

WEB ARCHIVE - RESEARCH REPORT

# 2019 EUROPEAN



European Elections  
Monitoring Center

**EEMC**

## **ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN**

IMAGES, TOPICS, MEDIA IN THE 28 MEMBER STATES

Editors  
Edoardo Novelli  
Bengt Johansson

[www.electionsmonitoringcenter.eu](http://www.electionsmonitoringcenter.eu)

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# 2019 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN

IMAGES, TOPICS, MEDIA IN THE 28 MEMBER STATES

Editors

Edoardo Novelli

Bengt Johansson

International research project lead by University Roma Tre

Funded by the European Parliament

Category Events COMM/SUBV/2018/E/0147

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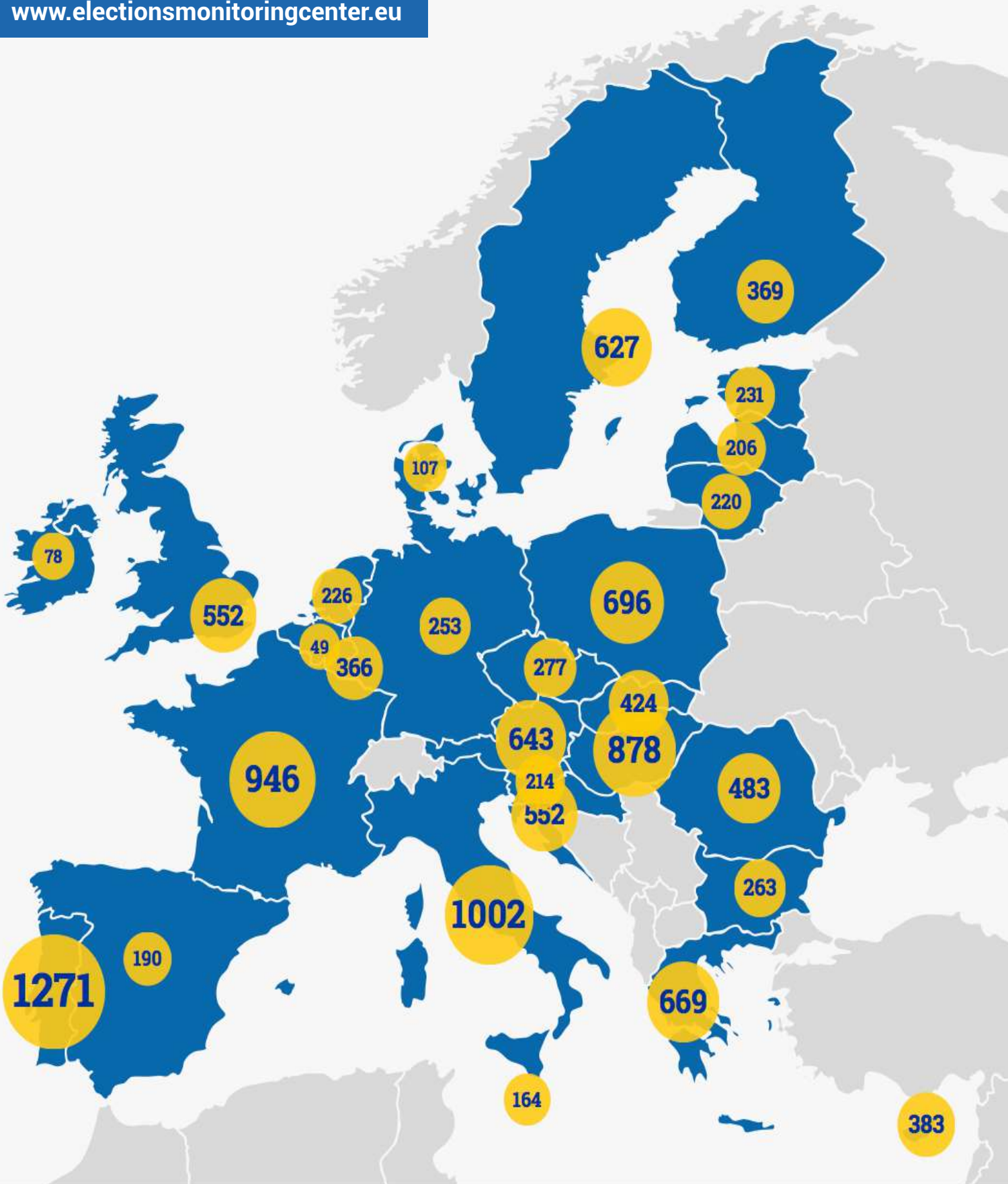
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# THE PROJECT PLATFORM EUROPE

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## PLATFORM EUROPE

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Platform Europe is an international research project led by Roma Tre University and co-funded by the European Parliament (EP) within the multiannual work program for grants in the area of communication (2016-2019), category of communication actions in support of the 2019 European Elections COMM/SUBV/2018 /E. As explained in the call for proposal, the EP's aim was "to co-finance communication actions aimed at providing citizens with non-partisan and factual information in the run up to the 2019 European elections to be held on 23-26 May 2019. For the purpose of this call for bids, "communication actions" are online and offline actions and products that stimulate debate and engagement in the European democratic process".

The principal investigator of the Platform Europe research project and coordinator of the European Election Monitoring Centre is prof. Edoardo Novelli, Università di Roma Tre, Italy.

The co-coordinator of the European Election Monitoring Centre is prof. Bengt Johansson, Gothenburg University, Sweden.

Platform Europe's general aims were:

- to promote the dissemination and knowledge of the European election campaign;

- to improve the transnational circulation of the electoral materials produced in the different nations;
- to allow European citizens to access and compare the different national European campaigns and political proposals;
- to improve the comparative study and knowledge of European political communication, political cultures and political history.

Platform Europe's specific aims were:

- to establish 28 National research units
- to define Codebooks of analysis
- to develop an online web-platform for the analysis and uploading of the materials
- to monitor, collect and analyse the European electoral campaigns in the 28 Member States.
- to create a database of electoral materials produced for the European Election campaigns in each Member State.
- to develop a digital platform containing the materials collected.
- to run 26 national workshops.
- to release research reports on the European electoral campaign progress and development, at both national and transnational level.

To accomplish these goals, an international network of scholars on political communication and electoral campaigns and a great number of researchers were selected at the end of 2018, through an international “call for research”, with presentations at international conferences, such as the 2018 Ecrea conference in Zürich. At the beginning of 2019, a network of around fifty university and research centres, with more than a hundred scholars, researchers and PhD students, was ready to start work. During a two-day Organisational Meeting, held at Università di Roma Tre on 9 and 10 April 2019, the EEMC website and the back office platform were officially presented to the representatives of the 28 national research units, also involved in a one-day training session on the analysis codebooks and the monitoring and use of the platform. The analysis looked at verbal aspects of the campaign content, whether the appeals had a national or European dimension, which policy issue the content focused on, whether negativity and humour were used. We also analysed visual elements, such as facial expressions and the dress code adopted by the politicians, iconographic styles, and to what extent political symbols were visible. More than 1000 posters and press ads, and almost 500 television commercials for the 2019 election campaign were collected and analysed. The examination of Facebook posts was even more extensive, with the categorisation of more than 11000 different kinds of post. This dataset offers a unique opportunity to see whether there are differences in both campaign content and campaign style around Europe and between parties.

The main outputs of Platform Europe are:

- The online **European Election Monitoring Centre EEMC** ([www.electionsonitoringcenter.eu](http://www.electionsonitoringcenter.eu)). It started its activity at the beginning of the electoral campaign and, during the four weeks leading up to the vote, allowed thousands of visitors to watch the evolution of the electoral campaigns in the 28 nations and to compare their similarities and differences.
- A **multidisciplinary network of universities**, scholars and researchers, active in the study of the European election campaigns, European issues and political communication.
- **An archive and a database**, unmatched in terms of the wealth of data, which provides useful tools for further study and analysis.
- 26 international **university workshops** on the European election campaign, attended by more than one thousand students and streamed on the social network accounts of the EEMC.
- Multi-country **Social Network Accounts** on the most important social networks (Fb, Instagram, Twitter), to promote the activities and the result of the project.

- A **Final Conference** of the Platform Europe project at the House of European History in Brussels, on 11 July 2019.
- **Articles** in academic journals and **presentations** at national and international scientific conferences.
- **Reviews and comments** in national newspapers and on television stations.
- More **articles and analyses**, which will be published during 2019 and beyond.

Today, Social Research cannot progress without an integrated methodological approach to observing phenomena. For this reason, we thought that it was necessary to implement methods and tools that would allow the performance of extensive and widespread research, and the real-time collection of an enormous amount of data, constantly produced both on the web and social media. Platform Europe and EEMC have been supported by a technological tool in 28 European countries: an engine that collected all the Facebook posts produced by the main parties and politicians who ran in the European elections.

For this research, a crawler managed by a small AI component collected all the Facebook content posted by monitored accounts, in order to make them available to the various European research teams involved in this political communication analysis. While gathering the content, the engine automatically assigned a thematic attribution following the analysis model developed by the scientific community participating in the project.

The crawler worked on a 4-weeks time span, gathering 30,016 elements from social media and providing updated metrics in real time, such as the engagement generated by political subjects and the most relevant topics of the online political agenda.

The web intelligence platform supplied each national research unit with a reserved area in the back office, where they were able to monitor and file all the contents gathered during the election campaign. Specific codebooks were drawn up both to file the social media contents automatically gathered by the online platform and the election materials collected offline by research teams. In total, 48 variables were activated for the content analysis, in order to analyse visual and verbal dimensions and identify geopolitical data. The project ran entirely online; the uploading of the codebooks to the web and the highly automated monitoring process activated through the platform reduced the margin of error. Besides this, running the project online allowed real-time updates of the content archive and the European Elections Monitoring Centre website.



## CONTENTS OF THE EEMC

Country	Monitored Political Parties and Coalitions	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Social contents	Total contents	Monitored FB accounts	Number of seats
Austria	6	39	10	588	637	6	18
Belgium	12	2	0	47	49	7	21
Bulgaria	14	23	18	221	262	5	17
Croatia	33	10	12	530	552	5	11
Cyprus	13	11	4	368	383	7	6
Czech Republic	12	8	11	257	276	7	21
Denmark	10	34	0	73	107	7	13
Estonia	9	39	22	166	227	7	6
Finland	19	40	3	326	369	7	13
France	30	15	15	916	946	7	74
Germany	40	153	40	53*	246	7	96
Greece	13	1	87	580	668	7	21
Hungary	16	38	31	809	878	7	21
Ireland	4	7	0	71	78	4	11
Italy	11	44	16	942	1002	7	73
Latvia	9	6	7	193	206	7	8
Lithuania	16	48	16	156	220	7	11
Luxembourg	10	51	26	289	366	7	6
Malta	8	7	27	128	162	7	6
Netherlands	16	13	5	207	225	7	26
Poland	12	28	32	634	694	7	51
Portugal	32	43	63	1163	1269	7	21
Romania	13	57	9	406	472	7	32
Slovakia	10	154	1	269	424	7	13
Slovenia	8	44	0	170	214	7	8
Spain	5	23	8	156	187	5	54
Sweden	8	47	1	579	627	7	20
United Kingdom	14	0	12	540	552	7	73
Spitzenkandidaten	15	11	1	246	258	7	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>11083</b>	<b>12556</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>751</b>

\*Partial data







# EUROPEAN ELECTIONS MONITORING CENTER

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## INTRODUCTION

14 The first outputs of the EEMC are a web-based archive and a database of the electoral campaign for the 2019 European election, which is freely available online. EEMC has collected more than 11 thousand electoral materials including posters, Tv commercials, social posts and printed announcements, produced by 418 political parties or candidates and 193 of their official Facebook accounts, in the 28 Nations called to vote. It is undoubtedly the largest archive of the 2019 European elections and documents several trends in the evolution and trends of the European electoral campaigns. These include the main issues of the electoral battle, the uses of different instruments of communication and the fast diffusion of the new ones, the languages and the words of the political parties, the general sentiments and moods toward the European institutions and their representatives and, finally, the political cultures and traditions present in Europe.

The EEMC web-archive and its database are open not only to European voters and citizens, the first targets of the project, but also to scholars, journalists, students, professionals of communication and to anyone interested to know the contents of the 2019 European election campaign and the different forms which have been developed and disseminated around Europe.

In the development of the EEMC website and its IT architecture, the possibility to enrich and integrate the database with the materials produced in previous European elections has been considered, thus proceeding to the future creation of an extensive archive of all European electoral campaigns.

The second outputs of the EEMC are the classification and the analysis of the 2019 European elections campaign. In this report,

which closed only a few weeks after the vote, quantitative data and some general results are presented. It was, in fact, impossible in such a short time to go deeply into the database and to analyse such a large quantity of information obtained through three codebooks containing more than 50 variables of analysis. More detailed reports and more in-depth publications are planned by the EEMC for the future.

### 28 different electoral campaigns

Moving to the main results of what is commonly called the European electoral campaign is, in fact, the result of many different electoral campaigns, carried out at the national levels.

The electoral campaign for the 2019 European elections did not take place in uniform, and similar forms in the various countries called to vote. There are several differences among the 28 European nations, each of them marked by specifics and peculiarity. Starting from the electoral laws and the regulations of the electoral campaign, passing through the different use of Tv -ads in private and public televisions, and ending with the different possibilities of using public or commercial spaces for the posters. A further element of difference was the coincidence in many countries of the European election with other elections, thus affecting the tone and the topics of the European elections campaign. It is the case of Belgium, Italy, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Lithuania, Romania and, in particular Spain, with a record of 5 elections in a month. The simultaneity with presidential, general and local elections, or referendum, on the one hand, supports the level of participation in voting, reducing the abstentions but, on the other, distracts the election campaigns from Europe and European topics.

### Not a supranational campaign

In addition to that, the different national electoral campaigns presented a low degree of internationalization. Among the thousands of materials collected in the different countries, the presence of European campaigns or contents developed at a supranational level was not detectable. An aspect that, at least for the electoral communication, confirms that national identities are by far prevalent over the European political affiliations. A trend that the candidacies of the Spitzenkandidaten, appointed by the European political parties to the role of Commission President, introduced in 2014, did not seem to be able to counter. Spitzenkandidaten have been a specific target of the EEMC. In fact, in addition to the electoral campaigns of the political parties, also the electoral campaigns of the Spitzenkandidaten were monitored. A dedicated section of the EEMC website accessible from the main menu collects all the electoral materials produced by them. Only some of the Spitzenkandidaten realized campaigns centered on themselves and engaged in electoral tours across the various countries. The choice of other political families not to indicate their Spitzenkandidaten or, as in the case of Alde, to appoint a team of politicians to this role, limited the communicative potential of these figures.

### The impact of Social Network

Observing the number of materials produced by the three hundred European political parties, a shift in the instruments of the campaigning appears evident. Social Networks, whose use represents the biggest news of this electoral campaign, outclassed the traditional posters, and the more recent Tv commercials. In this regard, confirming the variety of situations encountered, it worth noting as in some countries the exhibition in the streets of the electoral posters during the electoral campaign is not allowed (Estonia). In others, where posters are allowed, their use is progressively failing in favor of the Social network (Italy). Finally, there are nations in which the poster remains a central tool of the electoral campaign, and the parties produced many of them (Germany). Finally, another relevant evidence that emerges from the research is the presence of remarkable differences in the production and the use of Social Network among the four geographical areas and political families.

### A low-intensity electoral campaign

Two weeks before the vote, the electoral campaign still had difficulty taking off. Only in a few countries, was it possible to talk of an intense electoral campaign, while in the majority of others the European

campaign was barely perceptible. In general, it is, therefore possible to talk of a low-intensity election campaign.

### More national than European

The prevalence of domestic themes over the European ones was a common trend in almost all countries. The topics discussed by the political parties and their candidates, as well as their declination and points of view, were mainly national. It is, for example, the case of the topic of immigration that, despite it being potentially supranational, because strictly depending on the European politics, laws, and choices, it was frequently presented and discussed within the limits of its domestic consequences or relapses. It is in particular the case of Hungary and Italy. In contrast, environmental topics were usually dealt with in a supranational dimension.

### The issues

Turning to the macro-themes discussed more during the elections campaign, in the first places we can find Europe, a some what predictable result, Values, that contains subitems quite different from each other such us National values and Solidarity, and Economic in which we can see taxes, inflation, crisis, banks. Afterward, more surprisingly, we can find the environmental macro-theme that involves single themes as climate change, energetic issue, and environmental sustainability. The macro-themes of environment and immigration, this with lower values than expected, show a marked geographical characterization. While the immigration-related issues are more present in the Eastern Europe elections campaign, the green ones are strictly related to Northern and Western Europe.

### A pro - Europe campaign

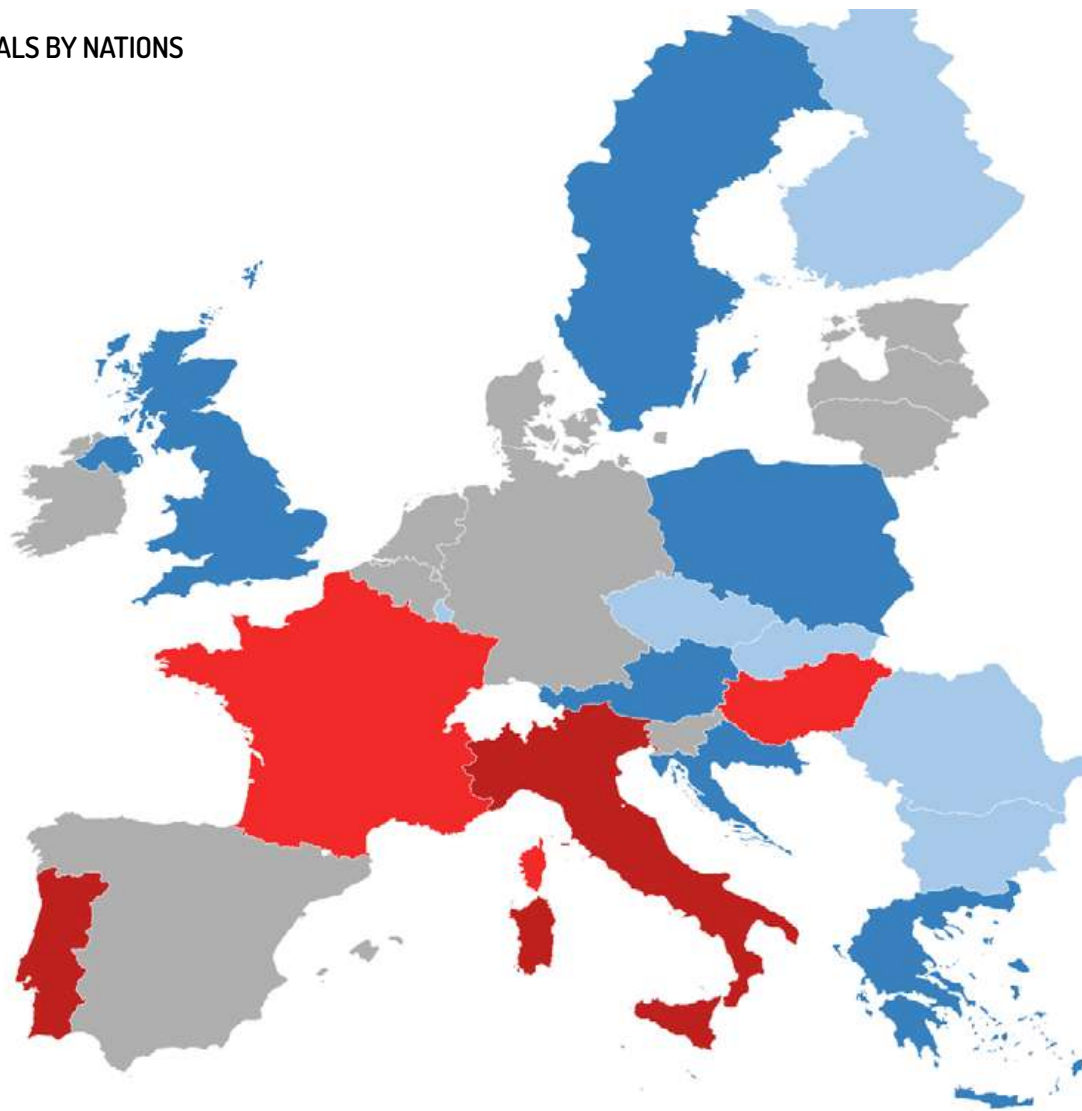
Despite the general opinion of an election campaign characterized by the great activism and a significant presence of the Eurosceptic feelings and the Euro-critic parties, the most active forces in the electoral campaign and those that communicated the most were those strongly or in any case quite favourable to Europe. As a result, from a quantitative point of view, the 2019 European election campaign was not dominated by the propaganda of the euro-critic or Eurosceptic forces, nor by the generally defined front of the sovereign forces. A fact that could be linked to the change in the topics of the election campaign of some political parties whose in the past had supported positions of radical opposition towards Europe up to the exit from the Euro, and that this year have instead limited their criticism on specific aspects of EU and its policies.

### TYPE OF MATERIAL AND AREAS OF MONITORING

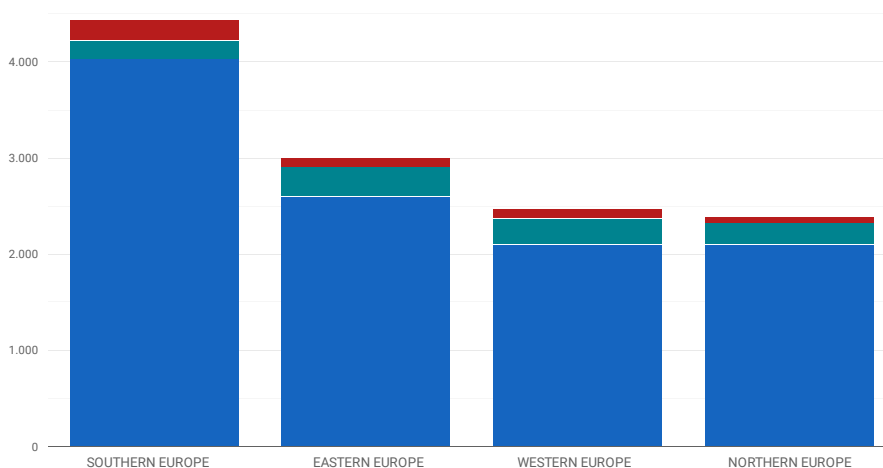


### NUMBER OF MATERIALS BY NATIONS

- 0 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 750
- 751 - 1000
- >1000



### NUMBER OF MATERIALS BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS



## TPOLOGY OF MATERIALS BY NATIONS



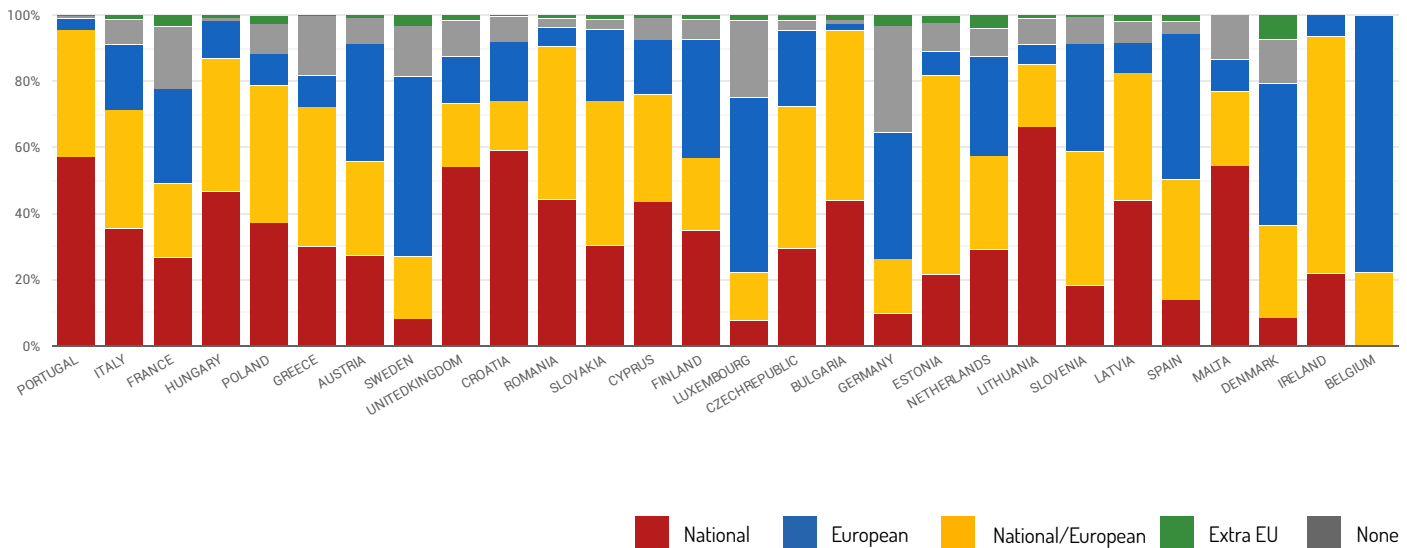
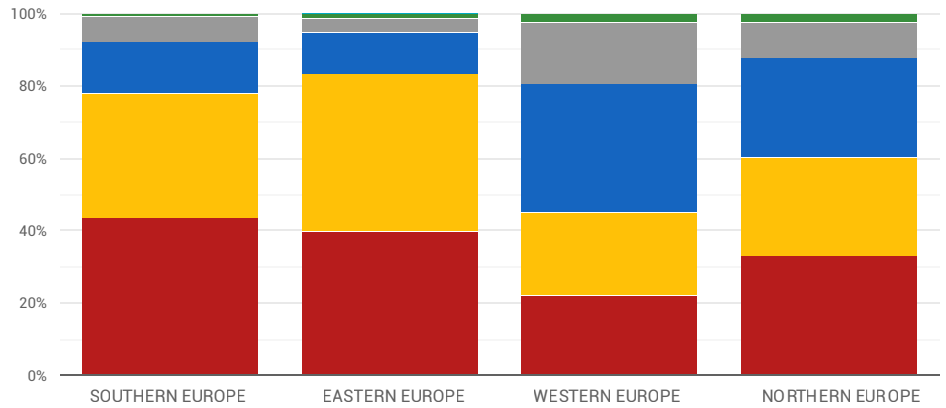
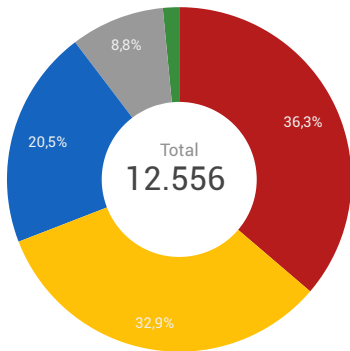
During the European election campaign, scholars in the EEMC network collected 12.556 campaign messages. The vast majority of them were scraped from 193 official party accounts on Facebook in the 28 member states of the EU (n=11.083). In this way can the 2019 European election be characterized as a social media election campaign. The parties spend both extensive time and resources on their social media accounts, posted and shared webcards, webcasts, pictures and videos. Even so, more traditional campaign channels are still commonly used, where election posters and to some extent newspapers advertisements play a significant role. More than 1.000 posters and press ads (n=1.016) were collected around Europe during the last four weeks of the campaign. Television commercials play an important role in countries where it is allowed for political communication. However, television commercials are prohibited in some of the member states and due to high costs, some parties also opted out this campaign channel in the European elections of 2019. Social media posts outnumber other ways of campaigning in

all geographical areas and all member countries. The use of Facebook as a campaign tool seem also be most accentuated in southern Europe, where we find the highest activity in Italy and Portugal. Southern Europe also differs in another way, in that television commercials are more frequently used compared with posters/press ads. In other parts of Europe, the situation is the opposite.

Posters and/or press ads is a part of campaigning all over Europe 2019, with two exceptions. The campaigns in United Kingdom and Greece were carried through without printed political propaganda. Instead, Greek parties emphasized on television and published 87 commercials during the campaign. No other country was close to that number, even if use of television commercial was extensive in Portugal (n=63), Germany (n=40), Poland (n=32) and Hungary (n=31).

To conclude, even if there a general similar picture of campaigning for Europe, there are country differences too, probably dependent on legislation and traditions of political communication.

ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?



Legend: National (Red), European (Blue), National/European (Yellow), Extra EU (Green), None (Grey)

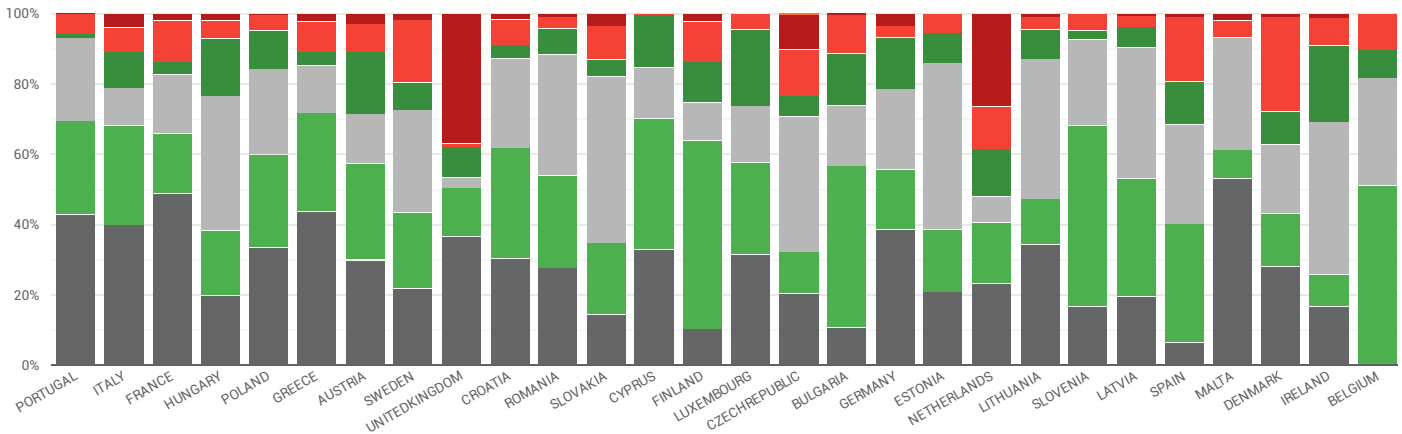
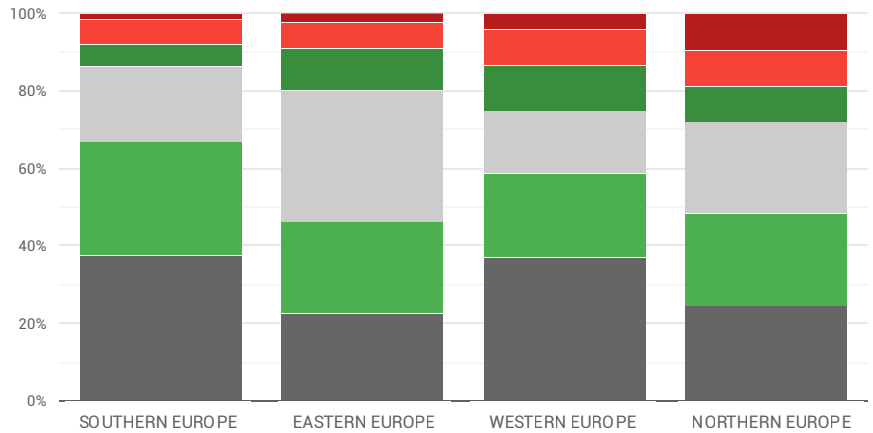
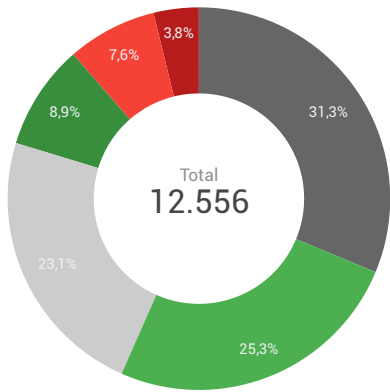
The European campaign had, at least on a general level a national (36,3%) or a comparing/contrasting perspective (32,9%). One fifth (20,5%) of the campaign appeals focused on Europe and European perspectives and only a small share (1,5%) of the campaign content could be categorized having a perspective of looking outside EU. In most cases, these “Extra EU” appeals dealt with climate change from a global perspective.

However, there are significant differences, both if we compare different parts of Europe and single countries. Campaigns in eastern and southern Europe tend to be more nationally oriented or contrasting national and European dimensions in the appeals. In western and to some extent in the northern Europe, we find more

campaign messages with an exclusively European perspective.

As pointed out above, there are significant differences between single countries in dimensions of the campaign. Countries like Bulgaria or Portugal have almost no appeals with a European perspective, while the campaigns in Belgium, Luxembourg and Sweden had a strong focus on Europe. The most nationally orientated campaigns are to be found in Lithuania, Croatia, Portugal and United Kingdom, where more than 50% of the content had a national perspective. Countries where the campaign emphasized European dimensions had quite naturally a less national oriented campaign. The most extreme in this regard is the Belgian campaign, where there not one single appeal found with a national dimension.

## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?



■ Strongly positive 
 ■ Positive 
 ■ Neutral 
 ■ Negative 
 ■ Strongly negative 
 ■ Not represented

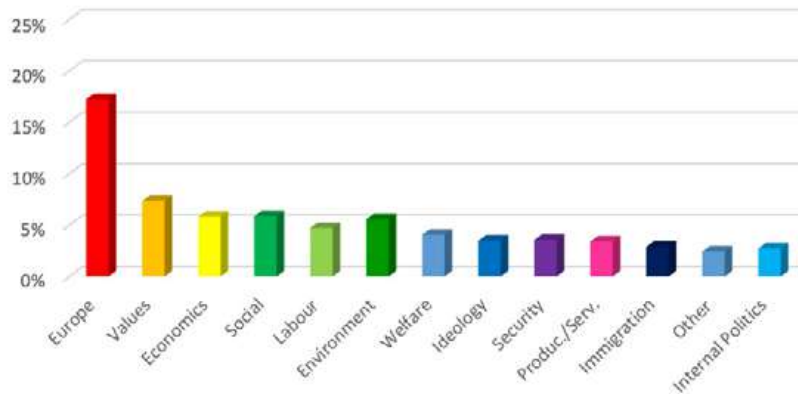
A large part of the campaign contents of the EU elections had either no clear representation of Europe (31,3 %) or a neutral assessment (23,1 %). This means that a majority of the campaign messages did not evaluate Europe/EU at all. When focusing on positive and negative perspectives, there are three times as many messages with positive perspectives (34,2%) on Europe and EU than assessments being more critical (11,4 %). This picture seem to be quite general in different regions of Europe, in terms of the share being positive towards Europe. One significant difference between the regions is to what extent Europe and EU is represented more negatively. It seems to be more common with negative assessments of Europe in western and especially northern Europe, where one fifth of all campaign messages view Europe from a critical light. Eastern and southern Europe is found on the other end of the scale, where strongly negative representations of Europe are rare. So even if predictions of the EU elections talked

about a landslide of Euroscepticism, the campaign seemed to be more Pro-Europe than anti-Europe.

When representations of Europe is analysed country by country there are of course differences found. In most countries, assessments being more positive toward Europe are in majority. We only find small shares of negative representations of Europe and a vast majority of appeals presenting Europe as something positive in countries such as Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Romania and Slovenia. In other countries the share are more even between negative and positive representation, like France and Malta. However, there are also countries where EU and Europe is seen in a predominately negative perspective. In United Kingdom, we find an extremely negative representation of Europe, which also is the case for the campaign in the Netherlands and Denmark. The negative evaluations of Europe are also more common than positive ones in the Czech Republic.

## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

EUROPE

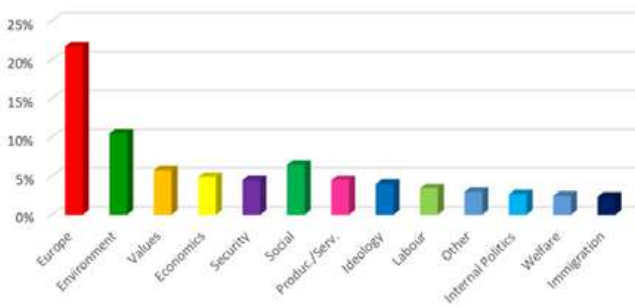


The most common issue European Election campaign was “Europe”, with around 15 % of the total amount of the topics covered. In the broad category “Europe” we find a lot of subcategories, such as appeals about the EU economy, the Euro and more general aspects of the European Union, such as treaties. In addition to these issues, we also find more critical views on EU, such as Anti-EU, Brexit and content covering discussion about “Another EU” and “EU integration”. In many countries, “Europe” dealt with the discussion about the countries position and future role in the EU. On the next level (around 5%) of the covered issues, there are values, economic issues, social issues, labour and environment. As for “Europe”, they also contain a number of subcategories. Values can be about national identity, but also dealing with cultural differences

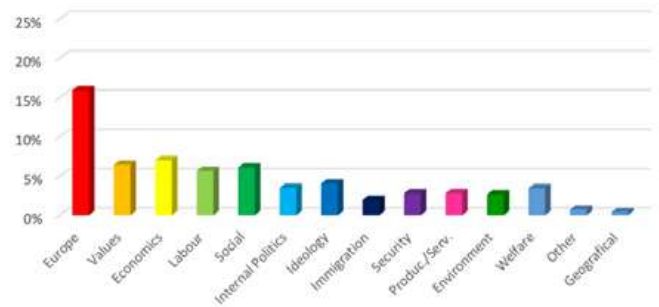
and religion. This category also contain more general values like peace, honesty, justice and solidarity. Social issues are also covering a number of different aspects. Social and gender inequality and civil rights are examples of these subcategories. Topics reaching less than 5 % of the total attention are welfare issues, security (crime/terrorism), immigration and more ideological aspects. Trade, agriculture, transports and other more specific areas of production and services were also not particularly dominant in the European campaigns. To summarize, the content of the campaign seemed to focus on Europe in a broad sense (both pro- an anti) and perhaps a little surprising did not immigration and security dominate the debate as one might have predicted.

20

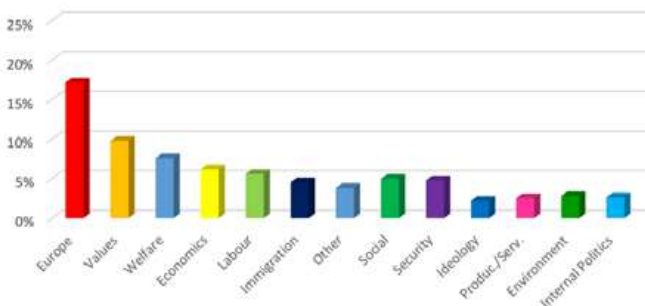
Northern Europe



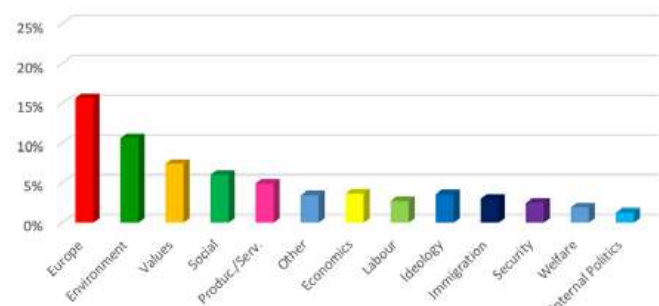
Southern Europe



Eastern Europe



Western Europe



LEGEND:

Western Europe: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands.

Eastern Europe: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia.

Northern Europe: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, United Kingdom. Southern Europe: Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain.

This partition by macro-regions is realized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and is available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>

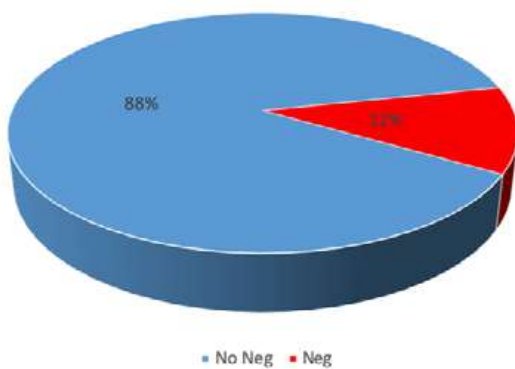


When we analyse the attention for different topics for different regions, there are similarities found but also significant differences. “Europe” is the dominant topic everywhere, even if it is prevailing in the northern parts of the EU compared with the others. Besides, from this “meta-issue”, which to some extent unifies the different EU campaigns, there are a number of important dissimilarities. Environmental issues received significantly more attention in the northern and especially in Western Europe, where the threat of

climate change became a major theme of the campaign. There is no similar dominant topic in southern and Eastern Europe, even if economics was more visible in the southern EU countries and values and welfare in the eastern parts of the EU. A conclusion we can draw is that a clear divide emerges between the northern/western regions and the southern/eastern regions, when we look at which topics received attention during the EU campaign.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

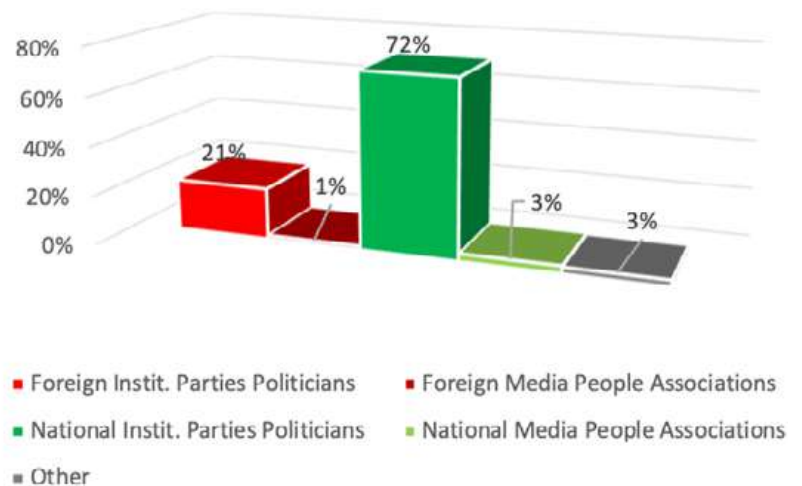
### PRESENCE OF NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN



Even if there were predictions about a polarized election campaign, this seems not to have been the case. At least not all over EU. The general share of negative attacks is limited to 12% of all the classified content. Behind this general figure, we find large divergences in negative appeals depending on country. In some countries, like United Kingdom, Netherlands and Malta was more than 20% of all content negative campaigning. On the opposite end of the scale, we find Slovenia, Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg, where negative campaigning was almost not visible at all.

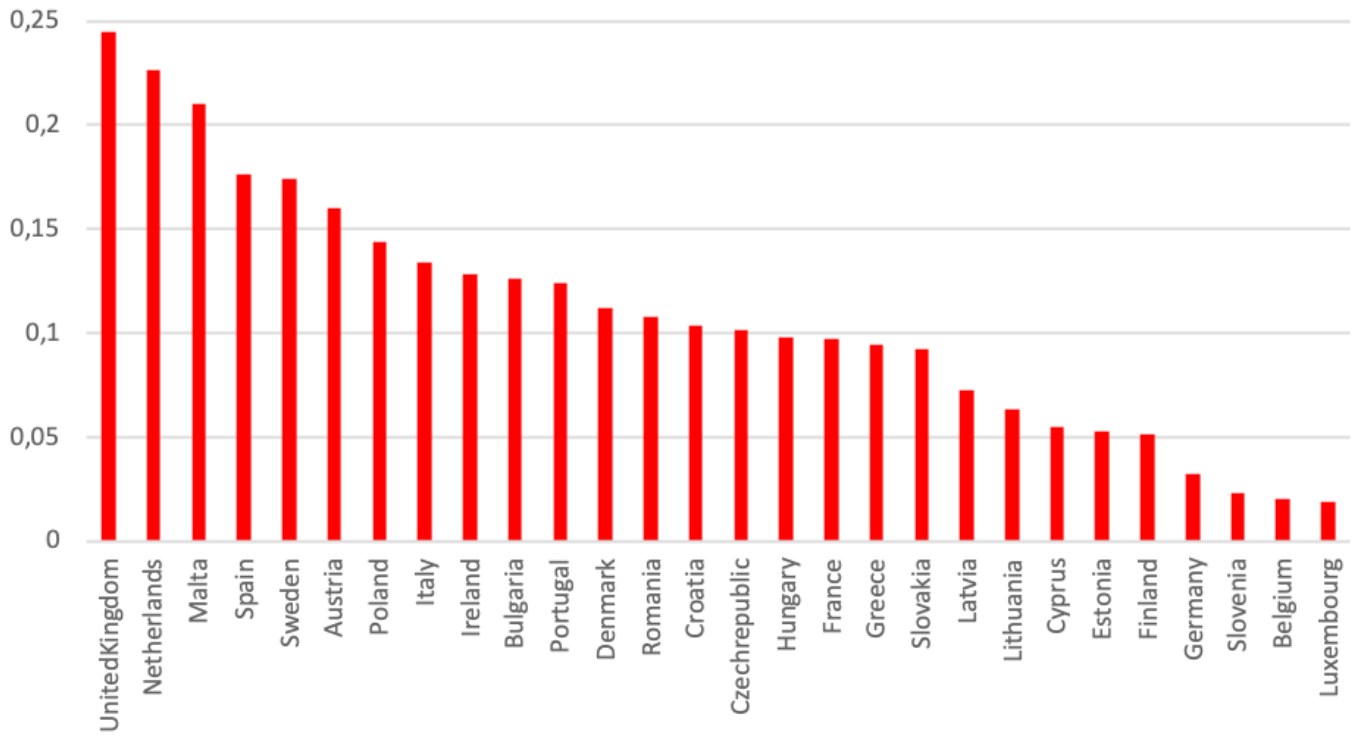
The target of the negative campaigns are to a large extent (72%) national institutions, politicians and parties. What can be concluded from this is that negative attacks are aimed at political opponents on the national level. When candidates and parties decide to go

### TARGETS OF NEGATIVE



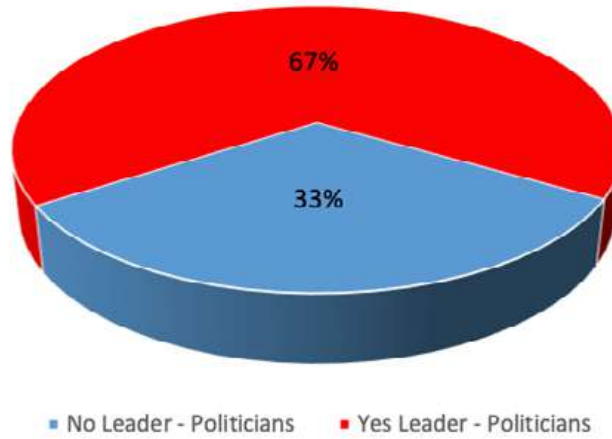
negative, they mostly attack competitors, i.e. other political parties in their home country. Around one fifth (21%) of all attack are directed toward institutions, politicians and parties outside the country. However, it is not the same type of attacks hiding behind these negative appeals. When negative campaigning goes beyond the country border, parties and politicians are not the primary target. Instead, we find “EU” and “Brussels” as the target of the attacks. Only a few attacking messages are directed toward (national and foreign) media, other famous people or associations. Accusations of “Fake news” was not a significant trait during the 2019 election campaign in Europe. Attacks are directed inside the political system – toward national competitors or the EU as a collective actor.

RANKING % NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

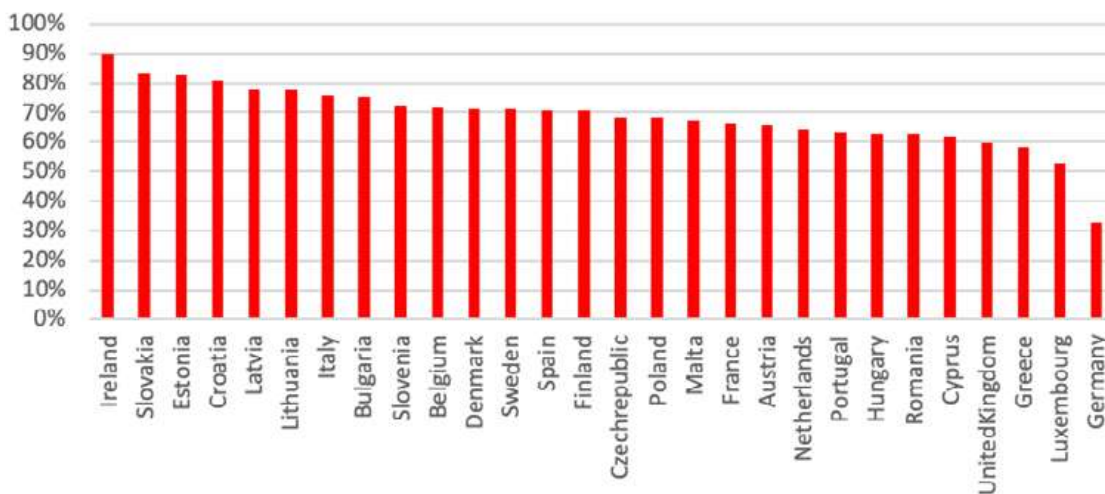


PERSONALIZATION OF THE CAMPAIGN

% OF PERSONALIZATION  
Europe



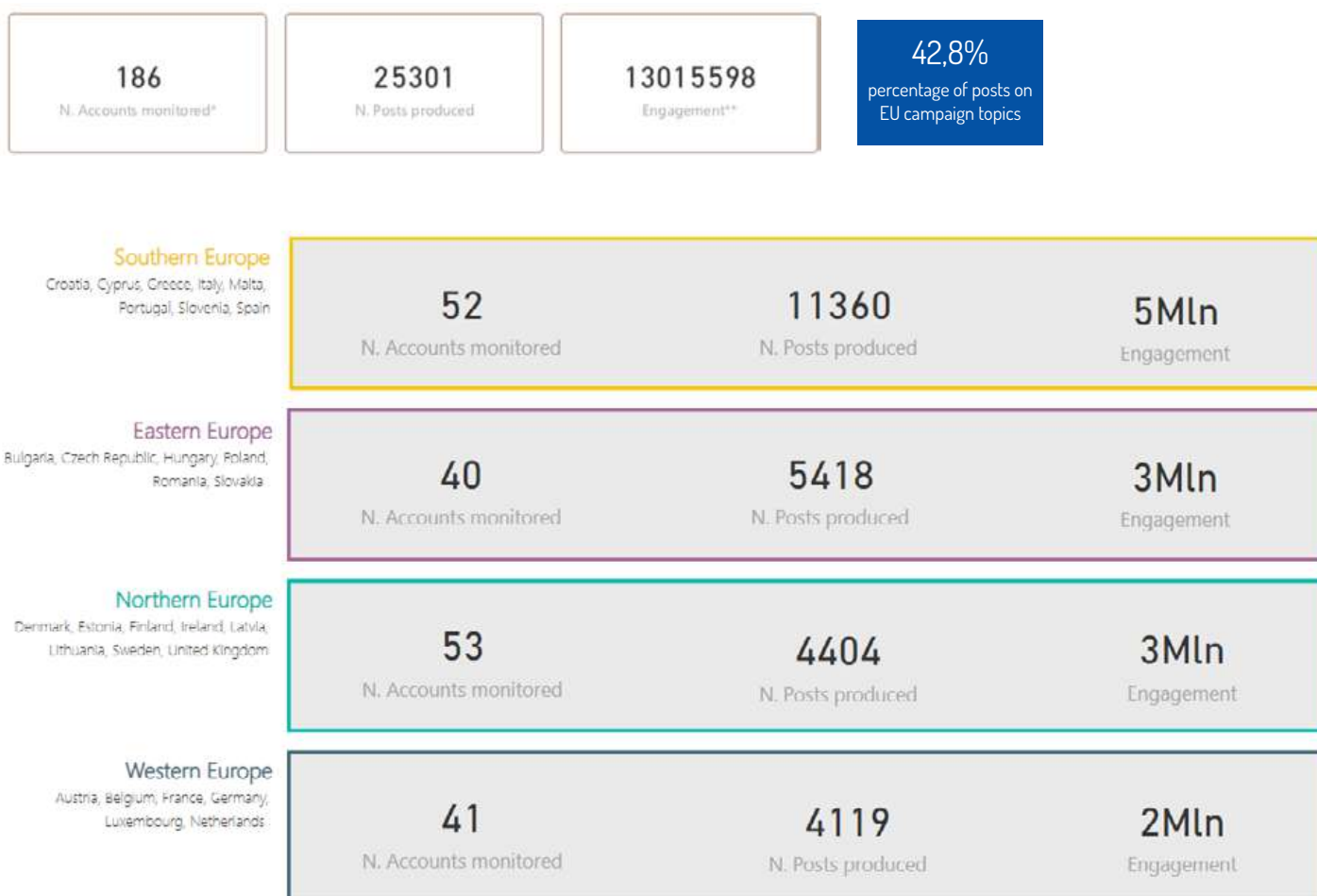
RANKING % PERSONALIZATION



Personalization is often discussed in political communication, both in positive and negative ways and sometimes as an indicator of mediatization of politics. One conclusion of the results from the European election campaign is that European parties often used candidates and party leaders in their electoral communication. Studying all posters, newspaper ads, television commercials and Facebook posts, we find that 67 % of all content show pictures of one or more politician. One important feature of the 2019 European election campaign can be said to show an extensive personalization, both on posters, ads, commercial and Facebook accounts. Just as for other indicators, we find significant differences between

the member countries. Most countries (17) reach a personalization level higher than average, where Ireland top the list. In the Irish campaign contained 90 % of all messages a picture of a politician. No other country has such a personalized campaign, even if Slovakia, Croatia and the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) also reach high numbers in the personalization scale. The least personalized campaign, in terms of focusing on politicians is found in Germany, where only around one third of all content is portraying a politician. Luxembourg is another country in which the campaign were less personalized. A little bit more than half of the content showed a picture of one or more politician.

## NUMBERS OF SOCIAL CONTENTS



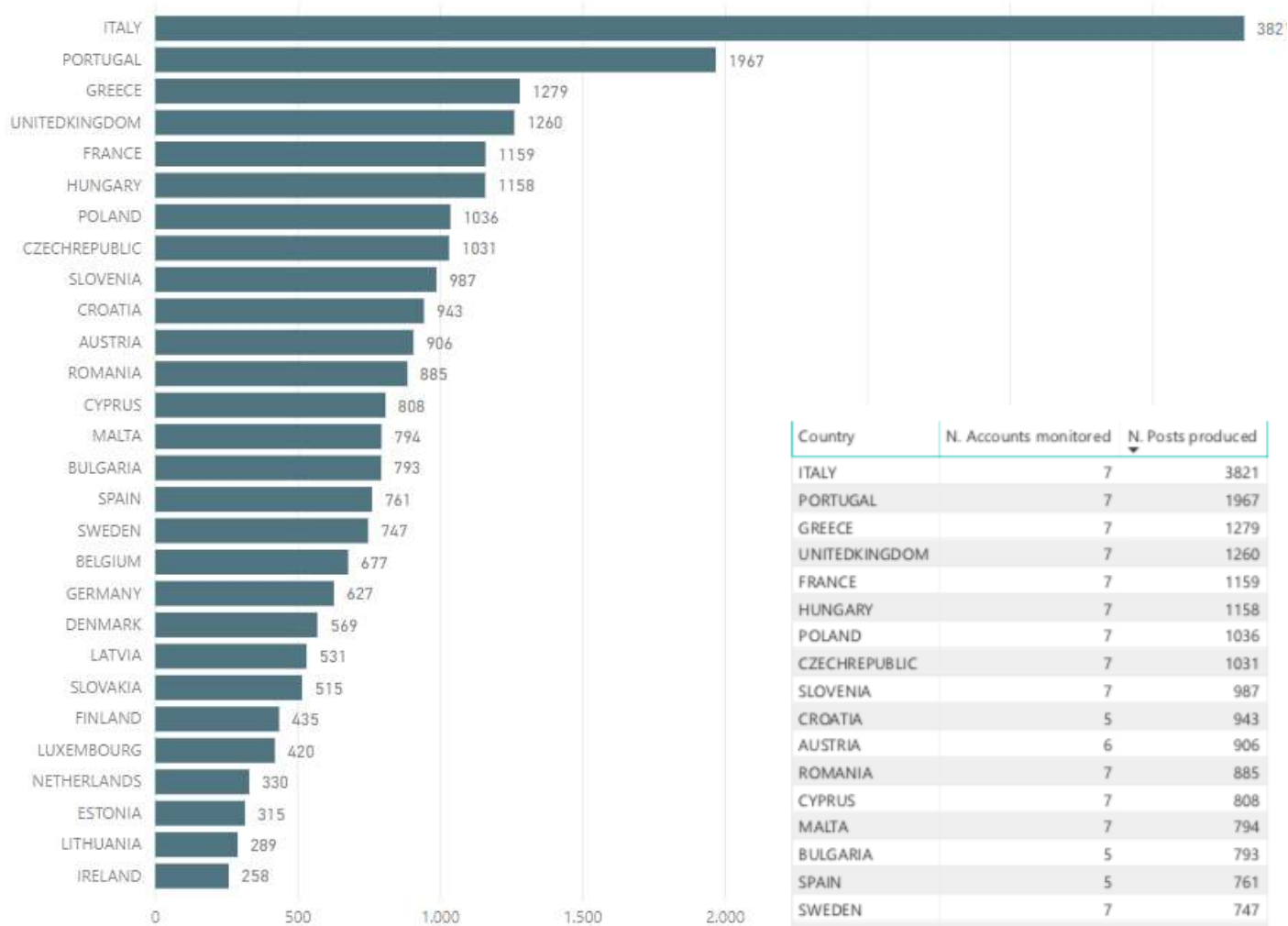
\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes. In the 186 monitored accounts are not included the 7 ones related to Spitzenkandidaten.

The monitoring of the official Facebook accounts confirms that the use of Social Networks was one of the main new developments in the European election campaign in 2019. Overall, in the four weeks leading up to the vote, the 186 accounts monitored generated 2,5301 posts. Just under half of these (42.8%) were related to the European election campaign, which shows that party communication was only partly aimed at this election. The total number of engagements developed by these posts was over 13 million. As mentioned earlier, this figure refers to the early hours of publication, archive, and is therefore partial, but nevertheless indicative of the virality of this form of communication, which has recorded significant variations. The breakdown of overall data by geographical area reveals differences in the use and effectiveness of social networks. The most evident point is the extensive use made by parties in southern European countries, where the 52 accounts monitored generated

almost half of the total number of posts (11,360) and developed about 40% of the engagement. The second most active area is Eastern Europe where the 40 accounts monitored generated one fifth of the total posts (5,418) and developed 3 million engagements. Much lower values were recorded by the 53 Northern European accounts, with an average of 100 posts each, followed by the 53 Western European accounts, the last in this special ranking. It is important to specify that the figures quoted here refer to the total number of posts generated by the accounts monitored in the four weeks leading up to the vote and not only to those relating to the European election campaign, which were monitored and classified for the research. The number of posts analysed is indicated in the general table of materials, by country, and in the tables of the individual national reports.

## FACEBOOK POSTS BY COUNTRY

EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.



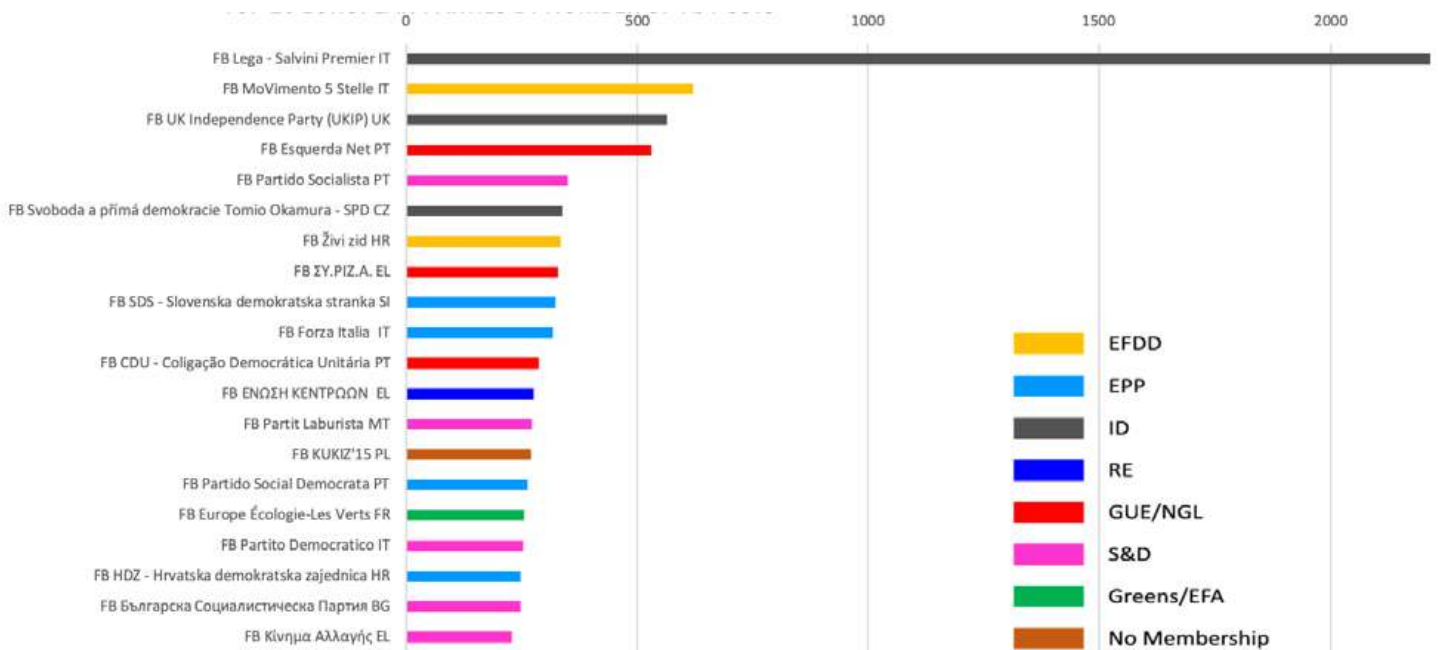
Country	N. Accounts monitored	N. Posts produced
ITALY	7	3821
PORTUGAL	7	1967
GREECE	7	1279
UNITEDKINGDOM	7	1260
FRANCE	7	1159
HUNGARY	7	1158
POLAND	7	1036
CZECHREPUBLIC	7	1031
SLOVENIA	7	987
CROATIA	5	943
AUSTRIA	6	906
ROMANIA	7	885
CYPRUS	7	808
MALTA	7	794
BULGARIA	5	793
SPAIN	5	761
SWEDEN	7	747
BELGIUM	7	677
GERMANY	7	627
DENMARK	7	569
LATVIA	7	531
SLOVAKIA	7	515
FINLAND	7	435
LUXEMBOURG	7	420
NETHERLANDS	7	330
ESTONIA	7	315
LITHUANIA	7	289
IRELAND	4	258
<b>Totale</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>25301</b>

25

The ranking of the production of posts on Facebook by country confirms the relevance of the geographical dimension, and different communication practices and political cultures also play a role. The first three countries are all part of Southern Europe: Italy, Portugal and Greece. Great Britain follows in fourth position. As explained in the National Report, the widespread use of social media was dictated by the fact that it was impossible to prepare an election campaign using traditional media. Sixth to tenth places are all occupied by Eastern European countries. However, the most striking fact concerns Italy. The country in which almost

4,000 posts were generated, accounting for 15% of the total. The values of the second country, Portugal, were half those of Italy and still much higher than those of the third country, Greece. In total, eight countries are above the threshold of 1000 posts, fourteen between 999 and 500, a figure which six countries did not reach. It should be noted that, with the exception of Luxembourg, where, as explained in the national report, the use of social media by parties is generally very low, the lowest positions in this ranking are held by the Northern European countries.

## TOP20 POLITICAL PARTIES BY POSTS



FB Lega - Salvini Premier	ITALY	2214
FB MoVimento 5 Stelle	ITALY	620
FB UK Independence Party (UKIP)	UNITEDKINGDOM	564
FB Esquerda Net	PORTUGAL	530
FB Partido Socialista	PORTUGAL	350
FB Svoboda a přímá demokracie Tomio Okamura - SPD	CZECHREPUBLIC	338
FB Živi zid	CROATIA	334
FB ΣΥ.ΡΙΖ.Α.	GREECE	329
FB SDS - Slovenska demokratska stranka	SLOVENIA	322
FB Forza Italia	ITALY	317
FB CDU - Coligação Democrática Unitária	PORTUGAL	287
FB ΕΝΩΣΗ ΚΕΝΤΡΩΝ	GREECE	275
FB Partit Laburista	MALTA	272
FB KUKIZ'15	POLAND	271
FB Partido Social Democrata	PORTUGAL	263
FB Europe Écologie-Les Verts	FRANCE	256
FB Partito Democratico	ITALY	254
FB HDZ - Hrvatska demokratska zajednica	CROATIA	248
FB Българска Социалистическа Партия	BULGARIA	248
FB Κίνημα Αλλαγής	GREECE	229
<b>Totale</b>		<b>8521</b>

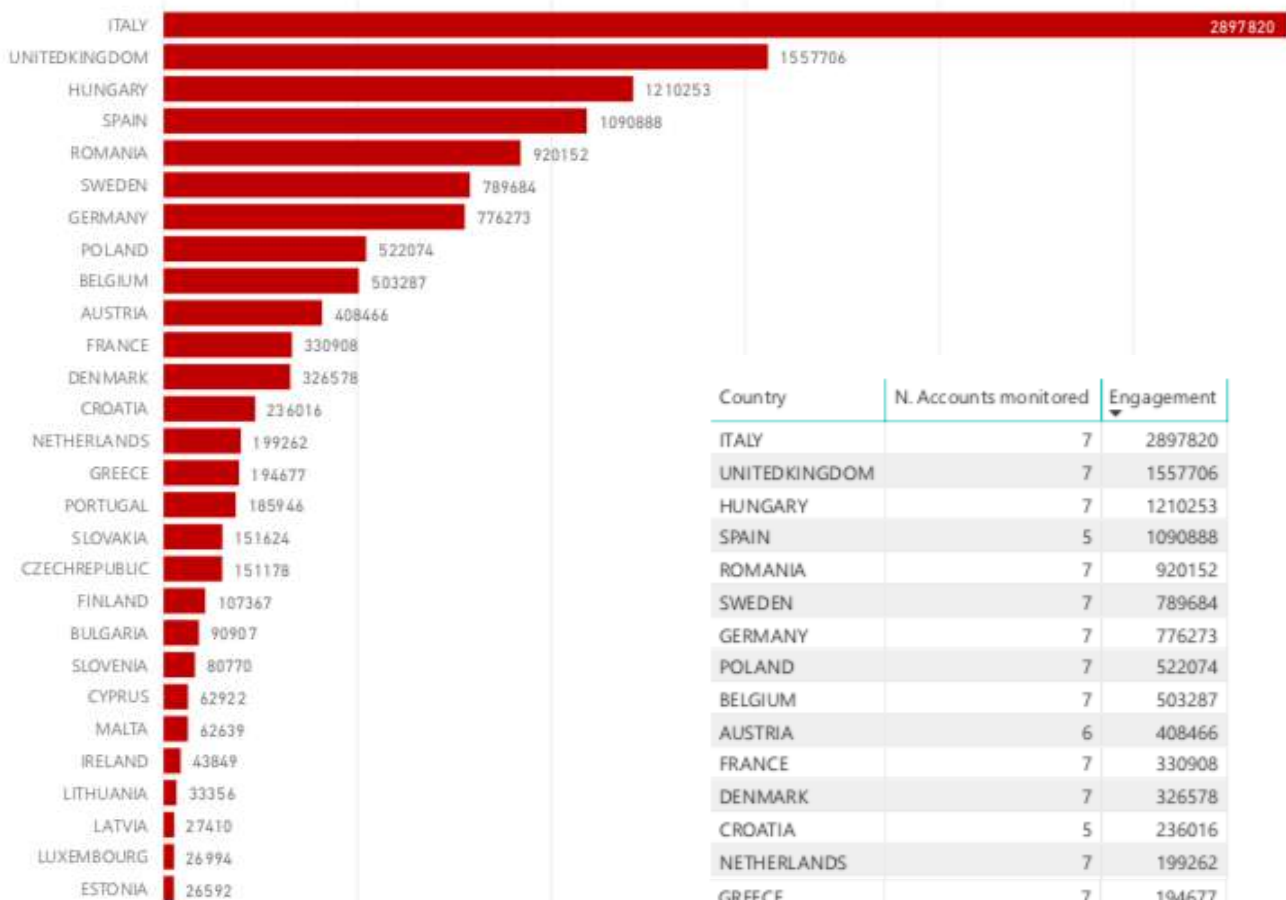
The ranking for the production of Facebook posts by party provides further information on the use of this tool. Obviously, the first places are occupied by parties from the countries that are most active on the web. The most macroscopic data concerns Italy once again, which had the party with the most extensive use of the web in Europe. The number of posts generated by the Lega (n. 2,214) is almost four times that of the second party in the ranking, also Italian, the Movimento 5 Stelle (620). Britain's Ukip was not far behind. Moving on to analyse the political groups of the parties in the ranking that belong to the ninth European Parliament, some of

them emerge as predominant. In particular, five of the top seven parties, including the two at the top, are members of Identity and Democracy (ID) and Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD). The first brings together some of the main parties of the far right, the second some Euro-sceptic parties including the Brexit Party. Both formations share strongly critical and sceptical views of Europe. The parties of the largest and most pro-European political families, such as the European People Party (EPP), the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) and Renew Europe can be found at the bottom of the list.



