



# EU ELECTIONS SNAPSHOT

BY FTI CONSULTING BRUSSELS

CRITICAL THINKING AT THE CRITICAL TIME™

# Eurosceptics rock the boat but old guard still captains the ship

## Euroscepticism makes its mark

As predicted, the most significant development of the elections is the rise of the hardcore eurosceptic parties. On the right they command 141 seats, up from 99 seats in the current Parliament. In addition the constructive eurosceptic ECR group has won 44 seats (down from 57). With 185 seats, the eurosceptic groups on the right will have an important say in the legislature. Much will depend on the question whether the strongest parties, the French Front National and the British UKIP, both with 24 seats, will manage to join in a group together with other eurosceptic parties. If this is the case they will form the third strongest group. However, the participation of such parties in the Parliament's day-to-day work is not certain: in the past, their MEPs have usually not attended committee meetings.

## The new majorities and impact on decision-making

The centre-right EPP and centre-left S&D, both pro-European, will remain by far the strongest groups. The EPP has now won 212 seats (down from 273) and the S&D 186 seats (down from 196). Together they have a comfortable majority, and as in the previous Parliament many legislative files will be carried through by an agreement between these two groups. However, if EPP and S&D do not manage to find a joint position, the EPP will not have a majority with the other centre-right groups such as the liberal ALDE, which has now 70 seats (down from 83), and the ECR. Together these three groups often formed a coalition in the outgoing Parliament, gaining the upper hand in many legislative files. In the next five years the centre-right groups might therefore be forced to join forces with some of the hardcore eurosceptic groups to gain a majority against the centre-left. The fact that the German and the British liberals, both from the pro-business wing of the ALDE group, have lost dramatically will make it more difficult to forge a business-friendly position. The Greens have only lost slightly (down from 57 to 55 seats) and will probably maintain their influence on issues such as environment, climate and energy.

## Next Commission President: Juncker's hand strengthened?

This election marks the first in which the Parliament's groups have put forward their own candidates for European Commission President, based on a generous interpretation of the Parliament's new powers under the EU treaty. For S&D group candidate Martin Schulz, the outcome is a disappointment; EPP candidate Jean-Claude Juncker has come out strengthened in his bid to lead the next Commission. However, his majority is not clear enough to make his candidacy a certainty. The next days and weeks will show whether he can gather enough support from the other political groups and whether the Member States can agree on him as the next Commission President. It is still not clear to what extent the governments will take account of the Parliament elections in making this appointment.

## New MEP heavyweights

The top German candidate for the CDU (EPP group), David McAllister, is the MEP with the strongest backing of any candidate and the personal support of Angela Merkel. He will certainly gain a top position in the new Parliament and has a good chance of being elected the new

Parliament President. On the other hand the UK has lost its Conservative MEP Martin Callanan, who led the ECR group, and Graham Watson the leader of the UK ALDE group. From ALDE, former Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt will remain an influential MEP and so will Martin Schulz from the S&D.

Marine Le Pen and Nigel Farage, the leaders of the largest French and British eurosceptic parties, can be expected to make themselves heard very loudly during the Parliament's Plenary sessions.

## Political Issues

The rise of the eurosceptic parties will inevitably lead to stronger discussions on institutional reforms of the EU, much more aggressively than in the current Parliament.

The projected trade deal with the USA, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), has featured strongly in the election campaigns, and has been criticised both from the right and the left. It will be a challenge to gain sufficient support from the European Parliament, which must ratify a deal negotiated by the Commission.

Other issues that are going to be of importance in the short term are financial reform, energy, climate change and data protection. Only when we see the make-up of the responsible Committees, namely ECON, ITRE, ENVI and LIBE, will it be possible to say in which directions these files will go.

## Turnout

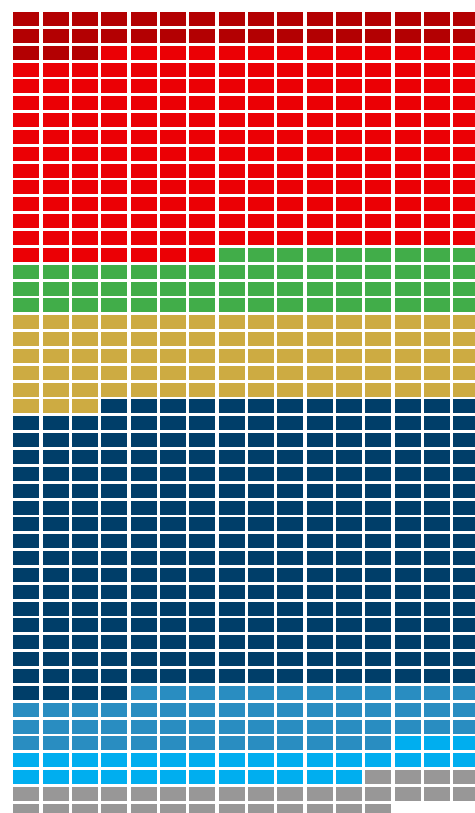
With 43%, the turnout is fractionally higher than in 2009, so for the first time since the European Parliament was elected directly in 1979 the turnout has not decreased. However, considering the effort put into the election campaigns, in particular by the candidates for the Commission Presidency and the much stronger media coverage, the turnout is certainly a disappointment. In some countries such as Slovakia (13%) and Czech Republic (18%) the turnout itself is a blow to the EU.

## Next steps

The new Parliament will assemble in Brussels for the first time on 2 June, and will spend the rest of the month negotiating the formation of its political groups – while these will mostly follow the same lines as in the outgoing Parliament, the affiliation of some national delegations is not certain, and for the new eurosceptic MEPs in particular much is still up in the air. MEPs will also use this time to decide who sits on which committees, which is important as these are the engine rooms of the Parliament's legislative work; and they will elect the next Parliament President, a prestigious position which has traditionally been split between the two main political groups (EPP and S&D) for two-and-a-half year terms.

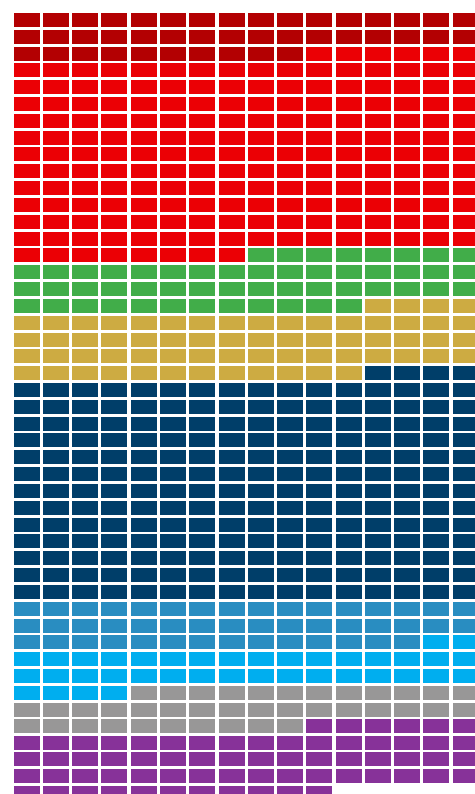
As outlined above, there may be a big political clash over the naming of the new European Commission President: the Member States, who have the right of appointment, will make their choice known in the European Council meeting at the end of June. However, the Parliament must also give its approval, and it may reject the Council's nomination at its vote in mid-July if it believes that its own considerations (and perhaps its own top candidate, Jean-Claude Juncker) have been overlooked. Watch this space.

2009  
2014



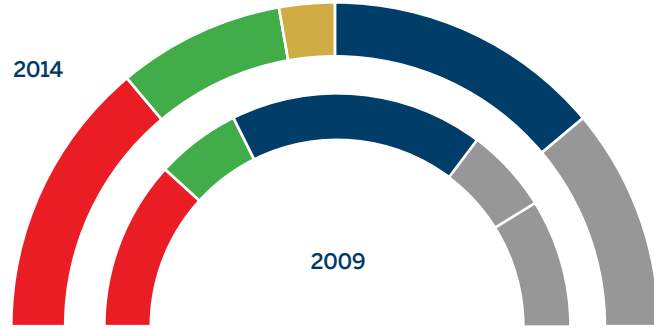
■ GUE/NGL ■ Verts/ALE ■ PPE ■ EFD ■ Other  
■ S&D ■ ALDE ■ ECR ■ NI

2014  
2019



# 28 Member States

(Please click to view each country)



EP Party	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs	5	5
G/EFA	Die Grüne Alternative	2	3
ALDE	NEOS - Das neue Österreich	0	1
EPP	Österreichische Volkspartei	6	5
NI	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs	2	4
NI	Demokratie, Kontrolle, Gerechtigkeit	3	0

## Only winners, no losers?

Chancellor Faymann's Social Democrats SPÖ (S&D group) has won 23.8 % of the votes, which is just fractionally more than in the last European election. There was moderate relief among SPÖ followers, as they managed to close the gap between themselves and their coalition partner ÖVP.

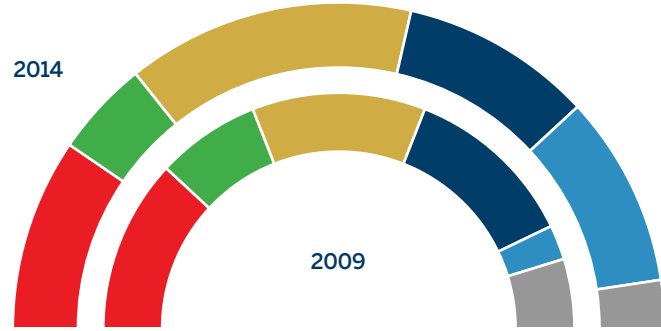
As the other governing party, the centre-right ÖVP (EPP group) has lost 2.7% but regardless still regards itself as the winner of the election as it has maintained its number one position. Veteran MEP Othmar Karas, who tops the ÖVP list, has been tipped as a candidate to become Austria's next European Commissioner.

However the real winners of the Austrian election are the FPÖ (non-attached) and the Greens. The nationalistic FPÖ, which openly campaigned against foreigners, has won 20% of the votes, which means an increase of 8%. In many communes they are now the leading force.

The Greens have surprisingly increased their share from 9.9% to more than 13% which they celebrated as a huge success.

NEOS, Austria's new liberal party only founded in 2012, has reached 7.9% but are not satisfied with the result, as polls had seen them above 10%.





EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	sp.a / PS	5	4
G/EFA	Groen! / Ecolo	3	2
ALDE	OpenVLD / MR	5	6
EPP	CD&V / Cdh / CSP	5	4
ECR	NVA	1	4
NI	Vlaams Belang	2	1

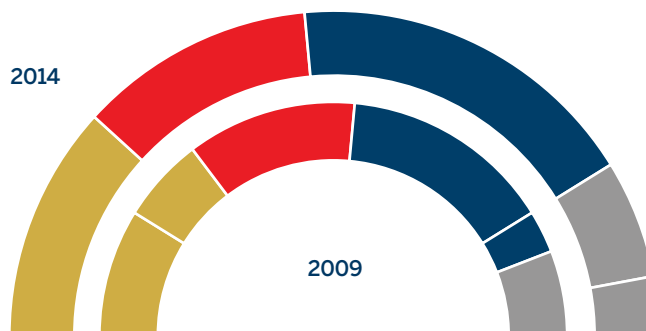
## Fall of extreme-right; rise of the Flemish nationalists

Traditionally, the turnout for European elections in Belgium is high for two reasons: firstly, voting is mandatory in Belgium and secondly, they occur on the same day as the national and regional elections. There was no difference in this statistic this time around, as 91% of the population showed up to cast their vote on 25 May. Inevitably this means that national politics largely influenced the outcome of the European elections in Belgium.

