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## **ARMIN LASCHET: MERKEL'S HEIR APPARENT?**

17.09.2021

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Euractiv (17 September 2021)

By Nikolaus J. Kurmayer

Angela Merkel has governed Germany for 16 years and proven a reliable ally both in Europe and for the world. Will her party colleague hoping to succeed her follow in her footsteps or diverge from her path in order to forge his own legacy?

In his parliamentary debut in 1994 Laschet ran for the conservative party CDU under the slogan listen, decide, act on a family policy platform, laying the foundation of the measured and progressive persona he continues to cultivate.

Unlike Merkel, Laschet is West German. He stems from Aachen, on the border of Belgium and the Netherlands, which he invokes to explain his pro-European politics.

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