

The background of the entire page is a photograph of the interior of the European Parliament. In the foreground, a person wearing a brown hijab and a white t-shirt is seen from behind. The t-shirt has black text that reads "WORKING FOR A DIVERSE, COHESIVE, VIBANT EUROPE" with a small map of Europe below it. The person is standing in a large, modern hall with many rows of desks and chairs, where other people are seated. In the background, there are large screens displaying a map of Europe, and a European Union flag is visible. The text "FEMYSO TOOLKIT FOR THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN 2019" is overlaid on the image in a bold, sans-serif font. The words "FEMYSO" and "CAMPAIGN 2019" are in yellow, while "TOOLKIT FOR THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS" is in blue.

"YOUR VOTE, YOUR VOICE"



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WHY YOUR VOTE, YOUR VOICE MATTERS

The 2019 European Elections (EE19) are taking place within a shifting context. With each passing day, we are witnessing a number of structural changes in our political and social landscapes, which pose an existential dilemma to us primarily as EU citizens, but especially so as young Muslim Europeans. 2019 is the year in which for the first time, a major anti-European wave is expected to have a large influence in the European Elections. As such, our rich and often hybrid European identities have become a target. While unity in diversity has been the engine of the European project, diversity has recently become a scapegoat in the political narrative.

FEMYSO has partnered with the European Parliament for the European Elections 2019 campaign, in order to provide citizens of all backgrounds the opportunity to actively and effectively participate in public life, and take part in political debates. As we live in pluralist societies, engaged voting is a cornerstone of our democracies. Yet the political and social challenges that Muslim communities in Europe are facing cannot be ignored. There is a continuous rise in political movements, parties and groups which are anti-diversity, anti-migrant, and most

importantly, Islamophobic. We believe that the political and civic commitment of young people is a necessary driving force to build a stronger Europe and to contribute to more vibrant, inclusive and cohesive societies. To achieve this goal, we need to strengthen the political consciousness of youth and their sense of responsibility towards the societies they live in.

● THE CAMPAIGN

This is the reason we are launching the Your Vote, Your Voice campaign. With this campaign toolkit, FEMYSO is providing young citizens with the necessary tools to engage with the European elections, and to bring their voice to the political debate. As an official, non-partisan* partner for the EE19 campaign, FEMYSO aims to cultivate a generation of young active citizens who know how to raise their voice within the EU. Furthermore, FEMYSO believes in the importance of empowering young people to become skillful, proactive and engaged citizens. The goal of this campaign is to increase the civic engagement and democratic participation of European Muslim youth in the upcoming European Elections by strengthening their knowledge of the institutions of the European Union; by encouraging them to commence and contribute to political debates about European issues; and to actively engage with their national MEPs and MEP candidates.

** FEMYSO confirms that it does not provide support to neither political parties nor candidates participating in the elections, nor does it intend to field its own candidates in the 2019 European Elections.*



THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

The European Elections are an important opportunity for EU citizens to raise their voice and to be heard. The European Parliament is the only EU institution where EU citizens can directly elect their representatives every five years. Contrary to general knowledge, the Parliament has a surprisingly influential role in the EU decision-making process, as it has to approve the majority of EU legislation, and as it elects the European Commission's President. It is by ensuring you have a say in who gets elected; by challenging the MEP candidates from your country; by building networks with them and actively following them on their actions while holding them to account, that you can have a voice in decisions at a European level that affect your daily life and your future.

WHY JOIN?

This campaign assists the European Union in closing the gap between its supranational institutions and its citizens, by doing the work that the EU itself cannot do: effectively reaching out to a minority youth group, getting them on the same page in effectively engaging with the European Elections and bringing the European Parliament closer to a grassroots level.

So why join? This campaign is a chance for young Muslims to reclaim their narrative in their countries, to show that we care about Europe and that we feel European; to strengthen the relationship with local, national and EU institutions; and to build sustainable and cohesive societies.

Your vote is important, because you are a citizen of the European Union, and it is up to you to tell your story and to protect your rights and those of your fellow community members. Because it is up to us all to make a difference by choosing diversity over discrimination, integration over isolation. We can do so only if we decide to bring our voice to the decision-making table through one of democracy's most powerful tools: voting.



HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

FEMYSO's network consists of 31 Member Organisations (MOs) across 23 European Countries, out of which 17 are EU Member States. Whether you are a board member of one of our MOs, you are an engaged volunteer or just a caring EU citizen, this part is dedicated to everyone who wants to get active and raise their voice during the campaign period leading up to the European Elections in May 2019. This is how you can participate:

SOCIAL MEDIA



- a) Engage with FEMYSO's creative contents
- b) Share and like what FEMYSO has published



- c) Create your own social media campaign! You could:
 - Ask people why/if they will vote
 - Ask people what the EU has done for them
 - What they expect from the Elections
 - What future they want for Europe
 - Use creative ways to generate a discussion on European issues, such as a social media account with memes on the questions above
- d) Run a Twitterstorm on key dates with a clear message

MEDIA



- Write op-eds with your opinion on Europe and the Elections to be published in media outlets – FEMYSO can assist in editing and publishing on our website!
- Reach out to journalists to give interviews on the day of Elections
- For a concrete media strategy, reach out to us to get advice!

ORGANISING EVENTS ON THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS



- A short session at existing events: e.g. a two-hour discussion on the Elections, political engagement etc.
- Dedicated event to the EE19: a one-day or two-day seminar on active citizenship and the Elections, it could include training sessions on advocacy and media – with which FEMYSO can help!
- Panel discussion: with candidate or incumbent MEPs, or with key figures, e.g. from the university, European Parliament local office etc.

COOPERATE WITH OTHER YOUTH NGOS PARTNERING WITH EE19 CAMPAIGN



- Participate in their events
- Reach out to them and organise something together
- FEMYSO can help with getting you in touch with local youth NGOs that are also partners of the EE19 Campaign
- Managing busses that can transfer voters to the nearest voting office

ENGAGE WITH CANDIDATE MEPS



- Through events: nationally and local sections
- Invite them to different events, such as: roundtable discussions, video message/interview/podcast, interview over coffee to write an article about later
- Social media: Tweet to them, e-mail them, challenge them on their messages and ideas, invite them to your events

STREET ACTIONS AND CREATIVE PROJECTS



- Street Survey: record audio with your phone, with video as an additional feature. To look a little bit more professional get a friend with a decent camera, who'll film you. Ask people questions, such as when are the next European Elections? Where is the European Parliament? Etc.
- Be creative, keep it funny, have fun!
- Upload it on Social Media or send them to local radio stations.
- Organise a podcast with politically active guests on the importance of voting and the coming election. This can be very simple by for example conducting the podcast via the phone.
- Short 15-second Instagram story contents
- Writing articles on blogs and media outlets
- Create a temporary website and make it a place open for discussion, where you could use polls and publish statements.

THROUGH THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT & ITS LOCAL OFFICES IN EACH EU COUNTRY, WHERE YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO:



- Merchandise;
- Training sessions delivered by the European Parliament in Brussels or local office
- European Parliament staff to participate in events as speakers

SCHOOLS & UNIVERSITIES



- Organise a debate or discussion session at your university
- Visit the high school where you graduated from and talk with students about the elections
- Arrange a breakfast meeting on elections day and vote afterwards together.
- Fun idea: for every person who joins your breakfast meeting, you could plant one small tree!



WHAT SUPPORT FEMYSO CAN GIVE

FEMYSO has various forms of support that we can give to both our Member Organisations, and to individuals. Support can come from FEMYSO directly, or from the various networks that we are part of. As we are a partner of the European Elections 2019 campaign, this gives us a lot of opportunities.

SUPPORT FROM FEMYSO:

1 This toolkit

3 Access to resources:

- a) Previous academic research
- b) Previous campaigns
- c) Expert team members and expert network
- d) Examples: EU elections, functioning of EU institutions, EU decision-making and legislative processes; Islamophobia in the EU, in politics, in media; education and youth; political and civic engagement

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Participation into EU-level activities:

- a) FEMYSO can help you attend plenary sessions of the European Parliament in Brussels or Strasbourg
- b) Activities of other partners of the European Parliament (see: www.thisimeinvoting.eu)
- c) Elections night on May 26th: opportunity to showcase the work on grassroots level done for the European Elections

2 Training sessions*:

Training type: advocacy, lobbying, media, civic engagement, etc.

