

A close-up portrait of Sahra Wagenknecht, a woman with dark hair pulled back, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a black patterned top and large, teardrop-shaped earrings. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

Bündnis
**Sahra
Wagenknecht**

Second vote
X BSW

**Our country
deserves more!**

Election programme for the
2025 Bundestag election

"Our country deserves more" The BSW's election programme for the 2025 Bundestag election

Preamble

Germany is no longer what it was just a few decades ago: a modern industrial country that was valued abroad for its medium-sized world market leaders and its highly trained specialists, its good public infrastructure and health care, its efficient administrations, low crime rate and high degree of social cohesion.

Many people in Germany today live with fears of decline and existential worries. They are concerned about the decline in our industry, the shortage of teachers, doctors and nurses, the lack of security in old age, the loss of control over migration and the growing danger of war. The high prices and rising rents call into question their modest prosperity. Many feel insecure in their own country today.

The parties to the failed traffic light bear special responsibility for the situation that has arisen. But already in 16 years of CDU chancellorship, the course was set towards decline. Our country is at a turning point: the next legislative period will decide whether Germany will continue to belong to the league of leading industrial nations in the future or whether it will be irrevocably relegated because it will lose important industries and thus the basis of its prosperity.

At the same time, everything must be done to ensure that Germany is not dragged into war. Today's world is characterized by tensions, conflicts and more and more wars, in which nuclear powers are also involved. Germany is

now one of the largest arms exporters to war zones and is thus jointly responsible for suffering and death. In this country, too, more and more resources are flowing into rearmament and we should be accustomed to the idea that war will come to us at some point. We want to stop this madness! Our country cannot become "fit for war" because we would not survive a major European war in the nuclear age. The BSW is the only peace party in the German Bundestag that rejects the current rearmament just as consistently as it rejects arms deliveries to war zones. Instead of a new arms race, we need serious efforts to resolve conflicts diplomatically and new treaties on arms control and common security.

The BSW is presenting an election programme for a new political beginning in 2025: for a Germany in which the citizens feel comfortable and safe again, in which schools provide education for life and where every sick person finds a good doctor, in which the hard-working are rewarded and not the heirs, a country in which effort makes advancement possible again and politics makes life easier and not more difficult for people.

We want to stop the threat of deindustrialisation by lowering energy prices through a sensible energy policy, promoting innovation in a technology-neutral way, modernising our ailing infrastructure by reforming the debt brake and relieving SMEs of bureaucratic requirements. The crises of recent years have weighed on the working

middle, while the fortunes of the upper ten thousand have continued to grow. Wealth inequality in Germany is as great as it was in the days when Germany was still ruled by an emperor. A society in which the most powerful are driven only by the motivation to make more money out of money loses its social cohesion.

We want to raise the minimum wage to 15 euros, strengthen collective bargaining coverage, a citizens' insurance scheme instead of today's two-class medicine, and a pension system based on the Austrian model, where an average pensioner receives a good 800 euros more per month. In addition, we want to exempt pensions up to 2000 euros from tax.

We need a well-thought-out climate and environmental policy that takes climate change seriously, but does not get bogged down in haphazard activism and burns many billions of euros of taxpayers' money in the process. Relying solely on electricity-intensive technologies such as electric cars and heat pumps, without a concept of where the electricity for them should come from, especially in winter, does not lead to a climate-neutral economy, but to a blackout. Not to mention the question of how people without large wallets are supposed to pay for all this.

We demand the withdrawal of the ban on internal combustion engines and the heating law.

Our goal is safe streets and squares, through more police officers and a stop to irregular migration. We want to work through the injustices of the Corona period, compensate for vaccination consequences and refund fines levied due to the Corona rules. We want to strengthen direct democracy, defend diversity of opinion and protect personal freedom.

On February 23, it will
be a matter of deciding
on the direction of the
company

In a world full of conflict and instability, Germany must focus on its interests and its strengths. We don't need billionaires to govern through as in America, nor politicians who exacerbate the crisis with the failed recipes of recent years. The German model of success must be a social market economy, with a strong middle class, strong trade unions and workers' rights, social cohesion, justice instead of greed, opportunities for advancement and prosperity for all who make an effort, and the common good before commerce, where existential matters are at stake: in health, care, housing or education.

German democracy relies on competition between parties, but the Basic Law does not require that only those who have previously worked their way up in a party are eligible as government personnel. The situation is serious, so it is time for a cabinet of experts who are really concerned with the well-being of our country and not with their subsequent use in the economy, and who can restore the lost trust in the state and democracy.

1. Peace

We live in a time of upheaval, which is associated with increasing tensions and conflicts, which increasingly lead to war and violence. The era of the West's global hegemony is over, the Ukraine war and the Western reaction to it have accelerated its end. The United States, as a declining superpower, is fighting for its influence in the world, mostly without regard for its allies. The European Union currently seems incapable of representing European interests. Russia is defending itself against Western military installations in its periphery. As an emerging economic power, China is struggling for global influence and is leading the increasingly self-confident BRICS alliance, which more and more countries are joining. Today, more than a third of global industrial production comes from China.

The struggle for zones of influence, for raw materials and sales markets is being waged by all sides by economic, secret service, but increasingly also by military means. It is still mainly proxy wars that are the subject of the conflict. But the danger of a direct military confrontation between nuclear powers is perhaps greater than ever before in the history of mankind.

A new arms race has begun after almost all treaties on arms control and confidence-building measures have expired or have been terminated. Armament devours more and more resources and increases the danger of war instead of reducing it. This also applies to the risk of a catastrophe triggered by a misunderstanding or a computer error. We want to stop this dangerous development.

Détente and shared security

The logic of wars and armed violence determines international relations. German foreign policy has also been speaking the language of war for several years. It seems to see its task as supporting military conflicts through arms deliveries, economic sanctions and the dissemination of enemy stereotypes. Diplomacy has become a foreign concept in the German Foreign Ministry.

We are the only consistent peace party in the German Bundestag with the aim of once again putting German foreign policy at the service of a policy of détente, reconciliation of interests and international cooperation in the tradition of Willy Brandt. The BSW sees itself as part of the German and international peace movement.

We want Germany to live up to its historical responsibility from two world wars. Peace must emanate from German soil.

That is why we are committed to a foreign policy that takes everyone's security interests seriously, rejects military force and seeks to resolve conflicts in accordance with the UN Charter not by weapons but by negotiation, based on mutual respect.

We fundamentally reject the resolution of conflicts by military means.

We oppose the fact that more and more resources are flowing into weapons and military equipment instead of into the education of our children, the research of environmentally friendly technologies or our health and care facilities. Nuclear armament and escalating conflicts between the nuclear powers put the survival of humanity at risk and must be ended.

A military alliance whose leading power has invaded five countries in violation of international law over the past three decades and killed at least 1 million people in these wars fuels feelings of threat and defensive reactions and is partly responsible for growing tensions and conflicts.

Instead of an instrument of power for geopolitical goals, we need a defensively oriented defence alliance that respects the principles of the UN Charter, strives for disarmament instead of committing to rearmament, and in which members meet on an equal footing.

Europe needs a stable security architecture that should include Russia in the longer term.

We are the only party in the Bundestag to advocate disarmament and comprehensive arms controls and call for a ban on arms exports to war zones.

In the armaments industry, too, we are striving for a long-term restructuring of economic structures. The security of the population must not be subjected to profit interests. Therefore, we demand that profits of arms companies should not be distributed to shareholders.

We support the UN's proposed blanket ban on all nuclear weapons and strive for a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

We are committed to ensuring that Germany plays a mediating role in a multipolar world. We are committed to strengthening the United Nations and giving the countries of the Global South greater say.

Capable of peace instead of warlike

In the nuclear age, you can't become fit for war. We see with great concern how attempts are being made to get people in Germany

used to the idea that war will come back to us at some point and that we could prepare for it. At the moment, this refers above all to a possible war with Russia. However, Russia is far inferior to NATO and even the European NATO states in all conventional arms, as a recent study by Greenpeace has once again demonstrated in detail. A military conflict with Russia would therefore inevitably escalate nuclearly. However, more tanks and fighter jets will not help against nuclear weapons, nor will bunkers or the training of companies on how to support the troops moving to the Eastern Front in the event of war.

A nuclear conflict would make large parts of Europe and especially Germany uninhabitable. This must be prevented at all costs. That is why we are campaigning for Germany to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The nuclear weapons stationed in Germany must be withdrawn. In the long term, we also want to ensure that our international partners also join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Our country deserves a policy that focuses on the well-being of its citizens and is based on the insight that U.S. interests are sometimes very different from ours. In the event of a conflict, the United States has one interest above all: to keep a possible nuclear war out of its territory. They would behave towards us in a similar way as they have done towards Ukraine in recent years: military support would be within the framework in which an expansion of the war on US territory remains unlikely.

The stationing of long-range offensive weapons in Germany does not serve to protect us, but makes our country the target of Russian missiles and thus puts us in great danger. A major European war may be calculable from the safe distance of the USA,

but it would be devastating for the people in German and Europe.

We firmly reject the stationing of US medium-range missiles on German soil, which Federal Chancellor Scholz approved without any debate on the sidelines of a NATO summit and which enormously increases the nuclear risk for us. We demand strict adherence to the agreements made in the Two Plus Four Treaty regarding the deployment of missiles.

The German Bundestag already decided in 2010 to withdraw US nuclear weapons from Germany. We are committed to implementing this mission with the involvement of the US troops stationed in Germany.

The current problems of the Bundeswehr stem not least from the fact that it has been increasingly transformed from a defence army into an intervention army. The results were disastrous, for example in Afghanistan and Mali. We want to make the Bundeswehr a defensive army again and exclusively.

According to the Basic Law, the Bundeswehr has the mandate to defend our country. It must be adequately equipped for this task. We reject the deployment of German soldiers in international wars, as well as their stationing on the Russian border or in the South China Sea.

Another problem facing the Bundeswehr is its dilapidated and non-transparent procurement practices. Every fifth euro is spent on additional costs due to mismanagement and poor planning. The narrative of the "broken-cut" Bundeswehr is a myth. Since 2014, German military spending has more than doubled and amounted to almost 90 billion euros in 2024. In the global ranking of the research institute (SIPRI), Germany is in seventh place in terms of arms spending. No other budget item has risen as continuously in the past as the arms budget. Billions of taxpayers' money are burned in the

process. Arms companies are virtually given carte blanche to charge ever higher prices.

We reject higher military spending, the fulfilment of NATO's two percent target or even higher expenditures, as well as further special funds or debt funds for the rearmament of the Bundeswehr or military aid.

The German government must contractually oblige the arms industry to be liable for cost increases and delays in armament projects.

Full transparency on all military spending, an end to expensive and pointless consulting contracts

The principle of voluntariness is of enormous importance in the vocational orientation phase of adolescents and must not be overridden for war and rearmament policy.

We reject the reintroduction of compulsory military service.

Defense Minister Pistorius wants to make Germany "fit for war." We want to make our country fit for peace.

End the Ukraine war through negotiations

A proxy war is raging in Ukraine between Russia and the United States, which could escalate into a world war at any time. We condemn the Russian attack on Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. At the same time, we are convinced that this terrible war was avoidable and could have been ended long ago by negotiation.

People are dying every day, Ukraine is being destroyed more and more. Almost half of Germans fear that the war will

spread to our country. President Biden's decision to authorise attacks on Russia with Western missiles has ushered in a new dangerous escalation dynamic that poses major risks for the whole of Europe. Whether Trump will make good on his promise to end the Ukraine war quickly cannot be said at present. In any case, Germany and Europe should not rely on this, but should take their own peace initiatives.

We call for honest efforts to achieve a ceasefire without preconditions. The future German government should support the diplomatic efforts of China and the countries of the Global South and do everything possible to initiate negotiations on a realistic peace plan.

Instead, Merz, Lindner and Habeck want to supply Ukraine with Taurus missiles so that it can use them to attack targets deep in Russia. Such a step would practically be a declaration of war by Germany against the nuclear power Russia. Olaf Scholz has so far refused to do so, but has always fallen over as soon as there was pressure from Washington. He cannot be relied upon, especially since others in the SPD are open to the dangerous Taurus simulation games.

Like the majority of German citizens, we reject the delivery of Taurus cruise bodies. Only a strong BSW in the next Bundestag can and will prevent the war hawks and Taurus supporters in the SPD from gaining the upper hand after the election.

We must prevent German soldiers from launching missiles aimed at Russia again.

Even if an expansion of the war can be averted, arms deliveries will not stop the deaths. Hardly any other country burdens its citizens as much as Germany in order to finance this senseless war. Billions are

available again this year. It is also in our own interest that the war in Ukraine ends as quickly as possible.

We want no more German taxpayers' money to be made available to prolong this senseless war.