The big winners in Belgium are Flemish nationalists (NVA), with a programme of liberal social-economic reforms, as well as the pursuit of an independent Flanders. NVA becomes the country's largest political party and has increased its presence in the European Parliament from one to four seats. This victory comes at the expense of the 'traditional' political parties: the Flemish Christian Democrats have lost one seat, down from three to two, and the Flemish socialists have also lost, down from two to one. The status quo was maintained for the Flemish Liberals of Guy Verhofstadt, who have retained their three seats, as well as for the Flemish Greens, who keep their one. It is notable that NVA has yet to decide which European Group it will sit in. In the last Parliament mandate, they were members of the Greens/EFA group (which includes some nationalist/regionalist parties), but internal disagreements have resulted in group changes. The expectation is that NVA could move to the respectable eurosceptic ECR group. However, the most dramatic outcome of the Belgian election, especially at national level, is the quasi wipe-out of Flemish extreme-right (Vlaams Belang) after 23 years of strong presence in the political landscape.

In the French-speaking part of Belgium, the power-shift has been quite limited. The liberals have gained one seat, moving to three, at the expense of the Greens who have dropped down to one seat. The socialists have retained their three seats and the Christian Democrats have stuck to their one.

Belgium holds the very dubious world record of the longest time taken to form a national government, which took 541 days after the last national election. While all parties are committed not to repeat this fiasco in the months to come, a new political crisis looms. The Flemish nationalists (the largest party in Flanders) and the French-speaking socialists (the largest party in Wallonia) are diametrically opposed on all social, economic, and institutional issues, which is likely to lead to complex discussions at least in the months to come.



EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
ALDE	Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS)	3	4
ALDE	National Movement for Stability and Progress (NDSV)	2	0
S&D	Coalition for Bulgaria (BSP)	4	4
EPP	Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (GERB)	5	6
EPP	Blue Coalition	1	0
NI	National Union Attack (ATAKA)	2	0
NI	Coalition: BWC Bulgaria Without Censorship	0	2
NI	Coalition Reformist Bloc	0	1

## Low turnout as usual

Only 36% of the 6.3 million Bulgarian eligible voters went to the polling station on 25 May to elect 17 Bulgarian MEPs. The low turnout reflects the feeling of detachment from the European Union and its institutions. Bulgarians went to the polls against the backdrop allegations of vote-buying and violation of the electoral code.

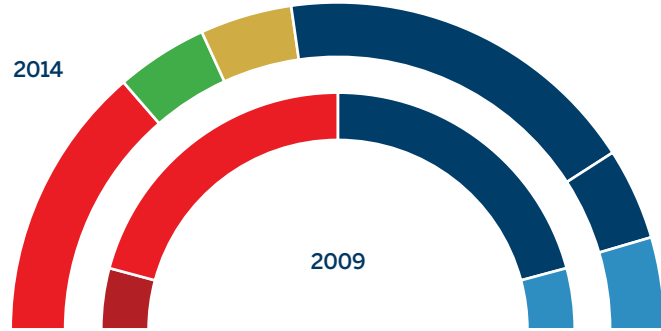
The opposition centre-right Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria party (GERB) of ex-PM Boyko Borisov has won the most votes. The other parties to send MEPs to the European Parliament are the Bulgarian Socialist Party/Coalition for Bulgaria (BSP), the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS), Bulgaria Without Censorship (BWC), and the Reformist Bloc.

The Socialists (BSP) are the main losers of the elections, as they could not mobilise their usual electorate, which is a major surprise and was not predicted by the opinion polls. The results show dissatisfaction with the BSP as the current ruling party, and could lead to resurgence of anti-government protests which were common throughout 2013 and early 2014. The vote also demonstrates discontent with the social policies attempted by the government for the last year. Even if BSP is seen as the pro-Russian party of Bulgaria, the two major winners are aligned in their policy towards Ukraine.

The victory of the former ruling centre-right party GERB replicates the results from the national Parliament election in 2013, when it won the majority of seats but failed to find allies and conceded the mandate to govern to the second-placed BSP.

As expected, third place has been taken by the ethnic Turkish party Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS), which historically has a solid, motivated electorate. Second in its MEPs list is a highly controversial and influential current MP Delyan Peevski, who embodies the shady power of Bulgarian oligarchs. After the election day, Peevski declared he will give his MEP mandate to a current Environmental Minister and fellow party member Iskra Mihaylova.

Two new parties will send MEPs to the European Parliament. The centrist Bulgaria without Censorship, led by the journalist-turned-politician Nikolay Barekov, has not yet confirmed affiliation with any EP political group. Barekov is seen as the new 'kingmaker', vocal against corruption but involved himself in a party funding scandal. He campaigned on a populist ticket, promising free tablets to school children and mandatory military service. The other new party is the liberal centre-right alliance, Reformist Bloc, which targets young voters, which claimed a victory against the far-right anti-European party ATTACK (EFD), part of the current ruling coalition. The leader of the Reformist Bloc, ex-European Commissioner for Consumer Affairs Meglena Kuneva, co-founded the pro-European party less than a year ago.



EP Party	Domestic Party	2013	2014
GUE/NGL	HRS	1	0
S&D	SDP	5	3
G/EFA	ORaH	0	1
ALDE	HNS	0	1
EPP	HDS	5	5
ECR	HSP	1	1

## Second test for the newcomer

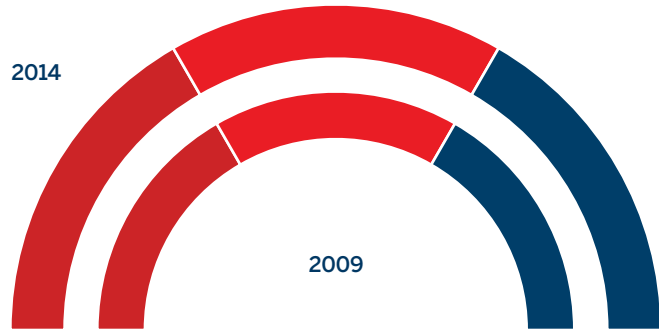
Croatians headed to polling stations to cast their ballots in the European Parliament elections for the second time in just over 13 months, as the country's first such vote took place in April 2013, prior to the country's accession to the EU. While opinion polls suggested popular apathy amid continuing economic difficulties, the estimated 2014 turnout of 25.06% is higher than that of 2013 (20.75%). In the new term Croatia will have 11 seats, one seat less than in the outgoing Parliament.

According to the first preliminary results, the coalition led by the centre-right Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) has won five seats in the European Parliament, with over 41% of the vote. Four members of the coalition will join the EPP group, one the ECR group. Incumbent MEP Ruža Tomašić (ECR) won the greatest support among the voters of the centre-right coalition. HDZ has dominated the country's political scene since the country broke away from Yugoslavia in 1991. Although the party suffered a heavy defeat in the national legislative elections in 2011 amid allegations of corruption against its former leader and Prime Minister Ivo Sanader, HDZ, now in opposition, was poised to score high in the European elections.

The centre-left Kukuriku coalition, led by the ruling Social Democrats (SDP) of Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic, is projected to come second, obtaining nearly 30% of votes, which would translate to four MEPs, one seat less than in 2013. Although individually, the Social Democrats led by EU Commissioner Neven Mimica are projected to obtain a relatively low support, the coalition result has been welcomed by Prime Minister Milanovic. Three members of the coalition are expected to join the Parliament's S&D group; another representative will join the liberal ALDE group.

The newcomer to the EU politics, the green party ORaH is said to have secured one seat.

Considering that Presidential elections are due at the end of the year, the vote to the European Parliament can be perceived as important dry run for both the governing coalition and the opposition HDZ.



EP Party	Domestic Party	2009	2014
GUE/NGL	Progressive Party of Working People - Left - New Forces (AKEL)	2	2
S&D	Democratic Party (DIKO) / Movement for Social Democracy EDEK	2	2
EPP	Democratic Rally (DISY)	2	2

## Crisis leaves a legacy

An impressive 56% abstention rate has marked voter sentiment in Cyprus, sending a message of discontent and disapproval to the domestic political leadership for their handling the economy (primarily) and the sovereignty issue (as Cyprus remains the last divided country since 1974). It also sends a message of disappointment in Europe, after Cypriots suffered Europe's first bail-in. The abstention rate is a record in the country's democratic history since its independence in 1960, as Cypriots have always been actively engaged in politics due to the division of their island.

It is also the first time since 1974 when Turkish Cypriots have claimed a seat on the ballot, but their performance has been marred by inconsistencies of Turkish Cypriot voters' eligibility: Sener Levent claimed close to 1% of total votes.

Voter discontent has coloured both the right and the left. Predictably, voters have tended towards bigger parties. DISY, the governing party of President Anastasiades, remains in the lead (2 MEPs), along with communist party AKEL (2 MEPs). Centrist DIKO (1 MEP) – who up until recently was in coalition with governing DISY – has lost its centre ground strength, and the Socialist EDEK in coalition with Greens has recorded an equally modest performance (1 MEP).

What makes this outcome different to previous European elections is the emergence of smaller parties, including ELAM, representing the extreme right. Initial assessments show that the high abstention comes primarily from middle to lower income groups, who have been severely affected by job losses and weak financial prospects.

Cyprus' political leadership has significant work to do in rethinking its credibility and policy substance in navigating the country through austerity, reform, and growth.

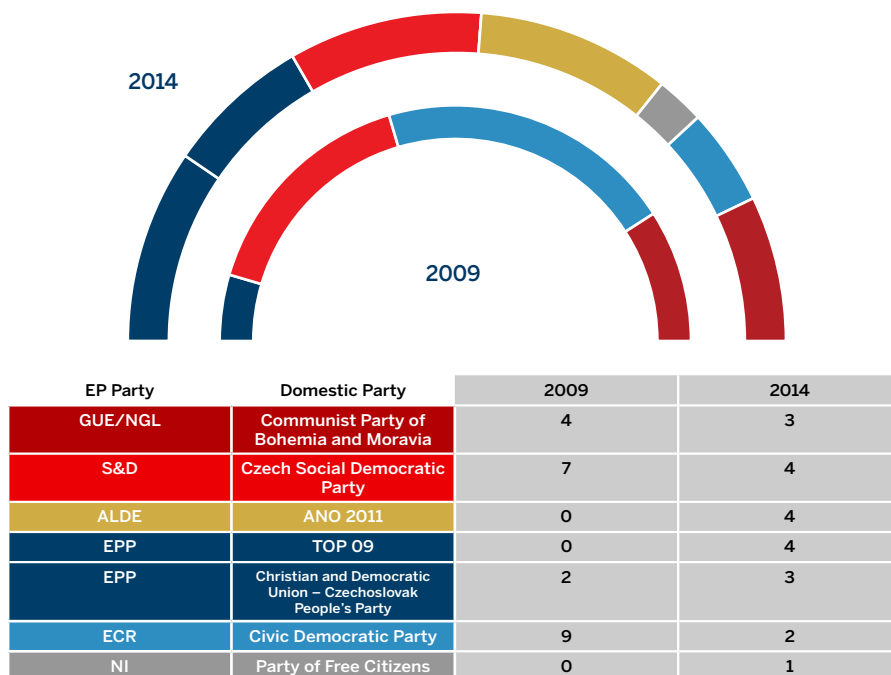
DISY: Eleni Theocharous (re-elected), Christos Stylianides (former government spokesman)

AKEL: Takis Hadjigeorgiou (re-elected); Neoclis Sylikiotis (former Minister of Energy)

DIKO: Kostas Marvidis Kostas

EDEK/Greens: Dimitris Papadakis





## Record low participation

The two-day vote for the European elections in the Czech Republic ended on 24 May with a record low turnout 18.2%: in the 2009 elections, turnout was over 10% higher. A poll for Czech TV found that 48% of Czechs thought the vote was “useless” and “will not change anything”. Commentators have linked the results with a record low turnout and have said Czechs’ basic identification with the EU is at stake.

