



Political Consulting in Germany



Dominik Meier, Chairman of **de'ge'pol**, Vice Chairman of **PACE**, and Owner of **MMC**
Co-author with Christian Blum of ***Power and its Logic*** (2019)

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homo consultandus



homo consultans

What is Political Consulting?

- Non-sufficient but *necessary condition* of liberal-democratic normative logic.
- Procedural element in democratic decision-making that generates *input-legitimacy*.
- Provision of power-related strategic *leadership expertise* to homo consultandus:
 - EMPOWER (understand political logic, political language, and political ethos)
 - CONDENSE (reduce complexity and develop power strategy)
 - INFLUENCE (transform power strategy into action)
- In sum: The potential vectorial representation of *all societal interests* contained in civil society.

How Not to Consult



= damage to the profession of political consulting and to civil society

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*Political consulting is not the unreflected manipulation of the other but the **astute, socially responsible and publicly justifiable** employment of power for the realization of particularized societal interests.*



About de'ge'pol

- The German Society for Political Consulting: Registered association of professional interest representatives in Germany, founded in 2002.
- Over 350 Members: Consulting firms and individuals from every field of political consulting.
- de'ge'pol advocates quality standards and ethical standards in political consulting.
- Professionalization of political advocacy through exchange, cooperation and the development of practice-oriented training programs.



About de'ge'pol

- Integrated networking platforms:
 - de'ge'pol COM: Platform for young professionals in public and governmental affairs.
 - de'ge'pol W: Network for women political consultants.
- Establishment of a binding code of conduct for all de'ge'pol members since 2003.
- Creation of voluntary self-control mechanism, thereby evolving policies of regulated self-regulation.
- Pioneer in transparency and ethical standards in Germany.

www.degepol.de



Further players in the field of political consulting regulation in Germany.





Political Consulting at the European Level

- de'ge'pol is member of the Public Affairs Community of Europe (PACE).
- Involves PA associations all across Europe.
- Aims to promote a joint stance on transparency.
- Fosters professional interest representation according to common standards and ethical values.



Regulation of Political Consulting in Germany

structural transparency



substantive transparency

required confidentiality



justified public interests

particularized interests



common good

regulated self-regulation



effective sanctioning apparatus

binding code of conduct



freedom of occupation



Lobby Register Act

- Came into force on January 1, 2022.
- Interest representatives are still in the process of registering their activities in the public lobby register maintained electronically at the German Federal Parliament.
- The number of registrations currently stands at 526 (as of February 2022).



Standard-Setting and Transparency Alliances

- de'ge'pol supports ongoing cooperation with the *Alliance for Lobby Transparency*.
- de'ge'pol co-organizes webinars which regularly exceed 600 attendees with focus on:
 - the normative logic and ethical requirements for responsible political consulting
 - the importance of forging alliances with all societal actors and structures (i.a. think tanks and NGOs)

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The end of “lobbying”:

- Fail to recognize new role of political parties as singular centers of power.
- Fail to conceptualize the pre-political arena.
- Enter political arena without coordinating singular interests with public interests.



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The birth of postmodern political consulting:

- Understand postmodern power logic.
- Recognize importance of credibility, professionalism, transparency, and trustworthiness.
- Become architect for adjoining particularized interests and common good.