Support type: organising, arranging a trainer, help create the concept, support in social media and mainstream media coverage and strategies

** For this, please fill out the Services Request Form on the FEMYSO website*

4 Roundtable at the European Parliament:

- a) Participants will get the opportunity to engage in discussions with candidates and incumbent MEPs.
- b) Keep an eye out on FEMYSO channels for its announcement!

6 FEMYSO's Member Organisations:

- a) Cooperation possibilities
- b) Information on participating in their events

7

Access to FEMYSO's institutional networks:

European Parliament:

- access to open sessions of the Parliament, support on research (statistics); content for media, PR and communications; funding opportunities
- European Commission Coordinator on Combating Anti-Muslim Hatred
- European Network Against Racism (ENAR): FEMYSO is a member of this NGO which is made up of a network of anti-racist civil society organisations
- Council of Europe

8

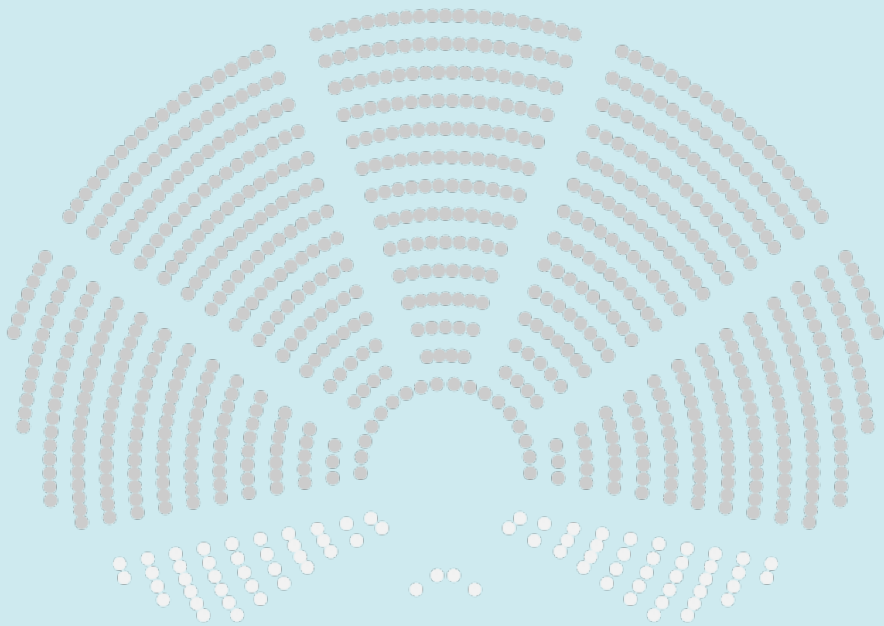
Advising:

- Reach out to us to get our advice in creating a concept, organising a campaign, arranging a training, getting you in touch with other Member Organizations or NGOs, or other points of advice!
- activecitizenship@femyso.org



THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT & EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2019 AND HOW TO VOTE

Every five years, EU citizens choose who represents them in the European Parliament. This directly-elected institution defends your interests in the EU decision-making process. This section provides you with the technical information on the European Parliament and the elections.



WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT?

“The Members of the European Parliament are elected every five years. The world’s only directly elected trans-national assembly, the Parliament represents the interests of EU citizens at the European level. It elects the President of the European Commission, appoints its Commissioners (as a college) and holds them to account. It passes laws for our protection and budgets on our behalf. It represents them abroad and acts on their petitions. The discourse of its Members shapes the political and social agenda upholding the values of the Treaty of the European Union.”*

* Directly adopted from: <https://www.european-elections.eu/how-elections-work>

WHAT ARE THE ROLES AND POWERS OF THE PARLIAMENT?

