

# **MERKEL LOSING GRIP: Germany more DIVIDED than ever before in threat to EU integration**

Theresa May: MPs must 'come together' to deliver Brexit

The German Chancellor is already suffering from a damaged ego over a failure to form a coalition following September's embarrassing election defeat.

And now Angela Merkel is struggling to maintain grip over her own party members from the Christian Democratic Union as the EU looks to its wealthiest country for leadership on governance reform within the bloc.

Fears were raised after German Agriculture Minister Christian Schmidt went against Mrs Merkel to vote in favour of a five-year extension for glyphosate, a controversial weedkiller, without consulting the chancellor.

It was also against objections of the Social Democrats (SPD) - who Mrs Merkel desperately hopes she can form a coalition with.

The controversial move shocked Brussels and even raised eyebrows among Germany's counterparts, including the French Agriculture Minister Nicolas Hulot, who told politics news site Politico he was shocked that Germany "was not more solid".

Reacting to the news, Mrs Merkel said: "As for the vote of the agriculture ministry yesterday on glyphosate, this did not comply with the instructions worked out by the federal government."

Mrs Merkel has turned to the SPD after she failed to form a three-way coalition with the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP) and the ecologist Greens.

And in another sign of her diminishing power, Michael Roth, a Social Democrat state secretary in the foreign ministry, voted against orders to back Dublin if Frankfurt's bid failed in a vote over the future location of the European Banking Authority.

Mr Roth had in fact backed Paris, which went on to claim victory.

EU members are now watching on nervously as their de facto leader struggles to regain control within her own country, long considered the economic powerhouse of the EU.

One Brussels official said: "If this becomes a precedent, it could affect any number of issues in the coming months."

Discussions surrounding Brexit are also creating deep divides in Germany as Britain's decision to leave creates cracks in the EU powerhouse.

While Mrs Merkel fully backs EU Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, a Social Democrat, has aligned himself more closely with the French.

It is believed French officials are beginning to become frustrated with Mrs Merkel's reluctance to back Emmanuel Macron's ambitious plans to reform.

And while the 39-year-old president ploughs ahead with his plans for further EU integration with the introduction of a Brussels army and shared defence budget, Mrs Merkel will attempt to form a government around a divided camp.

---

Source: <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/886225/Angela-Merkel-Germany-German-elections-latest-EU-latest-news>

[Disclaimer]