

CAMPAIGN GUIDE FOR THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2024

A few tools and tips to get engaged!



This campaign guide for the European Parliament elections 2024 is intended to AGE member organisations and whoever is willing to contribute to the debate around ageing issues during the campaign.

We hope you will find it useful!

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Why this campaign

The European Parliament is the only European institution that directly represents the voice of the 447 million citizens of the European Union. Since 1979, the European Parliament Members (hereafter: MEPs) have been elected through direct universal suffrage every five years. It is the Parliament which elects the European Commissioners, negotiates with Member States about important legislation, and votes the budget of the EU. To know more about the European Parliament, see ANNEX 1.

Given the impact of European legislations and policies at national level, it is important that citizens - including older people - are actively involved in the debates on the EU action. **AGE encourages its member organisations to engage with candidates to ensure that newly elected MEPs will take up challenges related to ageing demographics and address pervasive ageism in partnership with older persons' organisations in the next parliamentary term 2024-2029.**

Any parliamentary term is important, but it might be important to underline some of the key policies that are planned for the next term: the EU's seven-year budget framework runs out in 2027 and will need to be renewed, implying important strategic decisions. The legacy of the current Commission, and in particular the files linked to the 'Fit for 55' package that aims to ensure the EU's climate objectives (reduce CO2 emissions by 55% by 2030 and to net zero by 2050) are met could be either confirmed or weakened as it is implemented. The discussions around rule of law in the EU, common solidarity funds such as the fund to recover from COVID, and the stability of the euro will continue. Other files with a direct impact on the EU's citizens could concern drivers' licenses, pension funds, accessibility, employment, support for care and informal care etc.

Key messages

"The Europe we want is for all ages".

In its manifesto, Platform Europe calls on the future Members of the European Parliament to make sure that the European Union addresses adequately population ageing and works toward a society for all ages by:

- 1. Promoting age equality** and addressing ageism and the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination
- 2. Fostering participation and active ageing** through meaningful involvement of older people in society and equal and affordable access to services and goods
- 3. Ensuring autonomy and well being in old age**, including sustainable and quality working life, adequate pension, independence, participation, and inclusion of older people in long-term care

Furthermore, AGE has been working in a project together with the European Youth Forum to build an **intergenerational declaration**, calling for stepping up the fight against age discrimination, acting in awareness of the impact on future generations, fostering intergenerational dialogue, recognising the contribution of both older and younger people and building online spaces that are safe people for all ages.

Campaign timeline

October-December 2023

- 1st October: **international day of older persons**
- **Newsflash** to members with the final AGE manifesto (done on 22 Sept. For the addendum version)
- 5 October: **Webinar** on the EP election and AGE's campaign launch
- **Newsflash** to share campaign material with members
- AGE members organise **local exchanges about the AGE manifesto** and their demands, supported by the CERV regranting and on their own initiative (ongoing until the elections)
- **AGE exchanges with current MEPs and political parties at EU level** to rally support for the AGE manifesto and the common AGE-European Youth Forum intergenerational declaration

January-February 2024

- **Special briefing** in CoverAge about AGE campaign starting
- **Second webinar** with a presentation by AGE members of projects supported by the CERV regranting and a discussion how to move forward and raise awareness among candidates MEPs
- **AGE to release the first 'manifesto explainer'** delving deeper into the demands of the AGE manifesto. The first edition will focus on **fostering age equality**

March

- **Second 'manifesto explainer' on fostering participation and active ageing**

April

- **Newsflash** to share key dates
- **Third 'manifesto explainer'** on 'ensuring autonomy and well-being'
- **29/04: European Day for the Solidarity Between Generations**
- **Third webinar** with members to discuss progress, how to move forward and share experience between members

June

- 6-9: Elections Day
- **10-11-12 June**: General Assembly: Information about election results and discussion of the next steps
- **Fourth webinar** with members to discuss results of the elections and next steps: hearings + intergroup campaign

July

- **Special briefing** in CoverAge about the campaign results
- AGE monitors the **nomination of candidates** for Commissioners and suggests **questions for the candidates** to the new MEPs

September

- **Hearings of candidates** for Commission President and Commissioners, election of the Commission President and Commissioners

October-December

Meeting with MEPs who signed the AGE manifesto and other new MEPs to **form a support group** (intergroup or interest group) for AGE's topics

How to get Involved

A. Be informed about the European and national parties' manifestos and the candidates standing for elections

Each European political party will issue or has already issued its manifesto explaining their priorities and objectives at the European level. Similarly, national parties might have their own manifestos regarding the EP elections. European and national parties' websites and contact points can be found in annex.

More concretely

- * **Look through the different manifestos** (if published yet) and compare them with the visions and values of your own organisation;
- * **Check the profiles and backgrounds of the candidates** standing for the European Parliament elections, as it is easier to address those who already support your concerns (in some countries, there are databases or case files of all potential MEPs with their contact details);
- * **Identify national candidates within the last Interest Group on Solidarity between Generations** who are standing for re-election. The interest group consists of some 100 MEPs who are particularly concerned about older people's issues and have supported our work in the past legislature (in annex):
- * **Send the political parties an invitation to meet with you** and to exchange on your main issues (see our template letter below);
- * **Keep yourself informed and up-to-date** with European Parliament activities for instance through the European Parliament's own TV channel "[EuroparlTV](#)" available in 25 languages: or the [EP's official campaign website](#).

