

1ST DEMOCRACY CONGRESS

HOSTED BY THE AfD PARLIAMENTARY GROUP
IN THE GERMAN BUNDESTAG

FREE SPEECH – MEDIA – HUMAN RIGHTS



FRIDAY,
JUNE 26, 2026

SATURDAY,
JUNE 27, 2026



Alternative
für
Deutschland

FRAKTION IM DEUTSCHEN BUNDESTAG

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The AfD Parliamentary Group in the German Bundestag warmly invites you to attend the 1st Democracy Congress in Berlin. Under the guiding themes of “Free Speech – Media – Human Rights”, politicians, academics, journalists, and media representatives from Germany and abroad will come together to discuss current challenges to free speech in Germany and across Europe.

The two-day congress will focus on key issues affecting democracy and freedom of expression, ranging from the impact of the European Digital Services Act and the role of independent media to questions of parliamentary freedom and the protection of fundamental civil rights. In addition to keynote speeches and panel discussions featuring distinguished speakers, several breakout sessions will provide opportunities for in-depth debate and direct exchange with subject-matter experts.

Among the guests are **Prof. Václav Klaus**, former president of the Czech Republic; **Holger Friedrich**, publisher of the *Berliner Zeitung* and *Ostdeutsche Allgemeine*; **Roger Köppel**, editor-in-chief of *Die Weltwoche*; **Dr. Susanne Fürst**, deputy parliamentary group leader of the Freedom Party of Austria; **Dr. Hans-Georg Maaßen**, former president of Germany’s Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution; **Michael Meyen**, professor emeritus; **Dr. Ulrike Guérot**, author and public intellectual; **Alexander von Bismarck**, entrepreneur; and numerous representatives from politics, academia, and the media.

Together, we seek to strengthen one of the foundations of every free society: the right to speak, debate, and dissent without fear.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Alice Weidel MdB



Tino Chrupalla MdB

1st Democracy Congress
Hosted by the AfD Parliamentary Group
in the German Bundestag

Free Speech – Media – Human Rights

June 26, 2026

2:00 PM – 11:00 PM

June 27, 2026

8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Doors open on June 26, 2026, at 1:30 PM.



Please register by Monday, June 15, 2026, using the link below or the QR code on the left: <https://afdbundestag.de/1-Demokratiekongress/>. Once your registration has been processed, we will send you a confirmation email along with further information regarding your arrival.

Agenda

Friday, June 26

2:00 PM

Arrival and Registration

West Entrance, Paul-Löbe-Haus, coffee and pastries will be served

4:00 PM

Welcome Remarks

Stephan Brandner, Member of the German Bundestag (MdB), Parliamentary Secretary and Chief Legal Counsel of the AfD Parliamentary Group

Martin E. Renner, MdB, AfD Parliamentary Group Spokesman on Media Policy

Dr. Götz Frömming, MdB, Parliamentary Secretary of the AfD Parliamentary Group (Media Affairs)

Dr. Rainer Rothfuß, MdB, AfD Parliamentary Group Spokesman on Human Rights

4:10 PM

Remarks by the Co-Chairs

Dr. Alice Weidel, MdB

Tino Chrupalla, MdB

4:30 PM

Opening Keynote

The EU as a Threat to Free Speech in Europe

Professor Václav Klaus, Former President of the Czech Republic

5:00 PM

Keynote Sessions

I. Restrictions on Parliamentary Freedom: A European Perspective

Tomio Okamura, Speaker of the Czech Chamber of Deputies

II. Freedom, Democracy, and the Rule of Law in the Context of Conformity, Discourse, and Participation

Holger Friedrich, Publisher of *Berliner Zeitung* and *Ostdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (Ostdeutsche Medienholding)

III. EU Sanctions and the Risk of Government Overreach Against Citizens

Dr. Hans-Georg Maaßen, Former President of the Federal Office
for the Protection of the Constitution, Attorney-at-Law

6:00 PM

Panel Discussion

The State of Free Speech in the European Union – Challenges and Strategic Responses

Moderated by

Martin E. Renner, MdB

Participants

Petr Bystron, Member of the European Parliament (MdEP)

Holger Friedrich

Professor Václav Klaus

Dr. Hans-Georg Maaßen

Tomio Okamura

7:00 PM

Evening Reception Hosted by the AfD Parliamentary Group with Media Representatives

Main Hall, Paul-Löbe-Haus

Welcome Remarks

Dr. Götz Frömming, MdB

Welcome Address

Martin E. Renner, MdB

11:00 PM

End of Day One

Saturday, June 27

08:00 AM **Arrival and Breakfast**
Main Hall, Paul-Löbe-Haus

10:00 AM **Opening Remarks**
Stephan Brandner, MdB

10:15 AM **Keynote Sessions**
Moderated by
Martin E. Renner, MdB
Dr. Götz Frömming, MdB

