



vote for Diversity

SPECIAL: EP ELECTIONS 2014

This document is a short introduction on the European Parliament and its upcoming elections. This guide aims to answer the question: "How will these elections directly impact our campaigns?"

Let's start with the basics!

WHY ARE THE UPCOMING EP ELECTIONS SO CRUCIAL TO US?

Europe today is facing one of its most difficult economic crises. The importance of migration, the challenges of integration and mainstreamed austerity measures are current issues that political leaders, civil society actors and citizens seek to respond in the heat of European elections.

Voter mobilization is key to a new progressive Parliament. In the most recent years, voter turnout has consistently declined, falling by an average of 3% each election. The 2009 turnout was just 43%. However, for the first time, in 2014, citizens have the power to decide what happens in Europe.

Our role as ENAR is to talk to our communities and encourage them to become more engaged in this election process. The more minorities are informed about their rights and the strength they have as voters, the bigger are our chances to influence the political debate.

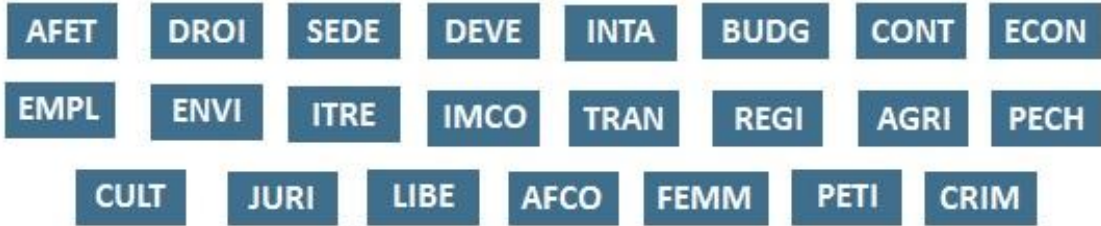
WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT? It is the directly elected institution of the EU, representing the second largest electorate and the largest transnational democratic electorate in the World. Today it comprises 751 Members who are elected for five-year terms. It exercises the legislative function of the EU along with the Council of the EU and the EC. What are the EP powers? They are mainly 3: the legislative, the budgetary and the power to approve the nominated. As a legislative institution and thanks to the preparatory work carried out by its internal Committees, the EP drafts resolutions, reports and opinions (according to its competences), proposes legislative drafts to the EC and considers citizens' petitions. Under its budgetary roll, it has the final say on the EU budget. After the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon, the EC President – the head of the Executive Branch of the EU – must be approved by an absolute majority of MEPs (376 out of 751). This new

“appointing” mandate is the reason why EP elections are crucial to all European citizens: your vote will directly decide who will be in the head of the most important position of the EU institutions.

Each member state has the right to elect a fixed number of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). The distribution of seats is defined by the European treaties on the basis of the principle of digressive proportionality: countries with a larger population have more seats than smaller countries, but the latter have more seats than strict proportionality would imply. For the 2014 election, according to the Treaty of Lisbon, the number of MEPs ranges from six for Malta, Luxembourg, Cyprus, and Estonia to 96 for Germany.



HOW DOES IT WORK IN PRACTICE? EP daily work is constantly developed through its Committees and their reports, in order to cooperate with the EC in initiating legislation. Each Committee is composed of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). There are 20 permanent Parliamentary Committees and 2 sub-committees.



After working in the different parliamentary committees, MEPs reunite in plenary sessions to amend and finally to vote to adopt EU legislation. The Committees which are mainly focused on anti-discrimination, anti-racism and other relevant areas of ENAR’s work are: the Employment Committee¹ and the LIBE².

REMUNERATION OF A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Until 2009, MEPs were paid (by their own Member State) exactly the same salary as a member of their own national parliament. As a result, there was considerable variation in salaries, ranging from

¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/empl/home.html>

² Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee - <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/LIBE/home.html>

€10,363 (Bulgarian members) to €142,512 (Italian members). With the new single statute for MEPs, a common salary system paid from the EU budget was introduced.

