

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM 2019 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS AND AN EFFICIENT CAMPAIGN STRATEGY FOR 2024 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY: THE REQUIRED INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM 2019 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS AND AN EFFICIENT CAMPAIGN STRATEGY FOR 2024 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 European Parliament elections are fast approaching. However, the figures from the 2019 European Parliament elections- for instance, 50.66% EU voter turnout, do not particularly speak in favour of high interest and involvement of the EU electorate. Bearing in mind that the European Parliament elections are on the horizon, the policy research designs mechanisms for fostering participatory democracy. More precisely, participatory democracy-high voter turnout, and election campaign are tightly linked. Hence the policy paper designs an efficient election campaign strategy for the 2024 European Parliament elections giving due consideration to key trends and outcomes of the 2019 European Parliament elections.

Social Media summary

An efficient campaign strategy for the 2024 European Parliament elections is designed in the paper.

Keywords

European Parliament, elections, campaign, strategy, democracy

Short bio

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TABLE OF ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists
EP	European Parliament
EPP	European People's Party
EU	European Union
Greens/EFA	Greens/European Free Alliance
GUE/NGL	The Left Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left
ID	Identity and Democracy
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NI	Non-attached Members
S&D	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

1. INTRODUCTION

The upcoming European Parliament (EP) elections are scheduled to be held on 6-9 June 2024. The European Parliament constitutes the very EU institution which is formed by elections. The European Parliament elections are held every five years, and the voting age and electoral threshold vary in the EU member states. The EP is equipped with decent legislative, budgetary, and supervisory powers, and hence plays a crucial role in the EU's political system.

To that end, the voter turnout at the EP elections remains a significant factor for the proper functioning of the EU democracy and deriving democratic legitimacy. When it comes to the 2019 EP elections, for instance, the EU voter turnout was 50.66% in average, while the figure fluctuated from very low to rather high in the member states. Many different factors lay at the core of the voter behaviour and the election campaign constitutes a crucial aspect among those.

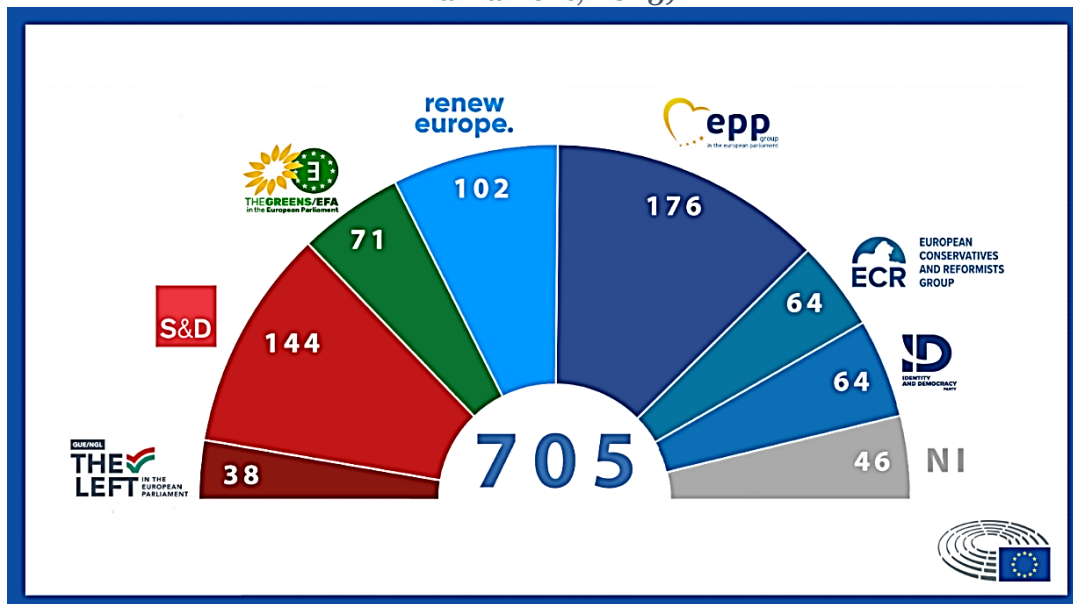
An efficient election campaign and voter turnout are tightly linked. Accordingly, the policy paper is dedicated to designing an efficient election campaign strategy for the upcoming 2024 European Parliament elections. In doing so, firstly, the key trends and outcomes pertaining to the 2019 EP elections are mapped to gain knowledge and evidence relevant for the 2024 EP elections. Secondly, an efficient election campaign strategy for the 2024 EP elections are designed giving due consideration to numerous decisive and delicate factors.