## FACEBOOK ENGAGEMENT BY COUNTRY

Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

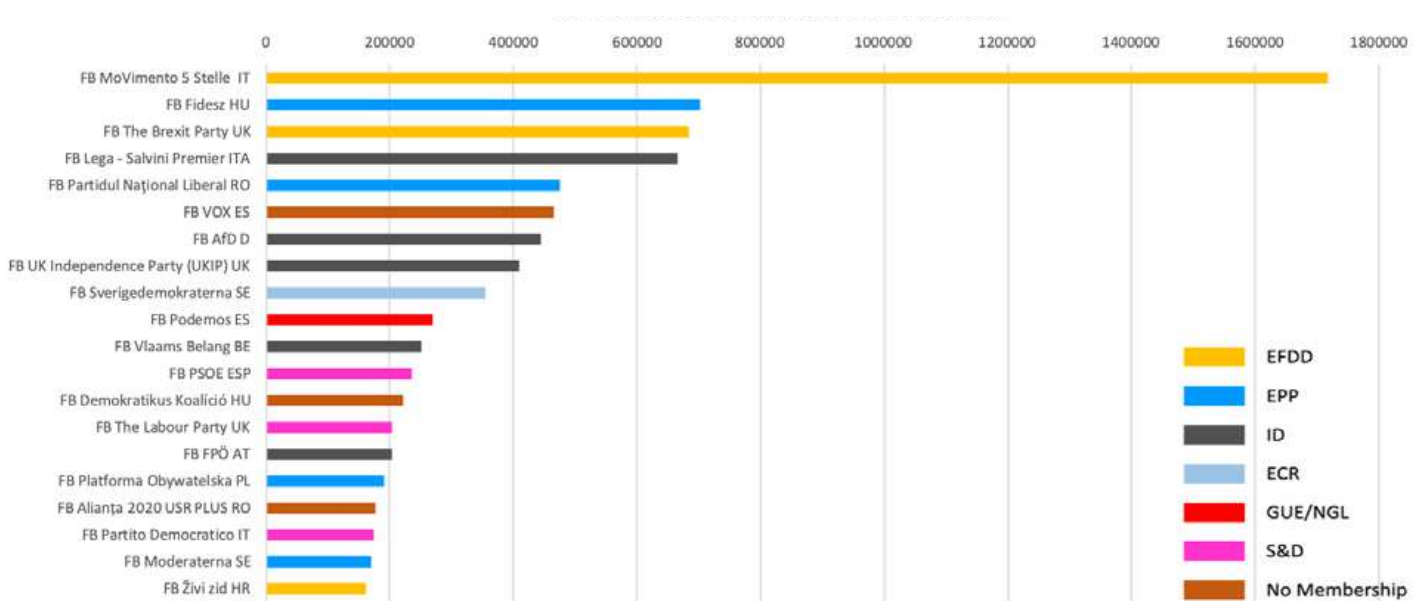


Country	N. Accounts monitored	Engagement
ITALY	7	2897820
UNITEDKINGDOM	7	1557706
HUNGARY	7	1210253
SPAIN	5	1090888
ROMANIA	7	920152
SWEDEN	7	789684
GERMANY	7	776273
POLAND	7	522074
BELGIUM	7	503287
AUSTRIA	6	408466
FRANCE	7	330908
DENMARK	7	326578
CROATIA	5	236016
NETHERLANDS	7	199262
GREECE	7	194677
PORTUGAL	7	185946
SLOVAKIA	7	151624
CZECHREPUBLIC	7	151178
FINLAND	7	107367
BULGARIA	5	90907
SLOVENIA	7	80770
CYPRUS	7	62922
MALTA	7	62639
IRELAND	4	43849
LITHUANIA	7	33356
LATVIA	7	27410
LUXEMBOURG	7	26994
ESTONIA	7	26592
<b>Totale</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>13015598</b>

The ranking of engagement by country reveals that this aspect is not automatically connected to production. Publishing more posts doesn't necessarily mean creating more engagement, i.e. involving more people in the network. It is a figure that depends on various aspects: the tones and forms of communication used by the parties, the size and characteristics of the nation and also its traditions and the general political climate. Italy holds absolute supremacy in this field, developing almost three million of the total 13 thousand

engagements on its own. The following positions reveal several shifts with respect to the production ranking. In second place is Great Britain, in third place Hungary and in fourth place Spain, with a particularly high ratio between post and engagement, at least partly due to the exceptional concurrence of electoral appointments that characterised this country. In line with the production ranking, also in this case, the lowest positions in the engagement ranking are occupied by Northern European countries.

## TOP20 POLITICAL PARTIES BY ENGAGEMENT



FB MoVimento 5 Stelle IT	ITALY	1717857
FB Fidesz HU	HUNGARY	702537
FB The Brexit Party UK	UNITEDKINGDOM	683823
FB Lega - Salvini Premier ITA	ITALY	665915
FB Partidul Național Liberal RO	ROMANIA	475376
FB VOX ES	SPAIN	465740
FB AfD D	GERMANY	444322
FB UK Independence Party (UKIP) UK	UNITEDKINGDOM	410070
FB Sverigedemokraterna SE	SWEDEN	354167
FB Podemos ES	SPAIN	269523
FB Vlaams Belang BE	BELGIUM	251407
FB PSOE ESP	SPAIN	238729
FB Demokratikus Koalíció HU	HUNGARY	221638
FB The Labour Party UK	UNITEDKINGDOM	204253
FB FPÖ AT	AUSTRIA	204051
FB Platforma Obywatelska PL	POLAND	191189
FB Alianța 2020 USR PLUS RO	ROMANIA	176719
FB Partito Democratico IT	ITALY	173946
FB Moderaterna SE	SWEDEN	169730
FB Živi zid HR	CROATIA	160907
<b>Totale</b>		<b>8178899</b>

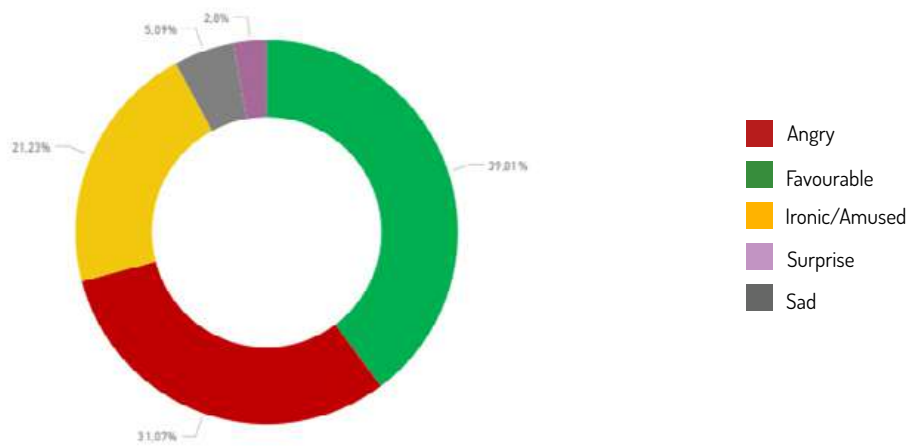
The ranking of interactions by party and their political affiliation within the European Parliament confirms the greater activism of non-historical parties on the web. These are parties that support critical and Euro-sceptic positions, characterised by so-called populist leadership. As we have seen, these are not only parties that use the web much more than the others, but which are able to use it to generate a greater degree of involvement and engagement. The novelty of two parties belonging to the EPP in the top positions is mitigated by the particularity of the Hungarian party Fidesz, to the point where it was suspended by the EPP. All three S&D parties

are at the bottom of the table. The only member of the GUE/NGL Group is the Spanish party, Podemos, who ranks tenth, but who certainly cannot be described as a historical or traditional party. The absence of the parties belonging to the Greens/EFA group comes as a surprise.

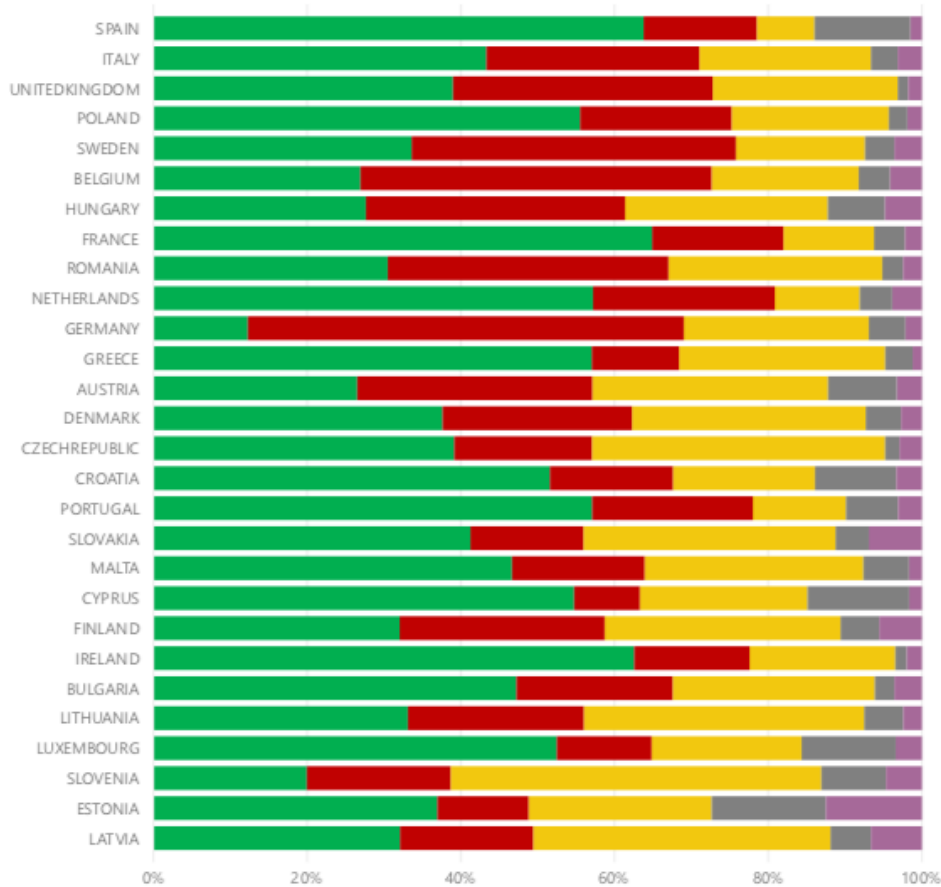
Overall, the web characterised the 2019 European election campaign with its presence, proving to be a more widely used and, one might say, even more useful tool for certain political areas, non-traditional parties and supporters of positions which take a more critical and sceptical view of Europe.



## FACEBOOK REACTIONS BY COUNTRY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.

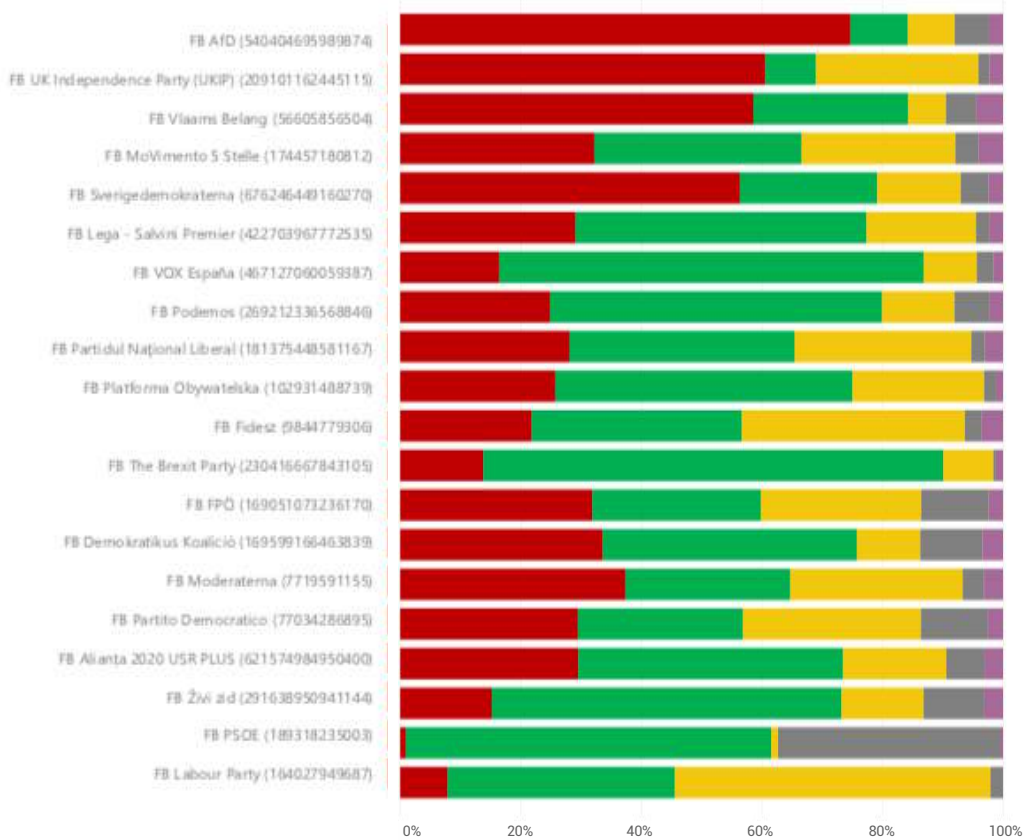


The figure relating to the reactions of their followers in terms of emoticons is subject to mixed interpretation. The same reaction, anger for example, can be aimed at the author of the post as a sign of disagreement or, on the contrary, be a way to express agreement with a criticism or an attack contained in the post. That said, the type of emotions that are aroused by the posts are still indicative of the tone and temperature of political communication on the web. Most of the reactions to the posts of the 186 accounts monitored were positive. They were followed by expressions of anger, a sentiment

which is known to be very widespread on the web and, then, by demonstrations of irony and amusement.

Moving on to the analysis of those born by country, the most positive reactions were in Spain, France, and Ireland, although this was the last country in the ranking in terms of use of social media in the election campaign. The most negative sentiments were expressed mainly by German voters, followed by Swedes and Belgians. Irony, on the other hand, seems to accompany political communication mainly in Lithuania, Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

## TOP20 POLITICAL PARTIES BY REACTIONS



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# NATIONAL REPORTS

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2019 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS





# AUSTRIA

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Membership: 1995

European area: **Western Europe**

Population: **8,576,261**

Number of MEPs: 18

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

36 Austria elected 18 MEPs on May 26. The whole country is only one constituency with a 4% threshold. In the party-list proportional representation system, the seats are distributed to the candidates on top of the lists. An exception are candidates who gain more than 5% of the party votes in personal preference votes (name or list number written on the ballot). FPÖ candidate Heinz Christian Strache was thereby ranked forward on the list; at the time of writing, it was unclear whether he would accept the seat or not.

The voting age is 16. Political advertising is allowed and widely used in the public space (election posters on billboards and poster stands). TV advertising is not allowed on public television anymore (since 1995). Political parties also use the opportunity to advertise in newspapers, and, of course, online. Facebook use is similar to in other Western European countries; Twitter, however, remains a medium for politicians, journalists and very well-informed citizens.

Since 2017, the government had been composed of the conservative ÖVP and the far-right, anti-EU FPÖ. While the level of domestic political conflict was fairly low and the government's approval rates were high, the atmosphere was dominated by EU-scepticism and anti-immigrant policies.

The campaign for the European Parliament was without major highlights, until on Friday May 18 an event later dubbed "Ibizagate" changed the course of the campaign and, for that matter, Austrian

politics. In short: Two German newspapers published a video secretly filmed in the summer of 2017 in a finca on Ibiza. In the video, FPÖ vice chancellor Heinz Christian Strache and FPÖ party whip Johann Gudenus were shown at a meeting – which later turned out to be a fake – with a rich Russian woman willing to invest money in Austria. During the encounter, Strache and Gudenus offered their help and political connections to acquire shares of the country's largest newspaper or the privatization of water supplies, all in return for favorable media coverage (The background story: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/20/austria-ibiza-scandal-sting-operation-what-happened-why-does-it-matter>).

Strache and Gudenus immediately resigned after the publication of the video. The last week before the EU election was therefore characterized by political turbulences, eventually resulting in the whole government having to step down after a vote of no confidence, the first ever in Austrian parliamentary history.

Nevertheless, the ÖVP gained votes in the EU election and the FPÖ did not lose as much as the size of the scandal would have led to expect. A noticeable result were 14% of the votes for the Green party, who had experienced their biggest defeat in the national election of 2017 when they failed to reenter into parliament. The Social Democrats and the liberal NEOS returned almost the same results as 2014; the new party Europa Jetzt could not win a seat.



## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

As expected, the parties did not want to spend as much money on the EU campaign as on national election campaigns. Therefore, online campaigning was the parties' main focus. The Freedom Party' account returned the lowest number of Facebook postings; however, one of their main social media channels is the personal page of their (former) party leader Heinz-Christian Strache, which is one of the biggest Facebook pages in Austria with 800.000 followers

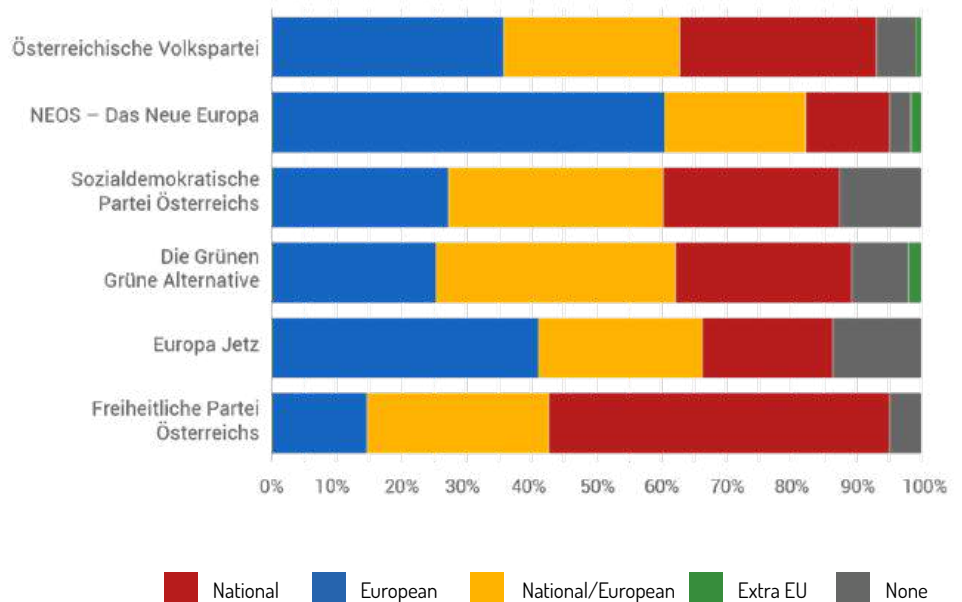
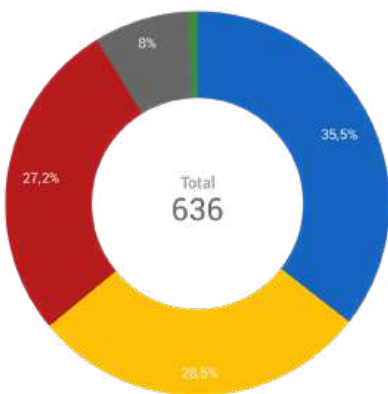


Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Österreichische Volkspartei	121	7	1	7
NEOS – Das Neue Europa	110	10	4	1
Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs	90	11	2	5
Die Grünen – Grüne Alternative	99	4	-	2
Europa Jetzt	95	-	-	0
Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs	73	7	3	3

37

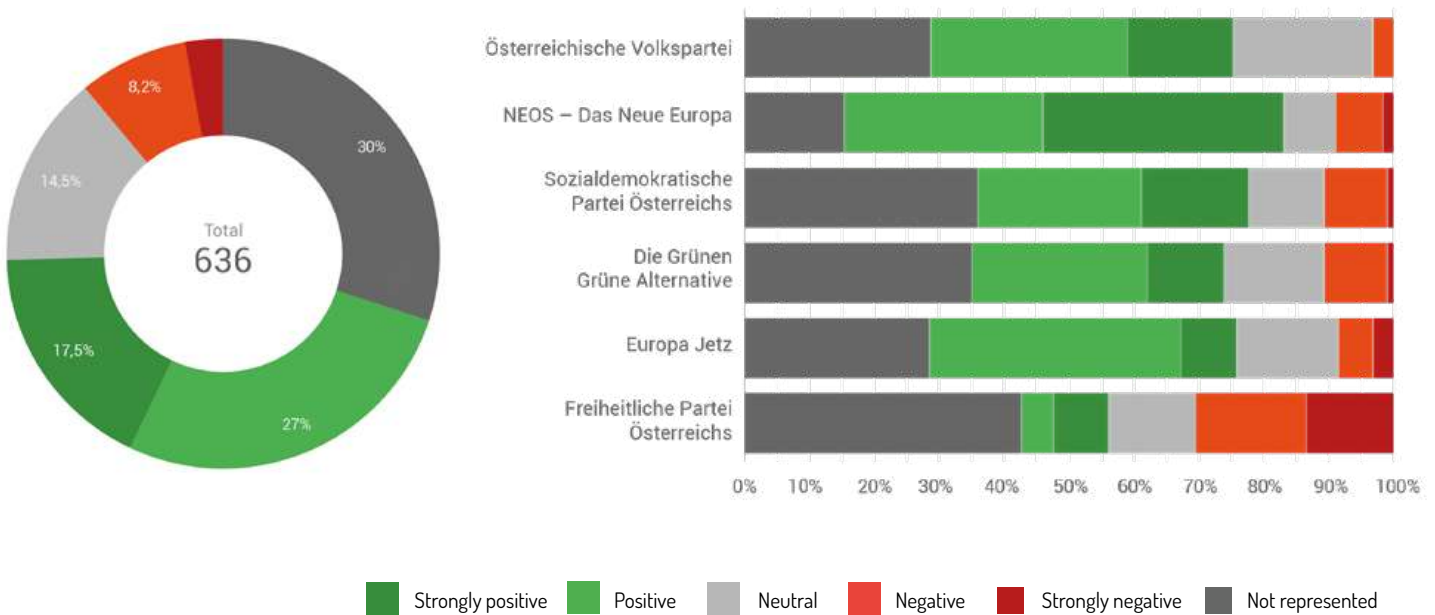
### ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

In line with their party policies, the liberal NEOS were the party that focused most on the European dimension, while the right-wing FPÖ focused most of their attention on national items. The other four parties rather similarly distributed their attention.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

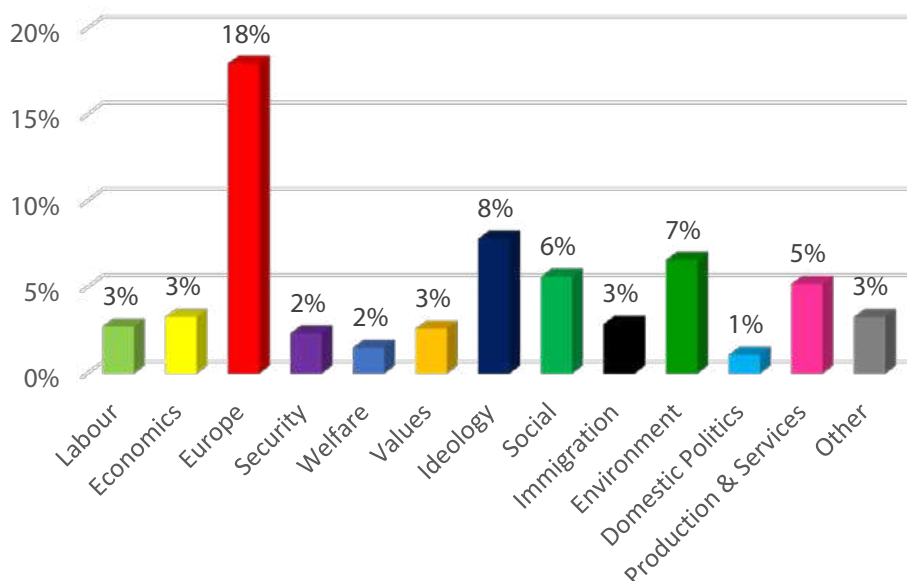
In line with their party policies, the liberal NEOS were the party that portrayed Europe most positively, while the right-wing FPÖ had about 30% negative connotations of Europe. Due to the developments in domestic policies (“Ibiza-gate”), a large proportion of materials did not focus on Europe at all.



## 38

## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The Green party had declared the election a “climate election” and were fairly successful with this claim, as “environment” was an exceptionally strong issue, also related to the Fridays for Future movement. Other than that, the issue categories perhaps did not serve the policy developments in Austria well (issues like corruption were probably categorized as “ideology” or “values”).

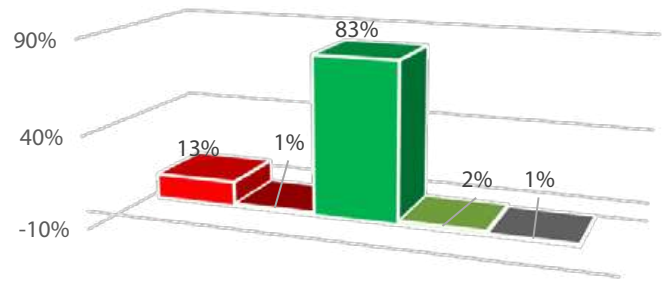
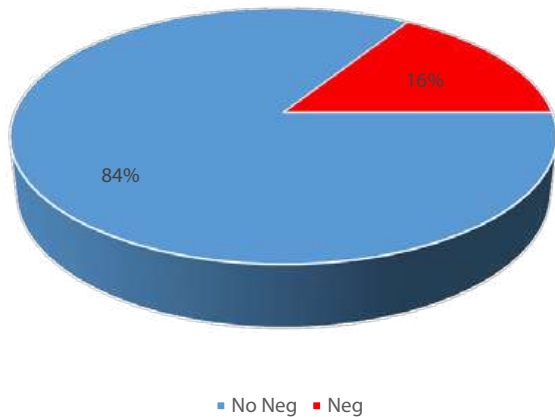


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

Negative campaigning was not a big issue in this EU election campaign. If it did occur, then the targets would be national political actors; and I assume that the majority of attacks occurred in the last week of the campaign.

The high percentage of negative posts compared to other countries probably results from the high level of polarization during the last 9 days of the campaign (“Ibizagate”), when criticism across parties was the main focus of most materials.



- Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Inst. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



The Freedom Party is the most active and engaging party account on social media.

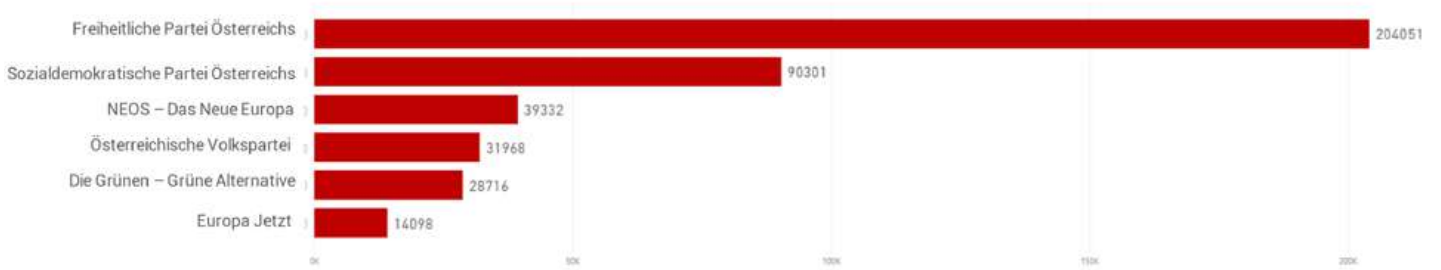
In terms of reactions, the People’s Party seems to provoke the most negative reactions; however, this also might be related to the events during the election campaign.

## NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

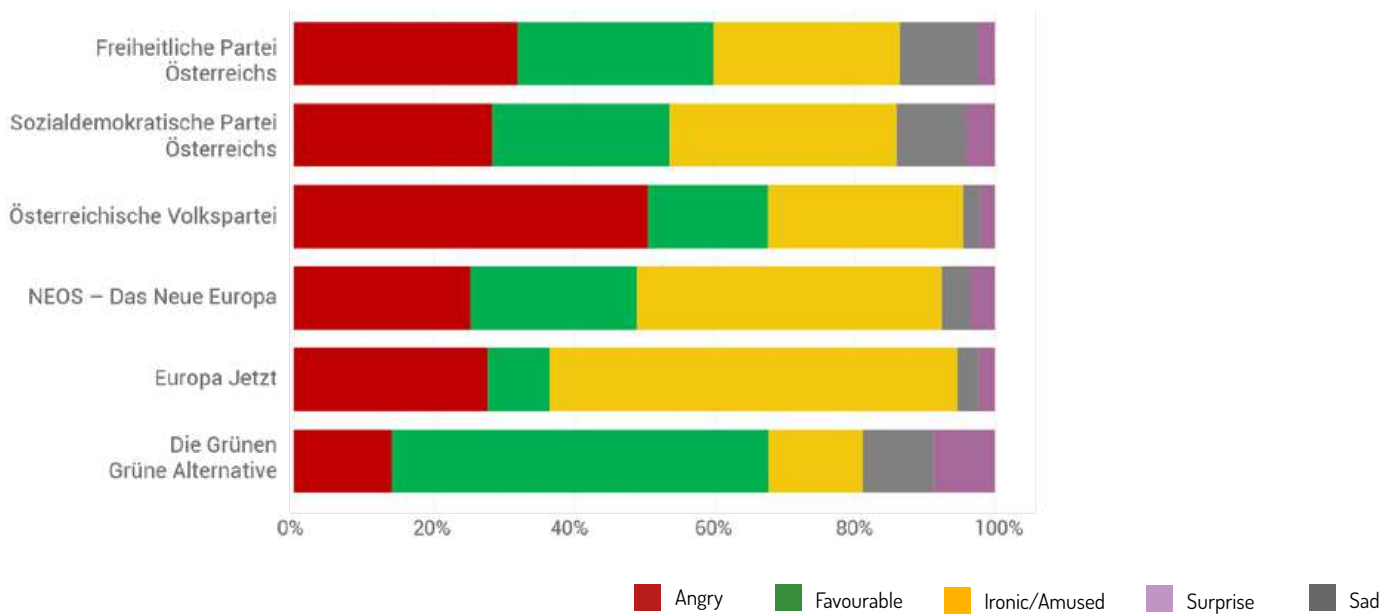


\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY

40



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.







## BELGIUM

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Membership: **Founder Country 1958**

European area: **Western Europe**

Population: **11,258,434**

Number of MEPs.: **21**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Political, general  
or national**

**Celeste Fornaro**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

As with all the other elections in Belgium, those aged 18 and over are eligible to vote in the European elections. Citizens of European Union Member States residing in Belgium, registered in the national electoral rolls, can vote both in the European elections, choosing whether to vote for parties and candidates from Belgium or their country, and in local elections. Once registered, it is compulsory to vote. This does not mean that voters have to vote, but they must at least go to their polling stations. If they do not, the Justice of the Peace can summon them and ask them the reasons for their absence. If the voter's justification is not convincing, the judge transfers the case to the Police Court and the voter absent without justification may be subject to a penalty or sanction.

**44** In Belgium, the common rules on the electoral system for European elections state that the admission threshold may not exceed 5% of votes at the constituency level. There are three districts corresponding to the three linguistic communities present in the country (French-speaking, Flemish and German-speaking). The European elections are also structured along sub-national lines: 12 MEPs are elected in the Dutch-speaking community, 8 in the French-speaking community and 1 in the German-speaking community.

The voter can express multiple preferences, the only limit being not to exceed the number of candidates on the list. Voting is electronic.

Belgian television broadcasts only the public channels on digital terrestrial TV: VRT for the Flemish community and RTBF for the Walloon/Brussels community. During the election campaign, these television networks cannot broadcast election commercials but can host candidates in programmes dedicated to elections for interviews or short presentations. The political programme of the parties or candidates is presented and published on the party's institutional website or sent by post to their voters. As far as the use of posters is concerned, each party can post them free of charge in the spaces made available in public places or for a fee on commercial billboards.

Since 2014, federal, regional and European elections have been held on the same day in Belgium. Citizens are called to the polls to renew both their European representatives and their representatives in six other parliaments. This means that, in the election campaign, European issues are either secondary or overshadowed by federal and regional issues. This figure is made evident by the very low percentage of social media posts dedicated to the European election campaign (7%). This is despite the fact that Belgium is one of the founding member states of the EU and its citizens are among the most favourable to Europe. As a result of these legislative and political aspects, the production of the parties dedicated to the European electoral campaign was the lowest of all 28 countries monitored, with only 49 materials mainly generated on social media.

The results of the 2019 European elections confirmed the general trends and the increase in non-traditional forces, in particular the Groen and Vlaams Belang parties. These two parties recorded the largest increase in support compared to 2014, making them the winners of the European elections in Belgium. Overall, the results indicated a shift and a polarisation between the regions and communities of the Belgian federation. In Wallonia and Brussels, the majority of voters supported the left-wing parties, i.e. the greens, the socialists or the left-wing radicals. Despite a drop in consensus, the socialists remained leaders in Brussels and Wallonia, followed by the Greens. In Flanders, on the other hand, voters rewarded Vlaams Belang along with VB and N-VA, both nationalist parties which defend an ethnocentric and autonomous position in Flanders.

Europe and its issues were almost absent from the election campaign, despite all the political forces, including the most extreme, being pro-European, although the N-VA defends a sort of Euro-realism and the VB adheres to the idea of a Europe of Nations.

A total of 12 political parties were monitored. Election material relating to the European elections was found and analysed for only eight of them. The most active, on the web as mentioned earlier, were Open Vld and Mouvement Réformateur.



## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Open Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten (Open VLD)	16	-	-	2
Mouvement Réformateur (MR)	12	-	-	2
Christen- Democratish & Vlaams (CD&V)	6	-	-	2
Groen	5	-	-	1
Vlaams Belang	4	-	-	3
Parti Socialiste (PS)	3	-	-	2
Parti du Travail de Belgique (PTB) - Partij van de Arbeid van België (PVDA)	Not monitored	2	-	1
Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (NVA)	1	-	-	3

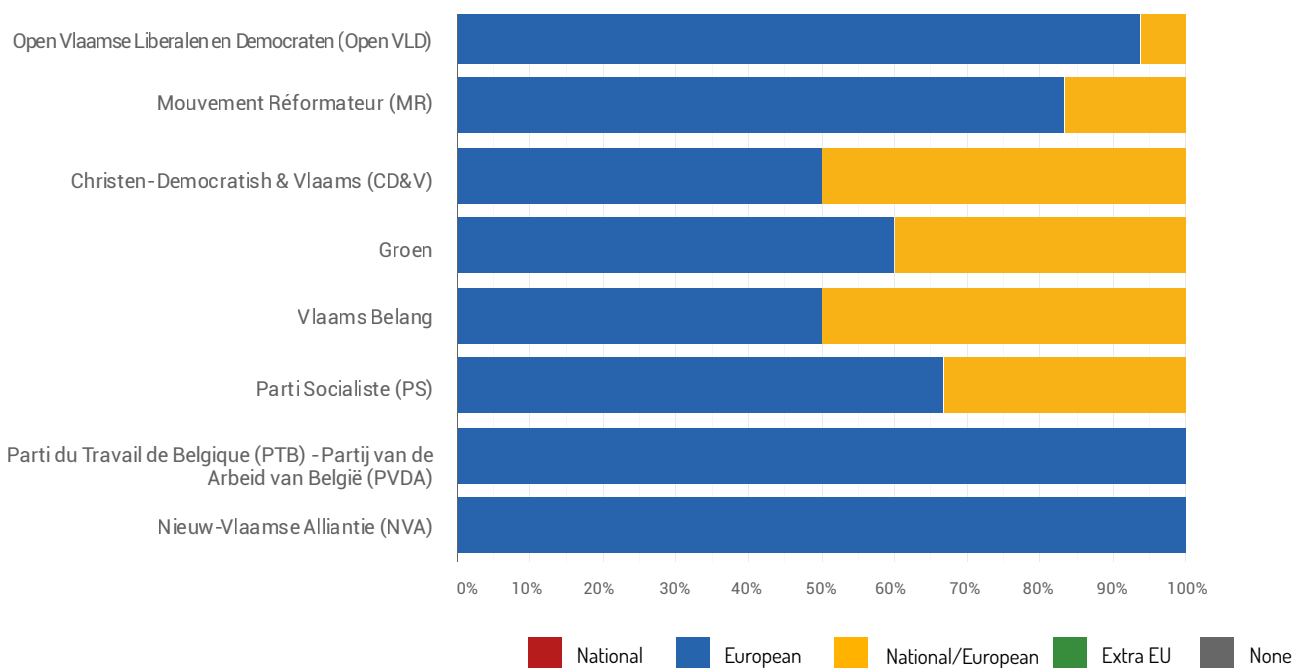
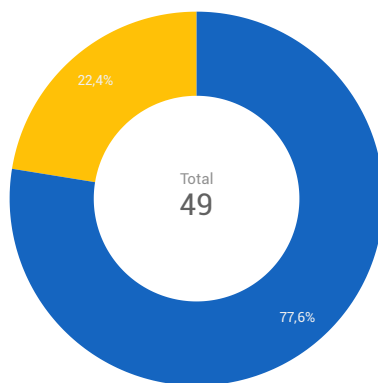
49 contents were produced from 28 April and 25 May 2019 in relation to the European elections in Belgium: 47 social contents, 2 posters and no political commercials. The party that produced the most content was Open VLD with 16 posts, the second was MR and the third CD&V. The almost total absence of posters and Political Commercials is due not only to their very limited production, but also to the fact that the very few materials of this type produced were published mainly by the parties as webcards and social videos and were therefore considered as social content.

The only two posters collected and monitored were produced by the same party, one in the French constituency (Parti du Travail de Belgique - PTB) and the other in the Flemish constituency (Partij van de Arbeid van België -PVDA). As the Facebook account of this party was not analysed, it was not possible to determine whether, as in the case of other parties, these materials were also disseminated on the social networks.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Bearing in mind the scarcity of materials relating to Belgium in comparison with the other countries monitored, the figure relating to their geo-thematic dimension reveals a strong pro-European orientation. It is understandable that the very few documents relating to the European election campaign were strongly focused

on European issues rather than those of a domestic nature, which had already been addressed in the other electoral materials produced. As a result, the European dimension is 77.6% compared to 22.4% for the national/European dimension.

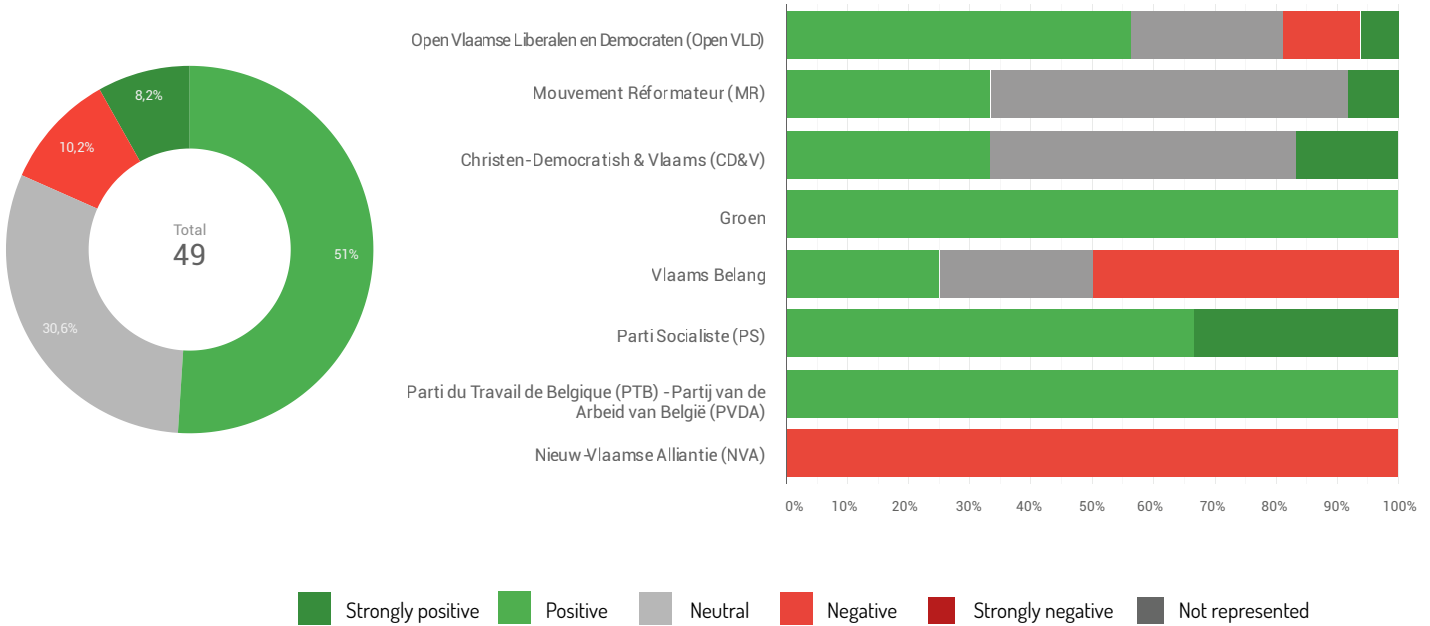


## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

A direct consequence of the particular nature of the material collected for Belgium, but also of the strong European leanings of both the parties and the citizens of this country, is that, when the electoral materials talk about Europe and the European elections, they do so with largely positive tones (about 60%). Looking at the individual parties in detail, the materials of the OpenVld show a critical or negative view of Europe, related to the idea that the EU must be more cohesive, with values that can be shared by all, and be more streamlined and active in policies between the various states.

The Groen party produced material that was totally positive towards the EU, stressing that, without common policies on the environment, the green project to improve the world cannot be implemented.

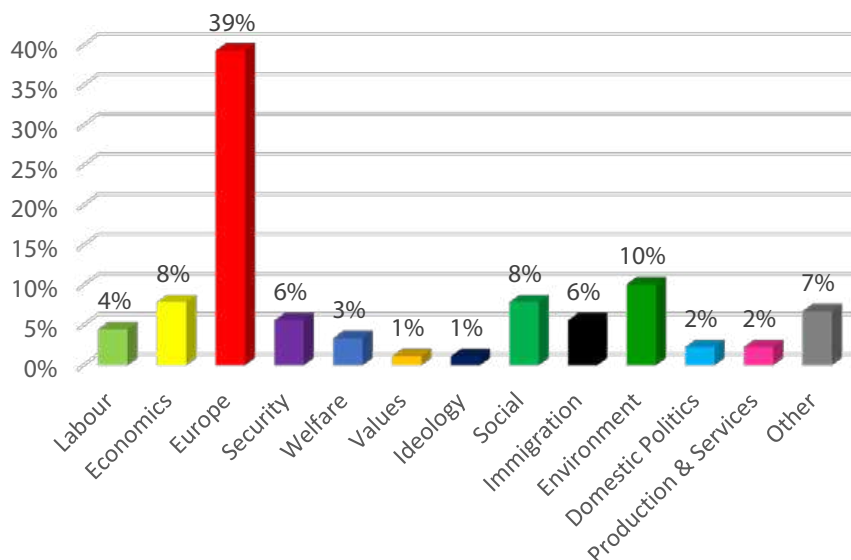
Vlaam Belang also spread a not entirely positive vision of Europe. Emphasising the need for a Europe that requires change, that must protect itself from external threats and that must place importance on the economy of Flanders. A Europe that therefore needs to be shaken up, and not just by a single country, hence the need to be present in the European Parliament.



### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The main themes were those related to Europe, a fact that can only be deduced given the scarcity of products for the European campaign. The other most popular topic was the environment, particularly climate change and its prevention. All the parties addressed environmental issues in their election campaign, although in some cases with particular points of view. The party

that won the European elections in Belgium, Vlaams Belang, talked about ecological issues in relation to the danger of tax increases resulting from green policies. Other issues addressed were of a social, labour and immigration and security-related nature.

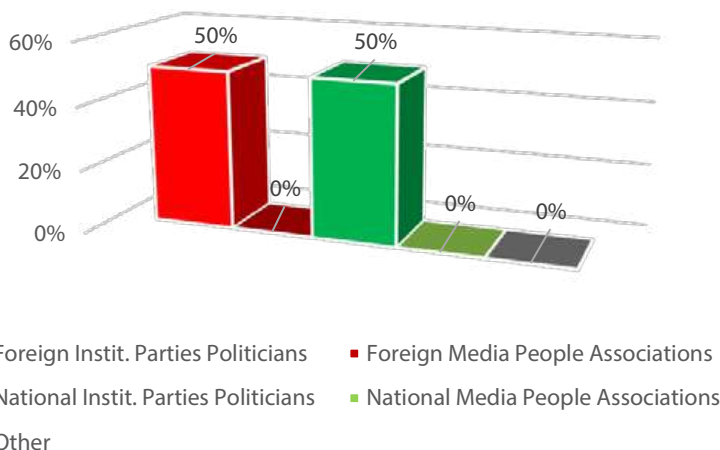
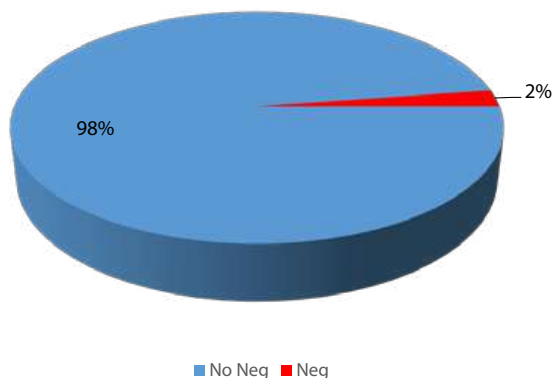


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

The tone of the European election campaign wasn't particularly conflictual. It was a quiet election campaign, with very few negative connotations and no attacks on individuals or institutions, be they national or international. The strongest or most polemical tones were reserved for the simultaneous

general election campaign. As mentioned earlier, there was a polarisation between the left-wing front, which brought French-speaking voters closer to Brussels, and a more nationalist Flemish front in Flanders. This divergence was reflected in the vote in the European elections.



## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

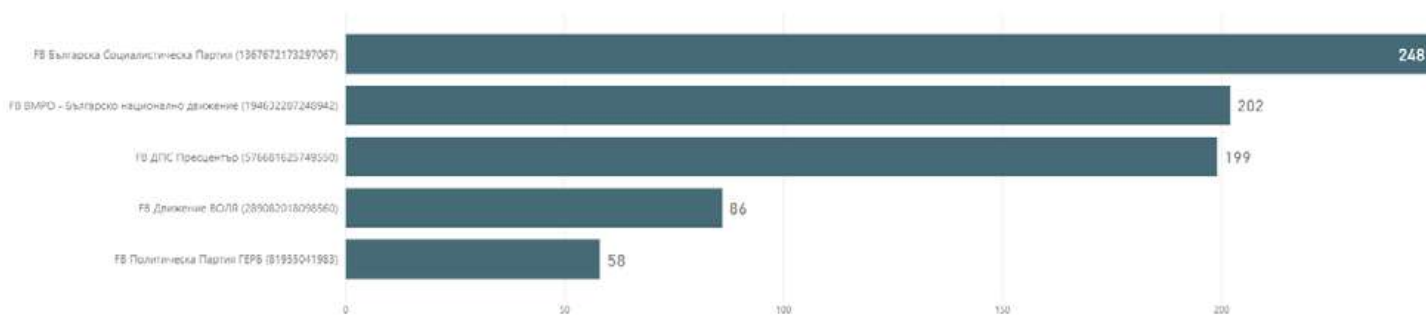
48



The figure for the production of social media posts confirms the low level of attention paid by Belgian parties to the European election campaign. Compared to 667 posts produced in the four weeks monitored, which place Belgium in eighteenth place in the ranking of countries by number of posts, only 7% (47) were related to this election. National issues were much more prevalent.

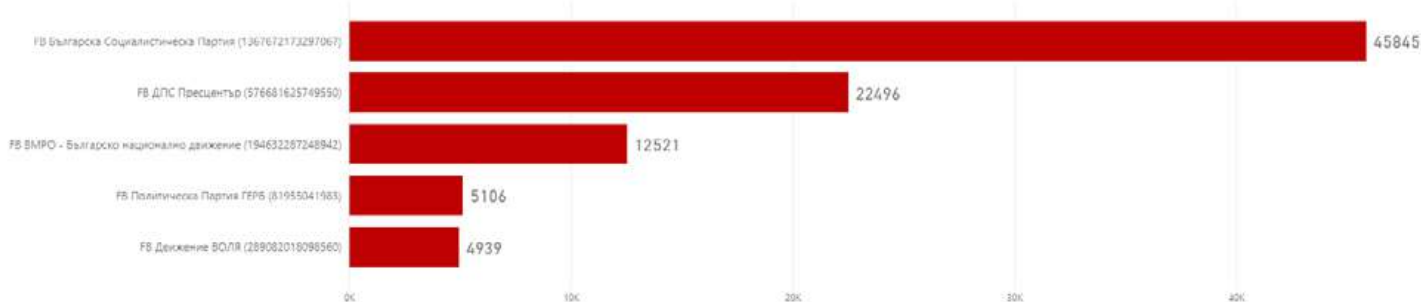
In detail, analysing the data on overall production by the various parties, it should be noted that the Vlaams Belang party, with the production of "only" 134 posts, achieved a high level of engagement, coming eleventh in the overall ranking of the European parties. This figure confirms the preference for and ability to use social networks by the right-wing, Euro-critical and sovereign parties of the Renew Europe group.

## NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

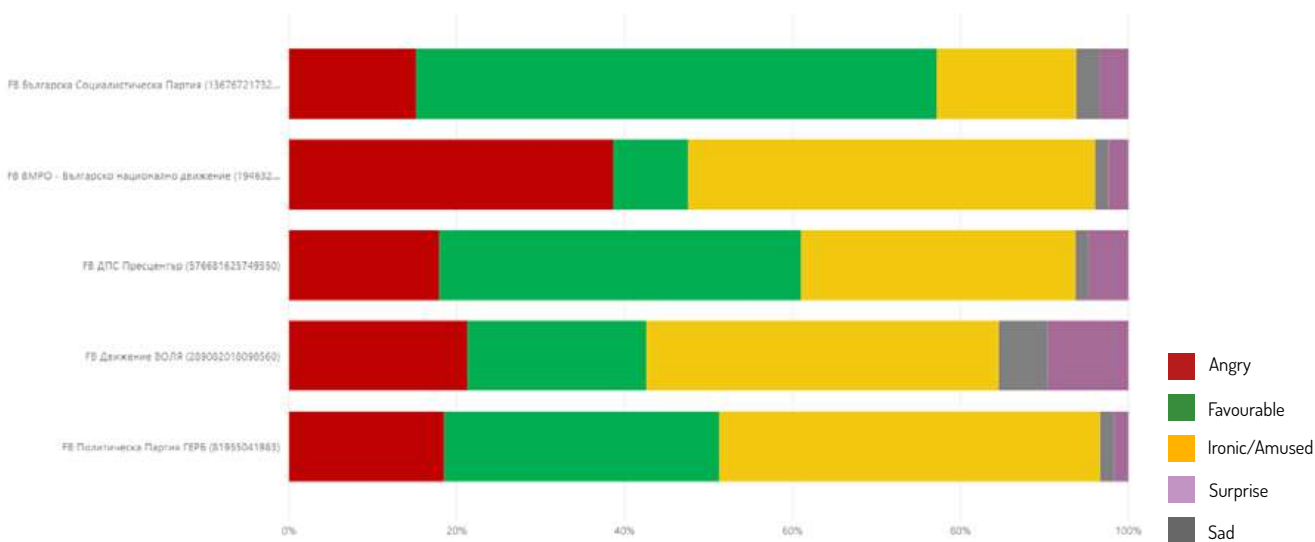
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# BULGARIA

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Membership: **2007**

European area: **Eastern Europe**

Population: **7,202,198**

Number of MEPs: **17**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The Bulgarian Election Code sets the framework for the elections of Members of the European Parliament from the Republic of Bulgaria. According to its Article 353, elections for MEPs are carried out under a proportional electoral system with national candidate lists of (a) parties and coalitions and (b) Initiative Committees. Voters may indicate their preference by order of candidate. There are 17 MEPs for the Republic of Bulgaria and they are elected under the Hare-Niimajer method. The threshold barrier is 5.8%

All Bulgarian citizens over the age of 18 have the right to elect MEPs. Bulgarian citizens who have reached 21 years of age by election day also have the right to be elected as an MEP. The campaign opens 30 days before election day. No election canvassing is allowed 24 hours before the election day or on election day itself.

The rules for election media campaign coverage are defined in the Bulgarian Electoral Code and are applied by the Bulgarian Central Electoral Commission. The Bulgarian State provides funds for media packages, which are used to pay for the various forms of coverage of the election campaign through media service providers.

**52** During the election campaign, candidates, parties, coalitions and initiative committees may design and distribute posters, references and other canvassing materials. Each of them must contain information clearly to the effect that they buying and selling of votes is a criminal offence. This information must be contained as a unambiguous clear message in all audio and audio-visual materials. Canvassing materials may be placed in the areas and spaces designated by the mayor, and on buildings, fences and shop windows with the permission of the owner or the manager of the property.

Print media and online news services offer the same conditions and prices to all parties, coalitions and initiative committees that have registered candidates. The PSB broadcasters – the Bulgarian National Television (BNT) and the Bulgarian National Radio (BNR) – cover the campaign using video clips, debates and other media formats. Both public service and the commercial broadcasters may use paid and free forms of coverage of the parties', coalitions' and initiative committees' election campaign. Results of opinion polls on the elections may not be announced until the end of election day.

The main battle in these elections was between the ruling political party, Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria – CEDB, part of the EPP, and the main opposition BSP for Bulgaria coalition,

belonging to the PES group. Traditionally, the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF) – the political party representing the Turkish minority in the country and part of the ALDE grouping – has been the constant third ranking player at every election. The coalition of the nationalists, The United Patriots, represented in the Bulgarian National Parliament and part of the government, failed to maintain its unity and its three political forces ran separately in the election race. Only one of them – the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Bulgarian National Movement – (IMRO-BNM), and member of the ECR, took fourth place in the race, followed in fifth place by the traditional right-wing Democratic Bulgaria (DB) coalition. Although spending a lot of financial and organizational resources in the campaign and significantly supported by Marine Le Pen, the leader of the populist nationalist French National Rally, by Matteo Salvini, the leader of the Italian right-wing Lega party, the coalition of the Bulgarian extreme right-wing, represented in the National Parliament by the populist Volya Bulgarian Patriots Party (Will), failed to qualify.

The electoral campaign for the European elections in Bulgaria was not particularly lively. Although the campaign was meant officially to start on 26 April, it only began on 7 May, due to Easter holidays (26 to 29 April) and the celebration of the Bulgarian national holidays on Labour Day (1 May), Bravery Day and St. George's Day (6 May), and the Pope's visit (5 – 7 May). Furthermore, Election Day fell on the final day of three national holidays (24–26 May) celebrating the Slavic alphabet. However, electoral apathy was caused mainly by the ineffective pro-European debate.

The election campaign for the 2019 European Parliament in Bulgaria veered away from the clash of different views on the future of Europe and was held predominantly as a rehearsal for the upcoming local and possibly early parliamentary elections, taking place primarily online. Participants' messages were dominated by national topics, namely welfare and economics. Important issues such as immigration, environment protection, and security were marginalized.

Voters went to the polls for the fourth time since Bulgaria joined the European Union in 2007 and for the second time it was possible to vote preferentially. 6,288,656 citizens were entitled to vote. The turnout rate, however, at these EP elections was 32.64% – lower than in 2009 (37.49%) and in 2014 (35.84%).

The EP'19 elections in Bulgaria showed that an energetic campaign does not always yield the expected dividends. The BSP party mostly



communicated its messages via Facebook, but failed to overcome CEDB and its leader's active canvassing campaigning among voters. Despite their massive – and very expensive – campaign, Volya (Will) failed to reach the threshold. Facebook messages were far

more used than TV commercials, posters and printed materials. Insufficient debate on substantial European issues led to low voter turnout.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Coalition "BSP for Bulgaria" (BSP)	58	15	-	5
Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF)	65	2	1	3
Internal Macedonian revolutionary organization – Bulgarian national movement (IMRO-BND)	59	4	1	2
Citizens for European development of Bulgaria (CEDB)	18	1	14	6
Coalition "Will – the Bulgarian patriots"	21	1	2	0

There were 318 Bulgarian candidates competing for 17 MEP places in the European Parliament elections in 2019 (13 political parties, 8 coalitions, and 6 independents).

- Koalitsiya BSP za Bulgaria (BSP) – (Coalition BSP for Bulgaria) included: Bulgarska socialisticheska partiya, Komunisticheska partiya na Bulgariya, politicheska partiya Nova Zora, Politicheski klub "Ekoglasnost", Politicheski klub "Trakiya".

- Dvizhenie za prava i svobodi (DPS) – Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF)

- Vatreshna makedonska revoljucionna organizacija – Bulgarsko natsionalno dvijenie (VMRO-BND) – Internal Macedonian revolutionary organization – Bulgarian National Movement (IMRO-BND)

- Grazhdani za evropeisko razvitie na Bulgaria (GERB) – Citizens

for European Development of Bulgaria (CEDB). It was supported by small right-wing political formations and emblematic for the beginning of the democratic processes of 1989 Sayuz na demokraticnite sili (Union of Democratic Forces).

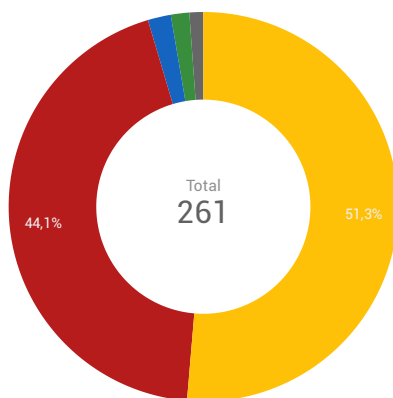
- Koalitsiya Volya – Bulgarskite rodolyubtsi (Will Coalition – the Bulgarian Patriots) included: Politicheska partiya Volya, Narodna partiya "Svoboda i dostoinstvo", Bulgarski zemedelski sayuz "Alexander Stamboliyski", Bulgarska socialdemokraticheska partiya, Hristiyandemokraticheska partiya, politicheska partiya "Obedinena socialdemokratsia".

The voting resulted in: 6 seats for CEDB (EPP), 5 seats for BSP (PES), 3 seats for MRF (ALDE), 2 seats for IMRO-BNM (ECR) and 1 seat for DB (EPP).

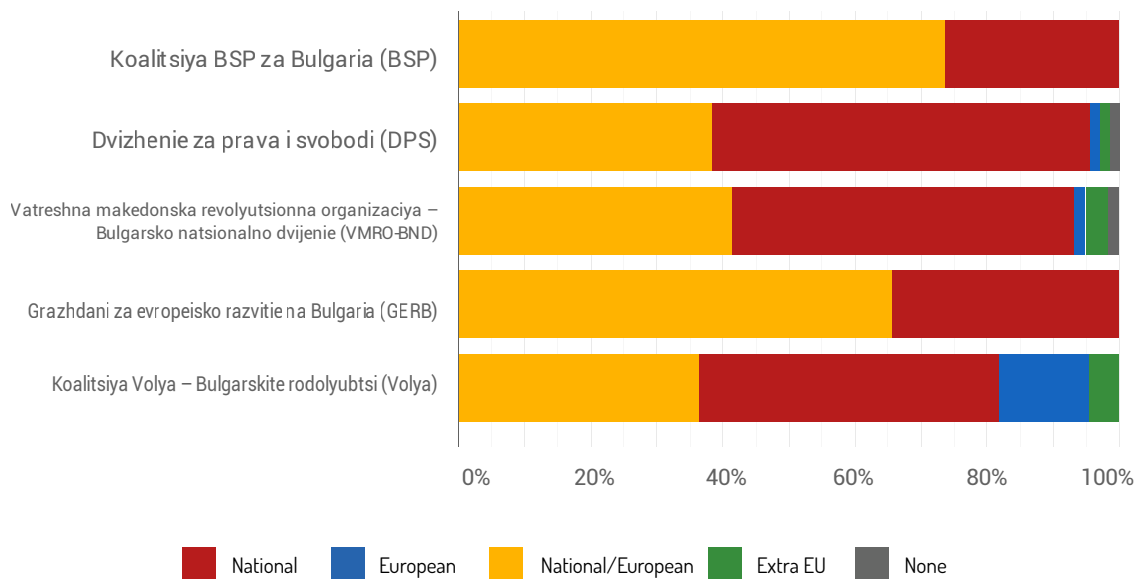
## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

A series of scandals shook Bulgaria on the eve of the European elections because of media revelations on apartments purchased at unusually subsidized prices by politicians and public officials. European funds used to build “guesthouses”, and then used as holiday or private homes, again by public administrators, often behind the smokescreen of compliant companies, front men and relatives, also added a particular piquancy to the scandals. As a leading political power, CEDB suffered reputational damage at the start of the campaign due to accusations of corruption. The national and international activity of its leader and prime-minister

Boyko Borisov supported the positive pro-European image in CEDB’s messages. That is why the withdrawal of sympathizers from CEDB did not transform into a clear superiority for the BSP coalition, which repeatedly highlighted these accusations of corruption. Additional difficulties in the left-wing political parties strategic behaviour were caused by its boycott of the Parliament for three months before the start of the campaign as part of their attempt to link a possible Euro-election victory with early parliamentary elections. These scandals redirected the election campaign’s focus on national rather than European issues.



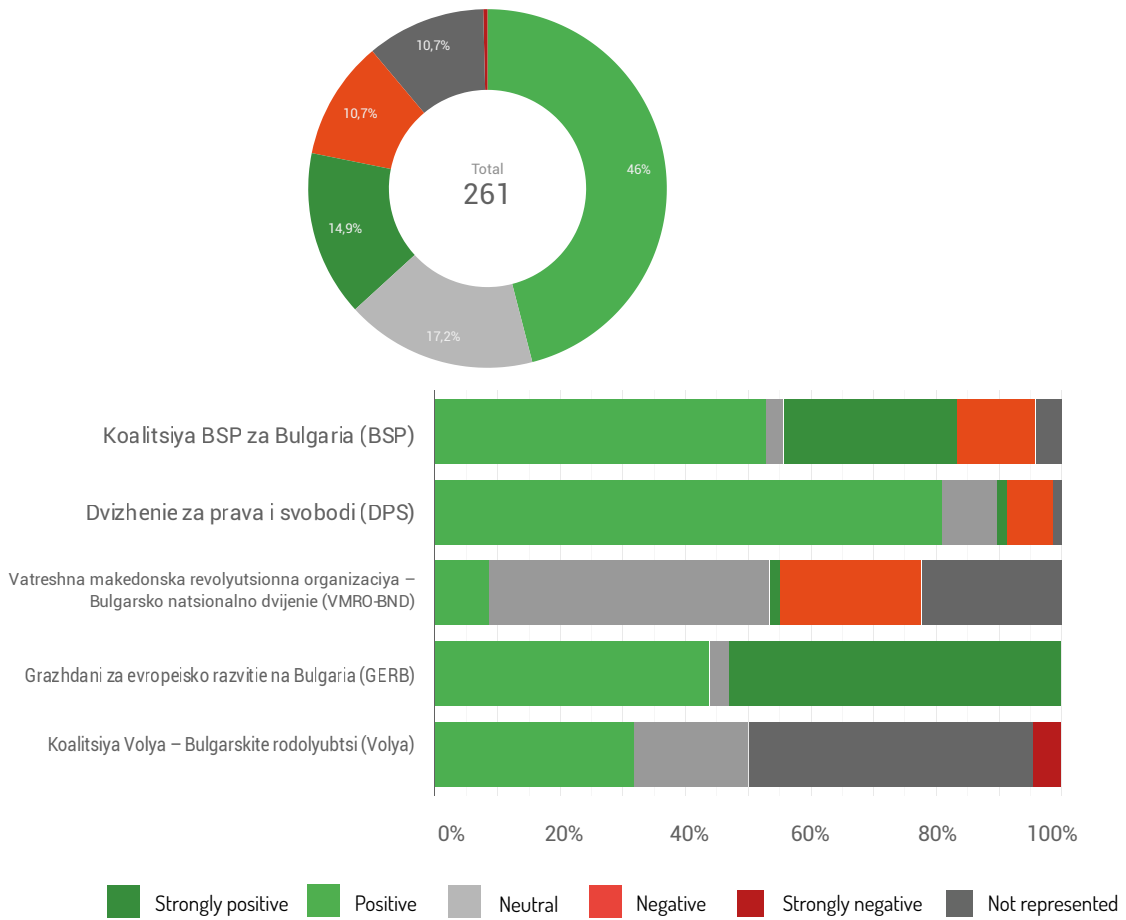
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## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

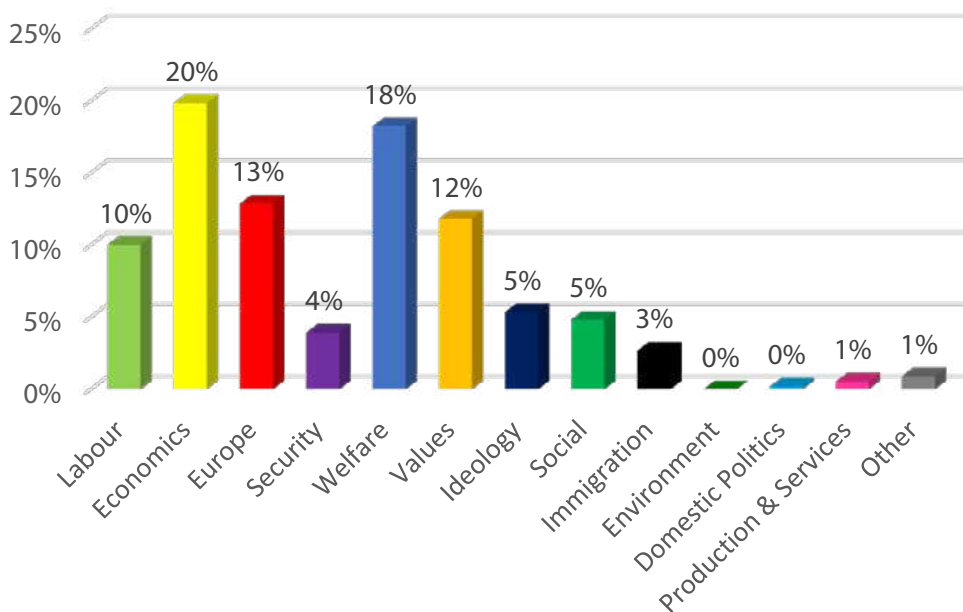
The majority of the political parties, coalitions, independent candidates and Bulgarian citizens participating in the EP elections political parties supported EU membership and the future entry of the country into Schengen and the Eurozone. Although very small part of the population expressed its

scepticism about Bulgarian EU membership, there are neither strong anti-European nor anti-system forces in the country. Only Koalitsiya Volya – Bulgarskite rodolyubtsi out of all the political forces monitored expressed any scepticism towards the European agenda.



### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The top three topics of the election campaign were: economics, welfare and Europe. Since the election race focused mainly on national issues, the political parties focused on topics of the everyday well-being of the voters. Such important issues as immigration and environment were not important for the political campaigning.

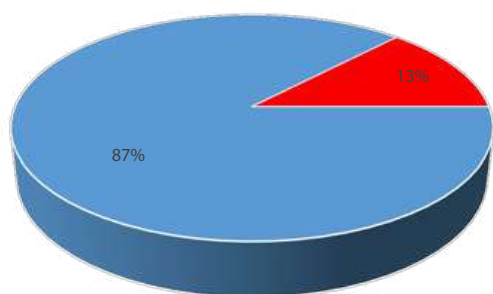


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

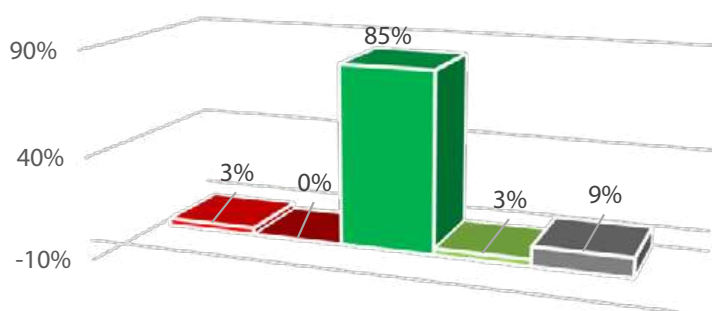
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

Hate speech was present to a certain degree in the messages of all parties in the election campaign. Aggressive language against opponents and indirect insults were also used. Hate speech proved to be a non-winning strategy. Thus, the Volya-Bulgarian Patriots coalition ended up with no elected MEP, despite the funds invested in the election race. The aggressive campaigning style of the BSP for Bulgaria coalition and its internal contradictions which came to a head during the drawing up of the electoral list

and almost led to the sensational exclusion of Sergei Stanishev, current leader of the Party of the European Socialists, did not prove to be productive. Although the BSP for Bulgaria coalition's election campaign was most expensive, it did not win more MEP seats than its main rival - Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (CEDB). These scandals overshadowed the debate on the major issues of the EU's future.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Instit. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other

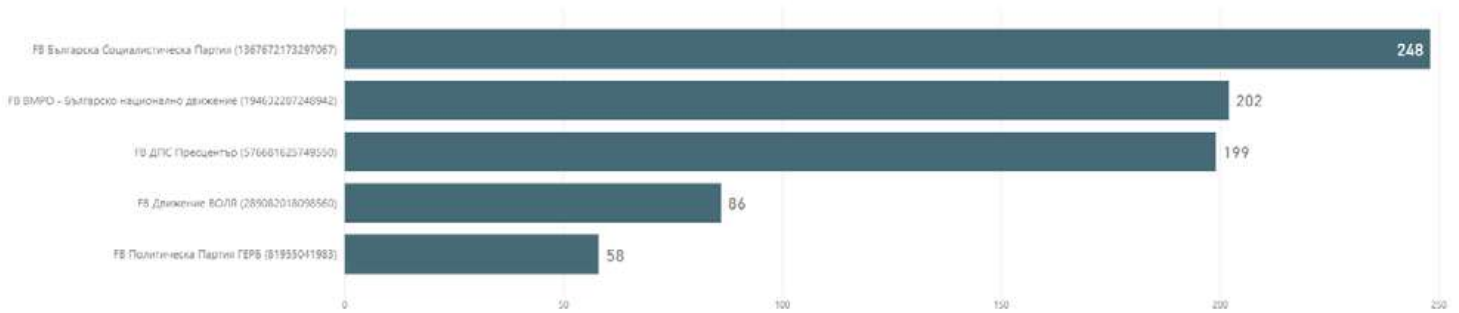
## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



The Facebook ads in the Bulgarian election campaign were far more effective than posters, commercials and press materials. Three political forces built their campaign predominantly on Facebook: Koalitsiya BSP za Bulgaria, Vatreshna makedonska revoljutsionna organizaciya – Bulgarsko natsionalno dvijenie (VMRO-BND) and Dvizhenie za prava i svobodi (DPS).

Koalitsiya BSP za Bulgaria (Coalition BSP for Bulgaria) gained the first place in publishing Facebook posts. The political party winning most MEPs seats – 6 – Grazhdani za evropeisko razvitie na Bulgaria did not use Facebook extensively. Generally, the mood of the Facebook posts was good-natured and ironic/amused rather than angry.