Efforts to achieve a ceasefire have so far been sabotaged or not seriously pursued. Ukraine has not gained a better negotiating position by continuing the war, on the contrary. An attempt should be made to resume the negotiations where they were broken off by Ukraine in Istanbul in spring 2022 due to Western pressure, and then to make them successful.

Peace in the Middle East

The Middle East is also a powder keg, because all the major powers in the region have interests, influence and allies and carry out their conflicts on the backs of the people there.

We unequivocally condemn the large-scale attack by Hamas and others on Israel on October 7, 2023. But it does not justify the Netanyahu government's ruthless campaign of revenge and annihilation against women and children in the Gaza Strip. The war crimes committed against the civilian population in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon rightly outrage the world. Notwithstanding the accusations of genocide against Israel as a result of Israel's conduct of war in the Gaza Strip before the International Court of Justice, the word "reason of state" in the matter of Israel continues to apply in political Berlin. What is meant is the uncritical closing of ranks with the ultra-right Netanyahu government. The anti-Semitism resolution adopted by the Bundestag in November 2024 narrows the domestic political debate space by largely equating criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism. The BSW distinguishes between the self-evident protection of Jewish life in

Germany and objectively required criticism of Israeli government positions. The USA and German are among the few countries that still support Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and supply him with the weapons for his horrific war.

We demand an immediate stop to arms deliveries to Israel.

In the meantime, a regime change has also taken place in Syria. Assad was overthrown, which was a cause for joy and relief for many Syrians. The new Islamist rulers could lead to further instability in Syria. There is a possibility that existing conflicts will continue and new forms of repression will emerge, which will continue to pose major challenges for the country.

The Middle East can also only be pacified if the interests of all sides are taken into account, if negotiations are held instead of shooting. Islamist terror cannot be defeated with terror. Israel's actions are stirring up hatred all over the Arab world. It is only a matter of time before the next generation of Hamas leaders grows up on this breeding ground. The spiral of violence can only be broken if the interests of the Palestinians are finally taken into account.

We call for an immediate ceasefire and serious negotiations on a two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians.

A sovereign Europe in a multipolar world

The EU has completely lost sight of its founding mission of peace and prosperity and is now unable or unwilling to represent European interests. We want to make the

European Union what it was founded to do again.

The EU must be a peace broker and not a party to the war. The enormous financial and military resources that the EU has provided to support Ukraine, the many billions that are earmarked to make European arms manufacturers even more profitable and their owners even richer, are uselessly squandered taxpayers' money that we urgently need for more important tasks.

We stand for close cooperation between European states, but not for ever deeper integration towards a European federal state. We are convinced that democracy, prosperity and social achievements can be better protected at the national level. Cohesion and prosperity in Europe will not be promoted by the European Commission's arrogance of more and more powers and resources.

We do not want a further centralisation of power at the EU Commission, but a transfer of competences back to the member states.

We need an EU that concentrates on its core tasks. Many of the tasks that are now handled by bureaucrats in Brussels can be carried out more efficiently, transparently and democratically on the ground. Instead of bureaucracy that causes unnecessary costs and bullies companies, the EU should concentrate on the tasks that nation states can hardly do on their own. This includes drying up tax havens, preventing tax-cutting competitions and subsidy races, and establishing Europe's digital sovereignty against the powerful data leeches from Silicon Valley. China has achieved its digital sovereignty vis-à-vis the United States in recent years, and Europe is still a digital colony today. The EU will not become more important if more and more countries are admitted.

We want an EU enlargement freeze that also applies to Ukraine, which would otherwise become a bottomless pit for German taxpayers.

The prosperity of Germany and Europe is based on stable and fair international trade relations. Protectionism and isolationism, economic sanctions and trade wars are not in the interests of Germany and Europe.

2. Stop deindustrialization – A comeback plan for our economy

Our economy has not grown for five years, and it has been in a serious crisis for two years. The migration of important industries has already begun. Four out of ten companies want to cut jobs this year. The number of company bankruptcies is rising rapidly. High energy costs and bureaucratic regulatory mania are suffocating the economy. The dilapidated infrastructure and lack of skilled worker training make the location unattractive.

The successful German model with its high proportion of industrial value creation, its globally recognised automotive production, its export-oriented mechanical engineering sector and its medium-sized world market leaders, which has secured hundreds of thousands of well-paid jobs over decades, is being negligently destroyed. It is true that China's rise to become a new competitor in the high-tech sector has also changed the international framework conditions. But the most important

decisions that can break our industrial backbone were made here in Germany. We want to correct these wrong decisions before it is too late.

Reduce energy prices, for a well-thought-out climate and environmental policy

Climate change is a serious challenge. He demands well-thought-out solutions and not blind activism or authoritarian presumption. The BSW stands by the Paris Climate Agreement. However, climate protection is a global task and should be driven forward according to the criterion of using funds where they have the greatest possible impact. Making daily life in the country more and more expensive is not a climate policy, but impoverishment policy.

The current German energy policy is driving up prices and jeopardising security of supply. While there is often an oversupply of electricity from renewable energies in summer, the insufficient reserve capacity since the nuclear phase-out and the gradual shutdown of coal-fired power plants has led to extreme price spikes during dark doldrums, which are associated with incalculable risks for companies and turn our European neighbours against us. The problem will worsen in the coming years if the coal phase-out is implemented as planned, but new capacities in the form of additional gas-fired power plants are still not created. In addition, the longer-term supply of sufficient gas, especially at moderate prices, is not secured.

An export-strong industry needs competitive energy prices and security of supply. The sanctions imposed after the start of the Ukraine war were an economic stimulus program for the U.S. economy and a killer program for German and European companies.

We need long-term contracts for energy imports that are based on the criterion of the lowest price.

The German government should negotiate with Russia to obtain cheap natural gas again via the remaining string of the Nord Stream pipeline. It should also tackle the restoration of the destroyed strands.

We call for a move away from the wishful thinking of a complete climate neutrality that can be achieved quickly. This is because it leads to the requirement that only technologies based on 100% renewable energies are sustainable. Efficient mixing technologies are thus excluded in favour of extremely expensive and often unrealistic "100% climate-neutral" projects. The result is excesses such as the ban on internal combustion engines, although there is currently no realistic concept for a climate-neutral power supply for many millions of vehicles, e-cars are too expensive for average earners, the charging infrastructure is not sufficiently available and important questions remain unanswered to this day, such as how long the most expensive part of e-cars, the battery, will last.

We want to use all technologies to reduce CO². This applies to the development of fuel-efficient and efficient combustion engines and to the promotion of alternative fuels. In the field of e-mobility, low-cost models must be offered. We also want to intensify research and development work on technologies such as solid-state batteries. Germany must take a leading position here. Purchase premiums in the low price segment for low-energy vehicles and e-cars can also boost sales.

Another negative example is the ill-thought-out heating law, which hardly brings any CO² savings, but also causes homeowners not only high acquisition costs, but usually also extremely high conversion costs if the heat pump is to heat the house reasonably

efficiently. In apartment buildings, these costs are passed on to the tenants, which leads to further rent increases.

We want to promote the installation of heat pumps without discriminating against the operation of other technologies. Here, too, openness to technology applies. We want to abolish Habeck's heating law immediately and replace it with sensible regulations.

We demand the withdrawal of the ban on internal combustion engines and the heating law.

The decommissioning of large parts of the gas network in the near future is also one of the political requirements that lead to a dead end, because there are currently no efficient and affordable alternative solutions for heating many apartments and houses. 41 percent of municipal utilities warn that under these conditions, an affordable heat supply will not be guaranteed in the future. This rightly frightens many people.

We want to preserve the gas networks, they must not be dismantled. We will also need methane as a fallback option in the long term, e.g. in the event of a long dark doldrums.

Emissions trading could be a useful instrument to steer technological change towards more climate-friendly technologies if it were applied worldwide. As a purely European instrument, it motivates the relocation of production rather than the use of climate-friendly processes. In fact, the EU's share of global production has been declining for years. In doing so, we are falling behind not only China, but also the United States. We want to leave this wrong path. Instead of relying on the CO² price, we want to enable technological change by promoting innovation and targeted incentives.

We want to abolish the CO² price, which makes everything more expensive without there being alternatives for most people.

European emissions trading must either be globalised, or German should promote its abolition at EU level. A European solo effort will not help the climate, but it will lead to the decline of our industry and to the migration of energy-intensive industries.

Through grid fees and green electricity subsidies, consumers and taxpayers pay many billions every year for an incorrectly constructed energy transition. Since the privatization of the grids, the state has guaranteed the grid operators increasing returns on equity of now seven percent, which are passed on to electricity customers through ever higher grid fees. Grid fees alone now account for around a quarter of the electricity price.

At the same time, electricity suppliers repeatedly make unjustifiably high profits from inflated prices. This haphazard policy must not be continued. Instead of burdening the economy with extreme prices on dark days with little wind and burning taxpayers' money in wind and sun, investments must be made in new gas-fired power plants as reserve capacity as well as in the grids. The investment sums required for this also speak in favour of nationalising these areas, as the state can take out loans at far lower interest rates than private providers and can thus realise the expansion at lower costs.

The maintenance and expansion of energy grids are public tasks and must be financed from public funds and not from electricity prices. Instead of securing dream returns for private grid operators, we want to nationalize the grids and reduce grid fees to a minimum.

Intelligent grids and metering points enable a more flexible energy supply. They should also be in public hands for reasons of data protection. To achieve this goal, we want to support municipalities.

We reject the possibility of capping energy. The state is responsible for Germany's security of supply. Therefore, storage and reserve capacities should not be operated according to profit interests, but in the interest of the general public.

In addition to classic battery storage systems, high-temperature storage systems are also a promising option here. They also offer the advantage that they continue to use a large part of the coal-fired power plant infrastructure without emissions. This saves costs, conserves resources and preserves jobs. There are a large number of promising approaches in the field of storage technologies. We want to promote research and development work here.

The construction of electrolyzers for the production of hydrogen should also be carried out publicly, in parallel with private plants, especially where renewable electricity is available in surplus and currently has to be curtailed.

We want to operate biogas plants in agreement with our farmers and thus achieve a supplementary source of income for agricultural businesses. The corresponding plant use must not compete with food production.

We reject the construction of new conventional nuclear power plants. The same currently applies to mini-power plants (SMRs), the operation of which generates up to 30 times more radioactive waste than conventional reactors. However, there are technologically promising approaches in the field of nuclear fusion. We want to intensify research and development here.

In the field of renewable energies, we are calling for a "repowering" programme. We want to replace old wind turbines with new ones. In this way, we can increase the electricity yield at existing locations without new interventions in nature.

We want to promote the installation of PV systems on public buildings, parking lots,

stables and factory halls. We want to support the participation of municipalities and citizens in renewable generation capacities through energy cooperatives.

We consider the import targets for green hydrogen formulated by the traffic light in the H2 strategy to be unrealistic and also harmful for partner countries, which should use their renewable energies themselves. In the countries of the South, renewable energies should primarily serve to make local electricity generation CO₂-neutral before focusing on exports.

Instead of subsidising the use of inefficient technologies with large sums of money, more should be done to promote research and development of new climate-friendly technologies. The greatest contribution to climate protection that a high-tech and industrialised country like Germany can make is the development of innovations and future technologies for a resource-saving, climate-neutral and environmentally friendly economy.

Instead of bans, we rely on promotion and incentives for the development of promising technologies. For example, we want to further develop and promote the operation of CCS or CCU plants for the capture of unavoidable CO₂ emissions and their storage or use. We want to promote the construction of CCS or CCU plants with the help of super depreciation or public loans.

District heating will play a more important role in the future, we support its expansion and the conversion to renewable energy sources. We want to expand geothermal energy. The potential in Germany is 300 terawatt hours, which is around a quarter of our heat supply. As a first step, we want to raise the development targets from 10 to 100 terawatt hours by 2030. We also want to use waste heat from industrial processes, incineration plants and data centers more efficiently. The

promotion of combined heat and power plants must be continued beyond 2025.

Openness to promising technologies is a central component of our policy.

A major burden on the environment and a source of unnecessary CO₂ emissions are products that end up in the trash after too short a useful life. This eats up scarce resources and energy and is a significant climate and environmental problem. Quite a few manufacturers ensure a shortened service life of their products due to inferior material or poor workmanship at weak points. This is called "planned wear and tear". If it is proven to be intentional, it must also be banned in Germany.

With mandatory labelling for the service life, we want to increase the pressure on manufacturers to produce their products more durable. In future, the expected service life of technical products should be clearly and clearly visible on the packaging or in the product description.

A deliberate and targeted reduction of the lifespan of products is to be prohibited.

If manufacturers had to specify the number of washes, shaves or print pages that customers can expect before a device discontinues service, customers can base their purchase decision on this. Manufacturers of cordless tools that enable inexpensive battery replacement could promise a significantly longer service life than those who permanently install the battery.

We want to make repairs of defective devices more attractive – through a lower VAT and a nationwide bonus for repair services.

