



## Europeans, scientists need your votes!

On 22-25 May EU citizens will cast their votes to choose the future European-level decision-makers by electing a new European Parliament. In the run up to the big day, a pan-European team of political scientists invite you to take part in “EUROVOTE+”, a unique online voting experiment allowing you to learn about and test different European voting systems.

To mark the occasion of the May 2014 elections for the European Parliament, an online academic experiment is being launched throughout Europe. The objectives of the *EUROVOTE+* project are threefold: to carry out a scientific study on voting behaviour, gather opinions about voting procedures in Europe, and provide information to the general public about how the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are elected in the various European countries.

The website **eurovoteplus.eu** will be open to the public the first week of May 2014. Events will be organised to mark the opening of the site, and a network of academics specializing in political economics are available to provide information on the project and reply to questions.

### HOW TO TAKE PART?

Taking part in the study is simple: via the website, the public can cast their fictitious vote for the MEPs according to three different techniques currently used in Europe: the closed list system, an open list system, and a “Panachage & Cumulation” system. They can also “vote” via a single pan-European constituency – an electoral system which has been proposed by certain MEPs but remains for the moment only hypothetical.

**Website: <http://eurovoteplus.eu> (available to the public from 5th May)**

**Taking part in EUROVOTE+ is 100% anonymous and the study is aimed solely at furthering the cause of public scientific research.**

### WHO'S BEHIND THE STUDY?

This scientific experiment is run by a group of social scientists who want to understand the effects of different electoral systems on politics. **Eurovoteplus.eu** is part of a larger international project, *Making Electoral Democracy Work*, which brings together researchers from numerous countries and aims at gaining a better understanding of the functioning of democracy. Does the electoral system have an impact on who gets elected? Are the different systems really different? Is there a better system? To answer these questions, it is essential that we know how voters utilize different voting systems and the best way to achieve this is by asking them how they would vote in a real election with various systems. By taking part in the online vote, you will help us answer these questions.



## VOTING IN THE EU: THE LOWDOWN

Voting practices vary across the EU. Some form of proportional representation has to be used, however, in some countries, voters vote for party lists which are “closed” (e.g. Germany, France, Spain), in the sense that voters vote for a party list but have no say on the party-supplied order in which party candidates are elected, while in other countries, on top of voting for a party, voters can also influence the order in which a party's candidates are elected (e.g. Latvia). In Luxembourg, a voter can vote for candidates from different lists.

In the current system, all MEPs are elected on a national basis (or on a regional basis in countries which have several regional electoral districts). But one could also think of having some additional MEPs elected directly by all European citizens, gathered in a single pan-European district. Such a proposal has been put forward by some people, but remains at the moment only hypothetical.

This site provides simple descriptions of electoral systems in three countries (France, Latvia and Luxembourg) where MEPs are elected following three different sets of electoral rules. It also provides some arguments for and against the creation of a pan-European district.

The visitors are invited to reflect on those different electoral institutions. The « practical » part of the site allows to participate in a series of votes under different systems, an opportunity to experience how these institutions work in practice.

In all countries, the participants will be given general information, will then vote for the pan-European lists, according to the various rules, and asked a short questionnaire. In some countries (Belgium, Germany, France, Hungary, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and UK) the participant will also be offered to vote on the actual candidates in his/her district according to the proposed voting rule. Then he/she will vote for the pan-European lists.

## Team and contacts

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