

Germany **MUST** get behind EU reform of sprawling bloc or it will fail says German minister

ANGELA Merkel's Germany must lead the movement to reform the European Union or watch it fail, a leading German politician said today.

Merkel: We hope to be ready to initiate phase two by December

Former foreign minister Joschka Fischer said reform of the sprawling EU was vital and "continuing with the status quo" was simply not an option.

In an outspoken attack he accused Angela Merkel and Germany of failing to reach out to French President Emmanuel Macron, who is calling for an urgent overhaul of the bloc.

He said "sticking with the status quo is no longer an option" as Germany remains in chaos over coalition talks following Mrs Merkel's dismal election victory.

Mr Fischer said it would be a "fatal" move for Germany not to get on board with France's reform plans.



GETTY

Merkel is under pressure to back plans to reform the EU

He told the Financial Times: "Macron must succeed, that's in Germany's interest.

"And that's why I'm amazed at the reaction you get here. People say maybe we'll support him, maybe not.

"They're playing with fire."

Germany is not expected to announce its plans to reform the bloc until a coalition is properly formed, with talks expected to drag out until January.

Mrs Merkel currently faces political turmoil as coalition talks look likely to ground to a halt as the parties remain divided on the main issue of immigration.

There are fears it could take months to form a coalition, leaving Germany politically weakened as the European Union looks to its wealthiest country for leadership on governance reform within the bloc.

The CDU/CSU conservatives, the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP) and the Greens are currently in talks over a so-called 'Jamaican coalition.

And so far it remains unclear whether or not the parties will back Mr Macron's ambitious plans for further EU integration with the introduction of Brussels army and shared defense budget.

When Emmanuel Macron swept to victory in the French presidential elections this summer, there were hopes the Franco-German partnership would be revitalised. But so far his nearest neighbour, Mrs Merkel, has been reluctant to praise the EU poster boy.

When Mr Macron, 39, outlined his ambitious vision to rebuild the bloc back in September, Mrs Merkel was starting with her desperate attempts to form a government and simply said it was "too early for a detailed assessment" in response.

Michael Roth, outgoing Europe minister at the German Foreign Ministry, accused the German chancellor of "leaving Emmanuel Macron hanging".



GETTY

Macron promises a great overhaul of the EU

He told Die Welt: “Germany can’t afford to do that, where is finally a new dynamic, a new optimism.

“Our European partners and the EU want a strong message from the German government about what our plans are for Europe.

“Many others have delivered, but we haven’t.”

Source: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/873016/Angela-Merkel-Germany-latest-news-Eu-reform-emmanuel-macron>

[Disclaimer]