

# European elections 2024: guidelines



The European elections will take place across the 27 Member States of the EU from 6 to 9 June 2024, depending on the country. Nearly 450 million citizens are called upon to elect their MEPs in the European Parliament

## 1 The European Parliament in brief

### History



Created in 1957 as a parliamentary assembly of elected national representatives of Member States, the European Parliament has been elected by direct universal suffrage since 1979.

### Locations



The seat of the European Parliament is in Strasbourg, where the plenary sessions take place (one week a month); in Brussels for committee meetings and in Luxembourg for the secretariat of the European Parliament.

### Presidency



The first directly elected President was Simone Veil. The current President is Roberta Metsola from Malta.

### Elections



The vote takes place every 5 years and over several days: elections begin on Thursday (the day on which the Netherlands votes) and end on Sunday (voting day in most countries).

### Working languages



24 official languages

### DID YOU KNOW



The multilingual Parliament employs around 300 staff interpreters and relies on more than 1.500 freelance interpreters; the EU's interpretation services are one of the largest employers of conference interpreters in the world\*!



## Legislative, budgetary and supervisory powers of the European Parliament

### THE "ORDINARY LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE" ("CO-DECISION")



The procedure that enables the European Parliament to pass legislation (directive or regulation) in co-decision with the EU Council (meeting of the various ministers of the 27 Member States) in the European Union's areas of competence.

The European Parliament has the power to approve the multi-annual EU budget negotiated and decided by the Member States. In addition, although it does not have the power to vote taxes (unlike national parliaments), it does vote with the Council of the EU on the annual expenditure of the EU budget.