Fair trade in a multipolar world

A country like Germany, which is strong in exports and poor in raw materials, depends on stable economic relations with as many countries as possible in order to sell its own goods and secure the supply of raw materials and cheap energy. Germany therefore has a fundamental economic interest in not participating in the economic sanctions pushed by Washington in the interests of the US economy. This applies in particular to the looming trade conflict with China, which will have far-reaching consequences for the German economy.

We want fair trade in a multipolar world and not a new bloc confrontation.

We reject free trade and investment protection agreements that are primarily aimed at suspending social rights or other national rules in the interests of multinational corporations. What we need are international agreements that guarantee security of supply and access to important sales markets, as well as social, human rights and environmental standards so that domestic suppliers are not squeezed out of the market by less regulated low-cost foreign producers.

In order to make Germany less dependent on foreign countries and supply chain problems in the long term, we want to promote regional economic cycles. This presupposes that key sectors such as steel production or energy-intensive basic chemicals remain in the country. We want to reduce import dependencies, for example for medicines.

We want to promote regional economic cycles and reduce import dependencies.

Keeping key industries in the state, promoting innovation

We are committed to an active industrial policy, as is practiced in almost all successful

industrial countries. The state has a responsibility to maintain and restructure industries for strategic reasons and to promote and support innovation, which is open to technology, for socially desirable goals (climate and environmental protection, saving resources, circular economy).

The innovative strength in Germany has recently deteriorated significantly in an international comparison. We want to stop and reverse this downward trend.

We want to significantly increase spending on research and development.

Germany spends about 3.1% of GDP on innovations. For other industrialized countries, the figure is more than 5%. We want to increase spending on research and development to at least 4% of economic output by 2030.

The state has a central role to play as a supporter of innovation by bearing risks that private actors avoid. From silicon-based semiconductors to the Internet to GPS, from groundbreaking medical innovations to nanotechnology: it was not private companies, but government research laboratories or development programs financed with taxpayers' money to whom we owe the decisive breakthroughs. The state's share was not limited to funding basic research.

We want to invest in relevant future sectors and key industries through an industrial fund and help innovative start-ups to succeed with "patient" capital that does not expect quick returns. Because of the short-term logic of the financial world, this would often not be possible without state aid.

The increasing power of financial investors in listed companies, the orientation towards quarterly figures instead of long-term growth opportunities, and business models that focus

on maximum distributions instead of reinvesting profits are reducing the productivity and innovative power of the economy. VW, for example, has transferred 22 billion euros to its shareholders in the last three years instead of investing this money in the development of more attractive models. Now the management realizes that the company is in a crisis. The chemical company BASF recently paid out even more dividends than it made profits, so instead of investing, the substance is plundered. The negative consequences of this business model are usually borne by the employees. If there is state aid, taxpayers are also liable.

As a counter-model, foundation companies have a long and good tradition in Germany. They reinvest most of their profits, are better able to cope with crises thanks to their high equity capital, and are more innovative. The latter above all because they have the staying power to drive forward innovations that require many years of intensive research before market success can be expected. If foundation companies receive government funding, there is no risk that the money will be passed on to shareholders.

We therefore want to transform large companies in key sectors that receive government support into innovation-friendly foundation companies. At the same time, these should be opened up for greater co-determination by employees.

But foundation structures are complicated and were originally intended for charitable tasks instead of commercial enterprises. For medium-sized companies, the bureaucratic hurdles are usually too high. Therefore, the creation of a new legal form beyond corporations and partnerships is overdue, especially for medium-sized companies.

The traffic light government had agreed on the creation of the legal form "Gesellschaft mit gebundenem Vermögen" (GmbH-gebV) developed by medium-sized entrepreneurs in its coalition agreement, but had not

implemented it. We want to make up for it. In this legal form, which is also known as stewardship ownership, profits may no longer be distributed to external owners, as is the case with foundation companies, but must be used to promote the company's purpose or for charitable commitment. Responsible companies are companies that do not aim to pay dividends to investors, but to ensure the long-term existence of the company with good jobs, good products and satisfied customers. Responsible companies cannot be taken over and plundered by financial investors or fail due to unsolved succession problems.

More steward-owned companies would make our economy more innovative and productive and strengthen social cohesion.

Strengthening SMEs, promoting competition

SMEs are the backbone of our economy, but they are under increasing pressure. In the competition between domestic and foreign companies and between small and large companies, the former often lose out. Also in the interest of fair competition, opportunities exploited by corporations to reduce their taxes to a minimum through international profit shifting must finally be eliminated.

We are committed to ensuring that corporations are taxed just as heavily as medium-sized companies for their activities in Germany.

We demand that the German government insists that we defend ourselves against unfair trade practices, including those of the USA, within the framework of EU trade policy. Because the costs of meeting bureaucratic requirements are much higher for smaller companies relative to turnover than for large

companies, we want to consistently relieve SMEs of bureaucratic requirements. Competition policy is hardly fulfilling its task of preventing the dominant positions of individual very large suppliers at the expense of consumers and small and medium-sized competitors. Legislators and competition watchdogs have adopted the pro-corporate ideology that the only thing that matters is supposedly to prevent the abuse of market power, not market power itself. However, it is often difficult to prove abuse, as the mastermind of ordoliberalism Walter Eucken already knew, who vehemently criticized this approach. As Eucken predicted, competition policy has become toothless as a result.

We want to equip the Bundeskartellamt with the necessary resources and expertise to play an effective role in mergers.

Against this background, we want to examine rules for market share limits for individual companies in critical sectors such as energy, communications and food. The Unbundling Act, which was already planned in 2009, was to be taken out of the filing cabinets, adapted to today's challenges, completed and adopted.

The number of self-employed has been steadily declining for over a decade. Last year, interest in starting a business fell to a historic low: Recent case law on bogus self-employment and its handling by the German Pension Insurance Fund also contributed to this. Educational institutions and IT departments of companies hardly see any possibility of employing freelance teachers or external employees in a legally compliant manner.

We are striving for a reform of the status determination procedure so that music schools, adult education centres and companies can once again hire self-employed people in a legally secure manner and without fear of back payments or even criminal

prosecution if they do not work predominantly for the same client in the long term. If they wish, teachers at music schools, in adult education, etc., must be employed under social insurance, and the higher costs must be raised.

If they wish, teachers at music schools must be employed in adult education, etc., with social insurance.

We demand that all employed persons and their earned income, and thus also all the self-employed, be included in social insurance.

Modernising infrastructure, strengthening domestic demand

A modern economy needs a modern infrastructure. A country in which thousands of bridges are dilapidated and roads, railways, digital networks and school buildings are in poor condition is gambling away its future. Adequate housing, sufficient and affordable daycare places, youth leisure facilities, citizen-oriented and competent administrations as well as reliable local and long-distance transport with safe commuter connections should be a matter of course in a country like Germany.

The debt brake has not prevented unsound budgeting, but has become a brake on investment. That is why it must be reformed. For a responsible use of taxpayers' money, we need above all more competence in responsible offices, less lobbying influence and more say of the population through direct democracy.

We want to exclude investments in bridges, roads, railways, schools, housing and networks from the debt brake and remedy the dramatic investment backlog that is leading to the decay of our infrastructure without further delay through a major investment programme.

Despite the high need for investment, the construction industry is also in crisis. There is not a lack of capacity, but of orders that the public sector can and must create.

We want an infrastructure guarantee for Germany: we want to align health, housing, energy and water supply with the common good and not with profit. The state must guarantee public transport, basic medical care and regionally accessible hospitals, shopping facilities for daily needs, leisure centres, especially for young people and older citizens, and fast internet.

The municipalities in particular are suffering from the renovation backlog. Hardly anything works without subsidies, which have to be applied for and accounted for at great expense. With the allocation or non-allocation of subsidies, the municipalities are governed. In the future, they will be able to set the priorities of their own spending. The aim is to do what is needed and not just what funding is currently available for. The municipalities must be provided with the necessary financial resources for this purpose.

We are committed to strengthening local self-government again. An important lever would be a fair solution to the old debts for the municipalities.

We want equal living conditions in the countryside and in the city!

In recent years, inflation and loss of purchasing power, poor wages and low pensions have curbed demand in our country. The increasing uncertainty after three years of miserable economic policy is leading to significant reluctance to buy.

We want to strengthen domestic demand through higher wages, better statutory pensions and the strengthening of collective bargaining coverage.

We demand a citizen-oriented and modern, efficient administration at all levels, in which

the needs of the citizens and the economy are central. The administration works for the people – not for the state. We want to ensure that all concerns are handled in a benevolent, fast and competent manner in our daily administrative practice. We want to increase the attractiveness of administrations as employers through flexible working time models, competent and lean management structures and the early promotion of top performers.

Taxes and finances – For more investment and cohesion

The tax system in Germany punishes work and rewards large fortunes, although these are often not based on one's own performance, but on inheritances or exploitation of the work of others. While around half of the income is taken away from the industrious through taxes and levies, the tax rate on investment income is only 25 percent. That wasn't always the case. The effective tax rate paid by billionaire Susanne Klatten, for example, on her BMW profits, fell from 61.0 percent to just 21.4 percent between 1996 and 2022. Reversing this trend and, in return, relieving hard-working low- and normal-income earners, is urgently needed.

Internationally operating companies and wealthy private individuals also have many opportunities to avoid taxes and avoid them with the help of legal loopholes or even illegal tricks. This must also stop.

Germany needs a fiscal policy that promotes investment, strengthens domestic demand and distributes the financing burden according to the principle of fairness in performance. That is why we advocate a tax system that noticeably relieves the burden on the vast majority of citizens and, in return, burdens far above-average incomes and large fortunes. For the hard-working majority in the country, their efforts must be worthwhile. We want to relieve income of up to 7500 euros gross from tax.

We demand a significant increase in the basic tax allowance, which should be based on the at-risk-of-poverty threshold.

In the absence of other income, the statutory pension up to 2000 euros per month should be exempt from tax.

The top tax rate was intended to spare middle incomes and only apply to very high incomes.

Capital gains are to be taxed at the normal income tax rate in the same way as earned income.

It must not remain the case that it is mainly low-income earners and the middle class that finance the welfare state.

We need a basic allowance for social security contributions with the same entitlements, counterfinanced by raising the contribution assessment ceilings.

This could noticeably relieve the burden on employees and pensioners.

Companies should invest their surplus capital primarily in their business models and innovation instead of driving up their own share price through share buybacks. By taxing share buybacks, we want to ensure that this practice is avoided.

Debt interest and royalty payments to holding companies abroad are among the most important instruments for internationally active companies to shift profits to tax-advantaged foreign countries. These should therefore no longer be allowed to be deducted from trade income when calculating trade tax. They will only be deductible from capital gains tax if the recipient pays an acceptable minimum tax rate in his country of residence.

Another loophole for the wealthy that urgently needs to be closed is the tax exemption of increases in the value of real estate with a

holding period of ten years or more. We want this privilege to be limited to owner-occupied housing.

By means of so-called "share deals", institutional investors can avoid real estate transfer tax when selling a property. We also want to close this loophole, which has been known for a long time.

At the same time, we want to exempt families from real estate transfer tax when purchasing their first owner-occupied home.

The property tax reform, which was supposed to be revenue-neutral, is currently leading to considerable additional costs for millions of citizens. We demand a moratorium on burdens for normal homeowners and tenants.

Currently, the higher the inheritance, the lower the effective tax rate. This is neither fair nor reasonable, because it means that an inherited single-family home is subject to higher taxes than an inherited business empire worth hundreds of millions of euros. We want to change this and tax all inherited assets above the exemption amounts equally.

We want to reactivate the wealth tax for assets of 25 million euros or more with a tax rate of 1 percent, which will rise to 2 percent from 100 million euros in assets and to 3 percent from 1 billion euros.

At the same time, with the new legal form of stewardship ownership, we want to give company owners the opportunity to avoid an outflow of liquidity by converting their company into a "company with tied assets" and also to ensure the continued existence of the company even without suitable successors within the family.

It is also high time to introduce a financial transaction tax for all securities and derivatives transactions in order to curb and tax highly speculative activity (and the decoupling of financial markets from the real economy).

Cutting red tape: the key to growth and innovation

The German economy is suffering from record bureaucracy. Companies and citizens often experience an inefficient administration that is remote from the citizens. According to current estimates, bureaucracy reduces our economic output by 146 billion euros per year. We see the reduction of bureaucracy as an important key to growth and innovation. We will work vehemently to reduce unnecessary rules, requirements and processes and to simplify procedures.

We want to lay the foundation for an administration that supports citizens and companies instead of burdening them, and that works efficiently at the same time. Reducing bureaucracy is an investment in an innovative, dynamic and fair Germany.

A large part of the bureaucratic burden in recent years has its origin in EU law. We reject the over-fulfilment of EU standards in the implementation of national law.