2. 2019 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS; KEY TRENDS AND OUTCOMES

2.1. The outcome of the elections

The European Parliament (EP) elections are held every five years and members of the European Parliament are elected by direct universal suffrage. The 27 European Union (EU) member states hold elections based on proportional representation system, the voting age varies from 16- in Austria and Malta, 17-in Greece, to 18 in majority of member states. When it comes to the electoral threshold, the EU member states apply divergent ones: the figure fluctuates from 3% to 5% in average. The number of seats in the EP are allocated based on the proportion of an EU member state population. The 2019 European Parliament elections were held from 23-26 May; - as for the time being- in 28 member states of the European Union- the United Kingdom included. As a result of the 2019 European Parliament elections the composition of the **2019-2024 EP** is established as follows: **705 members of the European Parliament (MEPs)** affiliated with **7 political groups** (European Parliament, 2023).

Figure 1 European Parliament's Seven Political Groups (source: European Parliament, 2023)



Out of the 7 political groups the **European People's Party (EPP)** holds the largest seats at the EP with **176 MEPs**, followed by the **Progressive Alliance of Socialists**

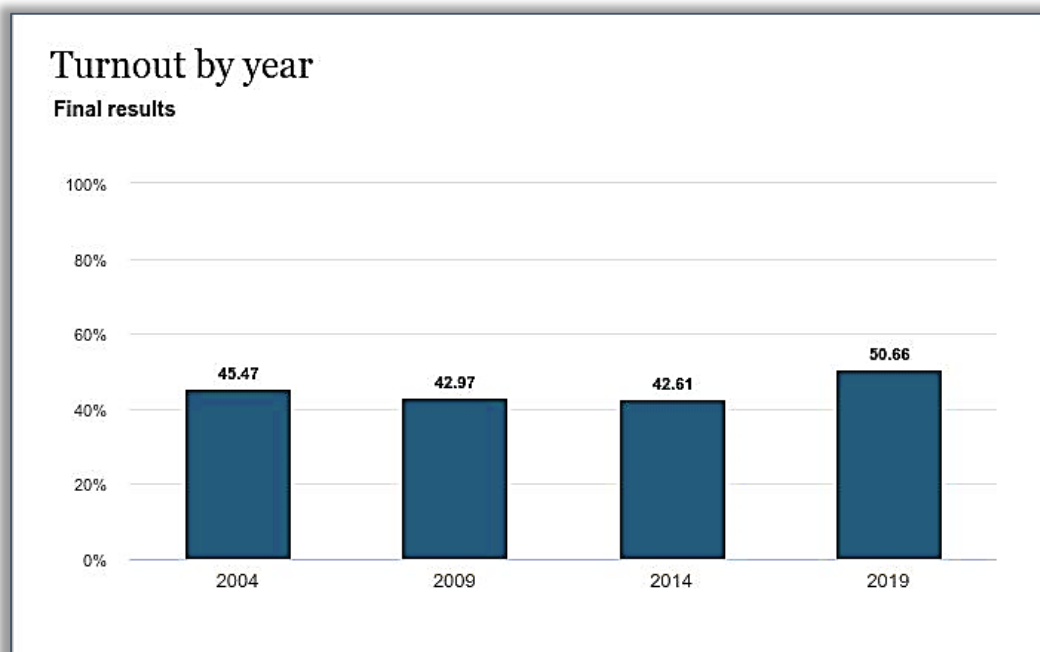
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and Democrats (S&D)- 144 MEPs, Renew Europe- 102 MEPs, the Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA)- 71 MEPs, European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)- 64 MEPs, Identity and Democracy (ID)- 64 MEPs, Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL- The Left)- 38 MEPs, and Non-attached Members (NI)- 46 MEPs.