The parliament has 3 main roles:

LEGISLATIVE

- Passing EU laws, together with the Council of the EU, based on European Commission proposals
- Deciding on international agreements
- Deciding on enlargements
- Reviewing the Commission's work programme and asking it to propose legislation

SUPERVISORY

- Democratic scrutiny of all EU institutions
- Electing the Commission President and approving the Commission as a body. Possibility of voting a motion of censure, obliging the Commission to resign
- Granting discharge, i.e. approving the way EU budgets have been spent
- Examining citizens' petitions and setting up inquiries
- Discussing monetary policy with the European Central Bank
- Questioning Commission and Council
- Election observations

BUDGETARY

- Establishing the EU budget, together with the Council
- Approving the EU's long-term budget, the "Multiannual Financial Framework"*

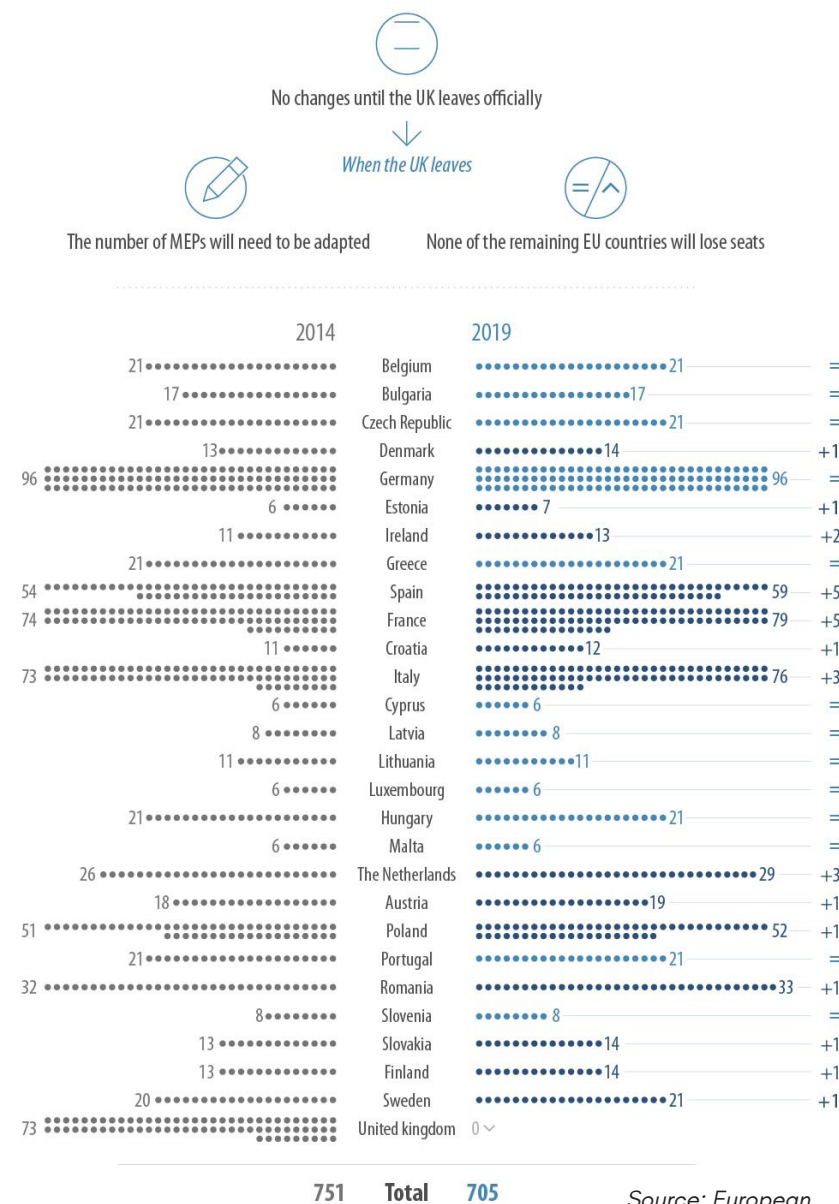
* Directly adopted from: <https://www.european-elections.eu/how-elections-work>

HOW IS THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT COMPOSED?

The Parliament is currently composed of 751 MEPs, although when the UK leaves, the number will be reduced to 705 seats. How these seats are allocated, is laid out in the EU Treaties. It takes into account the size of the population of each country, with smaller countries getting more seats than strict proportionality would imply. Currently, the number of MEPs per country ranges from 6 for each of the following countries: Malta, Luxembourg and Cyprus; to 96 for Germany. After the UK leaves, the seats will be allocated according to the following numbers:

European elections in 2019

How many seats will each country have?