- *Salaries*
 - € 7.956,87/month brut (38,5% of an ECJ judge)
 - € 6.200,72/month net
 - Pension scheme
- *Allowances*
 - General expenditure allowance (€ 4.299/month)
 - Travel expenses (some limits)
 - Annual travel allowance (€ 4.243/year max)
 - Subsistence allowance (€ 152-304/session attended)
 - Facilities and staffing arrangements
 - Voting card, badge, laissez-passer, offices
 - Staff allowance: € 21.209/month
- *Facilities and staffing arrangements*
 - Voting card, badge, laissez-passez, offices
 - Staff allowance: € 21.209/month

The "subsistence allowance" is paid without any proof of expenditure. MEPs are just requested to sign an attendance register when arriving at the European Parliament. The allowance is halved in the case of Members who, without due justification, do not attend half the number of plenary sittings in one parliamentary year (September to August). Considering that MEPs attendance to plenary sessions can sometimes be motivated by allowances, [the work of MEPs can be better examined](#) by the number and type of speeches, motions, parliamentary questions and/or written declarations.

SIMPLE DESCRIPTION OF THE EUROPEAN POLITICAL PARTIES

The Members of the European Parliament sit in political groups – they are not organised by nationality, but by political affiliation. A minimum of 25 MEPs from at least seven EU countries are needed to form a group. Each group appoints a chair and has a bureau and Secretariat to manage its internal organization. Prior to a vote, MEPs of each group analyze the proposals, discuss amendments, and seek to have a consensus group position. However, individual MEPs are not bound to vote according to their group's position.

Since July 2004, European parties can receive [annual funding](#) from the European Parliament. It can cover up to 85% of the eligible expenditure of a party, while the rest should be covered by own resources such as membership fees and donations.

The budget can be used for costs directly linked to the party's political programme, such as meetings, conferences, publications, studies and advertisements, administrative, personnel and travel costs, campaign costs connected to European elections. However, it can't be used, among others, to meet

expenditure of direct or indirect funding of national parties, election candidates and political foundations both at national and at European level.³



European United Left–Nordic Green Left: Established in 1995, it consists mostly of socialist and communist parties which traditionally fight against anti-fascism and anti-discrimination issues. It encourages a vision of a socially equitable, peaceful and sustainable European integration process by fighting for more and better education and job opportunities, for social security and solidarity, for the improvement of the living conditions and civil rights and liberties and the enforcement of human rights. For further info: <http://guengl.eu/>

EC Presidency candidate: [Alexis Tsipras](#)

The Greens–European Free Alliance: Composed mainly of green and regionalist political parties. Its main projects are: to raise ecological, social and democratic standards to ensure the quality of life, to improve structures for democratic participation in political decision making, to better the redistribution of work policy with a focus on the gender issues. For further info: <http://www.greens-efa.eu/>



EC Presidency candidate: [Ska Keller](#) and [José Bové](#)



Group of the Progressive Socialists and Democrats: The EP political group of the Party of European Socialist, which is composed of 32 full member parties from 28 EU member States (plus Norway), it brings together Labour, Socialist and Social Democratic parties from all over Europe. Its aims are: to contribute in increasing European and public awareness on citizenship issues; to develop an effective European migration policy; to enhance Europe's role as a partner for peace, security and development. For further info:

<http://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/> and <http://pes.eu/>



EC Presidency candidate: [Martin Schulz](#)

³ Source : European Parliament – About political parties



Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE): ALDE is a transnational alliance based on liberal democrat values among the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party, and the European Democratic Party. It sponsors and supports neoliberal economics, European integration and a single European market. It provides an increasingly vital connection between citizens and EU

institutions. For further info: <http://www.alde.eu/>

EC Presidency candidate: [Guy Verhofstadt](#)

European People's Party: The EPP is the largest political organization in Europe with over 70 members – parties from 40 countries. It belongs to the political family of the Centre-right, striving for a democratic as well as efficient, trustworthy, and close entity to the European citizens. It promotes a free market economy. Its 2014 election campaign will be launched on 6–7 March in Dublin, Ireland. For further info: <http://www.epp.eu/>



EC Presidency candidate: TBC on 6/7 March



Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists (AECR): is composed of Centre-right parties, and it aims for radical reform of the EU and the spread of conservative values, working alongside the European Conservatives and Reformists Group in the EP, the European Young Conservatives, the New Direction think tank, and other allied groups. The main values pursued are: free enterprise, trade and competition, sovereign integrity of the nation state, higher migration controls, and the end of abuse of asylum procedures. For further info: <http://www.aecr.eu/>

EC Presidency candidate: No candidate presented

Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD) is a right-wing political group made up of Euroskeptics and EU critics who oppose further European Integration.