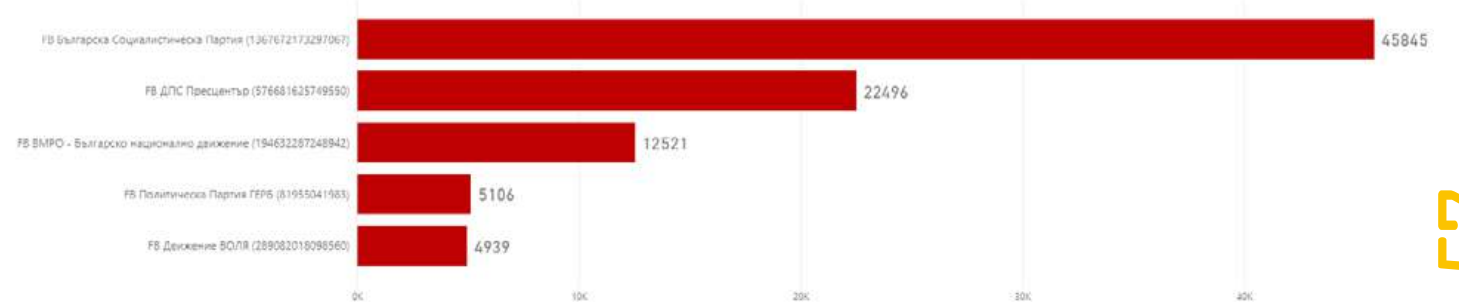
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

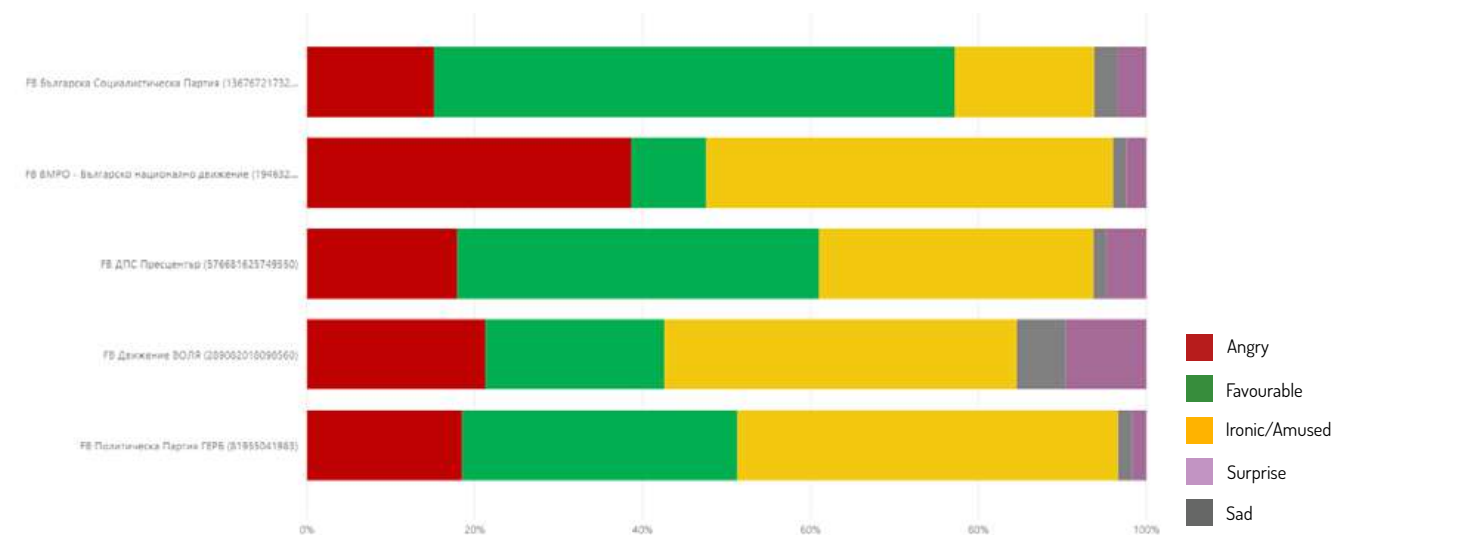


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\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# CROATIA

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Membership: **2013**

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **4,225,316**

Number of MEPs: **11**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The 2019 EP electoral campaign in Croatia started on 10 April, when the State Electoral Commission published the accepted lists which met the standards for competing in the EP elections. Competing for 11 seats in the European Parliament (12 after Brexit) were 33 lists consisting of single parties, coalitions and citizen lists. The campaign was quite long, like that of 2014, and ended at midnight on 24 May, to allow for the law-prescribed electoral silence to be put in place 24 hours before the election day. All citizens aged 18 or older had the right to vote – a total of 3,696,907 voters. The turnout on 26 May was 29.85%, with 2.68% of spoilt votes. This was a small improvement in comparison to 2014, when the turnout was 25.24% and there were 3.06% of spoilt votes. EP members were elected in a single constituency, with a 5% electoral threshold, and using a proportional electoral system with preferential voting.

Regarding the regulatory framework in which the Croatian campaign took place, it is worth noting that a new law governing the financing of political campaigns was passed just weeks before the start of the campaign, in spite of protests of civil society groups and some opposition parties. Under the new law, each list competing in the EP elections was allowed to spend up to 4m HRK (€530,000) during the campaign. This represented a significant increase of campaign spending for the biggest parties, which could afford it. The spending limit in 2014 had been significantly lower (1.5m HRK = €200,000). The political advertising regulation was very much similar to that in force in 2014 – all lists and candidates were allowed to pay for TV ads on public and private television channels under the same conditions, as well as purchase billboard spaces to showcase their posters.

At the time of the 2019 campaign, the Croatian government led by the centre-right party HDZ and Prime Minister Andrej Plenković was in its third year in office and starting to prepare for the parliamentary elections due to take place in 2020. HDZ, a relative winner in the 2016 snap elections, had been governing with a wide coalition as it did not have a majority in parliament. The second biggest parliamentary party was the left wing SDP, while the third and fourth were the Eurosceptic populist and protest parties MOST and Živi zid respectively. Furthermore, there had been no high-level elections (presidential, parliamentary, EP) in Croatia since the snap parliamentary elections in 2016.

With regard to news and current affairs, two notable events took place during the campaign, both related to referendums. First, the citizen-led initiative 'Take money from parties' started campaigning for a referendum in which citizens would vote on whether or not they wish for parties to continue to be

funded from the state budget. The initiative was supported by a parliamentary opposition party and a list competing in the EP elections – Živi zid. Secondly, the '67 is too much' initiative, supported by the main unions, also started campaigning for a referendum in which citizens would be called to vote on the retirement age. This referendum campaign too was used by the opposition parties campaigning in the EP, most notably the third biggest parliamentary party MOST, to show solidarity with voters and as a topic of attack on the ruling party, government and its members.

The preliminary analysis of the Croatian campaign indicates that there have been great efforts put into campaigning on social media, while key players also invested in traditional forms, such as posters and TV ads. As the campaign was quite long, parties and candidates waited until the final few weeks to launch the most expensive promo materials, TV ads and billboards. Based on ethnographic observations, these only became more visible in the media and in public spaces in the final two weeks of the campaign. Some parties that were contacted informed the research team that they did not have sufficient funds to produce TV ads and billboards, and overall there seemed to be only a small minority of all competing lists which had actually produced traditional promo materials.

The Facebook accounts of four main parliamentary parties and contenders for EP seats were analysed in this study. During the analysed period, the most active campaign-wise was that of the ruling party, HDZ, whose coalition won the previous European elections in 2014. They were closely followed by the two largest opposition parties, SDP and Most. Živi zid, the Eurosceptic party that won its first seat ever in the EP, was overall the most active on Facebook, but only 24% of their posts were campaign-related, which put them far behind in the frequency with which they used social media for communicating campaign messages (60% less than the ruling party). It is worth noting that, as in the 2014 elections, the main focus in the campaign was on national, rather than European topics, and issues, which is also well illustrated by the fact that Europe was never even mentioned in around a third of all analysed materials. However, the EU was, when mentioned, mostly presented in a positive light (largely due to the pro-EU positions of the main parties) and discussed in terms of the benefits of EU funds.

It is important to note that many parties/coalitions/groups participating in these elections that were contacted for access to promo materials simply did not respond, or replied by saying they cannot give access to materials (mostly citing time pressures). In



In addition, many of the TV ads and billboards that the research team collected through an ethnographic approach, were not readily available on websites or social media accounts of parties/coalitions, indicating a lack of transparency in the conduct of the electoral campaigns.

In the end, the results were somewhat surprising given the pre-election polls. As expected, the two biggest parties won most votes and seats, but the ruling party, HDZ, did not get the expected 5 seats and the third biggest parliamentary party, MOST, did not

win any seats. In comparison to the 2014 elections, Croatians will be sending one less EPP MEP (HDZ 4 seats), S&D will have one more MEP in the Croatian delegation (SDP 3 seats, with the fourth MEP joining after Brexit), ALDE will receive one less MEP from Croatia (Amsterdam coalition 1 seat), while the ECR group remains with one MEP (Croatian sovereigns). Two other MEPs will come from anti-system populist and protest lists/parties (citizen list of Mislav Kolakušić; Živi zid), with no existing affiliations with EP political groups.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Hrvatska demokratska zajednica (HDZ)	189	2	1	4
Socijaldemokratska partija Hrvatske (SDP)	135	4	7	3
Most nezavisnih lista (MOST)	127	-	-	0
ŽIVI ZID	79	-	-	1
Amsterdamska koalicija	-	3	1	1
Hrvatska narodna stranka - liberalni demokrati (HNS)	-	-	2	0
Bandić Milan 365 - Stranka rada i solidarnosti (BM 365)	-	1	-	0
Hrvatski suverenisti (HS)	-	-	1	1

The preliminary analysis of the Croatian campaign indicates that there have been great efforts put into campaigning on social media, while key players also invested in traditional forms, such as posters and TV ads. As the campaign was quite long, parties and candidates waited until the final few weeks to launch the most expensive promo materials, TV ads and billboards. Based on ethnographic observations, these only became more visible in the media and in public spaces in the final two weeks of the campaign. Some parties that were contacted informed the research team that they did not have sufficient funds to produce TV ads and billboards, and overall there seems to have only been a small minority of all competing lists which produced traditional promo materials.

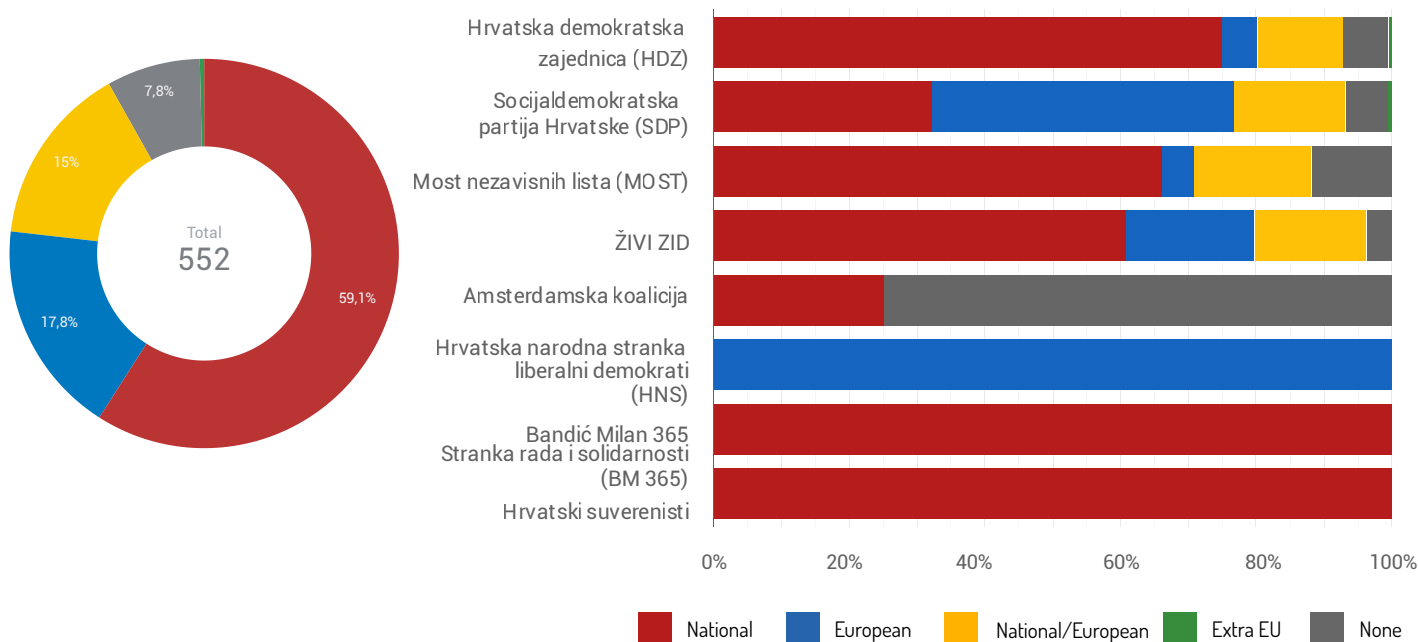
Most lists and individual candidates campaigned on social media, and many placed paid Facebook ads. The three biggest parliamentary parties focused quite heavily on the campaign on their social media, with 70-80% of all their posts in the examined period being campaign-related. The most vocal Eurosceptic party, Živi zid, was actually the most prolific on social media in this period, however, because they were following several other agendas at the same time and only around one fourth of their posts was focused on the EP campaign. Notably, the Amsterdam coalition, grouping seven parties and winning one seat, created a common FB page for the purpose of the campaign, but this account in the end was not used for campaign purposes. Instead, individual parties and candidates campaigned on their own.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The key topics pursued by candidates in their campaign have mostly been tied to national issues and development – almost two thirds of all campaign materials were mainly focused on this dimension. This may be surprising considering that these were EP elections, however, the finding is in line with the practices observed in the 2014 elections and across Europe to a great extent. The ruling party put heavy focus on national topics, most notably the development of the country and achievements of their government, but also often tied this development to EU funds. The main message being sent was ‘Croatia is being built with European money’. With rare exceptions, the ruling party’s Facebook campaign mostly presented EU as a source of funding. The only party that more meaningfully focused on European

topics was the main opposition party, SDP. It too most frequently spoke about the potential of using EU funds, but also focused on its ambitions to position Croatia as a Member State equal to others in the EU. The two other biggest parliament opposition parties, MOST and Živi zid, used the campaign to position themselves on national issues and attack the ruling party and the government. MOST even very clearly framed these elections on their FB account as a ‘referendum against the government’.

It should be noted that samples for the 4 parties that produced promotional content – Amsterdamska koalicija, HNS, BM365 and Hrvatski suverenisti – are quite limited, so their data should only be used to reach approximate conclusions about their campaign focus.

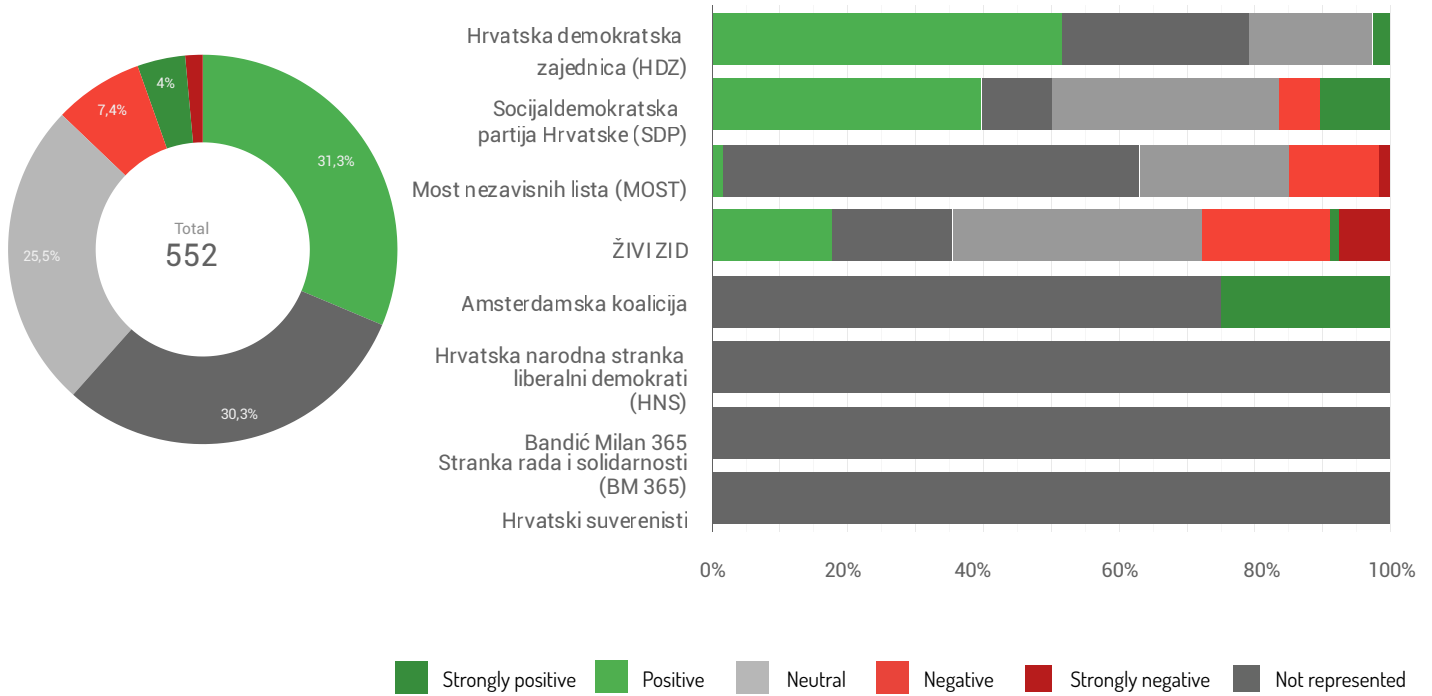


## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Given the overall focus on national topics, it does not come as a surprise that Europe was not even mentioned in around a third of all analysed materials. When it was mentioned, it is evident that there was quite a clear pro-EU position communicated across the board, primarily because of the pro-EU positions of the two biggest parties – which were also those most represented in our sample. The most positive outlook on Europe was that of the ruling party, which indicated the opportunity and ability of using EU funds as one of the main benefits of EU membership. The main opposition party, SDP, was the one which most frequently spoke about the EU in positive terms, emphasizing the opportunities offered by the use of EU funds. However, it should be noted that all the main

opposition parties also criticised the EU. Most critical of the EU, as expected, was the anti-system party Živi zid, which expressed its disagreement with the EU’s agricultural and migration policy, as well as with intra-European migration where citizens of poorer member states emigrate to richer ones. However, even this Eurosceptic party occasionally spoke positively about the EU – again, mostly related to the potential of using EU funds.

Again, samples for the 4 parties that produced promotional content – Amsterdamska koalicija, HNS, BM365 and Hrvatski suverenisti – are quite limited, so their data should only be used to reach approximate conclusions about their campaign focus – which seems not to have been tied to Europe.

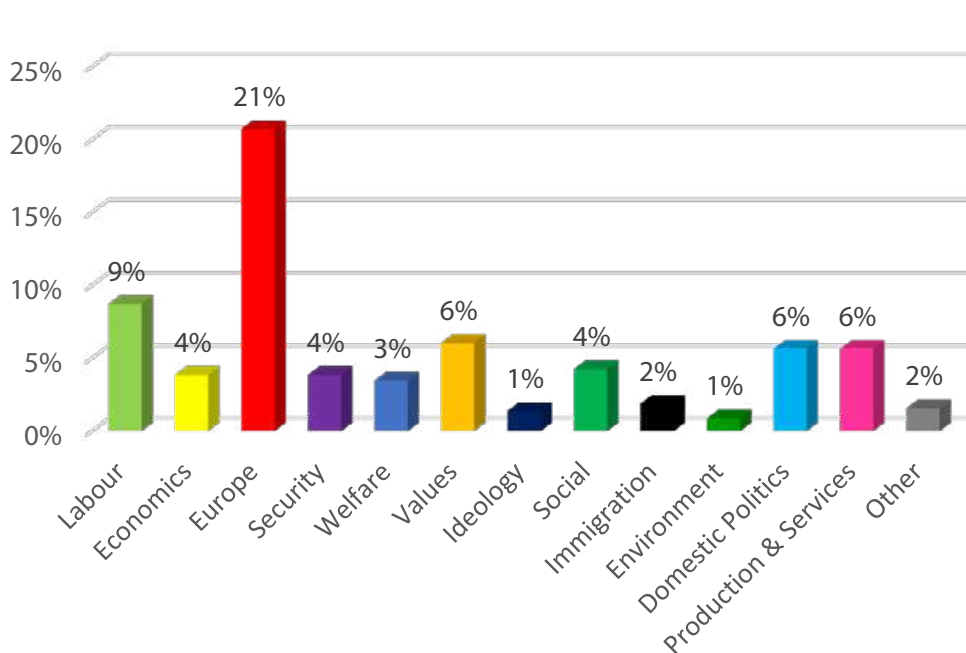


### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

While overall, Europe was rarely in the main focus on campaign materials, it was most frequently mentioned as a topic area across campaign content. The fact that almost every fifth material did mention Europe stems from the fact that almost all key players focused, at least to some extent, on the benefits of EU funds, with the ruling party, which is also best represented in our sample, putting concentrated focus on the country's development based on

EU funds.

During the campaign, emphasis was also put on a range of other topics, but these rarely managed to achieve a meaningful place on the agenda. This is likely due to several very fragmented campaigns which tried to cover areas and topics which were far too wide and hence often lacked focus.

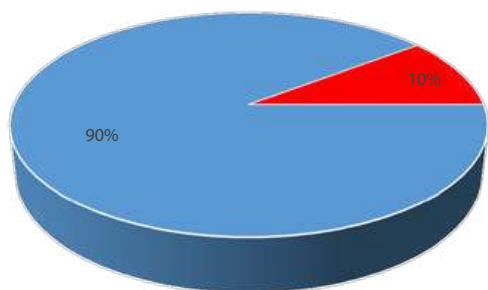


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

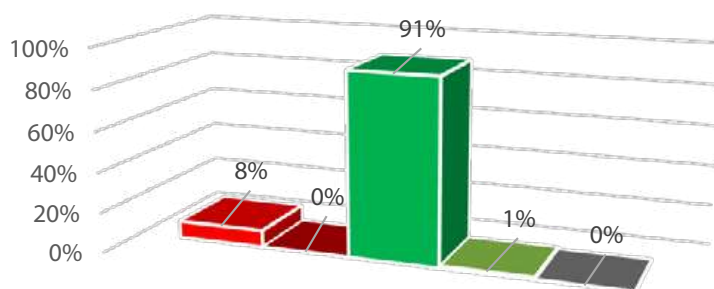
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

The extent to which Croatian campaigns were negative (10% of analysed materials) is in line with the EU average. This information speaks partly about the main strategies of key players, with two main parties focusing on the promotion of positive messages. However, it should also be noted that while the main focus of materials may not have been on attacking individuals or institutions, many more materials than might be suggested by the '10%' had negative undertones or contained an explicit attack, albeit not central to the message. The most negative campaigns were led by

the third biggest parliamentary party, MOST, and the anti-system party Živi zid. MOST in particular used the campaign to position itself as the alternative to the 'corrupt' ruling party and government and quite often used campaign materials to attack the Prime Minister, government, ruling party and its other party officials that were on the media agenda at the time. Hence, it does not come as a surprise that by far the most common subjects of negative messages were national institutions, parties and politicians. This is also the practice most commonly observed in other EU countries in these elections.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



- Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Inst. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

5

N. Accounts monitored\*

943

N. Posts produced

236016

Engagement\*\*

56,2 %

percentage of posts on EU campaign topics

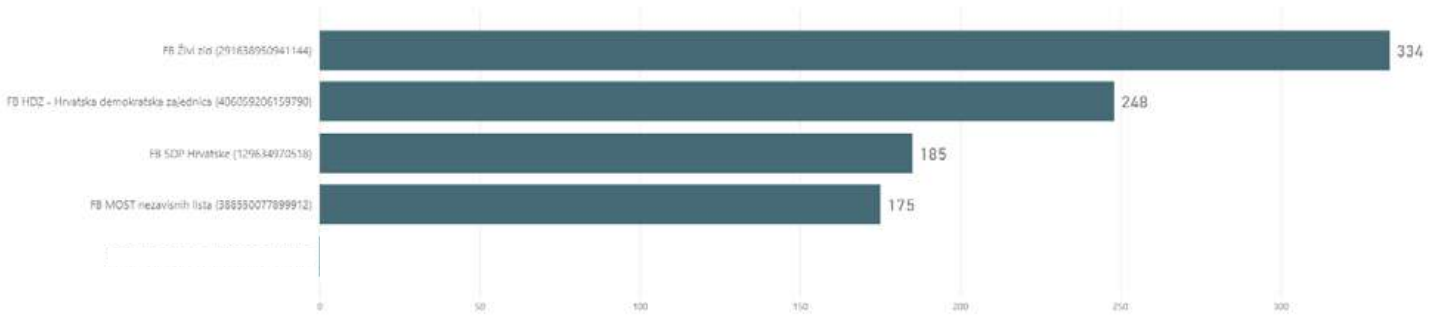
As expected, the most prolific account during the examined period was that of the anti-system and Eurosceptic party Živi zid, as it gathers mostly young people and consistently uses social media to communicate with its voters. Its Facebook page has the most followers of all examined accounts – more than 3 times more than the next. Specifically, Živi zid, at the time of the campaign, had around 190k followers, while the two biggest parties had around 60k each. Given the extent of their reach on social media, it is no surprise that Živi zid was the most active and engaged. A fifth account, that of Amsterdam coalition, was also included in the analysis, but it did not produce any posts in the examined period. Although Živi zid had the most active account, it promoted several agendas during the campaign period, so only around every one fourth of their posts was focused on the EP campaign, unlike the

other three parties, which published around 70-80% campaign posts within this time period. Hence, the average of the 56% of all posts that focused on the campaign should be interpreted as quite skewed by the social media communication strategies of Živi zid. If we assume that the majority of people following the party's FB accounts are those who support them, it cannot come as a surprise that in most cases FB posts received a favourable reception from followers. It seems that the smaller opposition parties, MOST and Živi zid, in particular mostly attracted attention from their supporters, who express agreement with their messages. It is interesting to examine in a more qualitative manner the type of posts that have received negative reactions from audiences on social media. For example, based on ethnographic observations of campaign-related posts, it appears that the 'angry' reaction was used to

communicate different messages to the pro-EU ruling party, HDZ, and the Eurosceptic party Živi zid. 'Angry' reactions to HDZ's posts seem to come from members of the public who disagree with the party's messages (e.g. interpretations of the state's development, descriptions of candidates and other party members), indicating that

not only party supporters engage with the party on Facebook. On the other hand, it appears that 'angry' reactions on Živi zid's account come from their supporters who are 'angered' by developments in the country which the party is emphasising as problematic – i.e. they actually agree with the party's messages.

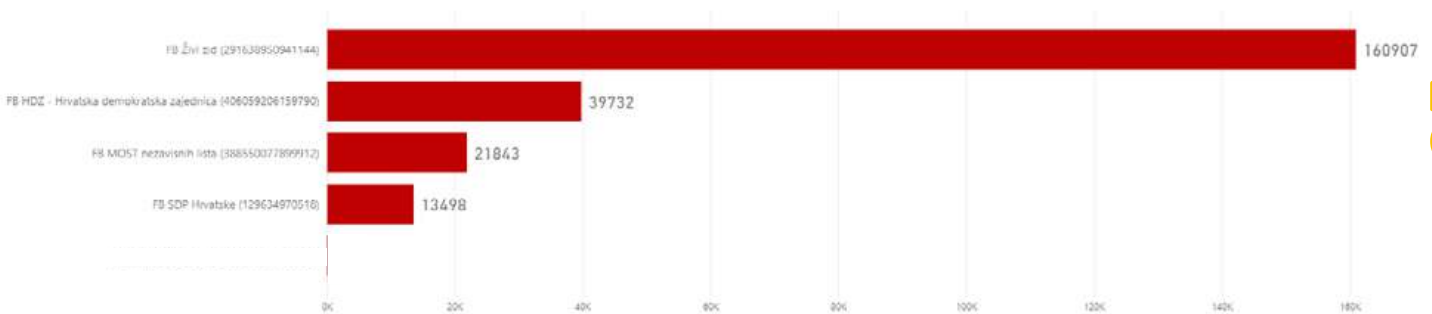
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

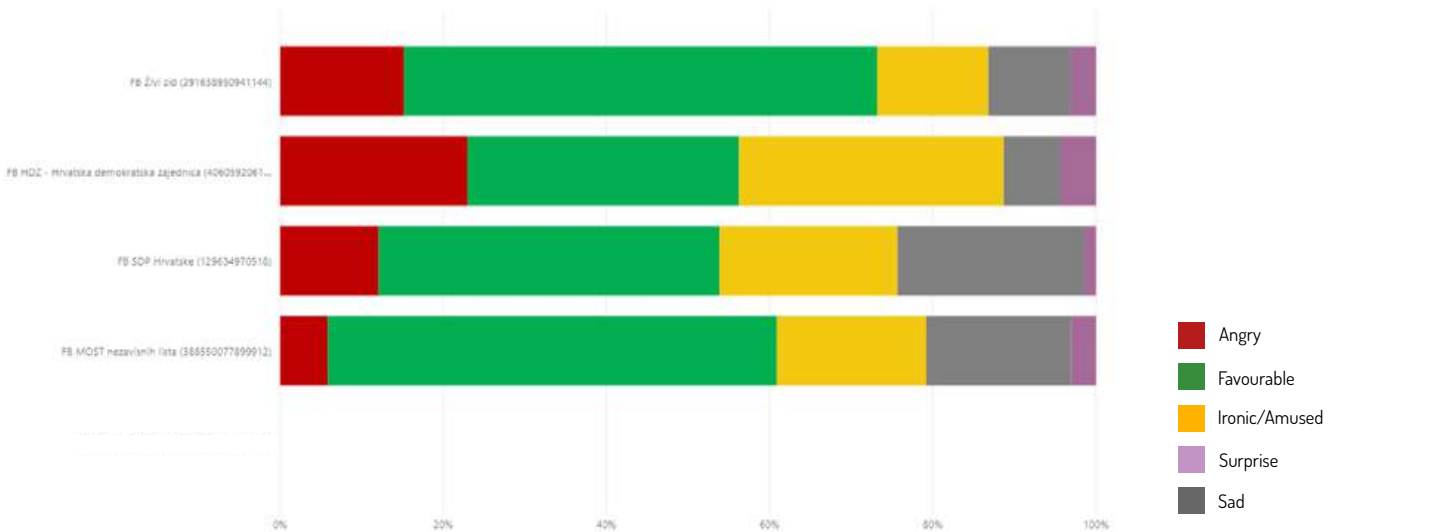
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# CYPRUS

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Membership: **2004**

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **847,008**

Number of MEPs: **6**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The Republic of Cyprus (RoC) took part for the fourth time in the EP elections, after its accession in 2004. A total of 6 MEPs were elected by the citizens of the RoC. For the EP elections, unlike the other national elections, the country is not separated into provinces. The place of residence is not a restriction; thus, the candidates are doing a cross-country campaign. For this reason, the EP elections are the only elections in Cyprus which citizens of the Republic who are residing in the Turkish-occupied areas (mostly Turkish Cypriots) can also participate. Also, a few months before the Election Day, a law was passed in the House of Representatives, which automatically registered the Turkish Cypriot citizens of the RoC in the electoral lists (regardless of whether they live in the government-controlled or the occupied areas). Due to the automatic registration, 81 thousand Turkish Cypriots had the right to vote, a record number after the first general elections of 1960. The campaign was officially launched on April 16 (the law defines the pre-election period as 40 days before the elections Day). Citizens over 18 years have the right to vote and all citizens over 21 have the right to stand for the election. The RoC has a presidential system and the election of the President is the most salient electoral event on the island. The party system in Cyprus is rather stable yet after the economic crisis, signs of party fragmentation emerged. Apart from the two biggest parties, the right-wing DISY (Democratic Rally) and the communist AKEL (Progressive Party of the Working People), there is the centre party of DIKO (Democratic Party) which was recently split, and the result was the creation of DEPA (Democratic Front-). In addition, we find some smaller parties such as the centre-left EDEK (Unified Democratic Union of the Centre), the green KOP (Movement of Ecologists-Citizens' Cooperation Greens) and the extreme-right wing party of ELAM (National Popular Front). Finally, we find two more insurgent parties, namely Citizens' Alliance and the Solidarity Movement, which were created by prominent members of the two largest parties (AKEL and DISY) on the basis of bringing change to the old and 'corrupted' status quo. While party coalitions are more frequent during presidential elections, due to the higher number of parties as well as the high threshold of 16.5% that a party needs to be able to elect a representative in the EP, coalitions were formed for the EP elections too. These concerned KOP that formed a common campaign platform with Citizens' Alliance and DIKO that collaborated with the Solidarity Movement.

Regarding public opinion towards the EU, the majority of Cypriots are supporters of the EU (61% consider EU membership beneficial and 84% demand Europe to have more important role

in Cyprus). However, there is a high percentage of citizens who do not know the basic functions of the EU. Parties' positions are in line with the Europhile citizens' attitudes except for the extreme right-wing ELAM, which can be characterized as Eurosceptic without though demanding Cyprus' withdrawal from the EU.

The regulations for the EP electoral campaign are the same with parliamentary or presidential elections. Political advertisements are allowed in public and private media, although political advertisements which mock or attack other politicians or political parties are prohibited by the respective law. Political advertisements can be displayed in private and public spaces, but it is illegal to poster them too close to public roads. Overall the campaign for the EP elections was rather calm without generating much of the public's interest. The first days of the campaign went without a meaningful dialogue among the candidates, as public opinion and the media were focused on the harsh murders of immigrant women by the first Cypriot serial killer. This event overshadowed for many days the election campaign, as was something unprecedented for the Cypriot society. At the same time, Turkey launched intense violations in the RoC's Exclusive Economic Zone, by even taking a drill into the RoC's sea area. All parties called for the assistance of EU partners and the safeguarding of Cyprus' rights by enforcing sanctions against Turkey. The debate was mainly centred on which EP political group could be more supportive to Cyprus and more likely to push for imposing sanctions against Turkey. Only a few days after the election date was announced, the implementation of the new national health system that Cypriot citizens demanded for years was put in motion. A big part of the debate was also focused on the possibility of ELAM's joining the EP for the first time. Parties accused ELAM for being racist and fascist and the smaller parties of the centre considered a necessity to outrun ELAM in the race for the sixth seat. This was particularly evident for the case of EDEK, which was in direct competition with ELAM and this is why it used a harsher tone underlining that electing a representative from the far-right was an issue of paramount peril. Finally, AKEL chose a Turkish Cypriot academic as one of its candidates (who after all managed to be elected). This choice raised controversy as for the first time after 1960 a Turkish Cypriot had serious chances for been elected in the EP.

In terms of campaign material, the 383 posts that were coded show that parties did not campaign as much as in previous national elections. This number of campaign posts situates Cyprus parties in the middle of the European ranking. Some explanations for this number can be the fact that the parties'



campaign was basically candidate-based except for AKEL, which run a centrally designed campaign. In addition, parties in general allocated a small budget for the campaign without investing in TV commercials. Instead they preferred to organize social gatherings and events. In general, the biggest part of the campaign suffered from lack of innovation and creativity with discussions focusing mainly on national issues. The parties' decision to run a rather inexpensive campaign can be due to the fact that they had seen

these elections as less salient.

The elections results were rather expected. The biggest increase in vote share was gained by ELAM, which despite its failure to win the sixth seat amidst a hostile campaign environment in which it faced the scandal of military-skipping by its party leaders, it managed to triple its percentage in the period of the last six years. Lastly, it is important to note that Cyprus is the only EU country which did not elect a woman MEP.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Symmachia Politon & Kinima Oikologon – Sinergasia Politon	75	1	-	0
Dimokratiko Komma	69	1	-	1
Kinima Sosialdimokraton	53	3	3	1
Dimokratikos Sinagermos	53	3	1	2
Symmachia Politon	40	-	-	0
Kinima Oikologon – Sinergasia Politon	30	-	-	0
Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenounorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou	22	1	-	2
Dimokratiki Parataxi	22	-	-	0
(Dimokratiko Komma) – Kinima Allilengyis	4	-	-	0
Ethniko Laiko Metopo	-	2	-	0

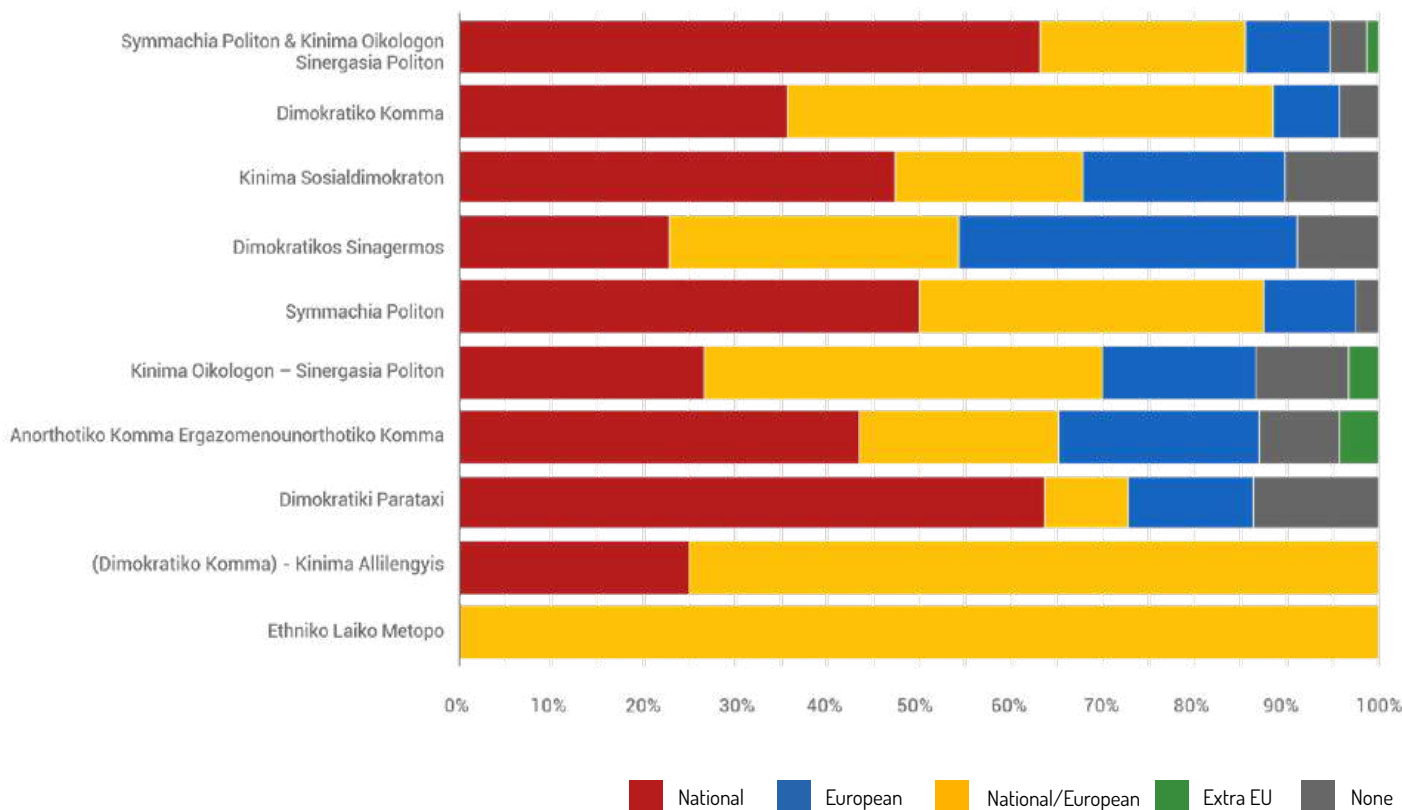
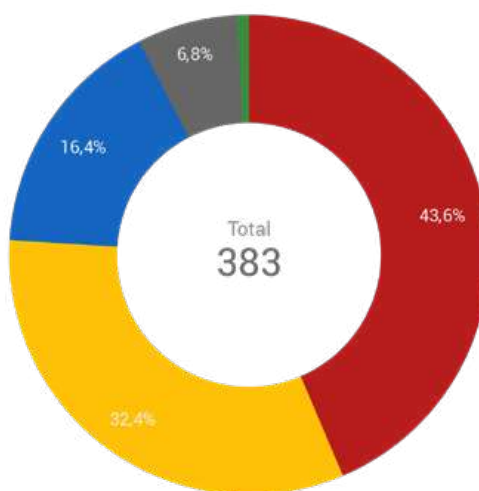
The preliminary analysis of the Croatian campaign indicates that there have been great efforts but Social media turned out to be the main communication tool of the party campaign. Besides, Cyprus came 13th out of the 27 member states regarding the number of Facebook posts published by parties during the campaign. EP elections in Cyprus are considered second order elections, and as a consequence parties invested considerably smaller campaign budgets. Instead they made extensive use of Facebook, which is costless compared to TV or press advertisements. Facebook was used to cover events

during the campaign (e.g. publishing photos or live coverage). Two parties, EDEK and DISY, combined social content with posters, press and TV advertisements. The coalition between Greens and Citizens' Alliance was the most active on Facebook. In contrast, AKEL did not use social media to the same extent, yet almost all of the party's posts were qualitative in terms of its messages. AKEL also was the first party that did Live Q&A sessions using Facebook. It should be noted that ELAM was banned from Facebook due to its neo-nazi nature and use of hate speech.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Overall political parties did not focus on discussing issues related to the European dimension. They instead organized their campaign based on national issues or national issues in which the EU is expected to provide solutions, like the Turkish violations (coded as “National/European” issue). Some notable national issues were: the new national health system, the need for a national minimum wage, the high rents for accommodation and the participation of Turkish Cypriots in the EP elections. The immigration policies were also categorized as a “National/European” theme since all parties supported and, in some cases, demanded a common

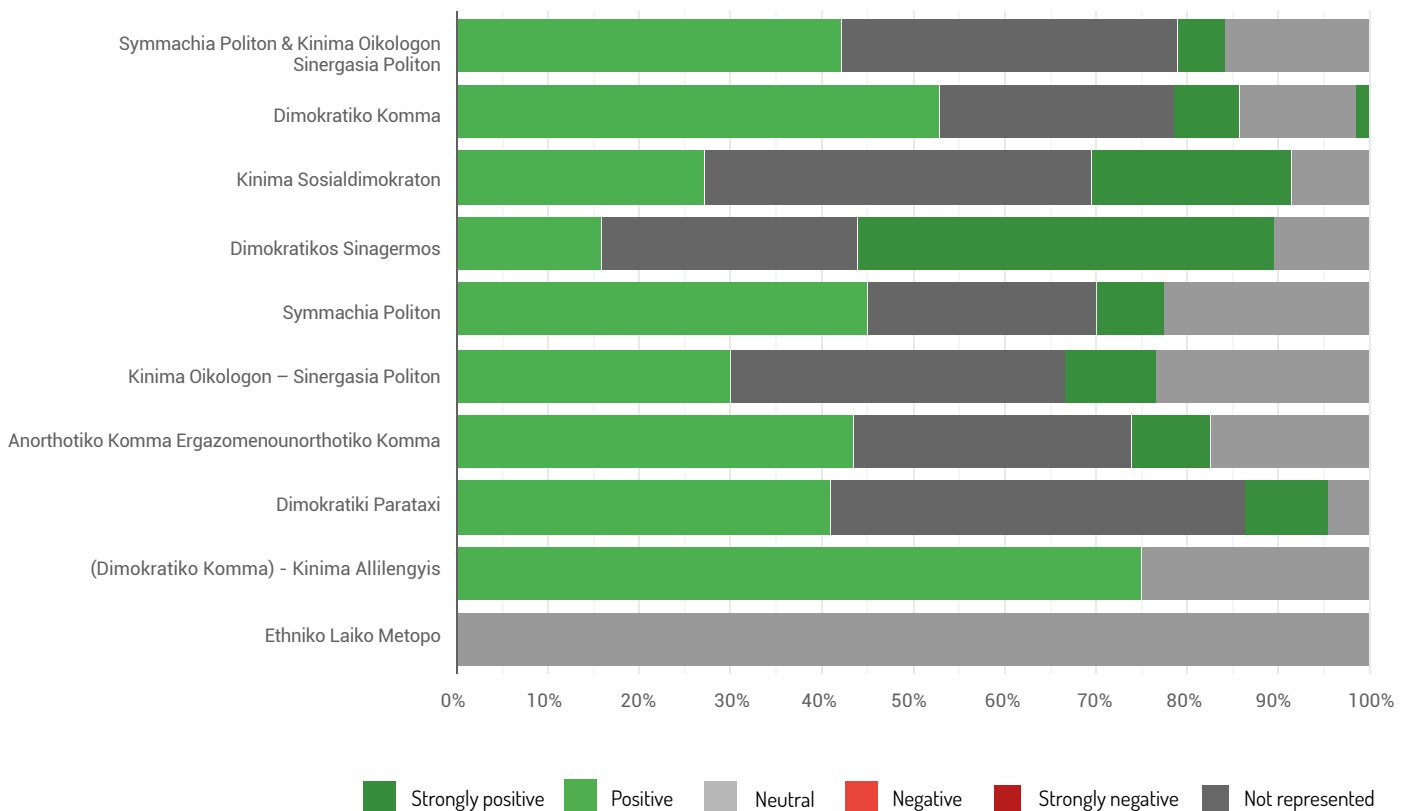
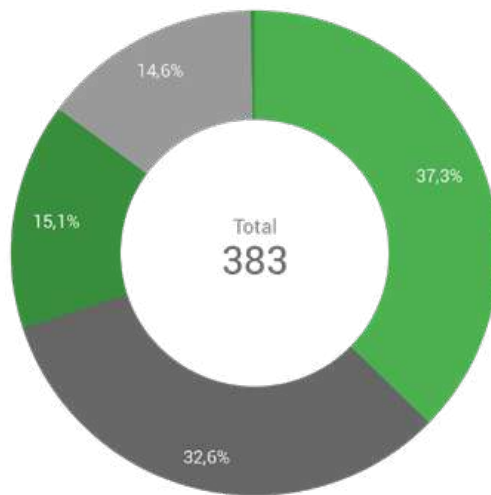
European immigration policy that would benefit the countries of the South (especially Cyprus). As expected, the party which focused more on European issues was DISY, since this is considered to be the most pro-European party in Cyprus. AKEL maintained a more critical position, demanding for a more social Europe, yet the majority of its posts were not exclusively linked to the EU. The coalition of KOP with the Citizens’ Alliance chose to focus mostly on national issues concerning citizens’ everyday life. The newly founded DEPA also focused on the national dimension, a choice that reflects the party’s lack of preparation in shaping views and suggestions about the EU.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Cyprus flags amongst the most Europhile member states. The same is reflected in the parties' positions. While the ruling DISY appeared to be the most pro-EU party in Cyprus, the rest of the parties also presented the EU in a positive way. This graph highlights the complete absence of Eurosceptic political forces in Cyprus. The extreme right-wing ELAM can be classified as Eurosceptic yet due

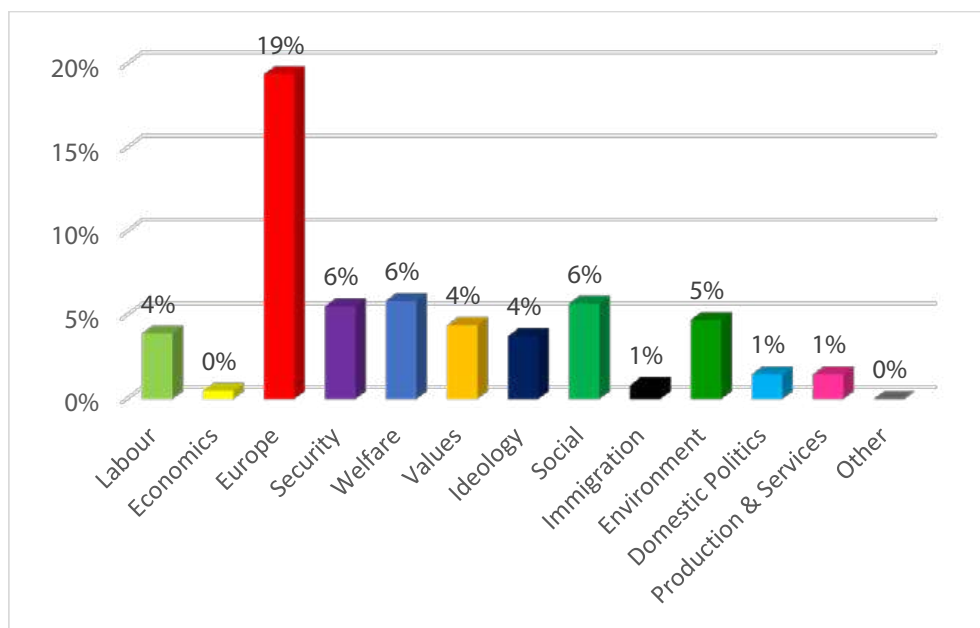
to the ban of its presence from Facebook, there was not enough material to represent its position. Cypriots consider the country's accession to the EU as an important and vital development. Political parties share this view too by stressing that being a small country, EU membership was necessary for Cyprus.



## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The graph shows that the campaign was spread on a variety of topics which concerned mainly major national issues. Europe emerges as a dominant topic in the campaign discussions since all parties mentioned how beneficial their membership in the respective European party families is. In contrast to other EU countries, in Cyprus the debate about environment and climate change was not discussed by the candidates. The only relevant reference to the

environment interventions came from the KOP party. Additionally, very low, almost absent, was the reference to the economy, an indication that Cyprus has left behind the financial crisis of the previous years. The biggest part of the content was intended to promote and cover party events or present the biographies of the candidates (Who is who).

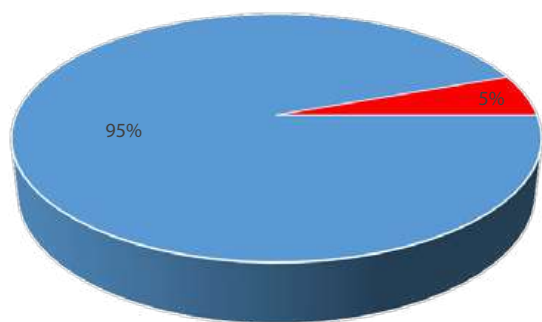


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

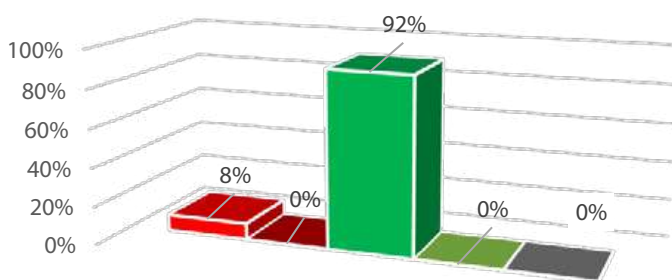
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

The political dialogue in Cyprus was 'civilized' with the parties being reluctant to be engaged with conflictual and negative deliberations. As appears in the graph, only 5% of the content was classified as negative, which shows that Cypriot politicians were not keen to accuse each other. In this 5% of negative posts, we can identify some heated debates, especially

between EDEK and ELAM, including provocative and negative statements on behalf of the EDEK party as well as the rest of the political parties (yet to a lesser extent) against the extreme right wing ELAM party, in an effort to create a front against it. Overall though the biggest part of the campaign was characterized rather calm.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Instit. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other

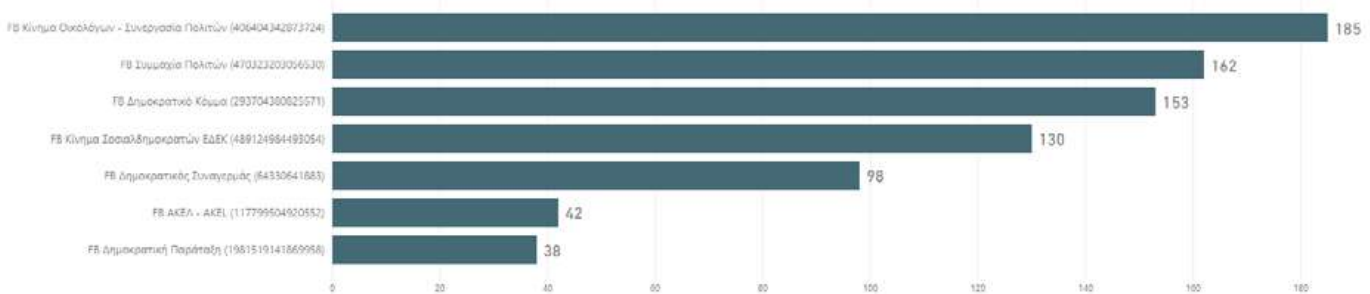
## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



The majority of all parties' posts contained a sentiment of appreciation and stimulation of the party's collective characteristics. Since most social media posts were related to party events and gatherings, the objective was primarily to mobilise their party members. That said most parties seem to have achieved this objective since, as the graph shows, the vast majority of the generated reactions of users were favourable to the parties' posts. We notice an increased number of posts by Facebook users who expressed anger to the posts uploaded by the coalition between

the green party and Citizens' Alliance but this linked to the posts which predominantly depicted problems and malfunctions of Cyprus politics and citizens' everyday life more generally. The expression of anger by Facebook users expresses their sharing of negative feelings that the coalition aimed at emphasizing. In addition, it was noted that DISY, AKEL and the Citizens' Alliance had a significant percentage of posts that were ironic against the rest of the political parties, a sentiment that was equally shared by their respective followers.

### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY

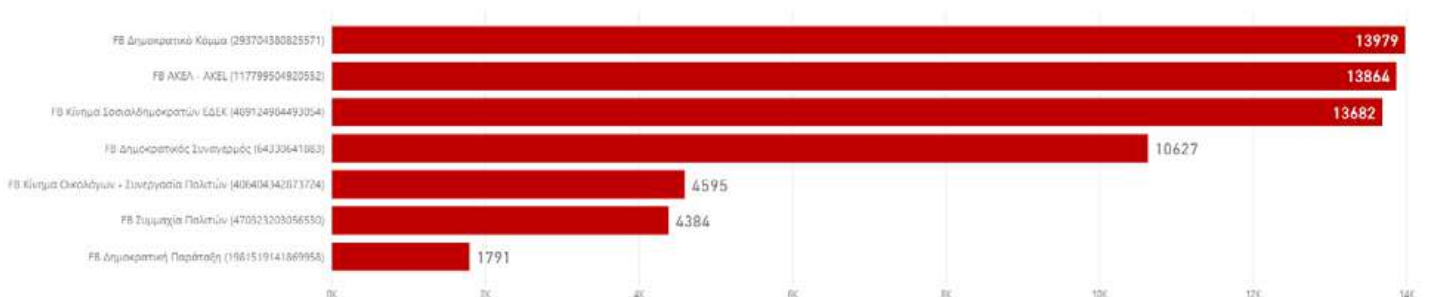


73

\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

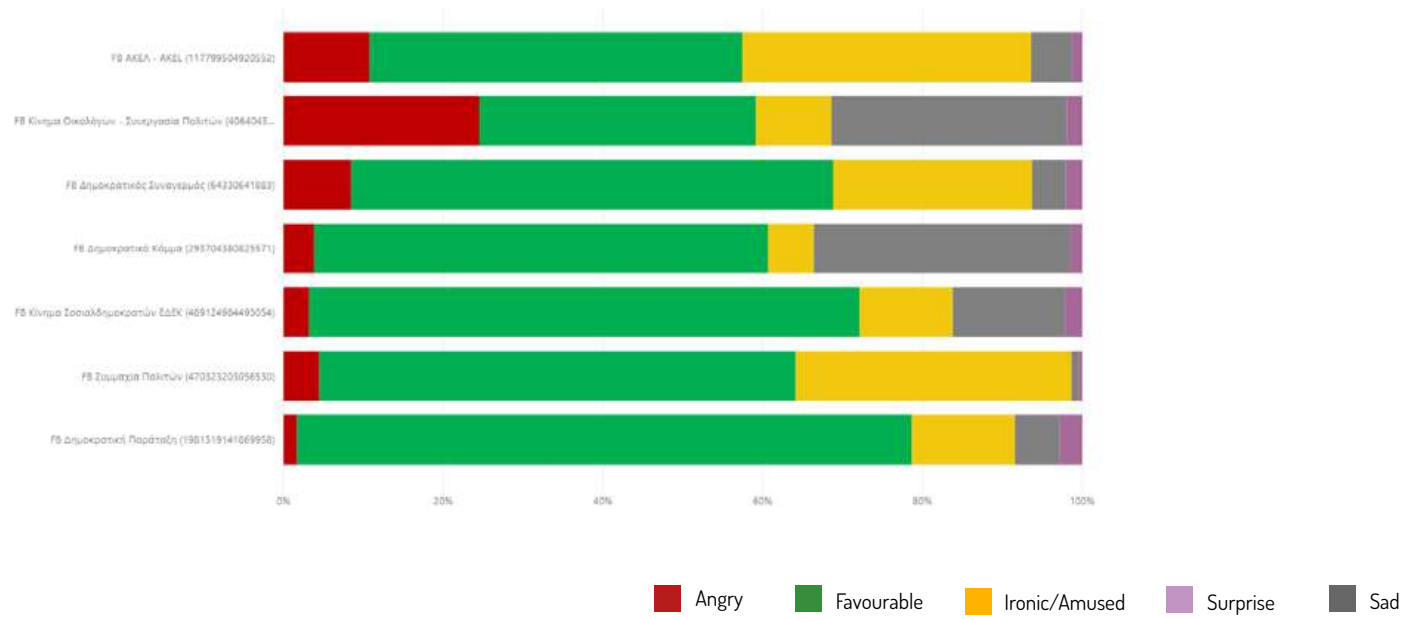
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.









# CZECH REPUBLIC

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Membership: **2004**

European area: **Eastern Europe**

Population: **10,538,275**

Number of MEPs: **21**

Election day: **May 24–25, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Local**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

In the Czech Republic elections were held from May 24 to May 25. Legally, the campaign started on January 17 when the presidential declaration came into action. From that day on, all the rules imposed by the Office for Supervision of Political Parties and Movements had to be respected (this includes financial limits, transparent money flow, publishing donor names or ad tagging on Facebook, print, billboards, etc.)

For the European elections, the Czech Republic act as one constituency. Electoral votes were divided by a proportional system (d'Hondt method), the election threshold is 5 %. Voters can cast their vote to one political party but can mark up to two preferred candidates. Parties competed for 21 mandates, lists of candidates could contain up to 28 candidates. All citizens of the EU could vote on our territory if they have been registered for residence in our country for at least 45 days. Age of vote is 18.

All the parties are eligible for free TV ads airing time on the public Czech Television. OOH, advertising has almost no limits, but all the posters and billboards have to be marked by those who submitted them. When it comes to municipal areas, they could be used for pre-election presentation only if the mayor proclaimed it. This kind of presentation had to be free of charge and open to all competing parties/movements.

The dominant political force in the country is the movement ANO 2011 led by Andrej Babiš, which holds stable 30 % preferences. Together with ČSSD (Social Democratic Party), they create the government. This coalition holds thanks to the Communist party support. Yet data shows both Communist and Social Democrats are losing voters support to ANO. Opposition parties are united in so-called "Democratic Bloc" consisting of ODS (Civic Democrats), Czech Pirate Party, STAN (Mayors and the Independents), TOP 09 and KDU-ČSL (Christian Democrats). SPD (Freedom and Direct Democracy) stands aside but tends to support the government.

The Czech political scene is highly polarized at the moment, Miloš Zeman has been elected as a president for the second term yet he divides the country. Andrej Babiš government continues to have steady economic growth, but due to his massive conflict of interest huge part of the society is mobilized and striking against his government. Despite the unity of governmental parties and SPD on domestic topics, they presented quite different stances to the EU. According to public opinion which tends to see "the Brussels" as some superior power who dictate the Czechia what to eat or who to welcome in our country all the parties called for strengthening the Czech Republic. ČSSD and KSCM went further and presented red cards for the EU or urgent need for the reformation. Neither ANO,

neither ČSSD called for the "Czexit". SPD covers the "angry voters" - those who feel the constant threat from "the dictate of Brussels and mainly immigrants who violate our people and profit from our social system". This party made an alliance with Marine Le Pen's National Front, Salvini's Five Stars or Wilder's Party for Freedom. As part of their campaign, they organized a music concert on Wenceslas Square and published tons of pictures and videos to promote their alliance. Neither "Democratic Bloc" was united. While TOP 09-STAN and KDU-ČSL stayed strongly EU positive, conservative ODS called for extensive reformation and stronger position of Czechia and Czech Pirate Party remained critical. All the parties basically followed the common opinion of their voters.

For a few years now the main domestic affair related to the EU is the Farm Storks Nest built by prime minister Babiš with the help of European subsidy. OLAF acknowledges this subsidy as a fraud. Prime minister's former holding Agrofert is constantly accused of misusing European subsidies, but while the supporters of opposition parties demonstrate against him, his own supporters seem to be not affected.

Czech voters are exposed to nonstop campaigning marathon there are now elections every year in the country. All the political parties were quite active during the campaign and voters were more or less mobilized from the previous elections. Parties presented usually about 3 social posts per day on their party accounts plus candidates presented themselves on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, which was for the first time extensively used for campaigning. Here an interesting exception from the analyzed data set represents the ANO party. Their FB account became active literary last few days prior to the election, yet much bigger traffic was on the personal account of the prime minister, who was driving force in the campaign.

Campaigns are professional well organized but not really bringing anything special, here few highlights were. The most-watched TV ad was created by TOP 09-STAN which was inspired by one of the most Czech popular movies. This spot gained about 2,4 million views and around 7 thousand shares on Facebook. Yet, the coalition did not really translate this to the electoral success.

Czech Pirate Party also published a very successful clip - a song sang by their national leader Ivan Bartoš with innovative lyrics naming main domestic issues plus call for voting in European elections.

Probably the most discussed, criticized and praised campaign was the one presented by ANO which was inspired by Trump's campaign and presented the red caps with the sign "Strong Czechia" on it. Prime Minister Babiš openly acknowledged that this campaign is related to "Make America Great Again" of Donald Trump.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

 Total contents  
276

 Social contents  
257

 Poster and press  
8

 Commercials  
11

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy (KSČM)	58	-	-	1
Občanská demokratická strana (ODS)	50	-	2	4
Česká strana sociálně demokratická (ČSSD)	49	1	1	0
Česká pirátská strana (ČPS)	39	-	2	3
Svoboda a přímá demokracie - Tomio Okamura (SPD)	35	-	1	2
Křesťanská a demokratická unie - Československá strana lidová (KDU-ČSL)	22	-	1	2
Hnutí ANO 2011 (ANO)	4	6	2	6
(Starostové, regionální partneři a TOP 09) - STAN	Not monitored	-	1	3
Starostové, regionální partneři a TOP 09	Not monitored	1	1	0

All Czech parties used their free TV ads airing time on the public Czech Television. When it comes to the print ads, ANO 2011 was the most active and present in the most read Czech tabloid (Blesk) almost on a daily basis. All parties had rather intense activity on their Facebook page. The only exception was ANO 2011, which almost did not use its profile during the campaign and communicated through its leader's Facebook page (the data were not collected). While the Tomio Okamura's SPD has published the largest share of Facebook posts in the period under research, not all of them concerned the European elections. They were often very long posts on domestic politics, migration or Islam, as well as posts intensively attacking other political parties, but without direct links to the elections.

Although SPD has published almost twice as many posts as the second most active Social Democratic party, engagement was on a rather lower level when compared with i. e. Czech Pirate Party (the highest engagement) which focused more on their program priorities or the introduction of candidates ('Humans of Pirates' series). The Communist Party published surprisingly frequently on its profile, most often photos from candidates' meetings with voters across the country. For all political parties, a huge part of posts was the campaign agenda, invitations to electoral debates and meetings with voters. The parties also often communicated their candidate's achievement in the European Parliament.

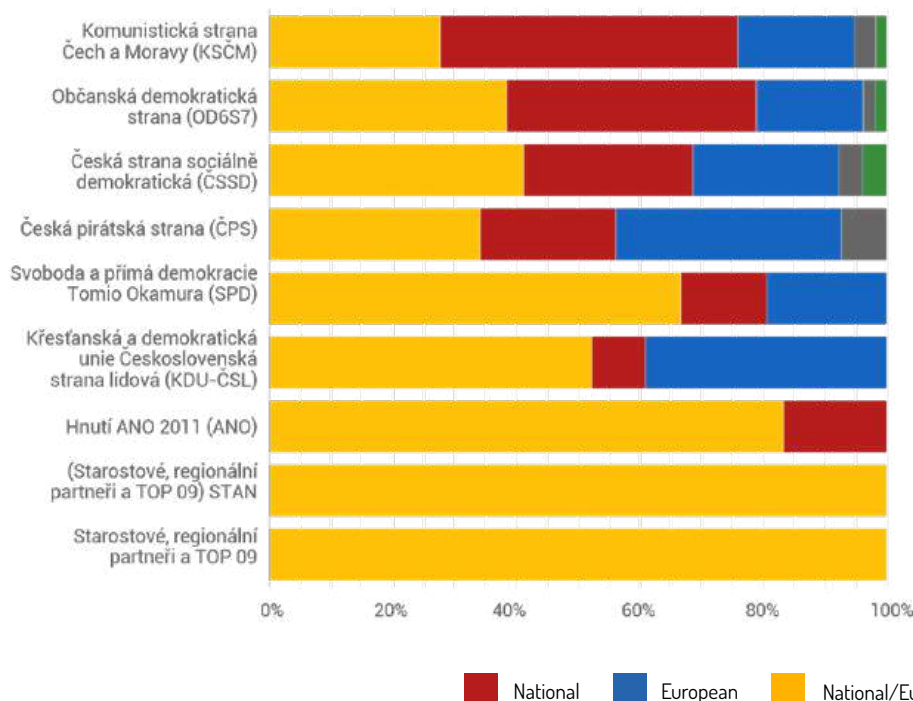
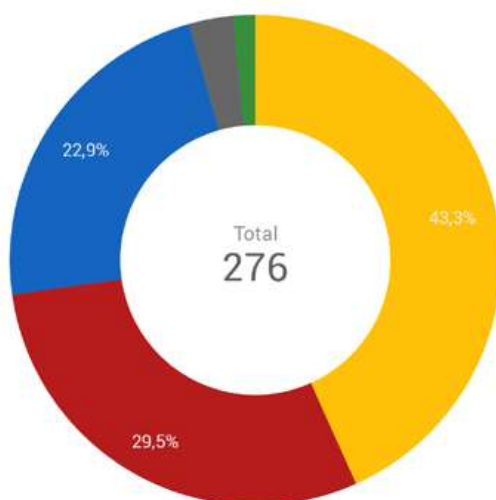
## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Second order election approach claims that issues communicated in the campaign are usually more focused on local topics. Here, the results might look surprising for a country with a reputation of EU skeptics.

Issues and campaign topics predominantly focused on both - national and European dimension, this was followed by national and once again the European dimension. One of the explanations is that parties were strongly focusing on introducing candidates as European politicians. ODS (Civic Democrats) used the claim "We are the heart of Europe"; TOP 09 a Starostové (TOP 09 and Mayors) were protecting "Europe and its values". KDU-ČSL (Christian Democrats) were communicating pro-EU agenda yet emphasizing the need for reforms and changes. But ANO 2011 the victor of the elections was saying "We will protect Czechia" and simultaneously

promoting the success of its MEPs who ran for the second time. KSČM - Communist party promoted their leaders as the best to represent us in Europe and at the same time advocating for huge changes within the EU (they even communicated that if their goals won't be met in three years, they will initiate talks about leaving the EU). Europe and the EU were also communicated by SPD (Freedom and direct vote party) but in a completely different meaning, the advocated for "common sense" Europe with strong antimigration policies. All the negativity was directed at the EU "the Brussels". The party leader Tomio Okamura used in the campaign support from Marie Le Pen, Matteo Salvini, and Gerd Wilders.

Pirate Party on the favorite of the election used the claim Europe needs Pirates. Issues were less important the main focus was on the candidates.



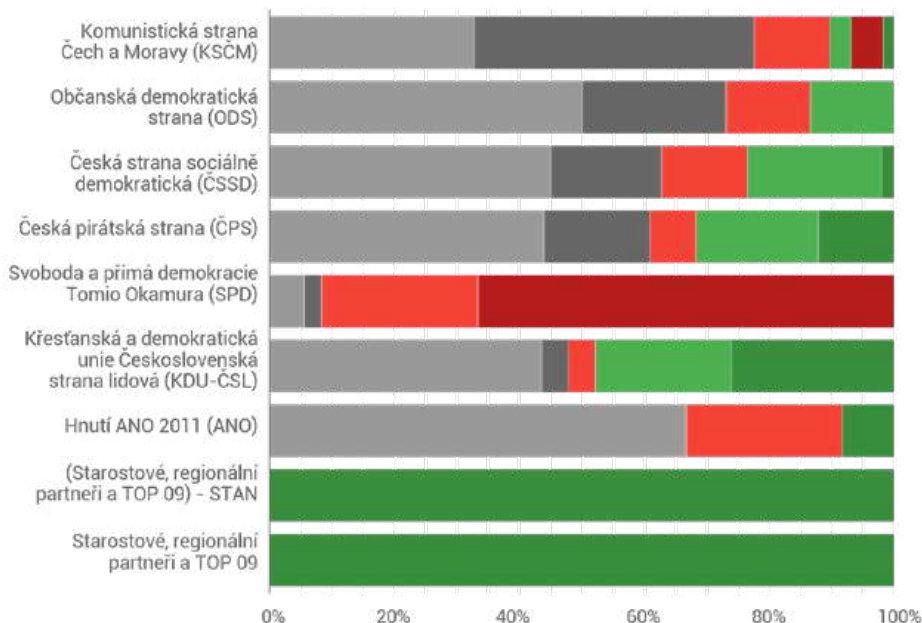
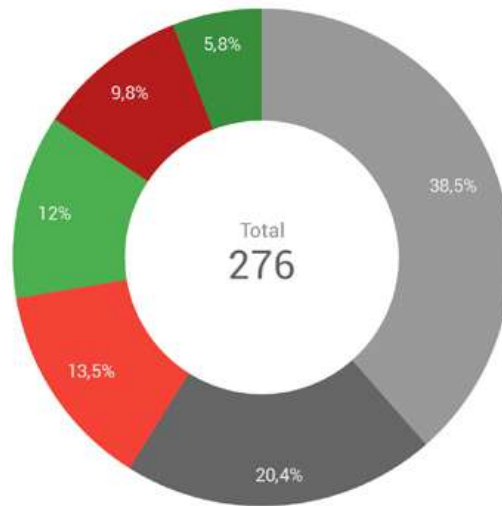
## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

European politics, European Parliament, Brussels these words have very often negative connotation or negative meaning. Therefore, the EU, Brussels or Europe were not really verbally represented in the campaign.

The only openly anti the EU, the antimigration party is Tomio Okamura's SPD (Freedom and Direct Vote) and the only party with strongly positive rhetoric was the coalition of TOP 09 and STAN (TOP 09 and Mayors). In spite of their strong pro-EU campaign, the party advocated for Europe they did not talk about the EU. The majority of the party were neutral, or they simply ignored the

European issues and focused on the domestic agenda or globally recognized issues – such as global warming, climate change, the dual quality of food, strong representations of the country, etc. The campaign issues were clearly “European” yet parties would try to literally cover it up. The best example can be ANO party with their special campaign logo. They used party logo, added Czech and the EU flag. The interesting fact is that the Czech flag covered the EU flag almost completely.

This EP election campaign, the Czech flag was unusually visually present.



