

The citizen is the focus of liberal policy. We Liberals aim to **strengthen the position of those in the middle rungs of our society**. They wake up in the morning to work, and in working they sustain our society. Their work must again be worth their while. Which is why Germany now needs political change – to start afresh.

We want:

- **more net income from gross income for more growth, more jobs and more prosperity**
- **more freedom through stronger civil rights**
- **more education for better prospects for the future**
- **more competition and lesser ideology in environmental policy for more energy**
- **more confidence built through international dialogue**

More net income from gross income

The social market economy remunerates work – and generates what has to be distributed among the needy. Germany has never known a better economic system. We Liberals respect, protect and defend the social market economy and call for its renewal. The renewal of the market economy will provide many new opportunities for the future.

But for this we need a genuine reform of the tax structure. We aim for **simple, low and equitable taxes**: in order to realise more net income from gross income.

Our **slab system** with its **low tax rates (10%, 25%, 35%)** provides relief to the citizen. This means you can then afford more, whilst companies can invest more. Tax relief is the precondition for both growth and employment – and not simply the outcome thereof.

This apart, every citizen – adult or child – will be entitled to a **basic tax exemption of 8004 euros**. This will provide relief to families in particular. Thus for instance, a family of four with an income of up to 41,000 euros after deduction of income-related expenses and social insurance contributions will be exempt from tax.

It must be worth your while to work again

A sound economic policy is the best social policy

Solidarity needs the willingness to take up self-responsibility. The FDP is the only party to present a perfectly harmonised tax and transfer system. All tax-financed welfare benefits are to be clubbed together under the ‘**Citizen’s Income**’ (**Bürgergeld**). Benefits shall be paid out at a flat rate, by a single authority: the Tax and Revenue Office.

The Citizen’s Income will create incentives for taking up employment. In this way, we will effectively help the needy, and not the clever. This will strengthen social cohesion.

It will also promote and reward self-responsibility. We propose that the Federal Labour Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) be shut down, and those seeking employment be assisted at the local level in a manner that is more responsive to the citizens’ needs, less bureaucratic and quicker.

The state needs to concentrate on its core responsibilities. We will rectify the defects of the corporate tax reform. German companies need less bureaucracy for greater freedom of enterprise. **We want to end the wastage of taxpayers’ money and cut back subsidies.**

We cannot play one generation off against the other. We do not want to burden our children with a mountain of debt. Our pension policy must again be fair and reliable. The FDP stands for effective health insurance coverage for all the residents of Germany.

New confidence in the financial system

It is necessary that both our citizens and our industries have confidence in the financial system. But at present this confidence has been shaken. We aim to restore it. For this, we need not more regulations for the financial market but better and more effective ones. The supervision of banks, both at the national and international levels, must be more effective and professional. Those responsible must bear both personal and financial liability for any risks.

Greater responsibility, fewer curbs

The FDP is the party of civil rights. **We want a policy that respects your most fundamental individual rights.** Freedom forms the basis of individual initiative and the development of personality. This also includes freedom of choice in one's life plan. The citizens of a country should not be degraded into becoming patronized clients of the state. We Liberals consistently protect the property and private sphere of our citizens.

We want:

- **a modern and effective data protection law**
- **the restoration of bank secrecy**
- **no Internet censorship or clandestine online searches of private PCs**
- **no data retention without suspicion**
- **no collection and storage of data on the movement of persons**

Freedom needs security: But state action must be restricted within narrow limits. For, there is no dearth of effective laws in Germany, rather a lack of implementation of existing ones. The state has the right to step in and curtail the individual's rights only in situations where this is urgently required to ward off dangers.

The family: Germany's most important undertaking for the future

The family is where there are children and where responsibility is borne for each other across generations. **Child welfare forms the very core of liberal family policy.**

We want:

- **family and profession to be better reconciled for mothers and fathers**
- **individual initiative and self-responsibility in family life**
- **equal rights for life partnerships**

Strengthening freedom, protecting civil rights

Germany can do better

FDP

The Liberals

A team with competence

The National Executive Committee of the FDP

More education, greater opportunities

Education is Germany's most valuable resource. **Education provides opportunities**, facilitates **social mobility** and is **the best investment for the future**. Education is a civil right that the FDP has been consistently promoting.

We want:

- **equal educational opportunities at the outset**
- **greater freedom and self-determination for educational institutions, from kindergarten to university**
- **a permeable system of education that assures opportunities for upward mobility**
- **no one to be deprived of higher education for financial reasons, which is why we demand that a scholarship system be put in place.**

Education and research are the **pre-requisites for new products and future-oriented jobs**. Germany must hold its own in the international race to attract the best. We aim for medical and technical progress through free, open research, unhampered by restrictions on freedom of thought. Ideological barriers should not be stumbling blocks to the alleviation of suffering and the healing of disease.

We want:

- **an initiative for freedom of research in Germany**
- **a modern law of immigration and residence for foreign workers**

- **more effective support for research and development**

Education is a civil right

Energy and environmental policy for an enhanced quality of life

The FDP stands for an intelligent environmental and energy policy. The contest of ideas leads to new solutions for addressing our future. Technical progress ensures that environmental protection, mobility and energy are no longer luxuries.

We want:

- **a coherent concept that makes energy environmentally friendly, safe and affordable**
- **a lowering of sales tax on energy from 19% to 7% or a lowering of the so-called eco-tax**
- **greater competition on the energy markets**
- **an expansion in regenerative energy supply**

We support an **energy mix that combines renewable energies with energy from highly efficient coal-fired power stations**. In the medium term, nuclear energy as a transitional form of energy production remains indispensable both for ecological and economic reasons.

A foreign policy that creates confidence worldwide

Liberal foreign policy is value-oriented. Democracy, human rights, rule of law and the market economy system are factors that determine our action. It is in this way that Germany's interests, for instance in international trade, are best represented. We will further **expand the dialogue with our partners** in Europe and other parts of the world.

To avert dangers, we believe we need more intensive cooperation: the reform of the UN, a more forceful NATO, a strengthened European Union and disarmament. To contribute

effectively, we need well-trained armed forces equipped to tackle the tasks before them. Conscription is no longer appropriate for the times, and must therefore be lifted. We are for a modern army of volunteers.

Germany can do better

Use the opportunity you have now. We are counting on the renewal of the social market economy and on citizens who will confidently take charge of their future.

Empower us so that we can empower you. We believe: Germany can do better.

The full text of the FDP's manifesto may be found at:

www.deutschlandprogramm.de

We will keep our word. Use the opportunity that will be yours on the 27th of September. Vote for the FDP. The election day is our number: 0800 27.09.2009.

Germany
can do better.

FDP
The Liberals

Strengthening the Middle (Die Mitte stärken)

The 2009 Programme for Germany

Our core demands