



The good, the bad and the silent middle

How do cities and municipalities cope with polarisation?

Belgian situation

- First signs in 2012
- 457 Belgian citizens left for Syria/Iraq
- No clear profile ~ age, education, socio-economic, etc.
=> common ground of “unhappiness”, “injustice”,
“frustration”, “an alternative future”

Centre loses, far Right and far Left win

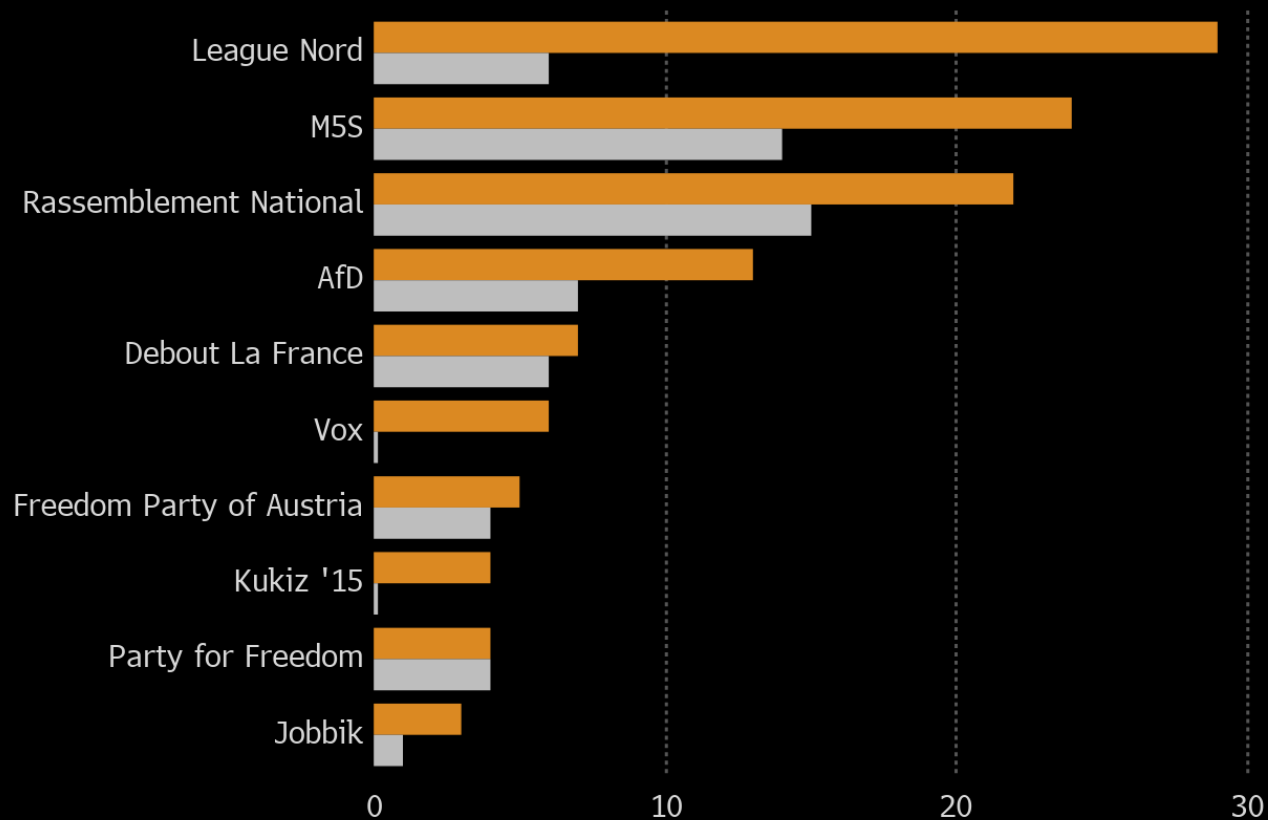
A complete chaos of Belgian politics is very likely. The far right political party of Vlaams Belang wins hugely (gain of over 12%), together with a win for the far left of PVDA (over 3,5 %) gain.

The center parties that were part of the last government all lose terrain. With NVA still being the biggest party with around 26 %.

