protection of the family in accordance with the Basic Law, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the European Convention on Human Rights and will advocate lifting the restrictions on family reunions. Families belong together and child welfare has top priority. People with a subsidiary protected status must therefore be able to bring their dependants in later without the existing restrictions and be put on a par with refugees in line with the Geneva Convention. We want to once again make it possible to bring in siblings later. German and European embassies need more staff and the possibility of filing applications digitally to shorten the waiting times for visas for family members. In cases where the procurement of proof of identity by people entitled to protection from official bodies in their country of origin will put family members still living there at risk, we will campaign for the pragmatic issuing of substitute ID papers. With a humanitarian visa, we want to give people in need of protection the possibility of coming safely to Europe and claiming asylum here. We will also advocate for the acceptance of local Afghan employees and their dependants, who are in danger as a result of their work with German institutions such as the Federal Armed Forces or the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ). This would not affect the individual right to asylum.

Secure access routes via a humanitarian host partnership

As part of the UNHCR resettlement programme, refugees who are recognised by the United Nations and are particularly in need of protection will be distributed among the host countries in solidarity and in an orderly manner, instead of leaving them to their fate on dangerous escape routes. This will save lives and remove the commercial basis for people smuggling, and follows a tried and tested, predictable process. In the Global Compact on Refugees, the world community reached an agreement to strengthen resettlement. However, the number of host places has actually been falling for years. We propose, together with the new US administration and Canada as well as others in a global humanitarian partnership, to significantly expand acceptance through the resettlement programme and in the medium term to meet at least the fair share of annual resettlement needs according to economic strength identified by the UNHCR. In this way, we will strengthen the United Nations, do justice to Europe's global responsibility in the long term, create predictability on all sides, set a good example and encourage other states to join the international alliance. In parallel, we will ensure that the planned EU resettlement is oriented towards the UNHCR criteria. Resettlement would not affect the individual right to asylum.

Enabling federal state admission programmes and a sponsorship scheme

Several federal states and over 200 local authorities in Germany are prepared to take in more refugees than have been promised by the federal government. The fact that these additional host places are urgently required is clear in light of the miserable conditions in the camps on the external borders of the EU, such as on the Greek islands or on the Bosnia-Croatia border. We want a humanitarian admission policy in which the federal government and the federal states work together and the willingness of local authorities and federal states to take in refugees is no longer ignored. Federal states, districts, cities and communities should be given a greater say in the humanitarian admission of refugees. By changing the rules of consent between the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the federal states from agreement

to consultation, we want to make it clear that in future, federal states will be able to decide freely and independently to accept refugees above and beyond the Königstein formula. Furthermore, the federal government should continue to fulfil its financial and infrastructural tasks and promote the willingness to take in refugees. European funds could also be used within the framework of the host states and regions. We will launch improved humanitarian federal admission schemes and allocations from EU states with external borders. A sponsorship scheme similar to that run by Canada could promote a welcoming culture. Groups of mentors or associations could use this scheme to pledge to supporting refugees and thus provide tangible help to people through relocation and resettlement opportunities.

Securing the rule of law and human rights at our external borders

A common space for freedom of movement with no internal borders requires controlled external borders. Yet borders are only controlled by the rule of law when human rights at these borders are protected and access to the right of asylum is safeguarded. The fact that each year, thousands of people drown in the Mediterranean because European governments do not offer them sufficient safe access routes and refuse to carry out rescues at sea is a disgrace. We will continue to fight for comprehensive civil sea rescue operations coordinated and financed by Europe. Since a joint approach by all European member states does not appear possible at present, we want to begin with those states that consider sea rescues as an obligation under international law and make their own contribution: those saved at sea must be taken to the nearest safe harbour where they are immediately allocated, via a distribution mechanism, to member states, regions or cities that are willing to accept them. We offer our staunch support for civil society rescue initiatives and call for an end to the criminalisation and official obstruction of their work. In this way, we want to make the registration of ships belonging to human rights monitoring groups and sea rescue organisations simpler and legally secure. We are in favour of a European border control that is based on the common protection of human rights and carries out its role without abusing them by preventing refugees from entering another country.