B. Share AGE Manifesto and/or set up your own!

AGE Manifesto summarises our key policy priorities for the next parliamentary term 2024-2029. This manifesto can be used to lobby the European political parties and candidates to include AGE priorities in their own manifestos. You can use and adapt AGE Manifesto to lobby national parties and candidates.

The manifesto is available online and in PDF for download in different languages here:

www.age-manifesto.eu

More concretely

- * **Adapt or translate AGE Manifesto to your context or publicize AGE Manifesto** through your channels stressing that your organisation supports it;
- * **Contact candidates and engage in a dialogue** referring to your national priorities, as well as to AGE Manifesto (see template letter below);
- * **Follow up your lobbying letters and establish personal contacts with prospective candidates**, especially influential national candidates or those that share common values to AGE and your organisation.

C. Meet with national candidates standing for elections

Meeting with candidates to present your concerns and issues related to European policy making will be decisive to convey your knowledge, expertise and demands. It will also be the occasion to collect their reactions to your demands and establish useful contacts with them for future collaborations.

More concretely

- * **Prepare the key messages you would like to discuss and practice** in advance. These key messages can include:
 1. observations taken from your work at local level;
 2. recommendations and priorities listed in AGE Manifesto;
 3. suggestions of European Parliament committees you would like the candidates to work in if elected (e.g. employment and social affairs, women's rights and gender equality, environment, public health and food safety, etc. - to name just a few);
 4. proposals of how your organisation and AGE could support their future work in the European Parliament.
- * **Take notes and write down any commitments** made by candidates. Then you can publicize them and remind them of their promises;
- * **Be clear, concise and to the point** about your concerns and priorities;
- * **Advertise the outcome of your meeting** by writing a little summary for your website, internal magazine, newsletter, etc. Candidates will appreciate media coverage; do not hesitate to send them a copy! Please do not forget to inform AGE secretariat too so that we can promote your work in our dedicated European Parliament elections blog.

D. Organise debates, hearings, conferences with candidates

Candidates will be eager to take part in public debates, meet possible voters and present their priorities. It is also an excellent opportunity for you to express concerns, ask questions, and check whether candidates are really committed to defend equal rights and dignity in older age. It could be especially interesting to invite candidates of different parties to have them presenting their views on ageing

policies at a public event. Again, **make sure to let us know** about an event so that we can publish the announcements or outcomes!

More concretely

- * **Check our European Parliament elections blog to see examples** of events organised by AGE members: <https://age-manifesto.eu/>
- * **An idea could be to link your event to the European Day on Intergenerational Solidarity** on April 29, 2024.

E. Team up with fellow NGOs

A number of civil society campaigns will probably go public in the next months, including by groups such as the [European Women's Lobby](#), the [European Anti-Poverty Network](#), the [European Citizen Action Centre](#), the [European Youth Forum](#), [COFACE-Families Europe](#) or the [European Disability Forum](#). AGE is regularly working with these organisations at European level, so do not hesitate to contact their member organisations. These organisations are all part of the family of European networks concerned by social policies, coordinated in the 'Social Platform' umbrella organisation, so we do share common values and approaches.

The European Parliament itself will run an institutional campaign called '[Together for democracy](#)' to encourage citizens to vote; many resources will be relevant for your own work.

More concretely

- * **Contact other civil society organisations** to seek whether you can have a joint activity with them – for example, an intergenerational workshop with representatives of younger people.

F. Join the institutional 'Together for democracy' campaign

The European Parliament itself will run an institutional campaign called 'Together for democracy' to encourage citizens to vote; many resources will be relevant for your own work. AGE will join this campaign as an official partner, to help you in spreading the word about it.

By becoming a formal supporter of the campaign, you can take part in or organise events (such as public debates with candidates, as suggested above) and be promoted on the website <https://together.eu>

More concretely

- * **Subscribe to the 'Together for democracy' campaign** via AGE's recruiter link, create your profile and advertise your commitment to encourage others to vote:
https://www.thisimeinvoting.eu/?recruiter_id=83414
- * **Check the European parliament thematic information fiches** to feed your narrative about what the European Union is doing for its older citizens; the most relevant information fiches are referred to in annex.

G. Be visible, be vocal!

The immense influence of social media is changing the shape of political campaigns. Also, a growing number of older people are themselves on social networks and use them for discussing public affairs.

Social media allows not only to push forward specific demands and advertise your manifestoes, actions and meetings, but also to frame how the concerns of older people are seen in the public debate.

More concretely

- * **Follow and share content on social media:**

Mentions of other social media users' accounts are useful in spreading the word about your news. You may like AGE (see below), but also institutional accounts, such as [@Europarl_EN](#) (European Parliament - other accounts exist for tweets in national languages), [@EU_Social](#) (European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs) or [@EU_Justice](#) (European Commission, DG Justice and Consumer's Rights) as well as the social media handles of the candidates.