■ Strongly positive 
 ■ Positive 
 ■ Neutral 
 ■ Negative 
 ■ Strongly negative 
 ■ Not represented

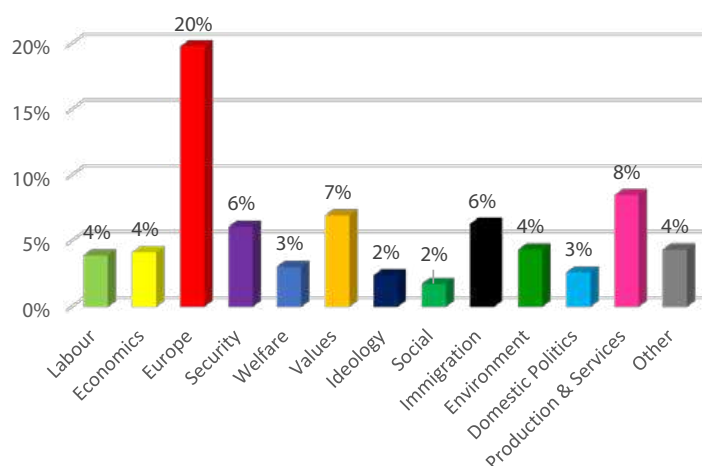
## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The topics of the campaign were very broad, there was not one topic standing out. We can more talk about clusters of topics joining the local topic with the European agenda. Parties were focusing on protecting “Czech interests”, a stronger position in the European Union, pointing out what they already have delivered and what they plan to do which we can see as “Europe”. Here, the interesting fact is parties used in a positive way the word Europe (such as we are part of Europe, we need strong representation in Europe, whereas the EU, was used in a more negative meaning. Interestingly enough, one

topic was standing out – the dual food quality (represented here in the column product service). The quality of food was communicated almost by every analyzed party.

Migration was less significant in the European elections as predicted and compared to the national elections in 2017. The issue was almost exclusively communicated by the party SPD (Svoboda a přímá Demokracie Freedom and direct vote).

Generally, the topics were less critical towards the EU than predicted.



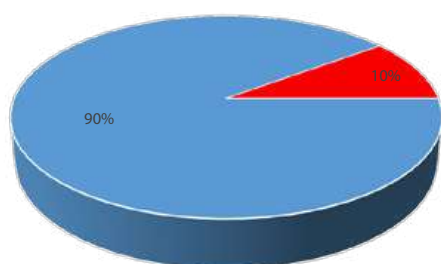
\*Multiple variables – the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

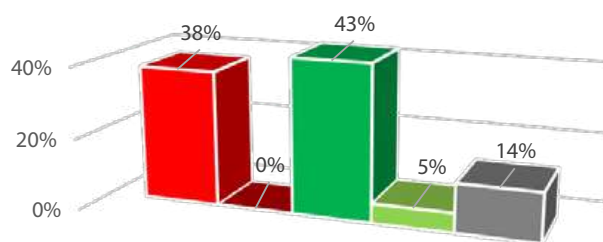
To summarize the negativity of the campaign, we can say the following. The posts were predominantly positive or better put it was 50 shades of „constructive criticism “towards the EU and advocating for better and stronger Czechia. The main campaign goal was to mobilize voters member base (the voter’s turnout is extremely low in this type of elections which represents a big problem especially for government parties), therefore, parties were communicating and more their candidates’ qualities than their aims and visions for the

EU. A big part of the campaign was focusing on highlighting the importance of going to vote.

The negativity focused on either local political issues or “the Brussels”. For instance, in criticism of the prime minister these issues were combined (the conflict of interest, the role of the EU, etc.) The interesting point is the positive attitude towards the word Europe and negative attitude towards the actual term the EU, which was clearly emphasized and distinguished even by openly pro EU political parties.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Instit. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other



## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



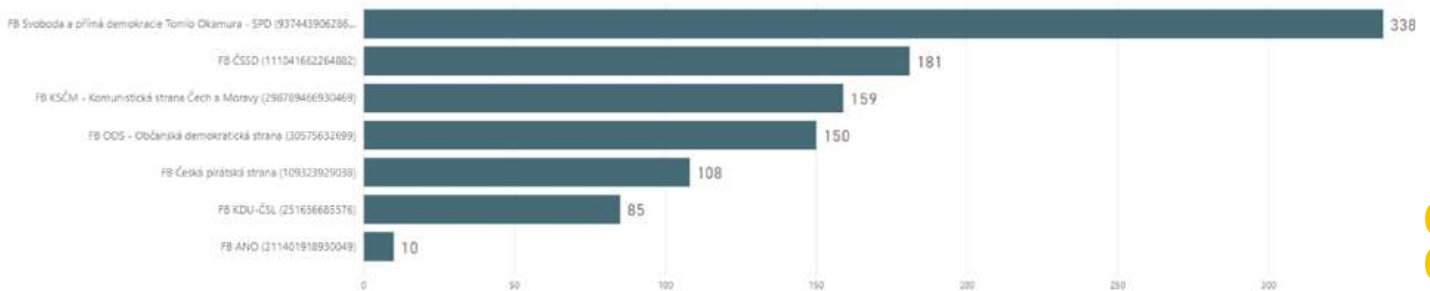
“The mood” very well describes each party communication intentions and campaign goal. If we look at each party presented in the diagram, we can see that it very well matches their campaign rhetoric. The angry tone and aggressive campaign style were very significant for Tomio Okamura’s SPD (Freedom and Direct Vote). The main message of this political actor was to warn against “Brussels, European Commission, and pro-migration forces”. At the same time, this very party was attacking almost every single Czech opponent.

ODS (Civic Democrats) is a party with strong eurosceptic agenda, they focus mainly on criticism of EU bureaucracy, accepting euro

and other issues. However, their campaign was exceptionally positive and the only criticism was directed against the Prime minister. The only goal of Pirates was “feel good” campaign and promotion of their candidates. With strong polling number, the party did not need to do to anything else. Interestingly, even they used half of the time for fundraising campaign money.

Communists combined the criticism with a positive attitude promoting their own candidates. And the winner of the election – party ANO combined criticism with emphasizing what their MEPs and the PM delivered and what they will do in next term. All packed as “We protect strong Czechia”.

### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

Post published

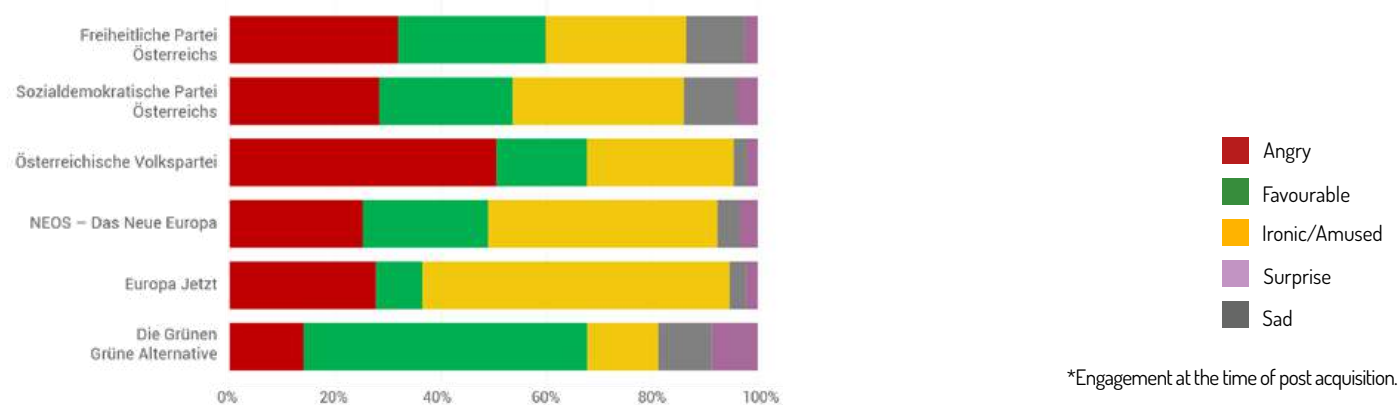
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.







# DENMARK

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Membership: 1973

European area: **Northern Europe**

Population: **5,659,715**

Number of MEPs: 13

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Political, general  
or national**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The European elections 2019 became a historic event in Denmark when 66 percent of the Danish voters voted on May 26.th 2019. That was the highest voter turnout since the first European election in 1979

In Denmark the Minister for Economic Affairs and the Interior sets the day for holding the election based on the appropriate rules and regulations of the European Communities, and announces the day for holding the election in the Danish Official Gazette. Denmark constitutes a single electoral area in which all members are elected by proportional representation. Denmark has 13 of the 751 members of the European Parliament (When/if UK leaves EU, Denmark will have 14 of the 705 members). Voting and counting take place in the same polling districts and nomination districts as in general elections. No European Parliamentary elections are held in the Faroe Islands or Greenland, as they do not participate in the European co-operation.

In 2019 Denmark had chosen the 26th of May as the elections day - a Sunday - and all EU citizens above the age of 18 were be eligible to cast their vote. However, non-Danish EU citizens living in Denmark had to register to vote. The rule in Denmark is that you have to register for voting as a foreigner 35 days before the election. (The Danish Minister for Economic Affairs and the Interior). The election campaign officially began on Saturday the 4.th of May at 12:00 pm. when parties were allowed to begin hanging up election poster. In Danish elections political advertisings is not allowed on television. Election posters are allowed with restrictions regarding public safety.

In Denmark the following parties were entitled to stand in European Parliamentary elections: 1) parties which in the general election held at least six weeks prior to the election day obtained parliamentary representation, and which are still represented in Parliament six weeks prior to the election day; 2) parties which in the previous European Parliamentary election obtained representation in the European Parliament, and which are still represented therein six weeks prior to the election day; and 3) new parties having registered with the Minister for Economic Affairs and the Interior no later than twelve noon, eight weeks prior to the election day. The registration form must be accompanied by statements from voters corresponding to at least two per cent of all valid voters at the previous general election, at present numbering 70.380 (1).

In Denmark the political parties are generally divided into two

blocks - the red and blue blocks. On the left, the red block include the Social Democrats, Social Liberals, Socialist People's Party, Red/Green Alliance and newly-formed Alternative Party. On the right, the blue block includes the Liberals, Conservatives, Danish People's Party (O), Liberal Alliance (I), and Christian Democrats (K), which have no parliamentary representation today. In EP-election the People's Movement Against the EU also stands for election. In the EP-parliament the Danish parties are largely part of the bigger groups. The European's People Party (EPP) is the conservative party under which the Danish Conservative party falls. Socialists & Democrats (S&D) is the social democratic party, where the Danish social democrats are members and as part of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats of Europe (ALDE), we find the Danish liberal party and also the Danish Social liberal party.

The 2019 EP-election ran almost concurrent with the national elections. The resulted in a hybrid campaign where EU-politics became one of the top issues on the national election agenda and Danish prime minister, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, made it a special point of his own election campaigns, to argue that having two elections at almost the same time, gave the Danes an unique opportunity to debate national and European politics at the same time. The issues at the top of the agenda of both campaigns were immigration and the environment. Most of the Danish parties campaigned on both issues, except for the Danish Peoples party who, in both campaigns, focused on immigration. The result was a big win for the Danish Liberal Party that won four seats, which is one seat more than in the last elections, and the parties that focused on the environment, especially the Danish Socialist party and the Social Liberal Party.

The Danish Peoples Party became the biggest loser of the election, holding on to just one out of a previous four seats. The Danish Peoples Party probably lost both to due to lack of including the environment in their campaign, but probably also because the party has been involved in scandals over its' use of EU funds in recent years. Also the party was, in the national election campaign, under pressure due to the emergence of new fringe parties, who are seeking to outdo it by taking even harder stances on immigration. This probably also influenced the party's European campaign. The People's Movement Against the EU which has consistently held a seat in previous elections, also lost more than half of its vote share and will thus no longer be represented in the European Parliament.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

Total contents 107		
Social contents 73	Poster and press 34	Commercials 0

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Dansk Folkeparti (DF)	33	2	-	1
Radikale Venstre (Rad)	10	7	-	2
Venstre (V)	11	5	-	3
Socialistisk Folkeparti (SF)	Not monitored	12	-	2
Det Konservative Folkeparti (Kons)	5	4	-	1
Liberal Alliance (LA)	6	2	-	0
Enhedslisten (Ø)	8	-	-	1
Socialdemokratiet (S)	Not monitored	2	-	3

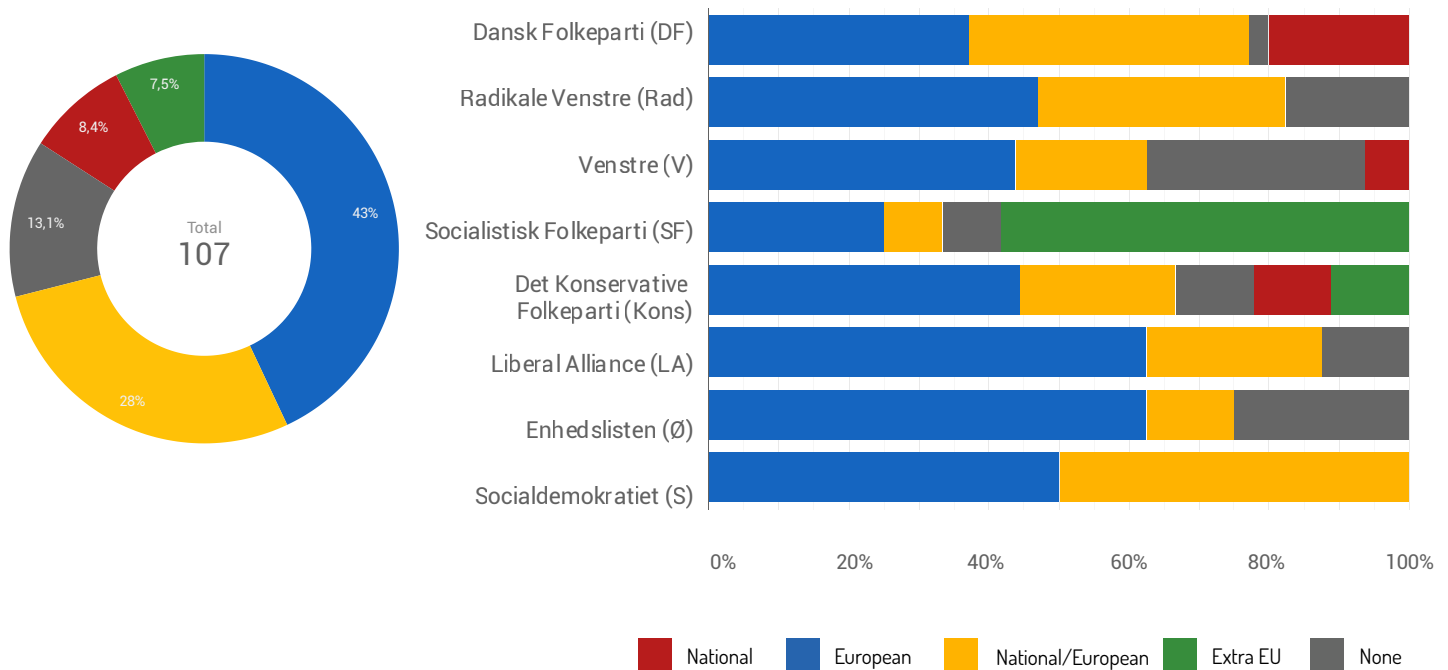
Establishing an overview of the activities of the political parties for the election for European Parliament, it is important to remember, that the campaign for European election has been running side-by-side with the campaign election for the national parliament. The campaigning for the European Election had a solo run for about a week before the national election was announced. Of course, this have had a significant influence on the activities of the political parties, where their activities were a bit higher prior to the announcement of the national election, but also a bit higher in the days right before the European election. It is worth noting, that the amount of press advertising is quite low and predominantly from before the announcement of the national election. This also applies to social content.

Establishing any correlation between activities and number of seats, would of course be impossible with the data present for analysis. However, it is worth noting, that the two right-wing parties, Dansk Folkeparti and Liberal Alliance, had poor election results both for the national elections and European election. Both parties were reduced to half the number of seats in the national parliament as opposed to the term before. This is mirrored in the results for the election for European Parliament, where Dansk Folkeparti, despite being the most active campaigning party social media, only achieved one (they had four seats in the previous term) seat and Liberal Alliance did not achieve election at all. Thus, a political trend is probably present in both elections.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The campaign for the election for the European Parliament has mostly been focused on the European or national/European level. For all parties except Socialistisk Folkeparti, these dimensions account for more than half. Socialistisk Folkeparti has apparently been more focused on the Extra European level, but this party has not been using social media in their campaign. The activities of Socialistisk Folkeparti come from press advertising and posters, typically communicating in a different manner. As such a different pattern could be expected. Dansk Folkeparti, a right-wing party in the ACRE group, has been the most active in the national dimension.

As such it is no surprise that the European elections campaign have been within the European and National/European dimension. The quite low amount of content from the National dimension is however quite surprising. This could partly be because the two campaigns (national and European) running side by side and needing to differ from each other. But it could also be because the European election, turning to themes, has been on issues, that are not exclusively national issues but rather distinctively European issues; environment and immigration.

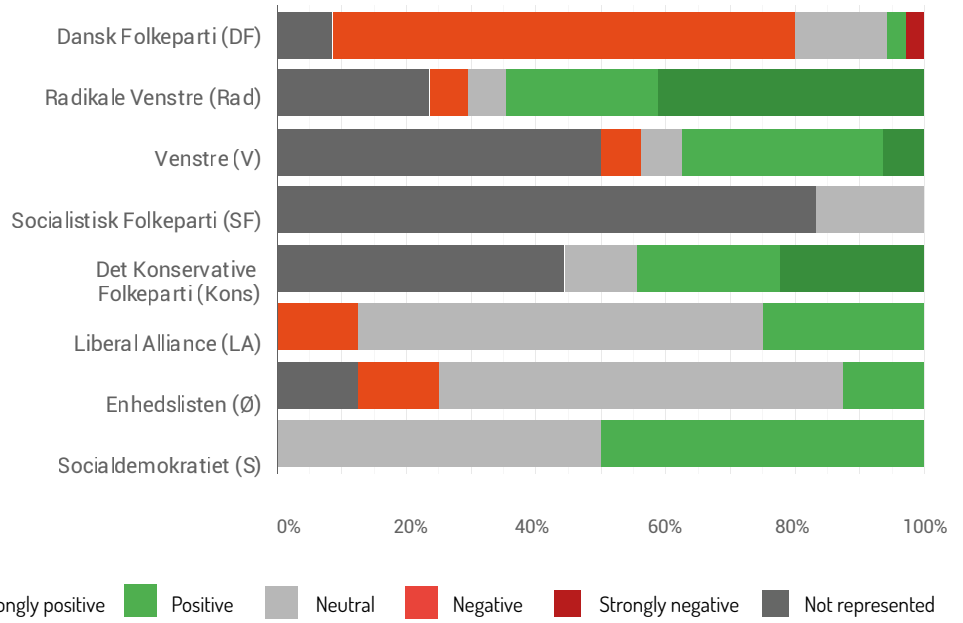
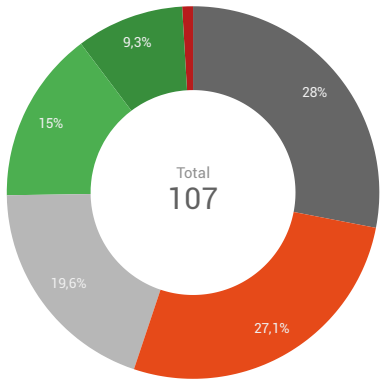


## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

The European Union is mostly either not represented or represented negatively. However, it is worth noting, that the negativity comes from the right-wing Dansk Folkeparti, and the high amount of non-representation comes from Socialistisk Folkeparti. Both of these parties differ from the other parties, as Dansk Folkeparti has been the most active on social media and Socialistisk Folkeparti has not been on social media at all, but

rather utilized posters and press advertisings.

Turning to the remainder of parties, a more positive trend is appearing where Europe is represented "positive" in around half the instances. It is also worth noting, that in many cases, Europe is represented as something neutral.



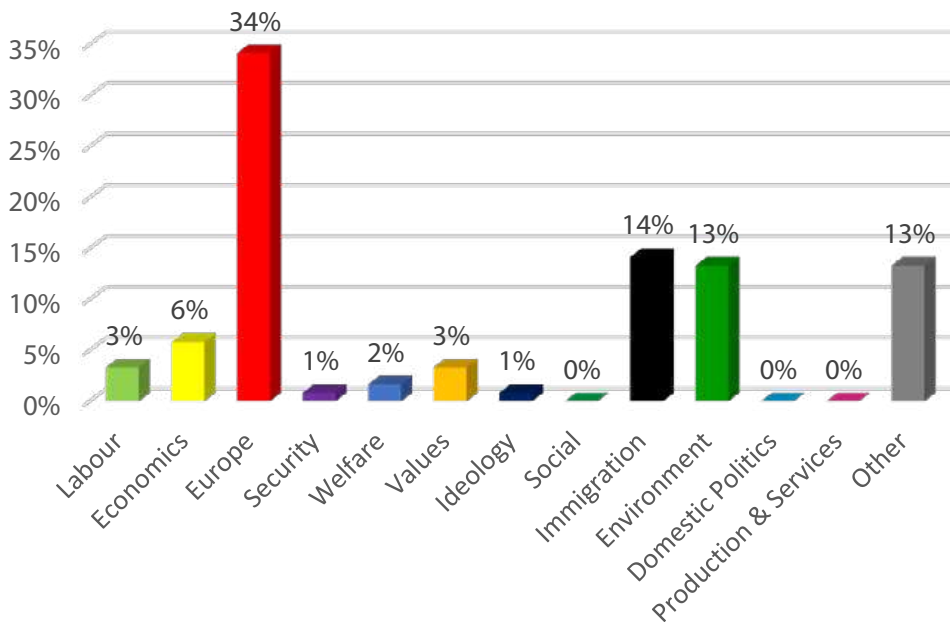
### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The topics of the campaign should be seen in light of the dimensions of the campaign. The main dimensions were European and National/European.

Turning to the topic most represented it is Europe. Many of the parties have had campaigns that point out, why Europe and the European Union is an important joint venture of nations. However, in many cases the topic has been on Immigration and Environment. This is two distinct topics, that most of the parties link to a European

context typically campaigning that these topics are either problems caused by the European Union or that the solution for problems lies in the context of the collaboration of European countries. Labour-market and Economics are also topics that are briefly mentioned. Other topics (Security Welfare, Values etc.) are overlooked. The agreement of the topics could point to a European common discourse of the topics of European campaigning in Denmark.

68



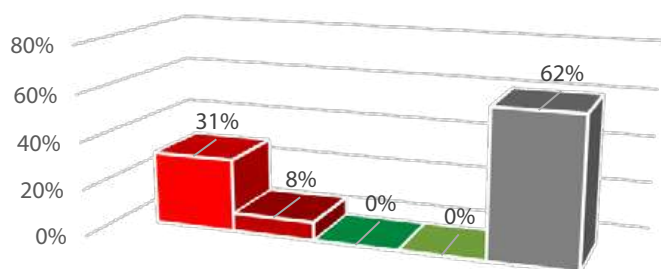
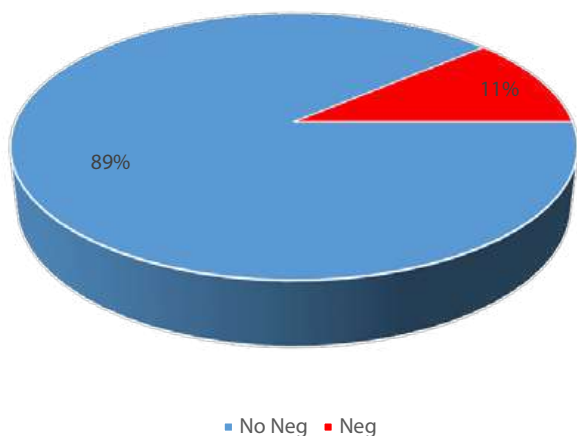
\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

As this is one of the first elections where social content is both utilized by parties and monitored (by means of for instance as this report) it is interesting, that parties do not turn to negative campaigning, even though social media definitely makes this tempting to do.

Danish politicians and political parties have never been known to use much negative campaigning. The campaign for the European election has not been different in this manner. In the few instances

where there has been negative campaigning, the target has typically been impossible to place within the target categories. This is evident most of the target of negativity is in the category other. One interpretation of this could be that because Danish parties typically do not use negative campaigning, they do not want to target other parties or politicians in the few instances where they do turn to negative campaigning.



- Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Instit. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

7 N. Accounts monitored*	569 N. Posts produced	326578 Engagement**	12,9 % percentage of posts on EU campaign topics
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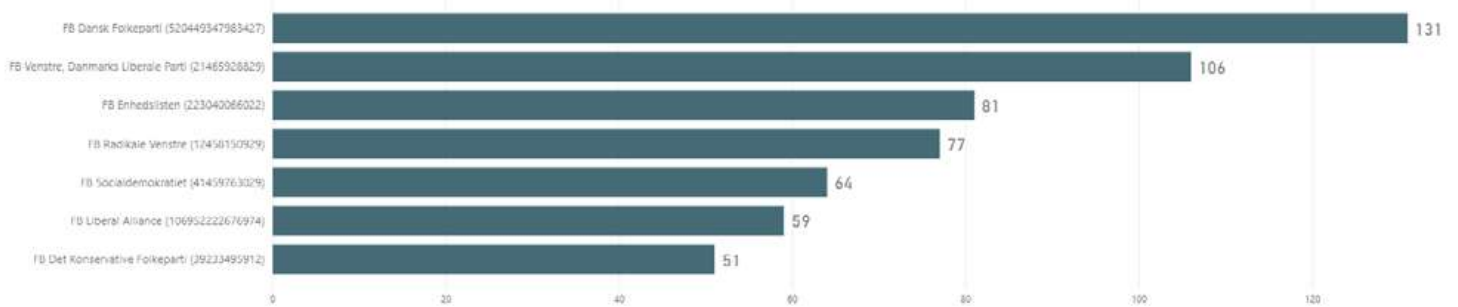
Social content is always subject to many reservations. These reservations also apply here. Especially because Denmark have had two election running side by side.

However, it is clear that social media (here Facebook) was utilized by most political parties but the parties utilized social media to different degrees. The most active party was Dansk Folkeparti followed by Venstre, Enhedslisten and Radikale Venstre. Turning to levels of engagement, Dansk Folkeparti got the most but also the angriest engagement. Venstre got quite a lot of traction in their social media campaign and many ironic/amused reactions to their posts. The campaign of Enhedslisten produced quite a few angry reactions but

also many favourable ones.

Many of the parties (specifically Enhedslisten, Venstre, Dansk Folkeparti and Radikale Venstre) produced several campaign films – some with higher production value than others. Denmark is a country where political advertising on television is not allowed. Video campaigns, commercials with high production value and political content, is thus not usually seen in Denmark. As this is “new” to the Danes, it is interesting that these parties are also the parties with the highest engagement levels, though engagement and election for parliament does not necessarily correlate.

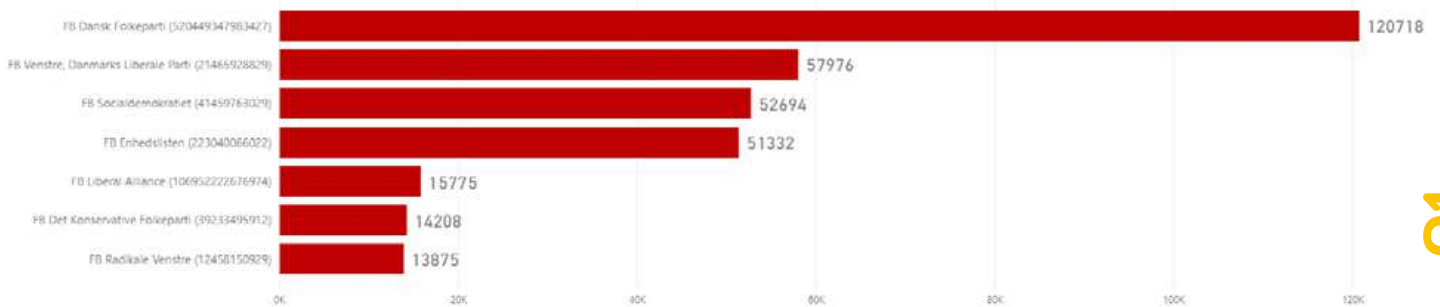
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

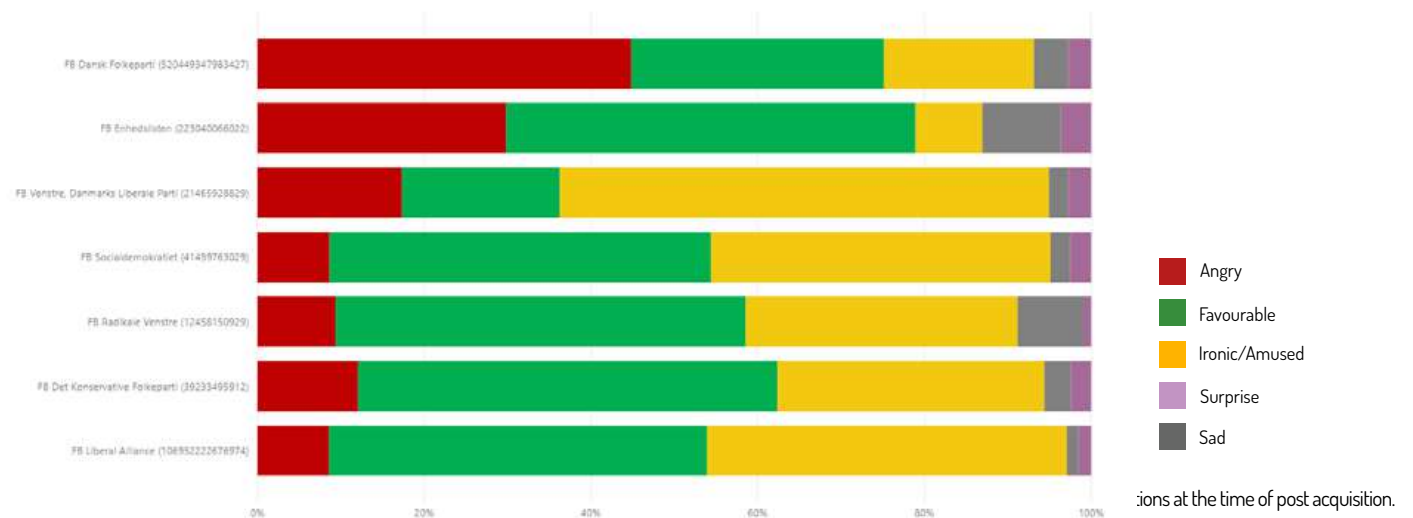


\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

Engagement

91

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



Reactions at the time of post acquisition.







# ESTONIA

Membership: **2004**  
European area: **Northern Europe**  
Population: **1,313,271**  
Number of MEPs: **6**  
Election day: **May 26, 2019**  
Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The election campaign for EP in Estonia lasted from 17.04 until 25.05, 2019. During this period posters in public places were not allowed, meanwhile the advertising on the private vehicles and indoor public spaces were permitted. TV commercials were not allowed in the Public Television (ERR), but were allowed in the private channels. In Estonia also electronic voting was permitted, 37,6 % of electorate voted this way.

The dominant actors of the EP election campaign in 2019 are the Reform Party, Social Democrats, Center Party, Conservative People's Party and Pro Patria. The role of smaller parties such as Richness of Life, Estonia 200 and Green Party has been less visible. Most active parties in Social Media were the Conservative People's Party and Pro Patria.

The EP election campaign in Estonia has been strongly influenced by an internal political conflict, which appeared after the general elections on March 3, 2019. The Reform Party remained the largest party (28,9 % of votes), but the Estonian Conservative People's Party (EKRE) had the largest gain overall (17,8 %, growing 9,7 percentage points compared to general elections in 2016). Despite much critics in the society, the centrist and social-liberal populist Centre Party (Keskerakond) turned down an offer by winning liberal Reform party to form a joint coalition. Instead the Center Party formed a coalition with national-conservative and right-wing populist Conservative People's Party, and national-conservative Pro Patria Union. This became the second cabinet for the leader of the Center Party, Jüri Ratas, since 2016.

As resulting from the collected data, during the EP electoral campaign the Reform Party attacked more the existing government, calling it in some promotional materials "unfair" and "illegal". Their slogans stressed that they want to bring better/right Estonia to Europe. The campaign of the Center Party was more concentrated on the solidarity of the people of Europe with Estonians. Anyhow, the slogans missed the concrete content, as it is the case with most Estonian parties. Beside the local issues the Social Democrats tended to pay more attention to the global affairs (importance of the relations with the US, especially previous governments; belonging to the international organizations such as the NATO, the UN; fear of Russia). In all cases Europe was mostly mentioned in neutral way.

The voter turnout for these elections totaled 37,6 %. The

highest turnout was in Tallinn (42,2 %), and the lowest in Ida-Viru County, North-East Estonia. ([www.valimised.ee](http://www.valimised.ee); [www.err.ee](http://www.err.ee)). This year's adjusted voter turnout exceeded the previous EP elections in 2014, when 36,52 % of the electorate went to vote, meanwhile in 2009 the record turnout was 43,9 % ([www.err.ee](http://www.err.ee)). Turnout for the 2004 European elections, Estonia's first following its accession to the EU, was just 26,83 %.

The electoral system in Estonia is not especially complicated, and similar to those of many other European nations. Estonian citizens aged 18 and over can vote the Estonian Parliament (those aged 21 and over can stand, and of at least 18 years of age for the purpose of the local government council elections). Six or seven members to the European Parliament are elected from Estonia, depending of the Brexit. Both political parties and independent candidates may participate in the elections. At the European Parliament elections Estonia forms one electoral district. The mandates are divided nationally according to the d'Hondt distribution method. At the European Parliament elections open lists are used, i.e. the candidates are reranked in the list according to the number of votes received.

In general it could be highlighted that the main trend of the EP campaign in Estonia have been an increasing use of social media and "selfy-style" or "talking head" video materials meant to be broadcasted on Internet, not in TV. This material is cheaper to produce and easy to send to the target audience. The simple smart-phone video seems to be less elitist and more "ordinary-people-friendly".

In Estonia the campaign was very candidate centered / "personalized". As in case of independent candidate Indrek Tarand in 2009 and 2014 who got large number of votes, this year Marina Kaljurand (Social Democrats) gained the 65 559 votes. In previous EP elections only Tarand in 2009 and Toomas Hendrik Ilves in 2004 have gained more votes.

In the general elections in March 3, the Social Democrats gained only 10 seats in the Estonian parliament (Riigikogu). While support for the SDE has declined, individual candidates still tend to get much support irrespective of their party affiliation.

After general elections in March the campaign for EP started quite late, in May. It was less visible than previously or during the general election. Even if Estonians support European

integration, the public tends to be not too involved to the politics of the EU.

It could be concluded that the EP elections were won by liberal forces, which currently are in opposition in Estonia. The Reform Party and the SDE gained two seats each, while the coalition parties—the Conservative People’s Party, the Centre Party and Pro Patria—gained one seat each. The candidate of Pro Patria enters the EP only after Brexit.

The participation of the electorate in Estonia for the EP elections was 37.6%, against 63.7% in the general election. Nevertheless, Estonians seem to support the liberal pro-European political world view, anyhow the Conservative People’s Party seems to gain more support.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Isamaa (I)	35	11	7	0
Eesti Reformierakond (RE)	24	15	4	2
Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond (EKRE)	36	1	5	1
Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Erakond (SDE)	30	5	3	2
Eesti Keskerakond (K)	13	4	1	1
Eesti 200 (E200)	16	-	-	0
Erakond Eestimaa Rohelised (ER)	12	-	2	0
Elurikkuse Erakond (ERE)	Not monitored	3	-	0

Public opinion on EU and EU membership is very high in Estonia - 74% of population support EU.

Most Estonian parties used Social Media for their communication. The dominant parties also sent TV commercials in private channels, but the most important campaign was on Social Media. Several parties used a “selfy”-like home-videos, where a “talking head”

explains or convinces to vote for them. This is a new style of audio-visual material and needs to be considered and studied.

As the posters in public spaces were not allowed during the election campaign in Estonia, the parties and the candidates had to be creative! Why not to use a private car, which is all legally correct!

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Most of the messages were related to Europe and Estonia, common part and relationship. Beside this was in most cases hidden the message “we need more ESTONIA in Europe”. This perspective is very important for a small country as Estonia.

Pro Patria’s values are related to Estonian culture: Estonia is an open nation-state, which ensures the survival of the Estonian people, language, and culture. Our policies are directed at the development of Estonian culture, the broadening of the use of the Estonian language, and the growth of the nation.

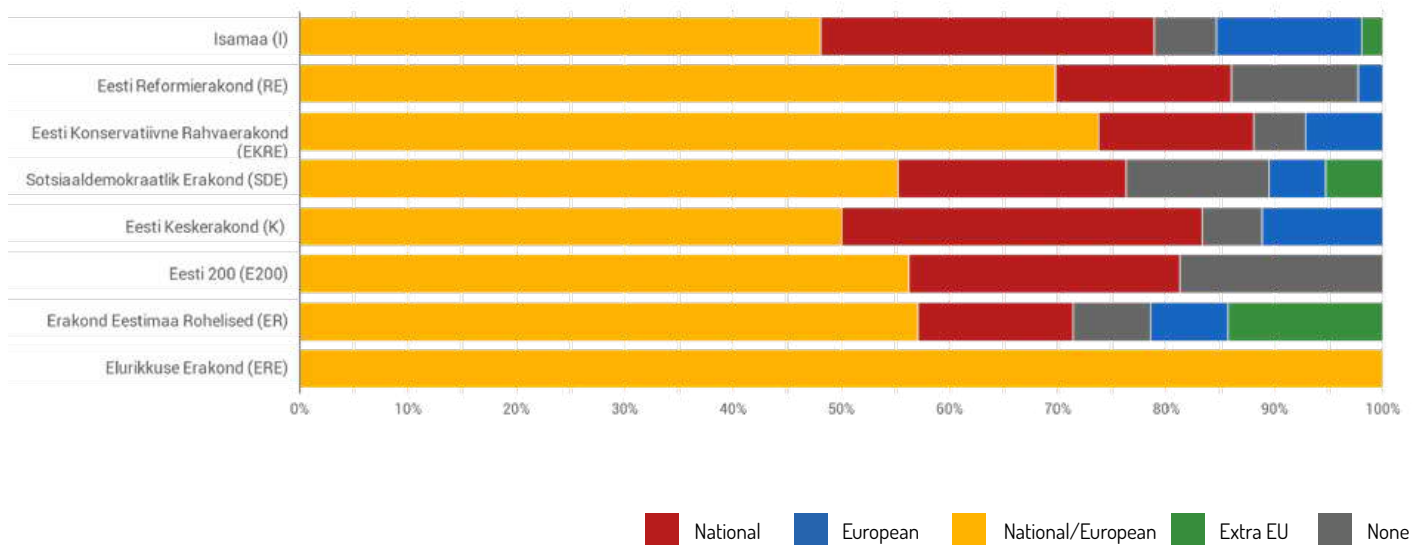
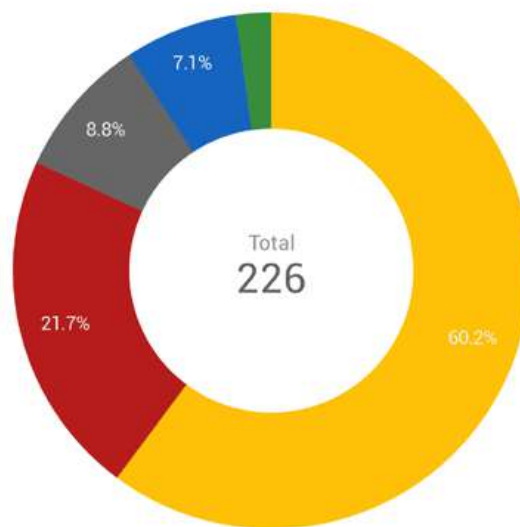
This principle can be seen in their campaign – the messages are

most related to national issues.

The fact that Centre Party (Keskerakond) pays a lot of attention to national issues and “people” is somewhat unexpected, but fits very well to the context of European elections.

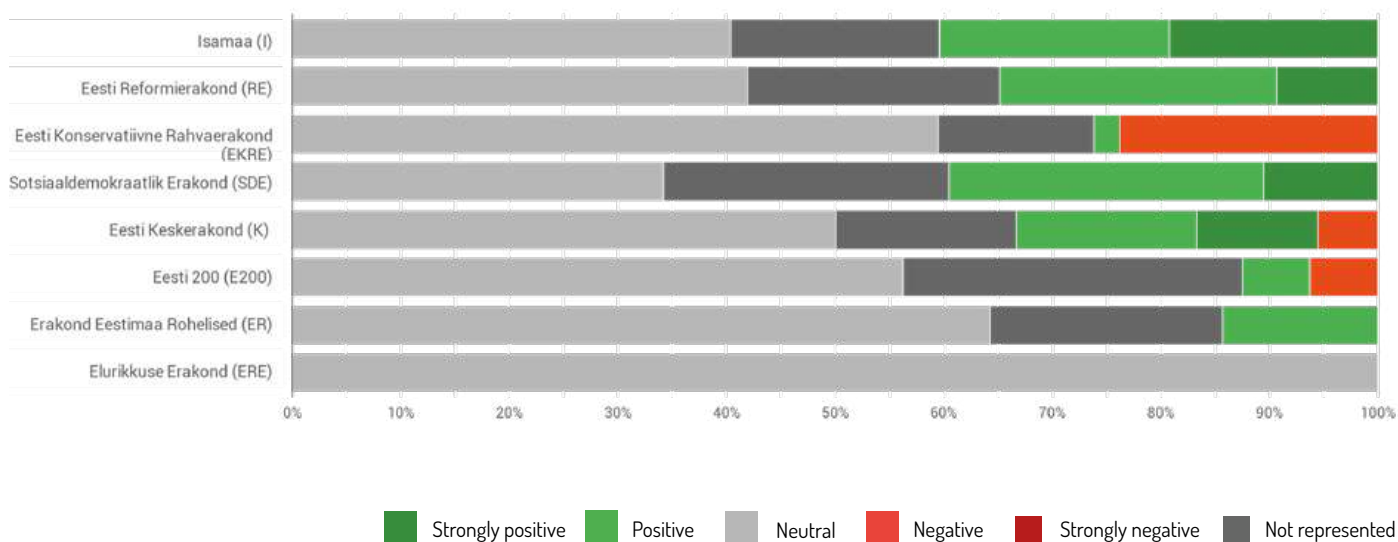
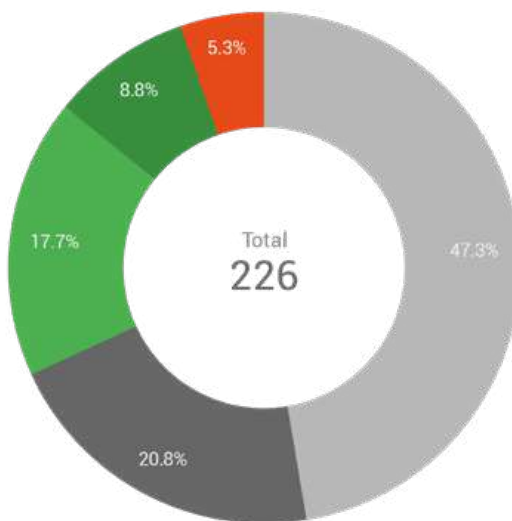
Based on our data, we can conclude that the party which pays more attention to Estonian-European values is the Conservative Party from the perspective of bringing “more Estonia in Europe”. The results of Richness of life party seem to be uncertain.

Most parties connected the home issues to the European or global context.



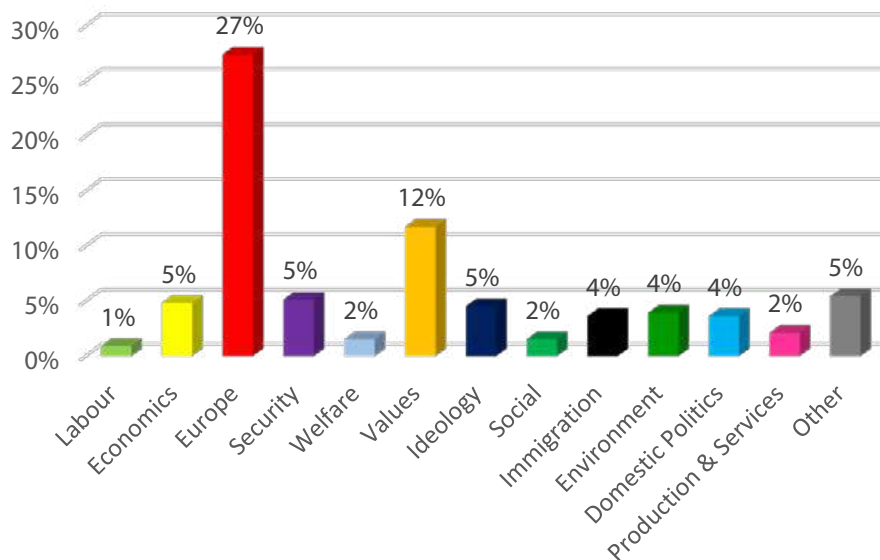
## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

It could be concluded that the European Union was mainly mentioned on positive or neutral way in Estonia. Most Estonians consider the European Integration and belonging to the EU in positive way. The most negative towards EU was the Conservative People's Party. Most positive towards the EU have been the Pro Patria.



## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

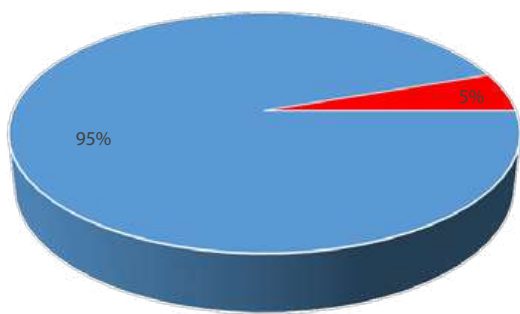
The main topic in the EP campaign in 2019 was Europe in general, all political parties mainly stressed the importance and necessity to take part in the elections. At the same time, the Conservative People’s Party and conservative Pro Patria party are pointing to “new Europe” which gives more sovereignty to the single states in the EU.



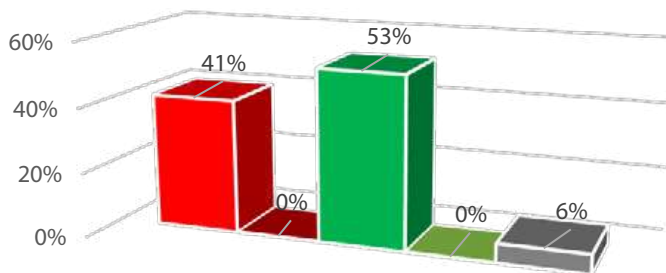
\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

Parties in Estonia mainly concentrated on the positive side of the EU. Most critical towards the EU is the Conservative People’s Party.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Inst. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

7 N. Accounts monitored*	315 N. Posts produced	26592 Engagement**
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53,9%  
percentage of posts on  
EU campaign topics

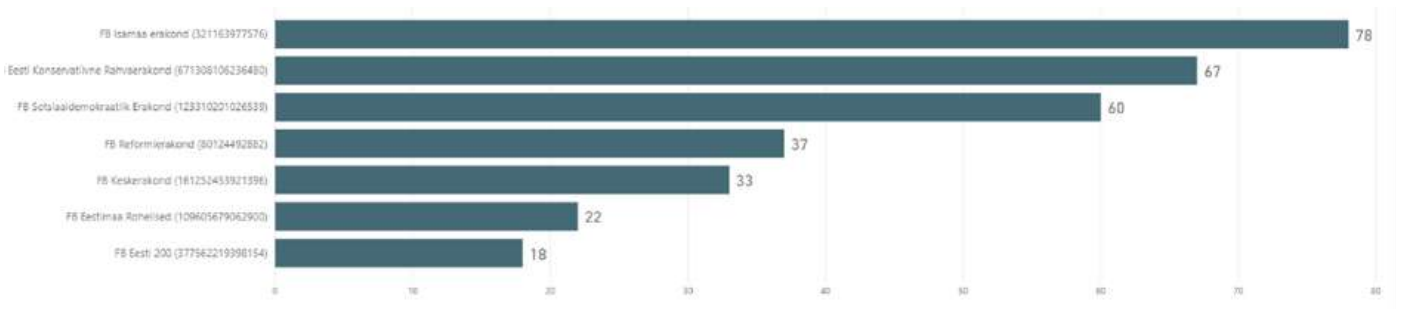
The dominating FB reactions mood during the campaign in general was “favourable”. It could be explained by the fact that majority of the posts invited people to vote, to make their choice and go to the poll stations if they haven’t had time to vote electronically (E-voting).

Less content was focused on concrete issues (economy, values, immigration, solidarity etc), which might have reinforced more negative emotions as “anger”. Most “favourable” reactions gathered Social Democrats and Conservative People’s Party. Conservative

party used attack which was critical towards the existing EU, but promised to “change Europe” and “bring more sovereignty for Estonia”, these posts also created mostly “favourable” reactions among the audience. More “anger” created the communication of Reform Party. The reactions to their posts reflected also more irony and amusement by the audience. It might be explained by the fact that Reform Party used attack towards the Estonian newly elected

government. The reasons could be explained in slide nr 2. The Estonia 200 got most “ironic-amused” reactions. The readers valued Pro Patria posts mostly “favourable” or “ironic-amusing”, also negative reactions were relatively high. Based on the collected data most “sad” reactions got the Green Party.

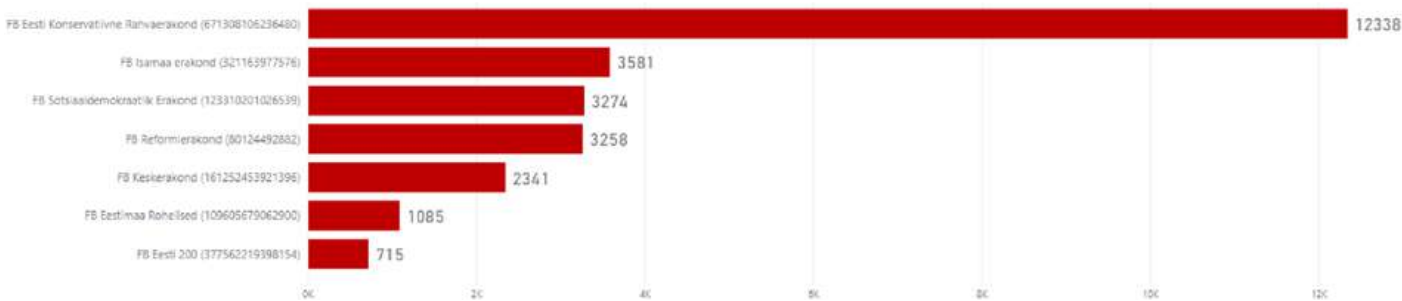
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

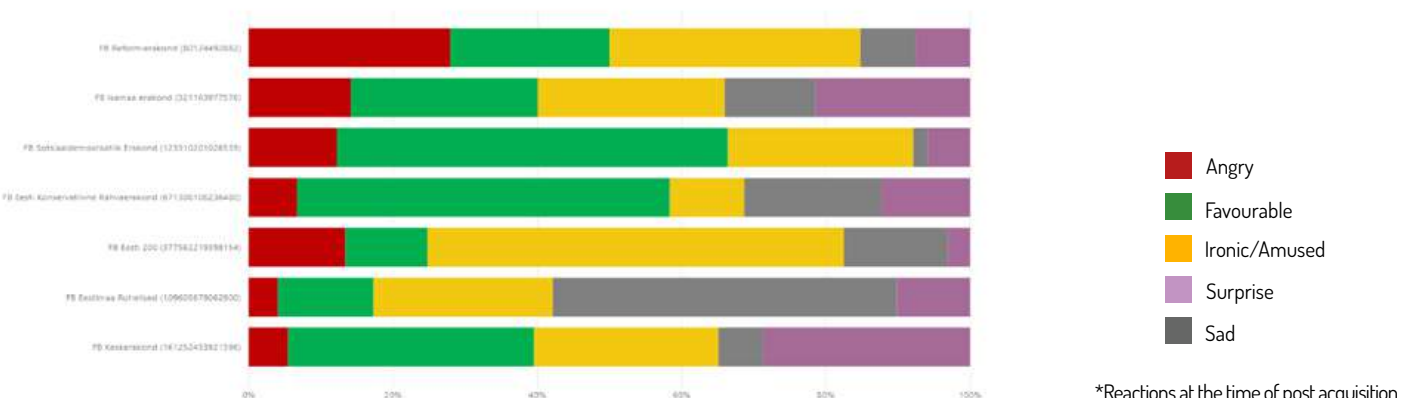
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.







# FINLAND

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Membership: **1995**

European area: **Northern Europe**

Population: **5,471,753**

Number of MEPs: **13**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

In Finland, European Parliamentary Elections have always been so-called second-order elections when it comes to participation rates (1999: 31.4 %; 2004: 41.1 %; 2009: 40.3 %; 2014: 41.0 %). Yet, the attitude of the Finnish population towards the European Union (EU) has over time become more positive. A 2019 poll published on May 9th concluded that the attitude to Finland's membership of the EU is more positive than ever (56 % of the Finns having a positive attitude), while rejection is at the lowest level (13 % perceiving the membership as something negative). Still, the voting percentage in the 2019 European Parliamentary Elections in Finland increased only slightly: from 41.0 percent in the 2014 elections to 42.7 percent.

In European Parliamentary Elections in Finland, the whole country operates as a single electoral district. Each political party can nominate a maximum of 20 candidates. In the 2019 elections, the number of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to be elected in Finland was 13 (or 14 if the United Kingdom leaves the EU).

The Finnish electoral system is strongly oriented towards individual candidates. Using proportional representation, the Finns cannot cast ballots according to party lists of candidates, but merely for unranked individual candidates representing parties or electoral alliances. Therefore, there are two kinds of campaigns. Firstly, a collective campaign is organized by the party, highlighting campaign issues and themes and often focusing on the party leader. Secondly, the candidates invest in personal campaigns and usually have their own support groups organizing campaign activities, raising money and generating publicity. These groups generally operate independently from the parties; the party organization may function as a background resource and coordinator. In this project, only the campaigns of the Finnish parties have been observed. Finally, before we turn to the 2019 European election campaign in Finland, it should be noted that the multiparty system in Finland is fragmented; the largest party usually gets around 20–25 percent of the votes. A consequence is that broad coalition governments are needed and formed, which in turn has fostered a consensual political culture, hampering strongly offensive campaigns by the parties.

The 2019 European election campaign in Finland was affected by the fact that this election was literally a second-order election. The national parliamentary elections were held in the middle of April; a general fatigue among voters, news media and parties followed lowering the enthusiasm for the upcoming European elections. What is more, the parties' negotiations on forming a

coalition government stretched out over the European election campaign period and gained much attention by the news media as well by the Finnish citizens. In fact, the European campaign was not intense before the final week leading up to the election. As the main party leaders were busy with the government negotiations, candidates and their teams did much of the campaigning. Besides rallying voters, the individual candidates were active on social media and bought advertising in the street, on TV and in the press.

Regarding the campaigns by the parties, then, their activity in buying traditional advertising was relatively low; possibly resources had already been spent in the national parliamentary elections. This time, only the populist Finns Party bought airtime for their spots on national television. The poster campaign was rather dull with parties mostly presenting galleries of their candidates. Above all, the parties used social media in their campaign communication. The strongest and most widely used campaign message was the call to vote. Policy messages came after that. With European parliamentary elections following the national parliamentary elections, there was an obvious fear that the turnout would stay low. This was noted especially in the Facebook campaign messages that called supporters and others to vote. Regarding the political topics, a European perspective overshadowed the domestic perspective as the main issues in the campaigns by the parties concerned the future (role) of the EU and European climate policy. Among the major parties, there was only one party having a strongly Eurosceptic campaign agenda, the populist Finns Party.

The Finns party campaigned actively in social media networks. The remarkable thing in the party's online communication was that it was heavily built around the party leader, Jussi Halla-Aho, who talked in short videos. The party's videos and spots streamed online, criticizing the EU and the EU elite, attracted much attention. Still, the Finns Party's vote share increased with only one percentage point to 13.8 per cent and the party kept their two seats in Brussels. The most Euro-friendly party, the conservative Kokoomus, campaigned with the strongly positive slogan We Believe in Europe, and claimed the top spot with 20.8 per cent voter support and three MEP seats. The real winner was arguably the pro-EU Green Party who based much of its campaign on an issue that the Finns saw as crucial in the elections, namely climate change and environmental protection. The party, with strong well-known top candidates visible in the campaign, saw its vote share increase by 6.7 percentage points to 16.4 per cent and gained two seats in the European Parliament.

Moreover, if the United Kingdom leaves the EU, the 14th additional seat will belong to the Green Party.

All in all, the 2019 Finnish European election campaign was eclipsed by the national parliamentary campaign and the following negotiations on forming a coalition government preoccupying the parties during the European campaign.

Therefore, the candidates of the parties were the main campaign actors. Still, there was a party campaign where the focus in general was on European matters and issues. This campaign was more visible online than offline. Although the Eurosceptic Finns Party did a visible and strong campaign, especially online, the winners of the election were pro-EU parties.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

Total contents  
369

Social contents  
326

Poster and press  
40

Commercials  
3

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Perussuomalaiset (PS)	70	5	3	2
Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue (SDP)	58	6	-	2
Vasemmistoliitto (Vas.)	51	3	-	1
Vihreä liitto (Vihr.)	44	4	-	2
Suomen Ruotsalainen kansanpuolue (RKP)	41	5	-	1
Suomen Keskusta (Kesk.)	44	2	-	2
Kansallinen Kokoomus (Kok.)	18	4	-	3
Suomen Kristillisdemokraatit (KD)	Not monitored	3	-	0
Suomen Kommunistinen Puolue (SKP)	Not monitored	2	-	0
Eläinoikeuspuolue (EOP)	Not monitored	1	-	0
Feministinen puolue (FP)	Not monitored	1	-	0
Seitsemän tähden liike (TL)	Not monitored	1	-	0
Piraattipuolue (PP)	Not monitored	1	-	0
Itsenäisyyspuolue (IPU)	Not monitored	1	-	0
Sininen Tulevaisuus (Sin.)	Not monitored	1	-	0

The Finnish parties did not campaign actively in traditional offline forums. Only one party, the Finns Party (PS), purchased airtime for spots on TV. This is surprising since major parties in Finland usually air spots on TV during National and European elections. Possibly, as these parties advertised on TV in the National elections in April 2019 (six weeks before the European elections), the budget was too small this time. The parties may have deemed publishing videos on social media platforms a cost-effective way to reach large target audiences. Advertising by the parties in the major national newspapers was very marginal (candidates running individual campaigns used ads in the press more frequently). As to posters, most of the parties dutifully produced one poster exhibiting all their

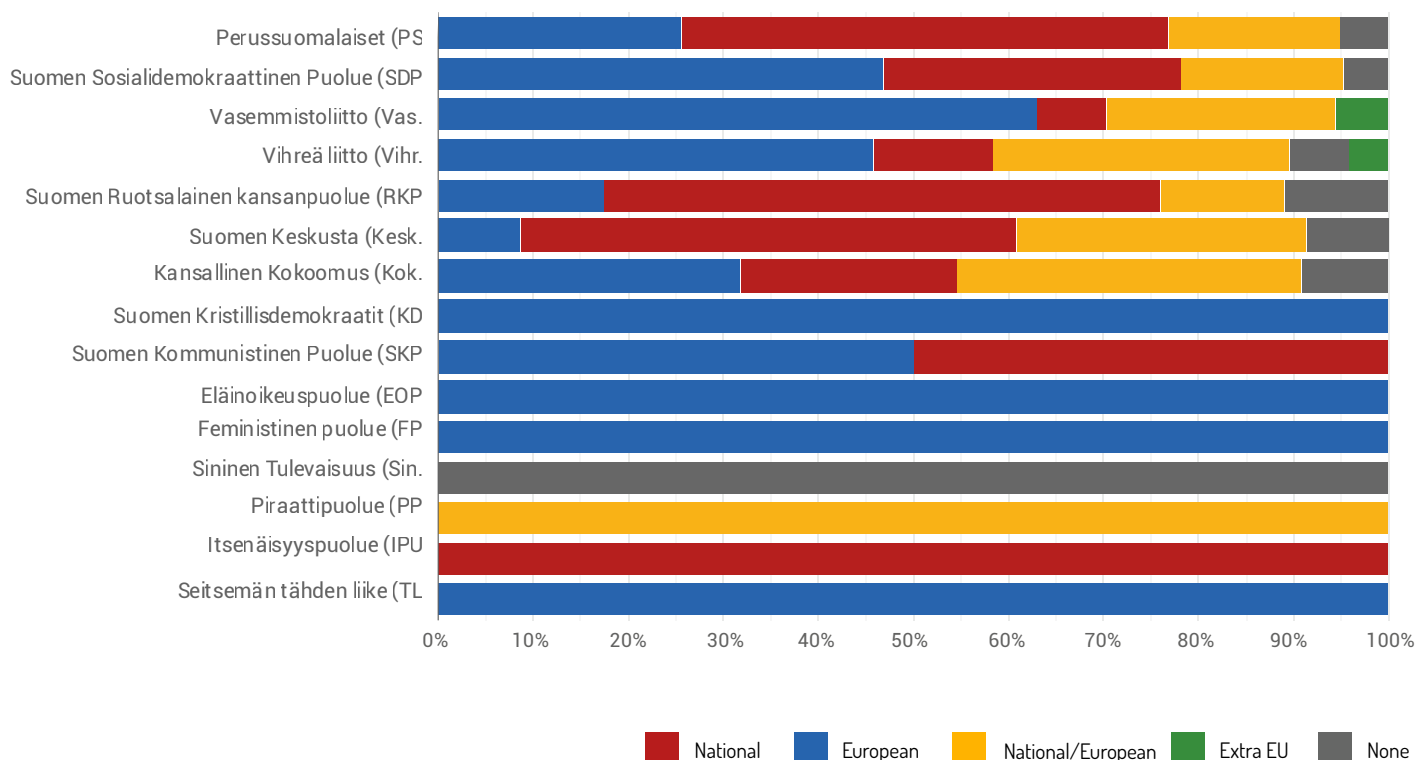
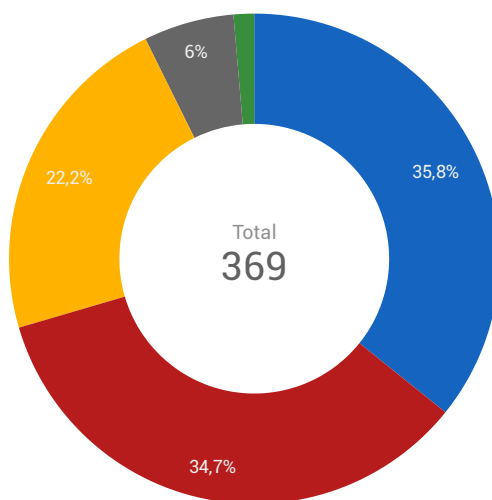
candidates and, in addition, some posters emphasizing campaign themes.

Obviously, social media was the main campaign arena for the major contenders. Still, the number of registered posts in the monitored Facebook accounts is not high. There are two explanations. Firstly, the 2019 European campaign was eclipsed by the preceding National elections and the following governmental coalition negotiations by the parties. Secondly, the parties so-to-say outsourced the campaign to their candidates that ran individual campaigns, also online. The party producing most content related to the elections was the Finns Party. The low activity online by the major conservative party, Kokoomus, is conspicuous.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Compared to earlier European elections in Finland, the prevalence of campaign messages having a European perspective increased. Approximately 36% of the messages had an exclusively European perspective and, in addition, 22% of the output mixed European and national perspectives, together thus 58%. A reason for this is that some of the most prominent issues in the Finnish campaign concerned matters on a European level, e.g. the future (role) of the EU and the efforts by the EU to fight climate change. Often, the interests of Finland were related to European developments and perspectives. For example, the populist Finns party warned about increasing efforts of the EU to advance political and economic integration. Still, approximately 35% of the coded

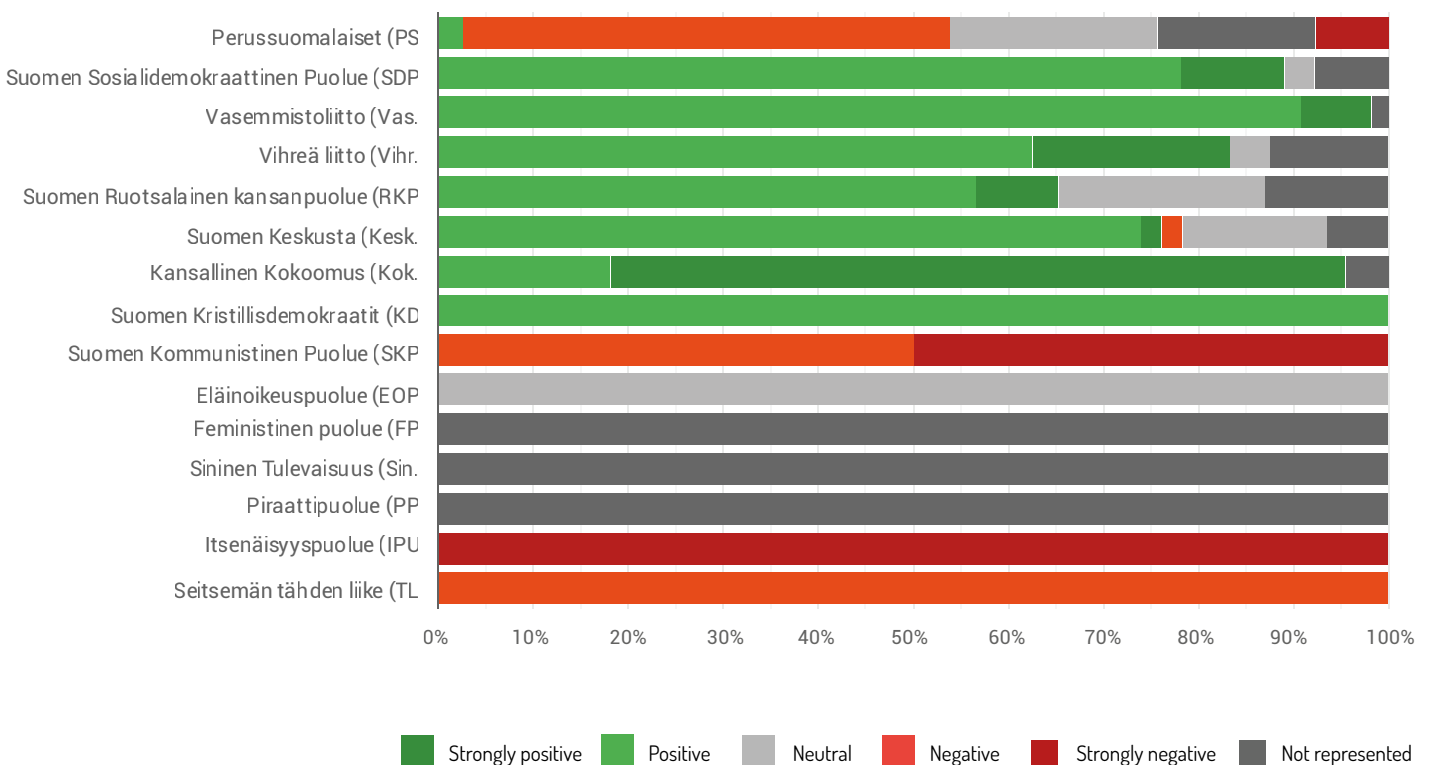
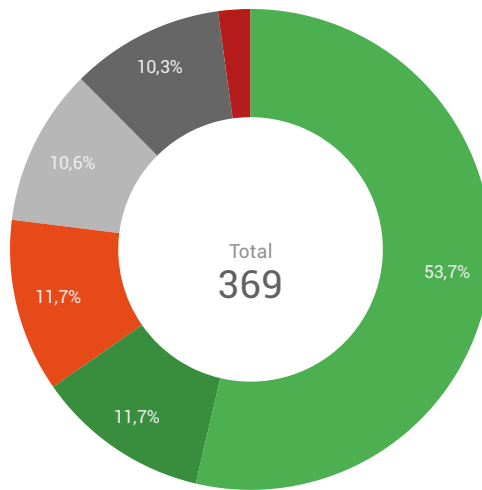
content was framed within a domestic perspective. However, there are some notable differences between the parties. As very little content is recorded for the parties representing the five lowest bars, the following observations concern the major contenders in the campaign (bars 1-7). The three parties that most clearly emphasized a European perspective were the two parties of the left side of the ideological spectrum, i.e., the Left Alliance (Vas.) and the Social Democrats (SDP), and the Green party (Vihr). The domestic perspective, in turn was expressed strongest by the national populist party, the Finns Party (PS), the Centre Party (Kesk., defending rural areas in Finland), and the Swedish People's Party in Finland (RKP).



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

On the whole, the campaigns by the Finnish political parties expressed a view on Europe and the EU that was predominantly positive. Among the main contenders (bars 1-7 in the graph), the most Europe-friendly party in the campaign was the major conservative party Kokoomus (Kok.) with 77 % of the messages strongly positive to Europe and the EU. The party campaigned with the slogan “We believe in Europe” and emphasized European co-operation in issues such as free trade, defense and climate change. The parties on the left – the Left Alliance (Vas.) and the Social Democrats (SDP) – also markedly framed Europe in a positive way. The SDP used the slogan “We don’t Brexit, we fix it”, whereas the Left Alliance wanted to build “A Europe without fear.”

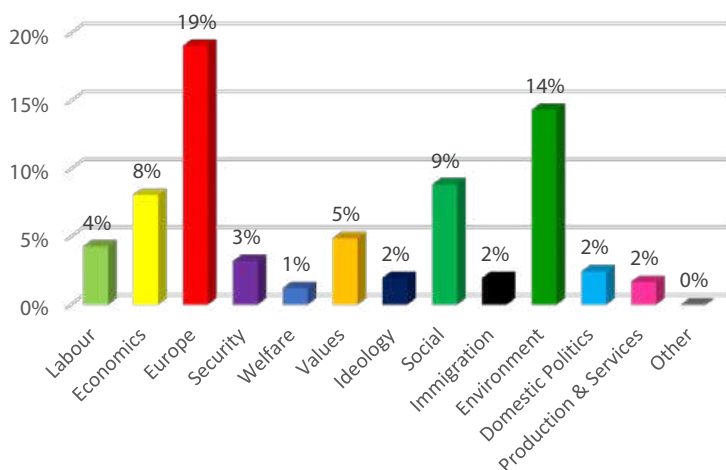
Notably, only approximately 14 % of all campaign messages expressed a negative or strongly negative view of Europe and the EU. Among the fringe parties (albeit few cases are recorded per party), the anti-EU parties the Finnish Communist Party (SKP), the Independence Party (IPU) and the Seven Star Movement (TL) exclusively expressed a negative view of the EU in particular. Among the major parties, only the populist Finns Party framed Europe and the EU in a negative way. Above all, the party pointed out federalist tendencies in Europe and lifted the issue about advanced efforts of the EU to advance political and economic integration. The slogan “Vote Finland back” implied that the EU has transformed the nation in a negative way.



## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

As to the issues in the campaigns by the parties, two topics stand out. Firstly, issues about Europe and the EU were frequently addressed. In general, these issues were of two kinds. When the parties expressed a positive view of Europe, they tended to emphasize how Europe and the EU should be enhanced and developed in a time of crisis in the wake of Brexit etc. Europe was here seen as an opportunity. For example, “Why Brexit when we can fix it”, asked a slogan by the Social Democrats. Conversely, the populist Finns Party frequently addressed issues about Europe and EU by criticizing federalist tendencies (“the federalist follies”) within the EU weakening the independence of the member states. Secondly, the Finnish campaign followed the trend in the other

Northern European countries by raising issues concerning Environment and, in particular, Climate change. The issue of climate change was not owned solely by the Green party. Even if the topic was capitalized upon most strongly by the Greens, other parties emphasized efforts for fighting climate change, too. The populist Finns party framed the issue in its own way by expressing that the EU climate change policies unfairly hit countries like Finland that has done more than its share on the issue. Among the other topics, the low prevalence of issues regarding security, welfare and immigration is remarkable. For example, issues about immigration were quite important in the national elections in April 2019.

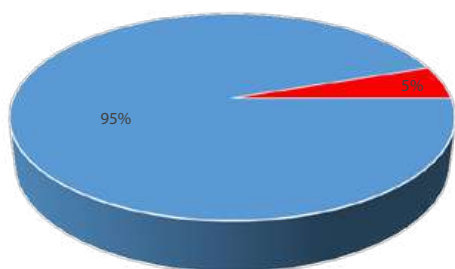


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

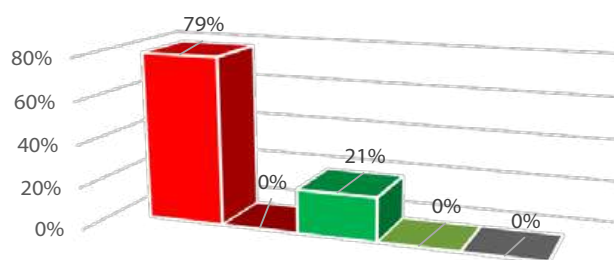
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

Evidently, the consensual nature of Finnish political culture, often noted by political scientists, was clearly reflected in the 2019 European election campaign in Finland. Most of the campaign messages did not take an offensive stance. Only 5 % of the campaign messages by the parties was coded as containing explicit “attacks” on people, political actors or institutions. However, messages containing implicit offensive strategies were more common. One party, the populist Finns Party, was using offensive

campaign strategies, including explicit attacking messages, more frequently than the others did. The party in question primarily accused and criticized institutions of the EU, and the elite politicians of the EU, for advancing a federalist project of Europe thus weakening the independence of the member states. For example, in one message, the party stated that Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission, should obey the voters, not command them.



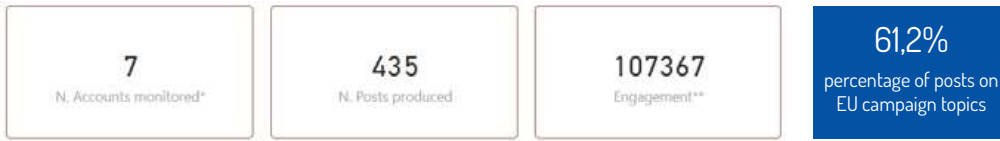
■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Inst. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other



## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



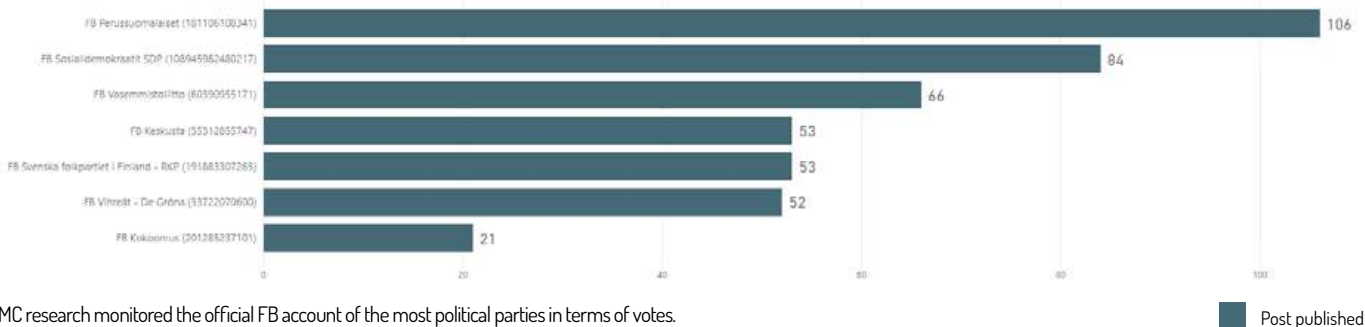
The large number of posts by the Finns Party generated a large amount of engagement. The party campaigned with strong, and at times even controversial, messages, which also shows in the reactions that were generated. In general, the engagement brought about angry and amused reactions. These reactions may represent partly the style and tone in messages and the sentiments of the supporters reacting to them and partly comments coming from those against the party's policies and message.

The Green Party was on the other end of the spectrum. Few posts created angry reactions. In their posts, the EU and European decision-making were shown in a hopeful, positive light. This followed the general tone of the party's communication strategies

and the trend of the party generating a considerable movement of followers on social media. The engagement was favorable and shows engagement from those who share the same values and supported the message of the party.

The National Coalition Party received most ironic/amused reactions to their content. In general, all parties got ironic/amused reactions to their posts on Facebook. The Social Democrats received a more balanced variety of reactions on their posts altogether, so each type of reaction was clearly visible. Sad reactions were rare. Frustration and willingness to change was rather converted into either angry reactions, by showing opinion against the party, or favourable reactions, expressing agreement with the post.

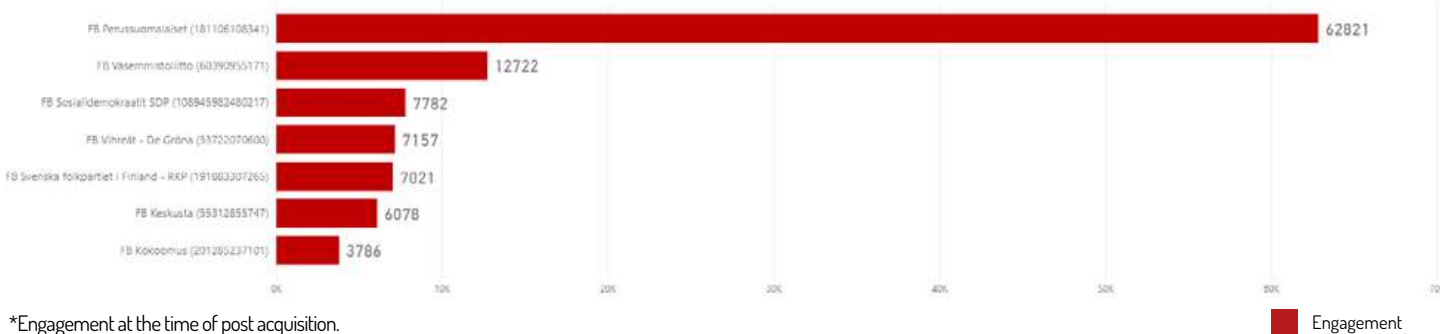
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

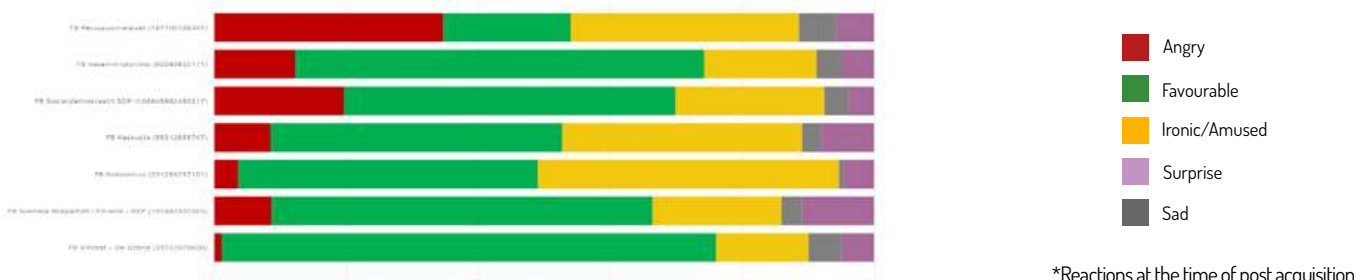
107

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.







# FRANCE

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Membership: **Founder Country 1958**

European area: **Western Europe**

Population: **66,415,161**

Number of MEPs: **74**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The European elections took place on Sunday May 26th in France. These were the first elections at the national level since the 2017 presidential and legislative ones. After being divided into 8 constituencies during the last three European contests, France returned this year to a single nation-wide constituency, with a PR system for allocating seats and a threshold of 5% of expressed ballots. All voters aged 18 and over were entitled to vote, for fixed gender-equal lists. 74 French MEPs initially sit, this will rise to 79 after Brexit will turn effective.

The official campaign lasted 2 weeks. During this time, all lists were allowed to put posters on billboards in front of each polling station, at their own expense. Because of limited funding some lists haven't printed theirs, hence many empty spaces across towns. These lists benefited from spots, broadcasted on public television and radio channels from the France Télévisions group. In 2019, each party had at least 3 spots, 2 of which were a minute and a half long. Parties with a significant number of elected representatives or a significant share of the vote in past elections had additional time for their spots. This led to 56 minutes for the Renaissance list, led by La République en Marche, the party of President E. Macron, which is majoritarian in the National Assembly. It should be noted that all paid political advertising is prohibited 6 months before the election, regardless of the medium (posters, print media or social-digital networks). The campaign had started earlier for many parties and the very issue of the composition of the lists was a recurring topic for media reporting on the European elections long before the contest, especially within the left. In the end, PCF, La France Insoumise, Europe-Ecologie les Verts and Génération.s each stood on their own, while the Parti Socialiste joined forces with 3 small parties (Place Publique, Nouvelle Donne and the Parti Radical de Gauche), behind the head of the list R. Glucksmann, one of the leaders of Place Publique. The lists had to be declared by May 3rd at the latest, and a record number of 34 lists ran in this election. The election took place in a context of enduring social protest known as the "Yellow vests" movement, which began in November as a countrywide mobilization against an increase of the fuel tax for motor vehicles, then enlarged its claims to issues of income and purchasing power for the lower middle-class, as well as about democracy.

The media very extensively covered this movement and many surveys suggested a rather high level of popular support for this protest, up until the election campaign. Two lists claimed to directly represent protesting citizens but each performed very low (0.54% and 0.01%). Other more traditional political lists opposing EU integration put forth, as a campaign argument,

one of their candidates more or less well-known as a Yellow Vest activist, yet also performed rather poorly compared to their opinion polls expectations ("Le courage de défendre les Français" 3.5%; "Ensemble Patriotes et Gilets jaunes" 0.65%). Despite these results, one could assume that the Yellow vests movement still had an indirect impact upon this election, in so far as the high share of the vote (23.34%) and first rank reached by the Rassemblement National could partly be explained by its ability to relate to some of the protesters' claims and to convey their strong criticism against President Macron, turning voters' attention away from purely European issues and presenting this election as a referendum against the president. It is striking that E. Macron and his Renaissance coalition (center-right allies MoDem and Agir) echoed this framing of the campaign, both in the media and their official propaganda, as a duel against their main extreme-right opponent. For instance, in a May 9th public statement, E. Macron said "I will give it all so that the Rassemblement National will not finish first in this election", and the party account mentioned it in four Facebook posts. He was mentioned in official propaganda material from the Renaissance list, appeared alone with the motto "En Marche for Europe, on May 26th, I vote Renaissance" on a non-official poster whose 60,000 copies were to be plastered on city walls by activists. His name also appeared at the bottom of the list official poster, his picture and quote were at the bottom of the official leaflet delivered by post to every registered voter. Another striking feature of this 2019 election is the fact that most top list members, even for the main parties, were unknown to the general public before the campaign began, and some were particularly young. Jordan Bardella (23 years old, Rassemblement National) is a regional councillor, Manon Aubry (29, La France Insoumise) was spokeswoman for Oxfam France, François-Xavier Bellamy (33, Les Républicains) is a high school philosophy teacher, Ian Brossat (39, PCF) is a Paris deputy mayor, and Raphaël Glucksmann (39, Envie d'Europe list) is an essayist.

This can be explained by three reasons: leaders from classic government parties wanted to distance themselves from prospective results feared as bad. The 2017 success of a President and many new MPs, who had never before run in elections, seemed to call for a candidates' renewal desired by voters. Last but not least, a new legal framework implied national representatives who would get elected in 2019 to the EP would no longer have one month to freely choose between these two incompatible mandates and would automatically lose their French national one (in the past, most politicians in this situation could decide not to sit in Strasbourg and Brussels, perceived as too remote from the heart

of French political life). That's why some prominent politicians such as J.-L. Mélenchon and M.

Le Pen, French MPs since 2017, were on purpose at the bottom of their respective 2019 European lists, so as not to be elected MEPs.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Europe Écologie-Les Verts (EELV)	221	1	1	12
Parti socialiste (PS)	186	1	1	5
Rassemblement national (RN)	164	1	1	22
La République en Marche ! (LREM)	146	1	1	21
Debout la France (DLF)	99	1	1	0
Les Républicains (LR)	55	1	1	8
La France insoumise (LFI)	45	1	1	6
Parti animaliste (PA)	not monitored	1	1	0
Les Patriotes (LP)	not monitored	1	1	0
Union des démocrates et indépendants (UDI)	not monitored	1	1	0
Union populaire républicaine (UPR)	not monitored	1	1	0
Parti communiste français (PCF)	not monitored	1	1	0
Génération.s (G)	not monitored	1	1	0
Lutte ouvrière (LO)	not monitored	1	1	0
Urgence écologie (UE)	not monitored	1	1	0

We studied the Facebook accounts of 7 parties that play a central role in the 7 lists likely to obtain the largest share of votes, and which gathered 83.7% of expressed ballots. While the activity of the FB accounts of LFI and LR was fairly stable and low (respective weekly averages: 11 and 14 posts), more important for DLF and PS but also stable (respectively 25 and 45 posts), the activity of LREM, RN and EELV accounts increased very significantly, signalling a rather late entry in full campaign mode. We also studied the official poster and one TV ad for 8 other parties, which got between 0.7% and 3.3% of the vote share, 15% in total. From left to right: LO (historical Trotskyist party), PCF, G.s (led by B. Hamon, 2017 presidential candidate for the PS), UDI (centre-right), LP (lead by a former National Front

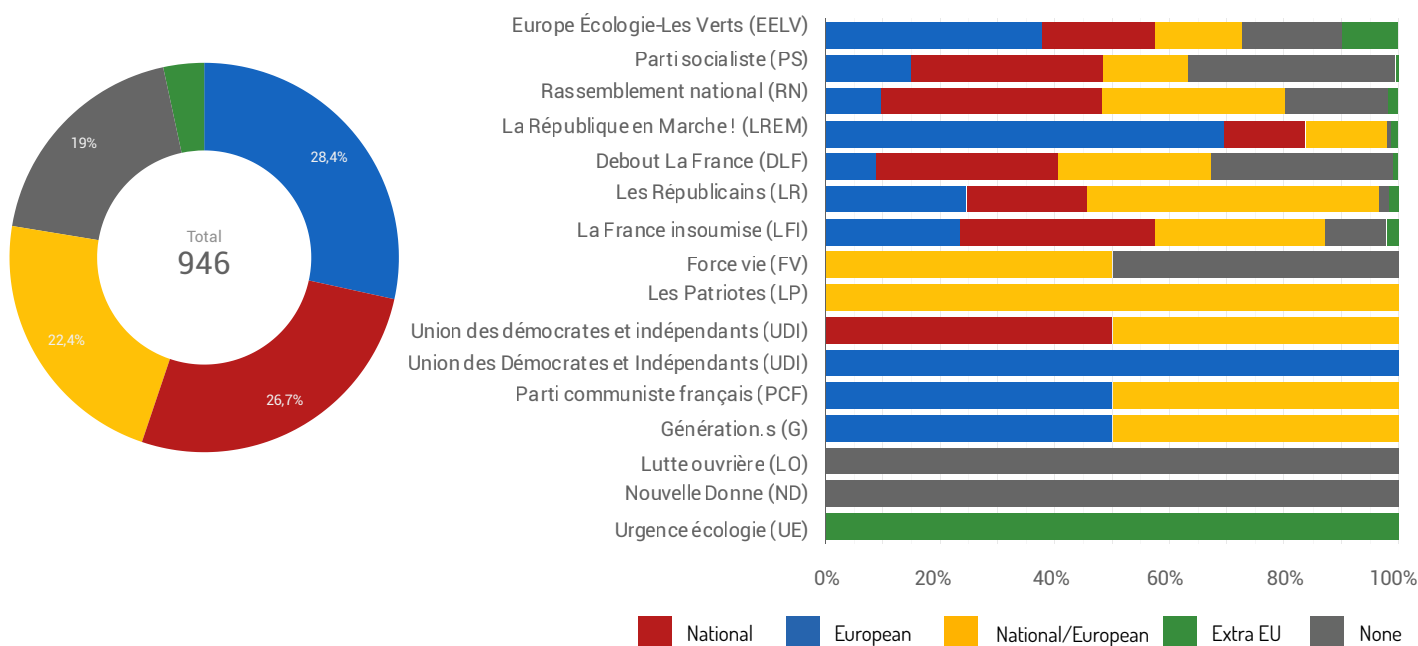
MEP). More difficult to classify: UPR (whose main agenda is the "Frexit"), UE (bringing together environmental activists from various backgrounds) and the PA. This Animals' rights party, founded in 2016 and very little known until now, received an unexpected 2.16% of vote share (i.e. 490,000 ballots, compared to 64,000 in the 1st round of the 2017 GE). Its campaign was rather innovative, including public figures such as humourist Laurent Baffie or former star Brigitte Bardot who both appeared in their official TV spot. Its official poster displayed a nice dog, in sharp contrast to other parties' posters, which presented, quite classically, one or more top candidates' faces.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

During 4 weeks, activities on Facebook of 7 main parties have been monitored; were kept for these analyses only those pertaining to the 2019 European elections. Despite this filter, it is noteworthy that Europe is not the main focus in many cases, with the exception of LR. The national dimension seems to prevail during this EP campaign, in line with previous European contests in France. This is all the more true since the parties' accounts are largely devoted to promoting their campaign as it is being carried out, and they take place exclusively on national territory. Moreover, there is almost no mention of the Spitzenkandidaten chosen by some EP groups as potential contenders for the Commission Presidency. Even if some parties, including the RN, sometimes refer to the European dimension of the campaign by mentioning their allies

from other countries (Matteo Salvini in Italy) or by posting pictures of their meeting (Bart de Wever in Belgium).

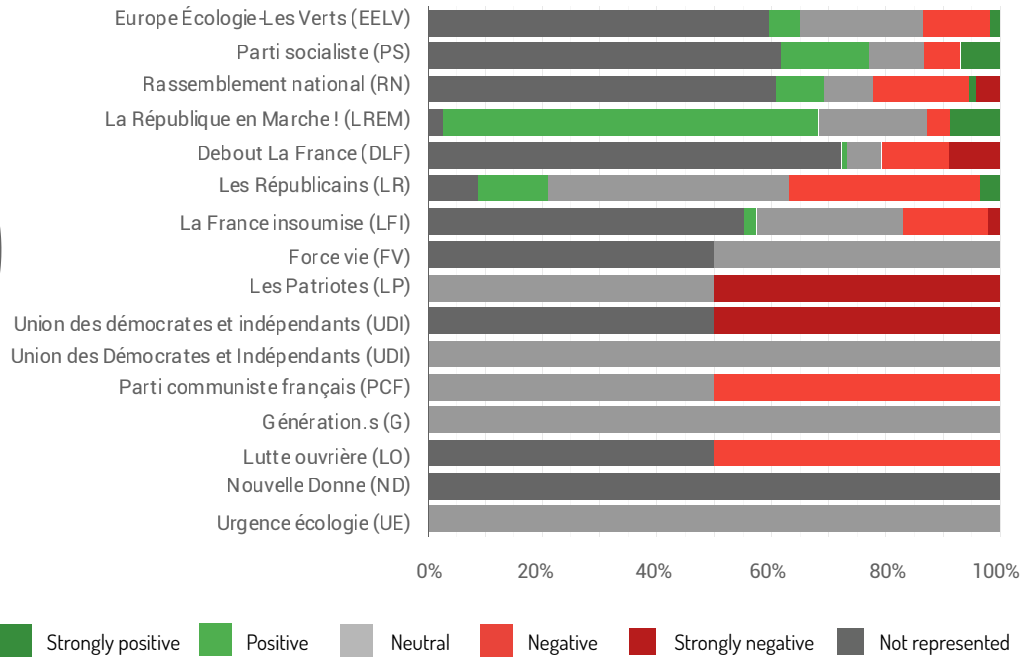
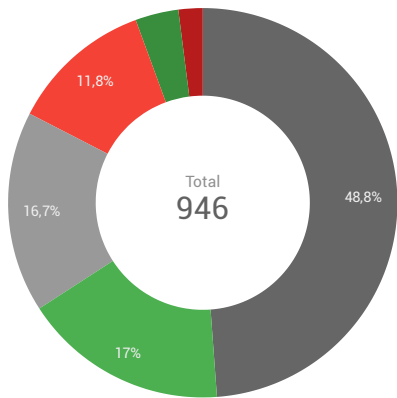
This national focus is especially true for LFI which often attacks the President and ends up calling to say "(Ma)non to Macron" (a play on words with its list leader 1st name, Manon Aubry). It should be noted, by contrast, that the Facebook accounts and lists members of the PS and EELV do not participate in this nationalised view of the confrontation and, instead, promote their own agenda: their candidates, their campaign events and also, for EELV, the past achievements of their MEP and their pledges for the next European legislature.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Party accounts are mainly used to report on the campaign as it is being carried out, whether to announce or report on an event (field visit, meeting) or a media intervention (radio, TV). They often invite followers to listen or watch it live or in replay, to comment it (providing the hashtags to be used), promoting a transmedia view of the campaign. Hence the FB posts themselves do not refer to Europe at all, not even in a neutral way. But in most instances, during these announced meetings and media interventions, the EU and its policies would very likely be at the heart of the candidates' statements and, depending on which party they stand for, Europe would then be evaluated negatively or positively.

In this respect, LREM stands out as a Europeanist party which sizes almost every opportunity to claim its love for the EU in its posts. Such a positive tone also prevails over the PS account, while the LFI account is clearly negative (proposing to renegotiate the European treaties), as are the LR and RN accounts (even though the latter somehow mitigated its 2017 elections call for France to leave the Eurozone). DLF showed in several videos national and European leaders, such as J-C. Juncker, as 'leaguings' with each other in order to destroy jobs, or French agriculture, because of exorbitant taxes (from a DLF perspective). More generally, Europe appears as a pretext for DLF to criticize decisions and policies from parties in power in France over the last decades.



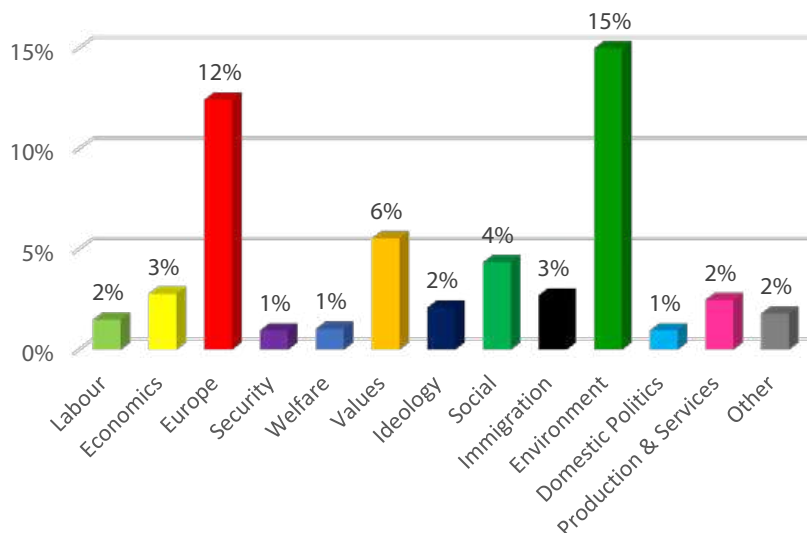
### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Facebook posts are mainly focused on how the campaign itself is going on. Some parties, especially LREM and RN, also devote numerous posts to brief biographies of their candidates. Except for EELV, few parties use FB to develop specific programmatic points, either from past achievements or their current platform. Substantive issues are covered during the meetings, but not in the FB posts announcing them.

Environmental issues - those related to biodiversity, climate change, air pollution, and their impact on health - are especially salient. Such topics are now regularly on the media agenda and some 'background news' (such as youth mobilisation for climate, the publication of alarming international reports or "Earth overshoot

day") encourage this saliency in parties' campaign. The massive presence of environmental issues in the Facebook posts can partly be explained by the fact that EELV posts alone account for 23% of the corpus, but also by the ecological conversion of some parties. Apart from EELV, structurally attached to these issues, several parties indeed now present themselves as ecologist, combining differently these issues with social and economical stands for PS and LFI. It should be recalled that the EELV score was, together with the failure of LR, the surprise outcome of these elections. If we add the share of the vote of UE and the PA (in very different genres), the environmentalist movement understood in a broad sense obtained 17.46% of the expressed ballots.

113

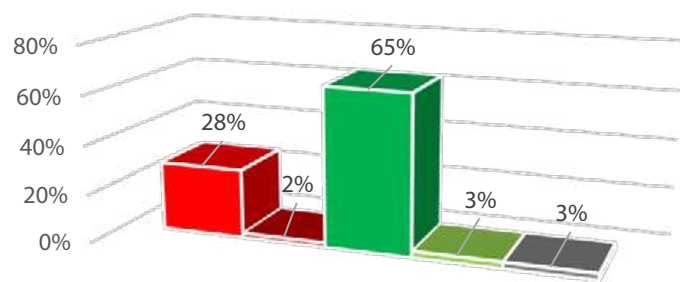
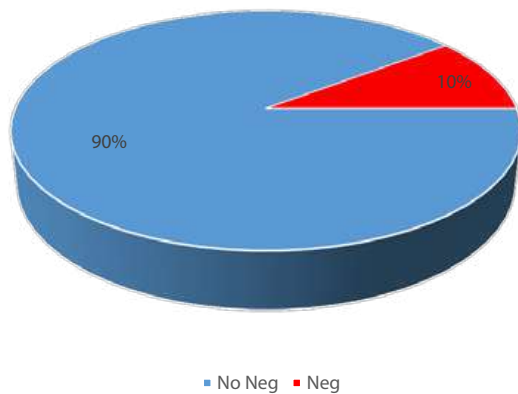


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

In France, negative ads are forbidden during the official televised campaign. Therefore, political parties do not really develop a tradition of formal and organized attack against their opponents. The parties used to govern (LREM, PS, LR and, to a lesser extent, EELV) remain focused on their own campaign and produce no critical document against their opponents. The RN and DLF both do develop criticism against the national political leaders. The latter needs distinctiveness after it stood alone in 2019 (while it backed

M. Le Pen in the 2nd round of the 2017 presidential election) and is more virulent, editing several videos with excerpts from politicians' quotes to illustrate the ideological proximity between Macron (LREM) and Bellamy (LR). The former is more in search of credibility and respectability. Yet, among the few very negative posts, there is a tribune by a RN candidate disqualifying Macron as an illegitimate president since he was acting as the de facto leader of a list "in perdition".



- Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Instit. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



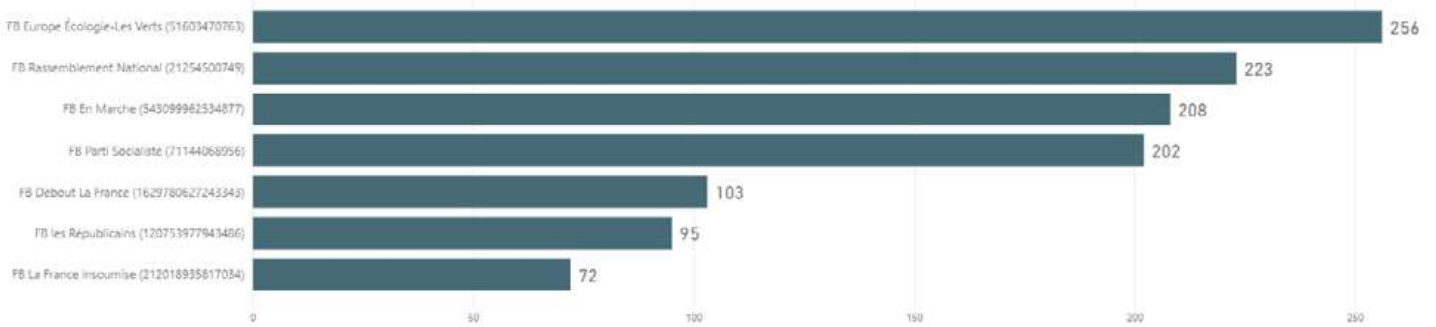
These statistics cover all the posts of the 7 parties studied, so that we can determine the proportion of posts that each of them devoted to the European elections. For instance, the accounts of the PS and DLF were quite entirely focused on the elections (respectively 93 and 96% of their posts), while, conversely, more than 40% of LREM's posts dealt with other issues, the majority party continuing to support the government's action beyond the European campaign. It is more difficult to conclude on the engagement, which will have to be related to the number of posts and the number of followers (from 12,000 for DLF to 432,000 for RN).

One possible explanation for the negative mood registered in

reactions to some parties' posts is the fact that they sometimes put forth scandals. For instance, EELV covered several times the revelation of an illegal listing of some activists, including its incumbents MEPs, by a lobby working for the Monsanto industry, and DLF published a tribune backing the social movement from civil servants working for border controls, in connexion with the alleged softness of EU policies on crime. When these parties' followers widely react to such posts, with dislikes or angry signs, it is not the party which trigger such negative feelings, but the situation they denounce.



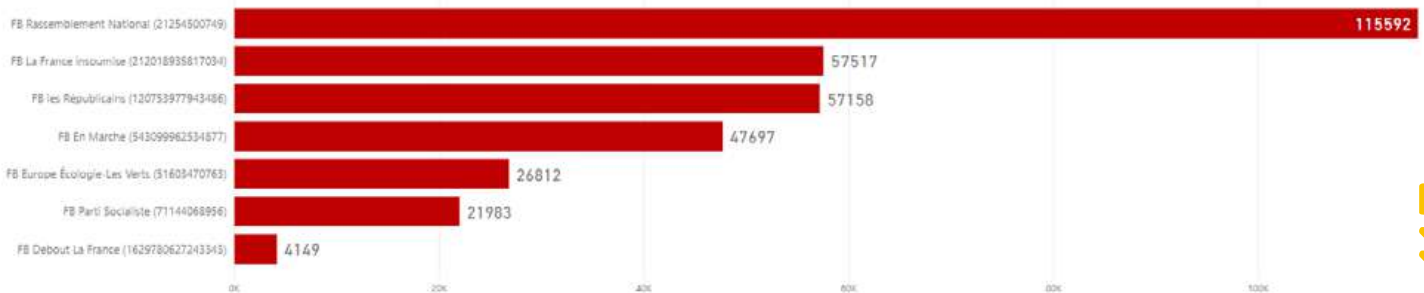
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

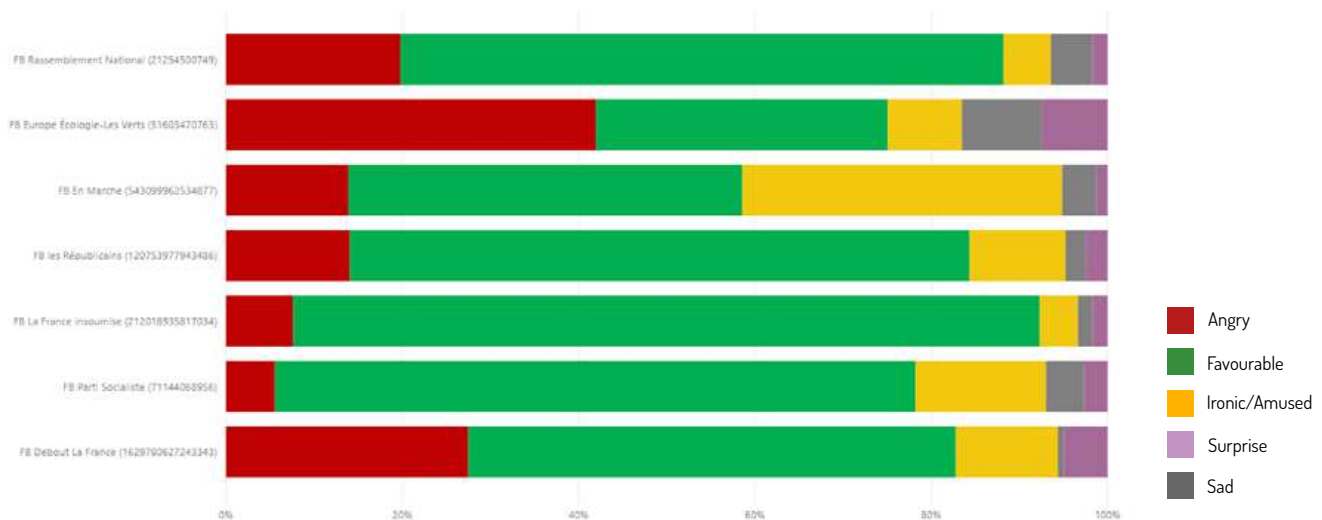


115

\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.







# GERMANY

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Membership: **Founder Country 1958**

European area: **Western Europe**

Population: **81,197,537**

Number of MEPs: **96**

Concomitance elections: **Political, general  
or national**

**Christina Holtz-Bacha**

Friedrich-Alexander

University Erlangen-Nuernberg

[christina.holtz-bacha@fau.de](mailto:christina.holtz-bacha@fau.de)

## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

In view of increasing populism along with growing nationalism and the drifting apart of the EU countries, the European Election 2019 was declared a key election in Germany. Moreover, the rise of global issues such as climate change and migration as well as the unpredictable US government have further highlighted the relevance of a strong force in Europe. In fact, in the last weeks before Election Day, interest in the election was considerably stronger than five years earlier and with 61.4 percent also led to a turnout above EU average. Several factors may have contributed to the turnout that was 18 percentage points higher than 2014. In addition to mobilization in favor of or against the right-wing populist Alternative for Germany (AfD), the abolishment of the threshold for European Elections in 2014 may have contributed to an interest in the election, because voters have the feeling that every vote counts. Since the European Election does not determine a government and a prime minister or chancellor as well as the fall of the election threshold invite people to vote according to their preferences rather than tactical calculations. Therefore, voters may have seen the European Election as an opportunity to express their opinion about the Federal Government after not much more than one year of the grand coalition. Against this background, it was surprising that the campaign started late and remained low-key until shortly before the election on May 26. It only gained momentum with the incipient discussion about the role of the Spitzenkandidaten and the release of the Ibiza video by two German print media that disavowed the Austrian vice-chancellor and leader of the populist FPÖ Strache and eventually caused the break of the Austrian government. With the long-time MEP Manfred Weber, a German was running as lead candidate of the European Peoples Party (EPP). Even though the EPP was expected to experience a loss in votes, Weber seemed to have a good chance of becoming the next President of the Commission. During the campaign, Angela Merkel was accused of not backing Weber wholeheartedly and finally the French President Macron expressed reservations about the Spitzenkandidaten process and declared that he would not support Weber. In addition to a discussion about the legitimate methods of investigative reporting and whether the end justifies the means, the publication of the Ibiza video sparked speculation about its impact on the European Election and the outcome for the populist parties particularly. However, just as other populist parties, the German AfD reacted by calling the incident a singular

case. The campaign got a final kick when a 26-year old and until then mostly unknown YouTuber released a video under the title "The destruction of the CDU" in which he ranted for almost an hour mainly about CDU policy, ending with an appeal not to vote for the parties of the governing coalition (CDU/CSU and SPD) and not for the populist AfD either. Instead he endorsed the Greens. The stupendous success of the video left the CDU dumbfounded, not knowing how to react on the attack. In view of the performance of the CDU in the election, the party leader Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer (AKK) imprudently criticized the video as a manipulation of public opinion ("Meinungsmache") and asked for more regulation of the web. Being understood as an attack on freedom of opinion, the remark provoked fierce reactions online and offline providing for a blow to AKK's ambition to become the next chancellor candidate of her party. In Germany, the election results forebode domestic consequences. The outcome for the coalition parties of the Federal Government seems to confirm the end of the catch-all parties ("Volksparteien"). Whereas the Christian Democrats remained the strongest party despite a drop of 7.5 percentage points compared to 2014, the Social Democrats only got 15.8 percent recording a loss of 11.4 percentage points. The big winner of the election was the Green Party with a share of 20.5 percent and votes mostly migrating from the CDU/CSU and the SPD. This not only expresses a low satisfaction with the grand coalition in Berlin, but also reflects the fact that environmental issues have been climbing up on the public agenda and are about to replace migration/refugees as most important topic. The differentiation of the election results shows that CDU/CSU and SPD have lost the young electorate. Many of them have taken to the streets in the last months challenging the government to deal with the burning issue of climate change. Thus, the Greta effect has worked in favor of the Greens that are traditionally attributed the competence for the environment. With a vote share that almost doubled compared to 2014 and ranking second, the Greens have achieved a powerful position in the German political landscape that cannot easily be ignored. Even though reaching a two-digit result, the AfD was disappointed about the election outcome. The party's strongholds are mostly in the East German states which points to a polarization between East and West and provides also for a glance at the outcome of the election in three of the East German states later this year (see Bolin, Falasca, Grusell, Nord, 2019).

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

Total contents

246

Social contents

53

Poster and press

153

Commercials

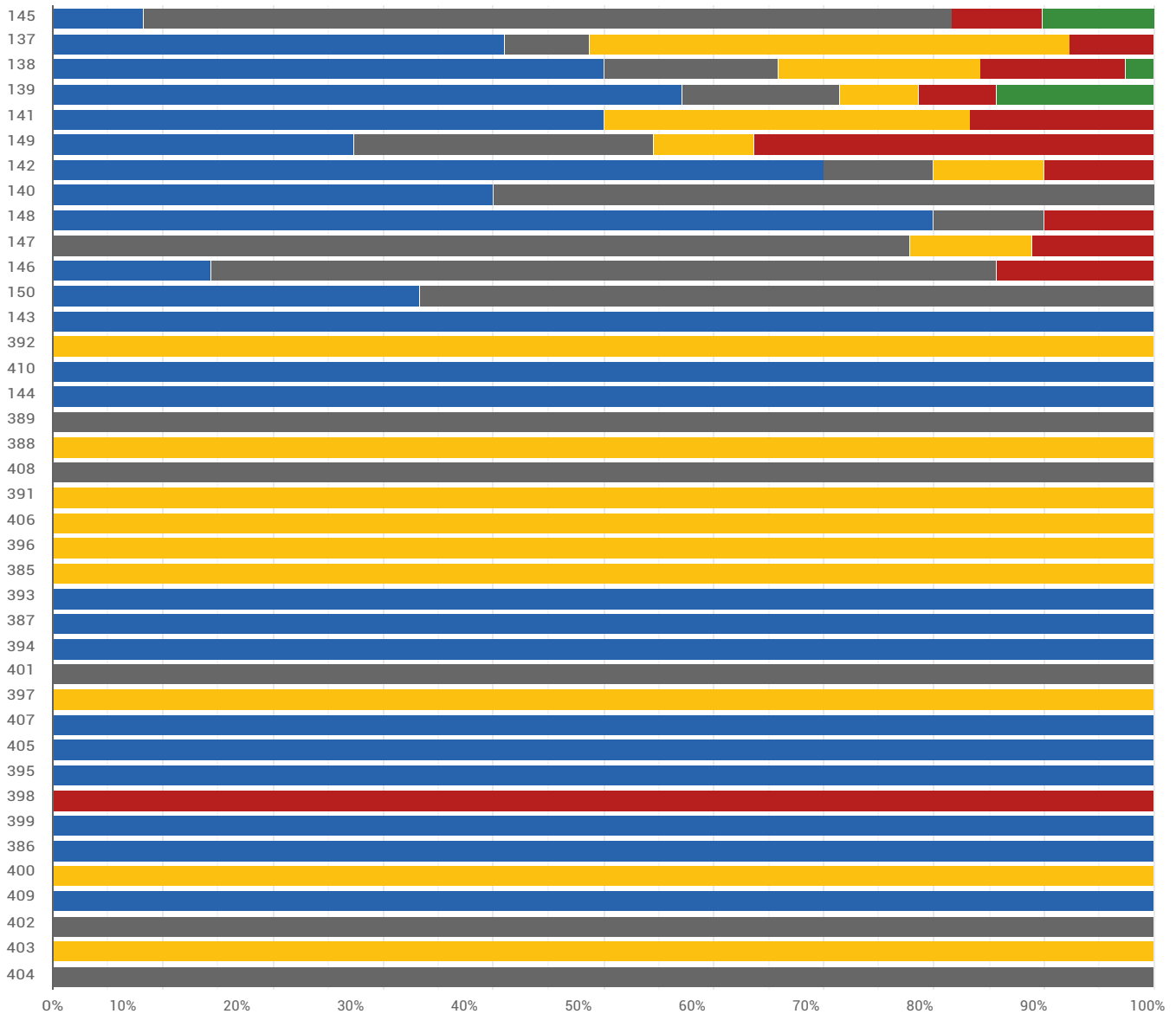
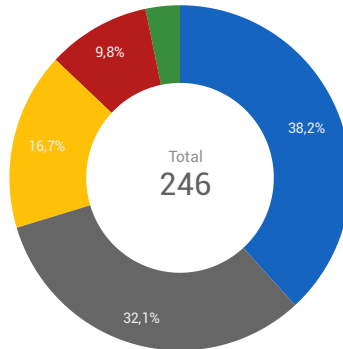
40

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Partei Mensch Umwelt Tierschutz (Tierschutzpartei)	Not monitored	48	1	1
Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU)	28	10	1	29
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD)	22	15	1	16
Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (Grüne)	2	11	1	21
Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)	Not monitored	11	1	11
Die Partei	Not monitored	9	2	2
Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (CSU)	1	8	1	with CDU
Die Linke	Not monitored	9	1	5
Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD)	Not monitored	9	1	0
Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei (ÖDP)	Not monitored	8	1	1
Familien-Partei Deutschlands (Familie)	Not monitored	6	1	1
Piratenpartei (Piraten)	Not monitored	5	1	1
Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP)	Not monitored	4	1	5
BIG	Not monitored	-	1	0
Volt	Not monitored	-	1	1
Freie Wähler	Not monitored	-	1	2
TIERSCHUTZ hier!	Not monitored	-	1	0
SGP	Not monitored	-	1	0
PARTEI FÜR DIE TIERE	Not monitored	-	1	0
Bündnis C	Not monitored	-	1	0
ÖkoLinX	Not monitored	-	1	0
III. Weg	Not monitored	-	1	0
BP	Not monitored	-	1	0
BGE	Not monitored	-	1	0
MLPD	Not monitored	-	1	0
DIE DIREKTE!	Not monitored	-	1	0
DIE FRAUEN	Not monitored	-	1	0
Die Grauen	Not monitored	-	1	0
Die Humanisten	Not monitored	-	1	0
NL	Not monitored	-	1	0
DIEM25	Not monitored	-	1	0
DIE RECHTE	Not monitored	-	1	0
DIE VIOLETTEN	Not monitored	-	1	0
DKP	Not monitored	-	1	0
LIEBE	Not monitored	-	1	0
Gesundheitsforschung	Not monitored	-	1	0
Graue Panther	Not monitored	-	1	0
LKR	Not monitored	-	1	0
MENSCHLICHE WELT	Not monitored	-	1	0

TV-spots are complete for all parties. Posters were only collected for those parties that were represented in the European Parliament since 2014. No press advertisements were found in the two quality newspapers that were monitored (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and Süddeutsche Zeitung). Only few Facebook posts were analyzed.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The findings reflect that this was an overall European campaign. Due to the analyzed material, these findings mostly refer to posters and television spots.



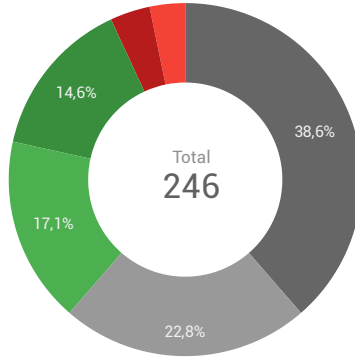
137 Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU) / 138 Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) / 139 Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (Grüne) / 140 Die Linke / 141 Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) / 142 Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (CSU) / 143 Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP) / 144 Freie Wähler / 145 Partei Mensch Umwelt Tierschutz (Tierschutzpartei) / 146 Familien-Partei Deutschlands (Familie) / 147 Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei (ÖDP) / 148 Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) / 149 Die Partei / 150 Piratenpartei (Piraten) / 385 BP / 386 DKP / 387 MLPD / 388 SGP / 389 TIERSCHUTZ hier! / 390 Tierschutzallianz / 391 Bündnis C / 392 BIG / 393 BGE / 394 DIE DIREKTE! / 395 DiEM25 / 396 Ill. Weg / 397 Die Grauen / 398 DIE RECHTE / 399 DIE VIOLETTEN / 400 LIEBE / 401 DIE FRAUEN / 402 Graue Panther / 403 LKR / 404 MENSCHLICHE WELT / 405 NL / 406 ÖkoLinX / 407 Die Humanisten / 408 PARTEI FÜR DIE TIERE / 409 Gesundheitsforschung / 410 Volt

■ National 
 ■ European 
 ■ National/European 
 ■ Extra EU 
 ■ None

120

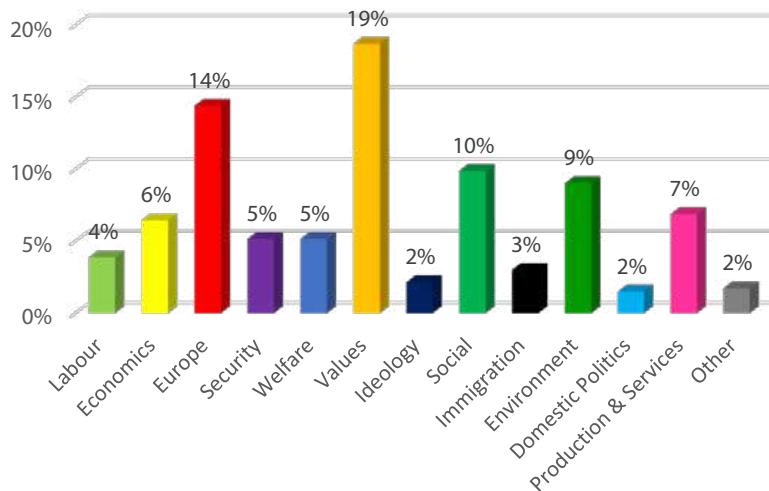
## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

The findings for the overall positive tone of the election campaign are very much influenced by the parties represented in the national parliament, except for the right-wing populist AfD.



## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

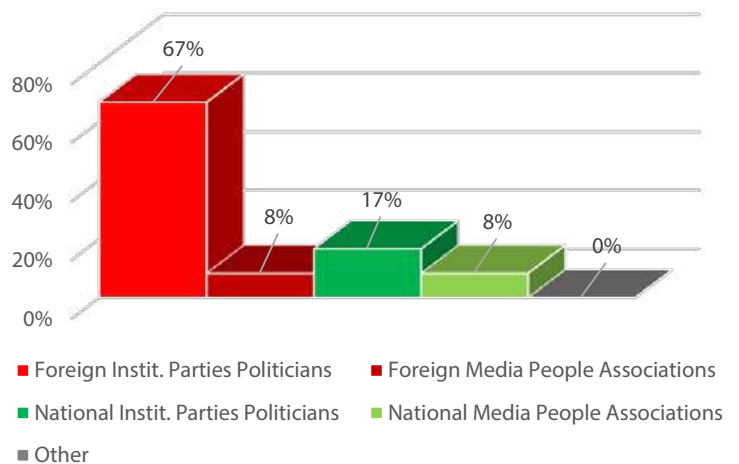
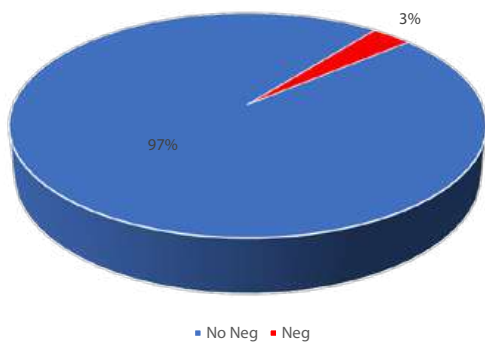
Values were often combined with references to Europe, which again shows how European the German campaign was.



\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

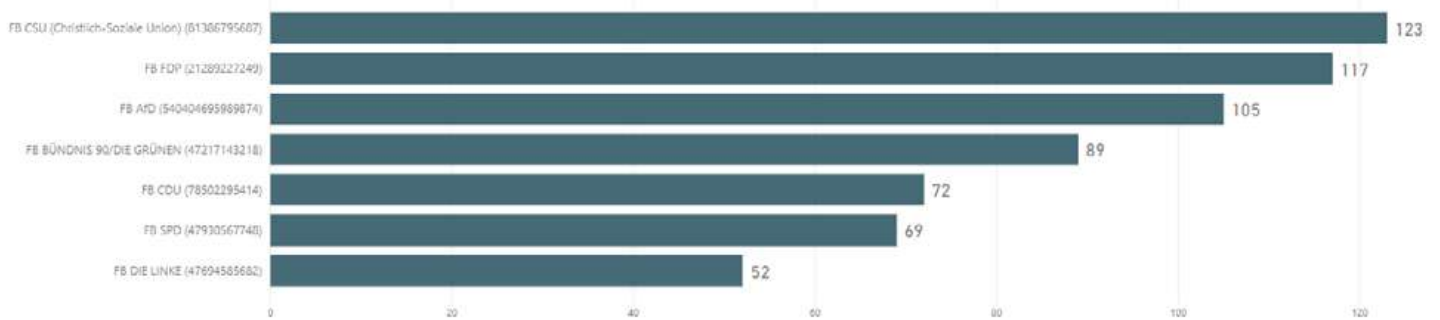
122



## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

<p><b>7</b></p> <p>N. Accounts monitored*</p>	<p><b>627</b></p> <p>N. Posts produced</p>	<p><b>776273</b></p> <p>Engagement**</p>	<p><b>8,2 %</b></p> <p>percentage of posts on EU campaign topics</p>
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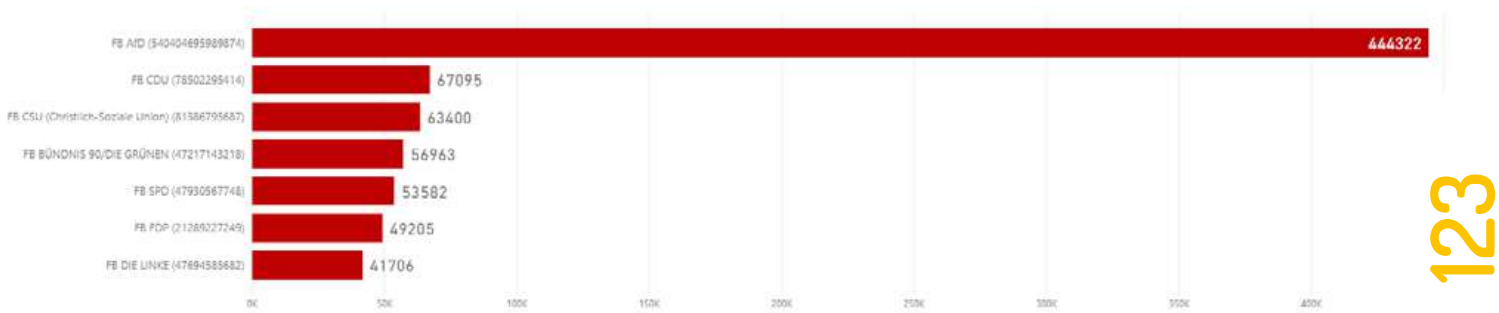
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

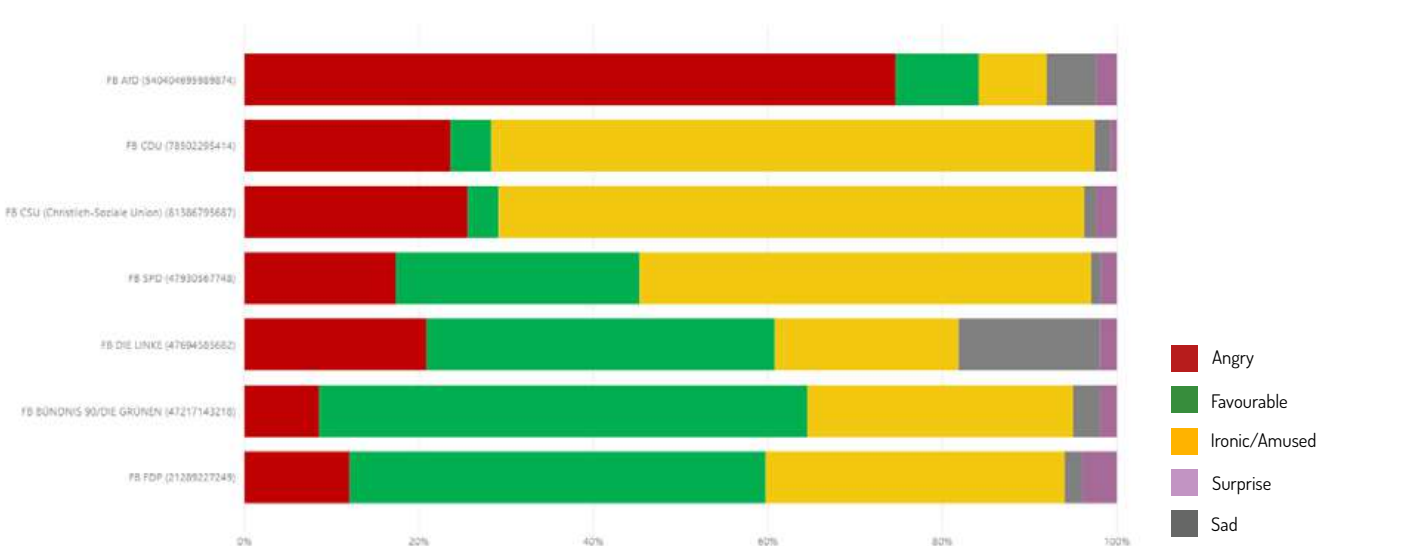
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.







# GREECE

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Membership: 1981

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **10,858,018**

Number of MEPs: 21

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Local**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The electoral system in Greece is –since the 2012 general elections– a mixed one. It combines characteristics of the proportional and majoritarian electoral systems: 250 out of the 300 MP seats in the Greek Parliament are proportionally disseminated to the parties that overcome the threshold of 3% of the votes, whereas the remaining 50 seats are given as a bonus to the first voted party. Similar is the dissemination of the 21 Greek MEP seats in the voted parties (dissemination in the parties that overcome the 3% threshold, but without the bonus).

The Euro-elections of May 2019 were the first elections in which 17 year olds were able to vote (the previous age limit was 18 years of age). In geographical–electoral terms, Greece is divided into 59 constituencies and the official length of the electoral campaigns is approximately one month. Regarding the media use, the political parties are eligible to air commercials on TV and radio stations (gratis), and they can use public commercial spaces to place their posters (if any). In the vast majority of cases, due to the inherently partisan character of the newspapers, parties usually do not place advertisements in the press. In terms of the public discourse, the rationale of conflict and polarization of political dialogue has a rather long tradition in Greece, and in several cases echoes the ideological repercussions of the Greek civil war. The emergence of the “crisis” contributed to the enhancement of the already existing polarization of the publicly articulated political discourse.

Due to the “crisis” context, the political scene in Greece has undergone several transformations. Since the 2012 elections, a new “bi-partizanism” emerged, since the leftist SYRIZA (Coalition of Radical Left) substituted the Greek Socialists (PASOK) in the political rivalry for power against the right-wing party of Nea Demokratia (New Democracy). SYRIZA won the elections in January 2015, but had to form a coalition with the nationalistic, Euro-sceptic, right wing Aneksartiti Ellines (Independent Greeks) in order to form a government. The rationale behind this ideologically “incompatible” coalition was the opposition of both parties against the Memoranda that the Greek governments had signed with the EU, ECB and IMF and the consequent austerity policies. This coalition “survived” the referendum of July 2015 and re-gained power after the September 2015 general elections. Still the nationalistic DNA of the Independent Greeks did not allow them to remain in the coalition with SYRIZA after the ratification of the Prespes treaty by the Greek Parliament, which regulated the long-term dispute between Greece and FYROM on the name of the former Yugoslav Republic (establishing the name Northern Macedonia). Since then (January 2019), SYRIZA had been in office “alone”, with the support of several independent MPs.

In tandem with the political transformations during the crisis, there are different phases in the stance of the Greek public opinion towards the EU. The imposition of the austerity policies and their heavily negative financial and social consequences, led to the conquest of a Euro-sceptic attitude, materialized through the electoral victory of SYRIZA in January 2015 and the consequent referendum result, which strongly rejected a new round of austerity policies imposed by the “troika” (EU-ECB-IMF). Since then, though, the –rather superficial– stabilization of the Greek economy, has led to an increase in the positive opinions for the EU, which of course cannot be compared to the pre-crisis extremely high support of the EU. The 2019 Euro-elections demonstrated a prevalent pro-European rhetoric (with rather minor criticisms on behalf of the major parties), whereas the anti-European voices were restricted to minor parties (the Greek Communist party/ Kommounistiko Komma Ellados being the most important among them).

The May 2019 Euro-elections took place together with the local elections and have been close in –temporal terms– to the general elections (the result of the Euro-elections actually triggered the proclamation of general elections to take place on July 7). This context contributed to the further domestication of the political discourse in the European elections. This domestication of the political discourse was also a result of the large period without elections in Greece. Given that the last elections –before the 2019 EU elections– took place back in September 2015, the Euro-elections were really about demonstrating the popular sentiment prior to the national ones. Nevertheless, one should note that the Euro-elections in Greece, have never actually served as a motive to substantially discuss about the EU and its various aspects.

The prevalent discourse of the 2019 Euro-elections has both similarities and differences to the 2014 elections. In 2014, the ongoing economic crisis had profoundly influenced the campaign in Greece. The vast majority of political messages focused on the crisis and the related austerity measures, heavily criticizing the asphyxiation of the Greek economy and society. In the 2019 Euro-elections, though the starting point of the discourse remained the same –the Greek economy–, the notion that conquered the public dialogue was “development”, instead of “crisis” or “austerity”. In this way, the major political parties (SYRIZA and New Democracy) that occupied the first and second place in the EU elections sought –each in its own way– to underline the gradual distantiation of the Greek economy from the crisis period and its entrance in a new era of financial and social elevation, leaving behind the economic upheavals of the last decade.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

Total contents 668		
Social contents 580	Poster and press 1	Commercials 87

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
SYRIZA-Proodeftiki Symmachia	224	-	23	6
Metopo Realistikis Anypakois 25	82	-	10	0
Aneksartiti Ellines	80	1	7	0
To Potami	68	-	11	0
Enosi Kentroon	72	-	1	0
Kinima Allagis	36	-	9	2
Nea Dimokratia	18	-	12	8
Plefsi Eleftherias	Not monitored	-	4	0
Elliniki Lysi	Not monitored	-	4	1
Chrysi Avgi	Not monitored	-	3	2
Kommounistiko Komma Ellados	Not monitored	-	3	2

SYRIZA (Coalition of Radical Left) appears to be the most active party in the production of electoral material both in terms of Facebook posts (224) and in terms of commercials (23). Regarding its activity in Facebook, SYRIZA is followed by MeRA25 (DiEM25-Greece) with 82 posts and Aneksartiti Ellines (Independent Greeks) with 80 posts. The big difference between SYRIZA and the rest of the parties is due to SYRIZA's posts announcing on a daily basis public events in various places in Athens and the rest of Greece.

In terms of the commercials, Nea Dimokratia (New Democracy) and To Potami (The River) follow SYRIZA's lead. Regarding Nea Dimokratia, it is notable that it did not count that much (as a

party) on Facebook posts to disseminate its messages for the Euro-elections, perhaps leaving this task mostly to its candidates, but presented a rather extensive commercials campaign with 12 spots. Nea Dimokratia is followed by To Potami, with 11 spots and a rather intensive presence on Facebook, with 68 posts. Last but not least, as evident from the table, the Greek parties did not count on posters or press ads to disseminate their pre-electoral messages. The lack of press ads is due to the highly partisan character of the Greek major newspapers, which makes the ads rather unnecessary. In addition, the Greek parties appear reluctant to use posters mostly for environmental reasons.

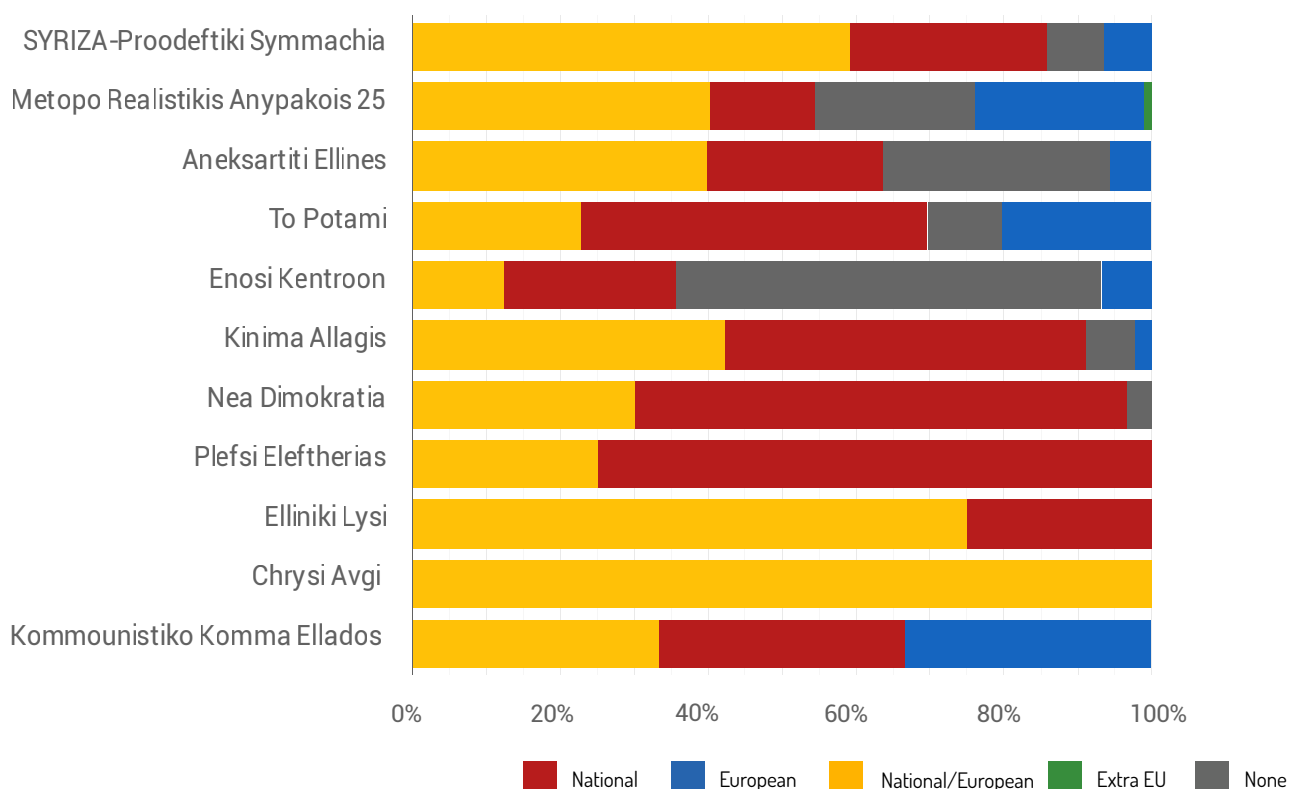
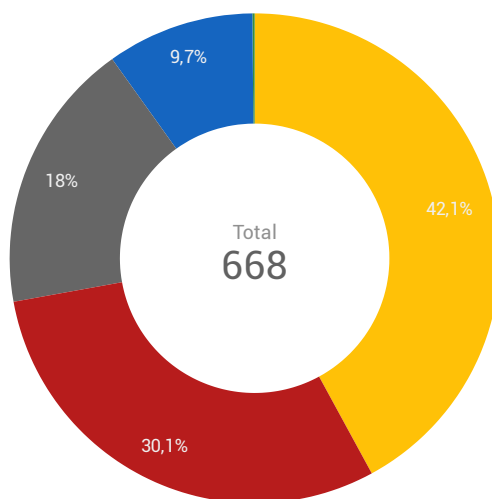
## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The nation-centric tendency of the political discourse on the European elections is evident from the difference between the nation-centric content (30.1%) and the exclusively European content (a very limited 9.7%), even compared to the material with no specific orientation, either Greek or European (18%). Briefly, almost half of the pre-electoral material of the parties in Greece (30.1%+18%) could be used for national elections as well, since it lacks any kind of reference to the EU. The more than 40% of “mixed” content, refers to pre-electoral material that in most cases referred to the EU in a rather superficial way, in several cases even in the form of a slogan.

On one hand, the most cases of Europe oriented discourse were encountered in MeRA25 (DiEM25-Greece), To Potami (The

River) and Kommounistiko Komma Ellados (Greek Communist Party). Among them, of course, there are significant qualitative differences, since the discourse of To Potami is by far the most EU friendly one, followed by MeRA25, which argues for significant changes in the EU (financial) policies and the Greek Communist Party, which argues that a “new” Europe is needed to replace the existing one.

On the other hand, Plefsi Eleftherias (Course for Freedom), Nea Dimokratia (New Democracy) and Kinima Allagis (Movement for Change) have adopted a predominantly nation-centric discourse. Among the notable results is the non-reference either to Greece or to Europe in the pre-electoral material of Enosi Kentroon (Union of Centrists).



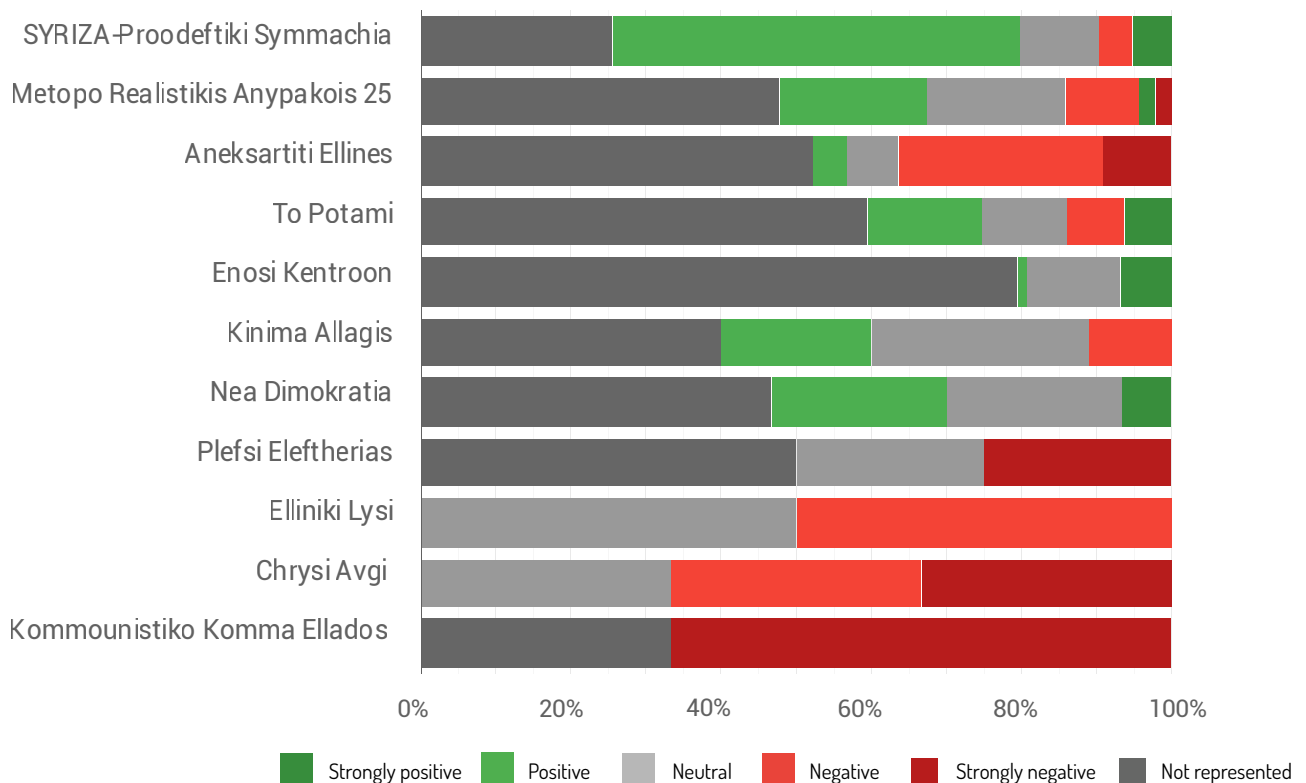
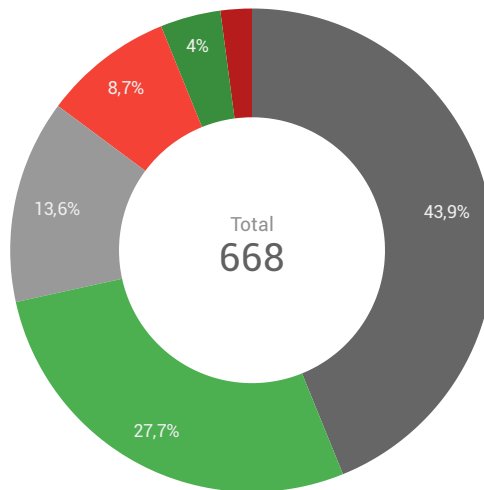
## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

The results on the predominantly positive representations of Europe (positive+ strongly positive: 27.7%+4%=31.7%) -in the cases it is being represented (56.1%)- stand in accordance with the overall “optimistic” discourse on the future of Greece and the EU that dominated the pre-electoral period in Greece, since the notion of “development” replaced “crisis” and “austerity”. On the other hand, the approximately 11% negative and strongly negative representations of Europe (8.7%+2.1%), signify the rather restricted anti-Europeanism of the electoral campaign.

The most characteristic cases of anti-Europeanism can be traced in small parties such as the Greek Communist Party (Kommounistiko Komma Ellados), Chrysi Avgi (Golden Dawn), Plefsi Eleftherias (Course for Freedom) and Elliniki Lysi (Greek

Solution), in spite of their different ideological orientations (Golden Dawn and Greek Solution are far-right parties, while the Greek Communist Party and Course for Freedom are placed on the left side of the ideological spectrum).