2.2. The voter turnout

The *EU voter turnout* pertaining to the 2019 European Parliament elections constituted **50.66% in average** (European Parliament, 2019), which is the highest figure compared to the previous EP elections.

Figure 2 European Parliament elections: the EU voter turnout
(source: European Parliament, 2019)



However, as far as the individual EU member states are concerned, the voter turnout could be classified in three categories: very low, medium level, and rather high. A very low voter turnout, i.e. ranging from 22.74% - 37.60%; was observed in Slovakia (22.74%; the lowest figure in the EU), Croatia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia, Czechia, and Portugal (in 8 out of 27 EU member states) (European Parliament, 2019). A medium level voter turnout- ranging in between 40.80%-55.27%; was observed in Romania, Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Cyprus, Finland, Sweden, France, Italy, and Ireland (in 10 out of 27 EU member states) (European Parliament, 2019).

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A rather high voter turnout- ranging from 58.69%- 88.47%; was observed in Belgium (88.47%; the highest figure in the EU), Malta, Austria, Spain, Greece, Luxembourg, Germany, and Denmark (in 8 out of 27 EU member states) (European Parliament, 2019). In addition, it is important to mention 2 facts: 1) voting is compulsory in 5 EU member states- Belgium, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Cyprus, and Greece (Sokolska, 2023); and a rather high turnout was observed in these states apart from Bulgaria, 2) the voter turnout was very low in Estonia- 37.60%, despite electronic voting option, and in Bulgaria- 32.64%, despite mandatory voting requirement.

As far as the voter behaviour is concerned, a number of main factors could be highlighted for impacting the voter turnout:

- ✓ ***“election fatigue”***: the 2019 European Parliament elections were run in parallel to a series of national elections. Spain, for instance, held 5 elections in a month, and the EP elections were run in parallel to the national ones in Belgium, Italy, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Lithuania, and Romania (Novelli and Johansson, 2019). In Belgium, in fact, federal, regional, and the European Parliament elections are held on the same day from 2014 onwards (Novelli and Johansson, 2019).
- ✓ ***“election campaign distraction”***: during the 2019 European Parliament elections campaign the discussion of the EU-related topics was overshadowed by national ones. In the meantime, political parties and affiliates demonstrated little campaign enthusiasm. The 2019 EP elections campaign is assessed as “barely perceptible”, “low intensity campaign” pertaining to most of the EU member states (Novelli and Johansson, 2019).
- ✓ ***short campaign period***: in majority of the EU member states the election campaign period is fixed for 1 month, however on certain instances the campaign runs for very short 2 weeks.
- ✓ ***technical impediments***; for instance, the problems related to registration and voting of mobile EU citizens, physical accessibility of polling stations, documentation and basic legal knowledge issues pertaining to ethnic minorities, etc. (European Commission, 2020).

2.3. The communication channels

The European Commission has characterised *the 2019 EP elections campaign as “the most digital to date”* (European Commission, 2020), and the European Elections Monitoring Center has assessed as *“a social media election campaign”* (Novelli and Johansson, 2019). During the 2019 EP elections campaign political parties and affiliates, indeed, made much efforts utilizing social media. To that end, first and foremost, Facebook was massively used as a communication channel. In line with vehement use of social media, the campaigners applied election campaigns’

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traditional communication means- TV commercials, posters, billboards, newspaper ads. However, the traditional communication means still bear high financial costs or are legally prohibited. TV or radio political advertisements, for instance, are legally banned in Belgium, Ireland, Italy, France, and Malta (Novelli and Johansson, 2019). Meanwhile, the efficiency of social media usage is proven by outreach to a wide audience and associated little or no financial costs and hence social media-mostly *Facebook*, usage took *enormous space*.

2.4. Disruptors: foreign interference, disinformation, or information manipulation, cyberattacks

The EU institutions anticipated major attempts of foreign interference, information manipulation and cyberattacks during the 2019 EP elections aimed at derailing free and fair electoral process, undermining integrity of the elections and shaking trust in democratic process. In this regard, while isolated instances of information manipulation or cyberattacks were identified, a large scale thoroughly impactful interference in the 2019 EP elections did not occur (European Commission, 2020).

