

A new, or rather reformed governance awaits Germany as polls on Monday hint towards the Green Party leading the national elections of September 26. This comes as a tide of change after Christian Democratic Union's 16 years of rule by Chancellor Angela Merkel. The poll published by Pollytix Strategic Research puts the Greens at the top by seven points for the first time in years.

The German Greens are also bracing themselves for their first ever woman Chancellor candidate, Annalena Baerbock. The 40 years old Baerbock embodies modernity and renewal, that 'challenges the status quo' as she quoted at a press conference. The party has been gaining momentum for months, following the weakening of Christian Democratic Union(CDU) along with its partner Social Democratic Party (SDP). After protesting against ineffective handling of the COVID crisis by imposing sudden lockdowns and judging the flailing industrial economy of Germany in an era of automation, the citizens are now looking to reaffirm the state of affairs through Green leadership. The results also reflect the fact that it is for the first time in 16 years that Merkel is stepping down, a symbol of stability for the Germans.



German Chancellor Angela Merkel speaks during a session of the lower house of parliament

Bundestag in Berlin, Germany, April 16, 2021. REUTERS/Michele Tantussi

The country is known for its conservative stance with its citizens averse to change for years. This resistance has preempted any other party from seeking power ever since the CDU's win in the 2005 elections. The Greens at the time were only able to secure single digit seats at the Cabinet Table. They have come a long way in their rise to popularity from the cold war days to the current surge. The Greens have been known through decades for rocking the boat with their provocative stance on foreign affairs. Even now, Baerbock plans on taking on authoritative powers like China and Russia as one of the leading voices for human rights. This is in stark contrast to the current, centre-rightist Christian Democrats and SDPs who have been putting relations with China and Russia at priority, despite apparent human rights violations. Baerbock is also reported to have not shied from the use of force or 'taking a hardline stance against these revisionist powers'. The New York Times lauded the party as a 'pragmatic party promising an assertive stance abroad'. Tracing to its pacifist roots, the Greens could potentially reform the current foreign policy altogether.



German Chancellor Angela Merkel during her election campaigning. Image source: Wall Street Journal.

The rise of the Greens can also be attributed to the exhaustion of CDU in coming up with new ideas along with the population now looking towards a more progressive form of governance. The Green Party with their environmental protection front and youthful image provides just this reassurance along with riding the climate movements as their foundation for support. The Party also promises to revise Germany's 'debt-brake' that prohibits the government from taking on too much new debt. The party has pledged to spend \$600 billions for the 'socioecological transformation' through availing new and cheap loans. With the forecasted loss of jobs due to rise in electromobility, the party has assured job creation through energy and digital transitions adding a green, sustainable angle to it. Increased international involvement of the EU is also predicted along with a fiscal push to Europe's economy.

Experts have expressed the need for stable political intentions from the public for another couple of weeks for these indicators to prove reliable. We are yet to see whether the poll predictions stand to be true in September. But the pace at which the Greens are growing, at least a coalition with CDU seems inevitable. Stefan Merz, the director of pollster Infratest Dimap reported to the Guardian saying, "But after years of very little movement in the hierarchy of Germany's political parties, there is now a sense that the deck is being reshuffled and we could be on the threshold of a historic moment."

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