# Council: Germany

*The Pirate Academy was made possible by the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament.*

*Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including other Council members. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.*

**The Council in this scenario.** Up to nine member states sit in the Council: Germany, France, Poland, Italy, Hungary, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Spain and Austria (the facilitator will say which are present tonight). Each state has one vote, cast by its representative. Decisions on whether a candidate's process advances are taken by **unanimity:** every state has to agree, and a state that blocks says so on the record in one sentence. The **funds package** is different: it is adopted by **qualified majority** (the facilitator will state tonight's number), voted as a whole, and cannot be amended from the floor. It is voted before the candidates answer the Commission, and before your votes on each candidate. Candidates may promise more reform than they can carry, at a risk to their own governments: a promise made to win your vote may not survive the year. Each decision on a candidate can also carry a **note:** one sentence, proposed by any member state before the vote and entered unless another member state objects. Conditions, reassurances and face-saving formulas are written there. The Czech Presidency chairs and does not vote. The Commission proposes and does not vote here. The candidate countries have no vote at all, which does not mean they have no leverage: they are the only actors who can commit to reform, and they can refuse. Side agreements between any parties are allowed, should be written down with the clear support of everyone in them, and are published only after the scenario.

## Your delegation: Germany (solo)

Germany is the Union's largest economy and the state most other delegations will come to when they want something arranged. Your government supports enlargement as a way of stabilising the continent and insists that it stay merit-based: no shortcuts, no geopolitical exceptions, no lowering of standards for countries that are not ready. Berlin is also genuinely worried about a Union of thirty-five members that still decides by unanimity, and about justifying new spending and new memberships to a cautious public.

Your position on Ukraine is supportive and careful. There is real solidarity and there is also a strand of thinking in your capital that wants channels eastward left open and does not want to over-commit. You do not say the second part out loud.

**Decision rule:** you cast Germany's vote in the Council.

## Your role

**Motivations and constraints:** Your aims: keep the enlargement process credible and conditional, so that whatever is decided tonight can be defended next year; hold the Council together, because a split between the enthusiasts and the sceptics is worse for the Union than a modest result; make sure money is tied to verifiable progress rather than distributed to keep people happy; and broker, because you are the only state that everyone will talk to. You should be in the EU channel early and often. If the member states arrive at the Final Act without a common position, the unanimity votes will fail one by one and it will be read as your failure as much as the chair's.

**Red lines**: No candidate status or opened negotiations without a reform commitment behind it. No generous funding for governments with weak governance records. Nothing that weakens rule-of-law conditionality, whether it is applied to a candidate or to a member state.

**Style:** Patient, unexcited, relentlessly reasonable. You propose compromise language rather than positions: "candidate status, conditional on the judicial reform being adopted by", and let others claim the result. Work bilaterally more than in plenary. When you speak in plenary it should be to close something, not to open it.

**Confidential (for you alone):** Your instructions are less demanding than your public line. What your capital actually wants out of tonight is that the Council does not visibly split, and you are authorised to accept a considerably weaker package than you will be seen demanding. That means your leverage is real but time-limited: it evaporates the moment anyone realises you will not be the one to break consensus. You also have an interest you should not state. German industry wants access to the Western Balkan labour market and to those markets generally, and a stalled accession process serves that badly; it is one reason your support for the Balkan track is warmer than your rhetoric about standards suggests. Finally, you would be perfectly content if two fund units went unspent, as a signal about budgetary discipline.