

Summary of our manifesto for the general election September 2017

Germany is holding a general election on 24 September. It will be decisive for the country. Some say that the election outcome has already been decided. In fact, nothing has been decided yet. What happens in this country depends to a large extent on how strong DIE LINKE is. It depends on your vote!

Social fairness, social security, disarmament and peace. You can count on the fact that this is what we stand for. We will not accept children growing up in poverty whilst the number of millionaires and billionaires is constantly rising. Or a state pension that is so low that it is no longer enough to be able to live a dignified life, or insecure jobs that make many people afraid of what the future will bring. Or the fact that a policy of austerity has led to spending cuts in almost all areas whilst the government intends to almost double its spending on arms and war.

Many people are fed up with the current policies. Many people want a radical change, social fairness and a secure future. We say: Things don't have to and mustn't stay the way they are. Let us make a difference – together. We want to change the country: We want to make it more socially fair and just!

The other political parties are willing to continue to pursue the policies that have governed the recent years. All other political parties are willing to form coalitions with the chancellor. We are not! We want truly different policies and a socially fair country. If DIE LINKE can get strong enough, we can trigger some of these changes. You can vote for hope on 24 September! Vote for DIE LINKE, for a political turnaround towards a socially fair system and against the continuation of “business as usual” in politics.

Our policies are detailed, economically feasible and just. We want a country where people can live off their income and can make plans for the future. We want a country where nobody has to be afraid of poverty.

We want a society that is inclusive, a society that does not exclude anyone. We are committed to making it possible for people with disabilities to fully participate in society. Inclusion is a human right. We want to break down the barriers and make it easier for people with disabilities to lead independent lives.



We will establish a solid network of social security benefits and increase the state pension. We are not afraid of making the millionaires and billionaires pay more taxes in order to finance this. We want a country where wealth benefits everyone.

1. Respect and good jobs. DIE LINKE is on the side of the workers when it comes to being respected for the work you do and good jobs. We want secure jobs that are better paid. This makes it possible to plan your life. The legal minimum hourly wage must be increased to 12 euros. That is the only way to protect the workforce against old age poverty. We want to make collective bargaining agreements and the unions stronger.

2. Work must revolve around life, not life around work. We will put an end to indefinitely extended agency work and the misuse of fixed term contracts. Instead of so-called “mini-jobs” and involuntary part-time employment, we will create good full-time jobs with proper contracts and wages that are in line with those agreed in collective bargaining agreements. Women must at last be paid the same money for similar work as men. We believe that those who take care of people for a living, like nurses or teachers, deserve higher wages. Everyone should have enough time to spare for relaxation, family life and leisure time activities!

3. No fear of old age poverty. The state pension must be enough to maintain a certain standard of living in old age. To achieve this, we want to increase the earnings-related state pension payment level to 53 per cent again. Low income periods will count more towards the final entitlement again. A sales assistant, for example, would then receive 270 euros more. And we will introduce a solidarity-based minimum pension of 1,050 euros. The wages and pension payments are currently still lower in what used to be East Germany than they are in former West Germany. We will make sure that they are the same.

4. The “Hartz IV” social security benefits system has led to many people living in poverty. **We will scrap it and replace it with a guaranteed minimum amount of benefits that is not subject to any sanctions!** It will include all of the benefits which claimants currently have to apply for separately. The statutory unemployment benefit “Arbeitslosengeld I” must be paid for longer. Nobody can be expected to live on less than 1,050 euros a month. We will introduce special reduced tariffs for electricity, public transport and on the Deutsche Bahn railway system. We will immediately increase child benefit to 328 euros and will then introduce a basic minimum income support for children.

5. Fair taxes! We will at last reintroduce a wealth tax – anyone who has assets worth more than one million should be taxed properly. We would spend this additional tax income on the improvement of public services: on schools and child day-care centres, social housing, the internet infrastructure, hospitals and public transport. Everyone benefits from this. If everyone contributes enough, everyone can also be properly taken care of.

6. We will reduce the amount of taxes people on average and low incomes have to pay.

We will increase the annual tax-free personal allowance to 12,600 euros. Everyone who earns less than 7,100 euros gross a month will benefit from our tax plan. We will compensate for this by taxing those on higher incomes at a higher rate.

7. We will put an end to the two-tier health service:

We will establish a healthcare system that benefits everyone, and put an end to long waiting times and journeys. Such a healthcare system would be economically feasible if everyone contributed to it: Everyone would pay into our solidarity-based healthcare system, and everyone would then enjoy the same level of good care – and we would even lower the contribution rate to less than twelve per cent.

Nobody will have to contribute towards glasses or dentures. Employers and employees will pay the same contribution rate again. We will employ an additional 100,000 carers: this benefits the employees and the patients. We will fight for every hospital that is threatened with closure or privatisation!

8. We will ensure that homes are affordable.

The rents in many cities keep on going up, and an increasing number of people have been forced to leave their neighbourhoods. We want to stop this displacement. The rents in the neighbourhoods affected by this will be frozen and reduced. We will build more social housing apartments, an additional 250,000 a year. We will make speculating on housing illegal.

9. Change takes courage! We want to start the European Union all over again: Instead of putting businesses and banks first, we want people to come first. We want a European action plan against unemployment and for a socially fair and eco-friendly economy. Rather than free trade agreements such as TTIP and TISA, we need fair trade and efficient climate protection. We will make the European Union socially fair, democratic and a good place to live for everyone.

10. We are committed to peace. DIE LINKE has always been firmly against war and yet more arms. We want to pull all German soldiers back from abroad. The government is planning to double its military spending. We want fewer arms, rather than more. We want to spend the money saved in this way on the refurbishment of schools and more child day-care facilities, and more fully subsidised places at these facilities. Arms exports – especially to war-torn areas – extend wars and force many people to flee these areas. We want to make arms exports illegal.

DIE LINKE is the only political party in the German parliament that does not depend on donations from major businesses and banks for the funding of its election campaign.

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