EU requirements that place an excessive burden on companies but whose benefits are questionable should no longer be incorporated into national law.

Corporate sustainability reporting (ESG) regulations, for example, lead to unnecessary bureaucracy. The absurd discussions about the "sustainability" of nuclear power and armaments show that the state should not prescribe a comprehensive assessment of economic activity according to ethical standards. This leads to the time-consuming production of useless reports and, in some cases, to the seal of approval for questionable products and to scandals such as the billions in payments for non-existent climate protection projects in China, with which companies have improved their sustainability balance.

The Supply Chain Act in its current form is also a bureaucratic monster with questionable

benefits for medium-sized companies. In contrast to large corporations, they do not have the resources and market power to test and oblige all suppliers in distant countries to comply with standards.

As an immediate measure, we will immediately suspend the obligation to report on sustainability and advocate for a reform of the Supply Chain Act in order to improve the ratio of benefits to costs.

We want to design threshold values in such a way that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are more exempt from reporting and documentation obligations. The aim is to expand entrepreneurial freedom and thus promote innovation.

The digitization of public administration can make a major contribution to more efficient and faster processes and a reduction in bureaucratic burdens. Germany is massively lagging behind other industrialized countries in this respect. With a central online portal for citizens and companies as a "one-stop shop" for all official services, in which data only has to be entered once ("once-only principle"), we want to make life easier for people. The implementation of this measure means that all authorities must critically scrutinise processes and, where appropriate, digitise them.

However, digitalisation can also increase the bureaucratic burden, especially for smaller businesses and the self-employed, if it is enacted by force. This is the case, for example, with the obligation to issue electronic invoices and electronic budgeting. Or even with pages of data protection declarations that no one reads, but which can be warned. We reject such coercive measures.

Every year, new laws and regulations create additional rules, guidelines, requirements and expenses. However, the

status quo is not systematically questioned and dismantled. This ballast is growing from year to year and paralyzes not only the administration, but our entire country.

We will introduce a national decluttering day that will take place twice a year. On this day, managers and employees in public authorities should focus on which rules and guidelines are no longer needed and how procedures and processes can be simplified and accelerated.

We want to strengthen the National Regulatory Control Council in its role as a driving force and for evaluation and monitoring.

The number of civil servants in the federal ministries has risen by almost 45 percent since 2013, while citizen-oriented administrations are understaffed. New commissioners are constantly being introduced for topics that are already the responsibility of the ministries. Each commissioner draws a staff and new requirements with him. Bureaucracy leads to more bureaucrats. More bureaucrats create new bureaucracy.

In order to break the vicious circle, we want to cut unnecessary jobs in ministries and build them up where citizens and the economy need more service and support. We want to abolish the commissioners in the ministries and, where necessary, integrate them into the organisational structure of the ministries.

Authorities and their employees must see themselves as service providers who make life easier for citizens and companies and act as "enablers".

At the federal level, we will introduce a continuous satisfaction rating for all authorities by citizens. In order to create transparency about this, the result should be published on the respective website of the authority.

Respect for our farmers, good environmental and animal welfare

We want an agricultural policy that is more nationally and regionally oriented. Agriculture first serves to secure food in one's own country. It must be prevented that cheap imports from abroad displace the food and feed produced in Germany. Farmers rightly expect stable and adequate prices from which they can live and with which they can plan.

One means can be legally regulated minimum producer prices.

We want to withdraw the abolition of the tax reduction for agricultural diesel.

There needs to be a limitation of the market power of corporations in processing and trade. We reject trade agreements that increase the competitive pressure for our domestic agriculture, such as the Mercosur agreement.

We rely on regional economic cycles with short delivery routes.

This not only makes us less dependent on the world market, but also strengthens rural areas by attracting and maintaining small and medium-sized dairies, slaughterhouses and grocery stores. This puts farmers on an equal footing with the negotiating partners and eliminates climate-damaging transport.

We demand affordable land to preserve agricultural and forestry land.

Unnecessary bureaucracy that makes life difficult for farmers must be reduced. Farmers must be involved in environmental requirements and compromises must be found through appropriate transitional periods and unbureaucratic subsidies. The aim must be to develop agricultural techniques and cultivation systems that are environmentally friendly, soil-friendly and climate-friendly, maintain food security and do not jeopardise

the profitability of farms. We firmly reject disparaging agriculture as a climate killer. It is a systemically important industry for our food security.

The preservation of agricultural land is a priority for us. Forests, grassland and moors must be preserved through careful use. Compensatory measures for construction projects must be implemented in an integrated manner with local farms. Photovoltaic systems must not displace agricultural use.

We want reliable origin labelling and affordable plant protection products, the safety of which has been determined by an independent and transparent approval procedure without the influence of the manufacturers.

We want to end animal suffering in stables and slaughterhouses. This includes cost-covering prices and good wages and working conditions in slaughterhouses. We want to limit live animal transports to a maximum of four hours. This requires sufficient official veterinarians. We want to create incentives for good veterinary care in rural areas.

We want to keep animal experiments to an absolute minimum. The trade in animals – especially on the Internet – must be strictly controlled. We reject agricultural genetic engineering and patents on life. Seeds must be allowed to be freely reproduced.

Seeds must be allowed to be freely reproduced. In particular, the preservation of old and regional varieties should be in the foreground.

To adapt to climate-related weather extremes, we want to establish a multi-risk insurance policy for farms nationwide, financed on a pro rata basis by the federal government. In addition, we support the formation of a tax-exempt company risk equalisation reserve. We want to preserve small and medium-sized fisheries, some of which have a long family tradition.

Climatic changes are already causing enormous damage through more frequent

floods, dry soils and damaged forests.

We want to strengthen disaster control, mitigate the consequences of flood events, provide funds for the construction and expansion of dikes and dams, and reforest forests with tree species that are better able to cope with climate change.

Whether animal farmers, arable farmers, gardeners, fruit growers, winegrowers, fishermen, beekeepers or foresters: the BSW stands behind those employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing.

3. For a fair meritocracy

Germany has come a long way from a fair meritocracy. Even in the crisis years, the top tens of thousands have become richer. Average earners, families and pensioners, on the other hand, are increasingly burdened by taxes, levies and price increases. In January, the next hammer will follow in social security contributions. Many people can hardly make ends meet despite having a full-time job. More than one in four employees currently earns less than 15 euros an hour. Performance is hardly worthwhile for millions of citizens.

Yet inequality in Germany has been growing for years. Millions of people work hard every day to give themselves and their families a good life. They are the ones who keep our society running and pay a large part of the taxes. But misguided labour market and social policies make their lives more insecure and difficult. Even those who have worked for years

slip into the so-called citizen's allowance after a year of unemployment and are treated as supplicants.

People in eastern Germany are still disadvantaged. The wage level in eastern Germany is still 21% below that in the west in some places. East Germans are not represented in the elites of the administration, nor in the courts, universities or the media, in proportion to their share of the population as a whole. In order to compensate for these disparities and enable appropriate East German participation, there needs to be a way of promoting East Germans, at least in the public service and administration, in science and culture. We also want to promote talents from East Germany with better access to scholarships and with a personnel development concept that supports the achievement of management positions.

Better wages and pensions, performance-based unemployment insurance

The promise of advancement of the social market economy no longer applies. Many children do not even manage to reach the level of prosperity of their parents. We want to enforce a turnaround in labour market and social policy in order to make advancement through effort and performance the norm again.

An important instrument in the fight against wage dumping is the minimum wage. The mini-increases in 2024 and 2025 of 41 cents each are a mockery against the background of the massive price increases in recent years.

We want to raise the statutory minimum wage to 15 euros immediately.

The minimum wage must be permanently poverty-proof. Future adjustments are to be based on the EU Minimum Wage Directive (60 percent of median income). Mini- and midi-jobs, fixed-term contracts and the abuse

of work contracts and temporary work still make it impossible for millions of people to plan their lives reliably.

We want to create a legal basis to convert mini-jobs into employment relationships subject to social security contributions and to end the abuse of work contracts and temporary work. We want to significantly reduce fixed-term contracts with objective reasons. We reject fixed-term contracts without objective reasons and chain fixed-term contracts.

These measures are also intended to help close the income gap between men and women.

Collective agreements are an important instrument for achieving good wages and working conditions.

However, collective bargaining has been in free fall for 25 years, with only 49 per cent of employment contracts still covered by collective bargaining.

We want a significantly higher tariff quota for Germany.

To achieve this goal, we want to implement a package of measures: Public contracts and subsidies are to be awarded only to companies that pay collectively agreed wages.

In addition, we want to make it easier for collective agreements to be declared generally binding.

In order to ensure that good working conditions can also be shaped at company level, we need strong works councils and rights of co-determination that are up to date.

We want to make it easier to set up works councils, among other things by providing better protection against dismissal for the initiators of works council elections.

Especially in times of economic upheaval, we want to ensure that employees are also involved in strategic corporate decisions. We

want to close loopholes from the German co-determination standards, such as those resulting from a change of legal form into a European stock corporation.

In order to stop the disintegration of social cohesion, we want to return to an efficient welfare state that supports people in difficult situations instead of taking away their dignity. We call for a more consistent implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which has also been in force in Germany since 2009, at the federal and state level. A welfare state that manages poverty instead of empowering people fails in its task.

We want to replace the citizen's allowance with high-performance and performance-based unemployment insurance and a fair basic income.

Long-term contributors deserve adequate protection in the event of unemployment. This is especially true for older workers, for whom it is often difficult to re-enter the labour market. In order to prevent people from slipping into basic benefits, long-term insured persons are to receive 60 percent of their last net salary until they are offered reasonable employment or have found one on their own. The deadline for completing insurance periods is to be extended, and periods of childcare and care for relatives must be recognised. For the self-employed, we would like to open up access to unemployment insurance and the contribution and benefit conditions based on those of dependent employees.

We want to prevent the abuse of social benefits, such as the receipt of citizen's allowance and simultaneous undeclared work – in particular through more controls by the Financial Control of Undeclared Work at Customs.

In order to get more people into work, we also rely on targeted support for job seekers. Obligations to cooperate in qualification offers are necessary in order to create perspectives.

Anyone who rejects measures without good reasons must expect consequences. Instead of focusing primarily on recruiting foreign skilled workers and thus promoting the emigration of qualified personnel from their home countries, we primarily want to qualify and train young people in Germany and thus offer them real opportunities on the labour market.

The job centres must be better equipped in terms of personnel and finances to ensure effective advice and support. Bureaucratic hurdles must be removed so that help arrives. At the same time, more incentives are needed to create barrier-free workplaces. An inclusive world of work uses the potential of all and strengthens social cohesion.

Our goal is an efficient welfare state that leaves no one behind, rewards motivation and provides support in difficult times such as unemployment or illness.

In Germany, the statutory pension is currently a poverty trap for millions of citizens. One in five has less than 1200 euros in pension after 45 years of work. In the future, there will be many more. More and more pensioners are receiving basic security in old age, although a large proportion of those entitled do not apply at all because the bureaucratic hurdles are too high or for fear of stigmatisation.

We demand a minimum pension of 1500 euros after 40 years of insurance. Similar to our neighbouring countries, we advocate a tiered model: after 30 years of insurance, the minimum pension is 1300 euros and after 15 years it is 1200 euros.

According to the report of the scientific service of the Bundestag, long-term insured persons in Austria receive an average of 823 euros more pension per month. This pension difference is an indictment of our country!

Our goal is to bring about a fundamental reform of the pension insurance system based on the Austrian model.

As in Austria, all working people, including all members of the Bundestag and federal ministers, should make compulsory contributions to the statutory pension. This broadens the revenue base and creates inhibitions in politics to lower the pension level if the decision-makers themselves are affected.

The average benefit level should be at least 75 per cent of the net income earned during working life.

Measured in terms of economic power, Germany today spends significantly less money on pensions than ten years ago – and this despite the fact that the number of pensioners has grown by about 1 million.

To compensate for the inflation of recent years, pensions for all were to rise by 120 euros per month in a first step.

After a long working life, a dignified old age free of poverty must be guaranteed. It must be possible to maintain the standard of living that has been earned. We want to strengthen pay-as-you-go pensions and put an end to the promotion of private pension models, which low-income earners cannot afford anyway. We want to delete damping factors in the pension formula such as the Riester factor. They were only introduced to cut pensions and lure people into private pension contracts.

Anyone who has worked for 45 years and paid into the pension fund must be able to retire at 63 without deductions.

We clearly reject calls to further increase the retirement age.

No speculation with the pension on the stock market.

The BSW rejects the reintroduction of waiting days for which no pay is paid in the event of illness of employees.

Best education for everyone, from the coast to the Alps!

The education system is in a miserable state. The renovation backlog at school buildings and universities runs into the billions. A major problem is the shortage of teachers, special educators, educators and educators. Many educators work at the limit of their workload, on the verge of burnout. More and more classes are cancelled and facilities remain closed.