### BUDGETARY POWER

### SUPERVISORY AUTHORITY

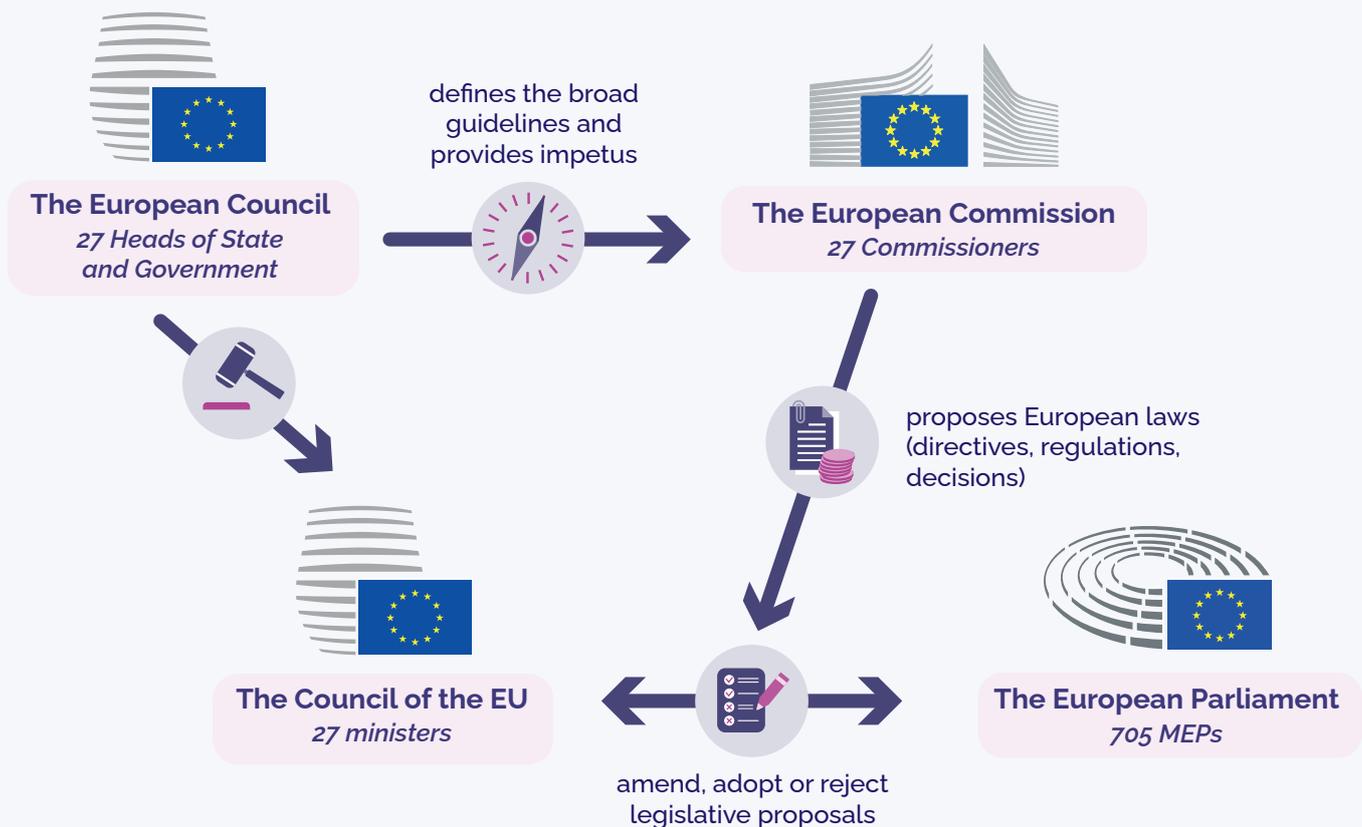


After holding hearings, the European Parliament first elects the President of the European Commission, then the College of Commissioners. It may censure the College. It exercises budgetary control and can set up committees of enquiry.



The European Parliament does not have the power to propose legislation; this prerogative falls to the European Commission, which has a monopoly on legislative initiative.

## The legislative decision-making process in the EU





While European legislation lays down the common provisions and procedures for electing the European Parliament, national law organises the various ballots, which explains the variations from one country to another.

Common rules in the 27 Member States



Direct universal suffrage



Proportionality: seats are allocated according to the number of votes cast



Minimum threshold: between 2% and 5% depending on the Member State

National regulations



Division into constituencies



The voting age is 18 in all Member States except Austria and Malta (16) and Greece (17).



Voting is compulsory in five Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece and Luxembourg).

\*Source: European Parliament. The European Parliament: electoral procedure.

DID YOU KNOW



All EU citizens living in a Member State other than their country of origin have the right to vote and stand for election. For example, a Czech can vote in Spain. Several MEPs have been elected in a country other than their own.



Number of elected members 2019-2024 legislature

705  
MEPs



Minimum number of elected MEPs per country

6



Maximum number of elected MEPs

96

Most Member States form a single constituency .



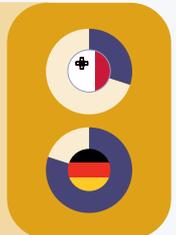
However, some Member States have divided their national territory into several regional constituencies.



DID YOU KNOW



The principle of “degressive proportionality” favours the representation of “small” Member States (demographically speaking): the most populous Member States have more seats than countries with smaller populations, but the citizens of the least populous countries are proportionally better represented\*. A Maltese MEP represents fewer than 86,000 people, while a German MEP represents 870,000\*\*.



\*Source: Public life “705 MEPs after Brexit”

\*\*Source: Les Echos 11 July 2023 “European elections: the 27 Member States face a redistribution of the number of seats in Parliament”.



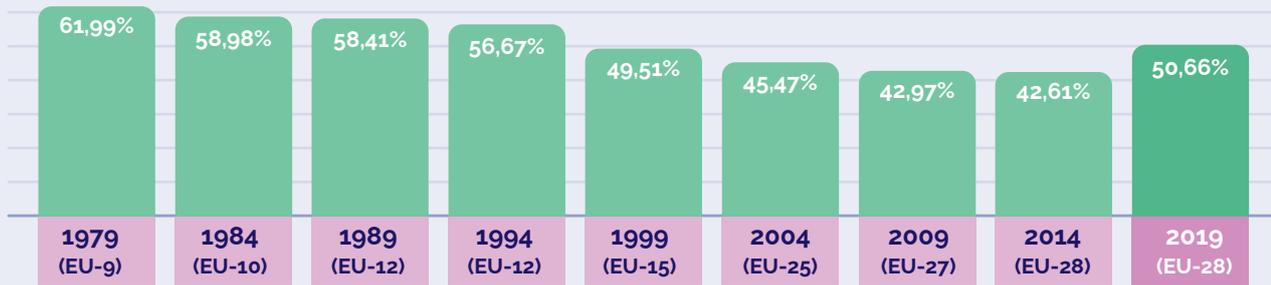
In September 2023, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU agreed on a new distribution of seats leading to 720 MEPs from 2024, in order to adapt representativeness to demographic changes.



**Transnational lists:**

The Jacques Delors Institute supports the idea of transnational lists leading to the election of a certain number of MEPs elected in a European constituency. However, no agreement has been reached for the next legislature.

**Turnout at European elections since direct universal suffrage (European average, in %)\***



\*Source: European Parliament website "Previous elections".

