

Viktor Orbán: Europe Will Restore ‘the Will of the People’ on Migration in 2018

European leaders will be forced to bow to public opposition to **migration** and concern over terrorism threats in 2018, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said after meeting Angela Merkel’s Bavarian allies in the German region Friday afternoon.

Meeting the Christian Social Union (CSU)’s parliamentary group at a former monastery in Bavaria, the Hungarian leader told reporters that **migration** has become a “problem” for democracy in Europe because “leaders in many places are not doing what the people want them to.”

“Europeans have a clear will,” Orbán said, standing alongside CSU leader Horst Seehofer for the press conference. “They don’t want to live under the threat of terrorism, they want security, they want their borders to be protected.”

“I told our Bavarian friends that I believe 2018 will be the year of the restoration of the will of the people in Europe,” he said.

Orbán’s appearance at the CSU conference came just two days before the start of exploratory coalition talks in Germany between Merkel’s conservatives and the center-left Social Democrats (SPD). As Merkel faces a challenge to get the SPD onside, she is also under pressure from the CSU to insist on stricter refugee policies to shore up ongoing support.

Merkel’s Bavarian allies have long been cozy with Orbán: During the height of the refugee crisis, Seehofer in the fall of 2015 praised the Hungarian leader as the guardian of the **EU**’s external borders, saying he “deserves support, not criticism.”

On Friday, Seehofer referenced the “friendship” between Hungary and Bavaria, saying Europe’s future challenges “can only be solved together.”

“Viktor Orbán clearly respects the rule of law,” the CSU leader added, in stark contrast to the stance of MEPs in Brussels.

The CSU, which exists only in Bavaria, is allied with Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) at the national level but tends to be considerably further right than the chancellor, especially when it comes to handling of the refugee crisis.

Though Seehofer and the CSU have made clear their support for Merkel in forming a new coalition, the party faces a regional election next fall in which they're expected to tack further to the right.

Discussions this week are Merkel's last chance to form a stable government: should they fail to reach an agreement, new elections in Germany would be likely.

Orbán declined to comment on the coalition negotiations, saying he didn't want to "interfere" in German internal politics, but said he hopes they find "success."/
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