Nationwide, there is a shortage of over 300,000 daycare places for under-three-year-olds. A quarter of fourth-graders cannot read, write and calculate properly. The number of school leavers without a qualification is increasing. There is a lack of affordable housing for students and trainees. In short: the educational misery is getting worse and worse and politicians are standing idly by. Education is the key to social and societal participation and the development of personality

Good education is crucial for career opportunities and life prospects. Our underfunded education system does not meet the demands of a modern industrial country. Children and young people, regardless of their background, do not have at least approximately equal educational opportunities, nor are individual talents and talents systematically promoted. In hardly any other Western country do children's educational opportunities depend so much on the social status of their parents as in Germany.

Despite many good schools between Rostock and Rosenheim, often only the grievance can be managed. Elementary skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic are insufficiently taught. The long school closures of the Corona period have destroyed the educational opportunities of entire grades. Accordingly, Germany has been performing poorly in international comparative tests for years.

The shortage of skilled workers has been a major issue in Germany for years. Unfortunately, the debate usually only leads to a call for more immigration, while the home-made causes are

hardly addressed: acute teacher shortages, cancelled classes and wrong curricula. More and more young people are leaving school without elementary knowledge. They hardly have a chance on the job market later on. Two-thirds of current recipients of citizen's allowance do not have a vocational qualification, and many do not have a school-leaving certificate either.

We need a comprehensive renewal of education policy.

We want Germany to have a chance again to be seen as a country of poets and thinkers, and not as an educational emerging country!

The ban on cooperation in the education sector between the federal government and the states must be lifted with the aim of educational justice in the states. This will contribute to the end of small-scale education.

We demand equal educational opportunities nationwide through a nationwide education framework law that creates comparable framework conditions, legal entitlements and high quality standards in all federal states.

We demand an expansion of all-day schools and after-school care and homework supervision in order to make children more independent of the supportive possibilities of their parents.

Different types of schools as a prerequisite for different later training paths make sense in principle, but social selection according to the parental home is not. The early decision in most federal states as early as the 4th grade is one of the reasons why parents' wishes and expectations often have more influence on the children's educational path than their talents and talents.

Therefore, the school system must be permeable at all levels. We are committed to longer joint learning. Educational justice also means that educational opportunities must not depend on the parents' wallets.

In order for basic school education to be effective, preparation for basic technical and social skills must begin in the daycare centre.

We demand a mandatory German test for children from the age of 3 and, in the case of identified German deficits, compulsory (free of charge) attendance at a daycare centre with additional offers for integration and language education.

We demand stability or reduction of daycare fees and freedom from contributions in the medium term.

Primary schools must once again focus on the core competencies of reading, writing and arithmetic. "Writing by ear" was counterproductive and must disappear completely. Studies also show that analogue learning materials are superior to digital ones when it comes to acquiring reading and spelling skills.

We want to ban mobile phones and tablets from classrooms at least until the end of primary school and use them as little as possible in the classroom after that.

We call for a social media law based on the Australian model, so that children do not disappear into a virtual parallel universe, but communicate and laugh again in the here and now with real friends.

Instead of sickening social media algorithms, children need more exercise, fun and friends outside of school.

The federal government is to pay for the first year in the sports club for all children (subsidy of up to 150 euros per year). In this way, children are brought into the clubs and the clubs and their valuable work are supported.

We want universally binding educational standards: grading as the standard for measuring performance, reform of the framework curricula ordered according to

knowledge, skills and competences, moving away from pure competence orientation, reorientation towards binding teaching content.

In secondary schools, in addition to the acquisition of solid basic knowledge, individual strengths are to become the focus of the training. Every young person must be guaranteed the right to a training place. Strengthening vocational preparation at lower secondary level is just as necessary as upgrading intermediate school leaving certificates and apprenticeships – the "old" master craftsman professions in particular are among our strengths and should continue to be so in the future. With a nationwide internship concept, companies and businesses are to enter into close cooperation with the schools.

We need a vocational training pact so that vocational schools are modernised and better equipped.

We want to strengthen vocational preparation at lower secondary level at secondary schools.

The Bundeswehr, corporate lobbying and commerce have no place in schools. There is a need for more political education, peace education formats and democracy education in schools in all federal states.

We do not want the militarization of educational institutions and demand more peace education instead of advertising by the Bundeswehr in schools.

In order to solve the shortage of skilled workers in pedagogical professions, states and municipalities must be supported in training more teachers and educators. Working conditions in all educational institutions urgently need to be improved. To this end, teachers must be relieved of non-specialist tasks by support teams (social work, school psychologists, IT management).

Teacher training should include more practical elements. Dual forms of training that lead to a bachelor's/master's degree followed by a traineeship are conceivable. In the short term,

the shortage of teachers can be combated by attractive working conditions for lateral entrants.

In recent years, teachers have been increasingly burdened with additional tasks, such as IT management, school organization, and psychological counseling.

Teachers must be relieved of tasks from other subjects and be able to concentrate on teaching again.

The formation of support teams for everyday work at schools – social work, IT management, psychological support – can bring about a decisive improvement. The children and young people themselves must be able to perceive daycare centres and schools as safe havens again – without discrimination, bullying or racism – with dignity and recognition.

Education does not end in adulthood. Adult education centres must be financially strengthened. The chronic underfunding of universities must be ended. It is imperative that the federal government participates in the basic funding of universities and in the construction of higher education institutions with investment funds.

A BAföG reform to adequately finance studies and a higher education social pact for good social infrastructure are urgently needed. Universities must once again become places of free thought and open discourse. Professors and university staff must have the opportunity to express themselves critically within the framework of freedom of expression, without fear of disciplinary proceedings or job loss. Academic freedom must be restored.

We want civil clauses to be anchored at all universities and scientific institutions.

We stand for the end of chain fixed-term contracts and instead demand permanent positions for permanent tasks at universities.

Health and care: an end to the hunt for returns and two-class medicine

The well-being, human dignity and autonomy of patients must be the overarching goal of the health care system. However, health care in Germany is in a deep crisis. There is a lack of responsibility, cooperation and care, instead there are individual interests, undersupply, bureaucracy and profit orientation. The result is neglect of human attention, expensive apparatus medicine, superfluous operations and multiple examinations. Conversely, medically important but financially un lucrative preventive measures, examinations and inexpensive medicines and aids are prescribed less and less frequently. Competition from separate financing budgets means that hospitals, rehabilitation clinics, outpatient practices and care facilities do not cooperate for the benefit of patients. Politicians have also allowed pharmaceutical companies to rip off the general public with completely inflated prices for new medicines, while at the same time lowering the approval hurdles for new drugs and vaccines.

As a result of such wrong decisions and false incentives, we have the second most expensive health care system in the world, but we are at the bottom of the rankings in terms of the quality of care. Medical care has deteriorated significantly in recent years, especially for those with statutory health insurance, but the additional contributions will nevertheless increase drastically in January 2025. There is a shortage of doctors and dentists in the area, especially in regions with a low proportion of privately insured people. The way to the nearest hospital is also getting longer, with 40 hospitals and emergency rooms closed in the past three years alone. There is a lack of necessary nursing staff everywhere and complains about miserable working conditions. Pharmacies are dying and many medicines are no longer available.

Prevention, alternative forms of treatment, psychotherapy and simple human care are being neglected in favour of increasingly expensive "repair medicine", the preference for intervention-related diagnoses and the treatment of acute illnesses to the detriment of chronic multiple illnesses. These false incentives must be overcome.

Health care is based on human contact. Medical confidentiality is therefore a basic prerequisite for creating trust in care. Any efforts to digitize the healthcare system must be guided by this principle.

We want a health and care policy that ensures good care for every sick person and person in need of care. The BSW wants an end to two-class medicine, which disadvantages statutory health insurance patients and burdens them with more and more costs that should actually be borne by the general public.

We demand the tax financing of non-insurance benefits (e.g. contributions from recipients of citizen's allowance).

We demand the abolition of supplementary contributions and the introduction of a citizens' insurance scheme in which all citizens pay according to their income and receive the same benefits at the highest medical standards.

As an immediate measure, we demand the transfer of the retirement reserves of private health insurance companies in the event of a change of provider (so-called portability).

We want to strengthen the municipal level in the planning and organisation of health and care provision. Privatization, which has been intensified in recent years, has not brought

about any improvement in care and must be pushed back. The BSW wants to focus on the needs of the population.

We call for the abolition of the costly separation of the various care sectors, such as outpatient, nursing and inpatient care.

We call for the continuation of the innovative integrative care concepts that have been developed locally so far and provide for networked care across all actors.

We demand that the Joint Federal Committee be commissioned to formulate the minimum requirements to which these concepts must obey.

The federal states are not meeting their investment obligations under dual hospital financing. As a result, resorting to the means of closing hospitals is a cynical policy and reinforces the undersupply of citizens. We demand the preservation and better integration of hospitals into local health care. Instead of their current competition, which is at the expense of patients, a closer integration of outpatient and inpatient patient care should be promoted.

We reject hospital closures and the current hospital reform, as the outpatient sector cannot take over care and the reform is not part of an effective development perspective.

In particular, family doctors as contact persons for patients must be remunerated at a higher level. In general, the discontinuation of private insurance must not lead to a loss of income for doctors and dentists in private practice.

Every year, citizens pay more than five billion euros out of their own pockets for dental treatments.

We want to bring necessary dentures and visual aids back into the catalogue of benefits of statutory health insurance. People's smiles must not depend on their wallets!

Maternity clinics and midwife-run delivery rooms must not be located in an unreachable distance, but must be available close to home.

The discrimination against paediatric and adolescent medicine must be abolished and training in paediatric nursing must be resumed. In the same way, palliative medicine, hospice care and inpatient care must be promoted in such a way that this phase of human life can be spent in dignity.

The nursing home must not be a poverty trap! The co-payments for nursing home residents must be significantly reduced. That is why we are calling for full care insurance, which is mainly financed by tax calculations. Dignified care in old age must not be a question of money.

We want to create more medical school places and training places for psychotherapists, train more nursing staff and better pay. Preventing young people with a hard numerus clausus from studying medicine and then recruiting doctors from poorer countries is a cynical policy.

Stop rent increases – promote non-profit housing construction

Politics has failed on the housing market. It has not protected citizens from rapidly rising housing costs, but has continued to drive up inflation through incorrect requirements and a lack of regulation. More and more people can hardly pay their rent. Anyone who has to move today is faced with an almost impossible task, not only in big cities. Where citizens and families dare to take the plunge into the longed-for home, the state also intervenes and benefits from rising real estate prices.

The traffic light government had boastfully promised to have 400,000 new apartments built annually, including 100,000 subsidized affordable apartments. This goal was missed by miles. The number of building permits has recently continued to plummet. The number of social housing units has reached a low of around one million. In 1990, there were almost three times as many. Every year, significantly more apartments fall out of the social bond than new ones are built. In view of high interest rates and construction costs as well as increasing financial burdens on broad sections of the population and municipalities, it is high time for a trend reversal in new residential construction.

Non-profit housing construction must be strengthened. Larger parts of the housing market must again be subject to the rules of non-profit status, non-profit and municipal housing companies should receive low-interest loans and launch a large housing construction program. Where social housing is built, the social commitment must apply permanently.

Tenants have to spend more and more on housing, especially in metropolitan areas and university towns. Instead of increasing housing benefit, which ultimately only benefits property owners, the state should cap rents and invest in the construction of new rental apartments – with a clear focus on the low-cost segment. These earmarked public funds are intended to strengthen the equity of the municipal housing companies and enable them to build rental apartments that remain in public ownership in the long term and are thus available for affordable housing. One example is municipal, non-profit housing in Vienna, thanks to which around 60 percent of Viennese live in apartments that have been built or renovated with housing subsidies.

We will campaign for the adoption of a law to better combat rent usury and take legal action against grossly excessive rents for furnished rooms. It is also necessary to accelerate construction projects, for example by

simplifying serial construction and introducing a simplified approval procedure for social housing. At federal, state and local level, we advocate initiatives to tighten regulation of the conversion of apartments into commercial holiday homes and to combat housing vacancies.

We demand a nationwide rent cap instead of an ineffective rent brake.

In all regions where it is no longer possible to afford adequate housing with a normal income, we want to freeze rents until the end of the decade. Costs for renovations have to be borne by the landlords.

We want to curb speculation on building land and promote an active, long-term land policy and a sustainable urban development policy with mixed neighbourhoods.

In order to curb construction costs, excessive building regulations must be put to the test. Unproductive profits of private landowners resulting from planning-related increases in value must be skimmed off, at least in part.

Transport policy for all instead of paternalism and bans

The car is still the most important means of transport in Germany. While one in three uses the car every day, only one in ten uses public transport or by bicycle. For most people, the car is an important part of everyday life and enables mobility, especially in rural areas.

We want to put an end to the hostility to cars that the Greens in particular stand for in transport policy. Making driving more and more expensive is inconsiderate of those who are dependent on their car.

