

Challenges facing Olaf Scholz

Germany's new coalition includes three parties that have never governed together before – the Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and Free Democrats (FDP) – and faces a host of urgent issues



Escalating pandemic

Karl Lauterbach:

Health minister (SPD)

Trained epidemiologist – nicknamed **prophet of doom** – is in charge of fighting Germany's fourth Covid-19 wave. **Faces anti-lockdown protests from virus-deniers and anti-vaxxers**



Foreign policy challenges

Annalena Baerbock:

Foreign minister (Greens)

One of first extensive tests of coalition could be response to possible Russian invasion of Ukraine. **Likely row over sanctions and Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia**



Economy

Olaf Scholz: Chancellor (Centre-left SPD)

Former finance minister must deal with slump in factory orders, shortages of raw materials and products – such as microchips – plaguing auto industry.

Tough new Covid controls could suppress consumer activity
Inflation has surged to 6%, far exceeding European Central Bank's 2% goal



Climate issues

Robert Habeck:

Economics minister (Greens)

Faces looming **power supply gap** once all coal and nuclear power stations are closed.
Plans to replace petrol and diesel cars with 15 million electric vehicles



Debt versus investment

Christian Lindner:

Finance minister (pro-business FDP)

Constitutional cap on new borrowing – so-called **debt brake** – and SPD's plan to invest billions in economy and infrastructure will trigger fights over spending priorities