

Potential Merkel successors

German chancellor Angela Merkel – Europe's most powerful leader – has confirmed that she will not be running for re-election as party leader of the centre-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU)



Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, 56:

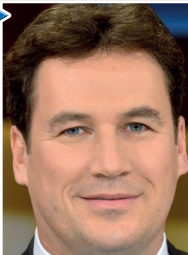
Close Merkel ally and General Secretary of CDU has said she is ready to run for CDU leadership

Christian von Stetten, 48:

Loud opponent of Merkel's policies on bailing out Greece and opening nation's borders to million-plus migrants in 2015



Angela Merkel: Chancellor for almost 13 years – her time in office has overlapped with four French presidents and four British prime ministers



Jens Spahn, 38: Arch-conservative Health Minister and critic of Merkel. Has announced he will stand for party leadership

Friedrich Merz, 62: Long-time rival regarded as more uncompromisingly conservative than Merkel. Former parliamentary leader of CDU is also joining race to succeed Merkel