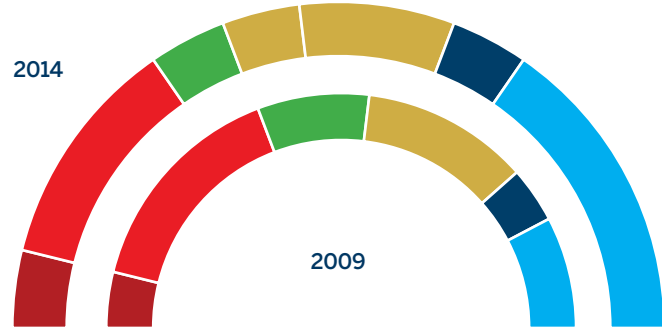
Additionally, general support for the EU in the Czech Republic has been declining over the last few years, as the image of the EU has been tainted by the way it has handled the economic crisis. A Eurobarometer survey in spring 2013 revealed that only 25% of Czechs supported joining the single currency. Furthermore, according to a 2012 survey, the level of trust in the Czech Republic in the EU institutions was at its lowest level since 1994.

The ANO movement has come first among the three new Czech parties. The results were nonetheless close: ANO finished with 16.1% of the vote which translates into four seats, and TOP 09 gained nearly 16%, also winning four.

The leading coalition party, the Social Democrats, finished third with 14.2%. Another four parties passed the five percent threshold to make into the European Parliament: the Communists (11%), the Christian Democrats (10%), the Civic Democrats (7.7%) and the third newcomer the Free Citizens’ Party (5.2%).

Various media sources have predicted that former Commissioner and lobbyist Pavel Telička who led the European elections campaign of the ANO 2011 party, could be nominated as a candidate to be the next Czech European Commissioner. Nonetheless, the ruling ANO 2011 party and Social Democrats are already deeply divided over whom to nominate for the prestigious post. Czech President Miloš Zeman has indicated that the winning party will rightly want to choose the new Commissioner.

It is notable that the Czech Eurosceptic voice will be weakened in the European Parliament given the poor result of the Civic Democrats, who have won only two seats compared to nine in 2009. However, the success of the Party of Free Citizens, whose leader has won a seat in Brussels and is expected to cooperate with the eurosceptic EFD group, has come as a surprise based on pre-election opinion polls. On the other hand, the nationalist movement Dawn of Direct Democracy – a newcomer in the 2013 national parliamentary election – failed to win any seats.



EU Party	Domestic Party	2009	2014
GUE/NGL	Popular Movement Against EU	1	1
S&D	Social Democrats	4	3
G/EFA	Socialist People's Party	2	1
ALDE	Social Liberals	0	1
ALDE	Danish Liberal Party	3	2
EPP	Conservative	1	1
EFD	Danish People's Party	2	4

## Far-right triumph

The far-right Danish People's party (DPP) triumphed in the European elections, winning Denmark's biggest share of the vote as EU-sceptic parties from across the Nordic countries gained further ground in the European Parliament.

The DPP, which had campaigned to reclaim border controls and curb benefits to other EU citizens living in Denmark, won nearly 27% of the vote and doubled its number of MEPs from two to four.

Denmark's centre-right opposition party Venstre, whose leader has been dogged by an expenses scandal in recent weeks, was one of the big losers, losing one of its seats and achieving its worst EU election result in 25 years.

"I see it as a clear indication that the Danes want the EU back on track," said Morten Messerschmidt, the DPP's leading candidate. "Europe has some democratic, civilised and critical parties for the EU, such as the Danish People's Party, the British Conservatives and others, who will now try to steer the EU back to what it is all about, to find a solution to the trade, environmental and energy challenges that we have across borders, but not an EU that is going to interfere in everything."

Messerschmidt said that he was worried about the electoral success of parties such as Front National and Golden Dawn, noting that this is proof that the established parties are failing in their duties towards the European citizens. He rejected the idea that he should join forces with these parties, instead calling for a cooperation between "democratic, civilised and EU critical parties" like the UK Conservatives.

Based on a prognosis by the national commercial broadcaster, the following preliminary list of new Danish MEPs is as follows:

Danish People's Party: Mr Morten Messerschmidt, Mr Anders Vistisen, Ms Rikke Karlsson, Ms Kristina Jørgensen

Social Democrats: Mr Jeppe Kofod, Ms Christel Schaldemose, Mr Ole Christensen

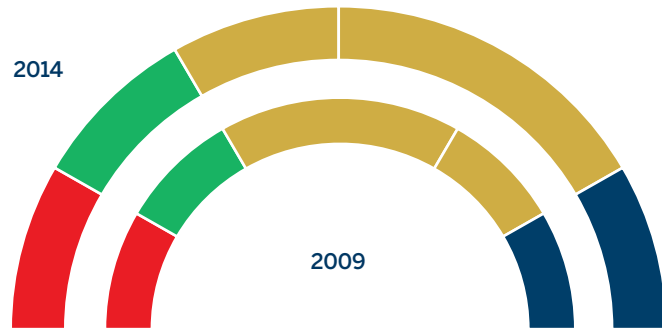
Liberal Party: Ms Ulla Tørnæs, Mr Jens Rohde

Socialist People's Party: Ms Margrete Auken

Conservative: Mr Bendt Bendtsen

Social Liberals: Mr Morten Helveg Petersen

Popular Movement Against the EU: Ms Rina Ronja Kari



EU Party	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Erakond	1	1
G/EFS	Indrek Tarand	1	1
ALDE	Eesti Keskerakond	2	1
ALDE	Eesti Reformierakond	1	2
EPP	Isamaa ja Res Publica Liit	1	1

## Steady waters

The elections attracted fewer Estonian voters this year, but the political parties maintained the same number of seats.

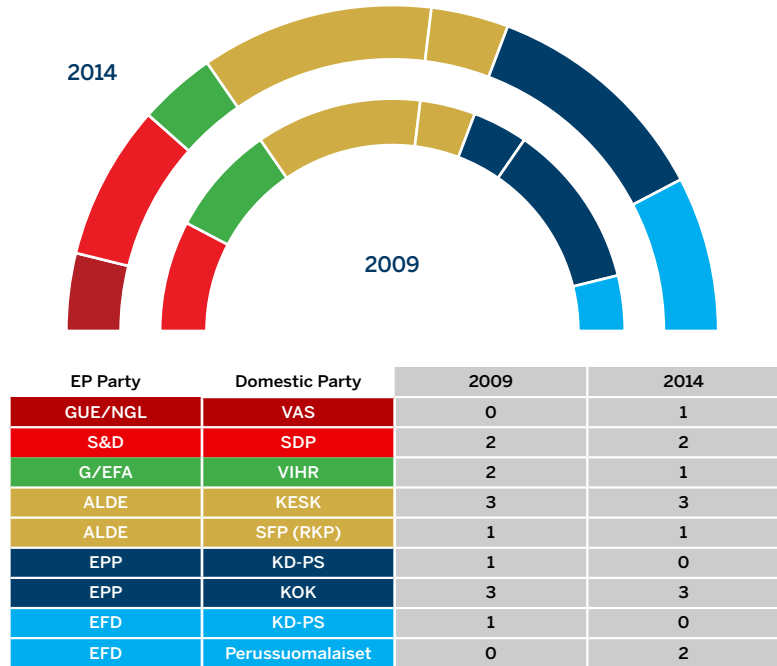
Election turnout was 36.4% this year, 7.5 % lower than in the 2009 election. This was expected due to a general lack of confidence in the political system and political parties; this has deepened in recent years due to several campaign finance scandals. The electoral campaign was dominated by local rather than European topics.

The Estonian Reform Party (ER) has doubled its number of seats in the European Parliament to two. The leading candidate, Adrus Ansip, Prime Minister of Estonia from 2005-14 before resigning in March this year, was most popular candidate from Estonia. Kaja Kallas, also from the Estonian Reform Party, is daughter of the founder of the party and current European Commissioner, Siim Kallas.

The Centre Party (KE), the largest opposition party, is the main loser of the elections, shedding 9.1% of its votes compared to the previous election, losing one seat.

The Socialist Party (SDE) won the largest number of votes with 16%, an increase of 7.3% from 2009.

Independent candidate, Indrek Tarand, and member of the Pro Patria and Res Publica Union (IRL), Tunne Kelam, are the only turning MEPs from Estonia.



## A true success for the far-right

High-profile politicians will join the new European Parliament, while the winners of the election are the True Finns and the Left Alliance.

This year more Finns voted in the European elections than in 2009 with a turnout of 40.9%. The largest party in the coalition government, the National Coalition Party, celebrated its victory in the election with 22.6% of the vote. Other coalition parties were not so successful.

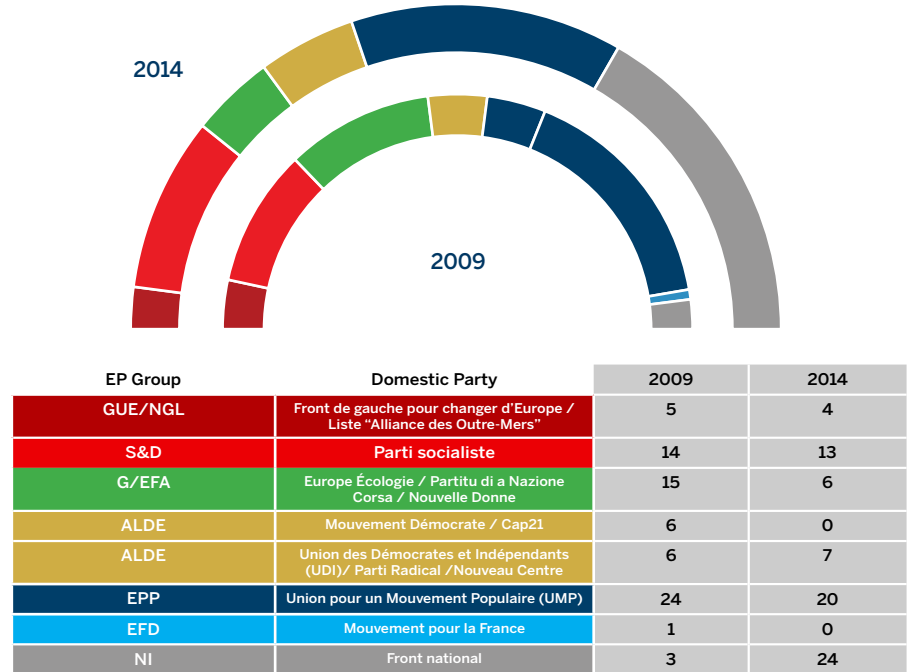
Compared to the 2009 European elections the biggest winners have been the Left Alliance and the True Finns. The Left Alliance has won 9.3% of votes and will send one MEP to the European Parliament. The True Finns has doubled its number of seats to two. The Social Democratic Party is the main loser of the elections, down 5.2% from 2009, and coming in fourth after the True Finns. However, it managed to keep the same number of MEPs – two.