3. 2024 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS: AN EFFICIENT CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

3.1. *The context of the upcoming 2024 European Parliament elections*

The *next European Parliament elections* are scheduled to be held on **6-9 June 2024** (Council of the EU, 2023). As the elections' dates are set and political competition is unfolding between political groups in Brussels and political parties in the EU capitals, the context of the upcoming 2024 EP elections is well worth reflecting on. Compared with the 2019 EP elections, the upcoming 2024 EP elections will take place in the EU's rather complex socio-economic, political, and security and geostrategic landscape. To that end, the core factors could be identified as follows:

- *the Covid19 pandemic* which caused the EU major socio-economic and political damage and hence the EU's Recovery plan (European Commission, 2021) devised and implemented to tackle the problem,
- the ongoing devastating *war in Ukraine* and its negative impact on the EU's security, politics, and economy. Hence the European Commission has come forward with "RePower EU" plan (European Commission, 2022),
- *foreign interference* in the EU affairs.

As far as foreign interference is concerned, the European Parliament has investigated, analysed, and provided an evidence-based report disclosing deeply disruptive foreign interference in the EU affairs (Kalniete, 2023). As reported by the EP, foreign interference operations and hybrid attacks against the EU are conducted with the involvement of a wide scope of actors, and usage of various tools- high tech-AI; cyberattacks, spyware, intimidation tactics, disinformation, and information manipulation, etc. (Kalniete, 2023). Furthermore, the European Parliament has drawn attention to the credible risk of a large-scale foreign interference during the 2024 EP elections:

"Parliament is a target of diverse and aggressive foreign interference campaigns;.... whereas disinformation in political campaigns is a direct threat to fair democratic political competition;whereas these issues present a challenge to the 2024 European elections; whereas *on the eve of the 2024 European elections increased interference and information manipulation activity is expected*".

Sandra Kalniete, Report on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union, Including Disinformation, European Parliament, 2023

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Against the backdrop of the outlined factors and attaching due importance to the EP elections, the European Commission and the European Parliament have undertaken decent measures to defend democracy, to enhance transparency and counter mis/disinformation, to safeguard integrity of the upcoming EP elections, to guarantee free and fair and trustworthy elections. The 2024 EP elections is expected to be held under new rules and revised procedures when it comes to political advertisement, EU electoral code, funding of European political parties and European political foundations, cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence (AI). More precisely, the EU has adopted Democracy Action Plan, Digital Services Act, Cyber security strategy, while the EU electoral code, revision of the European party funding rules and AI act are in the negotiation process.

3.2. The campaign strategy for the 2024 EP elections

As discussed and elaborated, the EU institutions have undertaken a series of effective measures aimed at strengthening democracy in the EU and insuring integrity of the upcoming 2024 EP elections. To that end, ***an efficient election campaign strategy*** constitutes a crucial contributing factor. An efficient election campaign could foster voter turnout, which constitutes an important parameter for a vibrant democracy and democratic legitimacy. An efficient election campaign generates the feeling and conviction among electorate that elections are crucial and consequential and motivates voters to be part of the political process. To devise an efficient election campaign strategy, it takes to carefully assess different aspects and craft numerous elements- slogans, promo videos, posters- to name just a few among many.

3.2.1. The role of the EP, timinig, slogans and voting promotion

The significant role of the European Parliament in the EU political system: The 2024 EU elections are the European Parliament elections specifically. Hence the electorate needs to have a clear understanding about 2 points: 1) why the EP is an important EU institution; which role the EP plays in the EU political system?, 2) why the 2024 EP elections matter specifically?. Firstly, it is important to underscore that the EP is a crucial actor among the EU institutions with decent powers and influence:

- ✓ the EP constitutes the very EU institution formed by elections and hence the EP elections empower the EU voters to express views and shape the EU politics and policies,
- ✓ the EP possess legislative powers- co-legislates with the European Commission and the Council in a great number of fields – be it agriculture, energy, transport, immigration, justice, or environment,
- ✓ the EP has its' say on the EU's entire annual budget,
- ✓ the EP is properly involved and supervises the other EU institutions- the European Council, the Council, the European Commission.