To follow AGE Platform Europe on social media, see:

X/Twitter: https://twitter.com/AGE_PlatformEU

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ageplatformeurope>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/age-platform-europe>

- * **Use hashtags when you share content** in particular the ones that will be most viral by other social media users during the campaign such as [#EP2024](#) [#EUElections](#) [#EUElections2024](#); the AGE Manifesto hashtag [#AGEManifesto2024](#) and you can also use generic hashtags like [#ageing](#) or [#ageism](#) or [#AgeingEqual](#).

- * **Use the social media material shared in the online Trello** in particular the banners that will be available for free: <https://trello.com/b/TqyRSnk3>

Toolbox and templates

AGE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT BLOG

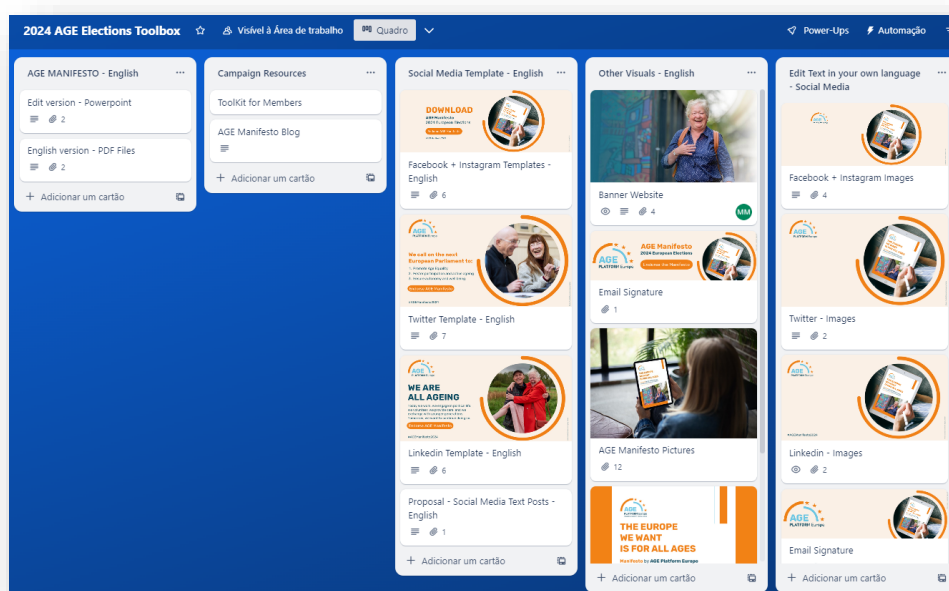
AGE runs a blog dedicated to European Parliament affairs: <https://age-manifesto.eu/> . It is used all year long to complement AGE website with more EP specific news; it was used since 2014 to follow campaign-related activities and it will be the case again in 2024! There you will be able to find:

- [Recommendations pages](#) of each recommendation of the Manifesto;
- [A 'Campaigner' section](#) for supporters of AGE to know how to take action;
- [A 'Commitment' section](#) for MEP candidates to sign our Manifesto;
- [A 'News' section](#) to discuss campaign activities (including yours if you want a bit of advertisement!), the European Parliament work, etc.;

ONLINE TOOLBOX

All resources mentioned in this document as well as additional ones will be made available in an online toolbox on Trello:

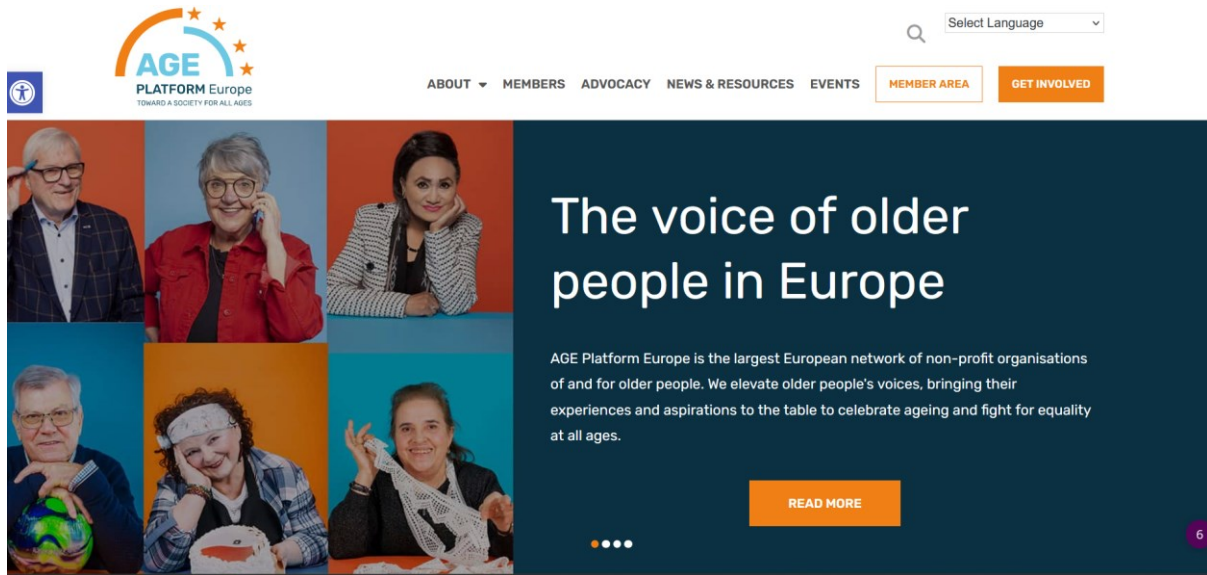
[Trello Toolbox](#)



AGE PLATFORM EUROPE WEBSITE

AGE website highlights the news relevant to older people and AGE's work including through our monthly newsletter CoverAGE:

www.age-platform.eu



THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WEBSITE

What Europe does for me?