The number of high profile politicians running for this year's elections has been much higher than previous years; candidates included several current ministers, former ministers, and a European Commissioner. Alexander Stubb (KOK – NCP), Minister for European Affairs and Foreign Trade, and his colleague from the National Coalition Party, Henna Virkkunen, Minister of Public Administration and Local Government have been voted into the European Parliament. The European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, Olli Rehn, has been also elected: he has been closely associated with eurozone austerity policies and is not popular in bail-out countries.

The opposition Centre Party (KESK), has won 19.7% of the vote and come in second. Both the National Coalition Party and the Centre Party have won three seats, no change from the 2009 result.

The Greens have lost one seat, but a prominent member of the Green party, Heidi Hautala, has returned to the Parliament. She served as an MEP for ten years in total, from 1995-2003 and 2009-11, before becoming Minister of International Development until October 2013.

Finland elected seven women and six men to the new European Parliament.



## A predictable shock

Despite numerous opinion polls over the last few weeks pointing to a victory for the Front National (FN), France's political class seemed shell-shocked by the news that the far-right party had gathered nearly 25% of the votes, making it the biggest party in the country by a significant margin for the first time. Twenty-four FN MEPs will join the new Parliament compared to only three in 2009. The FN, once strong "only" in a small number of constituencies, has become France's largest party in all French European electoral regions bar two (Ile de France; West). The victory is a resounding endorsement of Marine Le Pen's long term strategy of the "de-demonisation" of her party, which has succeeded in reassuring a large part of the electorate as to the intentions of the FN.

### Discredited traditional party

The crushing defeat of France's two traditional mainstream parties, the ruling Socialist Party (14%/13 seats compared to 16.5%/14 seats in 2009) and the opposition UMP (20.8%/20 seats compared 27.88%/29 seats in 2009) was as much of a shock as the FN's victory. Taking into account that only 43% of French citizens voted, the ruling party received the support of only 6.2% of the whole electorate.

### Scapegoats

Within a few minutes of the results announcement, representatives from both mainstream parties called for a change in EU policy and illustrated one of the main reasons for Ms. Le Pen's success: the constant habit of mainstream French politicians of blaming Brussels for their own failings.

### Divided UMP

Divisions within the UMP concerning which approach to take to address the rise of the FN surfaced immediately

as various party leaders targeted each other live on television. This highlighted the disagreements that will plague the UMP for the years to come and in the lead up to the senatorial elections in September 2014 and the legislative and presidential elections in 2017.

### Pale greens

The departure of Daniel Cohn-Bendit and the unpopularity of its action in government led the Green party to another significant defeat (8.9%/6 seats compared to 16.3%/14 seats in 2009), suggesting that the French Greens continue to struggle to establish themselves as a credible political force.

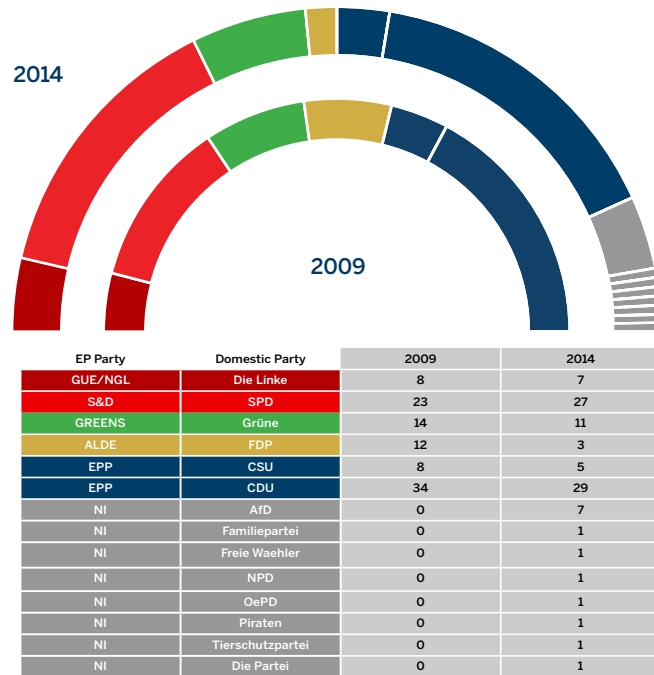
### Unscathed centre

Benefiting from an alliance between the traditionally right leaning centrist UDI and Francois Bayrou's MoDem, the centre (ALDE) succeeded in making small gains (9.9%/7 seats against 8.5%/6 seats in 2009) becoming the only mainstream party to escape unscathed from what Prime Minster Valls referred to as an political earthquake.

### Conclusion

An unpopular government, a bitterly divided opposition embroiled in scandal and a political elite perceived as distant and isolated have created all the conditions for the continued success of the FN. Its predictable victory is partly due to growing euroscepticism in France, notably with regards to perceived domestic austerity and international liberalism considered to be dictated by Brussels. More than anything it is due to domestic political opponents; both left-wing and right-wing, the inability of the French political class to pursue real structural reforms in the last two decades and its consistent habit of blaming Brussels for even the smallest painful change have paved the way for the FN's success.





## Germans content, not euphoric – Germany stable but ‘diversified’

There were two surprises in the European Parliament elections in Germany: the big loss of the CSU and the rise of the Social Democrats.

While Merkel’s CDU/CSU (EPP group) came out strongest once again, the CDU has lost a few seats and its sister party, the CSU, has achieved its worst result since the 1950s.

The SPD (S&D group) on the other hand mobilised its voters and has increased its share of the votes by 6.4%. While the base was low after the disastrous outcome of the 2009 election, this substantial increase in votes should not be overlooked. The SPD has never gained such a percentage of the vote before. Understandably they have named themselves as the true winners. However with a share of the votes still under 30%, some critics argue that the SPD cannot reclaim its status as ‘Volkspartei’, the popular party.

The personalised election campaign around Martin Schulz (as socialist group candidate to become European Commission President) helped mobilise supporters. Schulz knows that it will be difficult to push through a socialist/social democrat Commission President but he has emphasised once again his will to lead the Commission.

The Greens have lost 1.4% and of votes and three seats but unlike in the national elections, won a two-digit result (10.7%) and fought back to become third strongest party in Germany.

The liberal FDP is the big loser of the evening once again. With only 3.1% of the votes, the party will have to fight for its future existence.

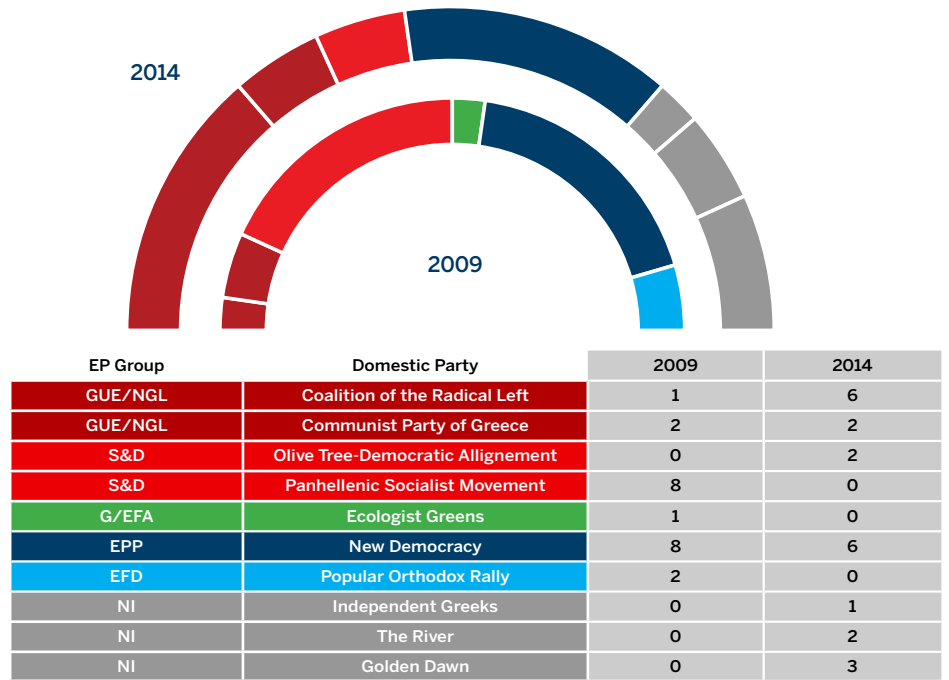
The new eurosceptic party AfD (Alternative for Germany) has won more than expected, and this will cause trouble for Angela Merkel who has always feared a parliamentary opposition that is positioned on the right of the CDU/CSU. While the AfD claims that it will not work together with European far-right and extremist parties, it remains to be seen where it will fit in, since the party is currently supported by all kinds of voters and played with far-right sentiments during the campaign. Interestingly it did not lure voters away from other parties but mobilised the typical non-voter.

Die Linke, the post-communist party, has achieved more or less the same result as five years ago. It managed to satisfy their core supporters but failed to win new voters.

Since the constitutional court has abolished the 5% threshold for the European elections, it came as no surprise that Germany will now be represented by 12 parties. Parties such as the Family Party, the Animal Rights Party and the Pirates have won seats, as has the fascist NPD, which won 1% of the vote.

In total, 47.9% of the German eligible voters went to the polls, an increase of 4.6% from five years ago; this is a positive sign but is mainly due to local elections taking place at the same time.

Overall the Germans seem content with their situation; they trust Merkel and the CDU/CSU to represent German interests in Europe and they value the European Union as an agent to guarantee peace and stability.



## A picture of extremes

Greece is on the verge of another tumultuous political period. Alexis Tsipras' leftist party SYRIZA has overtaken the ruling party New Democracy led by Prime Minister Samaras, but not by a significant majority, to unseat the current government. Golden Dawn now ranks third, adding three extreme-right MEPs to the European Parliament. The socialist PASOK has lost several seats, coming in fourth position. The 'River' movement, led by political journalist Stavros Theodorakis, has proven exit polls wrong and claimed fifth position. Communist KKE and the Independent Greeks came sixth and seventh respectively.

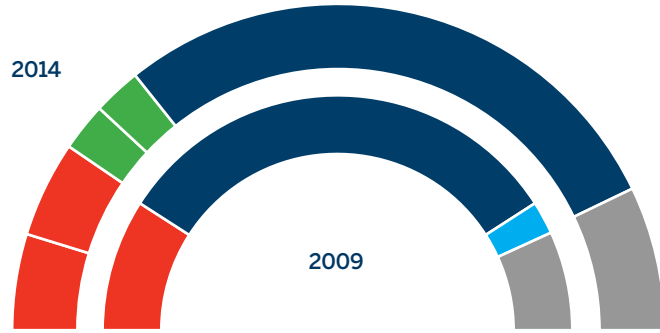
The results will disrupt the current government coalition. Greeks have voted from a domestic political lens – not a European one.