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Secondly, when it comes to the 2024 elections, the busy electorate needs to be convinced that the 2024 EP elections worth dedication of their precious time and efforts to pay attention to. To that end, the point could be made as follows:

“The EU is undergoing critical and decisive times; stakes could not be higher which is true pertaining to many different issues- be it environment, economy, or foreign policy (etc.). Hence the EU (a concrete party) needs your solutions, feedback, and contribution; as you matter, your opinion, livelihood, and wellbeing matters! Participate in the EP elections to find a proper solution to X problems. Are the EP elections held every day? No, absolutely not. The EP elections take place once in 5 years; so it is a special occasion and special time to be involved”.

Timing: The next European Parliament elections are scheduled to take place on 6-9 June 2024. As outlined, in majority EU member states the EP elections campaign is enshrined to be held in 1-month timeframe. Accordingly, as the core elections campaign runs for 1 month; the question is- what’s the optimal timing for disseminating stimulating information about the approaching EP elections, a party’s policies, etc.? Given the prospect of 2024 EP elections, as of August 2023 the EP political groups and national affiliates-political parties; in fact, have already started preparations and, on certain instances, have come forward with party programmes. However attractive policy debates and campaigning might be for politicians, it would be quite difficult to keep diverse and busy electorate consistently focused on the EP elections topic over long 1-year period. Hence it is optimal *to start a stimulating campaign 4 months prior to the EP elections*. A 4-month period is an optimal one as there will remain 3 months to go until the core elections campaign and it will be sufficient timeframe to catch electorate’s attention, to create a sense of urgency- i.e. the elections are fast approaching; the elections are on the horizon.

1-month timeframe management: The core-1-month election campaign needs to be an intensive one. It would be interesting and useful to start the campaign in a capital city and other locations simultaneously. The lead famous politicians need to visit and hold meetings in key constituencies at least.

Slogans: Slogans constitute an important element in elections campaign and slogans need to be meaningful, catching, simple, memorable, and motivating. The following slogans could be considered for use during the 2024 EP elections campaign: “EU your dreams come trUE”, or “EU your aims come trUE”, “EU your best friend for decades”, “European Parliament, the peoples’ power”.

Voting promotion: As discussed and elaborated, the voter turnout during the 2019 EP elections was above 50% in average, however the national figures resembled quite a dramatic picture: a very low voter turnout was observed in several EU member states. Electorate’s participation during elections, as highlighted, plays a vital role for democracy and democratic legitimacy. To that end, here are a couple of examples promoting voting to be considered for use during the 2024 EP elections:

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“Voting Empowers”; “Voting is Decisive”; “Voting Influences”, “Voting is Power”. “Do not be a passive observer, VOTE”; “Don’t bypass, VOTE”; “You have complaints, VOTE”; “Use the unique chance you have in 5 years only and VOTE”.

“Show up at the polling station on X day, we will be glad to see you 😊!”.

A promo video for voting: “Every single day you go to many different places, right? You go to supermarkets (in video a person is in a supermarket and is buying food), to shopping malls (respectively, episodes of action), pharmacy..... so it’s yet another single day- NO, it’s your special day, it’s the EP elections day. So just pass by/walk in and it is very simple- VOTE”.

A crucial note about promo videos for voting: the videos should under no circumstances be dramatic, but should be encouraging, inspiring, motivating, and dynamic.

3.2.2. *Communication channels; dos and don’ts*

As articulated, the 2019 EP elections campaign was described as the “most digital to date”; “a social media election campaign”. The 2024 EP elections campaign will massively utilize social media as well, in line with the traditional communication channels. As far as messaging and communication channels are concerned, it is important to reflect on several issues as elaborated below.

Images: Photo of a candidate on Posters/Facebook: It is not particularly the best option if a candidate’s photo articulated in a poster/or posted in Facebook resembles one’s passport photo; is of a passport photo style.

A candidate’s photo needs to illustrate something which best describes a candidate, something particularly inherent to a candidate; unique to a candidate – character, deeds, or policies he/she stands for. If a candidate has been in politics for a long time a major achievement could be illustrated, for example in form of a symbol.

A poster photo could be accompanied by political/historical symbols on the background; for example – reminding of and inherent to a particular local place/a country where a candidate stands during the elections.

