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Corporate Affairs & Policy Advice

# **NEW APPROACHES FOR BRUSSELS**



# EUROPEAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS FIRM WITH KNOWLEDGE OF THE TERRAIN AND A PIONEERING SPIRIT

The new 365 Sherpas Brussels office

## The European Union is changing

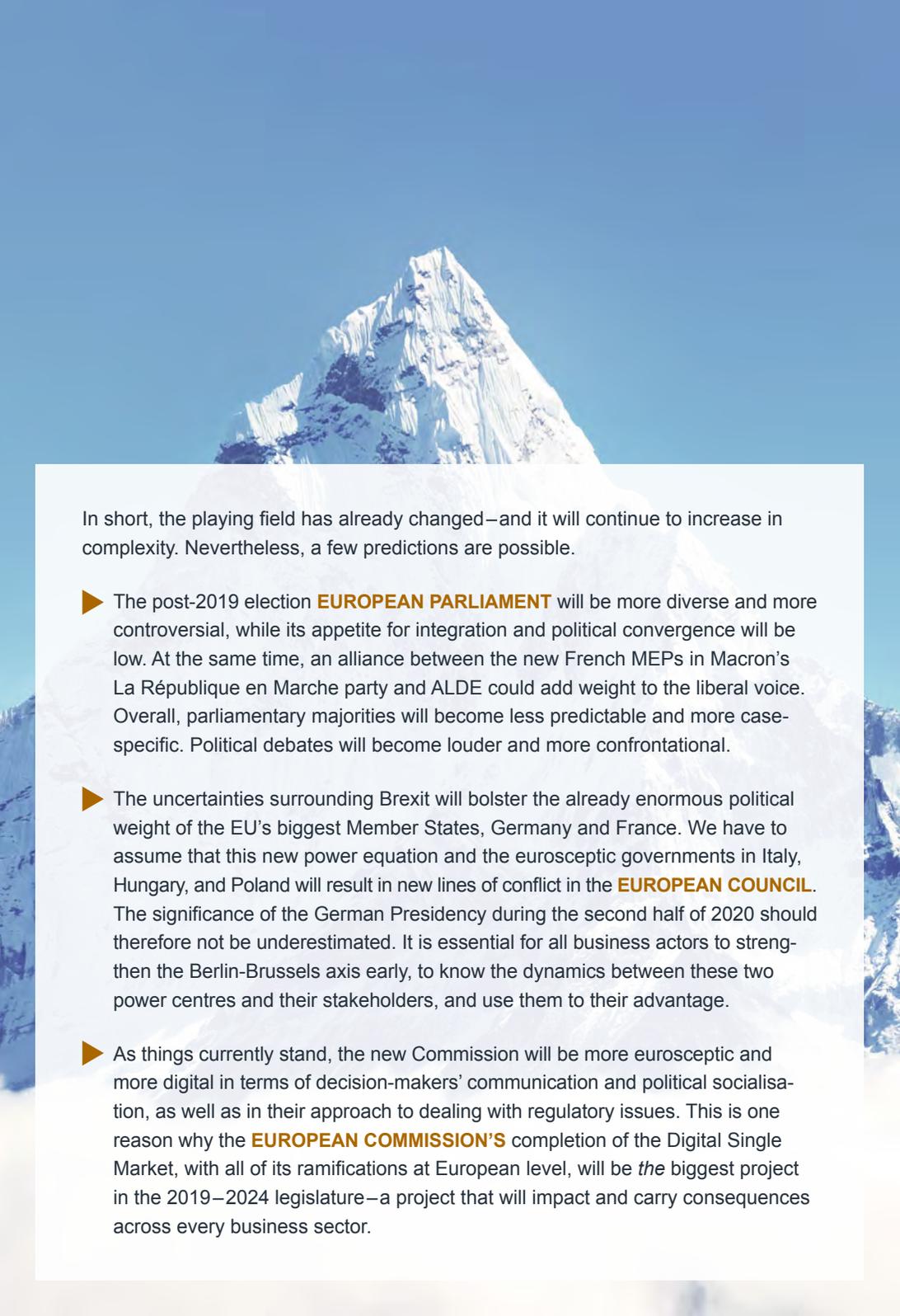
If the opinions of policy makers and observers in Brussels and Member State capitals on the European Union's situation ahead of the May 2019 European Parliament elections are any indication, this election year will be a momentous year for the European Union.