The European Parliament is running an institutional campaign for the upcoming EP elections 2024, including a website entitled 'What Europe does for me?': <https://www.what-europe-does-for-me.eu>.



The website collects information about European funding and initiatives

in regions, as well as thematic papers on the EU actions that have an impact in our everyday lives.

OTHER RESOURCEFUL WEBSITES

- **The European Parliament website:** <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/> where it is possible to retrieve information is available in all languages
- **POLITICO:** <http://www.politico.eu> where information is in English only
- **EurActiv:** <http://www.euractiv.com/en/HomePage> where information is available in English, German, French, Czech, Spanish, Greek, Croatian, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Serbian, Slovenian
- **EURONEWS:** <https://euronews.com/my-europe> where information is available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Greek, Hungarian

LETTER TO NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are XXX, an organisation of/for older people in [Country Name]. [Description of what your organisation is doing]. On European level, we are represented by AGE Platform Europe, the largest network of older people's organisations in the EU. We would like to inform you that we are actively engaged in the process of the EU elections because we believe that these are very important for older people.

In the past legislature, we have seen the immense challenge of overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing fight for sustainable living conditions in the future. We have sometimes seen that generations have been pitched against each other. We are also aiming to overcome policies that deny the rights to independence and autonomy to older persons in their diversity. This is why we advocate for an Age Equality Strategy, offering comprehensive and intersectional mainstreaming of aging in EU policies. We voiced this call already in the past legislature and made it concrete in our contributions to the European Care Strategy, the European Pillar of Social Rights and its Action Plan, in the taking into account of the rights of older people during the pandemic and in important legal acts such as the Council Recommendation on individual learning accounts, the diving licence directive, the Minimum Income Recommendation and other files. We also rallied a group of MEPs, the Interest Group on Solidarity between Generations to discuss ageing policies across political parties.

The European Parliament has been the champion in advocating for social justice and equality. The 2024 EP elections come at a turning point for the European Union which urgently needs to reconnect with the concerns of its citizens and show that it is there to safeguard their values and interests in an increasingly uncertain time where war, pandemic, climate change and inflation have eroded trust into politics. It is our wish and ambition that the next European Parliament will also be a champion in addressing the needs of older people and in improving the daily lives of one of the largest and fastest-growing population groups.

We know that the rights and issues of older people are also important to your party. As the run-up to the European election involves drafting national and European manifestoes, we would like to highlight the key issues of importance to older people in their diversity, which could be reflected in your own manifesto.

Therefore, we enclose our demands and the manifesto of AGE Platform Europe, adopted by its General Assembly in June 2023 and the Intergenerational Declaration, developed together with the European Youth Forum. We hope that this will provide you with material to concretely address the expectations of the group of older citizens.

Also, we would be happy to set up a meeting with you to present our demands and to hear about how they are taken on board in your party's programme. Also, if we could know about the candidates that your party will present to the elections, we could try to organise a meeting or a public event with them, to debate on these issues.

We hope that this will not only encourage older citizens to vote but promote the values of civic engagement and citizenship.

Yours sincerely,

YOUR SIGNATURE

Attachments:

- Your own manifesto
- AGE manifesto
- Intergenerational Declaration

LETTER TO CANDIDATE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Dear [Candidate name],

We would like to congratulate you for being designated as a candidate to the European Elections 2024. We are XXX, an organisation of/for older people in [Country Name]. [Description of what your organisation is doing]. On European level, we are represented by AGE Platform Europe, the largest network of older people's organisations in the EU. We would like to inform you that we are actively engaged in the process of the EU elections because we believe that these are very important for older people.

In the past legislature, we have seen the immense challenge of overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing fight for sustainable living conditions in the future. We have sometimes seen that generations have been pitched against each other. We are also aiming to overcome policies that deny the rights to independence and autonomy to older persons in their diversity. This is why we advocate for an Age Equality Strategy, offering comprehensive and intersectional mainstreaming of aging in EU policies. We voiced this call already in the past legislature and made it concrete in our contributions to the European Care Strategy, the European Pillar of Social Rights and its Action Plan, in the taking into account of the rights of older people during the pandemic and in important legal acts such as the Council Recommendation on individual learning accounts, the diving licence directive, the Minimum Income Recommendation and other files. We also rallied a group of MEPs, the Interest Group on Solidarity between Generations to discuss ageing policies across political parties.

The European Parliament has been the champion in advocating for social justice and equality. The 2024 EP elections come at a turning point for the European Union, which urgently needs to reconnect with the concerns of its citizens and show that it is there to safeguard their values and interests in an increasingly uncertain time where war, pandemic, climate change and inflation have eroded trust into politics. It is our wish and ambition that the next European Parliament will also be a champion in addressing the needs of older people and in improving the daily lives of one of the largest and fastest-growing population groups.