When it comes to writings on a poster; those should not take the space and should be minimum.

Images: messaging: It is necessary to refrain from mixed messaging- i.e. causing mixed feelings – with positive and negative connotations in the same image. Such an image will cause confusion, lead to mixed feelings and a negative angle will be projected to the EU. Messaging- signs used in an imagery coupled with verbal message; needs to be clear.

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It would be attractive if posters, images contain AI generated elements.

Messages: Facebook posts- texts: When it comes to texts in Facebook, it runs the credible high risk that a reader will lose interest and will not keep reading if a text is too long. Texts posted in Facebook should be short, precise, to the point and stress key arguments and points.

An example to use for reaching out to voters in Facebook during the 2024 EP elections campaign: Facebook chat with a candidate- ask your MEP: “You are curious to find an answer to X question, you have asked ChatGPT and ??? you are dramatically disappointed -“as an AI I can’t respond”... Do not worry; ChatGPT does not have an answer to your question, but your MEP definitely has; join, chat with your MEP, raise tricky questions and receive comprehensive answers /date and time specified/”.

Videos, politicians, AI: Many different types of video materials could be used during the 2024 EP elections campaign. To be impactful, videos should be dynamic, inspiring, attractive, motivating, and memorable; arguments made should be clear and to the point. Video materials could be used as mentioned below.

1. AI videos: It will be highly effective to use AI videos; i.e. videos to contain AI features. More precisely, robots and digital twins need to be used in videos. An example of such a video to use during the 2024 EP elections campaign runs as follows:

Robot-politician-digital twin trilogy: a candidate discusses an issue with its digital twin and a robot:

A politician/candidate stands in front of a virtual screen and touches upon/swipes the screen and brings the question– interesting, which day is X day? Next to the politician stands a robot- and the politician asks the question to the robot (in an artistic manner): Robot, can you guess which day is X day? (the robot might have a name as well). The robot replies- well, let me think- yes, exactly X day is the EP elections day. Then the candidate’s virtual twin appears, and dialogue follows- let me speak about X party’s policies, achievements, and new proposals. The policies, etc. are showcased one by one sequentially on the virtual screen with different colours. Video ends with- Vote X politician/party on X day.

2. Documentaries (time limit- 30 minutes to 1-hour maximum): A documentary will feature an EU political group’s/party’s/MEPs’ achievement, policies/policy proposals, time in the EP- shorts from the EP speeches, visits, reports. It will be aimed at showcasing the credibility of a political group/party/candidate.

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3. TV commercials: Short TV commercials must be memorable and convincing on why a voter should vote for a specific party/candidate. To that end, an example constitutes the following:

“Tough times require bold measures and decisive characters/politicians. X candidate has been in politics for X number of years and has staunchly defended X policies/ has fought for X policies/the EU with impressive results. The mentioned is accompanied by a classical inspiring motivating music and featuring X politician speaking at the the EP, etc. In 2024, as always, X politician won’t let you down, won’t break your precious trust. Vote X party/candidate”.

3.2.3. Campaign venues

In line with the traditional election campaign venues- townhall meetings, large outdoor gatherings, door-to-door visits, disseminating booklets in the streets; the election campaign could take place in “creative” venues to enhance productivity.

As far as the townhall meetings, large outdoor gatherings and events alike are concerned, it will be useful to display digital features during the events. For instance, instead of displaying the EU flag on the screen in picture format, the digitally produced version of the EU flag could be displayed. The same point is true about other components- be it maps, signs or slogans: instead of displaying a slogan in a picture format, the digitally produced version could be used- for example, letters mix, separate, and gather with digital effect and then turn into slogans.

In addition to the traditional venues, the election campaign could spread to shopping malls, pubs/wine bars, parties. If an EU member state has a tradition of pub/wine bar gatherings on certain days within a week, a candidate could walk into a pub/wine bar, take a beer/wine, and speak with the electorate. When it comes to parties, young party members could be dispatched to parties and chat about the EP elections with fellow young people; or otherwise a political party could organize promo parties for youth. As for the shopping malls, a candidate or if not the candidate per se, young party members/affiliates need to visit shopping malls at the weekends (as there are lots of people at that time) for campaigning. Shopping malls as a venue have the advantage of visitors being in good mood in majority cases.