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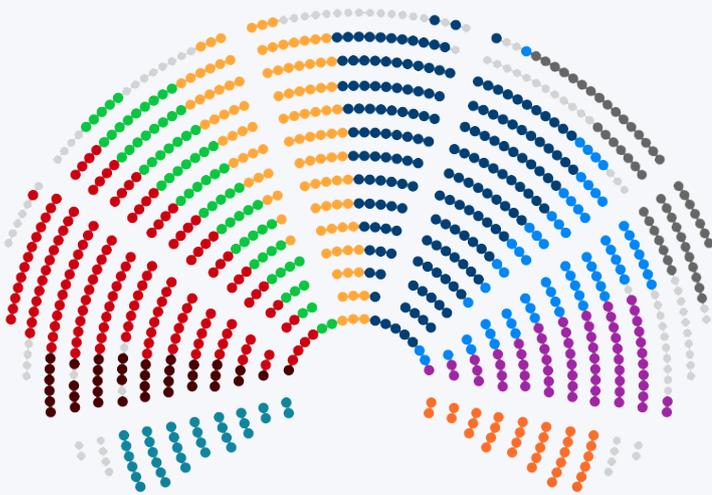
**Composition**

MEPs do not sit on the basis of their nationality, but on their political affiliation. The political groups are made up of at least 25 MEPs representing at least a quarter of the Member States.

Composition for the 2019-2024 legislature		MEPs	Countries
	European People's Party (EPP)	176	27
	Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats (S&D)	142	26
	Renew Europe	101	24
	Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA)	72	17
	European Conservatives and Reformists Group (CRE)	66	16
	Identity and democracy (ID)	62	8
	Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left	37	13
	<i>Non inscrits</i>	47	12

# Partisan composition of the European Parliament

Image source: European Parliament website



- PPE
- S&D
- Renew
- Green/EFA
- ECR
- ID
- The Left
- NI
- Council of the EU
- European Commission

## The European Parliament's 20 committees, each with between 25 and 88 members



Fisheries (PECH)



Development (DEVE)



International Trade (INTA)



Budgets (BUDG)



Budgetary Control (CONT)



Foreign Affairs (AFET) which has two sub-committees: (DROI) Security and Defence (SEDE)



Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) which includes the sub-committee Tax Matters (FISC)



Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)



Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)



Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)



Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)



Transport and Tourism (TRAN)



Regional Development (REGI)



Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI)



Culture and Education (CULT)



Legal Affairs (JURI)



Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE)



Constitutional Affairs (AFCO)

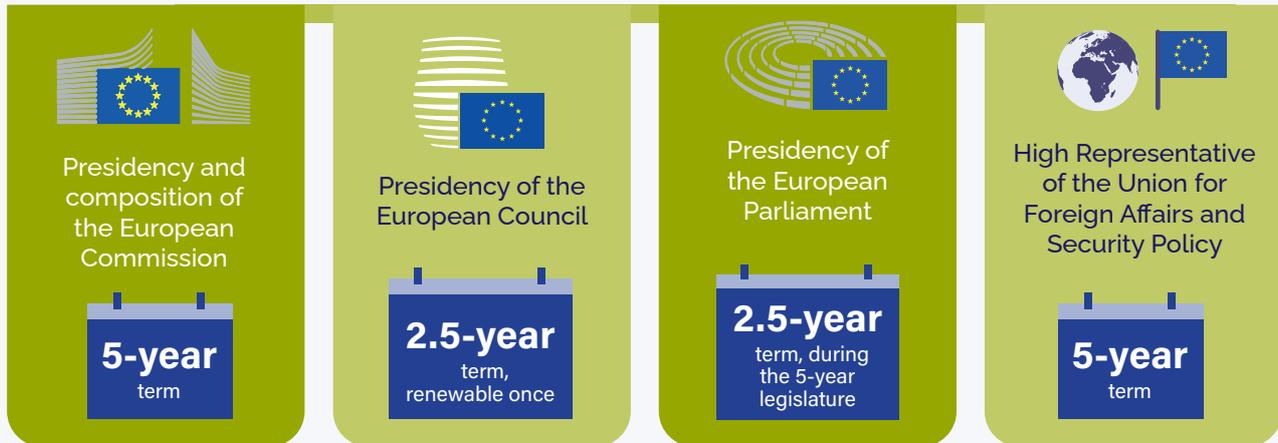


Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM)



Petitions (PETI)

The European elections are the starting point for a reorganisation of Europe's governing bodies:



The distribution of posts is based on a combination of different criteria: geographical (countries in the west, north, south, east), demographic (size of the country); representativeness in terms of political affiliation following the results of the elections; and also gender criteria.



The "*Spitzenkandidat*" system: the term is used by the European political parties to designate the "head of list", during the European election campaign, likely to preside over the European Commission. The current debate concerns whether or not to make this system compulsory.



In 2014, the spirit of this idea was respected, as the EPP candidate who came out on top in the elections, Jean-Claude Juncker, was elected President of the European Commission. However, this was not the case in 2019 when Ursula von der Leyen was elected (the EPP list leader was Manfred Weber).