The right to asylum is based on case-by-case assessments, and under international and European law, the non-refoulement obligation applies at all times and in all places. The Geneva Refugee Convention applies without limitation. Its erosion does not lead to greater security or increase the European capacity to act in terms of refugee policy. However, we are currently witnessing a systematic breach of the law on the EU external borders: people are being mistreated, left unprotected on the water or refused access to the asylum process. Pushbacks by national border police or Frontex must incur legal and political penalties. Germany must not take part in any operations that contravene international law or human rights; any violations must be prosecuted and must have consequences. We will work to ensure that there is no longer any room for a lack of transparency or human rights violations in EU agencies such as Frontex. We will support European initiatives that aim to rectify the structural problems around human rights protection at border controls by means of structural changes. We want to expand state and civil society human rights monitoring, in particular by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. There is a need for tight parliamentary control of Frontex operations as well as systematic monitoring of human rights on the ground.

Supporting host and transit countries

The humanitarian care of refugees outside the European Union is part of our global responsibility. We want to expand the financial and logistical support of reception and transit countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Sudan, Pakistan and Uganda as well as the aid organisations working there. German and European cooperation with third countries must always be carried out in a way that complies fully with human and fundamental rights as well as international asylum standards. It must also not be targeted at preventing escape, as is currently the case with the so-called Libyan Coast Guard and the Erdogan government. We therefore reject the existing “migration partnerships”, which make preventing refugees from entering another country and repatriation a condition, for example, of development cooperation, and also any cooperation with the Libyan Coast Guard. For repatriations, instead of defining “safe countries of origin”, we need readmission agreements that comply with human rights. For those countries that can effectively guarantee safety

for repatriated citizens, we want instead to open up reliable prospects for an orderly migration by means of visa facilitation or training partnerships. However, readmission agreements must not be made into conditions in other political areas, such as development policy support or support for the rule of law, must not apply to third-country nationals or counteract immigration law.

Tackling the structural causes of forced migration

One thing is clear: we cannot influence all the causes of displacement. Many people are forced to migrate because they are being persecuted or deprived of their basic rights. It is therefore all the more crucial to take consistent action wherever our economic activity and consumption lead to exploitation or a lack of prospects elsewhere. In this way, we want to prevent people from being forced to migrate in the first place and having to leave their homes involuntarily. We will therefore put the structural causes of forced migration and displacement and our responsibility in this respect at the heart of our policies. After all, many of the political decisions that we make in Germany and Europe have a direct impact on living conditions in other parts of the world. We will therefore take a strong stand in favour of civil crisis prevention and want to use more restrictive export controls to put an end to European arms exports to dictators, regimes that disregard human rights and war zones. We will work towards a fair trade system that also serves the interests of the people in the Global South. And we will drive forward the socio-ecological transformation of our economy.

We will fight for a fair world economic order

Global crisis prevention

In many countries of the Global South, the coronavirus crisis is leading to capital flight and currency crises, revealing the weaknesses of the monetary regime. Our long-term goal is the establishment of a cooperative global monetary system. The IMF must be able to provide much more unconditional liquidity in crisis situations. To that end, we will advocate for a significant increase in the special drawing rights.

Germany and Europe could lead the way and place any unused special drawing rights at the disposal of the countries in the Global South, as Canada has already done. The IMF should also help countries in the Global South with the introduction and implementation of capital controls, working in cooperation with states with global financial centres. Voting power must be shifted in favour of countries in the Global South. The EU states should combine their voting rights.

Enabling development, resolving debt crises

Many countries in the Global South find themselves in a debt crisis. The current moratorium on debt service is correct, but simply kicks the problem down the road. We need solid debt restructuring and debt cancellations to give these countries the space for sustainable development. To provide for future crises of over-indebtedness, we will work towards a transparent and independent debt restructuring process for countries, based at the United Nations. Private creditors must be legally obliged to take part in such a process, so that debt relief can no longer be blocked and mechanisms such as distressed securities funds can no longer profit at the expense of others. Until an international solution is feasible, Germany and other governments must make the first move with coordinated legislation. The aim of this is to make it possible for heavily indebted countries in the Global South to have the breathing space to develop the necessary socio-ecological transformation processes, such as improving their healthcare, education and social systems.