WHAT ARE THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2019?

Directly adopted from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/en/be-heard/elections>

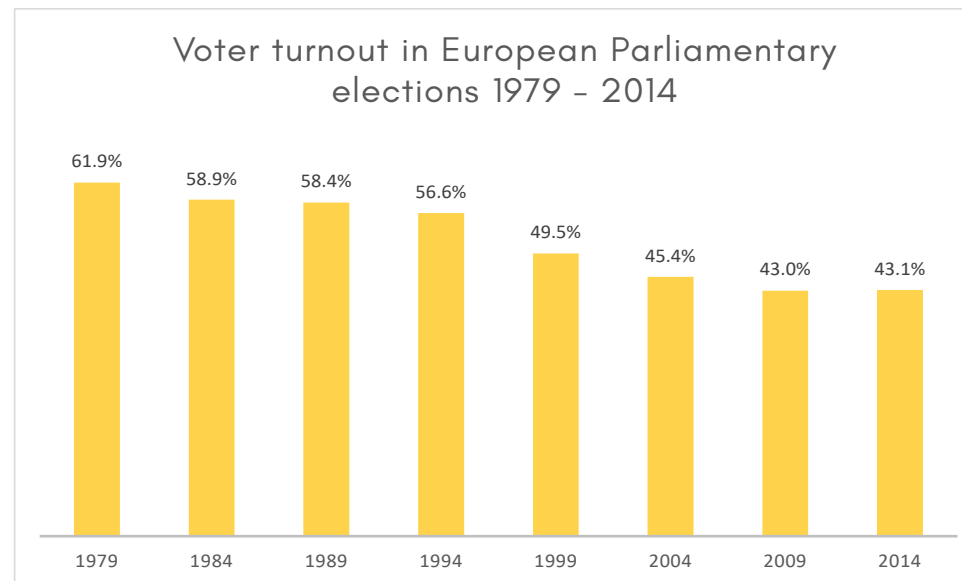
"The next European elections take place on 23-26 May 2019 giving all adult EU citizens the opportunity to select who will represent them in the European Parliament. Help shape Europe's future and vote!

The last European elections in 2014 were the largest transnational elections ever held at the same time. This time the stakes are even higher. By voting, you help decide what kind of Europe we have in the years to come.

The European elections in May 2019 will have a direct impact on your life. They will decide how Europe will act in the coming years to address your concerns about jobs, business, security, migration and climate change.

Because Europe belongs to all of us, we should all take these decisions together. So it's not only important that you vote, but also your family, friends, neighbours and colleagues. When everybody votes, everybody wins."^{*}

^{*} This part is directly adopted from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/en/be-heard/elections>, date



Source: Statista

HOW CAN I VOTE?

You can only vote if you are an EU citizen. In general in each EU country, if you have passed the minimum voting age, you get a voting card and you just need to go to a polling station on the day of the vote.

Check here (source: <https://www.european-elections.eu>) for your own country:

- What the voting date is
- Whether you must register to vote – and if so, whether there is a deadline
- How old you must be
- Where exactly you can go vote
- How you can vote if you live abroad

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO VOTE?

- “As with all elections, voting in the European elections is about choosing your future.”

* Directly adopted from: <https://www.european-elections.eu/why-you-should-vote>



YOUR VOTE INFLUENCES HOW THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DECIDES ON MATTERS THAT AFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE.

The European Parliament makes big decisions: how to grow the economy, how to curb energy use, how to make sure that the food we eat is safe. When you vote, you choose who makes these decisions and what they mean for the sort of world you want to live in. If you don't vote, you have no say.

YOUR VOTE GIVES THE EUROPEAN UNION THE STRENGTH TO PROTECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

The world faces many challenges, from migration to climate change. But when problems are shared, solutions are more easily found. Our Union is leading the way in innovation and investment that, for example, we need to tackle climate change. And it is working to protect our way of life and our privacy. Your vote gives it the strength it needs to do that.

YOUR VOTE DEFENDS DEMOCRACY.

All around us, we see how unchallenged "truths" can turn diversity into division. And how fragile democracy can be. Our Union is based on a shared respect for fundamental rights and democratic principles. Your vote is your claim on those rights, for yourself and for others."

