
THE BATTLE FOR GERMANY'S CENTER RIGHT

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Three hopefuls look alike on paper, but offer distinct visions for future of both Germany and Europe.

Hes a white, married Catholic father of three from North Rhine-Westphalia with a law degree and an ear for music.

Meet Armin Laschet, Friedrich Merz and Norbert Röttgen, the three men vying to lead Germanys Christian Democrats and succeed Angela Merkel as chancellor.

If the trio look like cookie-cutter versions of the same person on paper, in the flesh they offer distinct visions and approaches to the post with significant implications for both Germany and its role in Europe. About the only thing one can say for certain about Merkel's likely successor at this stage is that he will be a man.

Until the sudden resignation of Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer as party leader earlier this month, the chances any of the three would become chancellor after Merkels final term ends in 2021 were slim to none. Now theyre all in the running.

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