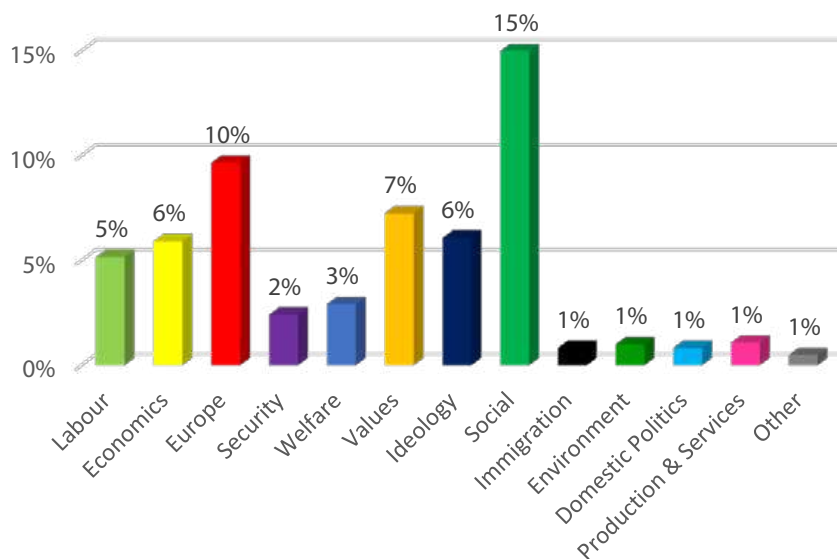
On the other hand, Nea Dimokratia (New Democracy), To Potami (The River), Kinima Allagis (Movement for Change), SYRIZA (Coalition of Radical Left) and Enosi Kentroon (Union of Centrists) appear to approach the EU in a rather positive way, expressing in most cases rather minor criticisms about the European structure. Most characteristic among them was one of the central slogans of SYRIZA “for the Greece of the many, for a Europe of the people”, which echoed SYRIZA’s “vision” for increased social justice in the EU.



## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The major topics discussed during the elections campaign in Greece are in accordance with the financial-social condition of the “crisis” that Greece has been undergoing during the last decade. In this sense, social issues were the ones most imminently “discussed” in the pre-electoral materials of the political parties (15%), followed by various thematics that can be categorized under the theme “Europe” (10%), (political/ideological) values (7%), (social) values (6%), economics (6%), labor (5%), welfare (3%) and security

(2%). What is also striking is the almost total lack of discussion on issues that are of major importance at a European scale, such as immigration and environment, which appeared respectively in only 1% of the analyzed electoral material, even though both issues are of great importance both in national and European scale. This finding confirms the nation-centric rationale of the published pre-electoral material for the European elections and the consequent discussion triggered by the political parties.

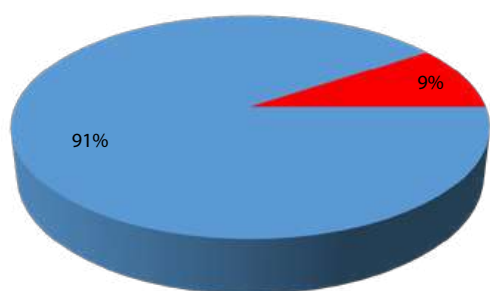


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

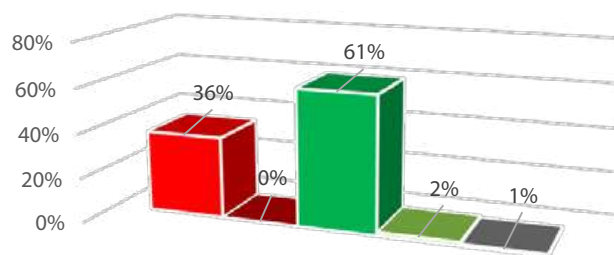
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

The low percentage of negativism in the messages of the political parties during the pre-electoral period of the European elections (9%) is one more element affirming the “optimistic” approach of the parties to the issues they mentioned through their campaigns. In addition, where a negative campaign material hits the public, it seeks to undermine mostly the national political rivals (61%) and

to a less extent -but still significant- foreign/European political institution or politicians (36%). The introvert character of the negative campaigning stands as one more aspect of the nation-centric rationale that dominated the electoral campaigns of the Greek political parties for the 2019 European elections.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Instit. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other

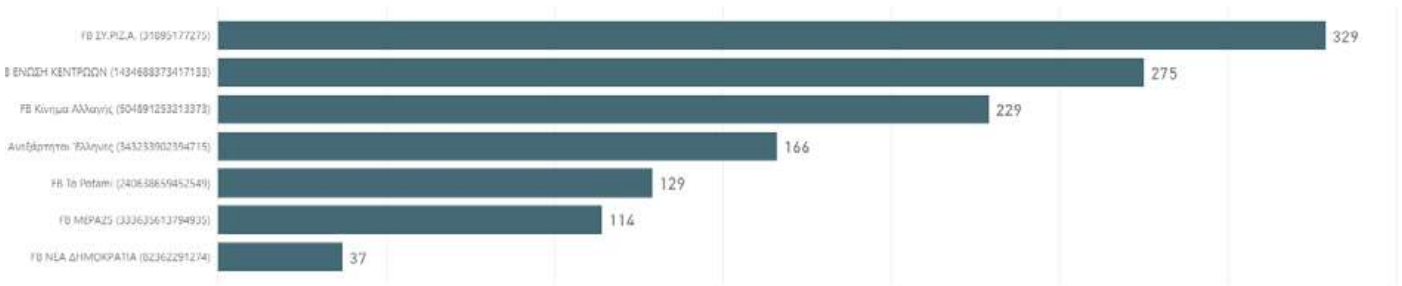
## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



In total, the seven party FB accounts we examined produced 1279 posts and engaged 194677 Facebook users. From the 1279 posts, almost half of them 45,4% focused on EU campaign topics. In terms of posts “productivity, SYRIZA/Coalition of Radical Left come in the first place with 329 posts, and is followed by Enosi Kentroon/ Union of Centrists (275) and Kinima Allagis/Movement for Change (229). Notable is the last place of Nea Dimokratia/New Democracy (the winner of the Euro-elections) with only 37 posts. With the exception of SYRIZA, it seems the smaller parties mostly invest in the dissemination of their messages through Facebook. SYRIZA occupies the first place in the Facebook engagement as well with 70785 users. In the second place one can find Kinima Allagis with 53873 users. Important to note are the very low engagement of Enosi Kentroon with only 3779 users (approximately 14 users per post) and the disproportionate engagement of Nea Dimokratia,

which with only 37 posts, engaged approximately 454 users per post (compared to the 215 of SYRIZA and the 196 of Kinima Allagis). In terms of the sentiment emerging from the reactions/comments of the Facebook users to the Facebook posts of the parties under scrutiny, most parties (Enosi Kentroon/Union of Centrists, Nea Dimokratia/New Democracy, MeRA25/DiEM25-Greece, Kinima Allagis/Movement for Change and SYRIZA/Coalition of Radical Left) appear to receive predominantly “favorable” comments. Aneksartiti Ellines/Independent Greeks and To Potami/The River appear to receive ironic/amusing comments, while, at the same time, they appear to have received the most “angry” comments, followed by SYRIZA and Nea Dimokratia. While “surprised” reactions appear to be rather marginal, there seems to be a notable amount of sadness in the comments/reactions to the posts of The River, followed by Kinima Allagis and Nea Dimokratia.

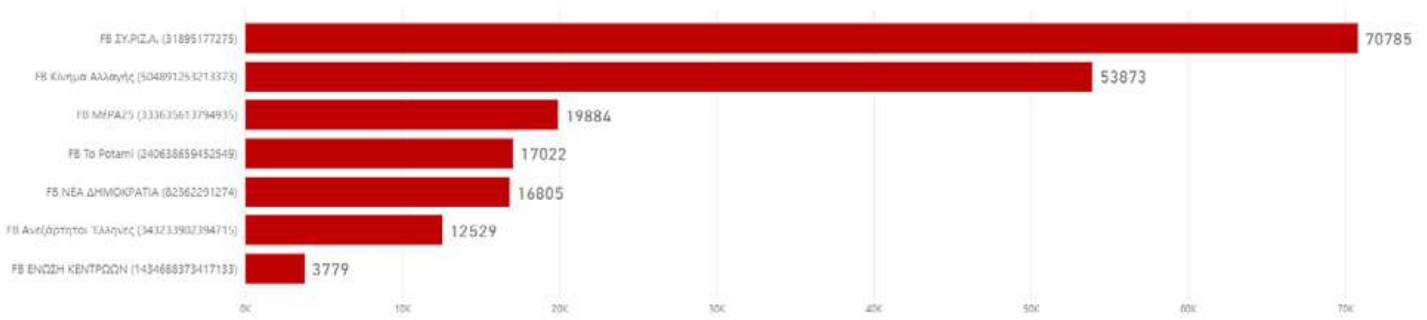
## NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Post published

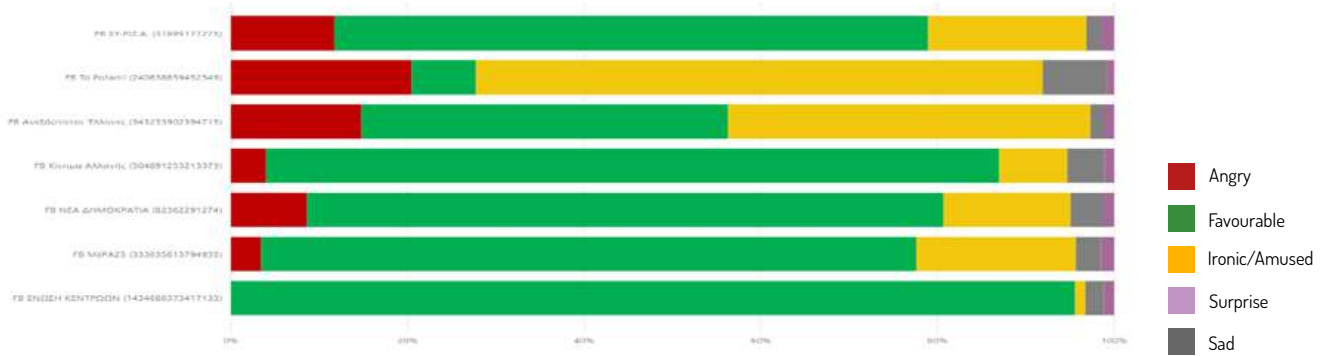
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.









# HUNGARY

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Membership: **2004**

European area: **Eastern Europe**

Population: **9,855,571**

Number of MEPs: **21**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

2019 marked the 4th European elections held in Hungary since the ascension in 2004. Currently, Hungarians elect 21 members of the European Parliament in a single, nation-wide constituency. The threshold of representation is 5% for both single-party lists and coalitions. Seats are distributed according to the D'Hondt method. Hungarian citizens of at least the age of 18 can vote and can be elected as a representative. The electoral campaign period begins 50 days before the elections. Campaigning is not prohibited on election day. However, it is restricted in the direct vicinity of the polling stations. Public TV and radio channels are required by law to provide equal airtime to political parties for advertisements and introductions. Private media outlets can register to air political ads and are required to provide equal airtime to all party lists free of charge.

Hungary is a parliamentary republic where executive power is mainly exercised by the prime minister, elected by a majority of the 199 representatives in Hungarian National Assembly. The current Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán and his coalition, the Fidesz-KDNP won a two-thirds supermajority for the third consecutive term in April 2018. Their opposition is fairly fragmented, in the parliament it consists of the right-wing Jobbik, the green Politics Can Be Different (LMP), the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), their splinter group called the Democratic Coalition (DK), and the Dialogue (P). There are also three extra-parliamentary parties contesting the election: the centre-liberal Momentum, the satirical Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (MKKP), and the right-wing extremists called Our Homeland Movement (MHM).

Public opinion on the European Union is generally high. However, the widely popular governing parties have been fierce critics of the EU's immigration policy, and the European political elite in general. So much so that before the campaign, Fidesz sponsored nation-wide ad campaigns criticising "Brussels" and featuring the image of Jean-Claude Juncker. Opposition parties generally support the EU, for example, they all want Hungary to join the European Public Prosecutor's Office, something that the government continually dismisses.

The 2019 European elections were held approximately one year after the general elections to the National Assembly and about half a year before the municipal elections. Since the beginning of the year opposition parties have been in the process of organising a primary to decide whose candidate should run for the office of the Mayor of Budapest. For the governing parties, the agenda of the campaign was dominantly about immigration, its dangers and the necessity of anti-immigrant political groups to take power on a European level. A central theme of the campaign was the

conflict between Fidesz and the EPP, and Viktor Orbán's criticism toward Manfred Weber, the group's Spitzenkandidat. Opposition parties, however, avoided the topic of immigration. In general, Jobbik and the MSZP-P coalition focused on domestic politics, criticising the government and appearing as the main political opponents of Viktor Orbán. The DK and the extra-parliamentary Momentum, on the other hand, focused on European issues. The DK and their leading candidate Klára Dobrev, wife of former prime minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, campaigned on the promise of the United States of Europe with common European social security.

The campaign of the European Parliament elections of 2019 in Hungary was relatively intensive, compared to previous second-order elections. All parliamentary parties used billboards except the Jobbik. According to them, fines charged by the State Audit Office put the party into such a dire financial situation that they could not afford to buy billboard space. The Momentum used trucks with a massive advertisement mounted on its bed to replace traditional billboards with moving ones. Of the extra-parliamentary parties, only the Our Homeland Movement had billboards. All parties had TV spots aired on public TV channels and RTL Klub, the most viewed commercial TV station in Hungary. Campaigning in social media was quite intensive, as a total of 809 Facebook posts were recorded during the campaign period.

The general experience was that the emphasis on online campaign tools and especially on social media has increased. While the governing Fidesz-KDNP coalition relied on billboards the most, they were among the most active parties on social media. At the same time, three political parties did not have any traditional advertisements at all. Political ads in the printed press were also scarce, with only one national daily newspaper featuring them. Parties substituted these traditional marketing tools with the more intensive online and personal presence of the politicians (via Facebook and street canvassing).

The EP elections in Hungary do not usually feature the European party families. There was much public interest surrounding the EPP membership of Fidesz, and Franz Timmermans did appear at the congress of the MSZP (he was also featured in some paid online ads). However, political parties rarely referred to the European parties and did not generally include their logos in their campaign materials.

As an overall conclusion, it is evident that these were the "most European" European Parliament elections since the ascension of Hungary into the EU. While a sizeable portion of the opposition campaigned on domestic issues, the governing coalition and

the two most successful opposition parties all focused on messages related to Europe. Also, voter turnout was especially high by Hungarian standards, 43.48%. These facts indicate that

the European issues raised during the campaign successfully mobilised the electorate, at least compared to previous EP elections.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

Total contents 878		
Social contents 809	Poster and press 38	Commercials 31

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercial s	Number of seats
Demokratikus Koalíció (DK)	165	3	6	4
Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom (Jobbik)	108	1	4	1
Momentum Mozgalom (MM)	67	4	6	2
Lehet Más a Politika (LMP)	58	2	2	0
MSZP - P	242	10	5	1
Magyar Kétfarkú Kutya Párt (MKKP)	-	14	4	0
Mi Hazánk Mozgalom (MHM)	-	2	2	0
Fidesz - KDNP	168	2	2	13

Hungarian parties communicated extensively during the last four weeks of the campaign. A total of 809 posts were registered on parties' Facebook pages. One of the most active parties was the Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance. Its Facebook communication contains lots of short messages regarding the threats of immigration and the need for border protection. Fidesz's posts are usually accompanied by photos of leading politicians of the party. Another active party was the Democratic Coalition (DK) that used a lot of live broadcasts in their Facebook communication, where the United States of Europe's concept was popularised. The coalition of the Hungarian Socialist Party and Dialogue (MSZP-P) produced more than 200 entries on their two Facebook pages. Their messages were the most diverse:

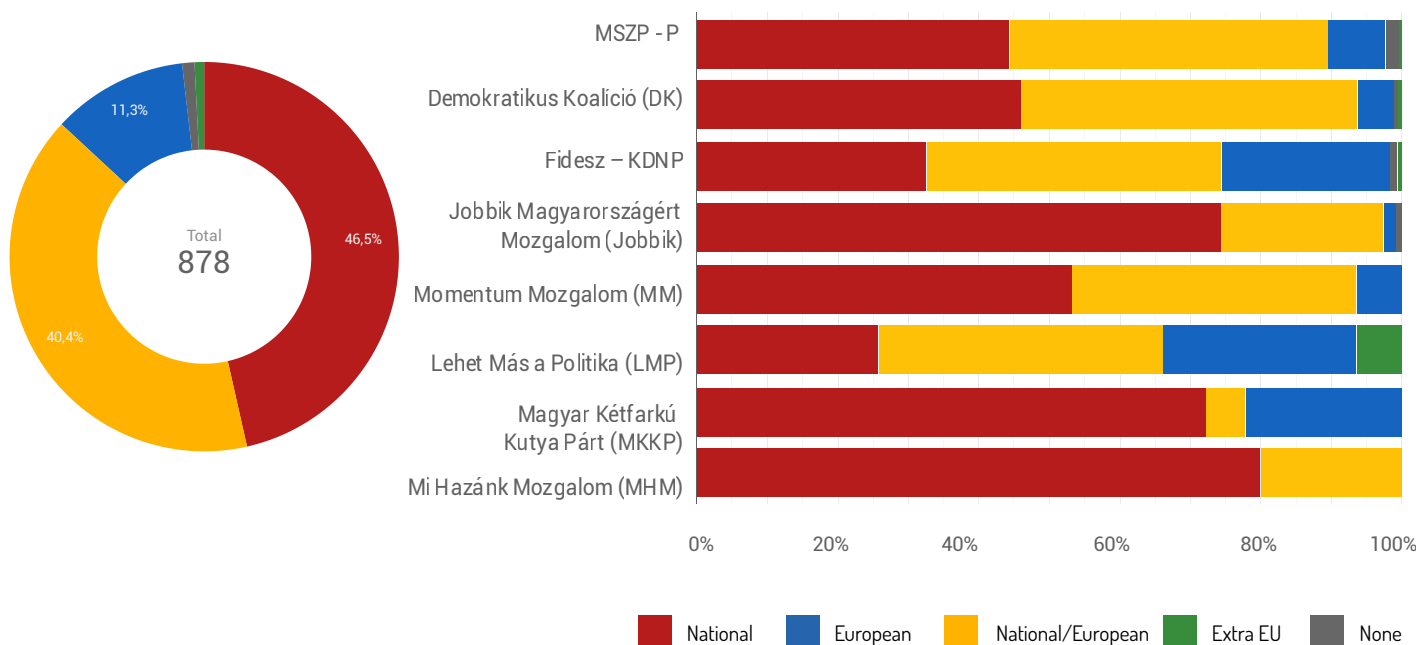
issues of the environment, candidates activities in the EP and jobs and salaries related posts and live broadcasts, etc. Other parties also had visible activity on Facebook. However, their numbers are significantly lower.

Regarding the press advertisements and street posters, the MSZP-P was the most active in newspapers. The Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (MKKP) was strong in posters, mainly because their advertisements were straightforward and could be distributed quickly. The usage of TV commercials in the campaign was relatively even among parties. Beside traditional ads, each party or coalition had five minutes on public broadcast channels to introduce themselves and their programmes.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Hungarian parties focused on national issues like jobs, salaries, welfare, borders and the environment during the EP campaign. However, these topics are usually in connection with European Union policies or politics. The European leading candidates' visit to Hungary often allowed parties to demonstrate the European dimension of their campaigns. The Fidesz–KDNP, and the MSZP–P coalitions, the LMP, and the MKKP regularly used common European topics. The Fidesz–KDNP depicted the EU as an example of bad leadership. The MSZP–P and the LMP, as an instance of good practices or as protector of democratic institutions. The MKKP used the EU as an excuse for jokes (e.g., "Let's celebrate all the national holidays").

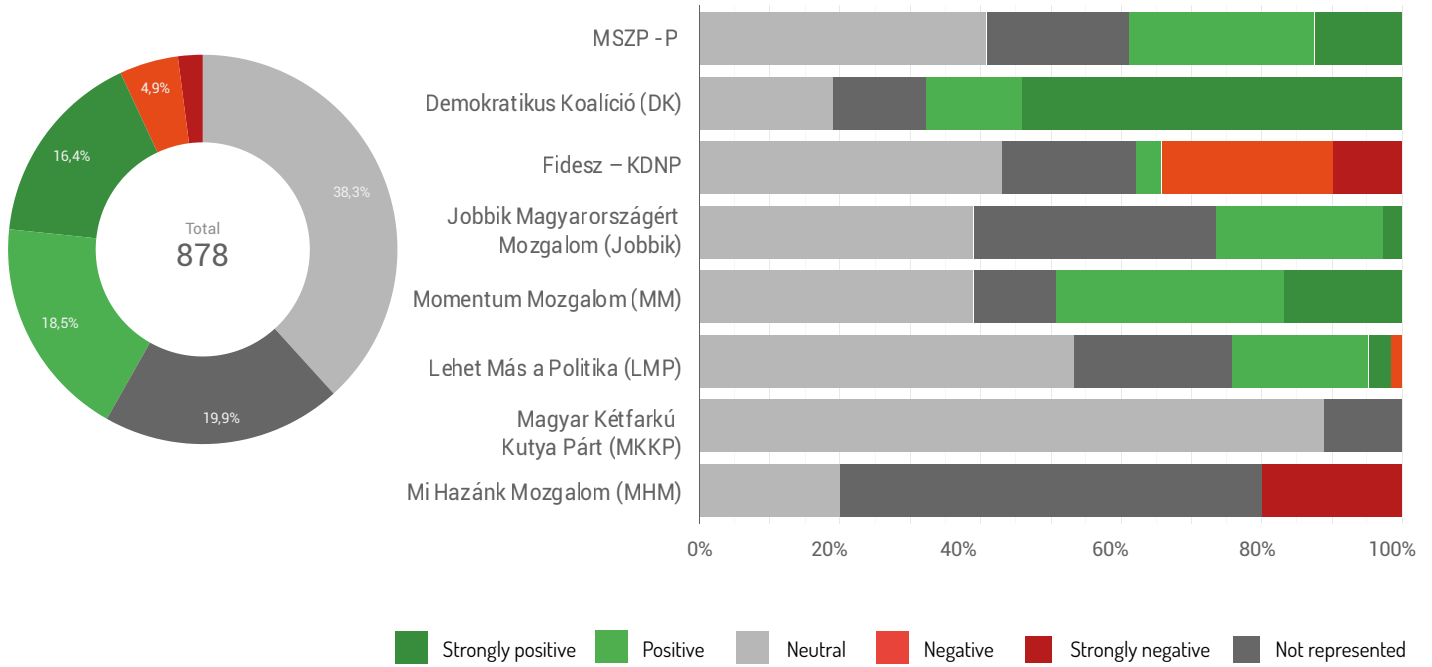
Interestingly, the DK promoted United States of Europe in their campaign, but this topic was attached to national issues. The script of these communications was that the leading candidates or the president of the party introduced a widespread problem that was usually in connection with the government or business interests around the Fidesz. The answer to these was a reliable and politically potent EU that is represented by the Democratic Coalition and its candidates. The most 'national campaign' was performed by the right-wing Jobbik and the far-right MHM (Our Homeland Movement). They rarely connected their topics to European politics. However, the Jobbik's programme was about trans-national issues (e.g. European Public Prosecutor's Office).



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

It should not be surprising that the EP campaign of Hungarian parties did not give much emphasis to the positive or negative aspects of Europe. Previous campaigns were mostly about domestic issues, too. Anyhow, the positive campaign communication on the EU was more frequent this year, primarily because of Democratic Coalition (DK), whose slogan was that they are the "most European party", while the Momentum Movement (Momentum) and Socialist - Dialogue alliance (MSZP–P) used topics like welfare, social policies and the environment to communicate pro-Union messages. On the other hand, the Fidesz–KDNP, who used the issues of immigration and the so-called European pro-immigration forces to convey negative messages on today's Europe. In the governing

parties' communication, they claimed to have the solutions to these problems and the ability to make Europe better. As seen above, Europe or the topic of the Union appears mainly in a neutral context. If we look at the parties' Facebook channels, they mostly used the platform for positive messages regarding the EU. The campaigning on print materials and in videos was primarily neutral on the topic of EU, although some of the positive aspects were emphasised. Most of the parties used some form of European symbols (e.g. name, flag, stars, etc.) on their print and in their video materials, except for the MHM (Our Homeland Movement), who was campaigning against the present and past prime ministers and governments

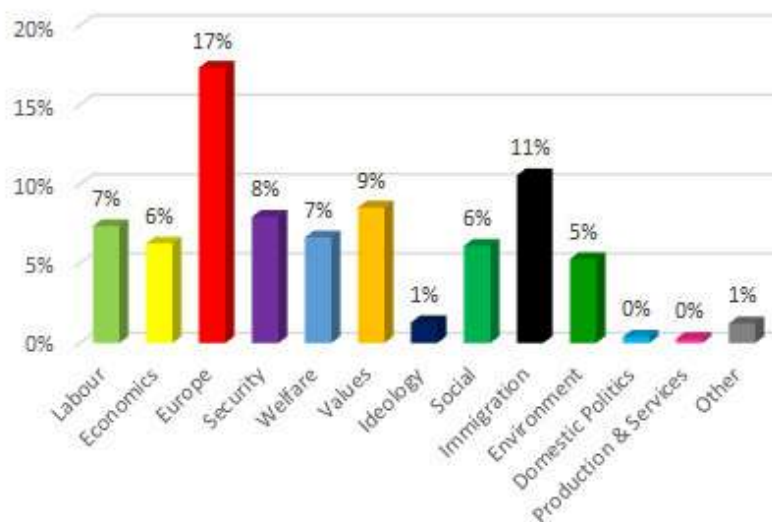


### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Europe was the most dominant topic in the campaign in Hungary. The DK used it in the context of their proposal for the future of the EU that is the United States of Europe. They usually connected this topic with other domestic issues that were available in the points of their program as well. These topics are the European minimum wage or the European health service minimum. The theme of the health service was also a part of the other parties' communications: the Momentum Movement mentioned the issue mostly concerning EU funds, the LMP in connection with climate change and other environmental problems. These questions were frequently tied to the value categories of the parties. However, regarding these

values, the issue of immigration was a highly politicised topic. Immigration was emphasised mostly by Fidesz-KDNP, who built their entire campaign around this question. They perceived immigration as a threat and often voiced that it must be stopped. In their communication, migration was often linked to things that must be protected, like Christian values or national traditions. They promoted the idea of a European Union leads by anti-immigration or 'Christian' forces. The importance of security had also appeared frequently in campaign contents. It played a prominent role in the campaign of opposition parties, who usually raised the subject in connection with the government party and corruption.

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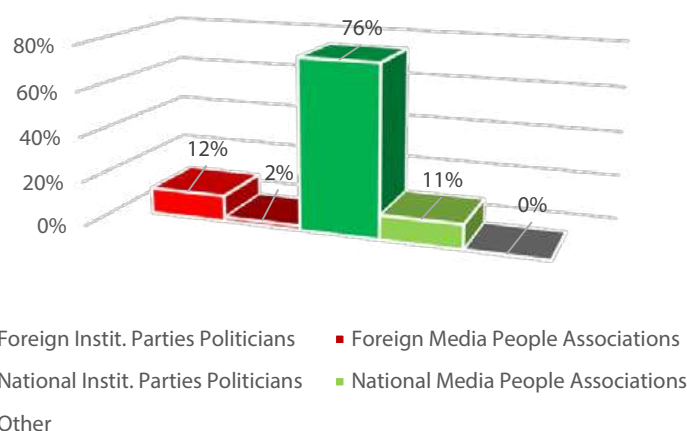
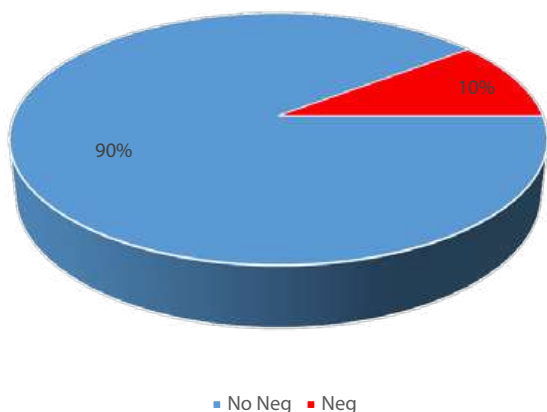
\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

When the campaign turned negative, it was typically targeting national institutions, parties or politicians. This usually meant the government party, its members, and the businesses or relatives associated with them. It was dominant in the campaign of Jobbik, DK and Momentum. The negative attack was often directed against the Prime Minister’s person and party and was frequently linked to corruption. The governing party also attacked domestic parties and politicians, and in such cases, the targets of the attack were

usually described as supporters of immigration or called (border) fence breakers.

The government was often targeting foreign institutions, parties or politicians. The immigration policy of Brussels, the politicians who supported it and Brussels itself was often a target in their campaign. They used Brussels as a threat to national sovereignty or Christian values and accused the EU leadership of supporting immigration.



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## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

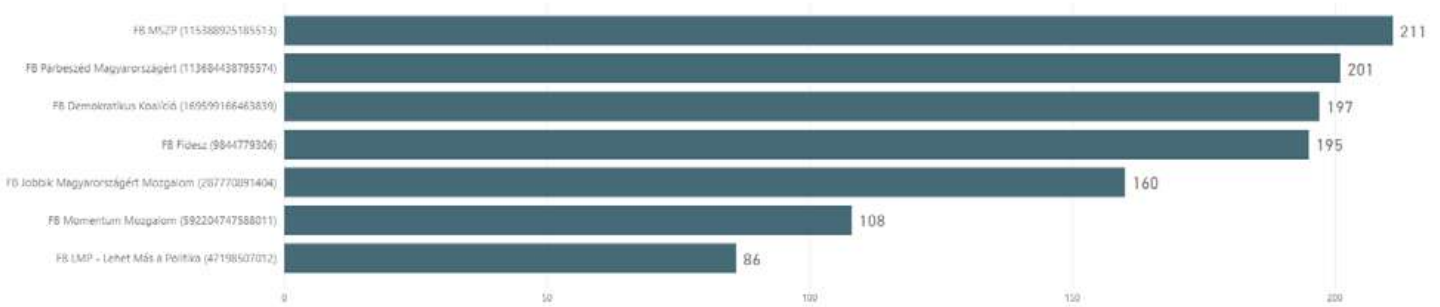
7 N. Accounts monitored*	1158 N. Posts produced	1210253 Engagement**	69,9 % percentage of posts on EU campaign topics
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Analysis of the engagement and the reactions to the Facebook posts of the parties’ is dubious. One of the reasons for this is that engagement numbers are strongly influenced by advertisement spending, which should be factored in when comparing the figures across parties. Another reason is that for instance, the ‘angry’ category could mean that the user is angry at the party, but it can also mean that the same user approves the parties’ message and agrees with it by showing the same anger that the party demonstrated. These signs of agreement were common on both Fidesz’s and Jobbik’s pages. The favourable, supportive moods were visible on DK’s and Momentum’s. However, the likes are the leading reactions to a Facebook activity most of the time, and here

those cannot be seen. It should also be taken into consideration that parties were using mainly neutral messages in the Hungarian EP election because posts that are not filled emotionally provide them with the safest communication environment. Finally, there is no visible pattern regarding the mood of the reactions. For instance, while the candidate of Párbeszéd (Dialogue), the fourth on the list of MSZP – P, Benedek Jávör, one of the most active MEP in the previous EP, was a very popular person in the campaign, the Párbeszéd Facebook page got most of the angry reactions. However, this means nothing, due to reasons mentioned at the beginning of this section.



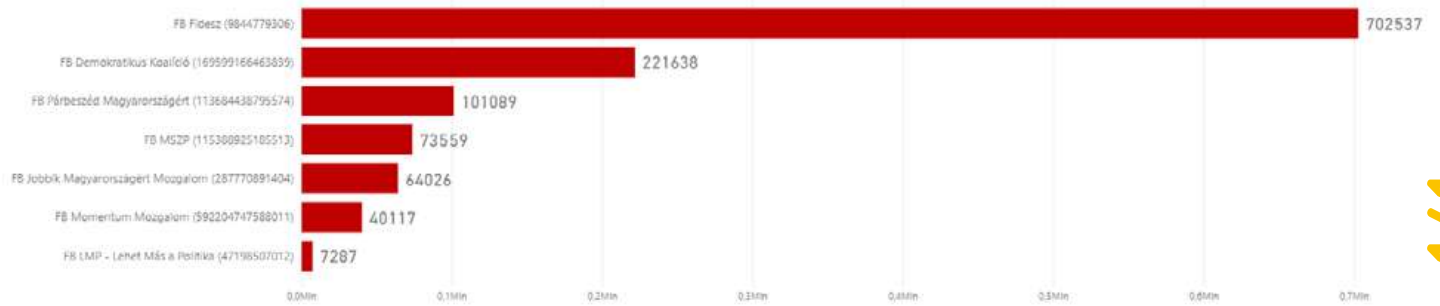
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

Post published

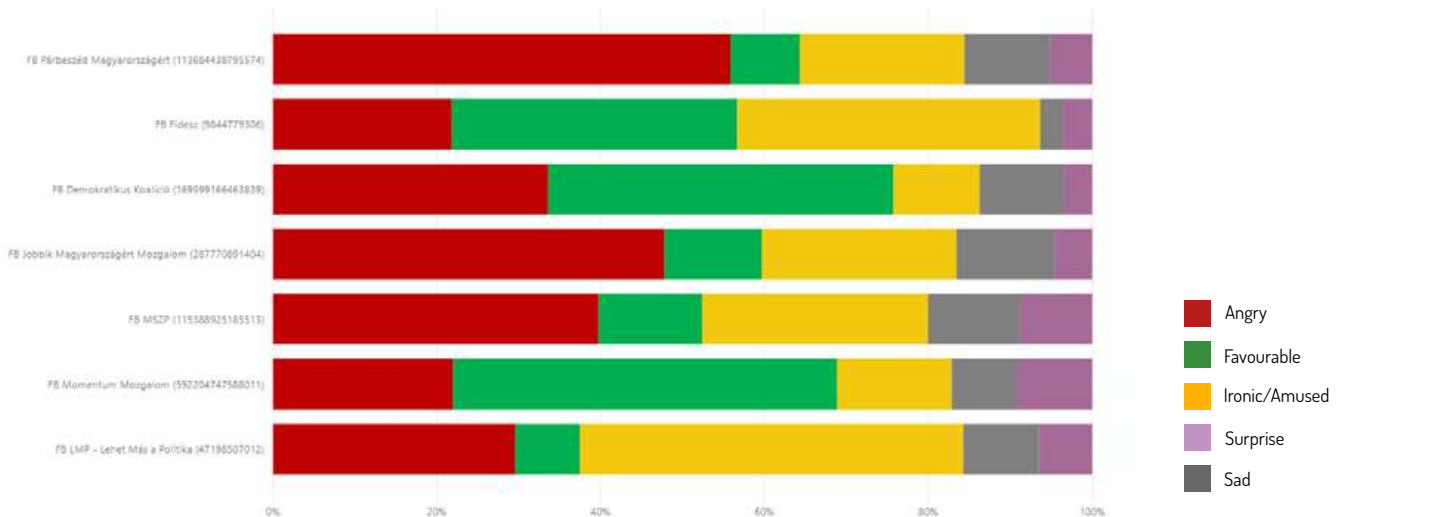
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# IRELAND

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Membership: 1973

European area: **Northern Europe**

Population: **4,628,949**

Number of MEPs: 11

Election day: **May 24, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Local and referendum**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Ireland uses a single-transferable vote (STV) system for electing the country's 13 members of the European Parliament election.

The country is divided into three geographic constituencies – Dublin (4), Midlands North-West (4) and Ireland South (5). In all, 59 candidates contested the EP election in Ireland in 2019 – 31 were members of registered political parties and 28 were independent non-party candidates.

From the 13 Irish MEPs elected – eleven successful candidates will immediately take up their seats with the other two – the last candidates elected in Dublin and Ireland South – filling so-called 'Brexit seats'. These two seats will be filled when the United Kingdom formally leaves the EU.

All adults over 18 years of age registered to vote were entitled to cast their ballot in the election which took place on Friday 24 May 2019. Turnout was 49.7% – down on the 52.4% in 2014.

144 Political advertising on television and radio is banned by law in Ireland. On this occasion, however, there was significant evidence of political parties and individual candidates producing their own broadcast spots for distribution on various online platforms. RTÉ, the national broadcaster, also recorded one-minute videos of the candidates for inclusion on its website. Existing regulations around the timing for putting up posters in public places during the official campaign period and the positioning of posters adjacent to polling stations remained in place for the 2019 contests.

The 2019 EP election in Ireland coincided with local government elections, a constitutional referendum and, in several cities, plebiscites on the idea of introducing directly-elected mayors. Neither the constitutional referendum to reduce the period in which married couples must be separated in order to seek a divorce – nor the plebiscites directly-elected mayors – were contentious.

The main focus of media and public attention was directed at the local and European elections. The official campaign period passed off without any great controversy with the focus of discussion primarily being on national issues.

One opinion conducted by the Red C company reported that Irish voters were primarily concerned about housing (60%) health and social security (40%) and rising prices (20%). When Europe or European issues were discussed it was generally in the context of the impact on, or overlap with, national policy matters. In the latter regard, concerns about climate change and Brexit featured strongly in debates.

The campaigns of the main political parties also placed greater emphasis on national issues and paid more attention to the local elections (as a gateway for getting potential candidates for future national elections) over the EP contest.

Ireland's current minority coalition government has been in office since May 2016. The coalition is led by the centre-right Fine Gael party and includes independent non-party ministers. The government does not have a parliamentary majority and is dependent on a 'confidence and support' arrangement with the centre-right Fianna Fail party, which is the main opposition party.

Having experienced a dramatic economic collapse in the post-2008 period, Ireland's economy has bounced back with significant employment growth. The legacy of the crisis period, however, continues to impact of many policy areas including housing and the health services. Despite public unhappiness about the pace of delivery in key public policy areas, the incumbent administration remains relatively popular.

Unusually, in a mid-term second-order series of elections – EP and local – the government party and the main party in opposition polled well. The biggest loser was Sinn Féin, a populist centre-left party which has had a long association with the Provisional IRA's now defunct campaign of violence to end British rule in Northern Ireland. Sinn Féin experienced significant electoral growth in the post-1994 peace process period and also in post-2008 economic crisis period. On this occasion, however, the party's message of protest failed to resonate with voters and it lost two of its three EP seats. Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael between them took seven of the available 13 seats. The remaining seats were won by the Green Party (2) and non-party independents (3).

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

Total contents 78		
Social contents 71	Poster and press 7	Commercials 0

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Sinn Féin	29	-	-	1
Fine Gael	14	3	-	4
Fianna Fáil	14	2	-	1
Labour	14	2	-	0

The EP election in Ireland was contested by candidates nominated by registered political parties as well as non-party independent. In all, 59 candidates contested the EP election in Ireland in 2019 – 31 were members of registered political parties and 28 were independent non-party candidates.

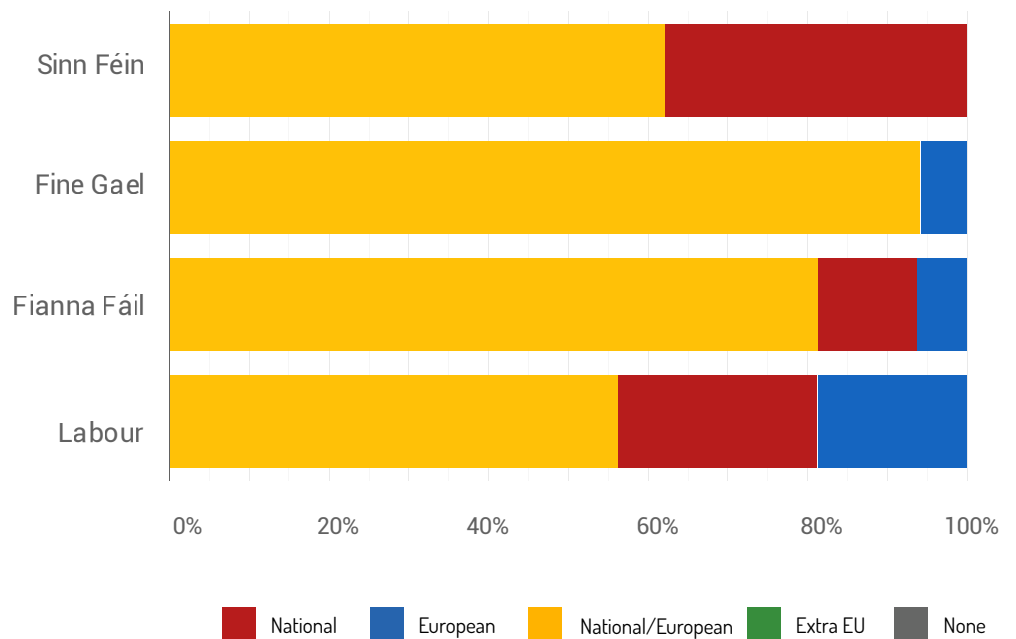
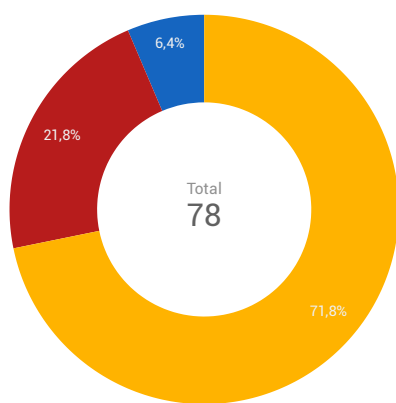
Looking at the EP-related Facebook postings of the four largest political parties – Fine Gael, Fianna Fail, Sinn Fein and Labour – there was general low level activity during the campaign. Sinn

Fein was more active than the other three main parties in terms of the number of postings. All of the party accounts were active with local election postings as well as normal routine political postings. In terms of posters a sample of the posters from candidates of the main parties were coded – as the EP elections in Ireland are dominated by individual candidates, given the nature of the Irish electoral and political systems, this selection was representative of the templates for posters used by all candidates for these parties.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The campaigns of the four main political parties focused on national issues. When Europe or European issues were discussed it was generally in the context of the impact on, or overlap with, national policy matters. In the latter regard, concerns about climate change and Brexit featured strongly in debates. There is some variation between the parties based on the sample of material examined – Labour was the only party to show any real

willingness to engage with European issues as European issues. Given that local elections took place at the same time as the EP elections in Ireland, it is no surprise that the campaigns of the main political parties focused on national issues and paid more attention to the local elections (as a gateway for getting potential candidates for future national elections) over the EP contest.



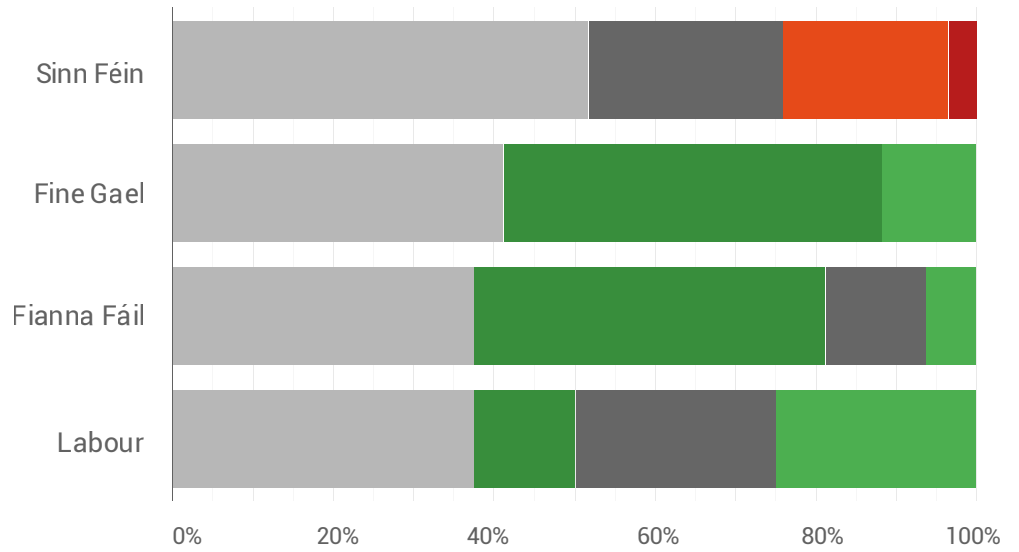
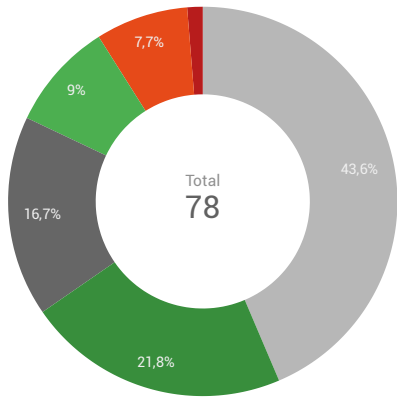
146

## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

According to repeated Eurobarometer surveys, there is very high public sentiment towards the EU in Ireland. This positive view of Europe in part explains how Europe was represented in the analysis findings with very little negativity found. The absence of Europe is explained in part by a focus on national issues in the EP campaign. Sinn Fein stands somewhat apart from the other parties in being more willing to adopt a negative stance on Europe – an expected feature given the party’s previous longstanding hostility to the EU

and, more recent, position of championing reform of the EU and its institutions.

According to repeated Eurobarometer surveys, there is very high public sentiment towards the EU in Ireland. This positive view of Europe in part explains how Europe was represented in the analysis findings with very little negativity found. The absence of Europe is explained in part by a focus on national issues in the EP campaign.

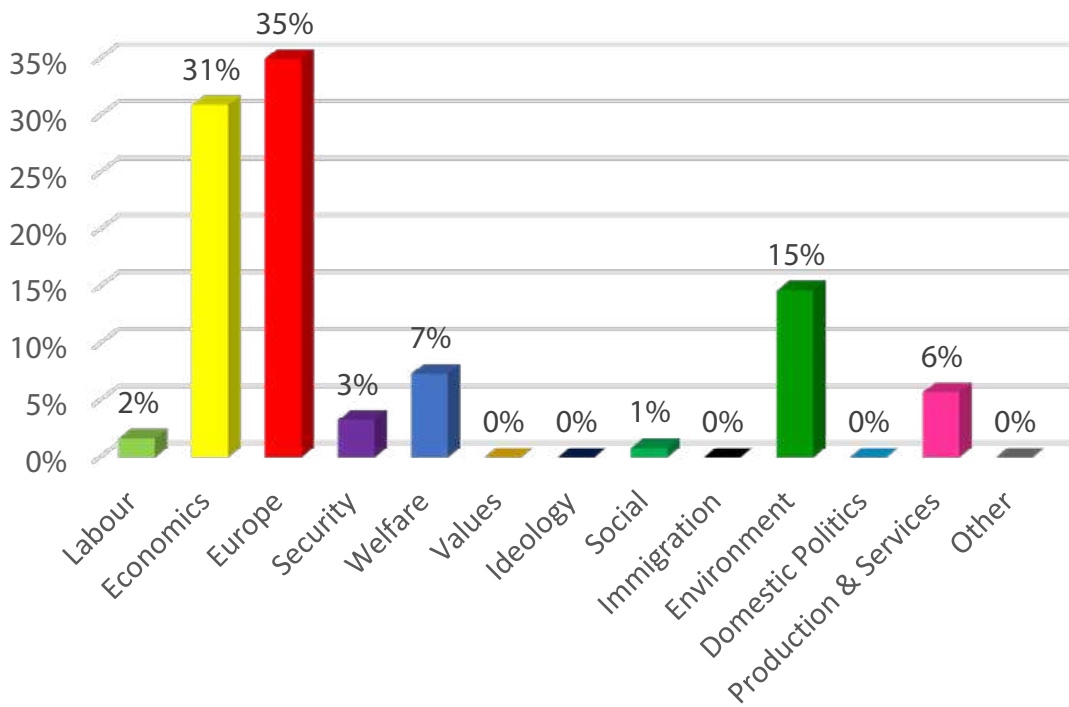


Legend: Strongly positive (dark green), Positive (light green), Neutral (grey), Negative (red), Strongly negative (dark red), Not represented (dark grey)

### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

An opinion conducted by the Red C company reported that Irish voters were primarily concerned about housing (60%) health and social security (40%) and rising prices (20%). When Europe or European issues were discussed it was generally in the context of the impact on, or overlap with, national policy matters. In the latter regard, concerns about climate change and Brexit featured strongly in debates. These features are evident in the accompanying chart with economic-related topics featuring strongly.

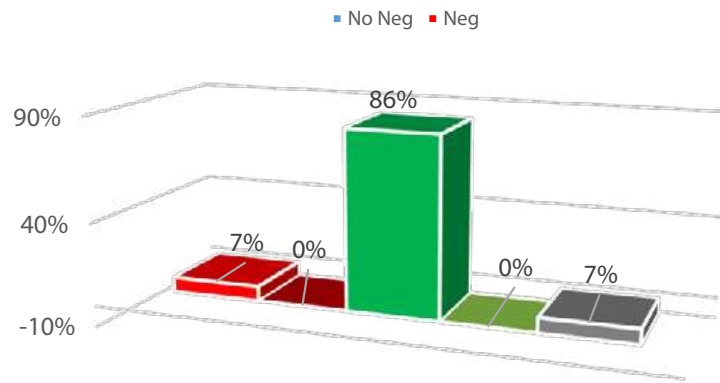
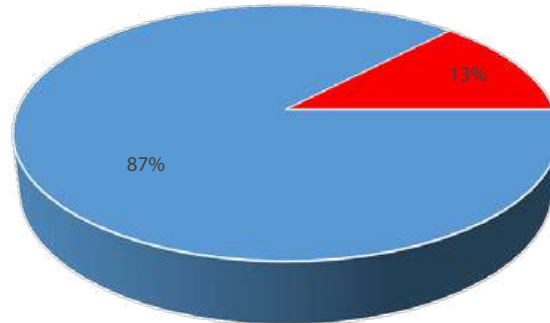
147



\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

Negative campaigning has not featured strongly in Irish election campaigns. In this regard, the EP elections in 2019 were no different. In addition, the campaign was overwhelmingly a national campaign – as clearly seen in the accompanying charts.

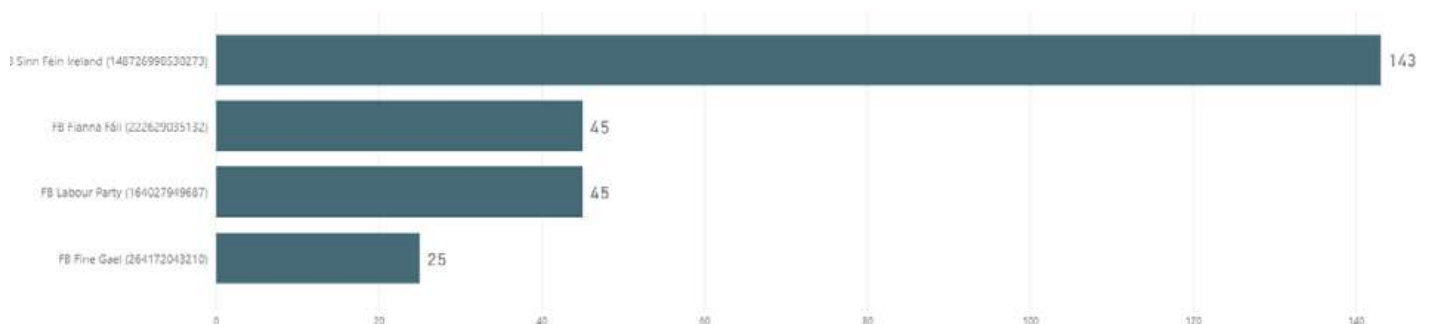


- Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Instit. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



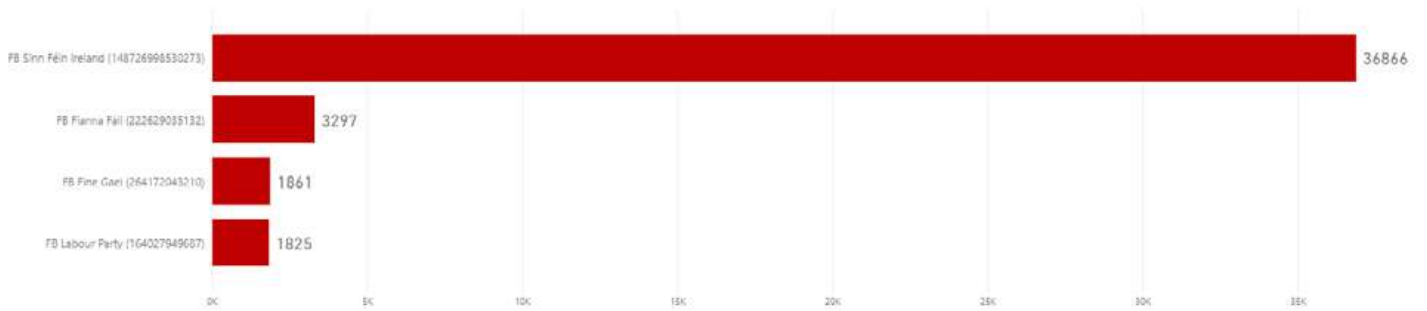
## NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.



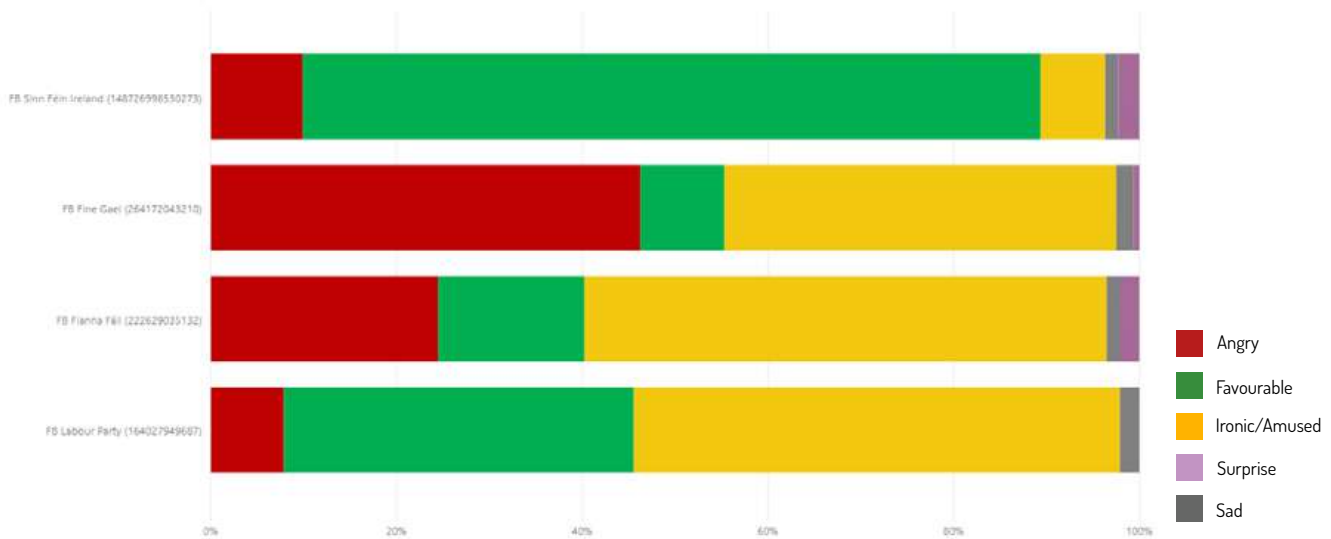
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





## ITALY

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Membership: **Founder Country 1958**

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **59,769,594**

Number of MEPs: **73**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Local**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The Italian electoral system for the 2019 European elections was proportional, with a 4% threshold and four constituencies. Electors were able to express up to three preferences but the first two had to be in favour of candidates of different sexes. The age of eligibility to vote was 18 and 25 to be elected. Starting from the 2014 European elections, the number of seats allocated to Italy has been 73.

The election campaign officially opened on 26 May 2019 and lasted four weeks. As regards the rules, law no. 96 of 2012 introduced specific spending limits for political parties and candidates, planning controls and sanctions. The purchase and broadcasting of political commercials on national and public radio and television channels were not allowed. They were, however, allowed on local radio and television channels but in minimal and regulated forms and quantities. As it turned out, no political parties produced or broadcasted television commercials. Public and private television stations were required to give equal airtime to all political parties in the news and in the most popular political talk-shows. Public television stations offered all political parties equal airtime during programmes to present themselves. Some significant regional and local elections were held at the same time as the European elections, with overlapping and interference between the different electoral campaigns.

Italy's particular political situation strongly affected the tones and the issues of the European electoral campaign. Since May 2018, Italy has been ruled by an unparalleled alliance between the Lega Nord (Northern League) and Movimento 5 Stelle (Five Star Movement) parties. Two political parties with some populist traits, the first right-wing and the second external to any ideological collocation, which had stood in opposition to one another at the 2018 General elections and then joined forces after the vote.

The European electoral campaign was marked by a clash and conflict between these two parties, which entered into heated debate during the last two weeks, ignoring the other parties and fully occupying the public stage and informative channels.

In an attempt to overturn the balance of power within government, Lega presented itself as the Italian ally of the sovereign front of Visegrad, focusing on issues such as Christian values, security and a ban on immigration. This party, led by Matteo Salvini, was the main player in the Italian electoral campaign and took part in some transnational electoral rallies in Italy and abroad, which brought together leaders from different nations. Movimento 5 Stelle, aware of the negative electoral forecasts, tried to counteract Matteo Salvini in the closing weeks of the campaign, re-proposing some of its historical themes and focusing more on

domestic than European matters. The Democratic Party, which had taken 40.8% of the votes at the last European elections but had since been overwhelmed by a complete collapse in consensus, presented itself as a pro-European force, with the new leader Nicola Zingaretti, mainly concerned with reversing the negative trend.

Forza Italia, still led by its founder Silvio Berlusconi, tried to counter Lega, which overtook FI in the 2018 General elections, presenting itself as a moderate and responsible right-wing force and claiming its membership in the EPP.

The far-right party, Fratelli d'Italia, with the slogan "In Europe to change everything", was quite active in the election campaign but was obscured by the activism of the Lega on both the radical criticism of Europe and on the issue of fighting immigration.

+ Europe (More Europe), a small party led by Emma Bonino, occupied the most pro-European front. The weight of Europa Verde (Green Europe) and La Sinistra (The Left) parties in the electoral campaign was irrelevant. None of these three parties exceeded 4%.

The Italian electoral campaign was not marked by major political and current events, neither at national nor European level. Domestic issues, as will be seen further on, prevailed over European and international matters. Controversy over the attempt to close Italy's ports, the new law on national security, the use of the crucifix and other religious symbols by Salvini, and the publication of his interview-book with an openly fascist publishing house, animated the political debate and occupied the media during the four weeks leading up to the vote. The issues in relation to which Europe was most present in the electoral campaign were immigration, the possible victory of an openly anti-European front and the threat of economic sanctions for Italy's high economic deficit.

The result was an understated campaign in which political parties invested little in terms of finance and creativity. An electoral campaign that failed to stand out from the normal state of over-communication and permanent campaign, which are two traits of Italian political communication.

The Italian electoral campaign featured little use of instruments, zero TV commercials, few posters and use of the Social Networks without parallel in Europe, and this will be examined further later on.

Within such widespread use of social networks, with the two Italian parties allied in government leading the European rankings, some campaigns pursued the path of personalisation,

gaming and use of satire and negatives. The most noteworthy can be found among the videos of “Vinci Salvini”, a sort of Fb competition aimed at boosting the engagement of the Lega’s Fb posts, held previously during the 2018 General election campaign.

The winner got to meet Matteo Salvini. Then there was Fratelli d’Italia’s “vote the most anti-Italian” contest, with a series of web cards aimed at engaging followers in criticising and ridiculing political adversaries.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Lega	212	8	6	28
Forza Italia	158	3	-	6
Movimento 5 Stelle	153	6	-	14
+Europa	138	-	1	0
Fratelli d’Italia	127	4	-	5
Partito Democratico	112	10	8	19
La Sinistra	42	2	1	0
Europa Verde	Not monitored	9	-	0
Casapound	Not monitored	2	-	0

With more than 1000 electoral materials monitored, produced by the nine main parties, the Italian electoral campaign is one of the most productive in Europe, second only to that of Portugal. As in Portugal, the majority of electoral material produced in Italy is made up of Facebook posts. The aforementioned spending limits, together with the regulation of the electoral campaign, are the cause of this trend.

The use of posters, a traditional Italian political competition tool that was very popular until just a few years ago, is in sharp decline. Only the Democratic Party conducted a poster campaign with a significant presence throughout the country. Forza Italia, which had made 6x3 maxi-posters a distinctive aspect of its communication in the past, limited itself to just three subjects, also limiting their use. Fratelli d’Italia made targeted use of posters

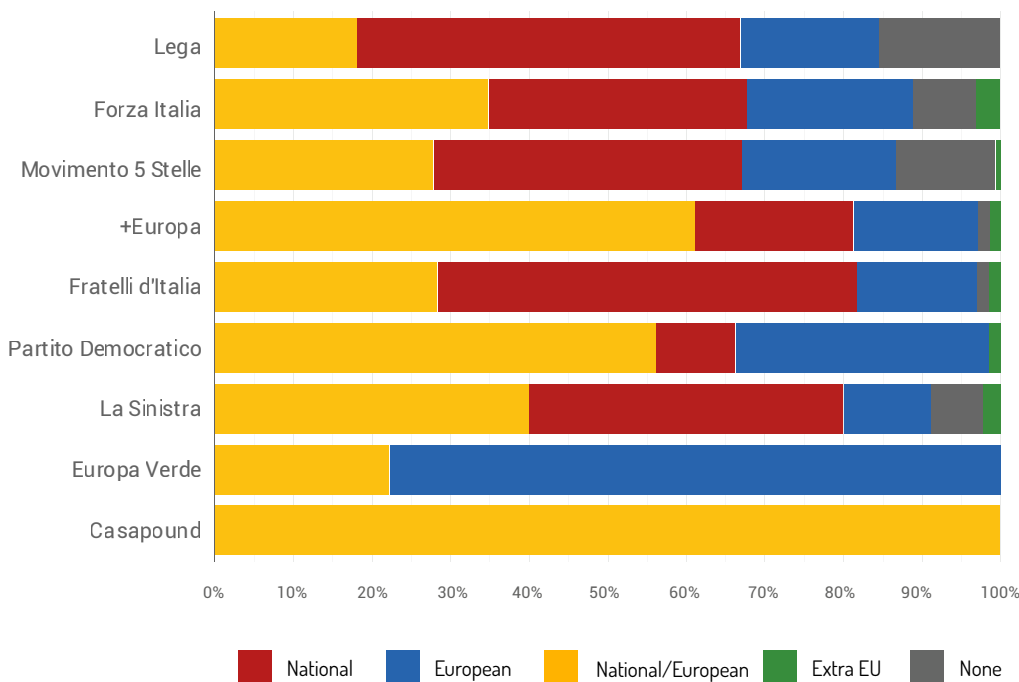
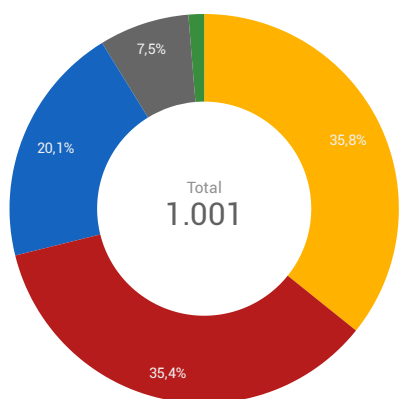
and, in advance with respect to the other parties, launched a national billboard campaign to position itself on the electoral market, consolidating its slogan “in Europe to change everything”. The use of political commercials, which were the main feature of the Italian election campaigns at the turn of the year 2000, but which have now been made obsolete and too expensive by the distribution of social network videos, was irrelevant. Because of the ban on broadcasting them on television, the few commercials that were made were broadcast in public places such as railway stations, underground stations, squares, etc.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

No less than 35% of the materials produced for the election campaign focused on purely domestic topics. The percentage of materials that combined domestic and European issues was similar. Only a fifth (20%) of the electoral materials dealt exclusively with European matters. The prevalence of domestic over European issues is a historical feature of European election

campaigns in Italy, this year reinforced by the aforementioned coexistence of local elections.

Specifically, the most European election campaigns were those of Europa Verde and the Democratic Party. While for the two main right-wing parties, Lega and Fratelli d'Italia, the domestic dimension that prevailed.



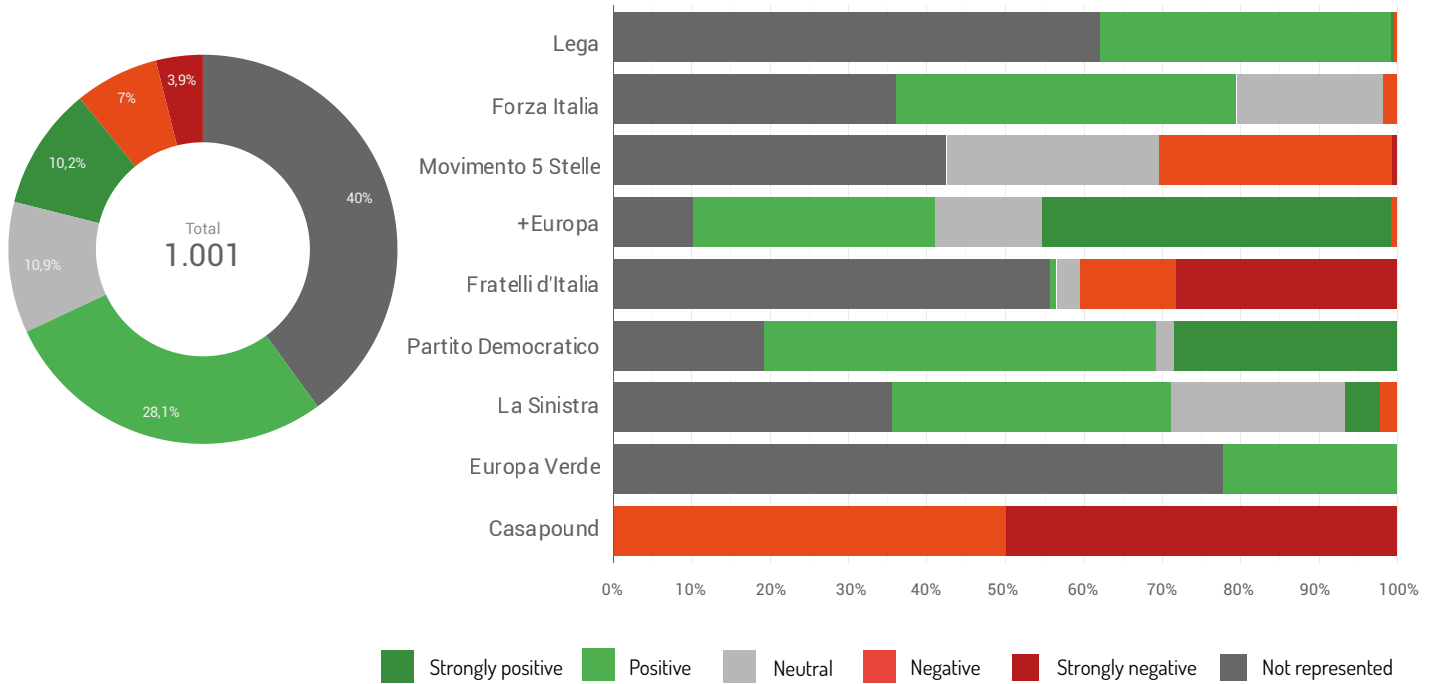
154

## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Despite the strong activism in the Italian election campaign of forces historically critical of Europe, such as Lega and even the Movimento 5 Stelle, it wasn't really an anti-European campaign. A third of the materials took a positive stance towards Europe, against a negative view of more than 10%. A significant factor in the low level of interest in European issues, as we have already seen, was the figure relating to materials that did not take Europe into account.

It should be pointed out that both allied parties in government, the Lega and the Movimento 5 Stelle, took a much less critical stance towards Europe than in the past. At the European elections in 2014,

the Lega even included the words "No Euro" in its electoral symbol, while the Movimento 5 Stelle proposed to call a referendum among its members to decide whether Italy would remain in Europe. This year, instead of attacking Europe frontally, the Lega focused mainly on some specific aspects, such as the management of migratory flows and the economy. More than against Europe, the campaign of the forces most critical of Europe has turned against this Europe or against certain aspects of it. The most anti-European party was thus Fratelli d'Italia, with the slogan "In Europe to change everything". On the opposite front, the most pro-European election campaigns were those of the Democratic Party and +Europa.

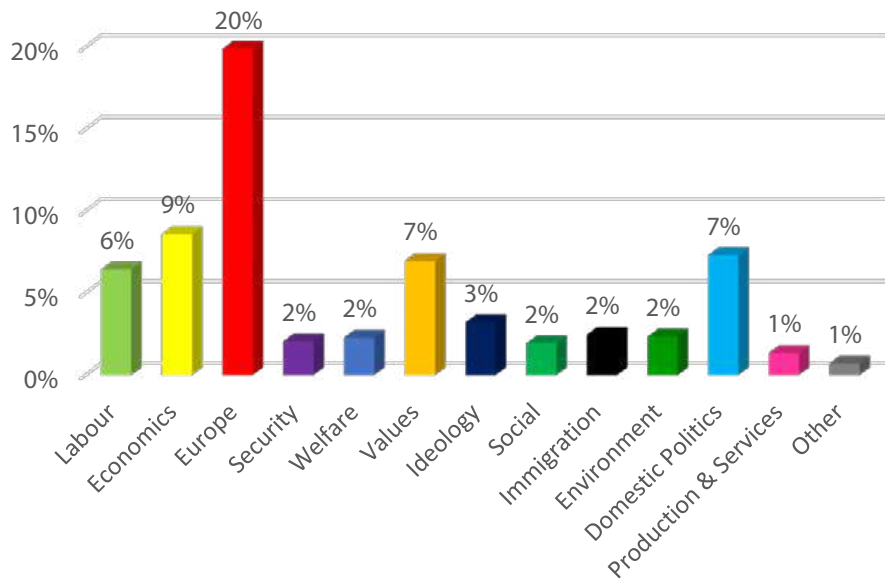


### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

As far as the main topics are concerned, Italy confirms the main trends in the Southern European geographical area. Apart from the obvious prevalence of European issues, there are also macroeconomic and labour issues. The macro-topic of values includes identity, ideals, nationalism, religion, claimed by right-wing and sovereign parties, as well as the themes of solidarity and hospitality claimed by the most progressive forces. It is surprising

that the issue of immigration is of little relevance to the election campaign, which, although addressed, did not play a central role as in the 2018 general election campaign. While, also in the light of the election results, it is not surprising that ecological and environmental issues are of little relevance. This figure is in line with the other Southern European countries.