Rip-offs on motorways are an expensive nuisance. The fact that the monopolist of service stations has been able to line its pockets for many years at the expense of motorists must be ended politically.

Horrendous fuel prices and overpriced food and toilet prices cannot be justified. Motorists may no longer be charged at motorway service stations, while at the same time they also pay for the infrastructure at service stations via the vehicle tax.

We want everyone to be able to choose their own means of transport. This requires inexpensive fuels and affordable and well-developed local public transport: safe, clean and cheap. The fact that countless train stations throughout the country have been closed for decades and that buses no longer run in many villages has massively damaged social cohesion in the country.

We are committed to lower prices for buses and trains and to the permanent preservation of the Deutschland-Ticket at an affordable price.

Instead of blindly focusing on e-mobility, we want to promote various approaches, including new drive technologies, alternative fuels and the development of more economical combustion engines.

We want to overturn the ban on internal combustion engines.

In the field of e-mobility, low-cost models must be offered. In addition, we want to intensify research and development work on technologies such as solid-state batteries. The production and further development of battery cells must also take place in Germany again. Our country must strive for a similar leading position in technologies for mobility in the 21st century as we did in the 20th century.

With a "people's lease" for environmentally friendly vehicles from European production, including fuel-efficient combustion engines

(less than 5l), we want to provide people in regions with low public transport services with appropriate mobility.

Because more and more citizens can no longer afford to buy a car. The entry rate for the monthly leasing should be based on the price of the Deutschlandticket. Following the French model, income limits are intended to ensure that the subsidy reaches low and normal earners and not those who do not need it at all. This would avoid the design flaws of previous premiums that promoted high-priced electric cars for the big budget. This leasing program would promote the sale of small, fuel-efficient cars, secure jobs and at the same time provide strong incentives to invest in fuel-efficient models. Such a rescue program for the German and European car industry would make sense in terms of economic and climate policy and would also be fair, because it would support those who would otherwise not be able to afford a new car.

We will pursue a transport policy that focuses on the renovation and expansion of the infrastructure. More money is needed for road construction and for the renewal of bridges in Germany. Those who save on transport infrastructure will pay double costs tomorrow: That's why potholes have to be plugged now and not just budget holes. Dilapidated bridges, dilapidated roads, the poor condition of many cycle paths and delays in buses and trains cost companies and employees every day not only nerves, but also time and money. Therefore, a large-scale investment program is needed, which is financed by a reform of the debt brake.

Where the infrastructure is decaying, we want to repair it, where new roads are needed, we want to build them.

We want to bring more traffic from road to rail. Many highways are overcrowded with

trucks. Because the railways have been cut to pieces for decades, freight transport is often not a practical alternative today. That has to change again. High track prices, which will rise sharply again in 2025, are also putting a strain on logistics companies and creating incentives for transport by road instead of rail. Instead of spending a lot of money on promoting climate policy hobby projects, which often have very little effect on the CO₂ balance, reducing track access charges and expanding freight transport capacities would be a real benefit both for the climate and for less congested motorways.

Deutsche Bahn's problems, including passenger transport, are homemade. Privatization fantasies and wrong priorities in both management and politics have made it possible for the once so proud Deutsche Bahn to be associated with delays, train cancellations and endless breakdowns.

We want a railway that concentrates again on its core tasks in our state – local and long-distance transport as well as freight transport by rail. It must once again become the public model company it once was.

We demand an integrated and timed rail and public transport concept based on the Swiss model. The railways – the rail network and trains – must once again be made into a reliable and successful "Deutsche Bundesbahn".

We want a transport policy that is there for all road users – from motorists to pedestrians. This requires safe cycle paths in the city centre as well as attractive local and long-distance public transport and intact roads and motorways. We rely on investments, a sense of reality and togetherness, instead of ideological prohibitions and unrealistic ideas. Mobility must not become a luxury, but must be affordable for everyone!

Food prices down, consumer empowerment

A functioning market economy needs strong consumer protection so that consumers and companies meet on an equal footing. There is a great need for improvement here. So far, large companies such as energy companies, food chains, banks, insurance companies or online retailers have been allowed to build up overwhelming market power. This allows them to dictate prices and contract terms – often to the detriment of customers. Far too often, consumers in Germany are ripped off. If they then want to enforce their rights, it is unnecessarily complicated, lengthy and expensive. We want to strengthen consumer protection.

We advocate clear and understandable labelling on all foodstuffs. Consumers must be able to see at first glance what is contained in a product and where it comes from. This transparency is a basic prerequisite for a responsible purchasing decision.

We want to provide sufficient funding for the consumer advice centres, expand their advisory services and important market observation (so-called "market watchdogs").

We are also committed to strict control of food quality. State food control must be adequately financed and staffed in order to effectively combat consumer deception and health risks from harmful products.

We want to strictly regulate SCHUFA and other private credit agencies so that the rights of consumers are protected.

The obtaining of credit reports for consumer contracts that have nothing to do with loans should be prohibited. Stored data must be deleted after one year at the latest. More and more citizens are finding it difficult to pay their

electricity and gas bills. So that no one has to sit in the dark or freeze in winter, we want to introduce a legal ban on electricity and gas cuts.

In addition, there is a need for nationwide access to social debt counselling services that mediate between creditors and debtors and help to develop realistic debt relief concepts.

Healthy nutrition must not be a privilege of the higher earners. But this is exactly the current situation for many people: fruit, vegetables, meat and other fresh food are too expensive to afford on a regular basis. Yet they are important for a healthy diet. In the process, farmers receive an ever smaller part of the final price that the buyer pays in the supermarket. What drives up prices is the enormous market power of food companies, large slaughterhouses and dairies as well as the supermarket chains that dominate food retailing in Germany.

We need a price regulator based on the Swiss model to make high profit margins of individual market participants transparent and, if necessary, to take action against them.

Strong antitrust law is also necessary so that market-dominant corporations can be unbundled.

Food must not be made even more expensive by state levies such as a meat tax. Instead, we demand a reduction in VAT to 0 percent for basic foodstuffs such as meat, cereals, dairy products, as well as fruit and vegetables. However, such a change would only make sense if it were actually passed on to consumers and did not end up in the accounts of the Aldi heirs or the Schwarz family.

In the catering industry, VAT should fall again from 19 to seven percent.

Every child in Germany deserves good nutrition.

We therefore want a free, healthy lunch in daycare centres and schools.

We attach great importance to quality: the mills should be balanced, fresh and produced as regionally as possible. This relieves the burden on families and ensures that every child has access to healthy nutrition – regardless of their parents' income. Nutrition-related deficits in children are thus effectively counteracted.

We want to combine catering in daycare centres and schools with a permanent programme for nutrition education that reaches all age groups and is adapted to them. Among other things, learning content about cultivation, storage and preparation is to be taught.

Family-friendly Germany

The BSW wants to make Germany a child- and family-friendly country. Starting a family must no longer be a risk of poverty. We want to create financial framework conditions and contribute to a culture in which people are happy to choose to have children. Children and young people enjoy special protection so that they can develop well.

Nationwide, there is a shortage of over 300,000 daycare places for under-three-year-olds. The daycare groups are too large and there are too few educators. As a result, daycare groups are closed and working conditions continue to deteriorate.

One in five children in Germany is at risk of poverty, and many more are at risk of social exclusion. We stand up for a social and family policy that specifically lifts affected children,

young people and their families out of poverty and opens up opportunities for them to participate, promote talent and receive a good education – regardless of their origin.

We stand up for good education and equal opportunities from kindergarten to school and training to university.

Family policy must focus on the needs of low and normal earners. Child poverty is always also parental poverty and can only be combated through higher wages and better social security in the event of illness and unemployment.

Every child must be worth the same to the state: the tax allowance of the chief physician for his children should be the same as the child benefit that a nurse receives for her children.

With an investment programme "Children and Education", we want to invest in a child, youth and family-friendly infrastructure. We demand low-threshold access close to home to offers such as children's and youth leisure facilities, libraries, sports facilities or music schools. The funds of the investment programme are to flow into the education and care infrastructure in cities and municipalities, some of whose dilapidated facilities are suffering from the long-standing renovation and investment backlog. This is especially true in the places and areas where poor families live.

Companies are to be held more accountable when it comes to providing daycare places. In return, there are to be tax advantages for these companies.

Good daycare and all-day school places must be available everywhere, also to support women in their gainful employment and to promote equal living conditions. In addition, we want to upgrade the social and educator professions.

Focus on social actors – living diversity, strengthening cohesion

Our party stands for the preservation of the state's neutrality in religious and ideological questions. We emphasize the fundamental right to free exercise of religion according to Article 4 of the Basic Law. Every person has the right to practice his religion freely or not to choose any religion. This fundamental right is non-negotiable and a cornerstone of our democratic society.

We recognize the significant contributions of churches, religious communities and world-wide associations. This includes in particular their achievements in the social, cultural and societal spheres. Whether Christian churches, Jewish, Islamic or other religious communities – they do valuable work for the common good, social peace and the cultural diversity of our country. In addition, secular and ideological associations are also important actors in society that enrich our democratic coexistence. Their perspectives and commitment also contribute to the promotion of tolerance and social progress.

We strive for constructive cooperation with religious, ideological, cultural, sporting, social, scientific, political, media or other civil society actors who serve the common good, contribute to integration and strengthen social cohesion. We reject any form of discrimination. Our goal is to promote an inclusive society in which all actors can contribute to the common future.

Volunteering is a central pillar of our society for us, which is why we will promote and support it in a more targeted manner in the future. We are firmly committed to a society based on mutual respect, openness and peaceful coexistence. Therefore, we reject fundamentalist-ideological interpretations of religion or worldviews that endanger

collective rights and democracy in the sense of a just and equal society.

Women's rights instead of gender ideology

Equal rights for women and men are enshrined in Article 3 of our Basic Law. Women make up about half of the population. They have the legal right to equal participation and equal development opportunities – at work and in the family. But in reality, women are still disadvantaged in many ways. They are underrepresented in many areas and especially at higher functional levels. On average, women earn less than men – for the same work. The so-called gender pay gap is continued in a comparatively low retirement pension. The fact that women's pensions are so low is partly due to the fact that they mainly do the care work alone. They take on household and childcare as well as caring for relatives and work part-time or have to give up their employment altogether.

The central concern of the BSW is to move from legal equality to real equality. This requires, among other things, concrete work-life balance solutions, e.g. through the nationwide provision of crèches and kindergarten places as well as high-quality care for children in these facilities.

At least 75 days a year, children in Germany have school holidays or no lessons due to public holidays. For parents who are full-time employed and often dependent on two incomes, this is an enormous challenge to ensure care. With 30 days, the holiday periods can hardly be covered. Especially for single parents, full-time employment is almost impossible. Here, the state is called upon to offer reliable, free and high-quality holiday care.

However, childcare is not only indispensable during the holiday periods - it must also be guaranteed reliably and for a sufficiently long time during school hours, ideally through all-day care, which includes free offers in the areas of sports, art and music as well as school meals. The model of all-day school or secure after-school care must finally prevail throughout German land. Currently, there is a shortage of hundreds of thousands of places nationwide!

Caring for relatives is work and deserves adequate remuneration or financial appreciation as well as social recognition. For example, the care allowance must increase significantly. At the moment, it is far too low: The care allowance at level 4 (where almost 24-hour care is necessary) has been 800 euros since January of this year. The care allowance should be based on the remuneration that professional caregivers receive – in accordance with the principle: equal work, equal pay!

There is a great need for action with regard to the protection of women from violence. Violence against women has been on the rise for years. Every third day in Germany, a woman is killed by her (ex-) partner. Nationwide, there is a shortage of more than 12,000 women's shelter places. We have set ourselves the goal of expanding the violence protection and support systems and significantly increasing the number of shelters and women's shelters. The financing of women's shelters must be secured by the federal government in the long term. The use of women's shelters and shelters must always be free of charge for women.

In addition to supporting and advising women affected by violence, violence prevention measures are another important field of action. Comparable approaches are needed nationwide to prevent violence against women and girls. Accordingly, information about and awareness of protection against violence must be an integral part of the educational curriculum – in schools and universities.

Furthermore, offers in the area of perpetrator work and anti-aggression training must be expanded.

The free, self-determined decision about one's own body and about whether or not to have a child must be guaranteed. The BSW calls for the fundamental exemption from punishment of abortion up to the 12th week.

Contraception is usually a woman's business, i.e. women usually bear the costs for it. Therefore, the BSW demands that prescription contraceptives be covered by the statutory health insurance companies and made available to women and girls free of charge.

According to the new Self-Determination Act, men can declare themselves women by simply signing them, potentially gaining access to areas such as women's sports, women's changing rooms and toilets, as well as women's prisons and other women-specific (shelter) spaces. This poses a danger and impairment for women and girls. Women's rights must not be sacrificed on the altar of political correctness. The new Self-Determination Act, which allows the change of gender once a year, undermines women's protective rights. We expressly reject this law. The change of gender identity should be possible without discrimination for the few who really need it for a satisfied life with a medical report.

