

European Election 2024

Life Without Borders and Without Nationalism and Wars - that's what it's about, but not only that

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Go Vote! Freedom, Equality, Care and Co-operation

41 sovereign states. In this region, two additional wars were fought after the wars against Napoleon's troops, followed by the war against France in 1870/71. Or forgetting a situation from 100 years ago, when the German army not only invaded French territory but had just ended a war that cost nine million soldiers their lives. Shockingly few years later, the worldwide conflagration of war repeated itself, leading to a border running through Europe that was long deemed insurmountable after 70 million deaths.

But it is also forgetting a time when traveling involved permanent fees for currency exchanges, smartphone calls incurred extremely expensive roaming charges, bank transfers required endless forms, working in a neighboring country came with bureaucratic hurdles and lacked cross-border insurance coverage, and studying abroad risked non-recognition, and so on.

After all the progress achieved in the EU, one might say, "We love Europe," especially since many climate policies or positive interventions in national decisions favoring freedom originate from Brussels.

But this is, of course, only one side of the coin. European integration on this basis also means competition and redirection of flows of goods away from the "periphery" towards the centers where money is earned and profits are made. Speaking of wealth redistribution: the German automotive industry has utilized the opportunities of the EU internal market to relocate the production of intermediate products to cheaper Eastern Europe, at the expense of workers in Italy and, of course, in Germany. Figure 1 illustrates this process for the car manufacturer Audi, with disproportionately more profits than newly hired workers.

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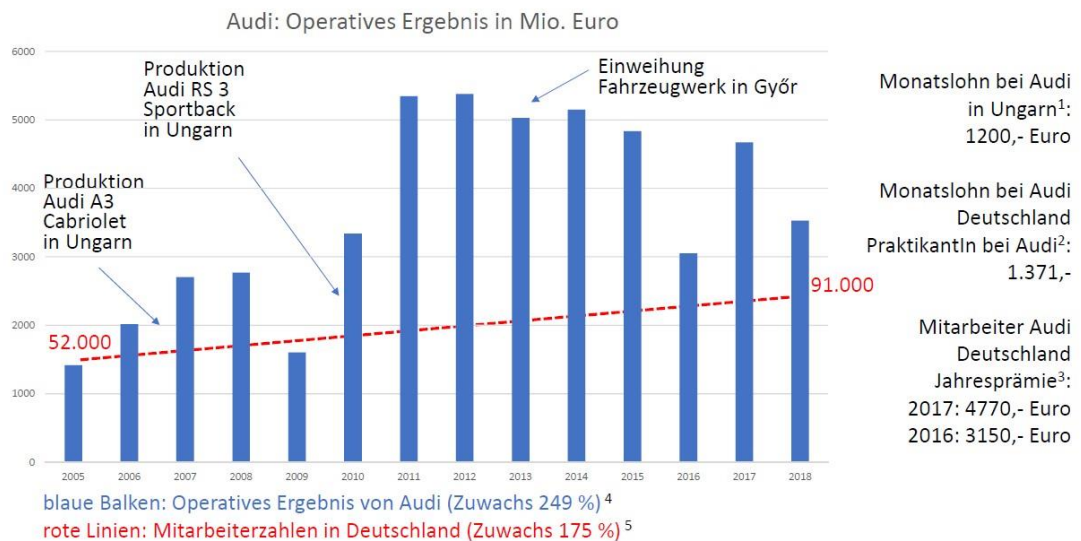
Introduction

What would be a left-wing demand? Nonsense from the AfD

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Forgetting is spreading in Europe: forgetting a state of affairs from over 200 years ago, when to travel from Flensburg to Munich, one had to pass at least six border checkpoints, and the German Confederation consisted of

Zeitlicher Zusammenhang zwischen der Ausgliederung der Fahrzeugproduktion nach Ungarn und der Gewinnsituation bei Audi: Der Gewinn steigt seit 2005 um 249 %, die Mitarbeiterzahl in Deutschland um 175 %. (nach Daten von Statista, 2018 bzw. Arriva.de)

