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## Czechs in the German sphere of influence



CDU Chair Friedrich Merz said during a panel discussion at the [Munich Security Conference](#) on Feb. 15, while he was still a candidate for chancellor, that he fully agreed with all those [demanding more German leadership within the EU](#). "Frankly," he said, "I'm willing to do it." Czech Pres. Petr Pavel, who was on the panel with him, didn't have time to respond then, but he got the opportunity yesterday in [Die Welt](#). He told the German newspaper that we need leadership in Europe and shouldn't "shy away from defining spheres of influence" in order to be a bigger world player. To be such a player, he said, we need more European integration and also leadership, and Germany can offer that leadership. Midsize countries like the CR, he added, are prepared to support this and to contribute their own ideas. "Germany can truly play a leadership role," Pavel said. Apparently, the Czech president sees his role in the world as one of helping to formalize a German sphere of influence and signing his country up for it.

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