Banning speculation on foodstuffs

Food prices are often subject to major fluctuations. This is not only a result of weather and harvests, but also unscrupulous speculators, who put the maximisation of profit ahead of food security. Other vital resources, such as water, are increasingly becoming speculative commodities. We will call for stricter regulations in the EU to prevent excessive food speculation. This will require strict reporting obligations for traders and strict price and position limits on all European commodity exchanges. In this way, we will counter uncontrolled speculation that distorts the market, without endangering the hedging mechanisms on the futures markets that are so important for the agricultural sector.

We will stand up for peace and security

Looking ahead to a peaceful future

Our foreign and security policy is aimed at preventing conflicts and is therefore based on looking forward in line with the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development. Germany should be a driving force in the political de-escalation of conflicts and civil conflict resolution at a global level. We will add human security to the traditional concept of security and thus put the spotlight back on the needs of people. The European External Action Service and the Common Foreign and Security Policy must be strengthened, including the role of the High Representative. To the principles of “preventing crises, resolving conflicts, building peace” we want to add a development plan with civilian aims and make the External Action Service fit for its current responsibilities. The human and financial resources for civilian crisis prevention should be increased in a targeted manner and made more predictable in the long term through a reform of the funding legislation. We want to establish a permanent reserve of EU mediators and experts in conflict prevention, peace consolidation and mediation, which can be deployed at speed. We want more interdepartmental analysis, early crisis detection and project planning, a closer agreement with international partners and an appropriately equipped fund for “crisis prevention, crisis resolution and peace-building”. We want to offer greater support to local civil society concepts and players in the area of peace-building. We want to further develop the Civil Peace Service and expand it as required, and to strengthen the Center for International Peace Operations as well as peace and conflict research. We want to increase the endowment funds for the German Foundation for Peace Research, and provide greater support for the newly established specialist department at the German Police University and other academic institutions, in particular in terms of human resources and more permanent positions. We also want to inform the population about the successes and opportunities for civilian crisis prevention and conflict resolution through increased and more targeted publicity.

Making international policy feminist

We will make our foreign, development, trade and security policy feminist. Women, girls and marginalised groups such as LGBTQ* people are far more likely to be adversely affected by wars, conflicts and poverty. Safeguarding their rights and their role as shapers of international policy promotes peace, development, stability and security. It is about strengthening and protecting the diverse perspectives of women, girls and marginalised groups and always involving them at least on an equal basis in all bilateral or multilateral negotiations. This also requires regular gender analyses for individual country contexts and close cooperation with feminist players in Germany and in our partner countries. We want to provide the necessary long-term financial and political support and strengthen needs-based strategies, gender budgeting and improved ministerial and departmental coordination. It is important to drive forward implementation of Agenda 1325 on “Women, Peace and Security” within Germany and at an international level, to make a determined effort to curb sexual and gender-based violence, to protect the reproductive rights of women, and to focus on the safety and participation of women and girls in the prevention of conflicts, the transformation of conflicts and in stabilisation processes. We want to counteract gender images that have a negative effect on peace, security and development. To that end, we want to work with civil society and the academic community to devise mandatory guidelines for a feminist foreign policy for the federal government.

Reappraising colonial injustice and decolonising international relationships

Our international policy is aimed at self-critical and equal cooperation. We can neither undo nor fully make up for the injustice suffered by people in the former colonies of the German Empire. It is therefore all the more important for us to acknowledge past injustices such as the Herero and Nama genocide, to ask for forgiveness for these and other crimes such as those committed in the Maji Maji uprising, and to take full responsibility for these in word and deed. However, the crimes of the colonial era mean that we have a special responsibility for our international actions today. We want to dismantle, piece by piece, struc-

tural injustices such as discriminatory clauses in trade agreements, the unjust distribution of wealth and the lack of representation in the UN Security Council. Our nature and environmental protection must also be post-colonial in nature. This means strengthening and respecting the human and land rights of indigenous and local communities. The local civil society, people in the diaspora and descendants of the victims of colonial crimes are partners in this endeavour. Together with them, we want to strengthen the reappraisal processes and, along with our European partners, ensure that there is a comprehensive reappraisal of colonial crimes.

