

Seminar for journalists

2014 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS: THIS TIME IT'S DIFFERENT

8-9 April 2014, Brussels

PURPOSE

The European Parliament's Press Service is holding a seminar for journalists on 8-9 April 2014 in Brussels on the upcoming European Elections, which are due to take place on 22-25 May.

High-profile journalists from all over the European Union will have the opportunity to meet Members from the political families within the European Parliament. Renowned speakers have also been invited to share their opinions on the political context of the European Elections. The debates will moreover focus on European political parties, existing trends, current challenges and the future direction of the European integration process.

INSIDE

This leaflet provides extracts from documents prepared by the European Parliament's Policy Department on Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs relevant to the topics of discussion of this seminar. Scan the QR code or click on the title of the publication to access it directly.

FACT SHEETS ON THE EU

The Fact Sheets provide an overview of European integration and of the European Parliament's contribution to that process. Updated regularly, they cover six main areas: how the European Union works; citizens' Europe; the internal market; the economic and monetary union; sectoral policies; and the EU's external relations.

www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets



PUBLICATIONS

The European elections: EU legislation, national provisions and civic participation – March 2014



This study describes both the European framework and national provisions on electoral procedures in the Member States. It also looks at recent developments concerning the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the creation of an independent statute for the European political parties. The most important legal provisions, the electoral system and some past elections outcomes - such as gender distribution of MEPs and participation of citizens from other Member States - are presented. This document also provides information sources for further study of national regulations.



Strengthening European democracy: citizens' participation. Which challenges do we face at the European elections of 2014? – November 2013



This document comprises two notes. The first one examines the challenges arising in the context of the European elections of 2014. Drawing on the history of the constitutional evolution of the EU, it turns to analyse opportunities and possible risks related to the prospect of turning the European elections into personalised contests for the presidency of the European Commission. The second note identifies key predictors of political participation at the upcoming European elections and the role of the media. It analyses how national media cover European elections and the effects that news coverage has on electoral turnout. It also identifies new developments in the light of changing media landscapes, social media, and the Lisbon treaty.





Independent candidates in national and European elections – April 2013



Independent candidates remain marginal vote-getters in the vast majority of elections in which they compete. However, they do regularly win seats in legislative assemblies in a number of European countries, and occasionally achieve surprise victories in others. The vote for independents has elements of a protest vote. Those who vote for independent candidates tend to be more critical of the government and are less likely to feel close to any political party. When independent candidates are elected to office, they frequently join parties and parliamentary party groups. Thus, independence is often not a principled position but a temporary status resulting from circumstantial choices made by individuals competing for political office.



Franchise and electoral participation of third country citizens residing in the European Union and of EU citizens residing in third countries – April 2013



This study analyses some key trans-border situations in which citizens may find difficulties in exercising their electoral rights – both to vote in elections and to stand as candidates. It focuses on the electoral rights of EU citizens when resident outside the state where they are citizens, and on the electoral rights of third country citizens resident in EU Member States. It also covers several complementary issues by examining the consular representation of EU citizens outside the territory of the Union, as well as the restrictions placed by Member States on the access of non-citizens to high public office.



How to create a transnational party system – July 2010



Parties are multi-faceted actors, whose organisation, strategy and style of competition are primarily embedded in, and defined by, national political settings. They originate and develop either from the organised expression of societal interests or from the organisational and political needs of elected officials. This study analyses the political doctrine of major political parties in several Member States, examining the procedures applied to choose European Office leaders. It looks at proposals for the evolution of a European political party system from national structures influenced by historical traditions and cultural factors.



The selection of candidates for the European Parliament by national parties and the impact of European political parties – March 2009



This study, dating from 2009, compares the procedures applied by national political parties when they select their candidates for the European elections, providing detailed information on the interaction between the Member States and the EU in forming the only directly elected institution of the Union. It analyses the background in national law, the formal party statutes and the informal processes preparing the final selection. The report covers the selection criteria and structural characteristics of candidate nomination in the major political parties of the Member States, including the impact of European political parties.



POLICY DEPARTMENTS: WHO ARE WE?

Effective parliamentary work relies on specialised, objective, high-quality and up-to-date information. To this end, five units responsible for research, analysis and policy advice, known as policy departments, were created to provide this expert advice. Their activities cover all areas of competence of the European Parliament, producing high-level independent advice, based on research carried out either in-house or by external researchers.

Policy departments deliver a wide range of expertise, comprising texts as diverse as studies, in-depth analyses and briefings. These documents aim to support the work of the various parliamentary bodies. They serve a variety of purposes: they can feed directly into the legislative work of a specific committee or serve as a briefing for delegations of Members.

Apart from a few confidential documents, all texts produced by the policy departments are available on the Parliament's website for the benefit of all Members and the wider public.

All studies: www.europarl.europa.eu/studies



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