SO, WHAT IS HAPPENING WHEN?

Key moments

2019

Debate with Peter PELLEGRINI,
Prime Minister of Slovakia

Future of Europe March I plenary session

Withdrawal of the UK from the EU
29 March

Last session of the outgoing Parliament
18 April

Lead candidates' debate in the Brussels chamber
15 May

European Elections
23-26 May

Elected candidates negotiate to form political groups for the upcoming
Parliament's 9th term
June

End of Parliament's 8th term
1 July

Inaugural plenary session of the newly-elected Parliament
2 July

First opportunity for the Parliament to elect European Commission President
July II plenary session*

Hearings of Commissioners-designate in Parliamentary committees
September and October*

New Commission is elected, new Commission President gives inaugural speech
October II plenary session*

* Based on the timeline at the start of the 8th term

Start of the Campaign
March

Lead candidates
debates
April - May



Source: European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-elections-communications-toolkit_2019.pdf

POLITICAL GROUPS

European People's Party (EPP) - 217 MEPs

- Centre-right, majority German Christian Democrats
- Biggest group in the Parliament
- Has provided most of the Parliaments Presidents and Vice-Presidents
- Current European Commission President (Juncker) is EPP member

Progressive Alliance of Socialist & Democrats (S&D) - 190 MEPs

- Centre-left
- Was the biggest group before EPP took over
- Mostly UK Labour

European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) - 74 MEPs

- Broadly centre-right and Eurosceptic
- Mixture of socially conservative & promoting economic liberalism
- UK Conservatives, Poland's Law and Justice Party, Ulster Unionists and Alternative for Germany (AfD)

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) - 70 MEPs

- Main centrist group
- One of the most Euro-enthusiastic groups
- Has often held the balance of power in key votes

European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE) - 52 MEPs

- Far left with members from Communist and traditional Socialist parties
- Broadly Eurosceptic from anti-austerity/anti-capitalist view
- Left-wing environmentalist groups from Scandinavia

European Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) - 50 MEPs

- Alliance of two parties: the European Greens and the European Free Alliance
- Left of centre position on most issues

Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) - 45 MEPs

- Disagree with the idea of European integration from right-wing view
- UKIP + Five Star Movement (Italy)
- Nigel Farage co-president

Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF) - 39 MEPs

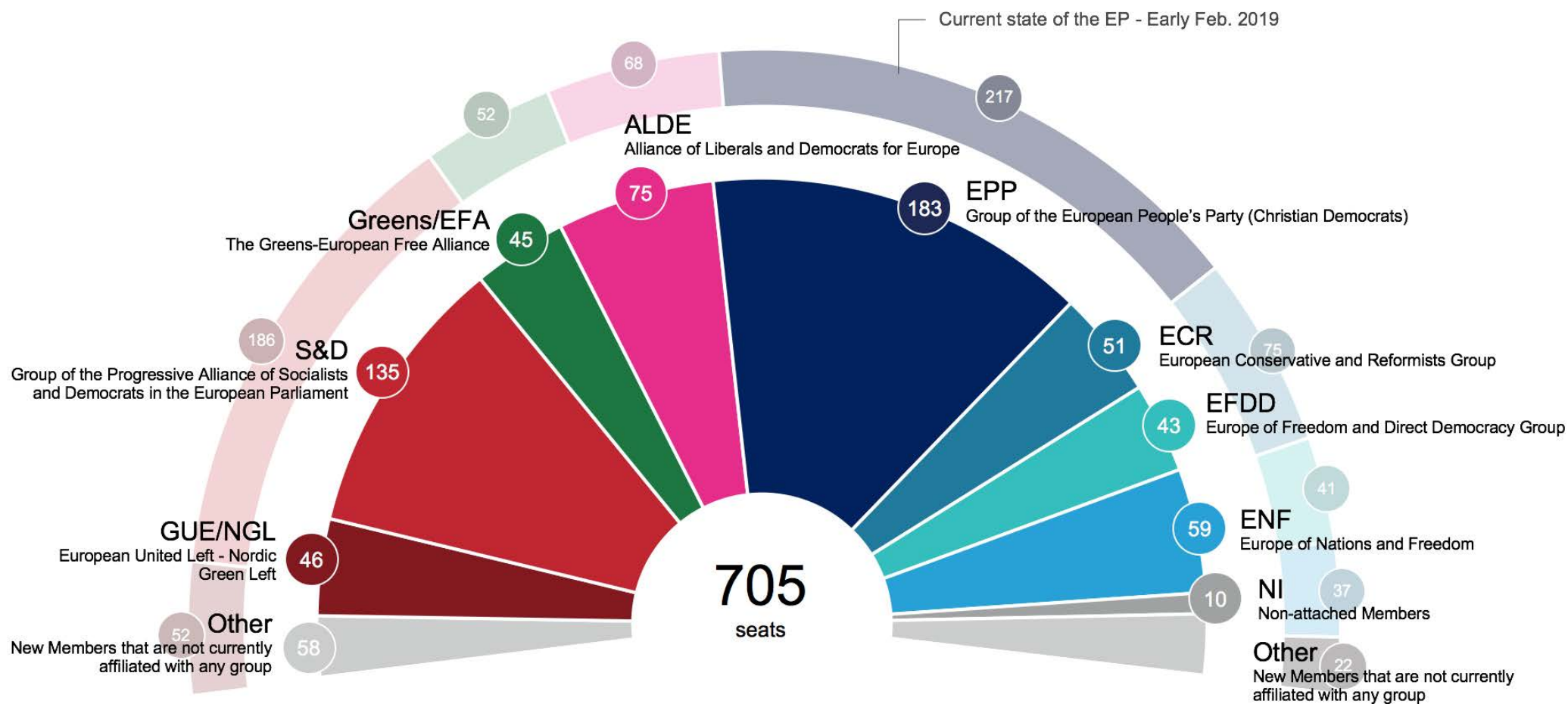
- Formation announced June 2015
- Majority from Front National (France), group led by Marine Le Pen
- Also includes Northern League (Italy) and Freedom Party (Netherlands)