We know that the rights and issues of older people are also important to the success of your campaign. Therefore, we would like to highlight the key issues of importance to older people in their diversity, which could be reflected in your own election platform.

Therefore, we enclose our demands and the manifesto of AGE Platform Europe, adopted by its General Assembly in June 2023 and the Intergenerational Declaration, developed together with the European Youth Forum. We hope that this will provide you with material to concretely address the expectations of the group of older citizens.

Also, we would be happy to set up a meeting with you to present our demands and to hear about how they are taken on board in your party's programme. Maybe, we could even organise a public event with you and other candidates to discuss how older citizens' issues are integrated into EU policies.

We hope that this will not only encourage older citizens to vote but promote the values of civic engagement and citizenship.

Yours sincerely,

YOUR SIGNATURE

Attachments:

- Your own manifesto
- AGE manifesto
- Intergenerational Declaration

Annexes

ANNEX 1 - About the European Parliament and these 2024 elections

Each EU Member State decides how the European elections are organised in its own country (either on a regional or national basis), and under its own electoral laws and procedures. Yet, all Member States follow the same system of proportional representation (by contrast to the first-past-the-post system in some national elections). Decisions on the composition of the candidate lists for the European Parliament elections are made at national level within each political party, and the public can only vote for national (or regional) candidates.

Powers of the European Parliament

The European Parliament has increased its influence over the years, being transformed from a consultative assembly into a real parliament with legislative powers. The European Parliament has three fundamental powers:

1. Legislative power

Thanks to the co-decision procedure, the Parliament shares legislative competence with the Council (national governments). This means it can accept, amend or reject the content of European law (directives, decisions, regulations). The Parliament also provides impetus for new legislation by examining the Commission's annual work programme, considering what new laws would be appropriate and asking the Commission to put forward proposals. The Parliament's power has been instrumental in shaping legislation at the favour of citizens, such as the setting of ambitious EU climate objectives, the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights or the introduction of a right to repair.

2. Budgetary Power

The EU's annual budget is decided jointly by the Parliament and the Council of the European Union. The Parliament can propose the modification of budget lines and has the power to overrule the Council. Importantly, the Parliament has the power to accept or reject the budget as a whole. In this way the Parliament has an important influence on EU spending. The budget is adopted every year, but the overall frame is a seven-year

framework, and the MEPs elected in 2024 will be the ones who will be up for negotiate the next period, 2028-2034. Thereby they will fundamentally set EU policies for the next decade The EP is also fully involved in changing the framework, such as by introducing the Recovery and Resilience Facility under COVID.

The Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT) monitors how the budget is spent and investigates cases of alleged misuse. Each year the Parliament decides whether to approve the Commission's and the other institutions' handling of the budget for the previous financial year.

3. Supervisory Power

The Parliament exercises democratic supervision over all EU institutions and in particular over the Commission. It has the power to approve or reject the nomination of Commissioners, including the Commission President after a proposal from the Council, and it has the right to make the Commission as a whole resign through a 'motion of censure' In both 2019 and 2014, the main EU political parties have chosen lead candidates to be Commission President, a process thought to make the selection of the EU's top job more transparent to citizens. In 2014, the lead candidate Jean-Claude Juncker of the EPP was appointed and confirmed, but in 2019 the heads of state and government rejected the idea of lead candidates and Ursula von der Leyen (EPP) was elected president rather than the lead candidate of the party with the highest number of seats (Manfred Weber, EPP). It is expected that most EU parties will nominate lead candidates again in 2024, but this is no guarantee that one of them will become President.







More generally, the Parliament exercises control by regularly examining reports sent to it by the Commission and by working closely with the Council in certain areas, including input into every EU Summit. MEPs regularly ask the Commission and the Council written and oral questions, and the Commission President and Commissioners take part in plenary debates, including the annual 'State of the Union' address. Parliament also examines petitions from citizens and has the power to set up temporary committees of enquiry (such as in the cases of the Panama papers on tax evasion or on the 'Dieselgate' scandals). It also has an appointed Ombudsman who deals with complaints by citizens against the EU institutions.








4. 'Discursive' power

The European Parliament can draft own-initiative resolutions, in which it expresses its desire for certain legislative and non-legislative changes or takes a position on issues on which it has no 'hard' power. For example, the Parliament regularly adopts resolutions on the European Semester process of socio-economic policy coordination, in which it does not have a formal say. The resolutions have no legal value but are instrumental in showing that there would be majorities in the Parliament for certain proposals. For example, a resolution on the reconciliation of work and family life preceded a Commission initiative in this sense and contained strong calls for example for the protection of informal carers, which might have been forgotten otherwise.