The category "Women's Sports" is based on biological sex – not on subjectively experienced gender identity. The separation in competitive sports according to biological sex is based on the fact that women cannot compete in many sports due to physical differences from men with the same talent and level of training. Allowing biological men who feel they are women to compete in the women's category is unfair and contradicts the core idea of sporting competition.

In the opinion of the BSW, sex offenders should not have a legal right to change their gender entry. On the other hand, it should not be punished as a criminal offence if the press or the victim calls a sex offender a "man" – even if he wants to be addressed as a woman.

4. Ensure security, protect freedom

Security is the prerequisite for freedom and for peaceful coexistence in German land. State action must serve to protect people and civil rights. We stand for security and freedom.

However, while state action is increasingly failing in its core tasks, state encroachment is increasing. The political authoritarianism of the Corona period went so far that basic civil liberties were suspended by the state. But even today, freedom of expression is under pressure, the "permissible" corridor of opinion is being narrowed. Many people no longer dare to openly say what they think. Surveillance, cancel culture and pressure to conform have taken on proportions that are incompatible with a free society.

Safe streets and squares: For a well-equipped police force

More and more people no longer feel safe in public spaces. We are committed to ensuring that the police are staffed and equipped in such a way that they can provide security from crime. Not least for the effective fight against clan crime, the police

need more personnel and better equipment.

Visible police presence on streets and public places is important for a sense of security and for the prevention of crime. This requires sufficient staff.

It is an untenable state of affairs that in some cities the police can no longer really support victims of crime due to an acute shortage of personnel, and even serious crimes are no longer prosecuted. We want to change that.

We oppose the privatization of security tasks. Security belongs in the professional hands of the police. Police officers, firefighters, rescue and disaster relief workers, doctors and health professionals as well as countless volunteers stand up for people's lives and rights every day. When it comes down to it, they must protect our lives. For this commitment and their passionate commitment, these everyday heroes need our support.

We want to better protect law enforcement officers, rescue workers and medical personnel from violent and physical attacks by accelerating charges and executing sentences.

Our police must be put in a position to put a stop to criminals, terrorists and extremists more effectively. We demand that the police be solidly equipped with modern resources and IT – especially with regard to current challenges such as cybercrime and terrorism. In doing so, we rely on excellent training and further education in academies and training centres.

It is important that all powers give the safety authorities exactly the tools they need to perform their tasks and must always have clear and unambiguous boundaries. Authorisation bases with a particularly high level of interference – such as the AI-based

evaluation of inventory data or automated data comparison – are only necessary where our society needs to be protected from extreme, terrorist or other serious crimes.

The police also need relief from subordinate tasks. House searches for insulting politicians or scouring the Internet for possible insults are certainly not among the tasks that our police and investigative authorities should deal with.

Politicians who employ entire public prosecutors' offices to prosecute their critics for harmless postings on social media are diverting capacities that are needed for more important things. While lèse-majesté against foreign heads of government has no longer been punishable since 2017, the Bundestag added the offence of insulting a "person standing in the political life of the people" to the Criminal Code in 2021. However, it is precisely politicians who occupy positions of power and whose decisions often have direct consequences for people's lives and prosperity that have to face criticism from citizens in a free democratic state governed by the rule of law.

We demand that the offence of insulting a "person standing in the political life of the people" be deleted from Section 188 of the Criminal Code.

The task of the constitution protection authorities is to identify extremist tendencies at an early stage, to prevent terrorist violence or activities that endanger the state, and to protect against political and economic espionage.

The Office for the Protection of the Constitution must neither protect the government nor damage core fundamental rights such as freedom of opinion, freedom of the press and information, or the right of assembly and association. As an important corrective to the fact that the Office for the Protection of the

Constitution is bound by instructions, parliamentary supervision and control must be exercised effectively and thoroughly. The BSW in the Bundestag will make full use of parliamentary rights.

The newly created observation area "Delegitimization of the State", which was created in response to the major protests against the corona measures, among other things, is a structural error. We want to abolish this task.

A functioning judiciary is also a prerequisite for a democracy based on the rule of law. Our judicial authorities, especially in the federal states, are severely understaffed, although the number of proceedings increases every year. This leads to an overload of staff and excessively long duration of proceedings, which rightly makes those affected dissatisfied.

We want significantly more staff in the judicial authorities and a reduction in the number of proceedings. We will achieve this through sensible reforms, especially in the area of criminal law.

Secure borders: Stop uncontrolled migration

Germany has taken in a major city every year since 2015. More than a quarter of a million people were killed last year alone. Even though the number of refugees arriving here is thus declining slightly, it is still far too high. One of the consequences is that many children have to learn in overcrowded classes in which a large proportion of the pupils can hardly speak German, that the search for accommodation has often become a nightmare even for normal earners, and that women in particular avoid certain streets and squares or outdoor swimming pools because they no longer feel safe there.

The social benefits for asylum seekers and refugees, which are very high by European standards, have a great attraction.

But a strong welfare state only works if not everyone can immigrate to it. Countries like Denmark have understood this, but Germany has not understood this so far. Citizen's allowance expenditure for refugees has risen from around six billion euros in 2021 to almost 14 billion euros. If the citizen's allowance increasingly becomes a refugee fund, this undermines acceptance and harms those who need it, such as single parents who are deprived of a daycare place.

The promised job turbo for Ukrainians and other refugee groups with protection status must finally be implemented.

At the same time, the uncontrolled influx of people, about whose biography, willingness to integrate and attitudes we know very little, is a security risk. The naïve admission practice of recent years has already been reflected in a disproportionate increase in knife crime, sexual offences and religiously motivated terrorism.

But even criminals without a right of residence are rarely deported. The inability of politicians to act on this issue outrages many people. Many well-integrated immigrants who abide by the law and have become a valuable part of our society are also calling for a U-turn in migration policy, because they are afraid that failed integration, Islamist violence and crimes committed by non-Germans will tip the social climate in a xenophobic direction. They are already experiencing increased hostility and attacks.

We defend the fundamental right to asylum for those who are genuinely in need of protection. At the same time, we want to end uncontrolled immigration. Germany needs a breathing space for the coming years. From now on, the principle should apply:

Anyone entering from a safe third country has no right of residence. Those who do not have a right of residence are not entitled to an

asylum procedure and are not entitled to social benefits.

The attacks in Mannheim, Solingen and Magdeburg have shaken our country. In all cases, there have been failures by the authorities in advance. The attacker of Solingen would not have been allowed to be in the country at all if the law had been observed in the deportation practice. The Magdeburg attacker had already been convicted of threats of violence in Germany when he was granted asylum in 2016 after a brief examination of his application. Despite many indications of a danger he posed, he was able to prepare and carry out the attack unmolested. An interior minister who has allowed and promoted that the Office for the Protection of the Constitution primarily takes care of harmless government critics and thereby neglects real threats, bears a great deal of responsibility for this failure.

We demand that laws and, if necessary, the Basic Law be amended in such a way that refugees lose their right to an asylum procedure in Germany after serious crimes and that protection against deportation is limited to cases in which there are clear indications that the person concerned is threatened with the death penalty in his country of origin.

Immigrants who come into serious conflict with the law must be expelled and, if necessary, deported. Appropriate administrative and court proceedings must be pursued as a matter of priority and quickly.

According to the Central Register of Foreigners, around 572,000 foreigners without a residence permit or permit were living in Germany at the end of 2023. They have neither an ongoing asylum application nor protection status or are tolerated for other reasons, such as a job or good integration. It is important to ensure that these people leave Germany quickly. This also sends a signal to potential immigrants that you cannot expect to stay in Germany permanently if you are not entitled to protection.

From January to September 2024, 23,610 of 38,328 planned deportations failed. This is a breach of promise by the chancellor, who had promised a change of course. The right to asylum is being abused on a large scale. Law and order must finally be enforced again when it comes to deportations. The authorities and courts responsible for asylum procedures must be staffed as a matter of priority and the procedures must be streamlined so that they are normally completed in three months.

It happens again and again that the authorities concentrate on deporting those whom they can most easily get hold of. These are usually law-abiding, well-integrated immigrants with a permanent residence and in work or training.

Immigration authorities and courts should focus primarily on those who are not yet integrated or do not want to integrate at all.

The prerequisite for integration is learning the German language and integration into working life. To this end, we need an adult education system in which school-leaving qualifications can be obtained and additional qualifications are possible if existing vocational training does not correspond to the German system and new vocational training is provided to ensure that these immigrants have access to the labour market.

Many European countries are now calling for a turnaround in European asylum policy. The principle that anyone who reaches the EU can almost always stay, regardless of their protection status, exerts an enormous pull and is causing more and more people to fall into the clutches of criminal smuggling gangs who make billions in business with migration. Those who are too poor to pay the smugglers or too weak for the dangerous escape routes, on the other hand, are left in the lurch by the EU.

In recent years, it has been the German government in particular that has

prevented a change in this dysfunctional European asylum policy. This blockade must stop. With all due respect and sympathy for the reasons that lead people to leave their homes and seek protection or a better life in Europe, the right of asylum is not a right for persecuted people to be accepted in the country of their choice with the most generous social benefits.

European asylum law is dysfunctional. It feeds highly criminal, unscrupulous slingshots and ultimately kills more people than it saves. It urgently needs to be reformed. If possible, asylum procedures should take place outside the EU in safe third countries.

We want to terminate the Global Compact for Migration, which obliges Germany to promote international migration movements, as soon as possible.

Reducing the causes of flight and migration at their places of origin helps the large number of people affected more effectively than taking in a small proportion in Germany. Especially since those who make it to Germany are usually not the most needy. That is why we are calling for a reorientation of EU foreign and trade policy aimed at improving living conditions in the countries of origin. This includes the lifting of economic sanctions against countries with politically unpopular governments, because it is always the population that suffers most from the sanctions. Germany must make a contribution to ensuring that the international community strengthens its commitment to ending wars, development cooperation and climate protection in order to sustainably improve living conditions in the countries of the Global South. This would not only increase the quality of life on the ground, but also effectively combat the causes of migration.

The largest flows of refugees to Germany land in the last decade have come from or

through countries that have been destabilized by the United States and its allies: Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Libya. Therefore, all military support for warring and civil war parties must be stopped.

The war in Ukraine, which was started by Russia, could also have been avoided in advance by a different US policy. Support for warring parties must not be used as a means to gain economic or geopolitical advantage. Germany and the EU must not participate, directly or indirectly, in military adventures to overthrow unpopular governments. We are also advocating for greater financial support for humanitarian organisations such as the UNHCR to help refugees in crisis situations on the ground.

Strengthening freedom of expression

More and more people in Germany no longer dare to speak their minds freely. This is a bad development for a democracy. For living together in a democracy, it is important that people express their opinions freely and that debates can take place openly. Without freedom of opinion and diversity of opinion, there is no democracy.

We want to recreate a social climate in which every citizen has the feeling that he or she can express his or her opinion freely.

"In a democratic state, the formation of the will of the people must take place freely, openly and unregulated" – according to the Federal Constitutional Court. The process of forming opinions and opinions among the population must therefore remain fundamentally "state-free".

At present, however, millions of euros of taxpayers' money are being spent to influence

the climate of opinion in Germany. This includes the promotion of certain projects, programmes and organisations ("non-governmental organisations") as well as the promotion of so-called fact checkers, who often do not check facts at all, but instead disseminate their own opinions under the heading "fact check".

We demand the end of all forms of cooperation between the state and the media to influence the free formation of opinion.

We demand an end to the funding of projects, programmes and organisations that are intended to influence public discourse and stand for certain political opinions. We reject a so-called democracy promotion law.

Freedom of expression goes very far in Germany. However, it is not protected, for example, if someone deliberately spreads false facts. Furthermore, freedom of expression finds its limits, for example, in the case of criminal statements.

However, the boundaries of legitimate expressions of opinion are softened by the established parties through the use of unclear or vague terms such as "disinformation" or "hate and incitement". For example, the German government supports a definition of the term "disinformation", which makes it possible to combat expressions of opinion that are protected by the law. What is understood by "hatred and incitement" can be punishable, but it is often not – especially not when it comes to permissible criticism of those in power.

Organized denunciation is a means of dictatorships, not democracies. In the meantime, however, there are numerous state-funded reporting offices where statements that are clearly covered by freedom of expression can also be reported. The denunciation of completely legal opinions is therefore openly promoted by the state. It is also a direct attack on freedom of expression

and thus also on democracy if the state now also wants to take action against expressions of opinion "below the threshold of criminal liability", i.e. statements protected by the Basic Law. All this serves to deliberately narrow the framework of discourse and does not belong in a liberal democracy.

