



Relaunching the EU

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The European Union faces manifold challenges from migration to Brexit, but the stars are aligning to create the conditions for a much-needed revamp of the bloc. Against this backdrop, the Centre for European Reform (CER) think-tank has produced 'Relaunching the EU' a blue-print for how the EU can reconnect with voters, improve its economic performance, and modernise its institutions. The key proposals include developing a more flexible 'multi-track' Union in which member-states need not all sign up to the same policies and objectives, such as adopting the euro. The CER argues that the EU must also do more to enforce the rule of law, fight corruption, stamp out corporate tax avoidance, and encourage internal mobility.

"For the past several years, the EU has suffered from weak and insipid leadership, as it has lurched from one crisis to another. But now, against the background of a somewhat improved economic situation, the combination of President Emmanuel Macron's enthusiasm and intellectual creativity, and Chancellor Angela Merkel's authority and experience, bodes well for the cause of EU reform. The Union's critics have often argued that it is too inflexible to adapt and flourish. Macron, Merkel and other leaders, including those running the EU institutions, must move quickly to prove the critics wrong and demonstrate that a relaunch is viable," says Charles Grant, the director of the CER.

The CER's proposals include:

- ★ Developing a flexible 'multi-track' Union where member-states don't all have to sign up for the same objectives – an arrangement that could one day see the UK seek to join an 'outer circle' or produce forms of associate membership that could be attractive to Turkey.
- ★ Removing barriers to mobility within the bloc, and developing a more muscular approach to controlling migration.
- ★ Greater integration of banking and capital market policies in the eurozone and broadening the European Central Bank's mandate.
- ★ Strengthening procedures for clamping down on corruption and member-states that flout the bloc's commitment to democratic values.
- ★ Creating a fairer multinational tax system.

Note for editors: The Centre for European Reform is an award-winning independent think-tank devoted to improving the way the EU works and strengthening its role in the world. We are pro-European but not uncritical. For more information on 'Relaunching the EU' or to request an interview with any of the authors please contact Nick Winning at the CER on nick@cer.eu or the press office on pressoffice@cer.eu or + 44 (0) 20 7233 1199.