Prime Minister Samaras will have a narrow time window to reshuffle his government and include members of the left and right in order to change momentum. SYRIZA will likely push for early general elections, which could take place in the first quarter of 2015. In his post-election remarks, Mr Tsipras contested the "political legitimacy of Prime Minister Samaras" and stated that "the Europe of austerity and of the conservative right has failed".

Troika and lenders will have to navigate a difficult political environment. Most importantly, they and the government will have to focus on reform and growth – not reform and austerity.

It is worth noting that Greece simultaneously voted in local and regional government elections. The two largest cities of Thessaloniki and Athens have re-elected their independent candidate mayors, but the prefecture of Attica, the largest in Greece, is still contested between SYRIZA and New Democracy/PASOK.

A new political landscape in Greece is emerging.



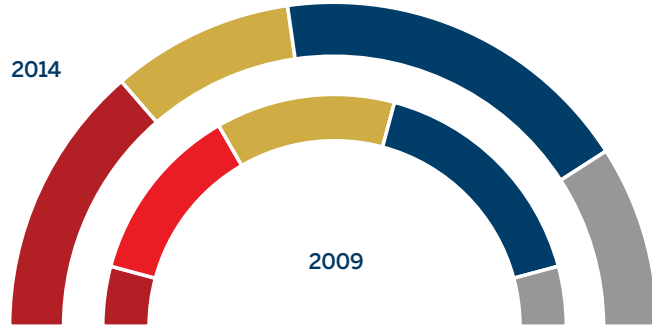
EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	MSZP	4	2
S&D	DK	0	2
Greens	LMP	0	1
Greens	E-PM	0	1
EPP	Fidesz	14	12
ECR	MDF	1	0
NI	Jobbik	3	3

## Orbán prevails

The big winner of the 2014 European elections in Hungary is the governing Christian Democrats Civic Alliance party (Fidesz, EPP) led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, which won a sweeping victory in last month's national elections. Fidesz is pro-business yet more protectionist and populist than other traditional EU centre-right parties. The Socialist party (MSZP, S&D), which lost voter confidence when it implemented draconian austerity measures while in government between 2004 and 2009, has been punished by voters and came third, its worst result in any nationwide election since 1990. Its poor showing can also be explained by the fact that it has had to compete with left-wing splinter parties that did not exist five years ago.

Second-placed Jobbik (or 'For a Better Hungary' NI) is the infamous ultra-nationalist far-right party opposed to the European Union whose views have been qualified as racist and even fascist. Despite being rocked by a series of allegations that have included spying for Russia, the party has done very well in these elections.

At six points behind the 2009 figure, the 2014 turnout of 29% is also a record low for Hungary. Voter fatigue may be an issue, with the European elections coming hot on the heels of the national elections of 6 April, and is the third and last ballot to have taken place in Hungary in 2014. Voter disinterest has mirrored the politicians', with neither Fidesz nor MSZP bothering to publish an election manifesto.



EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
GUE/NGL	Sinn Féin	0	3
GUE/NGL	Socialists	1	0
S&D	Labour	3	0
ALDE	Fianna Fáil	3	2
EPP	Fine Gael	4	4
NI	Independents	1	2

## Success for the governing party but Sinn Féin wins

Counting is still ongoing in Ireland, having commenced on 25 May and resumed this morning at 9am<sup>1</sup>, with only two seats currently filled.

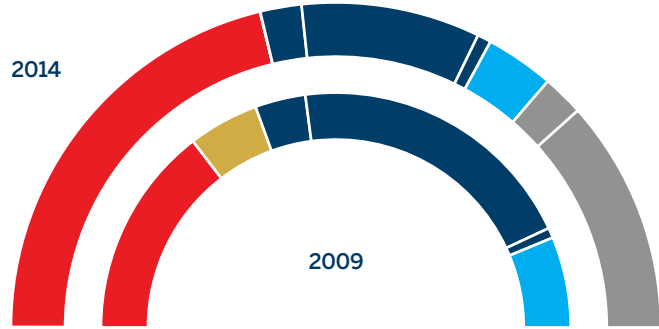
Voting for nationwide local elections took place at the same time as the European vote, and the results of those have left the government partners – Fine Gael (EPP group) and Labour (S&D) – reeling. Both parties received a brutal drubbing in the local elections, and while Fine Gael is expected to do well in the European vote, Labour is in total tailspin, and Irish media is widely reporting that the knives are out for its senior leadership. While one backbench Labour TD (MP) has called for the heads of the entire Labour front bench, Labour leader Eamon Gilmore this afternoon announced his resignation.

Sinn Féin's Lynn Boylan was the first candidate to be returned, having topped the poll in her Dublin constituency. It seems likely that Fine Gael's Brian Hayes and Independent Nessa Childers will take the other two seats in that constituency, but the Green Party's Eamon Ryan is fighting hard to retain his seat, having this morning requested a recount. It could not be tighter for Ryan, who entered the seventh count just 504 votes behind Childers.

In the South constituency, Brian Crowley of Fianna Fáil (ALDE) is expected to top the poll. Liadh Ní Riada of Sinn Féin (from the left-wing GUE/NGL group) is likely to come in second and Fine Gael is expected to take the remaining two seats.

In the last constituency, Midlands-North-West, Independent Luke 'Ming' Flanagan has been returned. Sinn Féin and Fine Gael are slated to take the other two seats.

For the senior partner party in government, Fine Gael has done surprisingly well in the European elections, especially given how much of a beating it took in the local elections. It will take comfort from this, as its government partners Labour are likely to lose both their sitting MEPs. While Fianna Fáil did very well in the local elections – to emerge as the party with the most local representation in the country – this result again did not translate across to the European poll, where the party's performance was somewhat desultory. Sinn Féin has emerged as the big winners in Ireland, in both local and European elections, and captured the lion's share of the protest vote – squeezing out rivals on the hard left. Although as one political pundit put it, having captured so many seats in local and European elections, Sinn Féin is desperately trying to pretend that it is still a fringe party rather than now a part of the political mainstream in Ireland.



EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
GUE/NGL	The Other Europe	0	0
S&D	Partito Democratico	21	31
Greens	Verdi	0	0
ALDE	Italia Dei Valori	7	0
EPP	Nuovo Centro Destra-UDC	5	3
EPP	Il Popolo della Libertà / Forza Italia	29	13
EPP	Südtiroler Volkspartei	1	1
EFD	Lega Nord	9	5
NI	L'Altra Europa - Con Tsipras	0	3
NI	Movimento 5 Stelle	0	17

## European elections legitimate Italian Prime Minister

The Partito Democratico, Italy's centre left party, has surpassed itself in the European elections gaining more than 40% of the votes. An extraordinary result for Matteo Renzi, Italy's Prime Minister, who took office only three months ago without a proper election and therefore needed the necessary democratic legitimacy to continue with his ambitious reform plan. In spite of the scaremongering from the anti-establishment movement, the Movimento 5 Stelle, the party heading the Italian Government has gained more votes than ever before in a European election.

The Movement headed by the comedian-turned politician, Beppe Grillo, has nonetheless placed itself in the second position with 20.6% of the votes, clearly ahead of Berlusconi's party (Forza Italia) that came third with a disappointing 16% of the votes.

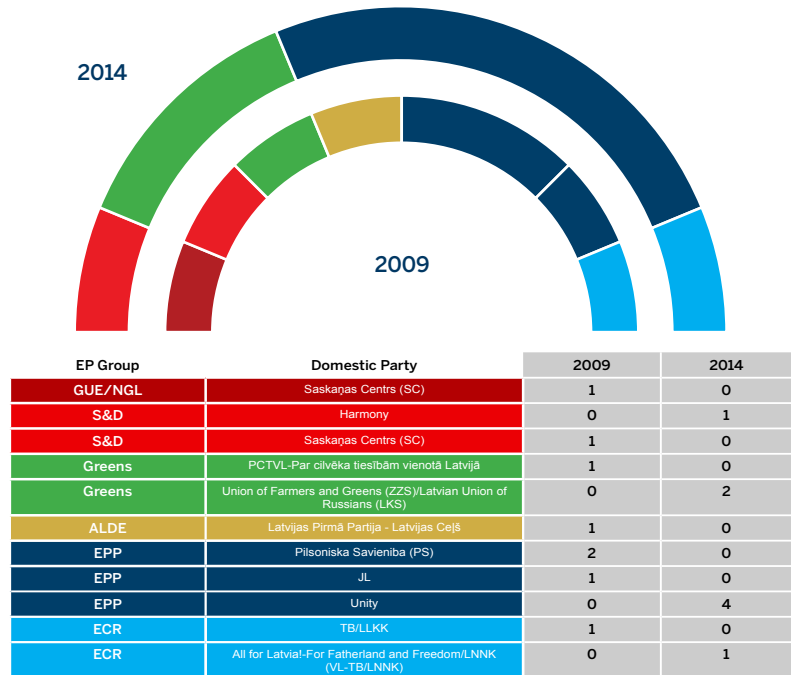
These results have significant implications for European and Italian politics:

- 1) They demonstrate that the anti-European sentiment is not as strong as many of the national and European media had made it out to be;
- 2) Secondly, but just as importantly, they show that the centre-left Government has the necessary legitimacy to continue with its reform programme;
- 3) Berlusconi's influence in Italian politics has clearly diminished and is unlikely to pick up again in future national elections.

The Prime Minister's reform and communication strategy has therefore worked. His friendly manner, his critical attitude towards the older political generations who have ruled Italy for the past 40 years and his 80-euro-a-month tax cut for low-paid workers, have paid off.

Italy was one of the last Member States to vote for the European elections. Booths opened at 7am on Sunday and closed at 23.00. We do not yet have the full picture of the seats that each party will have in the European Parliament but these results have surprised all and are likely to have a strong influence on the new European Parliament. The Italian contingent is likely to remain cohesive and continue voting according to the Government's prerogatives and the impact from the Eurosceptic MEPs will be much lower than originally expected.

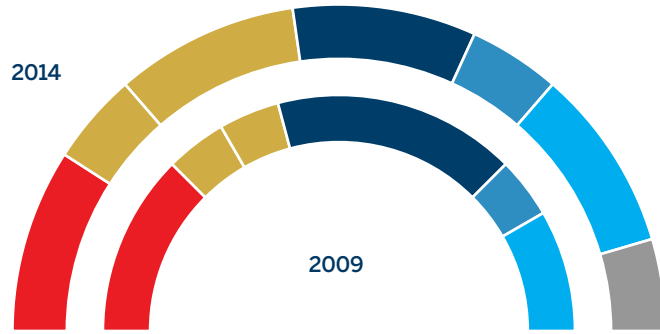




## Shifting landscape

Fourteen parties competed for eight seats, but at 30%, turnout in Latvia collapsed from the 53% recorded in 2009 (when local elections were held concurrently). Perhaps another factor in the low turnout is the fact that all major political parties are broadly pro-European.

The centre-right Unity party won by a large margin, with 46% of the vote. The right-wing All for Latvia! -For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK came second with 14%, followed by Harmony (Saskaņa) with 13%. Unity's potential representatives in the European Parliament include former Prime Minister Valdis Dombrovskis, former Defence Minister Artis Pabriks, and current MEPs Sandra Kalniete and Krisjanis Karins. Other prospective MEPs include journalist Andrejs Mamikins (Harmony); member Iveta Grigule (Greens/Farmers – Saeima); and current MEPs Roberts Zile (VL-TB/LNNK), and Tatjana Zdanoka (Latvian Union of Russians).