For further info: <http://www.efdgroupp.eu/>

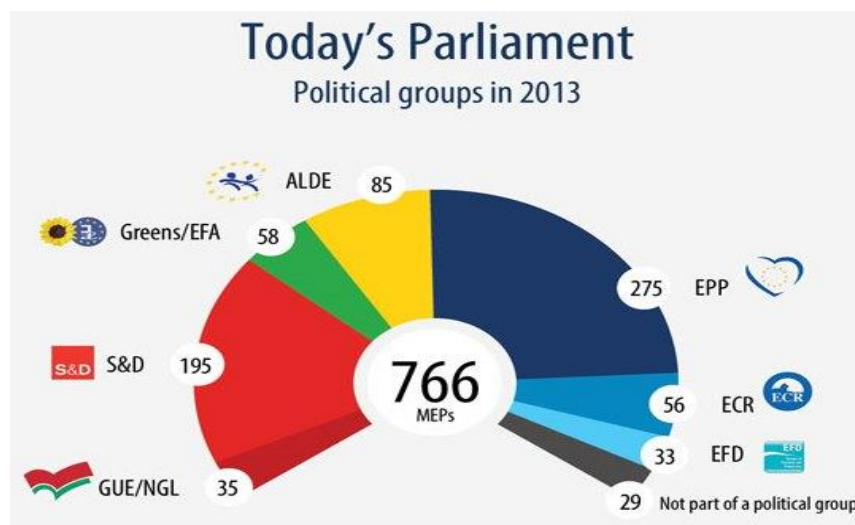
EC Presidency candidate: TBC



Non-Attached Members: MEPs who do not sit in one of the recognized political groups. Political ideologies displayed by the Non-Attached Members range from social liberalism to populism, conservatism, national conservatism and nationalism. As of 2009, however, the Non-Attached Members has consisted of mostly far-right parties.

Since 1999, the European Commissioner is affiliated to the European People's Party (EPP).

POLITICAL GROUPS IN THE EP PARLIAMENT IN 2013⁴



VOTING SYSTEM IN THE EU MEMBER STATES

There is **no uniform voting system** for the election of MEPs, but Member States have to follow **3 rules**:

1. The system must be a form of **proportional representation**, under party list or single transferable voting systems
2. The electoral area may be subdivided if it does not affect the proportional nature of the voting system
3. Any election threshold at the national level must not exceed five percent

⁴ Source: European Parliament

the *Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme*¹⁰, the *Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity*¹¹, and many others.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF EU ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION?

Ground of discrimination	Banned in employment	Banned in access to goods and services	Banned in social protection	Banned in education
Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Race and ethnicity	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Age	Yes	In discussion	In discussion	In discussion
Ability	Yes	In discussion	In discussion	In discussion
Religion or belief	Yes	In discussion	In discussion	In discussion
Sexual orientation	Yes	In discussion	In discussion	In discussion
Multiple discrimination	No	No	No	No

Source: EP Intergroup on LGB

USING THE WEB AS A USEFUL CAMPAIGN TOOL IN

4 STEPS

1. Link our hashtags to #EP2014 to promote ENAR - @ENAREurope #Ivote4diversity
2. Visit regularly our I vote for diversity facebook page to be updated
3. Find more information on other websites and pools
 - a. <http://www.elections2014.eu>
 - b. <http://www.euractiv.com/eu-elections-2014>
 - c. <http://www.myvote2014.eu/en/home>
 - d. <http://www.votewatch.eu/>
 - e. <http://euobserver.com/eu-elections>
 - f. [European Voice](#)
 - g. [Europe Decides](#)
4. Promote ENAR's projects and actions on your website and social media

¹⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/programme/index_en.htm

¹¹ PROGRESS - <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=327>