Twitter Thread by Jon Worth



Jon Worth
@jonworth

OK, so it's a fortnight away - the "Digital Party Conference" of the CDU to decide who the next party leader will be

And whoever wins this is going to have a good chance of being Chancellor, succeeding Merkel after the election in September this year

There are three main candidates in the running - all middle aged men from Nordrhein Westfalen
- Friedrich Merz
- Armin Laschet
- Norbert Röttgen

So who's going to win?

For ages it looked like Laschet was the clear front runner. Prime Minister of Nordrhein Westfalen (NRW), and with a kind of folksy-beergarten manner, it looked good for him.

But then came COVID, and in the first wave it looked like NRW was pushing to open up too early, and questions started to be raised as to whether he would be up to the job...

Laschet's star is falling

The candidate profiting is Merz. The comeback kid at 65 years of age would take the CDU more to the right - which seems to be what a slew of the 1001 delegates (esp those from the states of eastern Germany) want. That despite the pragmatic line of Merkel being +popular than ever.

The problem is that while the party faithful might like him, does anyone else? The CDU might find it hard to find coalition partners were it to go for Merz, and the SPD would be rubbing its hands with glee were he to win.

Röttgen is both more pragmatic and more centrist than Merz, and a much more compelling character than Laschet. But hasn't got a chance. Such is party politics...

A couple of news stories in German trying to make sense of the discussion currently - this today from Bild
https://t.co/24tiw4EaTm

And this trying to assess delegate intentions
https://t.co/DOWldt6u6G

How this pans out is going to have a major impact on both Germany and Europe... A victory for Merz is both a scary prospect, but also opens up the opportunity for a German government without the CDU in it for the first time since 2005

I'll have a close eye on this over the next fortnight - and beyond!

/ends