Bearing in mind recent challenges to—and in some circumstances, the complete break down of—old certainties in Europe, they are right. Brexit, plummeting support for mainstream parties, the emergence of populism as an electoral force in Europe, independence movements from the left and the right, and the looming departure of Angela Merkel, an immutable constant in European politics to date—the political union is changing, it is increasingly unpredictable.

At the same time Brussels institutions have become more confident on major policy issues throughout the last Commission mandate, for instance on plastic waste prevention, CO2 limits, and the regulation of big tech.

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In short, the playing field has already changed—and it will continue to increase in complexity. Nevertheless, a few predictions are possible.

- ▶ The post-2019 election **EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT** will be more diverse and more controversial, while its appetite for integration and political convergence will be low. At the same time, an alliance between the new French MEPs in Macron's La République en Marche party and ALDE could add weight to the liberal voice. Overall, parliamentary majorities will become less predictable and more case-specific. Political debates will become louder and more confrontational.
- ▶ The uncertainties surrounding Brexit will bolster the already enormous political weight of the EU's biggest Member States, Germany and France. We have to assume that this new power equation and the eurosceptic governments in Italy, Hungary, and Poland will result in new lines of conflict in the **EUROPEAN COUNCIL**. The significance of the German Presidency during the second half of 2020 should therefore not be underestimated. It is essential for all business actors to strengthen the Berlin-Brussels axis early, to know the dynamics between these two power centres and their stakeholders, and use them to their advantage.
- ▶ As things currently stand, the new Commission will be more eurosceptic and more digital in terms of decision-makers' communication and political socialisation, as well as in their approach to dealing with regulatory issues. This is one reason why the **EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S** completion of the Digital Single Market, with all of its ramifications at European level, will be *the* biggest project in the 2019–2024 legislature—a project that will impact and carry consequences across every business sector.

# Professional political engagement in Brussels demands the courage to traverse new paths.

Amidst this new complexity in Brussels it will become more difficult, yet increasingly important, for businesses to keep their bearings and retain an overview of all issues to distinguish between relevant issues and noise, and to introduce their own issues and messages into the political debate in a targeted way so that losses are minimised.

**The new 365 Sherpas Brussels office supports companies and associations to achieve these objectives.**

We are a political and strategic communication consultancy with offices in Berlin, Vienna and now in Brussels, a 40-person-and-growing team and clients from business, associations, and government. We are a non-partisan organisation with a well-established network of political, media and civil society contacts in Germany, Austria, and the EU. As part of the Hirschen Group, we are able to collaborate closely with a proven network of campaigning, digital, creative, and dialogue experts.

We see ourselves as pioneers; we stand for issue-focused and responsible political and strategic communication and public affairs; we provide reliable and targeted advice and are incisive and empathetic partners in our various areas of expertise:



## Lobbying

- Audits / analyses
- Monitoring
- Positioning
- Alliances
- Stakeholder Outreach
- Dialogue formats
- Political PR



## Crises & Special Situations

- Risk & situation analyses
- Scenario planning
- Messaging / Q&As
- Media relations / PR
- On-site operations
- Training / guidelines



## Campaign Consulting

- Issue & target group analysis
- Messaging / storytelling
- Phase & scenario planning
- Project management
- Evaluation

**WE ARE CONVINCED** that “more of the same” is not the answer to political engagement in Brussels in the context of political change.

**WE ARE CONVINCED** that public affairs actors have to adjust their antennas in order to understand and benefit from new debates, changing networks, and alliance structures in Brussels.

**WE ARE CONVINCED** that political engagement in Brussels must become more dialogue-oriented, more creative, and more digital in order to exert lasting influence and improve the long-term policymaking process.

**WE ARE CONVINCED** that an excellent knowledge of the Brussels political arena, plus the ability to rethink political communication, will be crucial to successful public affairs in the future.

**WE ARE CONVINCED** that close contact to Berlin’s government and policy-makers and an in-depth understanding of its workings will be indispensable to the success of public affairs in Brussels.

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Political engagement that builds on these convictions requires excellent craftsmanship, issue-specific expertise and, most importantly, values on which it is based. Since our founding, 365 Sherpas has advised clients with passion and creativity, innovativeness and intuition, good common sense and the courage to break new ground and take a stand.

We’re ready to tackle the next summit in Brussels *with* and *for* our clients. Contact our Brussels office to discuss your next summit:

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»If you want to go fast, go alone.  
If you want to go far, go together.«

African Proverb

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