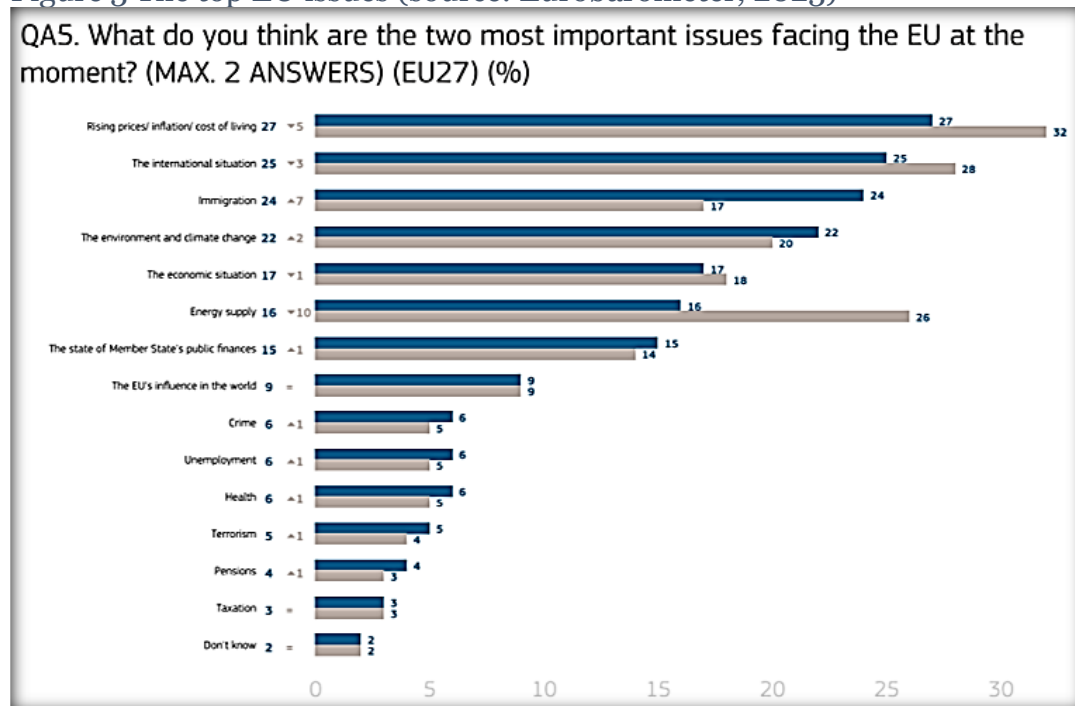
A scenario for a shopping mall campaigning during the 2024 EP elections runs as follows: A candidate (or young representatives) goes to a shopping mall; does shopping and starts talking to people. A candidate starts by saying- oh yes (with full of enthusiasm), I am here for shopping as well; and then engages in conversation-raises the point about elections, party policies, etc. Furthermore, if not prohibited by law, posters need to be displayed on moving screens in shopping malls.

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3.2.4. Topics, speeches, TV debates

During the 2024 EP elections, a heated debate should be expected on various policy topics. The issues to top the debate constitute: economy- inflation, cost of living, business dealings, the EU industry and competitiveness; migration and domestic security, environment and climate change, foreign affairs.

Figure 3 The top EU issues (source: Eurobarometer, 2023)



Accordingly, political competitors will raise problems, criticise, and draw electorate's attention to dysfunctional and failed policies viewed as such. In this regard, it is not the best tactics to just denounce a political competitor, especially as one receives millions of votes at national elections; resorting to black PR/negative connotations. The mentioned tactics contains the risk of having a counter effect- a political party/affiliates could be viewed as incompetent, detached from "tough" reality, and not representing the electorate at concern. Hence the question rises- how to proceed: it is useful:

1. to map the key topics,
2. to map the core controversial and challenging arguments and criticism that could be raised by a political competitor,
3. to figure out best strong responses that neutralise or at least minimize the impact and effect of competitors' argumentation. A political party needs to use facts-based

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solid counter argumentation and stress why proposed policies are better, appropriate, and deliverable.