I. Media Perspective

Challenges to Free Speech in Germany

Roger Köppel, Editor-in-Chief of the weekly magazine *Weltwoche*
Democracy and Free Speech in Germany from a Swiss Perspective

Dieter Stein, Editor-in-Chief of the weekly newspaper *Junge Freiheit*
The Threat to Democracy, the Media, and Parliamentary Government from an Increasingly Authoritarian Establishment

II. Academic Perspective

An Academic Perspective on Free Speech in Germany

Professor Emeritus Michael Meyen, Media Scholar,
Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

Dr. Ulrike Guérot, Political Scientist and Public Intellectual

III. Political Perspective

Withdrawing from Germany's Interstate Media Treaty and the Abolition of the Public Broadcasting Fee (GEZ)

Dr. Kristin Brinker, Member of the Berlin House of Representatives (MdA), Lead Candidate, Chairwoman of AfD Berlin, and Chairwoman of the AfD Parliamentary Group in the Berlin House of Representatives (*Introductory Remarks*)

Ulrich Siegmund, Member of the State Parliament of Saxony-Anhalt (MdL), AfD candidate for Minister-President of Saxony-Anhalt

11:45 AM

Panel Discussion

The State of Free Speech in Germany

Moderated by

Stephan Brandner, MdB

Participants

Ulrich Siegmund, MdL

Roger Köppel

Dieter Stein

Professor Emeritus Michael Meyen

Dr. Ulrike Guérot

12:30 PM

Lunch

Buffet-style networking lunch

2:00 PM

Expert-Led Breakout Sessions

Held concurrently in the committee rooms of the Paul-Löbe-Haus

I. Digital Regulation and EU Censorship

The Digital Services Act and Its Impact on Free Speech in Germany and Europe – Is the EU on the Path to an Authoritarian Surveillance State?

Udo Hemmelgarn, MdB

Petr Bystron, MdEP

Andrea Seaman, Executive Director of Bündnis Redefreiheit and Editor at *NovoArgumente*

Dr. Christian Zeller, Sociologist, Author of *The Destruction of Free Speech*, and Contributor to *Tichys Einblick*, *Aufklärung und Kritik*, and *Die Achse des Guten*

II. Germany's Interstate Media Treaty and the Role of Independent Media

How Could Withdrawal from Germany's Interstate Media Treaty Be Implemented Politically and Legally? What Role Do Independent Media Play in Safeguarding Free Speech in Germany?

Martin E. Renner, MdB

Wilhelm Domke-Schulz, Former Film Producer for ARD and ZDF, now an Independent Documentary Filmmaker

Dirk Schmitz, Attorney-at-Law

Uwe Schneider, Radio Journalist and Media Entrepreneur

III. Parliamentary Democracy Under Pressure: The Erosion of the Separation of Powers and Restrictions on Free Speech

The role of Germany's incitement statute (*Volksverhetzung*), laws governing insults directed at politicians, and the growing constraints on free speech, opposition rights, and the freedoms of members of the Bundestag

Stephan Brandner, MdB

Professor Václav Klaus

Roger Köppel

Tomio Okamura

Dieter Stein

Dr. Ulrich Vosgerau, Constitutional Scholar and Attorney-at-Law

IV. State-NGO Censorship Nexus and Attacks on Press Freedom and Free Speech

Can Greater Media Freedom Be Restored? What Role Do NGOs and So-Called Fact-Checking Organizations Play in Restricting the Work of the Media and Shaping Political Campaigns?

Dr. Götz Frömming, MdB

Dr. Ralf Höcker, Attorney-at-Law

Alexander Kissler, Author and Journalist

Professor Emeritus Michael Meyen

Claudio Zanetti, Swiss People's Party (SVP), Member of the Swiss National Council (2015 – 2019)

V. EU Sanctions and the Threat to Human Rights

What Are the Implications for Fundamental Rights, the Erosion of the Rule of Law, and the Future of Civil Liberties?

Dr. Rainer Rothfuß, MdB

Peter Boehringer, MdB, AfD Parliamentary Group Spokesman on European Affairs

Patrik Baab, Journalist and Author

Alexander von Bismarck, Entrepreneur

Dr. Hans-Georg Maaßen

3:15 PM

Short Break

Take your seats in the Main Hall, Paul-Löbe-Haus

3:40 PM

Closing Address

Dr. Susanne FÜRST, Member of the Austrian National Council and Deputy Parliamentary Group Leader of the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ)

4:00 PM

Closing Remarks

End of Day Two. Individual Departure





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