



Commission's report on the 2014 European Parliament elections



**24th ACEEEO ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Chisinau, 11 September 2015**

TRANSPARENCY AND EUROPEAN DIMENSION

**For the first time,
the European political
families
nominated candidates
for President of the
European Commission**





European
Commission

The visits of the lead candidates in the Member States

Member State	PES	EPP	ALDE	GUE / NGL	Green / EFA
Belgium	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bulgaria	✓	✓			
Czech Republic	✓		✓	✓	✓
Denmark	✓				✓
Germany	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Estonia					
Ireland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greece	✓	✓		✓	
Spain	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
France	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Croatia	✓				✓
Italy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cyprus		✓		✓	
Latvia		✓			
Lithuania					
Luxembourg	✓	✓	✓		
Hungary					✓
Malta	✓	✓			
Netherlands	✓	✓	✓		✓
Austria	✓	✓	✓		✓
Poland	✓	✓	✓		✓
Portugal	✓	✓		✓	
Romania	✓		✓		
Slovenia	✓		✓	✓	
Slovakia	✓	✓			
Finland	✓	✓			✓
Sweden	✓		✓		✓
UK	✓		✓		✓
Total	23	18	15	11	16



INCREASING THE FOCUS ON EU ISSUES

the actions of the Commission:



Citizens' Dialogues

2013/2014: 51 meeting of the Members of the Commission with citizens throughout Europe about their expectations for the future of Europe



Commission funding

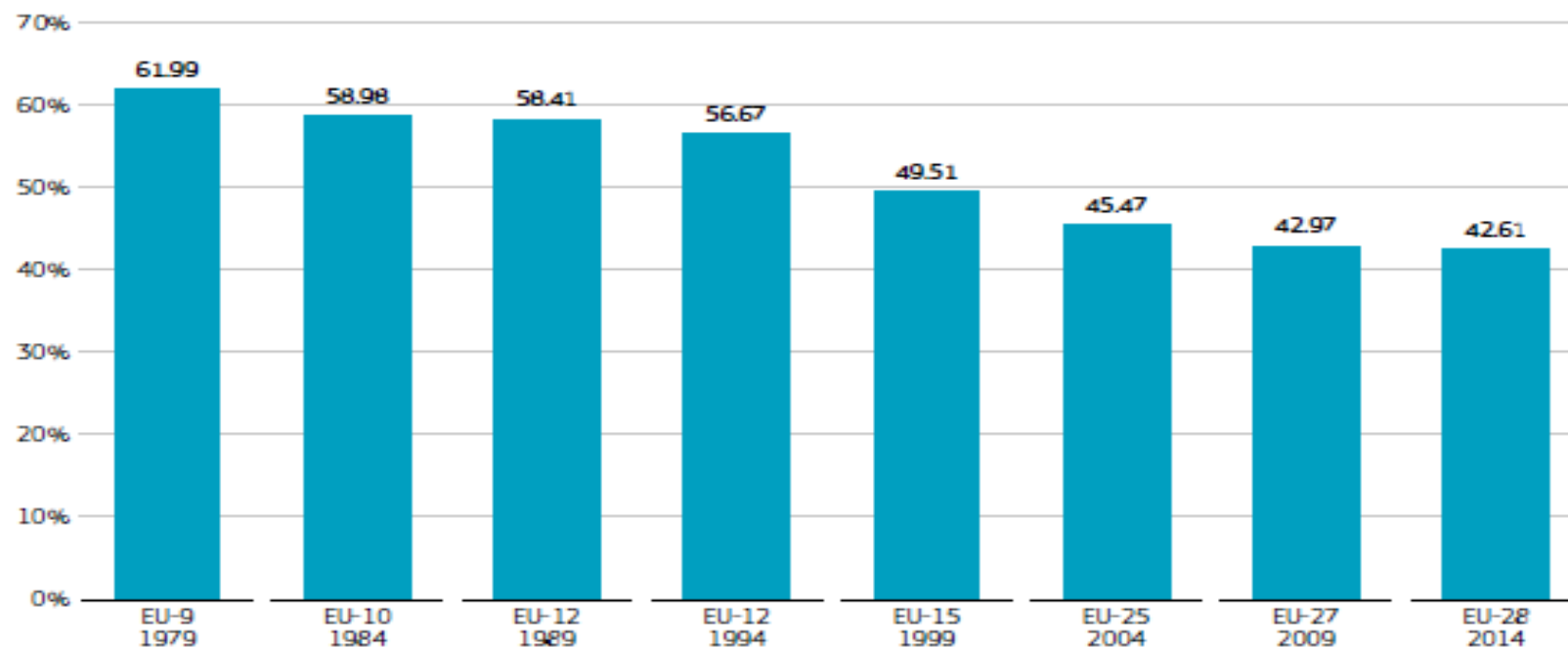
Europe for Citizens programme; Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme

