

Multiculturalism is dead - even Merkel warns immigrants 'fit in or face consequences'

GERMAN Chancellor Angela Merkel has warned immigrants to “integrate or face consequences” in a last desperate bid to gain support for her crisis-stricken coalition as she attempts to cling to power.

The Chancellor came under fire for her decision in 2015 to open Germany’s borders to one million migrants at the height of the refugee crisis gripping Europe.

And now the 63-year-old has lashed out at critics, admitting she would react “the same way again” if a similar crisis erupted.

The open-door policy weakened her support and saw voters turn to the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany party in the September elections.



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Merkel does not want to risk losing any more voters to the AfD

Speaking at her annual party conference, Mrs Merkel said: “Misguided tolerance is as dangerous to our cohesion as populist incitement against anything foreign.

“Integration requires well defined underlying values and clear and noticeable consequences for those who refuse integration.”

Vowing not to overlook racism, Mrs Merkel said: “It makes no difference to me if antisemitic incitement comes from Muslim immigrants, from the AfD or from the far left.

“Those who use hateful slogans will meet our determined resistance.”



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Merkel has sparked protests across Germany due to her immigration policy

Mrs Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Social Democrats (SPD) have reached a deal to govern in a coalition following marathon talks in Berlin after she failed to clinch a majority in the September 2017 elections.

Mrs Merkel's future now rests with the SPD members who will be deciding whether to approve the coalition deal in an internal referendum.



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Merkel is hoping to remain in power for her fourth term as chancellor

In a further sign of her weakening grip of the CDU, Mrs Merkel was forced to replace health minister Hermann Grohe and interior minister Thomas de Maiziere with more conservative members of the party.

In their place, Mrs Merkel welcomed her biggest critic Jens Spahn as health minister in the next Cabinet to quell party rebellion.

The health minister has repeatedly criticised Mrs Merkel's centrist policies, particularly on immigration, and his appointment signals efforts by the CDU to win back voters who turned to the far-right.

Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer was selected as the party's new general secretary after party delegates approved another governing coalition.

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