Non-attached (NI) - 14 MEPs

- MEPs who could not find allies to form a group
- Mainly nationalist MEPs, such as Hungary's Jobbik and Front National
- Disadvantages: less speaking time, less resources

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-parliaments-34574041>

FIRST SEAT PROJECTIONS FOR THE NEXT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190218IPR26703/first-seat-projections-for-the-next-european-parliament>



FURTHER USEFUL LINKS:

<https://www.thistimeimvoting.eu/>
<https://www.howtovote.eu/>
<http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/because/en/home>
<https://what-europe-does-for-me.eu/en/portal>

European Elections 2019

<https://www.european-elections.eu/>
<https://cor.europa.eu/en/engage/Pages/european-elections-2019.aspx>
<http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/at-your-service/en/be-heard/elections>
<http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/eu-affairs/20181122STO19860/all-you-need-to-know-about-the-2019-european-elections>
[http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/623556/EPRS_ATAG\(2018\)623556_EN.pdf](http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/623556/EPRS_ATAG(2018)623556_EN.pdf)
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/10391238/Benefits-in-Europe-country-by-country.html>

News

<https://www.euoparl.europa.eu/news/en>
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2018/nov/20/revealed-one-in-four-europeans-vote-populist>
<http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190218IPR26703/first-seat-projections-for-the-next-european-parliament>
<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.independent.co.uk/voices/what-has-the-eu-ever-done-for-you-quite-a-lot-actually-a7097636.html%3famp>

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/eu-what-has-european-union-done-for-us-david-cameron-brexite-a6850626.html%3famp>

<http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/elections-press-kit/0/key-dates-ahead>
<https://epthinktank.eu/2019/02/14/european-elections-voting-rights-for-eu-citizens-living-abroad/>
<https://epthinktank.eu/2018/11/14/what-does-the-eu-do/>
<http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190212IPR26008/european-parliament-and-professional-footballers-team-up>
<http://www.euoparl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190205IPR25020/erasmus-will-finance-existing-uk-eu-mobility-in-the-event-of-no-deal-brexite>
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/28/how-rising-populism-could-shake-up-european-elections>
<https://carnegieeurope.eu/2018/12/11/2019-european-parliament-elections-will-change-eu-s-political-dynamics-pub-77922>



THIS TIME





I'M VOTING





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