(projects raising awareness and seeking to empower citizens as regards their participation in the democratic life of the EU)



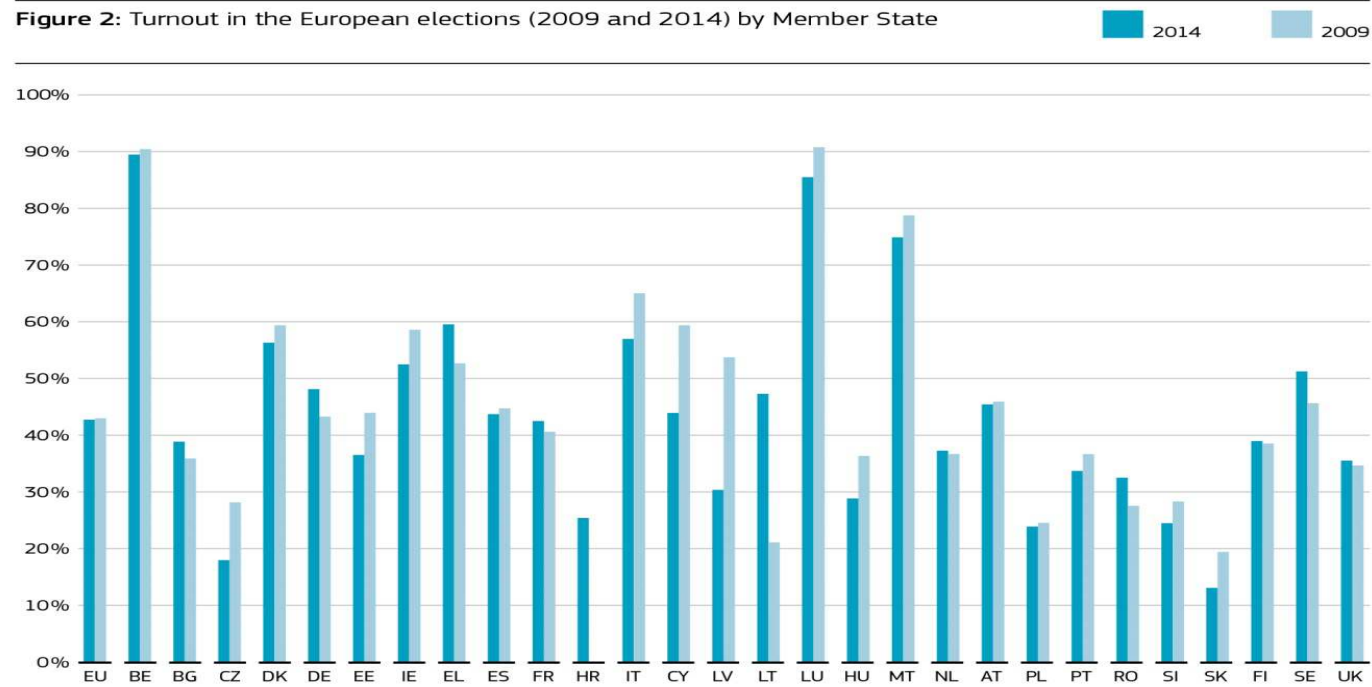
TURNOUT IN THE ELECTIONS

The 2014 elections virtually brought to a halt the steady fall in overall turnout since the first direct European elections in 1979



TURNOUT

Figure 2: Turnout in the European elections (2009 and 2014) by Member State



Turnout in 2014 EP elections **by age**



?

