

Is Germany on our side?



Vice PM Karel Havlíček told [FAZ](#) before traveling with [PM Andrej Babiš](#) to [Bavaria today](#) that the government of Friedrich Merz is much more pragmatic and results-oriented than Angela Merkel's was six years ago, when he criticized Berlin for its support for the Green Deal. The Babiš government won't give up on trying to change the conditions in Europe in terms of the ETS trading systems, high energy prices and low competitiveness, Havlíček said, and he hopes "Germany is on our side." This came as Czech athletes were presenting themselves in [German colors](#) at the Winter Olympics. It also came soon after Czech Pres. Petr Pavel spoke in favor of a [German sphere of influence](#) that he would be happy to sign his country up for.

And soon after Merz began talking about a [two-speed Europe](#) with Czechs in the outer lane. Elements of the previous Czech government were trying to be [better Germans than the Germans](#), but Havlíček is subtly saying that things are different now: Germany might be the engine of Europe, but if Europe keeps sputtering, Czechs might consider taking Germany (or at least Bavaria) into *their* sphere.

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