Composition of the current European Parliament

The European Parliament is made up of 705 Members elected in the 27 Member States of the European Union. Discussions on the technicalities of the 2024 elections are underway because of an adaptation to different population dynamics, therefore 720 MEPs will be elected in 2024. The seats in the European Parliament are distributed along the principle of 'degressive proportionality' among member states, meaning that member states have a number of seats relative to their size, but smaller member states are over-represented. Member states have between 6 and 96 seats to fill; all member states have national lists of candidates and apply a proportional system in the elections of the MEPs to fill the national delegations. Discussions are underway on whether to create a small 'transnational list', which could include the lead candidates and be proposed to all EU citizens, which is something the Parliament itself is advocating for, but the idea does not make unanimity among Member States.

| Political Group/ Country |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | NI (non-affiliated) | Total |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|------------------------|------------|
| EU | 176 | 142 | 101 | 72 | 66 | 62 | 37 | 47 | 703 |
| Belgium | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 21 |
| Bulgaria | 7 | 5 | 3 | | 2 | | | | 17 |
| Czechia | 5 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | | 21 |
| Denmark | 1 | 3 | 6 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | 14 |
| Germany | 30 | 16 | 7 | 25 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 96 |
| Estonia | 1 | 2 | 3 | | | 1 | | | 7 |
| Ireland | 5 | | 2 | 2 | | | 4 | | 13 |
| Greece | 7 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 5 | 6 | 21 |
| Spain | 12 | 20 | 9 | 4 | 4 | | 5 | 3 | 57 |
| France | 8 | 7 | 23 | 12 | | 18 | 6 | 5 | 79 |
| Croatia | 4 | 4 | 1 | | 1 | | | 2 | 12 |
| Italy | 11 | 16 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 25 | | 9 | 76 |

| Political Group/ Country |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | NI (non-affiliated) | Total |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|------------------------|-------|
| Cyprus | 2 | 2 | | | | | 2 | | 6 |
| Latvia | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | 8 |
| Lithuania | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | 1 | 11 |
| Luxembourg | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | | | 6 |
| Hungary | 1 | 5 | 2 | | | | | 13 | 21 |
| Malta | 2 | 4 | | | | | | | 6 |
| Netherlands | 6 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 5 | | 1 | 1 | 29 |
| Austria | 7 | 5 | 1 | 3 | | 3 | | | 19 |
| Poland | 16 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 27 | | | | 52 |
| Portugal | 7 | 9 | | 1 | | | 4 | | 21 |
| Romania | 14 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 1 | | | | 33 |
| Slovenia | 4 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | 8 |
| Slovakia | 4 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | | | 2 | 14 |
| Finland | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | | 1 | | 14 |
| Sweden | 6 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | 1 | | 21 |

Organisation of the European Parliament

Members are sitting in political groups rather than by nationality. There are currently 7 political groups in the European Parliament, as well as some non-attached members:



Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats (EPP)



Group of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D)



Renew Europe Group: liberals, composed of ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe), European Democratic Party, Renaissance)



Group of the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)



Group of the Greens / European Free Alliance (Greens)



The LEFT group in the European Parliament (GUE/NGL)



Identity and Democracy Group

NI

'Non-inscrits', MEPs without affiliation

Meetings of the European Parliament

The Parliament meets officially in plenary sessions and parliamentary committees.

Plenary sessions

Plenary sessions are attended by all MEPs and are normally held for one week each month in Strasbourg (sometimes also for two days in Brussels). The Plenary examines proposed legislation and votes on amendments, as prepared by the Committees before the plenary, before coming to a decision on the text as a whole. However, for most uncontroversial files, the Plenary vote just confirms the positions developed by the Committees. The Plenary may also hold high-profile debates, such as with Commissioners or heads of state.

Parliamentary Committees

Parliamentary Committees bring together smaller groups of MEPs that specialise in particular areas of EU policy. They do much of the preparatory work for the debates and votes carried out later in plenary. There are about 25 parliamentary committees dealing with issues such as employment and social affairs, environment and health, human rights, internal market etc. The exact number can change as there are standing committees, special committees (such as on foreign interference or COVID-19) or enquiry committees, as well as sub-committees to the standing ones (such as the Public Health Committee, subordinated to the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee).

For a detailed list of committees, please visit: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/about-parliament/en/organisation-and-rules/organisation/committees>

Intergroups and Interest Groups

MEPs also meet in unofficial, voluntary, cross-party groups known as 'Intergroups' or 'Interest Groups'. Intergroups bring together MEPs to discuss issues of common interest that transcend political divisions. These groups can be an important means to raise awareness about issues of particular concern (both within and outside the Parliament). Intergroups can also be a means for external organisations such as AGE to establish good contacts with a group of MEPs who share many of their concerns.

For long, there has been an intergroup on ageing in various forms (since 1982), and AGE has coordinated the work of them for at least two legislatures. In 2019, it was not

possible to create a sufficiently broad intergroup on ageing, as some right-wing, conservative and Christian-democratic MEPs established their own group without interest of bridging the political spectrum. AGE therefore grouped an interest group on Solidarity between Generations that was effective on grouping some MEPs and working on issues such as long-term care, COVID-19 and the situation of older Ukrainians. As this is no formal group, there also is no formal list of members, but the MEPs Milan Brglez (Slovenia, S&D), Jaroslaw Duda (Poland, EPP), Sirpa Pietikäinen (Finland, EPP), Jordi Cañas (Spain, Renew), Katrin Langensiepen (Germany, Greens/EFA), Marisa Matias and José Gusmão (both Portugal, Left) and many others actively contributed to its work.

