



The good European? Why Germany's policy ambitions must match its power

by Sophia Besch and Christian Odendahl

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It's time Germany shed its 'small nation' attitude and step up to develop a new national and European policy agenda more befitting of its economic stature. That's the central message of a new policy brief '[The good European? Why Germany's policy ambitions must match its power](#)' by the Centre for European Reform which sets out a series of recommendations for Germany's new government. Faced with challenges, ranging from Brexit to President Donald Trump, the CER recommends Germany take a fresh approach to economic, trade, foreign and defence policy, including:

- ★ Developing a more strategic European approach to international trade by using Germany's economic strength to push for improved social rights, market reforms, environmental protections, and political standards.
- ★ Working with France to strengthen the eurozone by making progress on developing banking and capital markets unions, and promoting counter-cyclical fiscal policies.
- ★ Taking a leadership role in developing a long-term strategy to manage migration into the EU, including working with Turkey and Libya to control flows and supporting source countries with a variety of tools including investment, development aid, and trade access to the EU.
- ★ Boosting defence spending and modernising Germany's armed forces, and forging a more muscular approach to security policy.
- ★ Rethinking the working relationships with Germany's main strategic partners: Washington, London, Warsaw and Paris.

"Germany likes to think of itself as the good European. But with power comes responsibility: Germany's domestic economic policy has consequences for its neighbours, and Berlin can no longer continue to outsource security policy to the United States. If Europe is to meet its many challenges, the next German government needs to start thinking more strategically about economic, trade, migration and defence policy," said CER research fellow Sophia Besch, who co-authored the paper with CER chief economist Christian Odendahl.

Note for editors:

For further information on the policy brief and to request an interview with Sophia Besch, please contact Nick Winning in the CER press office on pressoffice@cer.eu or + 44 (0) 20 7233 1199. Follow the authors on twitter on [@SophiaBesch](#) and [@COdendahl](#). (NB: Christian Odendahl is on paternity leave until September 2018).