

# The Political Journey of Angela Merkel

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**Abstract--** Angela Dorothea Merkel born on 17th July 1954 is a German politician who is currently the chancellor of Germany. She is also the leader of Christian Democratic Union. She is a former research scientist with a Doctorate in physical chemistry. Merkel entered politics in the wake of the revolutions in 1989. With her successful journey in the world of politics, Merkel was appointed as Germany's first woman chancellor in the 2005 federal election. Later in 2007, Merkel was the president of the European Council and chaired the G8. Merkel played a crucial role in managing the financial crisis at the European and international level, and she has been referred to as "the decider."

Merkel has been widely described as the de facto leader of the European Union throughout her tenure as chancellor. Since late 2016, Merkel has been widely described as the leader of the free world. This paper is an effort to bring out the political journey of this successful woman of Germany, who is the most powerful woman in the world.

Merkel was born Angela Dorothea Kasner in 1954, in Hamburg, West Germany, the daughter of Horst Kasner (1926–2011), a Lutheran pastor and a native of Berlin, and his wife Herlind. In her childhood and youth, Merkel was known among her peers by the nickname "Kasi," derived from her last name Kasner. Like most young people in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Merkel was a member of the Free German Youth (FDJ), the official youth movement sponsored by the ruling Socialist Unity Party. Merkel was educated in Templin and at the University of Leipzig, where she studied physics. In 1989, Merkel got involved in the growing democracy movement after the fall of the Berlin Wall, joining the new party Democratic Awakening. Following the first (and only) multi-party election of the East German state, she became the deputy spokesperson of the new pre-unification caretaker government under Lothar de Maizière.

Angela Merkel, in 1977 at the age of 23, married physics student Ulrich Merkel. The marriage ended in divorce in 1982. Her second and current husband is quantum chemist and Professor Joachim, who has largely remained out of the media spotlight. Angela Merkel is a Lutheran member of the Evangelical Church in Berlin, Brandenburg and Silesian Upper Lusatia. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Merkel joined the newly founded Democratic Awakening and in February 1990 became the party's press spokesperson. That month the party joined the conservative Alliance for Germany, a coalition with the German Social Union (DSU) and the Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

Merkel stood for election at the 1990 federal election, the first since reunification, and was elected to the Bundestag for the constituency of Stralsund – Nordvorpommern – Rügen, which is in the district of Vorpommern-Rügen. After her first election, she was almost immediately appointed to the Cabinet, serving as Minister for Women and Youth under Chancellor Helmut Kohl. In 1994, she was promoted to becoming Minister for the Environment and Nuclear Safety, which gave her greater political visibility and a platform from which to build her political career.

In late 1999 a finance scandal hit the CDU, and Kohl was implicated in the acceptance and use of illegal campaign contributions. In an open letter published on December 22, Merkel, Kohl's former protégée, called upon the party to make a fresh start without its honorary chairman. Merkel's stance greatly increased her visibility and popularity with the German public, although it upset Kohl loyalists. On April 10, 2000, Merkel was elected head of the CDU, becoming the first woman and the first non-Catholic to lead the party. As CDU leader, Merkel faced the lingering effects of the finance scandal and a divided party. Although Merkel had hoped to stand as a candidate for chancellor in the 2002 election, a majority of her party expressed a preference for Edmund Stoiber of the Christian Social Union (CSU), the CDU's sister party in Bavaria. After the CDU-CSU narrowly lost the election, Merkel became leader of the opposition.

On 22 November 2005, Merkel assumed the office of Chancellor of Germany following a stalemate election that resulted in a grand coalition. Merkel was elected Chancellor by the majority of delegates (397 to 217) in the newly assembled Bundestag on 22 November 2005, but 51 members of the governing coalition voted against her. Her party was re-elected in 2009 with an increased number of seats, and could form a governing coalition with the FDP. In the election of September 2013 the CDU/CSU parties emerged as winners, but formed another grand coalition with the SPD due to the FDP's failure to obtain the minimum of 5% of votes required to enter parliament. Merkel made headlines in October 2013 when she accused the U.S. National Security Agency of tapping her cell phone. At a summit of European leaders she chided the United States for this privacy breach, saying that "Spying among friends is never acceptable." Later reports revealed that the NSA may have been surveilling Merkel since 2002. Merkel was sworn in for a third term in December 2013.

By running for a fourth term as chancellor, Angela Merkel aims to emulate Germany's longest-running post-war leaders, Konrad Adenauer and Helmut Kohl. Hailed by outgoing US President Barack Obama as probably "my closest international partner", the chancellor has cultivated the image of a prudent and pragmatic leader. With the rise of populism in Europe and beyond, some see her as best placed to defend liberal democracy on the continent. But Mrs Merkel's domestic popularity is not what it was, even though one poll suggested as many as 55% of Germans want her to serve a fourth term.

Angela's decision to open the borders to refugees fleeing conflict in Syria in 2015 sparked a backlash. She stopped short of admitting she had made a mistake, but said "if I could, I would turn back the clock many years" to prepare better for the arrival

of 890,000 asylum seekers, most of whom were not from Syria. Her mantra that Germans would manage "wir schaffen das" was at the time widely praised, but has since been dropped. Germany's conservative leader, 62, now aims to "do something for social cohesion" from the centre ground.

As a female politician from a centre right party who is also a scientist, Merkel has been compared by many in the English-s. Some have referred to her as "Iron Lady", "Iron Girl", and even "The Iron Frau". She has also been called the "Iron Chancellor", in reference to Otto von Bismarck.[123] Stateside, both Donald Trump and Business Insider writer Josh Barro have described Merkel as being similar to Hillary Clinton. Merkel features as a main character in two of the three plays that make up the Europeans Trilogy by Paris-based UK playwright Nick Awde: "Bruges" and "Tervuren". A character named Merkel, accompanied by a sidekick called Schäuble, also appears as the sinister female henchman in Michael Paraskos's novel In Search of Sixpence.

Thus Angela Merkel has been named as the person of the year by the Times Magazine together with a picture of her portrait made by the famous painter Davidson, Chancellor Angela Merkel. In her country often called "Mutti" as the mother of the nation. While there is some variation in the definition about her leadership and she distance herself from being seen as a "female" leader has become "The Men", The Times calls the de facto European leader and she is often referred to as the most powerful woman.

### *Bibliography*

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