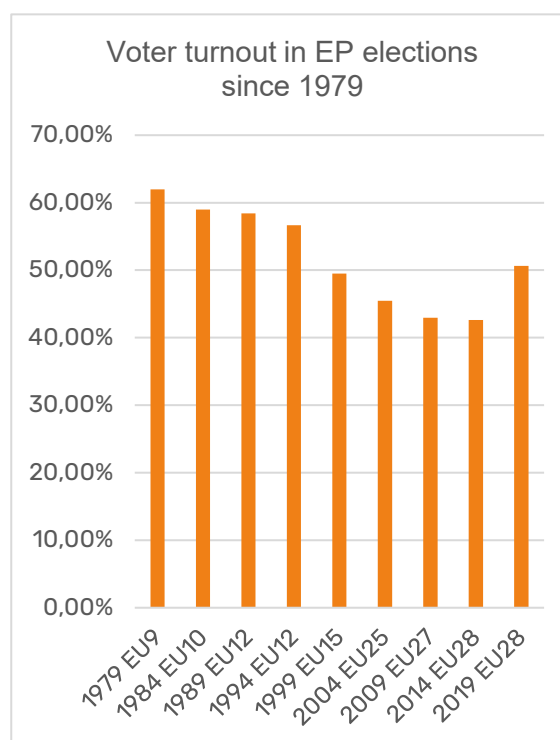
For more information about the Interest group and other European Parliament initiatives, please visit: <https://age-manifesto.eu/>

The decline in voters' turnout

The European Parliament's political powers have gradually increased since 1979 and the Parliament has gained more recognition and power. The co-decision procedure (in which the European Parliament is on an equal footing with the EU Council of Ministers) is concerns now most areas in EU policy making. In fact, most laws on the national level are translating European legislation (around 60% to 80% of national legislation comes from European legislation).

This evolution towards a strong and powerful Parliament not only enhances the democratic legitimacy of the European Union but also implies that European citizens, including older people, have more to say in the policy making on the European level.

However, contrary to the increasing powers and relevance of the European Parliament, the voter turnout in European elections has been in constant decline. The first elections in 1979 started with a 63% voter turnout and declined to the lowest voter turnout (around 43%) with the elections in 2014. 2019 reversed this trend, as particularly people

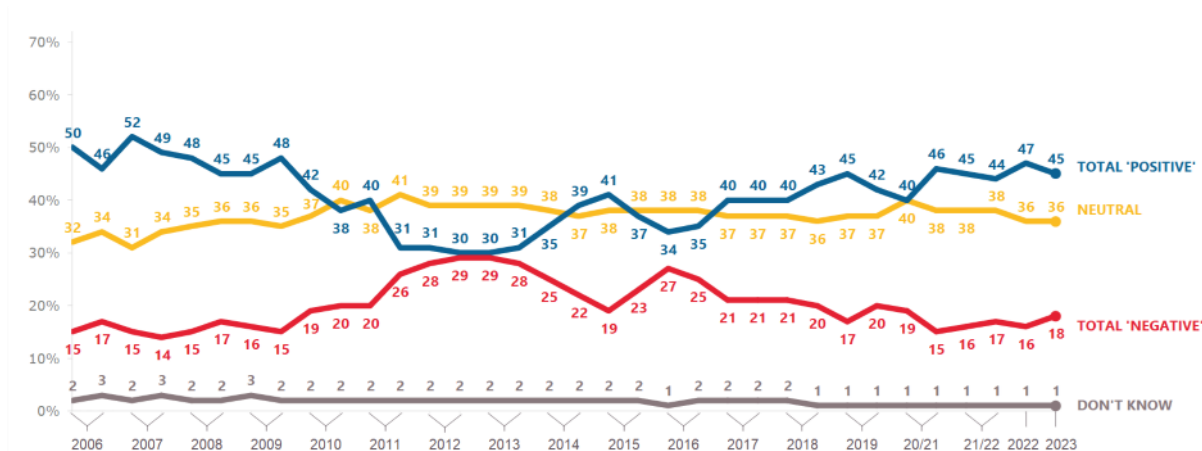


under 40 increased their turnout. Traditionally, older persons have among the highest participation rates in elections. The lowest turnouts on national level were registered in Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Croatia, Bulgaria, Portugal and Latvia (under 35%).

Opinions of Europeans one year ahead of the elections

The following insights are derived from a Eurobarometer Study on politics in the EU¹, for which questionnaires have been filled in all EU member States in May/June 2023, and are worth considering for the campaign.