Younger people were the largest group of abstainers:

only 27.8% of 18-24 year-olds voted, as compared with 51.3% in the 55+ age-group



reasons to vote *(EP post-election survey)*

- ✓ **I always vote (41%)**
- ✓ **It is my 'duty as a citizen' (41%)**
- ✓ **I vote to support a political party to which I feel close (22%)**
- ✓ **I am in favour of the EU (14%)**
- ✓ **I feel European (13%)**
- ✓ **I can make things change by voting in the European elections' (12%)**
- ✓ **I vote to influence the choice of Commission President (5%)**



reasons for not voting (*EP post-election survey*)

- ✓ **'lack of trust in politics in general' (23%)**
- ✓ **'not interested in politics' (19%)**
- ✓ **'my vote has no consequences' (14%)**
- ✓ **'do not know much about the EU or the European Parliament or the European Parliament elections' (7%)**



First conclusions

- *Candidates for President of the European Commission were nominated by European political parties and took part in a pan-European election campaign*
- *Direct link was established between the EP election results and the choice of European Commission President*
- *This contributed to enhance public interest and accountability in the EU institutions, and to reinforce the democratic legitimacy of the European Commission*
- *Turnout: is always a challenge but the decreasing trend was stopped*



DEMOCRATIC CONDUCT OF THE ELECTIONS: TRANSPARENCY AND EUROPEAN DIMENSION

European Parties

and

National parties

**Making the link more
visible for voters**





MOBILE EU CITIZENS

Political dimension of EU citizenship → *Article 22(2) TFEU*

"every citizen of the Union residing in a Member State of which he is not a national shall have the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament in the Member State in which he resides, under the same conditions as nationals of that State"



Right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament in another Member State

Equal treatment with nationals with regard to electoral rights:

- conditions of **entry on the electoral roll** as voters;
- **legal remedies** for persons having refused entry on the electoral roll or having rejected application to stand as a candidate;
- supporting documents – **same documents as national voters**, plus a formal declaration on nationality, address in the Member State of residence, last constituency in the home Member State and expression of will to vote in the Member State of residence only;
- **similar rules** apply to those who would like **to stand as a candidate**.



Implementing Directive 93/109/EC in the 2014 EP elections

➔ *Measures by Member States to inform citizens under Article 12 – good practices*

➔ *Measures to facilitate enrollment – good practices*

➔ *European Commission actions: funding NGO projects to encourage participation*





Directive 2013/1/EU ***EU mobile candidates***

candidates no longer have to provide proof that they have not been deprived of their electoral rights in their home Member State, but ***only have to make a declaration*** to that effect, to be verified by the authorities in the host Member State

Directive 2013/1/EU *EU mobile candidates*

*The number of mobile EU
citizens who stood as
candidates in their Member
State of residence more than
doubled,*

**from 81 in 2009 to 153 in
2014**





Actions of civil society organisations to mobilise voters

- *informing citizens about the importance and benefit of participating in the European elections*
- *working towards more inclusive policies*

Examples of NGO projects funded by the **Programme Europe for Citizens:**

- JoiEU: Joint Citizen Action for a Stronger, Citizen-friendly Union (European Citizen Action service - ECAS).
- The 2014 Transeuropa Caravans: transnational citizens' engagement with the European Parliament elections (European Alternatives).
- Encouraging Young Europeans to Vote Out the EU Democratic Deficit (International Management Institute).



Actions of civil society organisations to encourage participation by mobile EU citizens

Examples of NGO projects funded by the **Programme on Fundamental Rights and Citizenship**

- 'Operation Vote' (Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei paesi – COSPE).
- 'Access to rights & civil dialogue for ALL' (Pour la Solidarité).
- 'All citizens now' (University of Chieti-Pescara).



CONCLUSION

- *Looking ahead to the 2019 European Parliament Elections*
 - We need to reflect on further ways **to motivate** citizens to participate in the 2019 elections. Timely support for national, regional and local awareness-raising campaigns can go a long way towards achieving this objective.
 - The EU needs to act not only shortly before the start of electoral campaigns but throughout the political mandate. This reflects the need **to maintain an ongoing interest in EU politics**, increase awareness of the direct impact of European elections on citizens' lives, and foster sustained Europe-wide debates.



Thank you for your attention

Contact:

GIANCARLO DEFAZIO

European Commission

DG Justice and Consumers

Union citizenship rights and free movement

giancarlo.defazio@ec.europa.eu