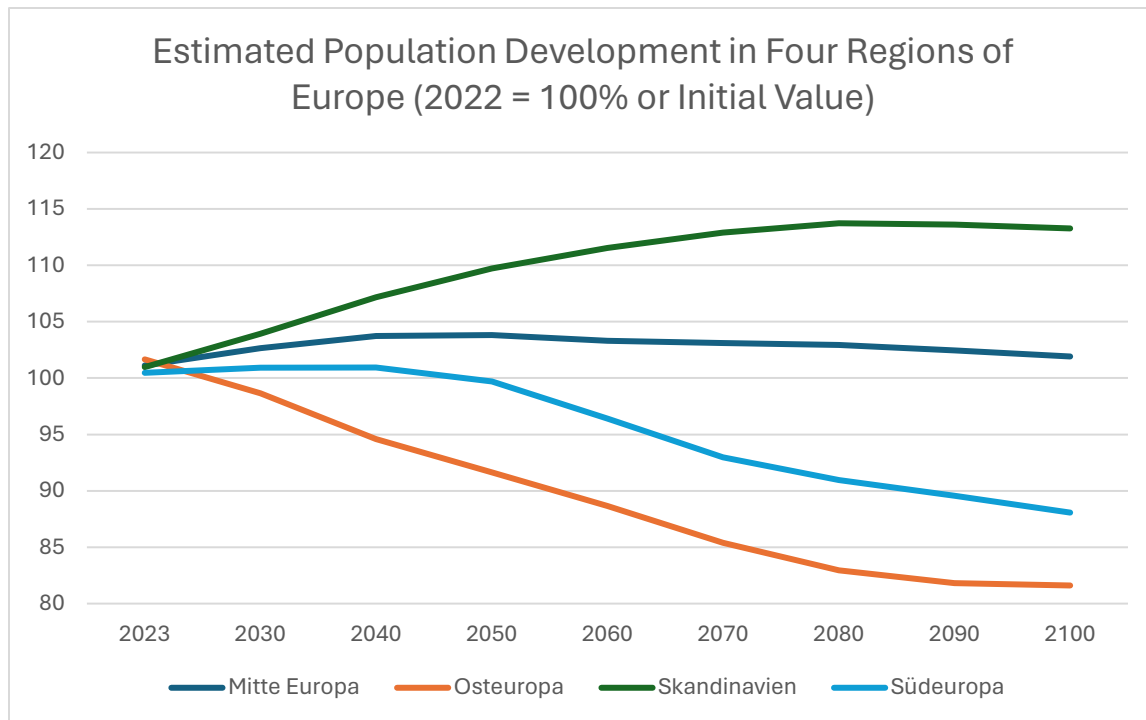


Missing cleaning, care, and medical personnel in Germany have been replaced by people from abroad. The percentage of individuals from other European countries working on construction sites, in goods delivery, and in the meat industry is approaching that of those born here. The EU is an economic "success recipe" for companies, whose profits have increased significantly.

Dissolving the EU in favor of the old nation-states would not improve conditions. The factual example of this is Britain after Brexit: In January 2024, just under two-thirds, namely 63 percent of Britons, believed Brexit was not a success. Only 12 percent saw it as a success, which is low considering the efforts made by its supporters to leave.

Migration is an achievement of the EU because it signifies the freedom to go where one expects more happiness and opportunities. It is a background for our strength: when work or home becomes unbearable, we can move on and seek something new; this weakens the power of employers and other "authorities" and strengthens our bargaining power.

However, migration becomes a problem when it is structurally constrained by economic and social conditions, when it flows like a raging river in one direction, for example, from the East and South of Europe to the North and Central Europe due to worse living conditions. This leads to a process of decay and significant strain, decay of areas in Eastern and Southern Europe with significantly decreasing populations - a process that has been ongoing since 2010 and will continue in the coming years (see the figure below). As a result, the living conditions for those left behind deteriorate in favor of the living conditions of people in Central and Northern Europe, where enough young people remain to do the work. Eastern Europe is the area that is depopulating the fastest worldwide, and emigration to the center of Europe is one cause. This also leads to strain in the North, for example, in schools due to the many children who speak little German.



This fact will remain as long as nearly equal conditions are not created in all parts of Europe. We already notice this within national borders, where the East, parts of the North, and southern West of Germany are emptying out while urban centers are growing ever larger. Merely economically overcoming the national borders within Europe or having free trade without implementing equal living conditions everywhere is poison for social cohesion and tears families apart over thousands of kilometers.

What would be a leftist response to these problems? Equal living conditions for all: This means comparable and sufficient income even in unemployment, equal free access to healthcare, equivalent school and vocational training, equal protection against disability and homelessness. With a strong sector of public common goods for health, education, care, and housing, for nature, and for visitors and refugees. Because that is what distinguishes a leftist response: caring for the "weaker" and the free cooperation of equals on an equal footing for the production of what we need for life.

Even less (dis-)bordering: One response would be care and cooperation within the EU and for the entire population across all borders. So, break down borders between countries even more - not just freedom and equality for goods, which brings the current problems with the EU.

And what do the alternative losers demand for Germany and elsewhere in Europe?

Firstly, they fear a loss of sovereignty of the nation-states. **How "nice"**: finally back to bureaucratically exchanging currencies when going on vacation, long waits at borders where passports are checked for validity, etc.

And then, once again, they are against and reject a common "European identity". **Great** - might as well go back to identifying as Bavarian, Saxon, Lower Saxon, Palatinate, and the state of Oldenburg.

Furthermore, they want the one-sided political focus to be placed on a stronger common market. **How "foresighted"**: more intermediate products from Eastern Europe, more pressure

for migration, more inequality in healthcare and education, i.e., everything that only serves the interests of companies and exacerbates inequality in Europe.

And it's about "preserving European culture and its various identities". **What a helpful hint or rather an empty phrase!**

And what they are not demanding? Care for the "weaker" with education, health protection, and medical treatment at the same level, free cooperation of equals on an equal footing for the production of what we need for life, through extensive participation in companies and major technical projects such as integrated energy generation in public hands for the whole of Europe.

The AfD – just another party of the affluent and socially established.