Strengthening foreign cultural and education policy

Against the background of increasing authoritarianism and worldwide attacks on artistic and academic freedom, we want to intensify the cooperation with UNESCO and the Council of Europe and reinforce our foreign cultural, education and academic policy. This ensures access to civil society, especially in times of crisis, strengthens democratic exchanges and builds new partnerships. We will provide additional support for civil society organisation *Eine-Welt-Engagement* and educational work around development policy. We also want to strengthen the reappraisal of the crimes of National Socialism through international cultural and youth encounters and through civil society exchanges. It is our goal for all young people to have the opportunity, as part of their school, training or further education, to experience some form of European or international exchange. We want to reappraise the responsibility for Germany's colonial past through initiatives such as joint History Book Commissions with former colonised countries. Cultural intermediary organisations, such as the Goethe-Institut, and German schools abroad should be better resourced and made digitally fit. We also want to reinforce the programme for persecuted artists and academics as well as measures against disinformation campaigns.

Strengthening the Council of Europe and the OSCE

Peace in Europe means more than peace, security and stability in the EU. For the vision of a peaceful future for all Europeans to become a

reality, we want to strengthen and develop the joint European institutions that reach beyond the EU, such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE, thus enabling the involvement of all European states. This is the only way in which we can actually create a strong and effective system of collective security throughout Europe. Our goal remains to win over the Eastern neighbouring states of the European Union to this point of view on the basis of shared values and to support local democratic civil societies there, which is especially necessary in light of the nationalist and retrograde policy of Russia which is undermining Europe's security and the self-determination of Russia's neighbouring countries. The OSCE as a forum for dialogue with a fair balance of interests needs more financial and human resources as well as a more active involvement on the part of the federal government and participating Parliamentarians. As a protagonist for arms limitation, disarmament and the joint fight against the climate crisis, it needs to be strengthened and provided with more support in its efforts to implement the Minsk Agreement. The ongoing attempts of authoritarian states to dominate the OSCE agenda in line with their own interests can only be countered by working together with other liberal democracies in the OSCE towards a values-led policy based on international law.

New impetus for disarmament

Disarmament and arms control mean greater security for everyone around the globe. In light of the growing military risks in Europe, a revival of conventional arms control is essential. The first steps should be further de-escalation measures in conflict zones and the resumption of the security dialogue and military contact between NATO and Russia. Beyond Europe, too, we want to get all countries involved, including and especially China. Our aspiration is still nothing less than a world free of nuclear weapons. Following the termination of the treaty on intermediate-range nuclear systems (INF Treaty) between the USA and Russia, a new treaty initiative is required. We reject the stationing of new intermediate-range missiles on the continent of Europe. We want to use the new transatlantic relationship following the US presidential election and the revival of the New START Treaty to enter into talks with the USA about Barack Obama's "Global Zero".

We want a Germany free from nuclear weapons and the accession of Germany to the UN Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty. A world without nuclear weapons can only be achieved via interim steps. As a first step, Germany should take part in the Conference of the Parties as an observer. Furthermore, we want to use the forthcoming legislative period to initiate the following processes: an international initiative for the reduction of the number of nuclear weapons, a NATO renunciation of any first strike and a broad public debate about the outdated deterrence doctrines of the Cold War. We know that this requires – given the Russian conventional and nuclear armament programme – numerous discussions in the alliance, including with our European partners, and above all the strengthening of the security and reassurance of our Polish and Baltic allies.