155

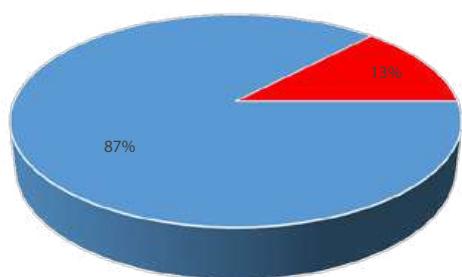


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

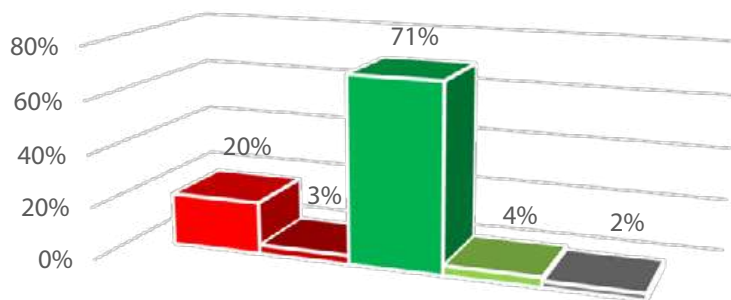
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

The presence of aggressiveness and negativity in the Italian election campaign is perfectly in line with the general data. Despite the extensive use made by the Italian parties of social networks, platforms that encourage strong and engaging communication tones and registers, it was not overall an aggressive and violent

campaign. The analysis of the targets also confirms that the national dimension prevails over the European one. The atmosphere of the electoral campaign was particularly heated in the last two weeks, also as a result of growing rivalry between the Lega and Movimento 5 Stelle.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Media People Associations ■ Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians  
 ■ National Media People Associations ■ National Instit. Parties Politicians  
 ■ Other

156

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



As already stressed in the general part of the report, of all 28 countries, Italy was that which made greatest use of social networks. The total production of posts in Italy (3821) is also much higher than that of the country ranked second. "Only" 24% (942) of this number of posts generated by the Italian parties were linked to the European election campaign. This is only a partial downsizing which, while bringing Italy down to second place in the ranking for the number of posts on the European electoral campaign, after Portugal (1163), shows how the use of the web by parties represents a structural aspect of political communication in Italy which goes beyond the themes of the European electoral campaign.

The figure for production by parties reveals the huge activism of La Lega which, with 2214 posts is not only the first Italian party but also the first in Europe. So the champion of social political communication is undoubtedly the party led by Matteo Salvini. This title is strengthened by the fact that the leader of La Lega

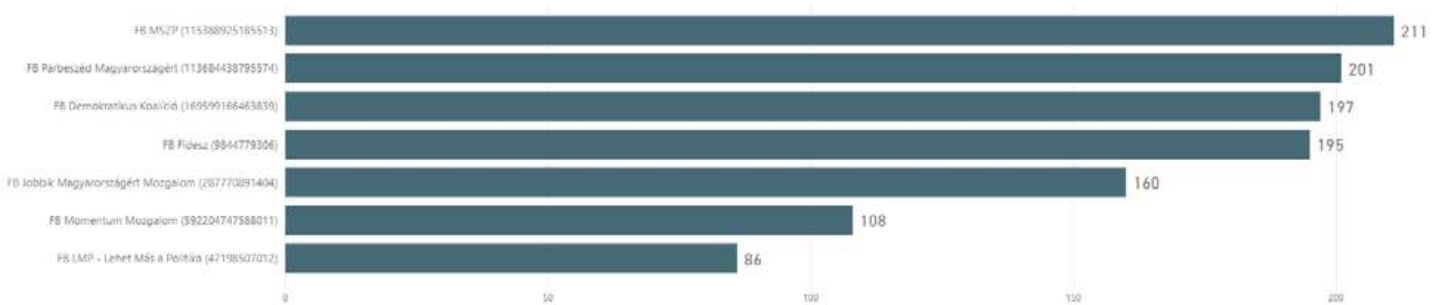
has a personal Facebook profile, not monitored in the research. This account has more than 3.5 million followers and is even more active in terms of production and levels of engagement than that of the party.

In second place in Italy, and in Europe, was the Movimento 5 Stelle, with a quarter of the posts generated by Salvini (620). The preference of these two parties, which are allies in government, for social media is nothing new. Both have focused on this form of disintermediate communication, making it a characteristic trait of their leadership in the case of Salvini and of the ideal of a direct and bottom-up democracy in the case of M5S.

Although with much lower numbers, the web was also used for the European election campaign by the other Italian parties, four of which rank among the top 20 in Europe in terms of production, as shown in the general section of the report.



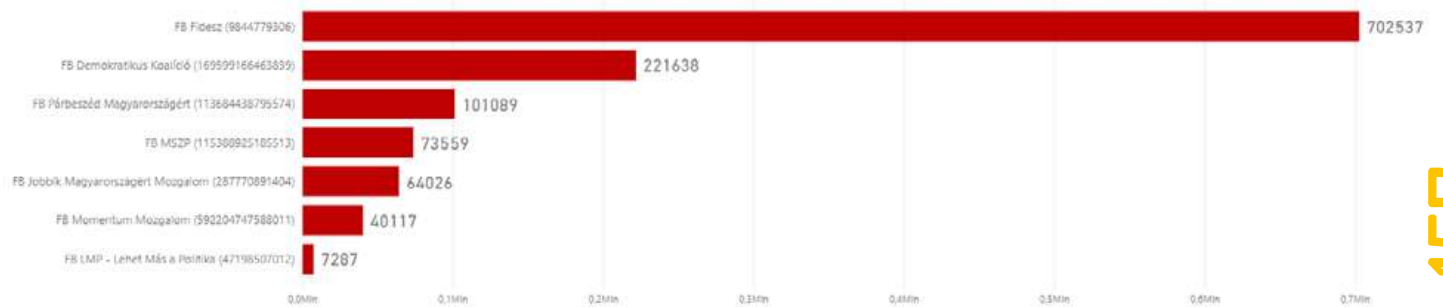
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

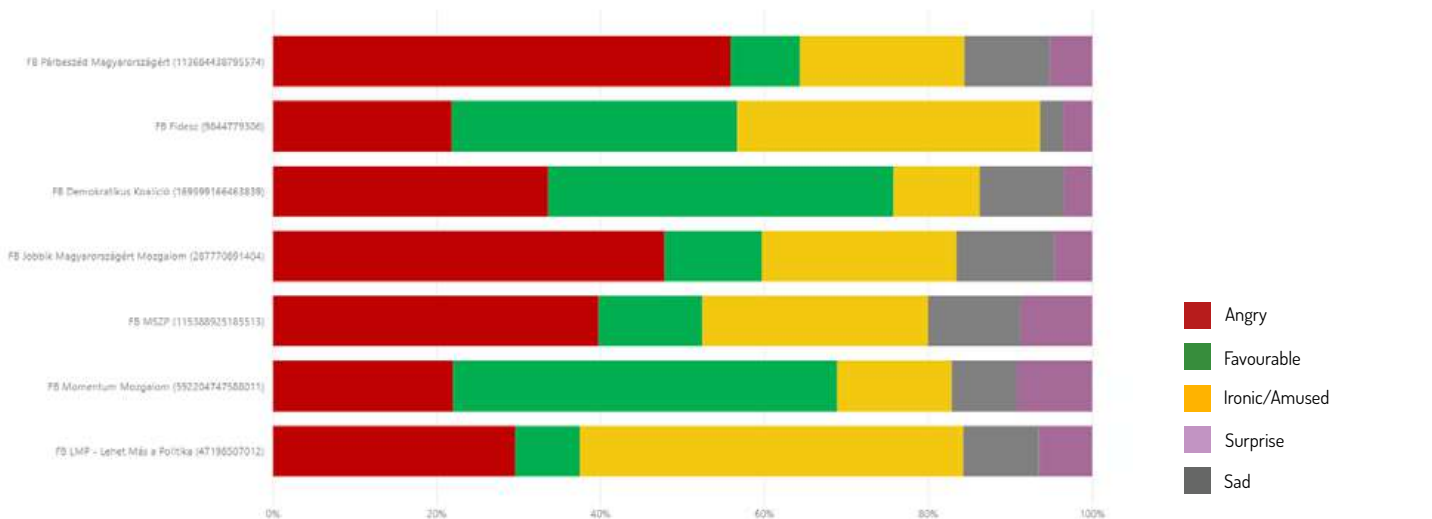


\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

157

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# LATVIA

Membership: **2004**  
European area: **Northern Europe**  
Population: **1,986,096**  
Number of MEPs: **8**  
Election day: **May 25, 2019**  
Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

European Parliament elections were held on 25 May 2019. Eight members from Latvia were to be elected for the European Parliament. Citizens of Latvia and citizens of other European Union member states residing in Latvia and entered into the Register of Voters of Latvia have the right to vote for members for the European Parliament. A voter must be at least 18 years old on Election Day to be eligible to vote.

The Law on Elections to the European Parliament provides various options for how voters could participate in the elections to the European Parliament: at their polling station on Election Day; at any polling station in Latvia on 22, 23 or 24 May, when the polling stations were open for several hours a day. It is important to note that technological problems occurred during the early days of the elections, thus partly eliminating the opportunity to vote at the polling stations.

1000 polling stations were opened for the elections, and for the first time 44 of them were established abroad. Despite pessimistic forecasts, voter turnout was still higher than five years ago, reaching 33.5% (474,390 people) of the voting population.

The pre-election campaign lasted four months, but during the last month campaigning on television was banned, according to law. Therefore the pre-election campaign could only be carried out in the printed press and radio, social media and outdoor advertising.

The intensity of the EP election campaign in Latvia is considered moderately active, and the highest intensity was observed during the last two weeks.

The fragmented political landscape of Latvia was reflected in the election campaign, indicating markedly diverse views on the role of the EU and EP, without however offering a unified vision of Latvia's place in the European integration process.

The personality and past performance of candidates played a great role in the campaign, but the ethnolinguistic, ethnocultural and geopolitical sentiments and sympathies of voters were no less important, as well as their "Euro-indifference" and lack of adequate Euro-skepticism. The electoral activity also showed that social media, which is increasingly used by politicians, did not successfully engage young people, whose participation in elections is still very low.

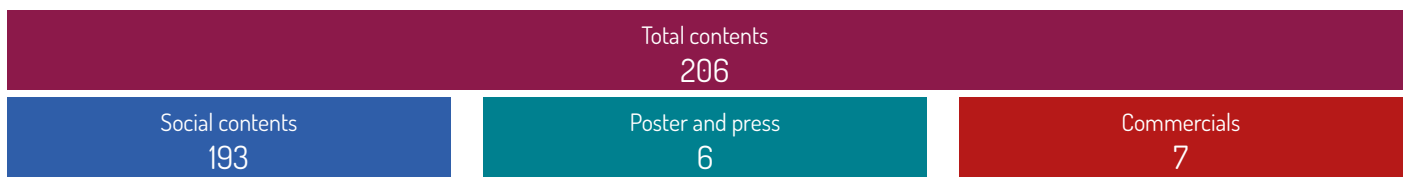
The success of the "Jaunā Vienotība" (New Unity) and "Nacionālā apvienība" (National Alliance) candidates can be explained to a large extent by the government's relatively successful operation and communication. Each party received two mandates in the elections.

"Jaunā Vienotība" had the broadest campaign with high-record intensity. By emphasizing the slogan "powerfully" and qualities such as "personality", "experience" and "influence", the party chose to highlight its past successes, thereby seeking to distinguish itself from the new political arena parties of Latvia. This was particularly important, given the poor results of the once-leading party in parliament elections in October 2018 and its ever-falling popularity among citizens. The use of the former EP Member, the current Latvian Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš, in the pre-election campaign also highlighted the experience and ability to work with different partners, inconspicuously recalling Kariņš, who as the only one of the three candidates for the post of Prime Minister, managed to form a government from a very fragmented newly elected parliament.

The "Saskaņa" ("Harmony") party succeeded in doubling the number of mandates even without a single active campaign. Despite the fact that leader of the party, former mayor of Riga Nils Ušakovs was the face of other elections held in Latvia, and regardless of his participation in the elections, this time he "disappeared" from the eyes of the public and media and stayed quiet while being the first candidate in the "Saskaņa" candidate list. The party's pre-election strategy was most likely influenced by corruption scandals in the municipality of Riga, when the public space was filled with messages about the connections of Ušakovs and his party with corruption. The only face that appeared on the uncharacteristic and inconspicuous environmental advertisements was the European Socialist Party's Spitzenkandidat Frans Timmerman. Such practice is unusual in Latvia's policy as a whole - to promote Spitzenkandidat instead of local leaders.

The explanation of the election of two "Saskaņa" candidate list leaders Ušakovs and former vice-mayor of Riga Andris Ameriks is the orientation of their voters towards Russian-language media, which has a different agenda and distinct frames of the EU than the Latvian-language media in Latvia.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Jaunā Vienotība (JV)	62	3	3	2
Zaļo un Zemnieku savienība (ZZS)	42	-	-	0
Nacionālā apvienība (NA)	33	2	-	2
Attīstībai/Par! (AP!)	26	-	2	1
Jaunā konservatīvā partija (JKP)	15	-	2	0
Kam pieder valsts? (KPV LV)	13	-	-	0
Saskaņa (S)	2	1	-	2

The intensity of the EP election campaign in Latvia is considered to be moderately active, and the highest intensity was observed during the last two weeks. According to the law, TV commercials were banned during the monitoring period, but the paid advertising in the leading press was used only by “Jaunā Vienotība”. But there is a tradition in the national newspapers to create a series of interviews with candidates from each party. These interviews are free and the parties believe that they are able to reach the audience of newspapers with this kind of appearance.

“Jaunā Vienotība” (JV) had the broadest campaign with a high level of intensity. All the campaign material was linked to the hashtag #Powerfully and the explanatory formula: JV = Personality +

Experience + Impact. The party communicated on topical issues using both the existing members of the EP and the Prime Minister of the country Krišjānis Kariņš, who is also a former EP deputy.

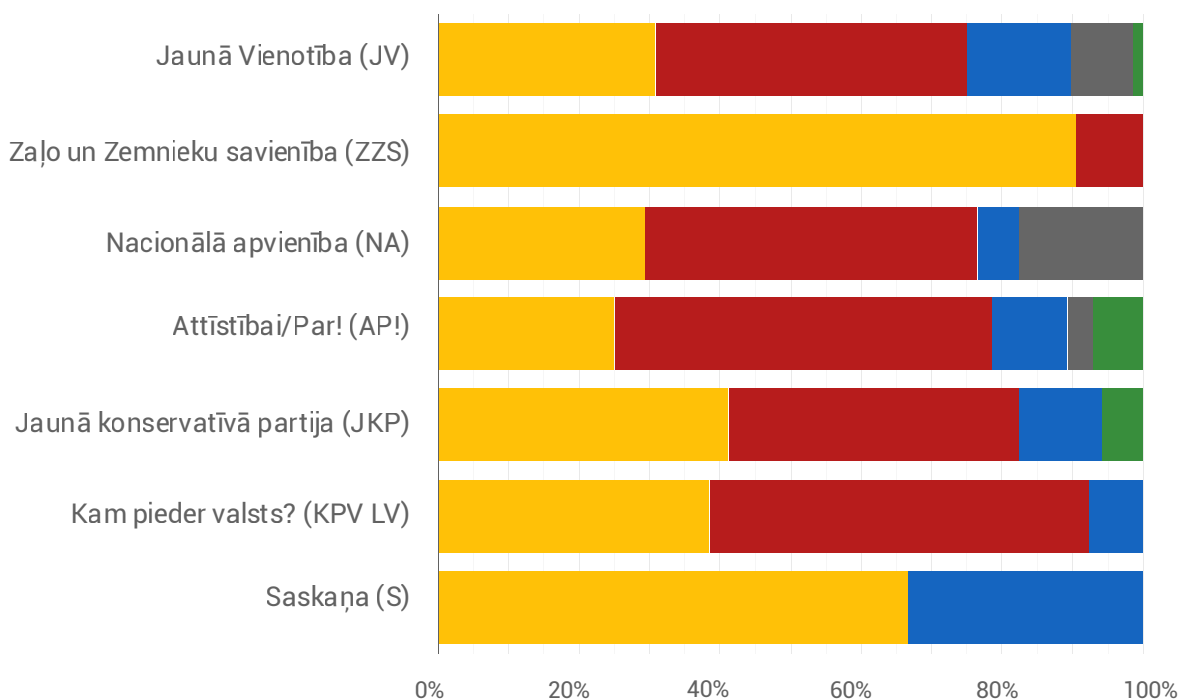
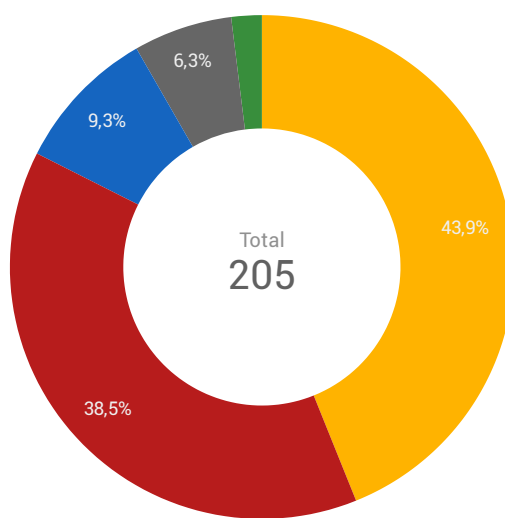
The “Saskaņa” party managed to double the number of mandates even without a single active campaign. The party’s pre-election strategy was most likely influenced by corruption scandals in the municipality of Riga when the public space was filled with messages about the connections of the former Mayor of Riga, Nils Ušakovs, and his party with corruption.

There was also a large pre-election campaign for “Jaunā konservatīvā partija” and “Zaļo un Zemnieku savienība”, but these parties failed to reach out to their voters.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The content of the parties' campaigns was mostly devoted either to European and national dimensions (43.9%) or the national dimension (38.5%). This means that the parties tried to define topics by linking them with European issues and with the explanation of why it should be of interest to the people in Latvia. This was most often done by ZZS and "Saskaņa".

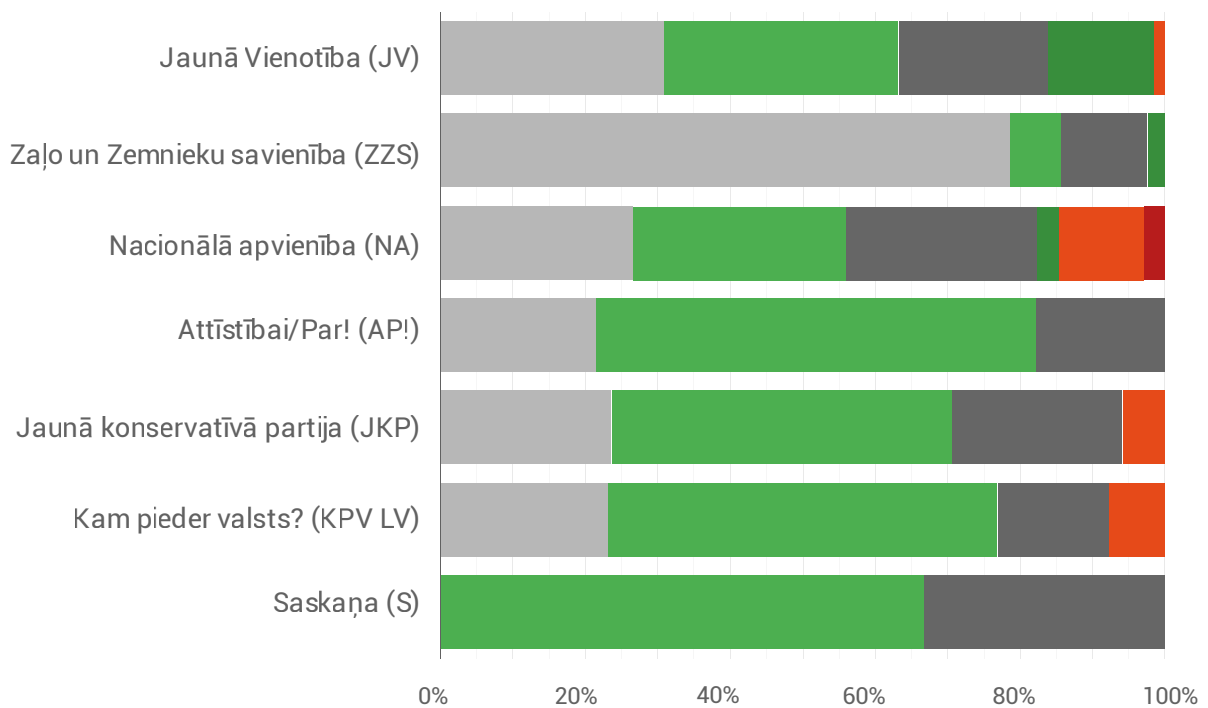
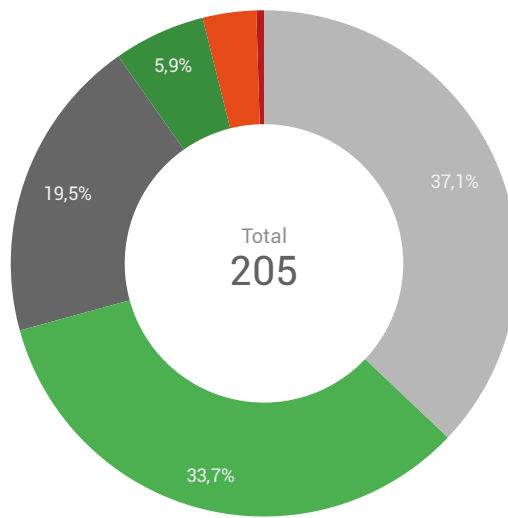
Only every tenth (9.3%) post was created exclusively for the European dimension. The smallest number - outside the European dimension - were devoted to issues that affect the whole planet, such as pollution, climate change and global security.



Legend: National (Red), European (Blue), National/European (Yellow), Extra EU (Green), None (Grey)

## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Most often Europe was represented neutrally (37.1%), positively (33.7%) or not represented at all (19.5%) in campaign messages. A negative representation of Europe could be found in less than 5% of publications. This points to the fact that the Latvian parties generally value European opportunities positively, while the negativity is instead related to the challenges the European Union countries face.

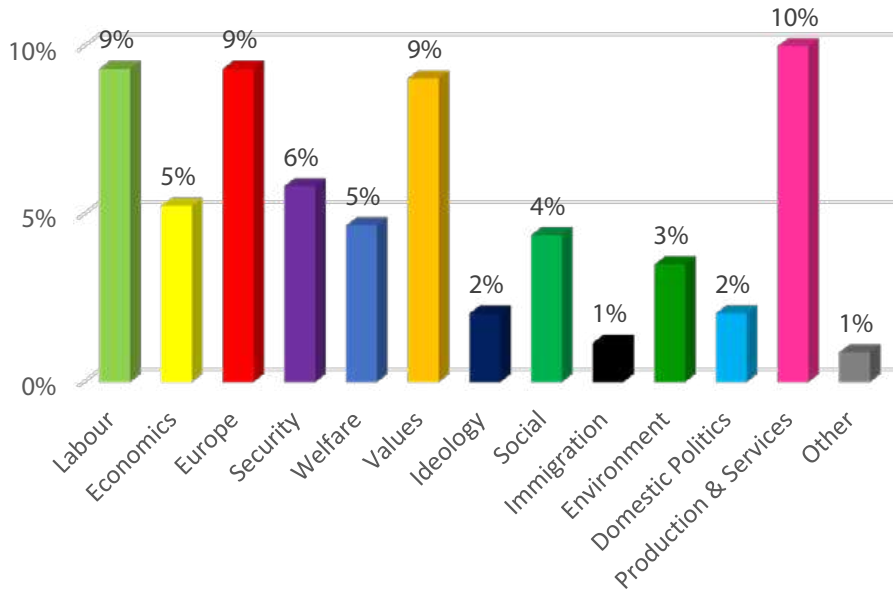


■ Strongly positive 
 ■ Positive 
 ■ Neutral 
 ■ Negative 
 ■ Strongly negative 
 ■ Not represented

## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Every tenth post of the Latvian parties was about agriculture and the need to help farmers from Latvia, promising to find ways to raise direct payments and defend national interests in the European Parliament. “Zaļo un Zemnieku savienība” campaigned the most on this topic, but it did not help it receive any mandates.

Other popular topics were labour, Europe, values (8% each), security (6%), economics and welfare (5% each). These themes were mentioned to a greater or lesser extent by almost every party in their posts. Unlike the southern Europe countries and the situation in Latvia a few years ago, the subject of immigration during the pre-election period was not topical.

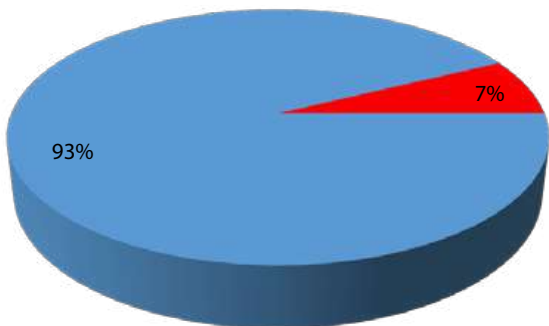


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

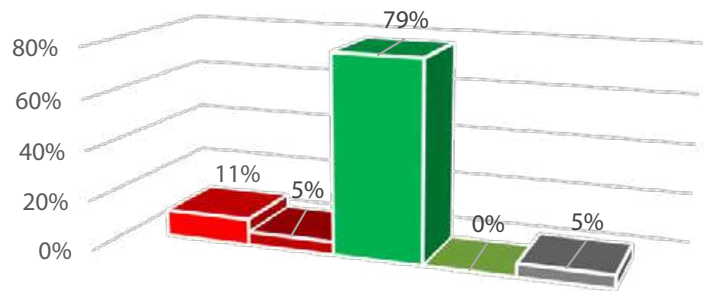
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

Unlike the Parliamentary elections held in October 2018, the parties only used negative elements in 7% of publications during the European Parliament elections. Most often (79% of cases), negative messages were aimed directly at the local politicians and

competitors, thus opposing themselves to others. For example, the “Attīstībai/Par!” party (Development / For!) continued to use its national agenda in the EP elections, trying to make changes to the Riga City Council.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Instit. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other



## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

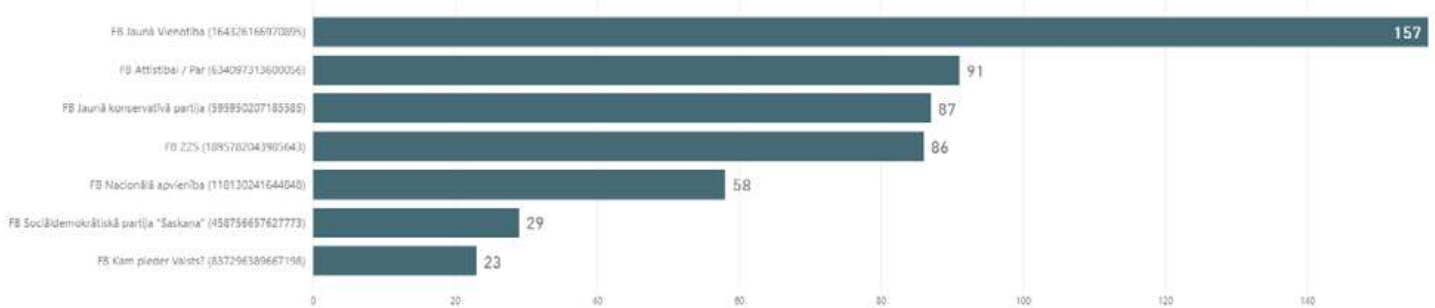


Almost all the parties' materials, with the exception of "Saskaņa" and to some extent "Zaļo un Zemnieku savienība" and "Jaunā konservatīvā partija" (both did not obtain a mandate), were evaluated as ironic / amusing by the public, thus showing the main sentiment of voters regarding the parties' promises and pre-election programs.

The "KPV LV" party was one of the leaders during the parliament

elections in October 2018, then losing its popularity month after month since then and not obtaining any mandate in the EP elections. Anger was a common reaction among the audience of "Jaunā konservatīvā partija" - this could be explained by the party's pre-election topics and messages to political opponents, which prompted users to express their attitude towards the subject rather than the party itself.

### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY

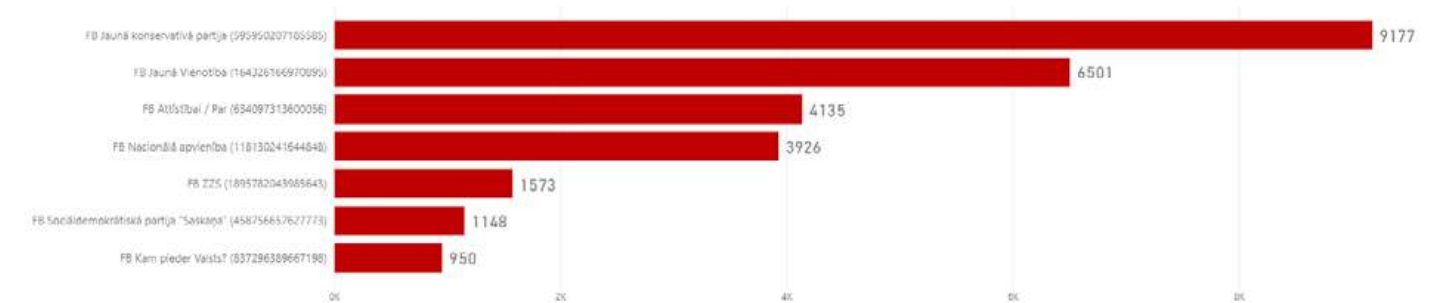


\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

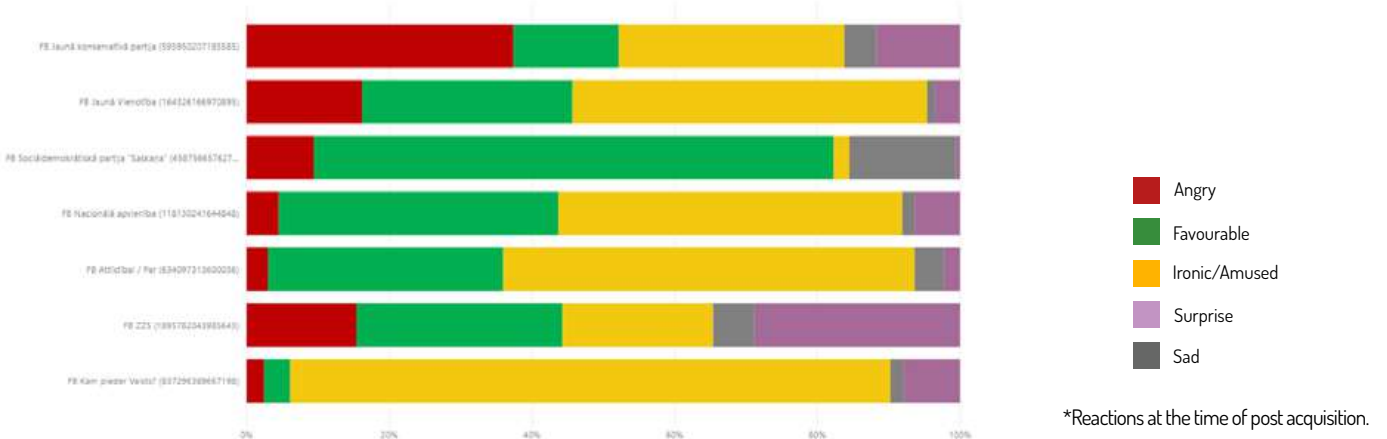
165



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# LITHUANIA

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Membership: **2004** until

European area: **Northern Europe**

Population: **2,921,262**

Number of MEPs: **11**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Presidential elections**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The general rules of the European Parliament electoral campaign in Lithuania are specified in the Republic of Lithuania Law on Elections to the European Parliament and Republic of Lithuania Law on Funding of Political Campaigns and Control of Funding Thereof. The elections to the European Parliament in the Republic of Lithuania are held on Sundays. For the purpose of the organization and conduct of an election, one multi-member constituency shall be formed where all the voters shall cast their votes. The number of the European Parliament members to be elected in Lithuania is specified by legal acts of the European Union (Lithuania has 11 members in the European Parliament).

To be eligible as a candidate in the European Parliament election in Lithuania you have to be a European Union citizen, permanently residing in Lithuania and be at least 21 years old on election day. European Union citizens who are at least 18 years old on election day and permanently residing in Lithuania have the right to vote in the European Parliament election in Lithuania. Foreign European Union citizens need to register to vote for the election. The political campaign comprises the following stages: the election campaigning stage and the final stage. The election campaigning stage commences when an election date is announced in accordance with the procedure laid down by law and end at the beginning of a statutory time limit during which election campaigning is prohibited. The final stage commences when the results of an election are proclaimed and end 100 days after the proclamation of the results of the election. It is prohibited to disseminate political advertising: on the front page of a periodical and if the dissemination of such advertising is in violation of the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Lithuania. During a political campaign, political advertising must be marked in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts, indicating the source of funding and visibly separating it from other disseminated information. The principles and requirements for advertising are set out in the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Provision of Information to the Public, applying to political advertising. In Lithuania the level of political tension and conflicts between parties is not very high. The main conflict is between the main party in government and the major opposition party, that is, the Lithuanian Farmers and Green Union party (ruling party) and the Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats party (opposition). This conflict was visible in the European Parliament electoral political campaign. The Lithuanian Farmers and Green Union party used negative communications directed against the Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats party.

The public opinion on the European Union is mostly positive.

People see opportunities and advantages which Lithuania gets from European Union. Of course, part of the country believes that the European Union has a negative impact on Lithuania, but this part is significantly smaller. This is proven by the fact that in last European Parliament election, of all the candidates only one had strong anti-European views – Vytautas Radžvilas. His public election committee obtained 3.35 percent of all votes and he did not become a member of the European Parliament.

The 2019 European Parliament election campaign in Lithuania took place during the first round of elections of the President of the Republic (on 12 May 2019). Moreover, a constitutional referendum was voted on that same day. Voters had to decide on two proposals: one of them concerned the reduction of the number of members in the Parliament of Lithuania from 141 to 121, while the second proposal regarded the allowance for dual citizenship for Lithuanians. The second round of the election for the President of the Republic of Lithuania was held on the same day as the European Parliament election. Thus its citizens were more focused on the presidential election and referendum than on the European Parliament election. On the one hand, the other election and referendum diverted attention from the European Parliament election and probably reduced citizens' interest in it. On the other hand, the concomitant second round of presidential elections increased voter turnout. The political parties ran their most active campaigns 2- 3 weeks before the European Parliament election. Prior to then, the parties simply publicized single messages. The most active parties included the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union and Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats; lesser active parties were the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party and Liberals Movement. The least active was the “Aušra Maldeikinė's Train” public election committee. The European Parliament election political campaign in Lithuania was not very innovative, unusual, remarkable or creative. Almost all the parties promoted their candidates choosing classic style posters, commercials, etc. The ‘The Decisive Leap’ public election committee was the only one to present slightly more interesting posters (with a snail and pole for jumping over a bar) and commercial (movie presenting the MEPs Paulius Kunčinas candidate, who was filmed jumping with a parachute). To conclude, in the European Parliament the Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats got 3 seats (before – 2), Lithuanian Social Democratic Party – 2 (before – 2), Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union – 2 (before – 1), Labour Party – 1 (before – 1), Liberals Movement – 1 (before – 2), “Aušra Maldeikinė's Train” Public Election Committee – 1 (new in European Parliament) and

Valdemaras Tomaševskis' block – Christian Families Alliance and Russian Alliance Coalition – 1 (before – 1). As the results show, on the one hand the parties with the most active electoral campaign got more seats in the European Parliament than before. However, these parties are popular in Lithuania and the media are focused on them anyway. Thus, we cannot state that it was the active political campaign to influence the voters. On the other hand, the

seats in the European Parliament were also obtained by parties which did not have very active political campaigns: the Labour Party and “Aušra Maldeikinė's Train” Public Election Committee. The leaders of these parties are well-known politicians. Therefore, it seems that people in Lithuania voted for popular politicians and political campaign activity was not perceived as the most important aspect.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Lietuvos valstiečių ir žaliųjų sąjunga (LVŽS)	61	4	-	2
Darbo partija (DP)	30	4	2	1
Tėvynės sąjunga - Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai (TS-LKD)	21	5	5	3
Lietuvos Respublikos liberalų sąjūdis (LRLS)	17	5	1	1
Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija (LSDP)	17	6	-	2
Partija Tvarka ir teisingumas (PTT)	5	3	1	0
Lietuvos laisvės sąjunga (liberalai) (LLS)	5	1	1	0
„Valdemaro Tomaševskio blokas“ – Krikščioniškų šeimų sąjungos ir Rusų aljanso koalicija (AWPL)	Not monitored	5	1	0
Visuomeninis rinkimų komitetas „Lemiamas šuolis“ (LŠ)	Not monitored	3	2	0
Lietuvos centro partija (LCP)	Not monitored	4	1	0
Visuomeninis rinkimų komitetas „Vytautas Radžvilas: susigrąžinkime valstybę!“ (VRSV)	Not monitored	2	1	0
Lietuvos socialdemokratų darbo partija (LSDDP)	Not monitored	2	-	0
Visuomeninis rinkimų komitetas „Prezidento Rolando Pakso judėjimas“ (PRPJ)	Not monitored	2	-	0
Visuomeninis rinkimų komitetas „Stipri Lietuva vieningoje Europoje“ (SLVE)	Not monitored	1	-	0
Lietuvos žaliųjų partija (LŽP)	Not monitored	-	1	0
Visuomeninis rinkimų komitetas „Aušros Maldeikinės traukinys“ (AMT)	Not monitored	1	-	1

220 electoral materials were collected during the monitoring process of the 2019 European Parliament election campaign in Lithuania. Among them, 156 were social media posts, followed by 48 electoral campaign printed posters and advertisements published in national newspapers, and lastly 16 commercials.

These results show that the European Parliament election campaign was promoted online and on social networking sites like Facebook to a certain extent, which became a very important platform for political promotion.

All 16 Lithuanian political parties, coalitions and public election committees manifested their presence on Facebook and

were rather active trying to reach their potential electorate. Unfortunately, due to technical limitations only seven Lithuanian political parties were monitored during this European campaign. Analysing printed materials in the two biggest Lithuanian national daily newspapers – “Lietuvos rytas” and “Vakaro žinios”, a significant majority of posters (42 items) was clearly visible over the presence of advertisements (6 items).

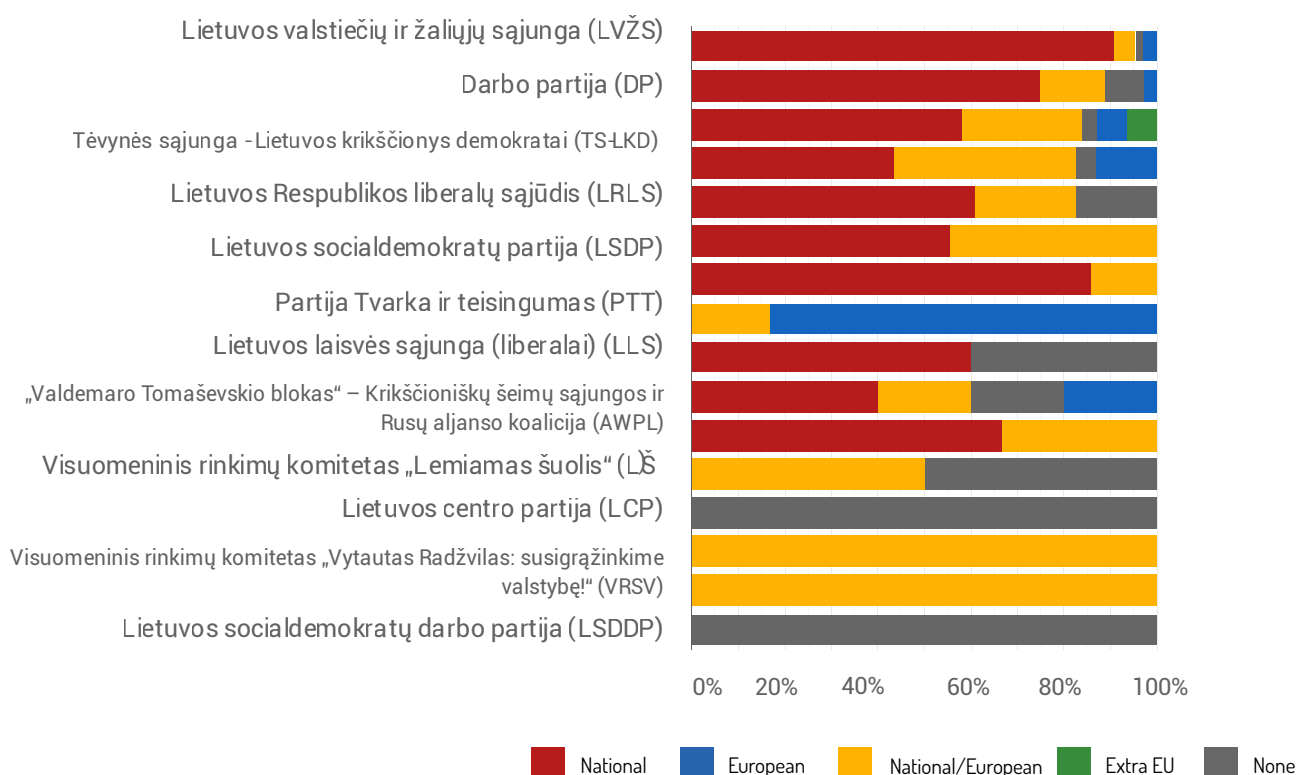
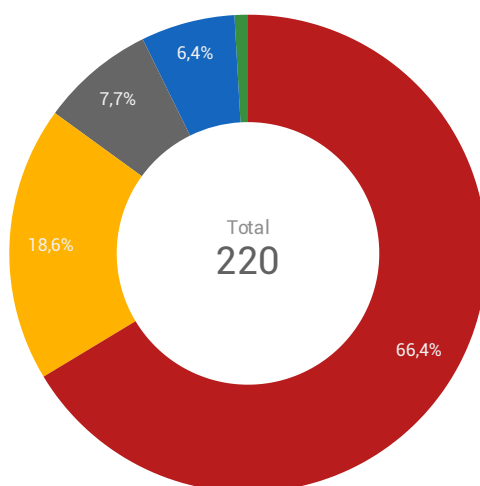
It is obvious that traditional printed media, still very important a decade ago, is increasingly losing its position nowadays, and politicians tend to choose other channels to communicate with their audience and share promotional materials.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

As was predictable, the content analysed here favoured a national perspective (66.4 %). Besides the usual reasons shared by all the countries, in Lithuania this situation was also caused by the fact that the Lithuanian presidential elections took place simultaneously. Some of the Lithuanian parties saw the presidential elections as a good opportunity to promote their visibility, popularity for the European Parliament elections or to fulfil their political agenda. This resulted in two thirds of the election materials focusing on national issues. A glance at the second major part of the electoral material (18.6 %) shows that the topics concerned both Lithuanian and European issues. However, some differences can be noted between the parties, for example the Valdemaras Tomaševskis' block - Christian Families Alliance and Russian Alliance Coalition

exclusively emphasized a European perspective, which constituted more than 83 % of the electoral materials of their party. In contrast, the ruling party Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union chose to focus almost exclusively on a national perspective (90.8 %).

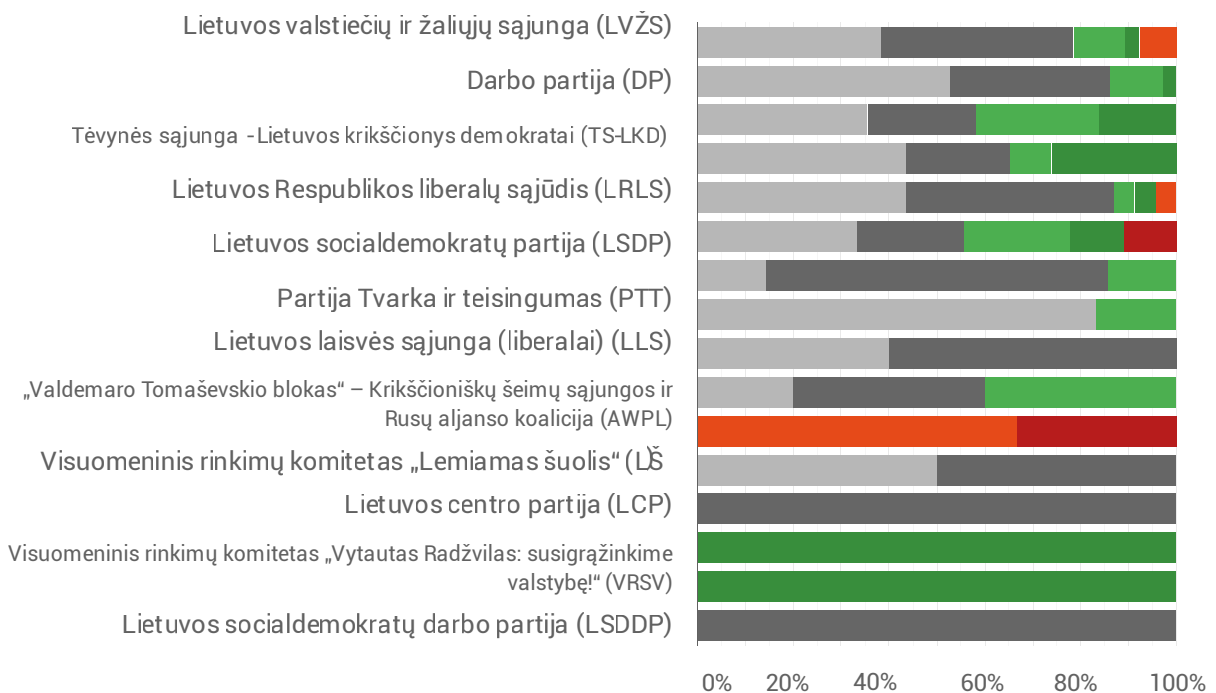
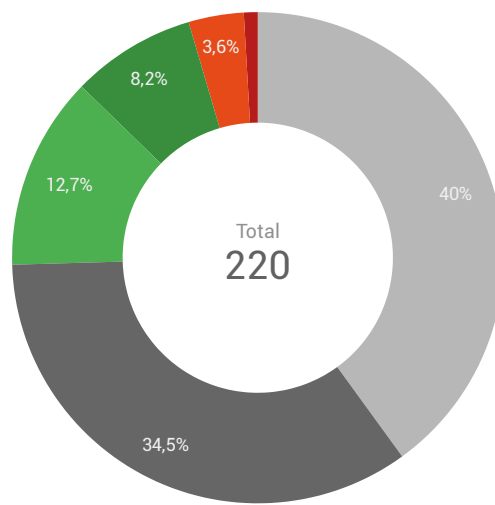
It is worth noting that during the election campaign the Lithuanian political parties paid hardly any attention to the extra-European Union perspective. Only one party - Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrats - had a small percentage of political messages (6.5 %) concerning the extra-EU perspective. Lastly, according to the electoral material collected, 7.7 % of all materials did not focus on any dimension except calling for candidate support.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

According to 220 electoral materials collected, the Lithuanian political parties, coalitions and public election committees had a neutral image of Europe (40%) and in 34.5 % of the materials collected Europe was not represented at all. Interestingly, two of the 16 Lithuanian election participants (Lithuanian Green Party and the “Strong Lithuania in the United Europe” Public Election Committee) placed a strongly positive view of Europe in all of their materials. Furthermore, only two of all the Lithuanian parties (Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union and Lithuanian Social

Democratic Party) had at least few messages with a negative image of Europe and two others (Order and Justice Party and the “Vytautas Radžvilas: Let’s Get the Country Back!” Public Election Committee) had materials with a strongly negative image. The last one, the “Vytautas Radžvilas: Let’s Get the Country Back!” Public Election Committee significantly differed from the other election participants, as their content had only negative (67%) and strongly negative (33%) views of Europe, demonstrating that this election committee’s main goal was to promote Euroscepticism.



Strongly positive Positive Neutral Negative Strongly negative Not represented

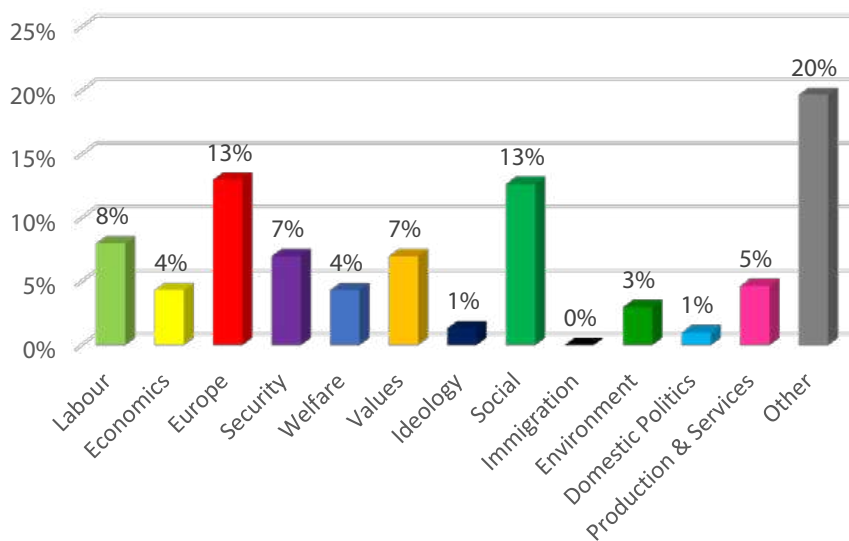


## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

From 220 electoral materials, which included 42 posters, 16 commercials, 156 social posts and 6 printed press materials, the most significant and popular topics among the Lithuanian political parties, coalitions and public election committees were Europe (13%) and social topics (13%). Less popular but still important were the topics of labour (8%), security (7%) and values (7%). One fifth of the Lithuanian electoral messages (20%) were about other topics.

While in some European countries, the main topics of the European Parliament election campaign strongly focused on immigration

and/or environmental topics, in Lithuania those issues were absent. Data analysis shows that the least popular topic of the election campaign in Lithuania was immigration with a percentage of 0. Minor interest was also devoted to environmental topic (only 3%), which was used in quite a small amount mainly by the two biggest Lithuanian parties - Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrats and Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union. The lack of interest in immigration problems can be easily explained by the low level of immigration in Lithuania, while the lack of environmental awareness and interest in much more striking.

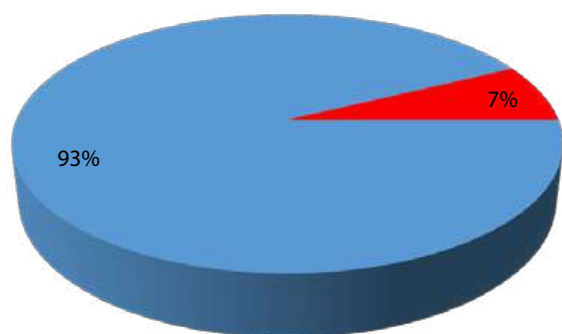


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

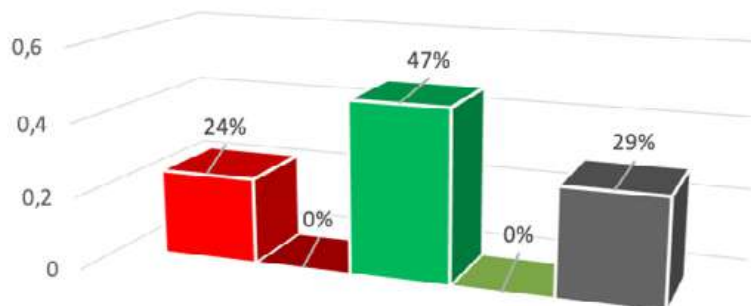
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

As can be seen in the diagram, during the European Parliament elections in Lithuania almost no cases of negative campaigns were observed (6% of all materials). Apparently, there is no such tradition in Lithuania: the parties, coalitions and public election committees tend to focus their electoral messages on positive or

neutral aspects. Among those rare, negative cases, the major part was direct against national institutions, parties or politicians (47% of negative messages) and only 24% of them against foreign institutions, politicians or parties. 29% of the negative messages in Lithuania were direct against other targets.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Inst. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other

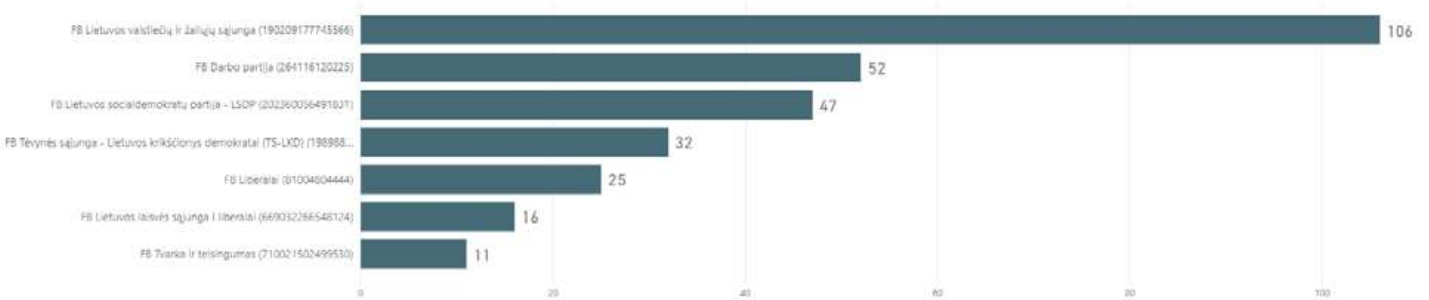


## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



The mood of the electoral material prepared by the Lithuanian parties, coalitions and public election committees was mainly favourable, ironic/amused and angry. There was very little content with examples of surprised and sad moods. The most examples of an ironic/amused mood can be found in the content prepared by the Order and Justice Party, while a favourable mood dominated content prepared by the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, and most of the angry mood can be found in the Liberals Movement’s material.

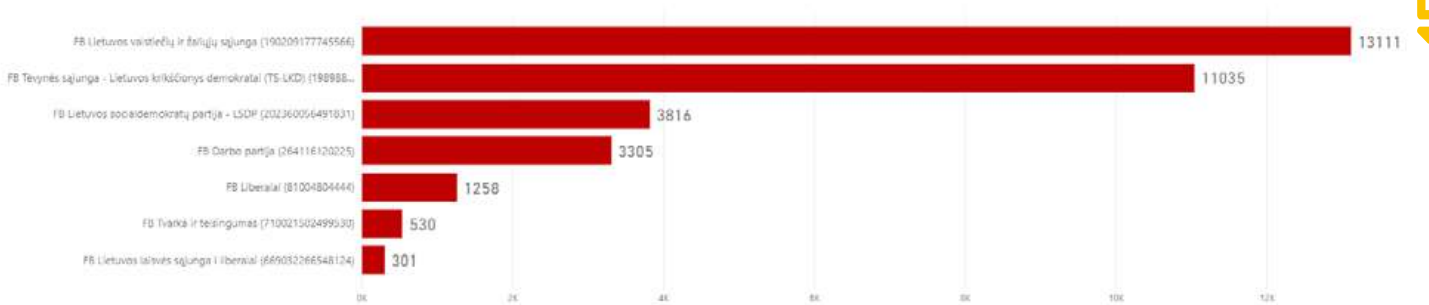
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

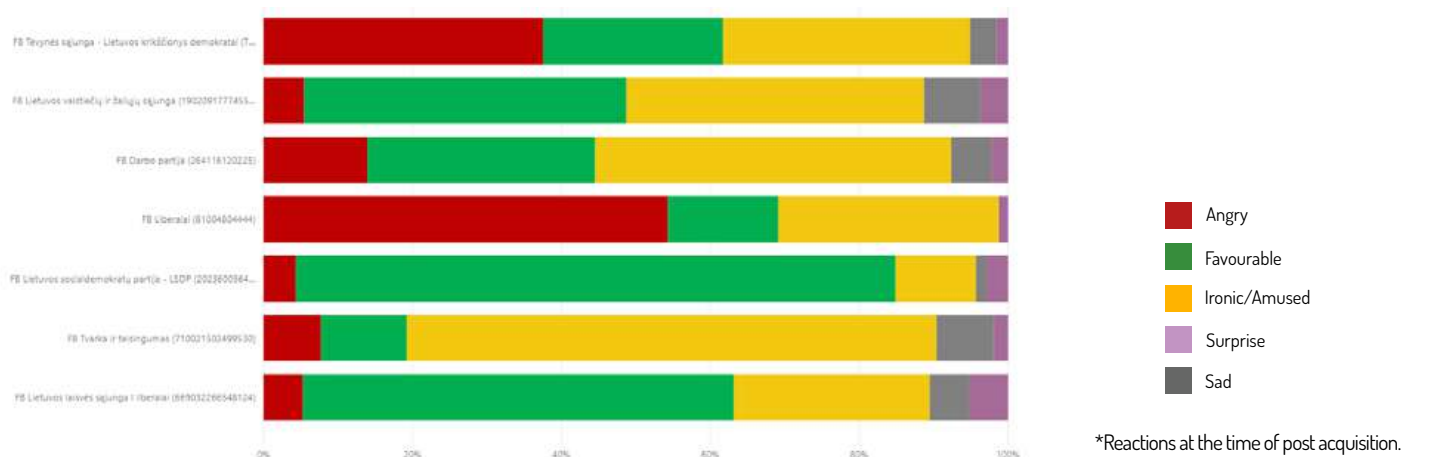


173

\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# LUXEMBOURG

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Membership: **Founder Country 1958**

European area: **Western Europe**

Population: **562,958**

Number of MEPs: **6**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

According to Luxembourgish law, European elections as well as national and local ones, are obligatory for national citizens older than 17 years under threat of legal sanctions. Foreign nationals living in Luxembourg can also vote following registration. Nationals living abroad can vote via postal ballot. Absentee voting presented a number of issues this year as several people have complained that the letters were returned to them.

There is no public service television in Luxembourg but political parties have the possibility to broadcast their electoral videos for free on the only TV channel that exists in the country - RTL Télé Lëtzebuerg. Each party is given the same amount of airing time (9 minutes in total). Likewise, each party is allowed to send radio spots on RTL Radio Lëtzebuerg and on radio 100komma7 - the only public service station in Luxembourg. With regard to political poster diffusion, each party has the right to post their banners and posters freely on public space.

6 national politicians are represented in Strasbourg and accordingly each citizen can cast 6 votes. What is peculiar about the Luxembourgish voting system is the fact that the elector can either vote for the whole party or for individual candidates. Each candidate can get a maximum of 2 votes by the same elector. Furthermore, the elector has the choice to vote for several candidates from different parties (Say: one vote for candidate X of the liberal party, one for candidate Y of the conservative party, two votes for candidate Z of the communist party and two last votes for candidate Q of the nationalist party).

10 parties were running for election in 2019 - one more than in 2014. Two new parties participated: VOLT and déi Konservativ. Most parties as well as the majority of the electorate is generally favorable of the EU. The only party explicitly rejecting the idea of the EU is the communist party KPL. All other parties - even the nationalist ones - describe themselves as pro-EU though they are in favour of completely reforming the system as they argue that Brussels has acquired too much power. However, it is clear that a European Union with a common currency and open borders would only be in the interest of a small country like Luxembourg - which explains why there are no serious Eurosceptic parties in Luxembourg (with the exception of KPL) and why even the most nationalist party presents itself as pro-EU. It is also interesting to note that the most critical parties are at the same time the smallest ones (with the exception of ADR) showing that the electorate is generally in favour of the EU. The main question regarding the election result was whether or not the centre-right CSV could keep its third seat. In 2013, the CSV had to cede its power to a coalition government composed of the DP, the Green party and the LSAP (sometimes called the

Gambia government because of its colours). Since then, the CSV is undergoing a political crisis and some people argued that the CSV would probably lose one of its three seats in the EP as well. This was confirmed after the election as the DP gained one more seat.

The 2019 elections are the second ones which don't take place at the same time at national elections. They are also the first elections - be they local, national or European - without election agreement stipulating the rules and limits of the campaign. In fact, there is no legal basis limiting the field of action of parties. In the past, the parties have reached informal agreements in which they determined the amount of electoral expenses as well as the number of posters and banners each party was entitled to put up on public spaces. The reasons for failing to reach an agreement this year are rather vague. Party members have stated that no one was really interested in stipulating rules for these elections and some argued that the agreements have never been really effective nor fully respected. The main fear voiced in the media was that the lack of agreement would lead to abuses in the sphere of online advertising - especially on social media. When the former Grand-Duke Jean died on 23rd April, the lack of agreement has led to some confusion regarding the dos and don'ts of the election campaign given that a mourning period of 12 days was proclaimed in his honour.

This year marks the first election under the monitoring of the Autorité Luxembourgeoise Indépendante de l'Audiovisuel (ALIA) - the national agency supervising audiovisual media. So far, the Service Information Presse (SIP) took charge of monitoring the election campaign in the audiovisual media. However, criticism has been voiced regarding the independence of SIP given that it is liable to the government. For this reason, the young agency ALIA was assigned with the task.

The issue that was probably most discussed in the media was the debacle around three commercial videos produced by VOLT and déi lénk. RTL refused to air the videos because they were in French and violated the technical rules of the company which state that everything needs to be in the Luxembourgish idiom. A gentleman's agreement was reached between RTL and ALIA solving the issue and allowing for the diffusion of the French spots.

Another hot topic in the media were the methods used by several parties to reach the electorate. The DP was criticized for using personal data, one candidate of the Pirates, who is also the head of an animal rights organisation was accused of using his organisation for political purposes and the ADR distributed quizzes to pupils and students in order to promote their party which was deemed inappropriate by some people.

ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
D’Piratepartei	101	8	6	0
Chrëschtlech-Sozial Vollekspartei	45	8	6	2
Volt	51	1	5	0
Alternativ Demokratesch Reformpartei	20	15	6	0
Lëtzebuenger Sozialistesche Aarbechterpartei	28	10	2	1
Demokratesch Partei	25	5	-	2
déi gréng	19	4	1	1

A total of 366 items has been produced between 28th April and 24th May 2019 by the 7 parties selected for monitoring by the national team. Compared to other smaller countries such as Malta, Belgium or the Netherlands, this figure seems astonishingly high. In reality, the figure is even higher (see graph on page 8) given the fact that some parties have published the same material more than once. The pirate party for instance has re-published older posts on Facebook as election day was approaching. However, all content published several times has only been quantified once. It should also be noted that some content has been published in more than one medium. The liberal party DP for instance has produced two commercial videos which were broadcast on private television but which are not included in the chart. Given that the videos were on Facebook before they were aired on TV, both

commercials are included in the category “social”. Likewise, several parties have published their posters on Facebook early on which is why they do not figure in the category “print” but are rather included in the category “social”. Strictly speaking, the bar chart is therefore slightly imprecise. All parties have produced commercial videos as well as posters and banners – albeit of different numbers and length. CSV, ADR and the Pirate party have each produced 6 commercial videos – one video per candidate. While all parties have produced banners and posters, the newcomer VOLT strikers out with its small amount of print material: they have only produced one single poster.

The disposition of seats per party has changed in comparison to last elections as CSV has lost one seat in favour of DP.

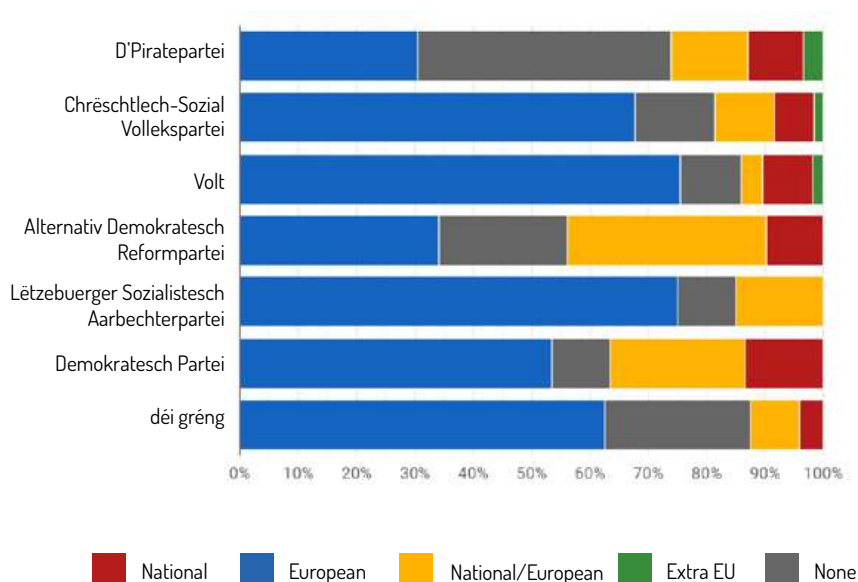
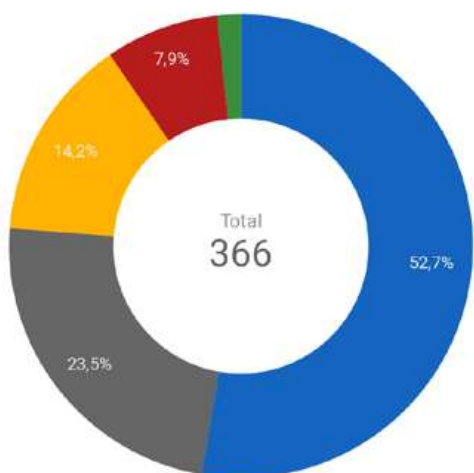
ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

There is no doubt that the elections of 2019 in Luxembourg are truly European ones. More than half of the material produced by the seven parties took an explicitly European perspective (52.7%). If the a-political material is taken out (23.5%) the prevalence of the European dimension becomes even clearer. A-political material are mostly posts depicting the installation of banners and posters around the country or the participation of candidates at public events. They did not have a political

message and had no European or national dimension. These posts constitute the second biggest type of material produced during the 4 weeks of the campaign. The Pirate party immediately strikes out in this regard as it has produced more content of this type than content with a mixed and European dimension taken together. Another party that strikes out is the right-wing party ADR. It is not surprising that, as the only party campaigning for state sovereignty and self-determination,

ADR has posted more content focusing both on a national and European dimension than other parties. In fact, the amount of mixed content and strictly European content published by ADR is roughly the same. Only 7.9% of all posts have focused mainly on Luxembourg. Most of these posts were invitations to or descriptions of meetings, gatherings and other events with

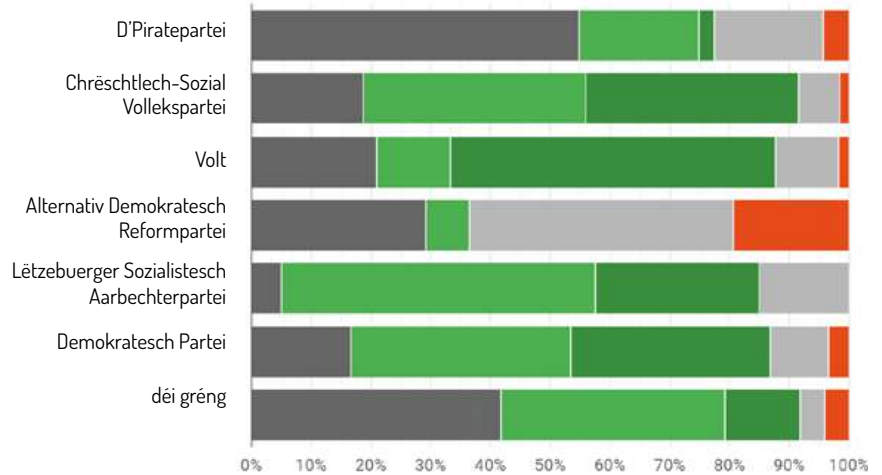
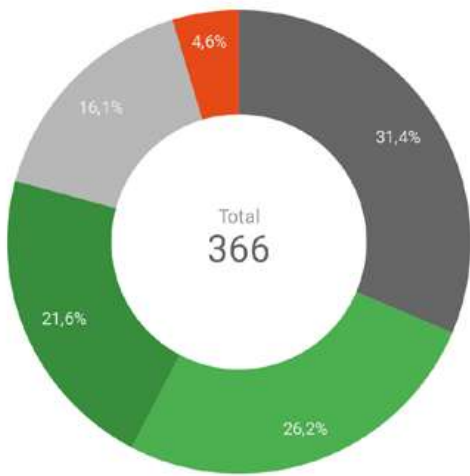
an explicit reference to national symbols, events or places. The only party which has not posted any national content is the socialist party LSAP. Only three parties have referred to the extra-European level - i.e. CSV, the Pirate party and the Green party. Most posts falling into this category were covering environmental issues from a more international point of view.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Luxembourg is usually described as a rather Europhile country. Not only do the charts confirm that most items produced by all parties taken together are representing Europe positively (47.8%) but furthermore no single item represented Europe in a strongly negative way. Leaving out LSAP, all parties have posted content in one way or another critical of Europe but these posts mostly constitute the exception rather than the rule. Only ADR - the most right-leaning party of the lot which has chosen the sentence "For a Europe of the Nations" as its motto - has published comparatively more negative content than all other parties. Furthermore, their negative posts outweigh their positive ones. Only neutral posts were published more frequently than negative ones by ADR. Negative content posted by ADR was mainly attacking aspects which were seen as a threat to the sovereignty of Luxembourg (such as the introduction of European taxes, the creation of a European army or European immigration policies). Other topics representing the EU negatively posted by other parties referred to the role of lobbies in Brussels, the liberalization of the railway system etc... The Pirate party stands out for its content which does not represent the EU at all. This can be explained - as in the previous chart - with the

many posts depicting the installation of banners and posters as well as photos taken at events. Not surprising is the fact that the young Pan- and pro-European party VOLT has published more strongly positive content than other parties. It must be added however, that the bar chart would probably look slightly different, had all the parties running for elections been monitored. The three parties that were excluded from the study are also the parties which are most critical of the EU. The communist party KPL for instance has been stressing the negative sides of the EU (austerity measures, poverty, wars in the Middle East and Northern Africa, big corporations, etc.). They argued that the EU could not be reformed but needed to be repealed. The left-wing party déi lénk has seconded most of the criticism albeit in a less radical rhetoric and without asking for the EU to be abolished. On the other side of the political spectrum, the party déi Konservativ argued much like the ADR that Luxembourgish interests should be the priority of national MEPs. These three parties have been excluded for the simple reason that a choice had to be made privileging those parties which were more likely to gain a seat.