D78 In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image? (% - EU)

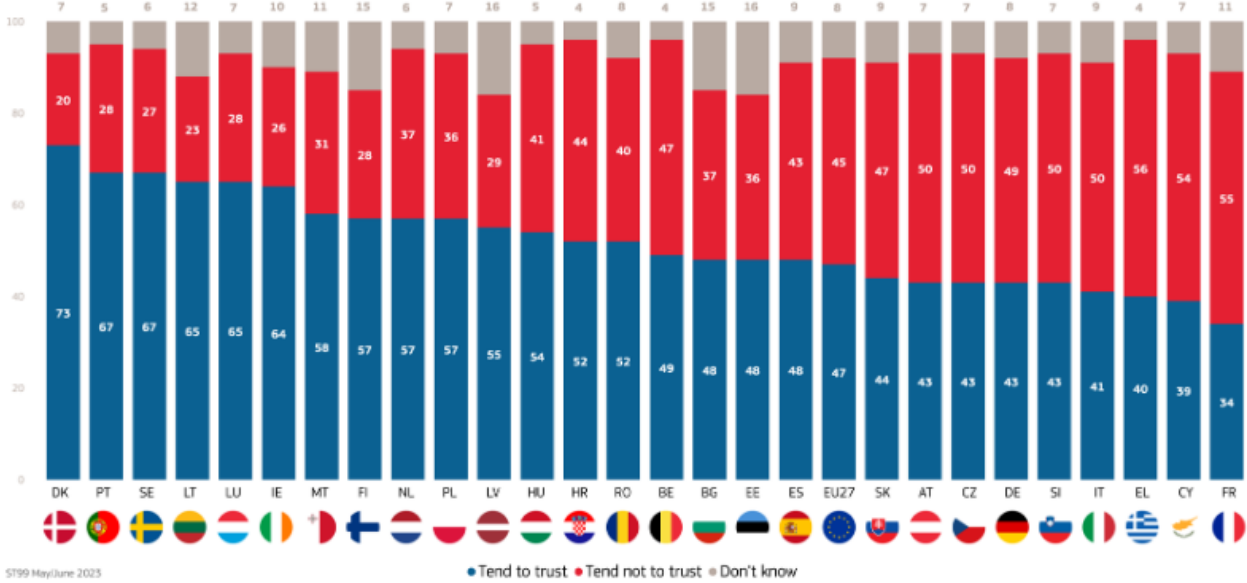


The EU conjures a slightly more positive image in 2023 than during the last elections in 2019, remarkably this has risen during COVID-19. However, the high inflation and uncertainties linked to the war close to the EU's doors created a downward.

47% expressed trust in the EU. It should be noted, although this might seem low, that trust in national governments and national Parliaments is lower than this (32% and 33%). **63% are seeing the future of the EU optimistic,** an upward trend since 2016 (when 50% were optimistic), with a spike at 66% just before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine and high inflation/energy prices.

¹ <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/3052>

QA6.11. How much trust do you have in certain institutions? For each of the following institutions, do you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it? -The European Union (%)



The most important topics that citizens see are (by level of importance): rising prices, the economic situation, the environment and climate change, immigration, health, energy supply, housing, the education system, pensions. 56% of Europeans are satisfied with the responses of the EU to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and 88% agree with the series of actions taken by the EU in response.

Regarding some cleaving issues, it should be mentioned that a very large majority of EU citizens agree that the EU should invest in renewable energies (85%), increase energy efficiency of buildings, transport and goods (82%), reduce dependency on Russian sources of energy (82%)

ANNEX 3 – An Intergenerational Declaration

European Youth Forum and AGE Platform Europe

United Across Generations

An Intergenerational Declaration

MEET
PROJECT

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1. We, younger and older people share common values and interests, facilitated by dialogue, opportunities to meet, collaborate and connect. Ageist stereotypes frequently focus on what divides the generations rather than celebrating what brings younger and older people together.
 2. Younger and older people have faced common challenges. The financial crisis, the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the climate crisis; all these occurrences have served to change every generation's views of the world and presented new realities for all ages.
 3. Younger and older people frequently experience discrimination in various aspects of their lives and throughout their life-course purely based on their age, which hampers the equal enjoyment of all human rights at all ages. Certain groups of older and younger people in vulnerable situations also suffer from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.
 4. Intergenerational connection, dialogue and volunteering has the power to bring people together to foster greater understanding, to learn about commonalities and celebrate diversity. The COVID-19 pandemic reminded us of the importance of a strong solidarity between generations. We continue to witness this solidarity daily, on a local level, including through innovative intergenerational living projects as well as community activities which bring different age groups together.
 5. In the context of the climate crisis - both older and younger generations are increasingly affected by climate change and are increasingly aware that it is not just their world that is at stake - but the quality of life and health of the planet for all current and future generations.
 6. In an increasingly digital environment, it is necessary to ensure that no one is left behind due to the rapid emergence of new, often expensive technologies, while also prioritising access to a safe space for genuine dialogue online.
- Therefore**
1. We denounce all types of discrimination based on age. We call on the European Institutions to prioritise ending age discrimination during the 2024-2029 political cycle.
 2. We encourage every citizen to act and engage, politically as well as sustainably, with an awareness of the future generations so that the decisions taken today leave a positive footprint for tomorrow, for people and the planet.
 3. We advocate for the importance of intergenerational dialogue, understanding and connection at all levels in society, which allows for a deeper appreciation of current issues while ensuring better decisions for the future. These opportunities for connection and conversation - including intergenerational volunteering - should be celebrated and supported.
 4. We specifically call on the European Parliament to recognise the complementary contributions that younger and older people make to society, and to protect, respect, and fulfil the rights of all people living in the EU.
 5. Finally, we call for a healthy online space based on mutual respect - and the access to digital democratic conversations for all age groups.





AGE Platform Europe is the largest network of older people in Europe.

We work in the interest of the 200 million
older adults of today – and those of tomorrow.



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