No German weapons in war zones or dictatorships

Exports of arms and military equipment to dictatorships, regimes that do not respect human rights and war zones must be banned. For the reduction of European arms exports, we want to see joint restrictive arms export control by the EU with strict, enforceable regulations and potential sanctions. Cooperations with the security sector of other states must be tied to their adherence to criteria relating to democracy, the rule of law and human rights. For Germany, we will present an arms export control law, introduce the right to take collective legal action in the event of violations against the new law, and ensure an effective end-use control. There should be no Hermes guarantees for arms exports. We want to strictly regulate the deployment of security firms in international conflicts and ban private military companies.

Outlawing lethal autonomous weapons systems internationally

Lethal autonomous weapons systems that are no longer effectively controlled by people in the choice and engagement of targets represent an incalculable threat. For the sake of peace and stability, we want internationally binding regulations on autonomy in weapons systems and the internationally binding outlawing and prohibition of applications that violate ethical and international law principles. This also applies to digital weapons such as attack and espionage soft-

ware. Germany and the EU must take on a global leadership role here. In order to prevent the militarisation of space, we want to introduce advanced, internationally binding rules.

Creating security in cyberspace and the information space

Lethal autonomous weapons systems that are no longer effectively controlled by people in the choice and engagement of targets represent an incalculable threat. For the sake of peace and stability, we want internationally binding regulations on autonomy in weapons systems and the internationally binding outlawing and prohibition of applications that violate ethical and international law principles. This also applies to digital weapons such as attack and espionage software. Germany and the EU must take on a global leadership role here. In order to prevent the militarisation of space, we want to introduce advanced, internationally binding rules. Creating security in cyberspace and the information space Digitalisation and new technologies offer many new opportunities, but also create risks for open, democratic societies and throw up difficult ethical, political and legal questions in certain areas. They change the opportunities for the exertion of state and non-state influence on individual freedoms and social discourse, democratic voting processes and modern warfare. The state is obliged to provide effective protection for its population from such attacks. For early recognition, analysis and a joint approach by public bodies, we need interdepartmental strategies for fighting hybrid threats, clear legal guidelines and strong parliamentary control over the actions of the Federal Armed Forces in cyberspace. The Federal Armed Forces need a specific remit in the digital arena that is focused on protection and defence. At the same times, all state institutions must constantly strengthen their resilience. Operators of critical infrastructure require particular support here. We will advocate for new international agreements to strengthen arms control of digital goods and international law. The validity of the UN Charter must be extended and international humanitarian law must also be applied in cyberspace. For that to happen, it is also necessary to expand European cooperation, with Germany playing a corresponding role.

Observing the international responsibility to protect

It is important to intervene early in disputes and prevent them escalating into armed conflicts. We are guided by the concept of the “Responsibility to Prepare, Protect and Rebuild” of the United Nations, which obliges the community of nations to protect people from the worst human rights violations and crimes against humanity, as well as genocide. Equally, the nations are obliged to expand their instruments for prevention, crisis response and the subsequent care or rebuilding of war-torn societies. We support international missions within the framework of the United Nations that contribute to stability, the protection of the civilian population and the implementation of peace processes. We will endeavour to fill gaps in resources and capabilities in this area and significantly increase the civilian and military contribution to UN operations. We want to considerably increase the proportion of women among deployed personnel, police and soldiers, especially in leadership positions, by means of targeted recruitment. The use of military force as a last resort when all other possibilities such as sanctions or embargoes have been exhausted, may be necessary in some situations to prevent genocide and create the opportunity for the political solution to a conflict. Any deployment needs a clear and attainable mission, balanced civilian and military capabilities and independent (interim) evaluations. Armed operations by the Federal Armed Forces overseas need to be embedded in a system of mutual collective security – in other words, not in unconstitutional coalitions of the willing – and in an overall political concept, based on the Basic Law and international law. Interventions in the sovereignty of a state or in places where there is no state sovereignty require a mandate from the United Nations. If the power of veto in the Security Council is abused to cover up the most serious crimes against humanity, the world community will face a dilemma because non-action can violate human rights and international law as much as action.

