
MISSING MERKEL ALREADY: GERMAN CDU LOSES CHANCELLOR'S VOTER BASE

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Trailing in the polls less than a week before Germanys general election, the governing Christian Democrats are learning the hard way just how much they depended on Angela Merkel.

Survey data shows that during her 16 years in office, Merkels pragmatic, centrist approach and unflappable manner helped her center-right CDU party build a coalition of voters consisting not only of traditional conservatives, but also of people who just liked the chancellor. That was especially true of women, older voters, and some centrists, according to the data.

Merkels biggest asset is probably that people who wouldnt otherwise support the CDU are totally comfortable supporting her, said Marcel Dirsus, a political scientist and nonresident fellow at the University of Kiel. She is in many ways the perfect centrist, he added. She really very rarely offends anyone, and its so difficult to dislike her personally.

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