For instance, a series of issues to reflect upon, to name just a few among many:

- how to decode the tricky notion “Brussels dictate”: to do so the decision-making procedures need to be explained in a simple manner,
- what will be the counter argument/counter narrative 1) if political competitors raise the question about the EP reliability given the Qatargate- the problem of corruption and misconduct; 2) or if they criticise the EU based solely on evidence- facts and figures- for instance, referring to the 2023 EP report on foreign interference,
- why the EU unity is vital; in practical terms, for example, why a person of Dutch nationality/citizenship should associate with a person of Bulgarian nationality/citizenship? A new approach is needed to convince voters.

Terminology: EU vs Europe: It is not quite clear why but during the 2019 EP elections campaign the term Europe and not EU was used. Europe is an abstract amorph category. Once used, does it refer to a geographical term – the European continent? If so then it is not correct to use Europe as a synonym of the EU. It would be appropriate to use the term- EU which refers to a specific political entity with clear boundaries, and other distinctive features.

3.2.5. Disruptors’ management: the elections app and working groups

As discussed and elaborated, on the eve of the 2024 EP elections massive foreign interference and manipulation attempts are anticipated. To that end, various tools such as disinformation or information manipulation, cyberattacks, etc. might be used. To manage the problem, a series of effective measures need to be undertaken.

2024 European Parliament elections app: In the premises of the European Parliament, the 2024 European Parliament elections app needs to be created containing all-encompassing information about the 2024 EP elections; meaning about the EP political groups and national affiliate parties, programmes, etc. The app would be highly useful on 2 grounds: 1) it would constitute yet another element catching voters’ attention, 2) it would serve as a counter measure against disinformation/information manipulation; it would be a focal point for voters to visit and find reliable information about the elections.

Disinformation working group: In addition, the 2024 EP elections counter-interference (disinformation, information manipulation, AI deep fakes) working group must be established. Primarily, the working group should be tasked with close monitoring of the information field related to the elections, detecting mis/disinformation attempts, and reacting immediately if a large-scale interference takes place.

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Cyber security working group: When it comes to cyberattacks, the 2024 EP elections cyber security working group should be established with primary focus on detecting and nullifying the elections-related cyberattacks. In case cyberattacks happen, the force should be competent to fix problems immediately.

4. CONCLUSION

The last European Parliament elections were arranged on 23-26 May 2019. As a result of the 2019 European Parliament elections 705 MEPs hold seats at the EP and 7 political groups are formed- EPP, S&D, Renew Europe, Greens/EFA, ECR, ID, and The Left. The average figure for the EU voter turnout played out 50.66%, however a very low voter turnout was observed in several EU member states. The voter turnout was determined by many different factors and the elections campaign featured among those.

The next EP elections are on the horizon: the elections are set to take place on 6-9 June 2024. Compared to the 2019 EP elections, the 2024 EP elections will take place in the EU's rather complicated socio-economic, political, and security and geostrategic context. The context is fuelled by the negative impact of the Covid19 pandemic, the ongoing war in Ukraine, and by the well-documented evidence of foreign interference in the EU affairs. Provided the prospect of the EP elections, the EU institutions- the Parliament and the Commission; have undertaken a series of effective measures aimed at safeguarding democracy and elections integrity. To that end, it is significant to complement the measures with the efficient campaign strategy for the 2024 EP elections aimed at fostering participatory democracy- voter turnout, during the elections.

As elaborated and thoroughly explained in the paper, an efficient election campaign generates the feeling and conviction among electorate that the elections are crucial, and they should be part of the process. To that end, a great number of factors need to be assessed and carefully designed – be it slogans, promo videos, the role of the EP; just to name a few among many. As in 2019, during the 2024 elections a vehement use of social media could be expected and hence the messaging features via social media will play a key role. As in 2019, on the eve of the 2024 EP elections, foreign interference is anticipated. Hence, the creation of a 2024 elections app, the establishment of disinformation and cyber security working groups would be useful to manage the problem.

Overall, the campaign strategy is designed to strengthen democracy in the EU, to enhance democratic participation, and to contribute to integrity of the upcoming 2024 EP elections.

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