Modern Federal Armed Forces

The mission and role of the Federal Armed Forces must be oriented towards the real and strategically important challenges of security and peacekeeping, and form part of a general government approach. Germany should be able to rely on its allies and equally, those allies should be able to rely on Germany. This includes ensuring that the Federal Armed Forces are reliably and predictably equipped with the human and material resources necessary for their mission and role and that they are optimally organised. It is no longer acceptable that soldiers are deployed with adequate protective equipment. Alongside ensuring adequate and optimal equipment at all times, we want to ensure that soldiers receive comprehensive care and support after missions and expand the range of services for those injured in action. The Federal Armed Forces should reflect the variety and diversity of our society in its personnel structure. Hateful ideologies and right-wing extremist behaviour are completely incompatible with the mission of the Federal Armed Forces and the duties of its soldiers. We will therefore monitor and investigate this rigorously and break up any such structures. In addition to comprehensive investigation, effective prevention is crucial through a practised and well-developed internal leadership, responsible personnel recruitment and up-to-date mandatory political education. We reject the recruitment of minors and the armed deployment of the Federal Armed Forces within our borders and we want to put an end to voluntary military service in homeland security and put political education in schools on an equal footing by strengthening civilian crisis prevention and conflict handling. Armed drones have been and continue to be frequently used, including by our allies, for extra-judicial killings and other acts that violate international law. Any such deployment is unthinkable for us and is incompatible with German constitutional and military law. At the same time, we recognise that these systems can provide better protection for soldiers in certain situations. It is therefore necessary to clarify which scenarios involving the deployment of the Federal Armed Forces should include the use of armed drones before any decision can be made regarding their procurement. Technical challenges such as the possible threat of hacking must also play an important role when weighing up the decisions.

Strategic reorientation of NATO

NATO is suffering from diverging security policy interests within the alliance right up to interstate conflicts. In this deep crisis it lacks a clear strategic perspective. Nevertheless, from a European perspective, it remains, alongside the EU, an indispensable player that can guarantee the joint security of Europe and, as an alliance of states, it discourages any renationalisation of security policy. We will advocate, within the framework of the ongoing strategy process, for a reorientation of NATO and, based on this, a debate about a fair distribution of the burden and a balanced participation of member states so that we can work together to develop strategic interests based on European values such as multilateralism, democracy and the rule of law, and represent those interests in a more cohesive and convincing way. The NATO target of 2 percent is not aimed at capacities and empowerment and thus does not provide an adequate response. We therefore reject this target. We advocate setting a new target that is not abstract, national and static, but instead is based on our shared tasks, and we will look for dialogue on this with our NATO partners. It also includes stronger military cooperation and coordination within the EU and with European NATO partners such as the UK and Norway.

Shaping Europe's security together

Together with its international partners, the European Union must fulfil its responsibility for its own security and defence. The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) requires a joint EU foreign policy. We want to establish an EU security union under strong parliamentary control and a joint restrictive arms export policy with strict rules and the possibility of enforceable sanctions. Instead of funnelling more and more money into parallel national military structures, we want to expand the reinforced cooperation of armed forces in the EU, combine military capabilities, achieve more efficient procurement and work together to close generally recognised capability shortfalls by consolidating the European arms sector. This will require suitable equipment, the expansion of EU units and a strengthening and consolidation of the joint EU command structure and European initiatives such as the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). Joint EU

overseas missions should be better supported and controlled by the European Parliament. We reject the reallocation of money from the EU budget previously earmarked exclusively for civilian purposes for military purposes.

Governing eye to eye with the future

Dear Voters,

In this manifesto, we have described to you the direction we want to embark on with a new set of policies and the projects that we believe will lead us to a better future. If we want to enable the best in times of upheaval and epochal tasks, not only does the content of policies have to change, but also the way we make policies, how a government leads the country.

In democratic societies, leadership is based on the strength of conviction. Yes, it is possible to resolutely push through policies with political majorities and see, after four years, whether you agreed with the political decisions or not. However, this simple principle of winning and losing every four years has proved to be too weak on its own to manage the current social challenges. Democratic societies can do more by networking, learning from each other and joining forces. We can only deal with the major challenges of our times together. The end of the present political era can at the same time be the beginning of a new political self-image and togetherness.