EP Party	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	LSDP	3	2
ALDE	DP	1	1
ALDE	LRLS	1	2
EPP	TS-LKD	4	2
ECR	LLRA (AWPL)	1	1
EFD	TT	2	2
NI	LVZS	0	1

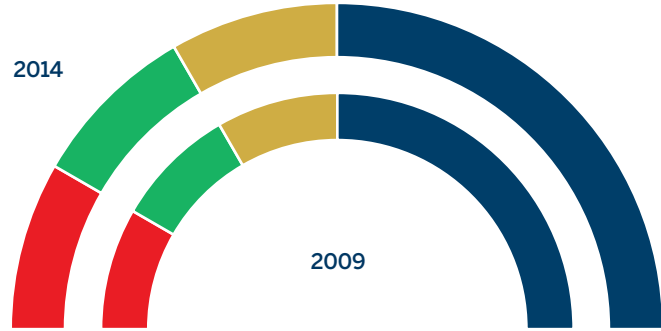
## Austerity's impact

The European Parliament elections in Lithuania were overshadowed by the second round of presidential elections, where the incumbent Dalia Grybauskaitė, known as the "Iron Lady", took the lead with 58% against 41% for Balcytis Zigmantas. It was only after the first round of the presidential elections on 11 May that real campaigning for the European Parliament elections began.

The big winners are Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevičius's Social Democrats, who trumped the centre-right conservative The Homeland Union (TS-LKD), which is suffering a dip in popularity for having adopting harsh austerity measures during the economic crisis.

No anti-EU party won seats and criticism of the EU has been limited in pre-election political debate. The energy of the eurosceptics will be focused on a referendum in late June on the sale of Lithuanian land to foreigners.

Preliminary results indicate the following incoming Lithuanian MEPs: William Blinkevičiūtė and Zigmantas Balčytis from the Social Democrats, Roland Paksas and Valentine Mazuronis from Order and Justice, V. Uspaskichas and V. Gedvilas from The Labour Party, Gabriel Landsbergis and Laima Liucija Andrikienė from the conservative Homeland Union (TS-LKD), the liberal Antanas Gouga, Ramunas Karbauskis from the Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union (LVLS), and the leader of Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania (LLRA), Valdemaras Tomaševskis.



EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	POSL/ASLP	1	1
EPP	CSV	3	3
Greens	Lest Verts	1	1
ALDE	DP	1	1

## Status quo remains

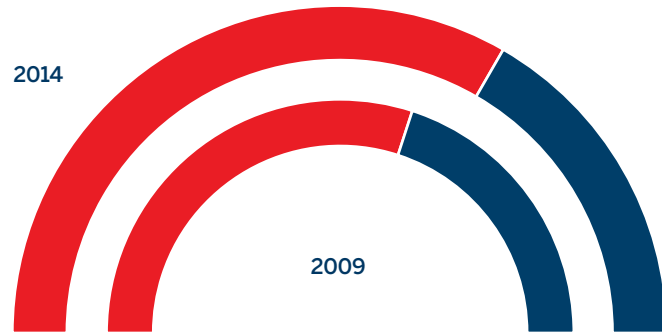
Luxembourgers have voted for the status quo remains: The CSV (EPP) keeps its three seats while the DP (ALDE), LSAP (S&D) and Déi Gréng (Greens) retain one seat each.

The CSV has emerged the clear winner in Luxembourg, taking 38% of the vote and benefitting from strong campaigns of former Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, the EPP group's candidate to become the next Commission President, and Viviane Reding, the current Luxembourg Commissioner. The Greens have come second with 15%, who just pipped the Liberals, third on 14.8%. The loser of the election is LSAP, with only 12% of the vote.

A smattering of small parties shared around 20% of the vote: ADR took 7.5%, Déi Lénk 6%, Pirates 4% PID 2% (both in their first election) and KPL took 1.5%.

Turnout was 90% in this country where voting is mandatory.

CSV's Engel hailed the result as a confirmation of the party's approach to EU policy. Luxembourg's Premier Xavier Bettel (DP) said that the election was overshadowed by the "Juncker effect" but congratulated the CSV for a successful campaign. LSAP's Chairman Claude Haagen spoke of a "terribly miserable result" and announced an in-depth analysis of the election in the coming days. The Greens stated that the result was an endorsement of their politics in Brussels.



EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	Partit Laburista/ Malta Labour Party	3	4
EPP	Partit Nazzjonalista/ Nationalist Party	2	2

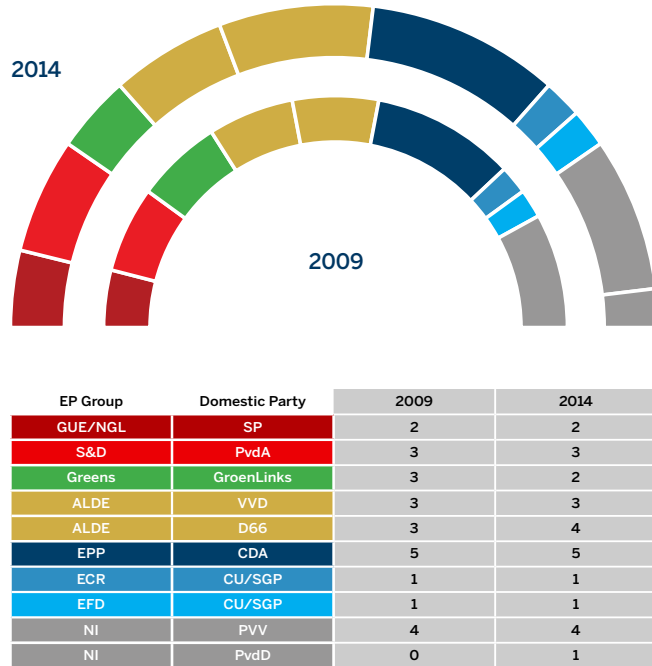
## Victory for the ruling party

With a turnout of 75%, Malta remains one of the Member States with the lowest abstention rates.

Using the single transferable vote (STV) system, Malta's ruling Labour party has claimed victory with a 53% share of the vote, trumping the centre-right Nationalist party's 40%. Malta has not experienced a surge in extremist parties, and the Greens-Democratic Alternative secured a marginal 3.5%.

Leading candidates likely to secure seats include former Prime Minister Alfred Sant, Miriam Dalli and MEP Marlene Mizzi for Labour and MEPs Roberta Metsola and David Casa for the Nationalist Party.

Labour party leader Joseph Muscat claimed victory on Sunday. Elected to the premiership last year, Muscat pushed through reforms such as the recognition of same-sex marriages and had not expected the strong results for his party at European level, stating that the results were a "vote of confidence" for the ruling party.



## Good results for pro-Europeans, but not as pro-European as results seem to indicate

The clear headline from the election is that the Geert Wilders' Eurosceptic PVV party has unexpectedly lost. This will come as a personal blow to Wilders, who was aiming to make his the biggest party in the Netherlands. The unequivocally pro-European party D66 is the clear winner of the elections and increases its number of seats from four to five. In terms of European political groupings, the Netherlands will return a majority of ALDE MEPs.

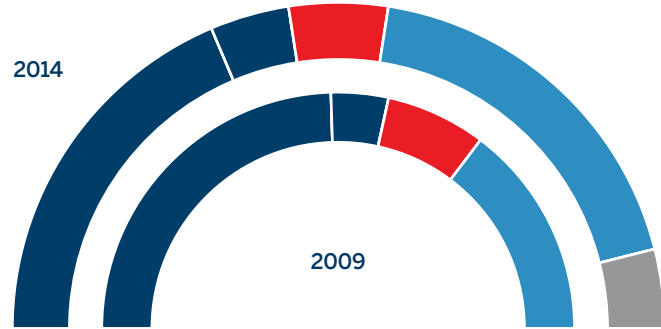
However, this belies a deeper truth. Despite the loss of the PVV and gain of D66, many voted for parties critical of or downright hostile towards the EU, such as the ruling liberal party of the current Prime Minister (VVD), the Socialist Party (SP, to the left of the Labour Party) and the one-issue Party for the Animals. The balance between pro-European parties and Eurosceptic parties has remained unchanged. The election results confirm Dutch schizophrenia vis-a-vis Europe: recent opinion polls show that 71% rejects a future outside of the EU and two-thirds support the euro. However, only 40% thinks the EU is good for the Netherlands and 59% think too much power has been transferred to Brussels.

PVV's terrible showing could be attributed to its inability to mobilise its base. The turnout of 38% was two points up on that of five years ago, but still reflects a lack of interest in European Parliament elections compared national elections, where turnout is typically twice as high.

The results reflected the ongoing fragmentation of the political landscape in the Netherlands, where the traditional hegemony of the Christian Democrats, Labour and the liberal VVD has been well and truly shattered. Now, nine different political groups will take seat in the European Parliament, and the top five parties each securing three to five seats.

Coalition government partners VVD and PvdA have maintained their seat tally, despite popular discontent due to the struggling economy. They will clearly see the election results as a vindication of their policies. The Christian Democrats are regaining ground after a dramatic fall following their minority government which depended on tacit support from the populist PVV.





EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	Democratic Left Alliance-Labor Union (SLD-UP)	7	5
EPP	Civic Platform (PO)	25	19
EPP	Polish Peasants' Party (PSL)	4	4
ECR	Law and Justice (PiS)	15	19
NI	The Congress of the New Right (KNP)	0	4

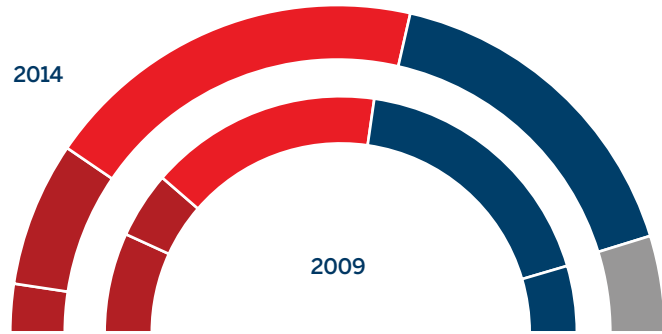
## Low turnout, no surprises

Some 23.3% percent of Polish voters turned out to elect the country's 51 MEPs: many Poles did not show up probably due to a poor campaign by the top candidates and the parties. For the first time in the history of Polish elections to the European Parliament, the lists of candidates submitted by a party must consist of at least 35% women and 35% men, according to the Gender Quota Law adopted in 2010.

The results of the election have not brought any major surprise as to the frontrunners. However, the difference between the leaders – Civic Platform PO (EPP group, 19 seats) and Law and Justice PiS (ECR group, 19 seats) – is small. The Civic Platform, under the leadership of Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, won in seven regions – in the West and in Warsaw, whereas the Law and Justice won in the traditionally conservative East.

Three other parties have exceeded the 5% threshold to be voted into the European Parliament: the Democratic Left Alliance-Labour Union (SLD-UP, S&D group) – 9.6%, nine seats; the Congress of the New Right (KNP, non-aligned conservative party) – 7.2%, four seats; and the Polish Peasants' Party (PSL, EPP group) – 7 %, four seats.