We demand that these limits of freedom of expression are not weakened by the use of unclear and undefined terms.

We call for the abolition of reporting offices and their financing with taxpayers' money. We reject the structural recording and evaluation of expressions of opinion by the state.

As such, state organs must serve everyone and behave neutrally. There is an obligation to neutrality and objectivity. Disparaging language towards citizens endangers the free exchange of opinions, as it can lead to intimidation effects. One-sided moralization is used as a method to stifle factual debates. This establishes a friend-foe mentality that makes open social discourse increasingly difficult and poisons the social climate.

We demand compliance with the constitutional requirements of neutrality and objectivity. Defamation of dissenters harms the debate just as much as moralization that distracts from necessary substantive debates.

The Digital Services Act, an EU regulation that has been fully applicable since February last year, contains, among other things, rules for online platforms according to which not only criminal but also certain lawful content can be deleted. Some of the terminology is so vague that neither the citizen nor the online platforms can know what exactly may or may not be posted on the Internet. This can lead to self-censorship by citizens and to a deletion

practice by online operators that is no longer compatible with our standards of freedom of expression.

Criminal law has been expanded more and more in recent years to the detriment of freedom of expression. If criminal law moves ever closer to everyday language, this leads to intimidation effects among citizens. In addition, the public prosecutor's office in German is bound by instructions and is therefore exposed to political influences. This was also made clear in the investigations into the-Ex scandal, which have repeatedly met with resistance in the judiciary.

We demand that criminal law is not unduly extended to the detriment of freedom of expression.

We demand an independent public prosecutor's office without being bound by instructions. Because at the moment we see how the European Court of Justice does not guarantee independent action.

Coming to terms with Corona policy and making amends for injustice

During the Corona period, fundamental civil liberties were arbitrarily suspended by an encroaching state. People were excluded from public life because of their vaccination decision and in some cases deprived of their jobs, although there was no medical justification for this due to the lack of external protection of the vaccination.

Millions of people affected by psychological, economic, social and health damage caused by lockdowns, school closures, business closures, occupational bans, 2G and compulsory vaccination in health professions and in the Bundeswehr need a voice. Many vaccine victims are still waiting in vain for medical help and recognition.

The RKI files that have become known show the dimension of the government's political influence on the Robert Koch Institute and the suppression of dissenting positions in public discourse. The authority's internal self-regulation failed. That's why we need an honest reappraisal.

We demand a reappraisal of the Corona period by a committee of inquiry in the Bundestag. Political decisions and measures must be put to the test. Political decision-makers and their experts must take responsibility in the committee of inquiry.

The recording and compensation of vaccine damage must be reduced in bureaucracy and taboos. We finally need nationwide medical assistance for vaccine-injured people, as well as a large-scale study that uses anonymised health insurance data to investigate whether certain diseases have significantly occurred more frequently in vaccinated people than in the unvaccinated.

It is necessary to strengthen internal self-regulation by amending the Federal Civil Service Act (BBG) and the Civil Service Status Act (BeamtStG). The legally enshrined obligation to remonstrate must not be career-damaging when exercised. Civil servants must be able to point out grievances without experiencing consequences under service law.

We want to revise the Infection Protection Act (IfSG). The changes in the Corona period have created opportunities for draconian measures and these continue to this day. In particular, we want to repeal § 22a IfSG (regulations on proof of vaccination, recovery and testing for COVID-19 as well as COVID-19 certificates) and the catalogue of measures of § 28a IfSG.

The RKI must be reformed and its independence secured. Likewise, the health authorities must become independent

specialist authorities again. The RKI has shown that it cannot handle a crisis with its own expertise and self-confidence in the face of political influence. The health authorities of the states were also politically influenced. The population's trust in the highest epidemic control authority and in the health authorities was deeply shaken as a result.

We call for a Corona amnesty law that ends proceedings based on arbitrary regulations and refunds fines levied, while criminal proceedings for actual enrichment or serious offences remain exempt.

The WHO Pandemic Treaty is an international agreement intended to regulate the responsibilities of the World Health Organization (WHO) and national governments in preventing pandemics and dealing with pandemics. Among other things, it gives the WHO Director-General the right to declare different types of pandemics.

We demand that the German government does not agree to a WHO pandemic treaty with expanded competencies for the WHO. The inglorious role of the WHO in the Corona period must be dealt with.

Media and culture: opinion instead of muzzle

The German media landscape is undergoing a radical upheaval. citizens' trust and acceptance of media content are steadily declining. On the distribution platforms of the tech giants, non-transparent algorithms that can be manipulated by the providers control the news. Alternative facts and narrow corridors of opinion endanger democratic discourse. Yet a critical journalism that questions governments and reflects a broad spectrum of opinions is essential for our democracy. Public service broadcasting should actually be a model for this kind of balanced and critical reporting – but it has become part of the problem.

We want a fundamental reform of the ÖRR and a renegotiation of the Media State Treaty.

We reject an increase in the broadcasting fee.

The contract presented so far by the so-called Future Commission does not contain any significant reforms of the public broadcasters. Previous organisational structures and financing models remain untouched in the reform paper, as do the disproportionately high salaries of artistic directors and directors. We do not want to abolish public broadcasting, but rather reformulate it in such a way that it can regain trust. This can only succeed if the interests and participation of the contributors are adequately taken into account.

Educational programmes and reports on political and cultural events are currently disproportionate to the offers of entertainment and sports programmes. A glaring disparity has led to cost explosions and significant watering of the state mandate of public broadcasting. Currently, only 44 cents of one euro of contribution flow into the program. Fee money seeps into external production companies, exorbitant salaries at the top, crushing pension burdens and unjustified multiple structures including excessive bureaucracy.

The remuneration of directors and directors should be significantly reduced and linked to the salaries of the public service in the future. Fee payments to commentators, experts and celebrities are to be limited and publicly accessible.

The current Reform State Treaty contains an "up-to-dateness clause", which is ultimately a depublication obligation: on the Internet,

recourse to broadcasts that were made more than 14 days ago is to be excluded. This is unacceptable. At the very least, the broadcasters' own productions financed by the contributors must be available for an unlimited period of time.

The majority of the ÖRR's supervisory bodies, which oversee both finances and the legally regulated programme mandate, are made up of representatives close to the state or party. All too often, a journalistic consensus prevails in editorial offices. This one-sidedness in reporting and the narrowing of the corridor of opinion in political commentary rightly outrages many people.

We demand that the control over the ÖRR and the composition of its committees be organized outside the party and that the influence of the fee payers be strengthened.

We call for the establishment of a commission of inquiry: the reporting and commenting of the public broadcasters must be examined to see whether it corresponds to the mandate of objective information and independence from the government.

The BSW calls for art and culture as well as cultural participation and education to be defined as compulsory tasks of the state.

We support the initiative "Protection of Art and Culture in the Basic Law".

The safeguarding of state, private and independent art and culture venues must be extended to include the creation of long-term protection instruments for artists and cultural workers against loss of earnings through no fault of their own. Cultural education must also remain an indispensable part of general school education and be strengthened. Project funding by state and municipal funding agencies must be non-discriminatory and without any obligation to make political commitments.

The BSW is committed to better social security for freelance artists.

The real working and living conditions of cultural workers, who are often classified as self-employed, are insufficiently reflected in the regulations of social and labour law. For example, a constant alternation between project-related fee-based, fixed-term or short-term employment and subsequent unemployment prevents social security in the security systems provided for this purpose and often leads to poverty in old age.

The BSW rejects any attack on the artists' social security fund and calls for its reform to secure the livelihood of artists and cultural workers.

Civil rights in the digital world

Digitization can make life easier. This can include digital access to government services, or making work easier through the use of artificial intelligence or digital technologies. The crucial question is what framework conditions policymakers set to enable economic development and ensure the data sovereignty of the state and citizens, while at the same time not forgetting those who do not have or do not want to have access to the digital world. The increasing use of digital technologies must be prevented from leading to a transparent, totally monitored citizen.

The large digital corporations were initially formed in the USA. China then focused on building an independent digital infrastructure. In both cases, it is about the generation and evaluation of data, coupled with lucrative business models, but also about the access of the state and intelligence services to this data.

The current data scandal at VW shows the extent to which private corporations today use digitization to spy on citizens and store everything about them. Even if this data is not normally freely accessible on the Internet, as

is sometimes the case with VW, it is used to do business and create personal profiles that are of interest to private market participants as well as secret services. In addition to the private sector's greed for data, there are also repeated calls from the state to record data en masse and without cause and to enable full access to the private communications of all citizens. Examples are the discussions on "chat control" in the EU and the data retention recently brought back into play by the rest of the traffic light.

We want to stop this path to complete surveillance and prohibit the collection and storage of individual behavioral data.

Europe needs an independent digital infrastructure that protects citizens from surveillance and also does not make companies dependent. We have to take a new path to digitalization.

We want to promote the development and use of open source software and freely available AI models for applications in science, education, culture and public administration.

Software manufacturers are to be obliged to publish their products as open source or to disclose license codes for their use when entering the market. In the sense of the public domain of publicly funded goods, we want to consolidate infrastructures for open access publications and for the long-term provision of research data.

The German administration has become highly dependent on the American data leeches. The federal government alone has concluded framework agreements with large international IT companies worth 13.8 billion euros for the next few years. Federal authorities are allowed to buy from the database provider Oracle for 4.8 billion

euros, and spend 1.3 billion on Microsoft software. The federal government spends only a tenth of this sum on services and products of German companies.

In the coalition agreement and in its digital strategy, the traffic light government had initially taken up the cause of strengthening the digital sovereignty of the administration through non-patent-protected, open source software (open source) and open standards. But it has done nothing: In the first two traffic light years, the open source share of federal spending on software development and services was a ridiculous half a percent.

We demand: Instead of transferring further billions to US monopolists to deepen our dependency, the next federal government should support the administration in using open source solutions that save a lot of money in the long term and in which our data does not become the property of American IT companies.

We also want to ensure the free use of cryptographic methods and the right to free information. Tracking by means of cookies or other methods should be avoided as a matter of principle and should not be requested via cookie banner if the user specifies this in the browser settings.

Millions of citizens who do not own a smartphone because of their age or their conscious decision must not be excluded from social life and discriminated against. This also applies to people who do not have a computer or an Internet connection.

They must all be able to use the services of the railway and local transport at no extra charge and to receive their packages. They must be able to get appointments at offices, with doctors and doctors. The same goes for people who don't have access to the internet.

Offices must not seal themselves off from citizens by erecting a digital protective wall and communicating with citizens only via digital forms and chatbots.

We advocate a legally protected right to non-digital participation in public life.

The ability to use cash is important for maintaining our financial and general privacy and for a self-determined life. Only cash makes it possible to buy goods and services without creating a data trail that is stored digitally for decades. Only with cash can we buy something without the involvement of third parties. If we (have to) pay for everything digitally, our bank account becomes the detailed logbook of our entire life.

We want to preserve cash and withdraw restrictions on its use.

As a first step towards the preservation of cash, we are pushing for a law that obliges all German offices and authorities to accept cash without discrimination. The same is to apply to all companies that provide services in a public mandate. Within the European framework, the German government should work to ensure that restrictions on the use of cash are relaxed again and that cash users are no longer placed under general suspicion even for modest sums.

Dare more democracy

Strengthening democracy must not only take place in public discussions. Above all, we need a stronger influence of citizens on political decisions. Especially in existential questions, the population should be given the opportunity to decide directly.

We will seek the necessary majorities to initiate a constitutional amendment that will enable referendums on important issues, for example on a pension reform as in Austria or the question of EU enlargement.

By means of a referendum, it should also be possible at the federal level to bring about a binding referendum on legislative proposals or legislative withdrawals (Heating Act).

Democracy can only work if lobbying and the influence of private companies on laws and state action are pushed back. In contrast, partnerships between the public sector and private companies and organisations are becoming increasingly common, both nationally and internationally. The United Nations, and the World Health Organization in particular, are highly dependent on funding from multinational corporations. This leads to conflicts of interest and to a policy in which the private interests of individual corporations or industries often outweigh those of the population.

There are also many national examples in which a cash-strapped state enters into cooperation with solvent associations or corporations due to a lack of money. If the government holds health congresses together with the pharmaceutical industry or digitization congresses together with the IT industry, it cannot be assumed that such congresses will produce independent results.

Particularly bad manifestations of the mixing of commerce and sovereign power are regulatory bodies in which government representatives and representatives of business associations make decisions on an equal footing, as is often the case with product standards in the medical and technical fields. Or when private organizations set standards that the state then turns into law. We want Germany to push for

private organisations to be kept out of regulatory bodies and for private organisations to be deprived of indirect access to the sovereign power of the state. At the same time, lobbying must be made transparent through far stricter rules and thus pushed back.

The change of retiring politicians to economic sectors with which they previously had dealings may at most be permissible with a waiting period of at least 5 years.

Second vote is
Sahra voice  **BSW**