A Turn to the Right

Far-right parties are expected to pick up 132 seats in 2019, or 19 percent

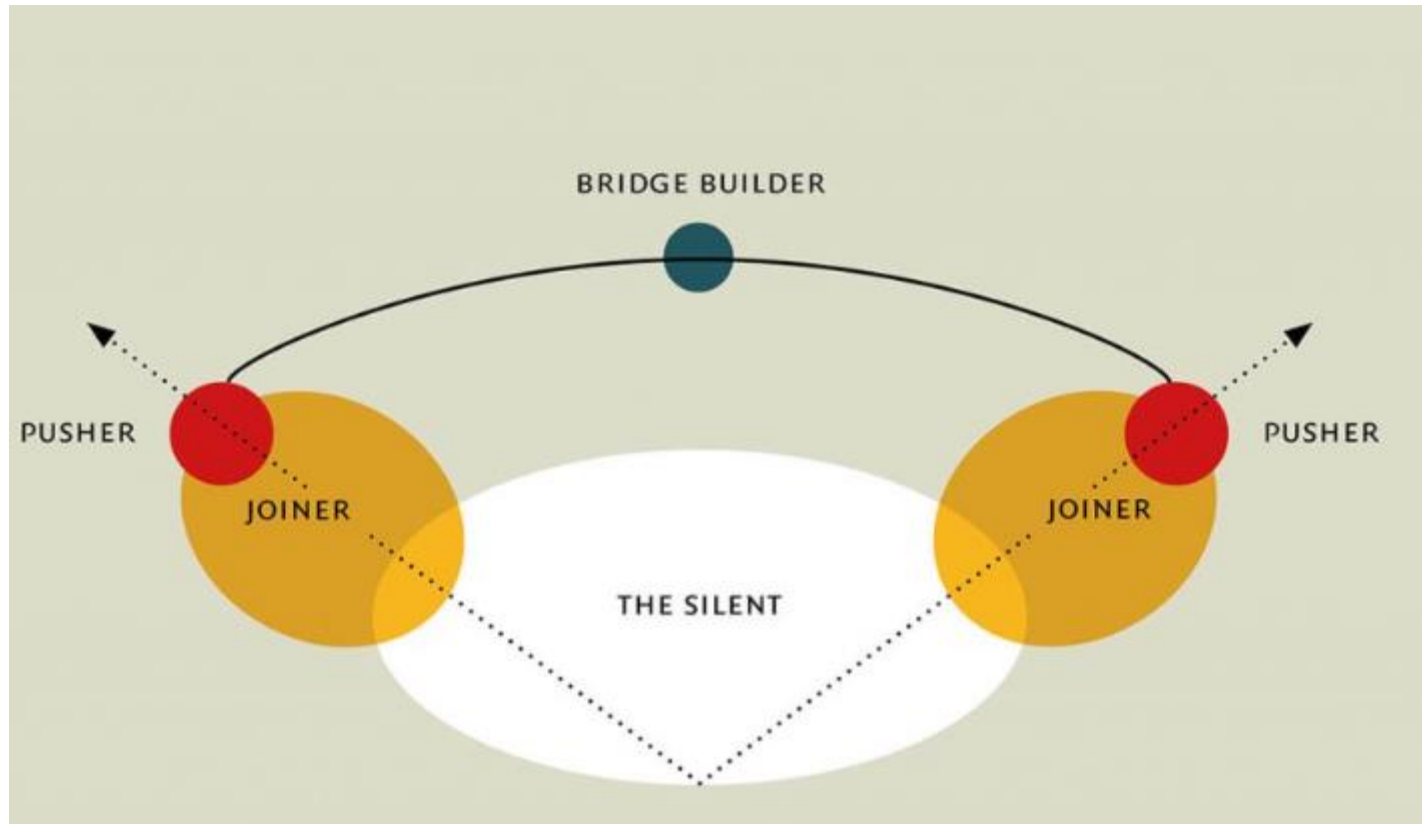
■ European Parliament Seats Projected in 2019 ■ EP Seats in 2018



ECFR, Poll of Polls projections

Bloomberg

Polarisation (Brandsma)



Depolarise the situation

1. Polarisation is a **thought construct**
2. Polarisation needs **“fuel”**
3. Polarisation is based on **emotions** (“gut feeling”)

Depolarise the situation

1. Change your **target group**
2. Change your **subject**
3. Change your **position**
4. Change your **tone**



Thanks for your attention!

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