Just as across Europe, support for eurosceptics is also growing in Poland. The KNP, led by charismatic Janusz Korwin-Mikke, have won four seats despite the controversy over the leader's radical statements during the campaign. The KNP has been strongly supported by young voters in the 18-25 age bracket. Poland has not returned a Green or far-right MEP.



EP Party	Domestic Party	2009	2014
GUE/NGL	B.E.	3	1
GUE/NGL	CDU	2	3
S&D	PS	7	8
EPP	Coalition	0	7
EPP	PPD/PSD	8	0
EPP	CDS PP	2	0
NI	MPT	0	2

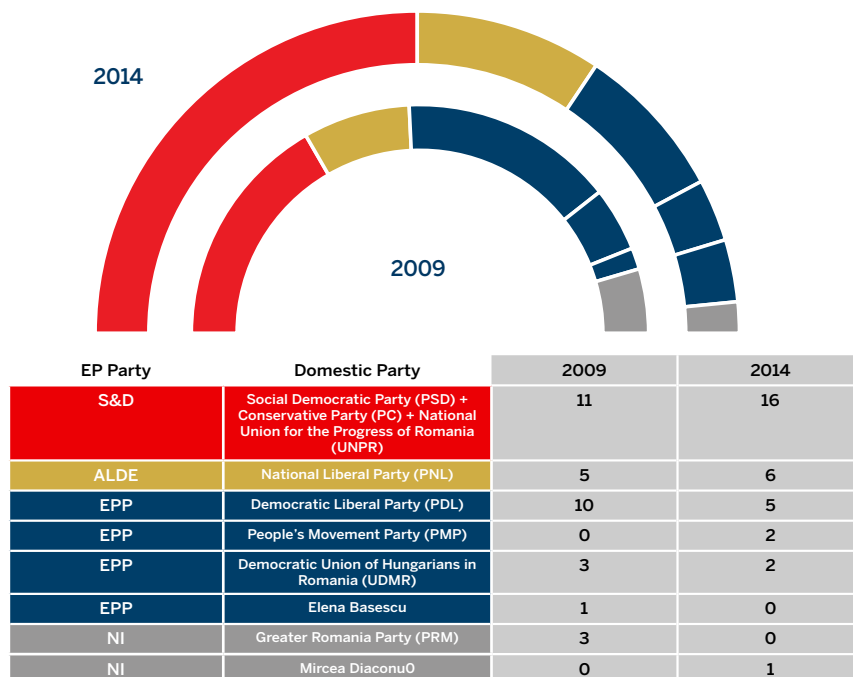
## In the wake of the crisis

Close to 9.7 million Portuguese voters were called upon to elect their 21 representatives to the European Parliament – one fewer than five years ago. These elections saw an unprecedented number of political parties running for election, with 16 lists in total, three more than in 2009.

According to provisional official results, Portugal's main opposition Socialist Party made the biggest gains, obtaining around a third of the popular vote (32%). The centre-right government coalition (PSD, liberal Social Democrats, and CDS-PP, the conservative Christian Democrats) lost three seats, taking 28% of the vote. The CDU Alliance (Coligação Democrática Unitária – Partido Comunista Português + Partido Ecologista os Verdes) took 13%, and the Partido da Terra (MPT) secured two seats for the first time. Support for the left-wing Bloco de Esquerda seems to have drained away, and they could not repeat the surprise result of three seats of 2009, managing just one this time round.

After three years of austerity in return for Portugal's bailout package, abstention figures are the highest in the history of Portugal's democracy. While the country exited the bail-out programme last week, the government has vowed to continue taking measures to lower its budget deficit and tackle a high public debt.

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho decried the low turnout and exhorted his compatriots to "recognise that the European Parliament today has a greater importance."



## Winning centre-left

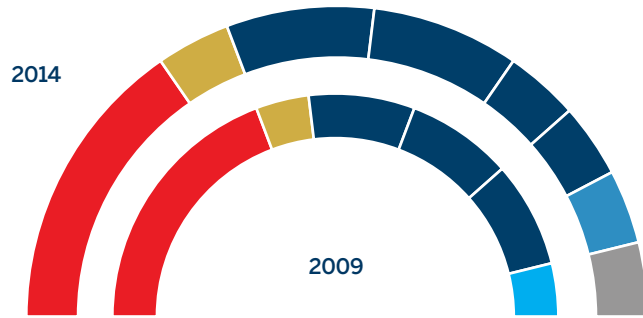
Romania experienced an increase in turnout: a total of 32.2% voted as opposed to 27.2% in 2009. This time, the European elections have also set the scene for the Presidential elections in November.

The projected results show the governing coalition of leftist Prime Minister Victor Ponta (PSD-PC-UNPR) as the winner with 37.3% of votes (according to the preliminary data from the central electoral bureau – the European Parliament shows the alliance won with a percentage of 41.1%). In Romania, Ponta's coalition was trailed by the Liberal Party (PNL), his former allies who split from the ruling coalition earlier this year and won 14.9% of the vote on Sunday. Following this worse than expected outcome, the leader of the PNL, Crin Antonescu, announced his resignation. Antonescu also stated the PNL will renounce the ALDE affiliation and most likely join the EPP group.

The opposition centre-right Liberal Democratic Party (PDL) conducted a parallel vote count for the European elections at more than 95% of the polling stations. Differences from exit polls presented by major media channels are significant: the results presented by HotNews.ro through PDL show that PSD-PC-UNPR has dropped significantly from exit polls that had the party as the winner with 40.5%-41.4%. Moreover, independent candidate Mircea Diaconu gathered nearly 7% of the vote and the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania (UDMR) 6.5%, BEC spokesman Marian Muhulet pointed out.

The People's Movement Party (PMP), which is actually the newly formed party by the President of Romania, obtained 6.2% of the votes, and two seats. Other minor parties scored around 14-15% of the vote but failed to win any seats.

The results from 93.5% of the polling stations have been processed so far: the total turnout was 5,549,303 voters (32.2%). PSD-PC-UNPR claimed that there was a turnout of 18.5 million people, which is not credible as the total population of the country is only 21.4 million. There is therefore a feeling among the population that these elections have been the subject of fraud, which is often the case in Romanian elections. We will find out in a matter of days what the truth is, and how will these elections shape the future of Romania within the next years.



EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	Direction – Social Democracy SMER	5	4
ALDE	People's Party – Movement for a Democratic Slovakia	1	0
ALDE	Freedom and Solidarity	0	1
EPP	Christian Democratic Movement	2	2
EPP	Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party	2	2
EPP	Party of the Hungarian Coalition	2	1
EPP	Most – Híd	0	1
ECR	The coalition of NOVA, the Conservative Democrats of Slovakia and the Civil Conservative Party	0	1
EFD	Slovak National Party	1	0
NI	Ordinary People and Independent Personalities	0	1

## European vote leaves Slovaks apathetic

Slovakia has rewritten the record books of EU elections again. Only 13.1% of Slovak voters have cast their vote in the European Parliament elections, remaining true to the country's reputation of posting low turnouts since joining the EU in 2004, when only 17% of the voters turned up.

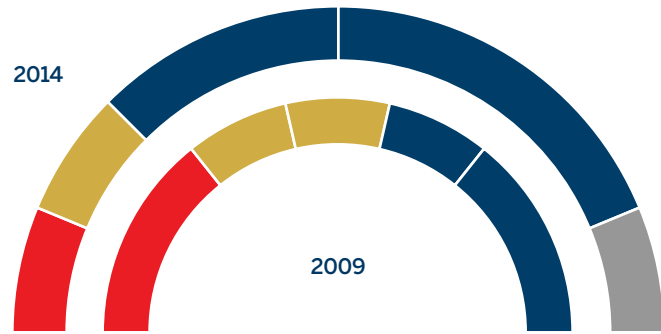
Analysts attribute the low turnout not only to election weariness, as voters had already voted in two rounds of presidential elections two months ago, but also to the generally critical tone of some candidates and media about the EU. Additionally, the historically low participation reflects the drop in trust in the EU that Slovaks have experienced in the last few years, fuelled by the crisis of the single currency, which the country joined in 2009, and growing discontent with the Slovak political class, following corruption scandals across the whole political spectrum.

Although the ruling SMER party received the highest number of votes in the election, Prime Minister Robert Fico failed to defend its previously announced target to get five MEP seats. Various analysts have thus reported that the centrist and right-wing parties affiliated to the EPP group in Brussels have won the elections, confirming the stagnation of the previously invincible SMER.

The Christian Democratic Movement as well as the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union have gained two seats each, while other parties will have one each. Overall, most of the 13 deputies are conservative.

The European elections in Slovakia have not only confirmed a sizeable swing to alternative parties, but also considerable fragmentation of the centre-right parties. This has brought some uncertainty regarding the affiliation of the newcomers within the European Parliament's political groups. At least two winning parties will need to clarify their membership in the upcoming weeks.

Finally, it is notable that the former Vice-President of the European Commission and leader of SMER's European elections campaign Maroš Šefčovič will take up a seat in the European Parliament.



EP Party	Domestic Party	2009	2014
S&D	Social Democrats	2	1
ALDE	Zares	1	0
ALDE	DeSUS	1	1
EPP	New Slovenia (NSi) + Slovenian People's Party (SLS)	1	2
EPP	Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS)	2	3
NI	VERJAMEM!	0	1

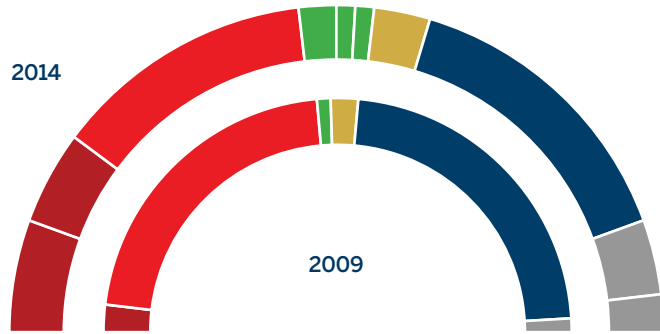
## Test for the national election

Half-way through the European Parliament campaign, Slovenia found itself without a government, following the resignation of Prime Minister Alenka Bratusek at the beginning of May. Bratusek's resignation came a week after she lost the leadership of the centre-left Positive Slovenia party (PS), putting an end to a coalition government with the Social Democrats (SDS). The government fell as the Social Democrats refused to work together with the new leader of the PS Zoran Jankovic, founder of the party and mayor of Ljubljana, who has been embroiled in a number of corruption scandals. The new national parliamentary elections that could take place as soon as in July were projected to have an influence on the number of voters taking part in the European election. According to the preliminary results, the turnout was 21%, compared to 28.4% in 2009. These elections are considered as a test for the parties' positioning before the national one.

According to preliminary results, SDS obtained 24.9% that would translate into three seats in the European Parliament. The SDS would be represented by incumbent MEP Milan Zver, MP Romana Tomc and former MP Patricija Šulin.

The joint list of the New Slovenia (NSi) and People's Party (SLS) is expected to win two seats, winning 16.6% of the vote. MEP Alojz Peterle is expected to be re-elected, alongside with the SLS President Franc Bogovič.

Former Court of Audit President Igor Šoltes, who leads the left-wing VERJAMEM! ( I believe!) movement is expected to be among the new MEPs. The VERJAMEM! movement is projected to win 10.5% of the votes. The incumbent MEP Ivo Vajgl (ALDE group – his new affiliation is to be confirmed) from the Pensioners' Party (DeSUS) is projected to be re-elected with 8.1% of votes. Outgoing MEP Tanja Fajon is said to have obtained 8.1%, and there re-elected for a new mandate.



EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
GUE/NGL	Izquierda Plural	1	6
GUE/NGL	Podemos	0	5
S&D	PSOE	21	14
Greens/EFA	L'Esquerra pel Dret a Decidir (LPD)	0	2
Greens/EFA	Europa de los Pueblos-Los Verdes	2	1
Greens/EFA	Primavera Europea	0	1
ALDE	Coalicion por Europa	2	2
EPP	PP (EPP-EP)/CEU	23	17
NI	Union, Progreso y Democracia (UPyD)	1	4
NI	Ciudadanos	0	2

## Spain, not so different...

Elections in Spain followed almost to the letter the overall European script: abstention was 44%, the top party is the ruling conservative party (PP – Partido Popular), the socialists (PSOE) have come second, both parties have lost considerable ground and the vote has led to greater fragmentation of the political landscape. Nonetheless, this process has not led to radicalisation. Spain will be one of the few European countries that will not send eurosceptic or far-right MEPs to Brussels.

The low participation reflects the drop in trust in the EU that Spaniards have experienced in the last few years, fuelled by frustration over Europe's austerity-driven response to the crisis, and the growing discontent with the Spanish political class, following corruption scandals across the whole political spectrum.

### Clear winners and losers

The two mainstream parties are the losers of the elections. Both parties have lost considerably more ground than the polls had forecast. While the PSOE (14 MEPs versus 23 in 2009) immediately acknowledged defeat, the PP claimed victory, despite seeing their seats trimmed by 33% (16 MEPs versus 24 in 2009).

The winners are the minority parties with a national footprint. The newly created Podemos, which emerged only a few months before the elections from Spain's protest movement 'los indignados', has won five seats. La Izquierda Plural (a broad coalition which includes the communists

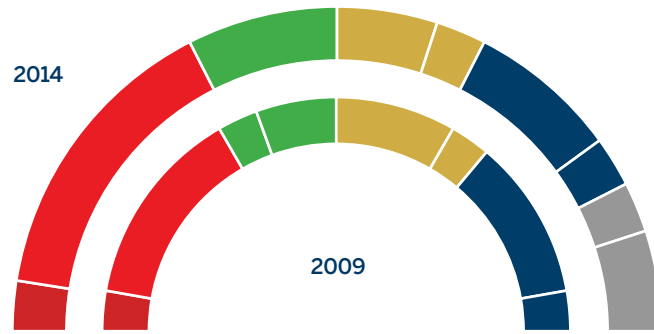
and the greens) sees also an important increase (from two seats in 2009 to six). Worth highlighting as well are the four seats obtained by right-wing UPyD (one seat in 2009). Two other new parties advocating for a renewal of the Spanish political class and for a more democratic Europe (Ciudadanos and Primavera Europea) have been rewarded by voters for the first time.

Six seats will go to nationalist coalitions LPD (1) and Coalicion por Europa (3) and Catalan pro-independence alliance L'Esauerra pel Dret a Decidir (2).

### A turning point in Spanish politics?

For the first time in the last three decades, the joint score of the PSOE and PP is below 50%. Over the last five years, the two main parties which have dominated Spanish politics seamlessly for more than three decades have lost 5 million votes and 30% of citizens' support.

While Spain was represented by six political forces in the last Parliament, this time around, ten different Spanish parties will take up seats in Brussels and Strasbourg. Only time will tell whether these elections mark a turning point in the structure of the Spanish political landscape and the beginning of the end of the 'bipartidismo' (Spain's two-party system). What is clear today is that Spanish voters have sent a strong message to the political establishment, which has limited time to react. The next general elections are almost around the corner (autumn 2015).



EP Group	Domestic Party	2009	2014
GUE/NGL	Left Party	1	1
S&D	Social Democracy	5	6
G/EFA	Pirate Party	1	0
G/EFA	Environmental Party	2	3
ALDE	Liberals	2	2
ALDE	Centre Party	1	1
EPP	Moderate Party	4	3
EPP	Christian Democrats	1	1
NI	Swedish Feminist Initiative	0	1
NI	Sweden Democrats	0	2

## The precursor to national elections

The Swedes will go back to the polling booths in September for national elections, and the outcome of the European elections can be seen as an important precursor for then. The campaign in Sweden was therefore even more nationally oriented than elsewhere. The turnout of 48% is relatively low for Swedish standards but slightly higher than last time.

The outcome reflects the fact that the voters have grown tired of the coalition government led by the centre-right Moderates (EPP group), which for the first time in history has managed to head two consecutive governments not led by the Social Democrats (S&D group). The Moderates and two of their junior coalition partners (the Christian Democrats and the Liberals) have lost seats, marking a loss of political weight for the current government. The government has been unable to capitalise on the fact that Sweden has been impacted less by the crisis than other countries; recent slow economic performance has been held against them. The incumbent government ran their European campaign on the generic message of 'stability in Europe, more jobs at home', which did not go down well with voters. The only true pro-European campaign, run by the Liberals, led to a defeat.

After years of internal turmoil, the Social Democrats have regained their traditional leading position under the leadership of an old school Social Democrat leader Stefan Lofven, a former Union leader with a working class background. The Social Democrats reinvigorated themes such as healthcare and education. Showing scepticism vis-a-vis the basic European freedoms, the Social Democrats

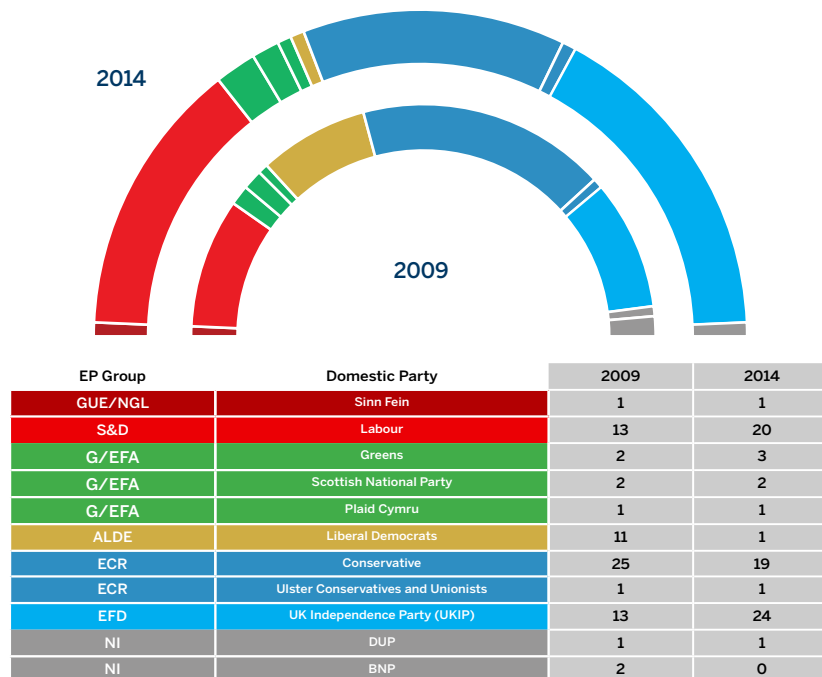
ran their European campaign on the theme of social dumping – 'Swedish salaries and working conditions for everyone working in Sweden'. In this context, Mr. Lofven said that the employment portfolio in the next European Commission would be a very interesting post for Sweden to have.

Sweden has not escaped the rise of the extremes, historically exacerbated in European elections where the consequences of such votes are less direct. In 2009, the Pirate Party did remarkably well. In these elections the extremes come from the Sweden Democrats on the right and the Left party on the left. The Sweden Democrats will for the first time enter the European Parliament in a climate of growing unease about immigration and unsuccessful integration. As with many of its European peers, the party has invested in shedding the image of its extreme-right past. The far-left Left Party has run on an anti-euro (which Sweden does not have) and anti-austerity ticket. This has clearly struck a nerve with Swedish voters, giving them two MEP seats.

The Environmental Party (Miljö Partiet) has performed better than ever, becoming bigger than even the Moderates.

The greatest novelty might be the result of the Swedish Feminist Initiative, which breached the 4% threshold and won a seat for its leader Soraya Post. The good results for the SFI are by them explained as a reaction to rising racism and fascism. The party has campaigned on the issues of abortion equal pay and equality regardless of gender, ethnicity disability and age.





## Outsider eurosceptics top the poll

The UK has experienced a political “mini-earthquake” with the success of the eurosceptic UK Independence Party (UKIP – EFD group), who topped the poll with 27.5% of the vote, winning 23 seats. UKIP has ridden a wave of support based on its twin policies of leaving the EU and restricting immigration and on disillusion with mainstream parties. European elections give UKIP an excellent opportunity, as they are organised on a regional basis with several MEPs for each constituency, breaking the three-party dominance of national elections, and they are traditionally characterised by a low turnout and protest voting. UKIP’s success in securing a seat in a traditionally labour / SNP dominated Scotland underscored the surprisingly broad appeal of the party across the political electorate. The parties of the governing coalition, the Conservatives (ECR group) and the pro-European Liberal Democrats (ALDE group) both suffered, the latter losing all but one of their seats.

UKIP leader Nigel Farage is an effective media performer and his lively eurosceptic rhetoric has made him one of the most memorable speakers in the European Parliament’s plenary sessions. In the new Parliament, UKIP’s MEPs, and Farage in particular, will continue to make a lot of noise and successfully irritate their opponents. However, they are likely to play little role in the Parliament’s legislative work, which principally takes place in Committees, which they do not usually attend.

The poor showing by the Conservatives, down from 26 seats to 18 and losing their lead MEP, can be attributed partly to the expected poor performance of governments in European elections but also due to UKIP factor. In view of UKIP’s success, of the unpopularity of the current government and of the poor showing of many ruling parties across Europe, many expected a poorer result for the Conservative party. The smaller number of Conservative

MEPs may not put into question the survival of the ECR group, which is home to the more respectable centre-right eurosceptics. This group will be strengthened by a larger Polish constituency which might imply that the UK will lose the chair of the group. While they will continue to play a constructive role in Committee work, the Conservatives are likely to increase their eurosceptic tone in Plenary to match Farage’s. The result will also be felt by the Conservative Party leadership in London, which may be inclined to make more anti-EU gestures between now and the national election in May 2015.

The Labour Party (S&D group) performed reasonably well with 25.4%, winning 18 seats, up from 13, and narrowly beating the Conservatives for second place – a disappointing result for Ed Miliband’s party according to some. This result is perhaps to be expected from the main opposition party in European elections, although it is overshadowed by UKIP’s success. The Labour delegation will be the main pro-EU British group in the new Parliament, although even they will have to take account of the growing euroscepticism at home.

The Liberal Democrats performed dismally, losing all but one of their 12 seats: they have been punished both for their unpopularity as the junior coalition partner in government and perhaps for their euro-enthusiasm. Many of their traditional voters either stayed at home or defected to the Labour Party. The Greens even beat them for fourth place, increasing their number of MEPs to three.

In Scotland, the Scottish National Party is projected to win two seats; in Wales the nationalist Plaid Cymru maintained its single seat; while in Northern Ireland, voting followed the usual tribal lines. The other news was the loss of both seats by the far-right British National Party.

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