As politicians, we are committed to the public good and are mandated to serve you, the people of this country. We need lively, controversial debate and the willingness to scrutinise situations and concepts and to learn, otherwise things will not progress. Those who make allegations or consciously provoke misunderstandings stifle debate. But we want to facilitate it.

We know that you too are having just as serious thoughts about our future as a society as we are. And that is why we say: yes, our plans are ambitious, not least the task for humanity of protecting the climate, because any less would not meet the challenges. And no, we cannot promise that every single project will be carried out exactly as we have outlined. We cannot promise that no one will be burdened by climate protection. We cannot predict how much room for manoeuvre

the state will have after the pandemic. No one knows all the conditions of the future. However, now you are familiar with all our proposals and goals, our views and our stance. Our promise to you: we have been preparing for many years and we will do everything we can to achieve as much as we possibly can. Because governing is not an end in itself. Our aspiration is no less than a renewal of the country.

The major transformation tasks, the cohesion of our society require more than ever the will to cooperate, to unite, to reach a compromise that is more than the sum of its parts. The major tasks of our times will not succeed if a government thinks it can do it all alone. It can only succeed if many people feel responsible, if as many as possible see themselves as part of the team. We want to take on responsibility, but we know that we will need your support. We ask you to please contribute and get involved, and we invite you to move forward with us. With our combined efforts, we can achieve a great deal together.

For this, we want to re-establish the relationship of government, parliament and citizens: strong parliaments and members of parliament, new forms of participation, for instance via citizen councils, early involvement of citizens in planning processes, transparent involvement of the democratic civil society and scientific facts. Governing does not mean knowing it all and opposition does mean being against everything on principle. Often the people directly affected by a law are the first to recognise its unintended effects. We want to listen and involve people to enable our politics to be better.

This also includes a new style of cooperation within government. As a party we have successfully adopted and put team spirit and cooperation to the test in recent years. We now want to bring in this idea - starting with the idea that full equality for women is self-evident. We want to lead a coalition that tries 'to make the best out of differences, instead of settling for the lowest common denominator. That recognises that a coalition partner brings value to the table and may also be right. A coalition that includes those who are not sitting on the coalition committee. Not everyone feels that they are represented by us; we know that. That is why it is all the more important to also approach those who do not or will not vote for us.

The coronavirus crisis has shown how much our state does - and where it is lacking. Inequality has grown, but a strong social safety net has up to now prevented the coronavirus pandemic from developing

into a far-reaching social crisis. Doctors, nurses and hospitals have accomplished enormous things. But the pandemic has also shown where our state reaches its limits. Fax machines, busy helplines, public authorities running around and plans that seemingly take an eternity to get implemented due to a lack of staff warn us that something has to change.

We also have proposals for you in our manifesto that address this issue. We want to modernise our administration, make it more creative, more digital and more innovative and equip it better. We want to encourage experimentation and develop a positive error culture. Our state should become more colourful and more feminist. We want to create scope for urgently required future investments, maximise the potential of renewables and harness the state's buying power for innovation and sustainability.

Because socio-ecological transformation and digitalisation, the modernisation of the state and the civil service can only succeed as a collaborative project, we want to get a convention off the ground to extensively readjust the interplay of the federal government, states and local authorities, based on the lessons learnt from the pandemic. We are planning on setting up new authorities and administrative structures because we want a strong, efficient state that is suited to its tasks. This also includes checking what is no longer needed, what can be shut down, what needs to be improved.

We want to tackle this after the election, together with you and the other democratic parties, without blinkers and dogmatism. Going back to the old arguments about more or less state, more or less regulation, more or less federalism is not suitable for the task. It is crucial to be bolder for the major tasks of the coming decade. And to do more.

Now it's up to you. In elections, a society decides who it wants to be. Elections are a moment of freedom. Use it – for freedom.



Election campaign 2021

Inform yourself and join us: [gruene.de](https://www.gruene.de)