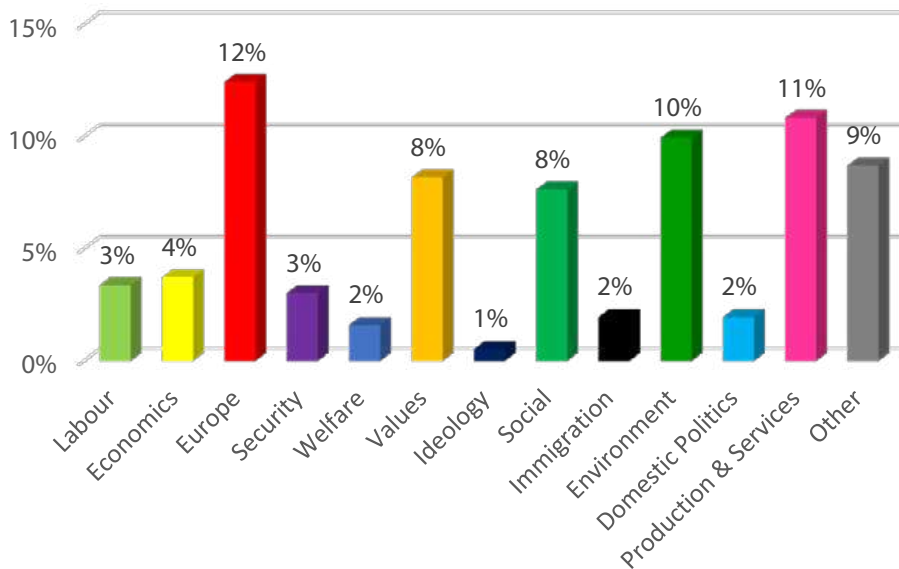
Legend: Strongly positive (dark green), Positive (light green), Neutral (grey), Negative (orange), Strongly negative (red), Not represented (dark grey)

### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

As already pointed out in the previous chart, Europe was clearly at the center of this campaign. In fact, the majority of posts were dealing with issues directly relating to Europe and the EU. Domestic policies represent only an extremely small number of posts. The productive sectors and services constitute the second most frequent topic of the campaign. The issues within this category mostly related to the agricultural industry as well as the media and information sector. A topic embraced by each

single party was the environment. This category incorporates issues relating to sustainable energies, climate protection but also animal rights. On international days, anniversaries or celebrations most parties also highlighted specific issues, mostly relating to social topics. Examples include International Labour Day (1st March), World Press Freedom Day (3rd March), World Bee Day (20 May), 100th anniversary of the introduction of universal suffrage in Luxembourg, etc.

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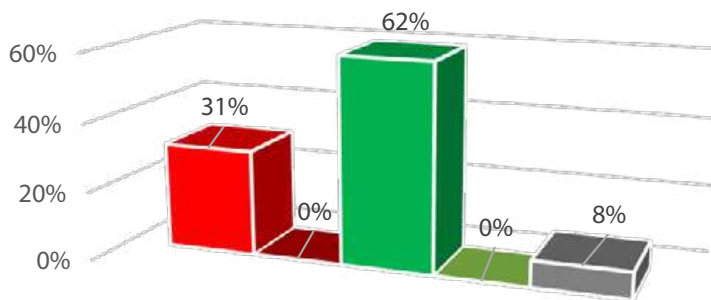
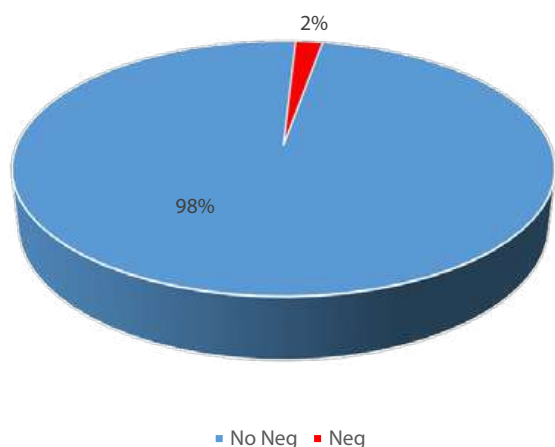
\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.



## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

The European election campaign in Luxembourg was rather mild. Attacks on other parties - be they foreign or national - constituted the exception. This is not to say that there haven't been controversies, attacks and criticisms but these mostly emanated from journalists or from civil society rather than from the parties or candidates themselves. Some of the few

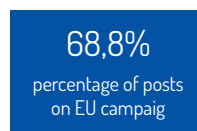
instances where one candidate was targeted by another candidate of a different party occurred during round table debates, which - by their nature - are more confrontational. But all in all the parties focused on their own positions regarding the issues at hand rather than criticizing institutions or the positions of their rivals.



- Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Inst. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

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## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



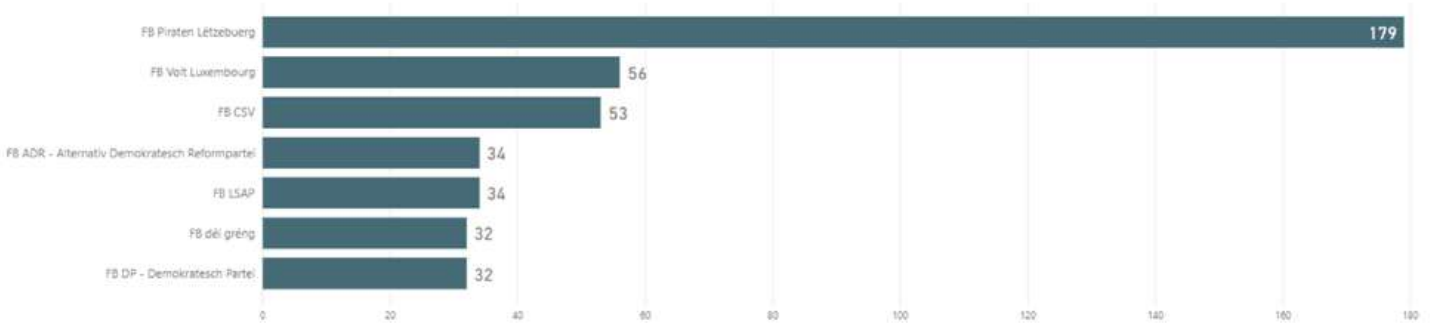
The previous charts (on page 8) indicate the total number of posts published by the seven parties on Facebook. They include posts unrelated to the election campaign as well as posts published several times. This explains the difference between the total number indicated in this chart (420) and the total number of social content uploaded into the EEMC database (289). The party most active on social media is by far the Pirate party which has posted more social media content in absolute numbers than the four following parties taken together. One reason for this divergence lies in the fact that the Pirate party has published numerous posts without any real meaning. As seen on sheet 4 the majority of posts had no political message. In fact, most of their posts showed candidates taking selfies in front of banners or at specific events. Furthermore the Pirate party has re-published quite a few of its older posts, especially in the last week of the campaign. It is not controversial to assume that this constant posting of selfies, pictures and posters constituted a clear strategy of the party which wanted to have a

large online presence. Whether the strategy is an efficient one in as small a country as Luxembourg is a different question. In fact, the level of engagement in Luxembourg is rather small. In retrospect the effectiveness of social campaigns in Luxembourg can also be put into doubt when looking at the election results. In fact, the two most successful parties during the election, as judged by the election results, were the ones at the bottom of this chart: DP and déi gréng. Interestingly, the posts of the Green party have experienced the highest degree of engagement even though the party has posted much less frequently than most other parties (with the exception of the DP).

The upper chart shows the reaction of Facebook users to the posts published by the respective parties. here again, the Pirate party strikes out as it exhibits the highest amount of "negative" feelings (i.e. sad and angry). On the other side, VOLT shows the highest number of favourable reactions.



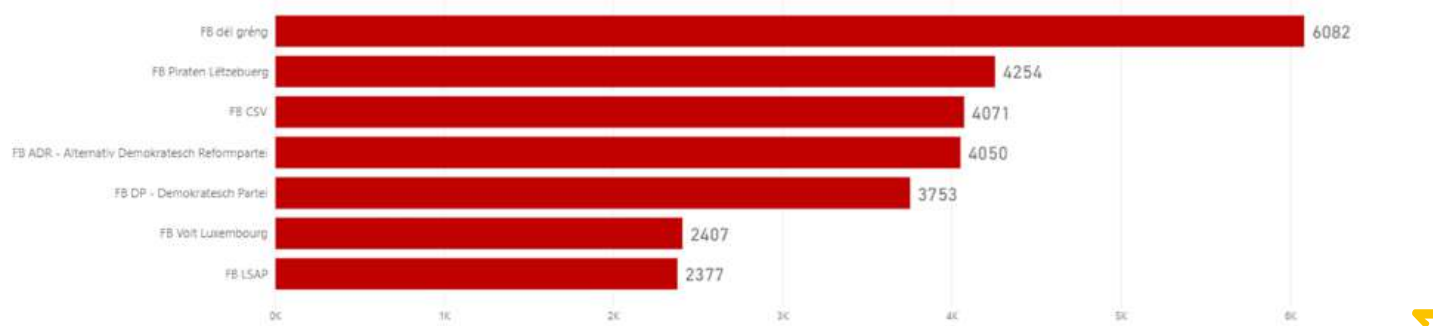
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

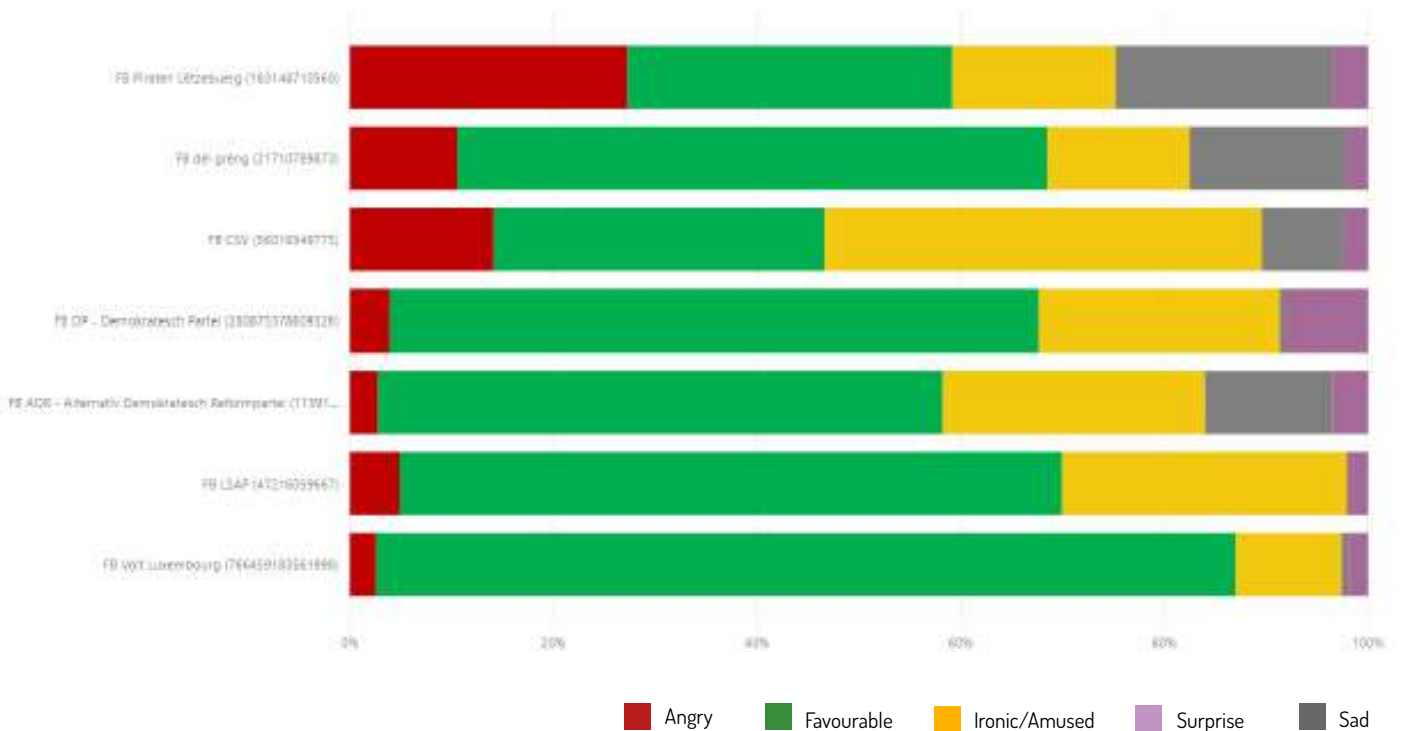


\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

Engagement

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### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# MALTA

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Membership: **2004**

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **429,344**

Number of MEPs: **6**

Election day: **May 25, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Local elections**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Malta is the smallest state in the European Union and in 2019 there were 371,450 eligible voters. Votes cast exceeded 72.6%, down from 74.8% in 2014 but still one of the highest voting turnouts in the EU. Voting is voluntary and for the first time in history 16 year olds were allowed to cast their vote in the MEP and local elections that were held on the same day.

Voting took place on Saturday 25th May. The Maltese electoral system is the PR-STV, introduced under colonial rule and retained after Independence in 1964. This system is used in all Maltese elections. In the case of European elections the islands constitute one single district that elects 6 MEPs. There were 41 candidates and the winners needed to obtain a national quota of votes.

The MEP elections of 2019 were also mid-term elections which tested the strength of the political parties. Both main parties had similar mottos that put love of country as their main focus: PL, "Pajjizna F'Qalbna" (our country at heart) and PN "Flimkien għal Pajjizna" (together for our country).

The governing Labour Party (S&D) won its biggest victory in the post-war history with 54% of the vote and it tremendously boosted the position of Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, whose party managed to increase its support over the national elections of 2017. The show of support for Muscat came at a time when he had already stated that he was preparing to leave politics.

This left the other main party the Nationalist Party (EPP) facing a crisis since it suffered its greatest defeat ever with 38% of the votes. In the period that followed the MEP election, cleavages within the Opposition were so severe that there was fear that the party may implode especially when there were efforts to change the leader Adrian Delia, a new comer to politics who was democratically elected by party members after the electoral defeat of 2017, but he was never fully accepted and endorsed by influential segments of the party establishment, that include many Parliamentarians.

In the MEP elections of 2019 the Labour Party obtained 4 seats whereas the PN obtained 2 seats. The other parties did not win any seats because they did not manage to make significant electoral inroads. The party that best performed was Imperium Europa, a Far Right small grouping that attracted voters because of immigration, which managed to obtain the highest number of votes. Alternattiva Demokratika (the Green Party) suffered one of the weakest results ever as a result of a split within the party in the weeks before the MEP elections over the issue of abortion. Abortion also divided the Democratic Party, when a statement by its leader was immediately shot down by other members.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights were on the agenda after an NGO Women's Rights Foundation started promoting legal

amendments to one of the most restrictive legislations that exist at a global level. In Catholic Malta divorce was introduced as recently as 2011 and abortion is not on the political agenda because the issue is deemed to be politically damaging. But the harmonisation of SRHR appeared on the European S&D family programme, it became an overarching electoral issue to an extent that the leader of the Opposition Adrian Delia dubbed the MEP vote as "a referendum on abortion".

In the results of the 2019 there was yet again a symmetrical gender split. Since 2013 half of the Maltese MEPs are women. The great success of MEPs Miriam Dalli, Roberta Metsola and Josianne Cutajar and the sheer amount of votes they obtained, came in stark contrast with national elections where women's representation in the National Parliament is among the lowest in Europe and it never exceeding 15%. In post-election analysis some tried to 50:50 balance to distort perceptions regarding a set of proposed reforms, which include positive measures, to increase women's participation, where Malta appears in the 150th position in UPI rankings. The MEP gender balance is very fragile indeed and it is easily tipped/overtaken because of the low number of MEPs – a total of 6 in number.

In the final result small parties obtained negligible votes.

For the first time ever Malta used a hybrid vote-counting system that mixed the traditional manual counting system with electronic counting.

Political parties ran their own campaigns but individuals raised funds to run their own campaign. Funding is capped by the Electoral Commission.

Broadcasting adverts are highly regulated by the Broadcasting Authority. About a month prior to the election, the Authority issued a directive whereby it stopped all political adverts and it allocated unpaid airtime to party broadcasts that are strictly managed by the BA. The authority does not merely manage the allocated time according to party strength, but in some rare instances it also intervenes regarding content. In recent years it blocked adverts that were deemed to fuel hatred against vulnerable segments of society that were produced by Imperium Europa.

The eve of all elections in Malta is "a day of reflection" where no political content is allowed. Yet this law is challenged on the internet and the social media that are unregulated. Moreover, Malta's idiosyncratic media system allows political parties to own broadcasting stations that have ample followers. Hence while adverts stop on all stations one month before any elections, parties still dedicate a lot of editorial content such as news and current affairs programmes to the campaign, where a lot of interpretations

and political comments are made.

The campaign was as expected highly polarised. Bi-polarism is a trait of Maltese political culture that was moulded by a duopoly. This political culture was heavily dependent on an interplay between two poles that divided the electorate and yet the parties also co-existed interdependently.

In Malta the EU enjoys a high degree of public support. It was a Nationalist government that fought and won a referendum for Malta to join the EU in 2004. At that time the Labour opposition had Eurosceptic. But after the enlargement of 2004 Labour had a change of heart and it became a strong supporter of the EU. In this campaign it was ironically the PN that questioned immigration and raised issues on national identity and traditions.

While positive advertising campaigns underlined Malta’s economic performance and its ambitions, immigration was one of the underlying themes of this campaign. Polls show that people were not merely concerned about sub-Saharan refugees and those from Libya and Syria that increased since the ‘Arab Spring’. There is also a degree of anxiety about Europeans who settle in Malta and third-country nationals that arrive as guest workers in various sectors. While government portrayed these immigrants as net contributors to Malta’s economic boom, other parties resented the overpopulation (Malta has one of the highest population densities in the world); the strain on services and housing, and the spiraling rental prices that have become beyond the reach of the average worker.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Partit Laburista	76	-	6	4
Partit Nazzjonalista	23	4	9	2
Patrijotti Maltin	12	-	1	0
Alternattiva Demokratika	9	-	1	0
Partit Demokratiku	5	-	3	0
Viva Malta	3	3	2	0
Alleanza Bidla	Not monitored	-	5	0

The incumbent party clearly had a superior campaign on Social Media and when it comes to TV productions. The second party PN had less funds at its disposal.

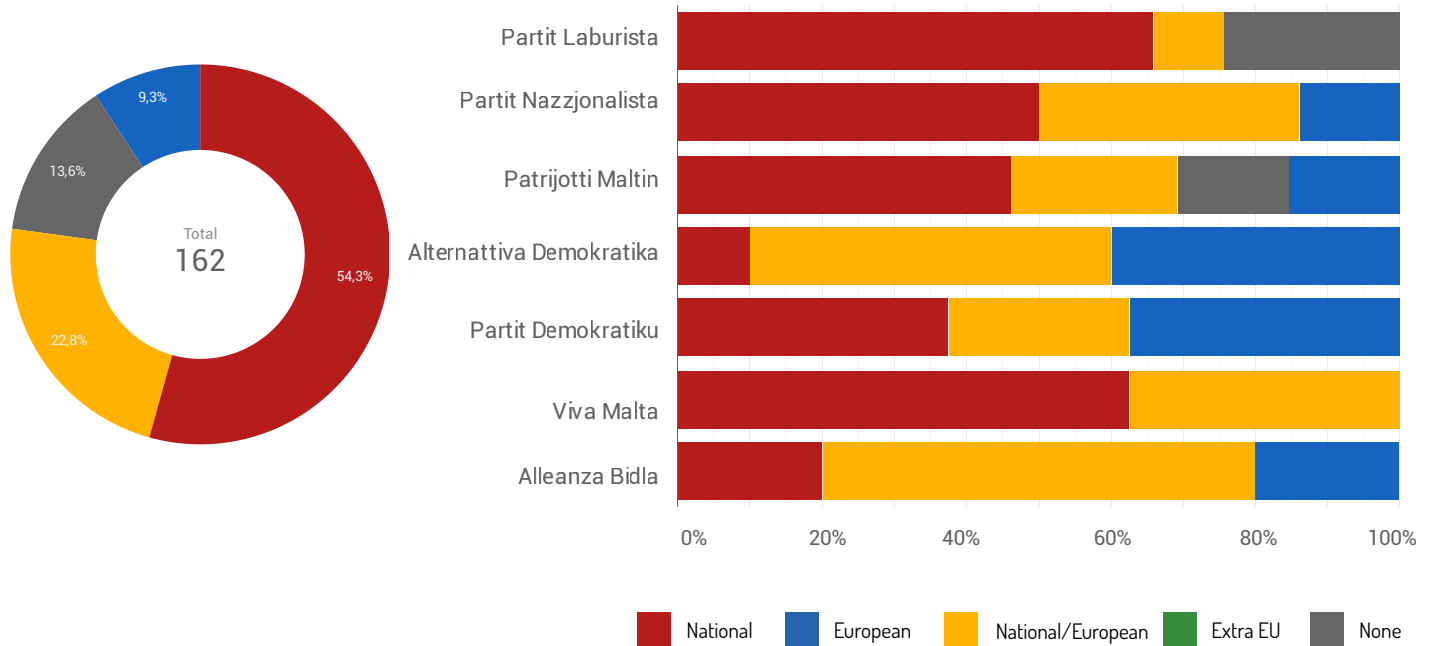
Both parties relied heavily on their own party media to deliver the message.

The candidates of the parties also relied heavily on face-to-face interactions and door-to-door canvassing.

Smaller parties relied mostly entirely on Social Media and adverts slots offered by the broadcasting authorities.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The MEP campaign was highly national in focus with issues such as economic performance, abortion laws, identity and migration at the forefront.

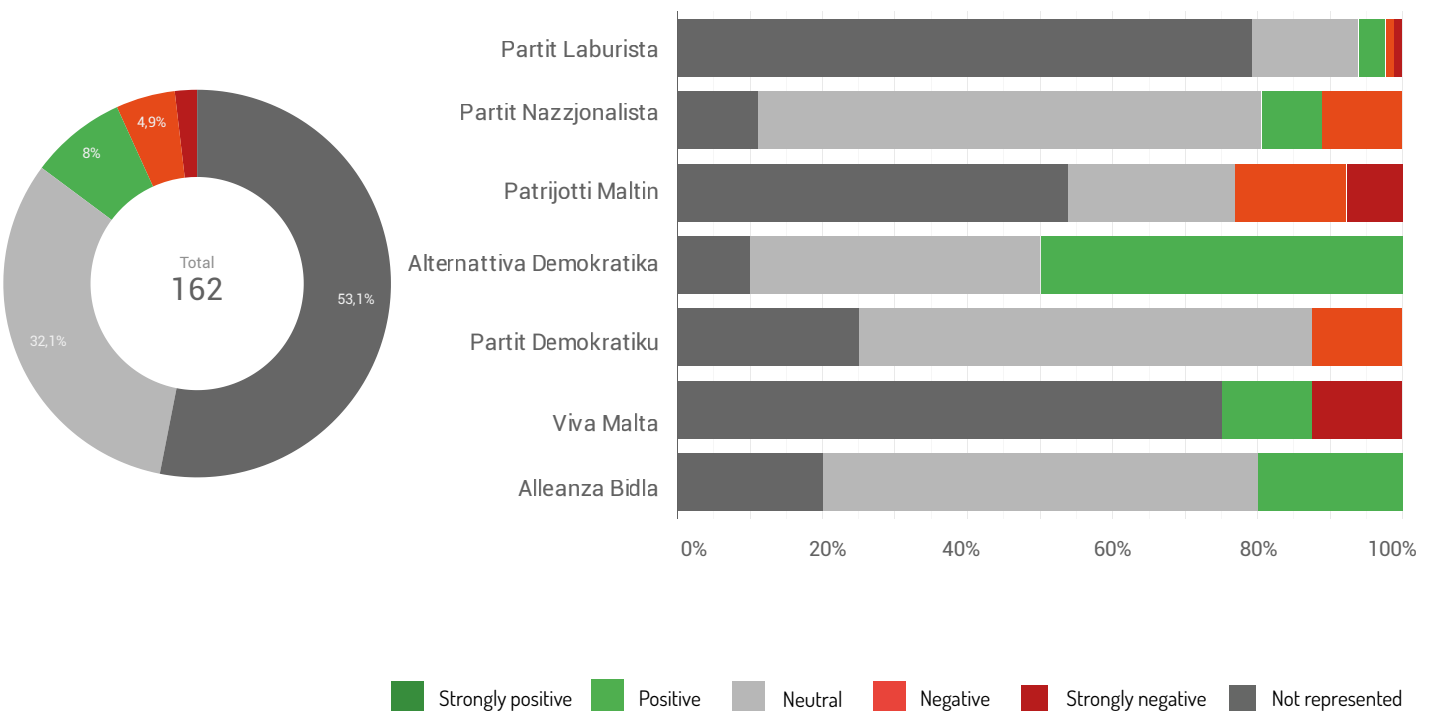


## 186 HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

It was merely Moviment Patrijotti Maltin that appeared to be nostalgic about life preceding EU membership.

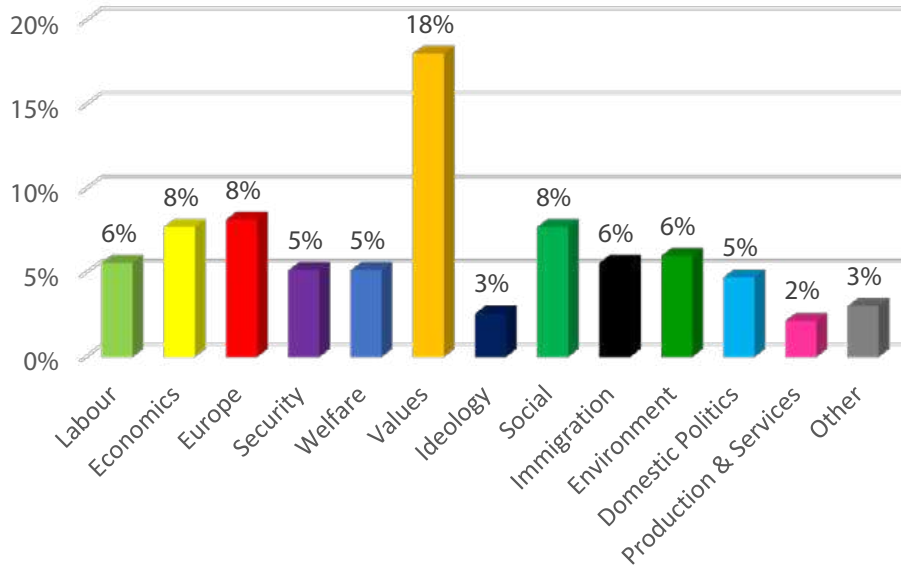
Imperium Europa tried to ride on the wave of popularity of far right parties in Europe whereas Alleanza Bidla focused on the importance of Christian values.

Whenever the main parties mentioned the EU they portrayed it in a positive or neutral light.



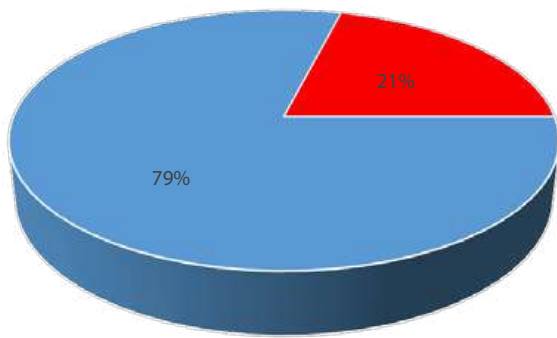
## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The struggle to win people’s hearts and minds required an emphasis on values that was highlighted by all parties together with inter-related socio-economic factors were also deemed important as well as concerns that revolved on the environment (given Malta’s construction boom that is resented by many) and immigration (as explained earlier).

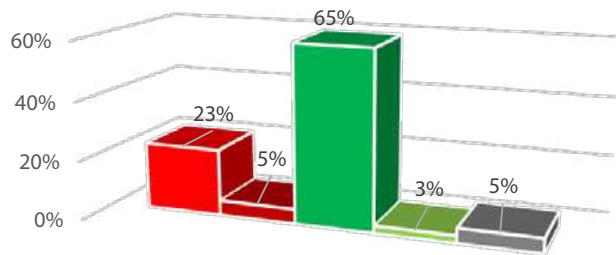


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Instit. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

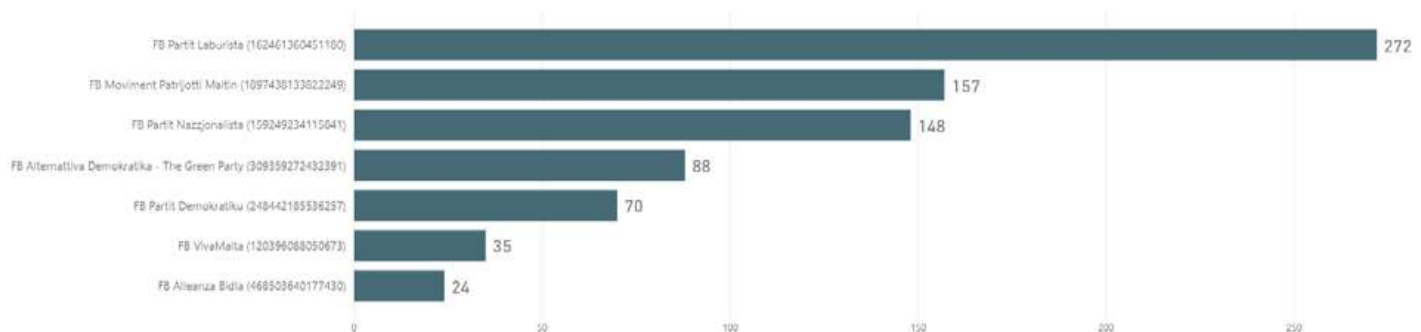


The incumbent Labour Party led a positive campaign that aimed to celebrate its successes and the high support & trust ratings of its leader PM Joseph Muscat. The few negative adverts targeted exponents within the opposition party. PL invested heavily in its online and media campaigns. Its leader suspended most of his other official engagements to tour the island meeting communities in every town and village on a daily basis.

PN led a rather negative campaign in the sense that it hardly flaunted what it stood for but used negative campaigning and irony/humour to attack its main opponent the Labour government. PN also organised face-to-face activities and its door-stepping.

It is interesting to note that the biggest number of Angry posts came from the small grouping Moviment Patrijotti, which may be described as the most Europe skeptic party. It must be noted that members of this small party did not merely post original campaign material but, to reinforce their message, they also selectively shared international news that portrayed 'foreigners' (namely people of colour and Muslims) in a negative light. Patrijotti drove a negative appeal and their number of posts even superseded that of one of the main parties PN, but since they enjoyed low support their number of engagements was highest.

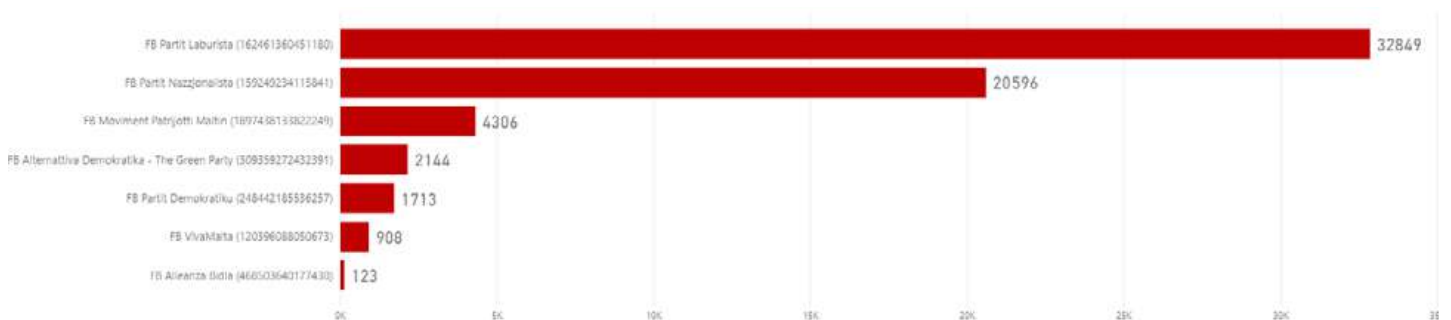
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

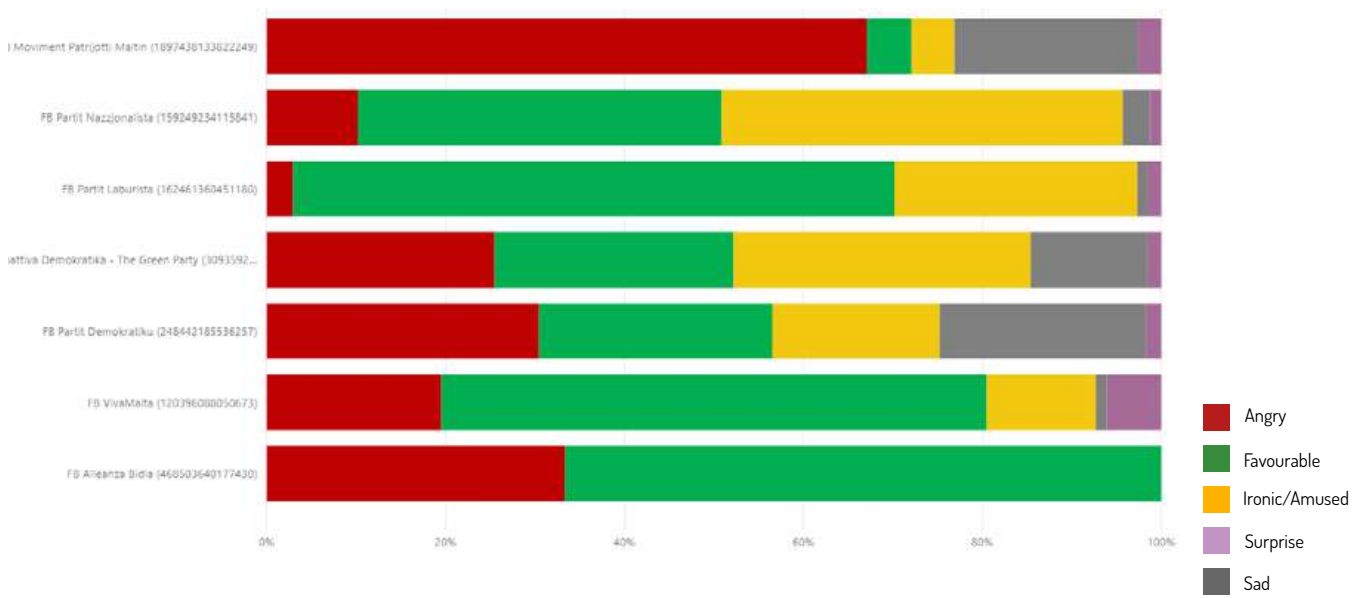


\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement



### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# NETHERLANDS

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Membership: **Founder Country 1958**

European area: **Western Europe**

Population: **16,900,726**

Number of MEPs: **26**

Election day: **May 23, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The Dutch 2019 EP election campaign

Election campaigns in the Netherlands are low-budget campaigns because they can rely on free publicity. At least 80% of the voters follow political news through public and commercial TV, national and regional newspapers and to a lesser degree through social media. Especially for lower educated voters TV is the foremost important medium.

Especially the campaign for the European Parliament on May 23rd 2019 was a low-budget campaign because parties had to invest also in the campaign for the Provincial elections of March 20th 2019. The latter elections have evolved into mid-term elections because members of the First House in the Dutch bicameral legislative system are elected indirectly by elected provincial candidates.

A content analysis of media coverage shows that Dutch media closely followed international media in their attention for the school strike movement initiated by Greta Thunberg in Sweden and for the Yellow Vests movement that originated in France. Measures to reduce climate change, and the social security costs of such measures – higher energy bill, expensive electric cars – became the most emphasized issues in the election campaign for the Provincial elections. Table 1 shows that these two issues became also the two issues that voters mentioned most frequently as issues on which their vote was based – in line with the theories of agenda setting and priming.

Forum voor Democratie with Thierry Baudet as its electoral leader managed to become the largest party from scratch with its position that measures to prevent climate change would result from hysteria because their effects would be entirely speculative. On a survey question about what should be done with respect to climate change a quarter of the voters answered that no measures should be taken, and within this group FvD and PVV – the anti-EU anti-immigration party headed by Geert Wilders – obtained a majority of the votes. The ecologist party GroenLinks could win voters among the quarter of Dutch voters who want the Netherlands to take immediate measures to reduce climate change. Slightly more than half of the voters answered however that the EU should take the lead in taking measures. After the EU elections any Dutch voters answered that their vote was based on their issue position on the EU.

In previous EU-related elections of 2014 and 2016 voters did not base their vote on how the EU should support the Dutch because Dutch parties and Dutch media did not ‘prime’ these issues. They based their vote on whether the Dutch should support the EU. After all the news on disagreement about Brexit, voters in 2019 became less Eurosceptic, simply because their support for staying in the eurozone and the EU increased.

The analyzed campaign materials on the EEMC-website show clearly that three parties launched a very negative anti-EU campaign nevertheless: PVV, SP and FvD. FvD managed to get 3 seats in the European Parliament, but did not at all succeed in becoming the largest party once again. PVV and SP lost all their seats (4 respectively 2 out of the 26 Dutch seats). The coded materials on the EEMC-website show that the SP tried to prevent this loss with an extremely negative and personalized campaign targeted against a pie-eating parody “Hans Brusselmans” of Frans Timmermans who even drops his pants. The coded campaign materials show also that the PVV tried to prevent the loss with a new 1-page party program that did no longer require leaving the euro but instead combatting the waste of “Dutch euros” elsewhere in Europe. They also show Geert Wilders on a variety of photos in campaign meetings with “hero” Matteo Salvini from the ENF – who declared to want to get rid of the 3% government budget deficit norm and the 60% state debt norm for spending “Dutch euros”. Dutch media criticized the SP campaign, while neglecting the PVV-campaign.

The analyzed Dutch campaign materials on the EEMC-website show that the other parties hardly tuned in to the less Eurosceptic climate. Not a single party claimed that a majority of the Dutch expects that the EU take the lead in combatting global warming, and in a stronger foreign policy, for example towards Russia. The PvdA did so most strongly in the last week of the campaign, after having started the campaign with portraying its EU lead candidate Frans Timmermans as a nice guy in various “social” discussions with EU citizens and especially with Dutch voters, presumably to prevent that the debate would shift again from climate change to a higher energy bill and expensive electric cars for Dutch citizens. The PvdA became the unexpected winner of the EP elections (from 2 to 6 seats). All in all the campaign mobilized more voters than previous EU election campaigns. Turnout increased from 37% to 42%.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

 Total contents  
225

 Social contents  
207

 Poster and press  
13

 Commercials  
5

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV)	50	2	-	0
Socialistische Partij (SP)	42	1	1	0
Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA)	37	1	2	6
Christen Democratisch Appel (CDA)	25	7	-	4
GroenLinks	23	-	1	3
Voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD)	15	2	-	4
Forum voor Democratie (FvD)	15	-	1	3

Dutch election campaigns are low-cost campaigns. They rely on free publicity (newspapers, TV). Especially the EP election campaign, just two months after the Provincial elections (March 20th), was a low-budget campaign. [[Background: Provincial delegates elect the First House of the Dutch Parliament. Government parties lost less than expected in these semi-mid-term elections. FvD became the largest party from scratch.]]

As compared to the 2017 national elections the number of TV-commercials was low. None of the 7 selected parties placed advertisements in De Telegraaf or de Volkskrant (D66 did, however). Most parties campaigned with one poster on municipal billboards, often with the name of the party and a photo of the EP lead candidate. FvD showed its lead EP candidate Eppink together with its national leader Baudet. CDA had different posters with photo's for each EP-candidate in his/her province. PVV offered

two posters: one with Geert Wilders demanding the Netherlands back to us, and one textual poster demanding Nexit.

Especially the opposition parties SP and PVV used social media. Typical posts include a video with a party message, often in a social context. Many PVV posts resembled tweets. SP launched a personalized, negative Youtube campaign against PvdA-Spitzenkandidat Frans Timmermans. Both PVV and FvD produced dedicated vidio's to show why the elections would be a merely a battle between VVD and FvD.

PVV and SP, the two parties with most social media posts, lost all their seats in Parliament. The Table below (from NRC Handelsblad, May 20th) lists party expenditures for Facebook advertisements. The two largest spenders on Facebook advertisements, SP and D66, lost all their seats, respectively 1 out of 3 seats.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

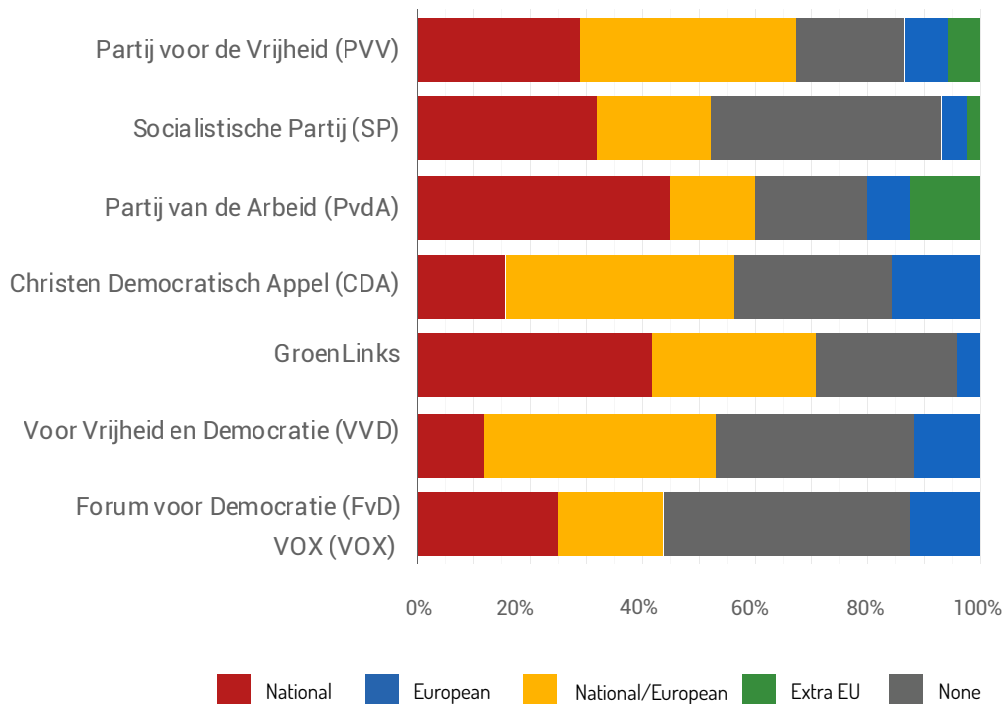
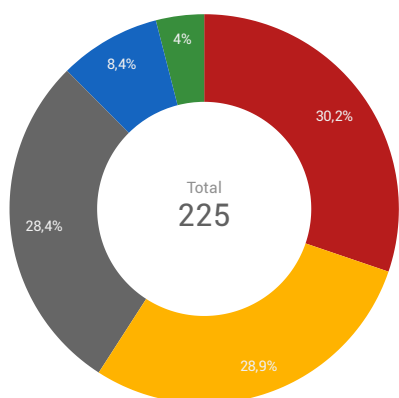
Stories with a national focus (28.4%) focused mainly on Dutch voters, whereas stories about European issues (8.4%) and National/European issues (28.9%) focused mainly on the bureaucratic Brussels elite.

The two major government parties VVD and CDA and the radical right party PVV offer many postings in which they stress the interconnectedness between national and European issues (yellow in the Figure). For the PVV of Geert Wilders this may come as a surprise, but as a matter of fact no other party emphasized so strongly during the campaign the relevance of “heroes” from other European countries: Victor Orban, Marie Le Pen, and especially Matteo Salvini. Since the PVV campaign was completely neglected in newspapers and on TV, no critical questions were

asked either about the apparent discrepancy between the party program of the PVV against “throwing away Dutch euro’s abroad” and Salvini’s neglect of the EU 3% budget deficit norm and the EU 60% state debt norm.

The two parties who engaged themselves in a tv-debate on the day before the elections, FvD, VVD, posted relatively many messages in the category ‘none’ (28.4% overall), which refers to social media postings that ask voters to cast their vote to a party without speaking directly about national issues or about European issues. These posts are presumably targeted at voters who doubt between VVD and FvD. The SP did the same, but the PvdA, which was attacked by the SP, neglects the SP.

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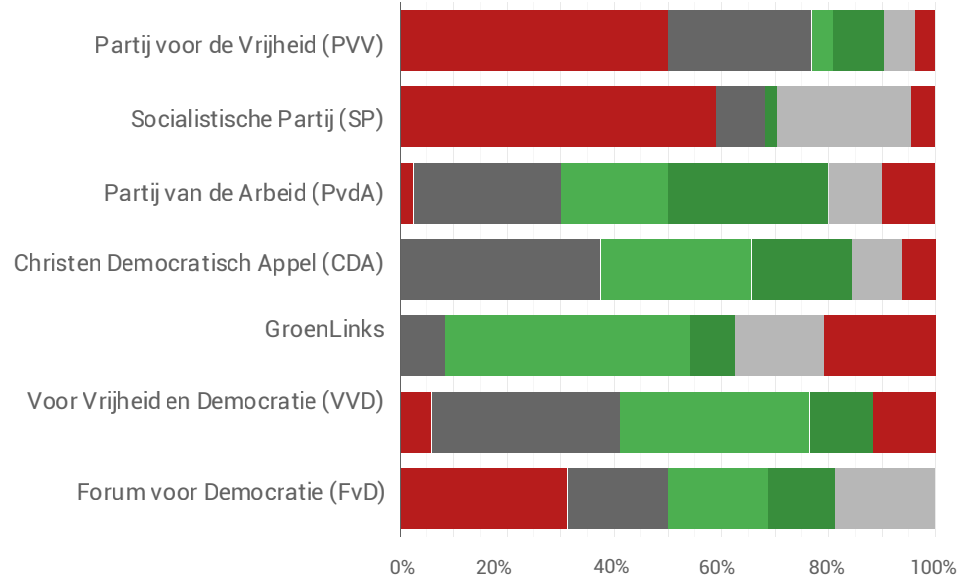
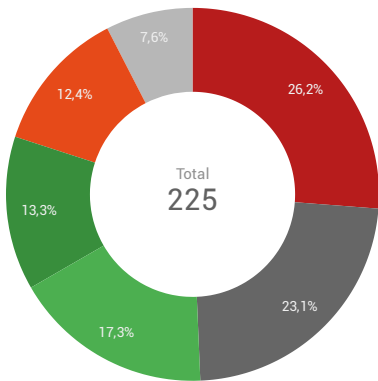
## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Overall the campaign on social media was very negative, primarily because the most active parties on social media – the Socialist Party (SP) and the Freedom Party (PVV) and the new right-wing party Forum voor Democratie (FvD) were very negative. The overwhelming majority of these negative social postings take a con-position on the pro-con globalization dimension (anti-immigrants, anti-Islam, anti-EU, anti-climate change measures (the SP was however silent on the latter)).

GroenLinks (ecologists), PvdA (Labour party, social-democrats) and CDA (Christian-democrats) posted a majority of positive messages. The Labour Party opted for a campaign centered around EP Spitzenkandidat Frans Timmermans, with much attention for his ability to speak to many different people from different classes. During the last week attention shifted towards the role of the EU in solving issues like climate change, migration and social welfare. Remarkably GroenLinks divided its attention

between very different topics, although their EP-candidate Bas Eijckhout was also one of the two EU lead candidates for the Greens. Even Bas Eijckhout himself did not focus strictly on

climate change, but addressed a variety of other topics also, e.g. the refusal of Eastern European countries, most notably Hungary, to take refugees.

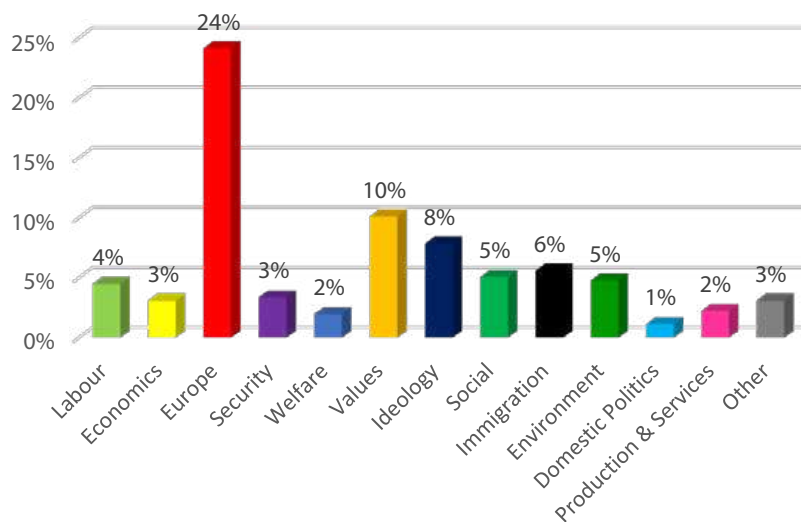


Legend: Strongly positive (dark green), Positive (light green), Neutral (grey), Negative (red), Strongly negative (dark red), Not represented (black)

### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Social media messages on Europe did not deal with very concrete topics, but rather with European institutions in general. National identity was one most often expressed values. A relatively large amount of social media messages were based on an either an explicit or an implicit leftist stance, for example towards top salaries paid in Brussels. The relatively high attention for the environment, especially for climate change prevention measures, and immigration

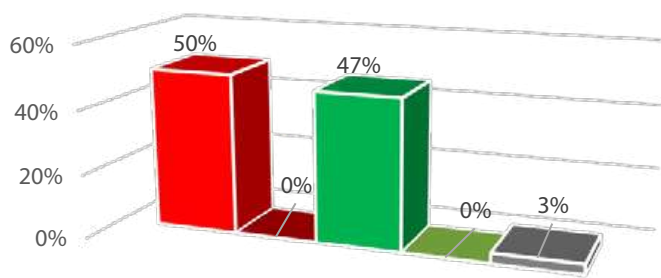
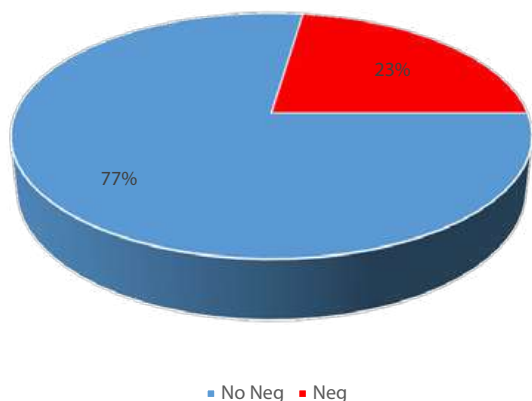
is accompanied with a relatively high attention for social issues and labour issues: who will pay the bill? The attention for the economy (3%), products and services (2%) and welfare (2%) was relatively low, which signals that the financial crisis of 2007-2008 and the subsequent euro crisis (2010-2012) did not play a major role anymore.



\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

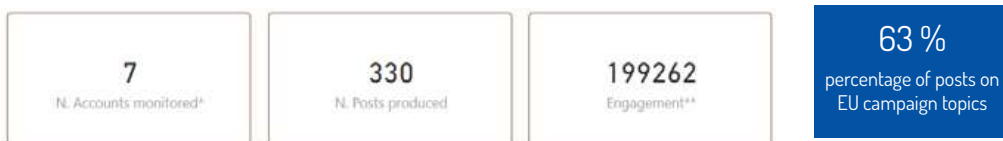
The co-occurrence of negative comments targeted at EU institutions and negative comments targeted at national political parties is for a large part due to the criticisms on Dutch political party representatives in Brussels, e.g. PvdA lead EP-candidate Frans Timmermans. The Socialist Party (SP) is the source of the most negative comments, both on the EU and on Frans Timmermans. Almost no negative comments are targeted at other political actors.



- Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Inst. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

196

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

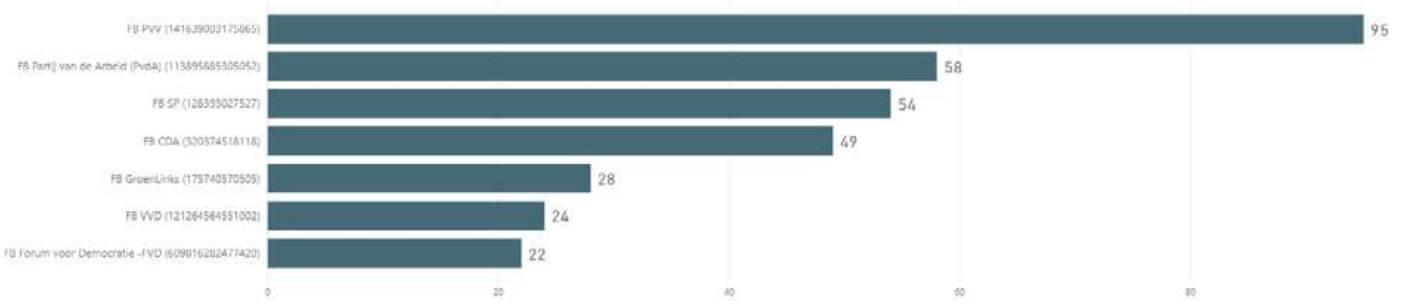


The popularity of posts is not linearly related to the amount of posts. The right-wing party PVV was almost completely neglected in newspapers and on television, with a lack of likes as a result. Television and newspapers now directed their attention to Forum voor Democratie. FvD broadened the attention of right-wing parties for immigration and Europe with attention for climate change measures in addition. FvD-posts went viral more often than those of other parties. Facebook posts by Forum voor Democratie were popular, and moreover Facebook reactions to Forum voor Democratie were remarkably favourable (as can be seen from the width of the green bar for Forum voor Democratie). One explanation would be that especially enthusiast adherents of FvD placed reactions. The FvD is a member party whose number of

members rose so sharply in 2018/2019 that the FvD now has more members than the country's largest governing party, the VVD. Another explanation would be the innovative style and unexpected content of some of the FvD postings, for example in a Facebook video in which FvD-leader kindly hands over a pile of books written by him to an equally friendly smiling VVD prime-minister Mark Rutte, while asking him to read them prior to the television debate on the evening before the elections. The Socialist Party SP, who launched a highly negative, personalized campaign against PvdA lead candidate Frans Timmermans, received relatively the smallest amount of favourable reactions. Next to FvD, PvdA received the largest share of favourable reactions (second largest green bar).



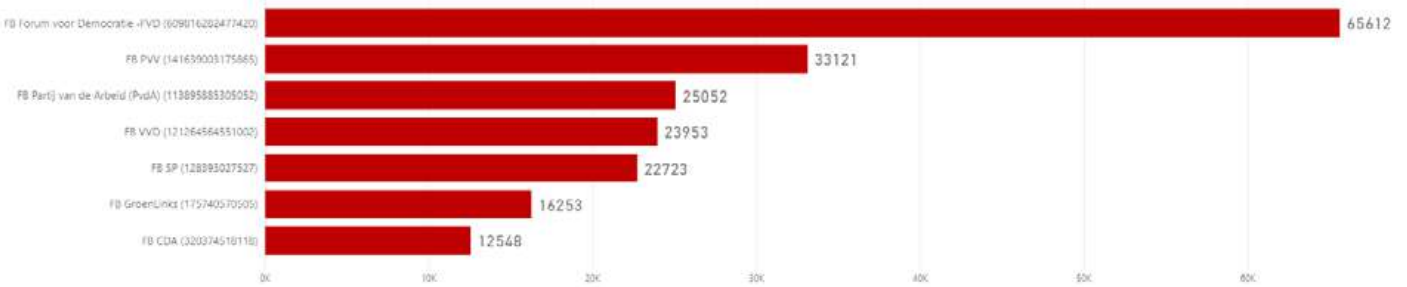
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

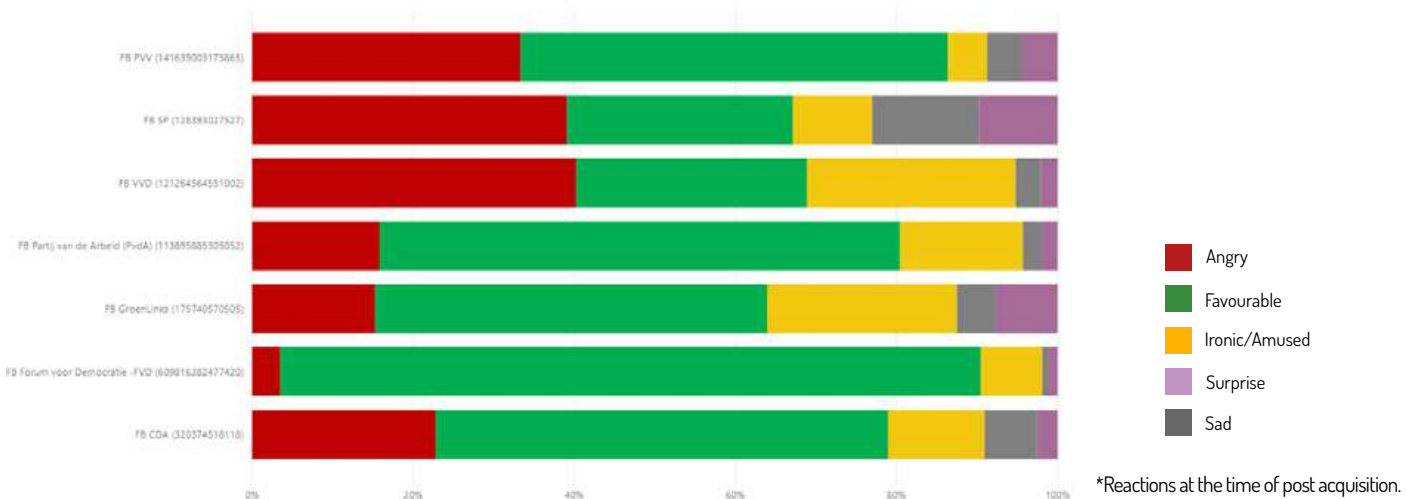
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.

197





# POLAND

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Membership: **2004**

European area: **Eastern Europe**

Population: **38,005,614**

Number of MEPs: **51**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

General rules of the European electoral campaign in your nations  
The rules and procedure of filling candidacies, as well as the conditions of the validity of the elections to the European Parliament in Poland is regulated by the Election Code. The elections are equal, direct, proportional, and secret and are held in election time established in line with the requirements of the legal framework of the European Union.

The campaign started on the day when the ordinance of the election was publicly announced and ends 24 hours before the election day (the election silence time). The number of seats that the committees are entitled to is determined in line with D'Hondt's and Hare'a-Niemeyer's systems. Electoral threshold is established on 5% in country scale.

In line with the Election Code the election committee has the right to free of charge distribution of election programs (broadcast) in public radio and television, both in country-wide and regional stations.

During the election campaign to the European Parliament in 2019, Law and Justice (PiS) was the largest party in the Polish Sejm (self-governing since 2015 – the majority government). The largest opposition party (strongly in conflict with Law and Justice) was the Civic Platform (forming the coalition government together with the Polish People's Party in 2007-2015, that is for 2 terms).

For the purposes of the election campaign to the European Parliament, the political parties in opposition (present in the Sejm currently and in the past) created (in February 2019), for the first time since 1989, such a politically broad, strongly pro-European European Coalition (KE), which was joined by the following parties: Civic Platform (PO), Polish People's Party (PSL), Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), Modern (N) and Green. The Kukiz'15 group joined the election on its own.

As a result of the elections to the European Parliament, the greatest number (27 seats) was awarded to Law and Justice (45.38% of votes), the second position and 22 seats was taken by European Coalition (38.47% of votes) and three seats was obtained by pro-European Wiosna of Robert Biedroń (Spring; 6.06% of votes, 3 seats), formed just before the European Parliament elections. The Kukiz'15 group (describing itself as an anti-system but pro-European group) was left outside the electoral threshold (it obtained 3.69% of votes).

The electoral campaign was also attended by a coalition of right-wing and Euro-sceptical parties, made before the elections to the European Parliament, the Confederation Korwin – Braun – Liroy – the Nationals (as a result of the election without seats, it obtained

4.55% of votes).

Public opinion in Poland strongly advocates membership in the European Union (turnout in the elections to the European Parliament was 45.68%). According to the nationwide surveys (CBOS, April 2019) over 90% of citizens surveyed have a positive attitude towards Poland's membership in the European Union. 78% of respondents believe that Poland's presence in the EU brings Poland more profits than losses.

The European election campaign in Poland was the only campaign that took place in Spring 2019, but the upcoming national parliamentary election in Autumn 2019 served as the political context for the European campaign.

The three months of election campaign abounded in many important and scandalous political events. One the one hand, the governing party L&J introduced multipoint, socially attractive election program. On the other hand, the opposition parties, as well as independent press titles and private TVs revealed many facts, cases and suspicions, that were directed against the governing party and aimed to discredit or delegitimize the party L&J and its candidates.

In total, seven parties prepared 694 materials, which means that on every day of the campaign observed – about 25 materials have been published. Surprisingly, the most active committee, that is Koalicja Europejska – Platforma Obywatelska (EK-CP), in terms of the number of materials published (180), turned out to be one the second position on national political scene, while the winning party Prawo i Sprawiedliwość prepared 114 materials, but still they are able to take the first position. Consequently, it can be concluded that communication exercised by social platform is not enough to win the political election, or that not only the quantity but also the quality and relevance of political message matter.

As one of the most innovative promotional material the poster prepared by Koalicja Europejska – Platforma Obywatelska can be considered. The commercial presents 'personalized Europe' (woman that speaks on behalf of Europe) belonged to the most innovative and convincing.

When summing up the general results it can be concluded that the European election 2019' in Poland has to be described as second order election, due to domestic and national issues that dominated political communication. The main topics that were most widely presented and discussed in the campaign regarded mainly socio-economic issues, the European topics were also noticed, but they were communicated on more or less general level, without focusing on any specific European problems.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

 Total contents  
694

 Social contents  
634

 Poster and press  
28

 Commercials  
32

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Koalicja Europejska (KE) - Platforma Obywatelska (PO)	171	1	8	0
Kukiz'15 (Kukiz'15)	114	1	1	0
Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS)	93	10	11	26
Wiosna Roberta Biedronia (Wiosna)	106	1	-	3
Koalicja Europejska (KE) - Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (SLD)	70	-	-	0
Koalicja Europejska (KE) - Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL)	39	-	2	0
Koalicja Europejska (KE) - Nowoczesna (.N)	31	-	-	0
Platforma Obywatelska (PO)	Not monitored	11	2	0
Nowoczesna (.N)	Not monitored	-	-	0
Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL)	Not monitored	4	-	0
Koalicja Europejska (KE)	Not monitored	1	4	22
Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (SLD)	Not monitored	3	-	0

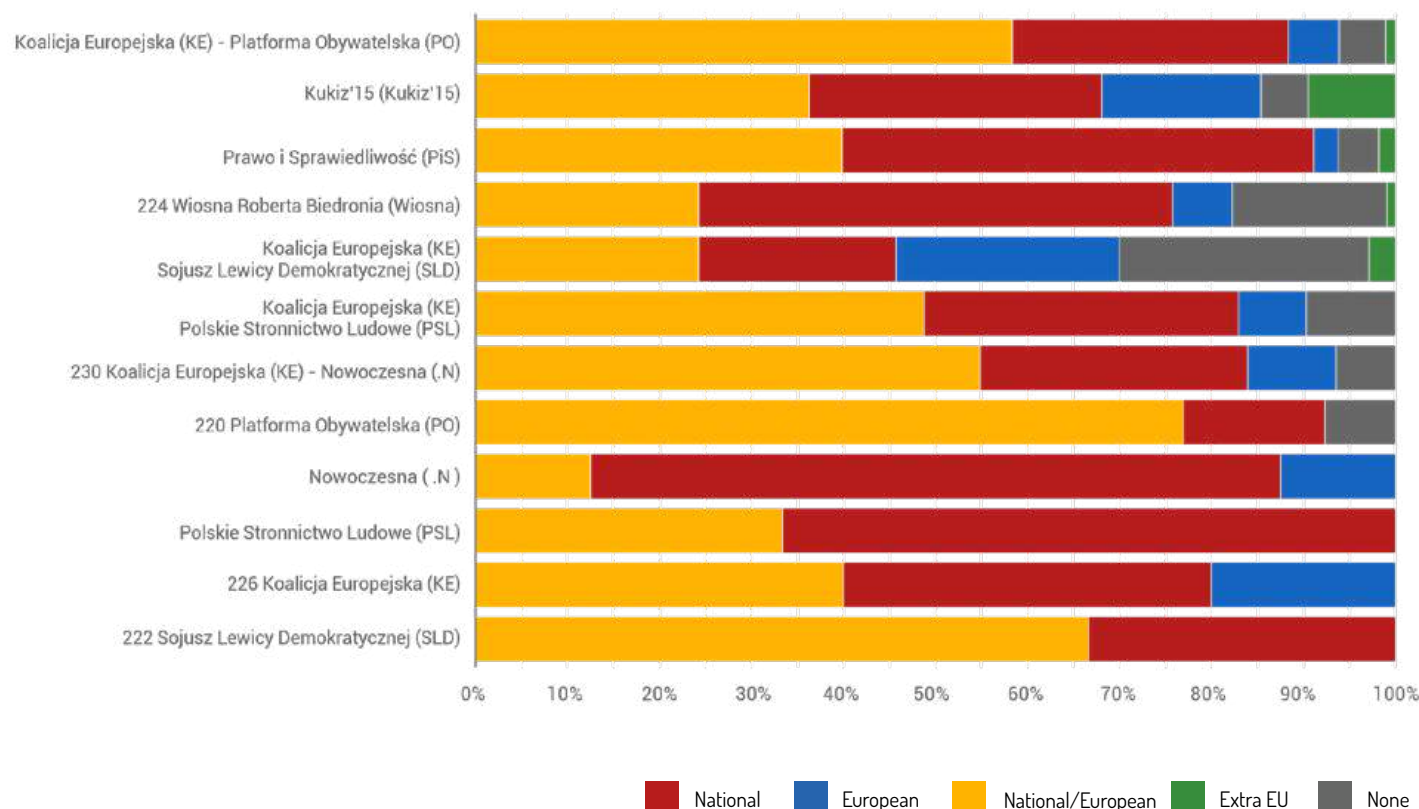
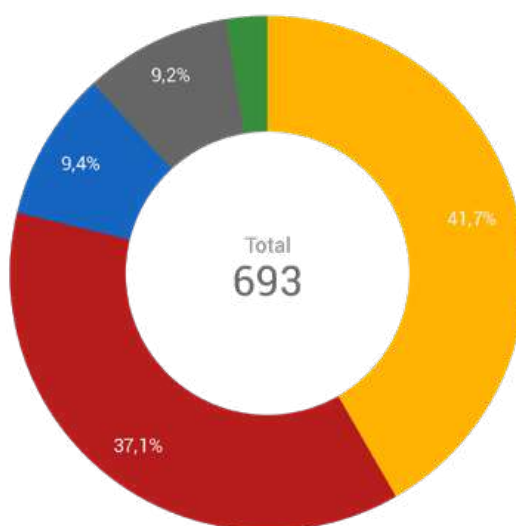
The content uploaded by Polish team includes 634 social items, 32 commercials, 28 posters what makes in total the number of 694 content items coded. We did not noticed any paid press material published during election campaign, although we observed both opinion leading (two titles) and tabloid (also two titles) press. There are two political parties leading in terms of the quantity of publishing campaign materials, which is Platforma Obywatelska (PO, Civic Platform; 22 seats) forming European Coalition (with three other parties; PO) and Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS, Law & Justice; the proper number is 27 seats). Civic Platform prepared in total 193 materials and

Law & Justice presented 140 items. The Facebook posts were the most numerous and available elections materials, however also the representation of posters is taken into account. The observed parties were not very active in terms of producing and publishing the political commercials, most of them were uploaded and coded in the Platform Europe. The two most active political parties turned out also the most successful political groups in terms of Parliamentary seats taken over. However, also the political groups: Wiosna (107 items) and Kukiz'15 was quite engaged (116 items) although Kukiz'15 failed to enter the EP.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The national/European dimension was the most popular context applied in case of election materials in Poland, (41,7%), but it is only slightly more frequently used than the national dimension (37,1%). The typical European dimension was used only in case of 9,4% of items, and almost the same number of materials included none of them (the extra EU dimension is almost not represented). As the most interested in European issues the party: Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (being a part of European Coalition), European Coalition as such, and Kukiz'15 should be considered, however in case of Kukiz'15 there is more probable that the Euro-sceptic dimension was applied. The most successful,

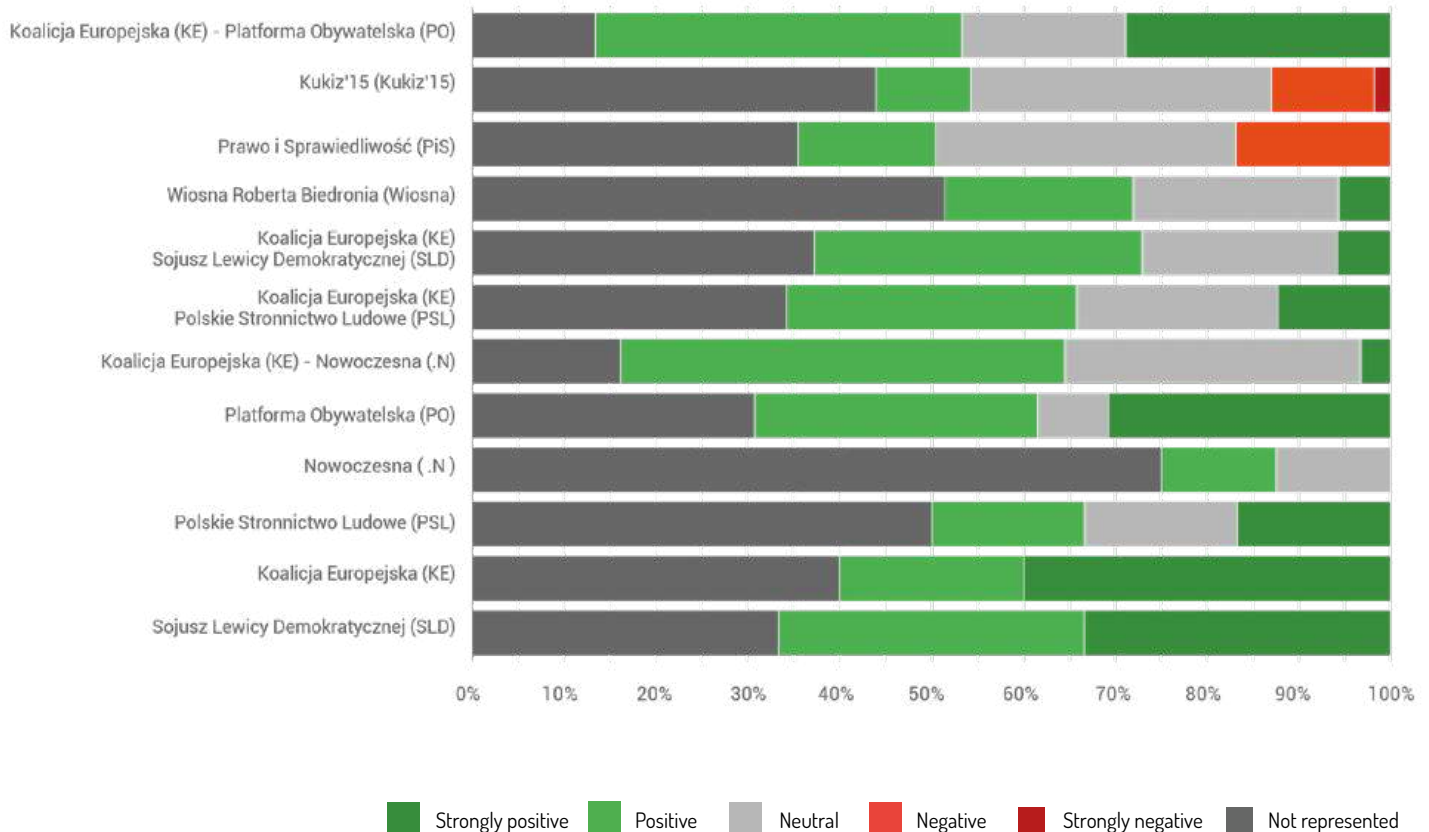
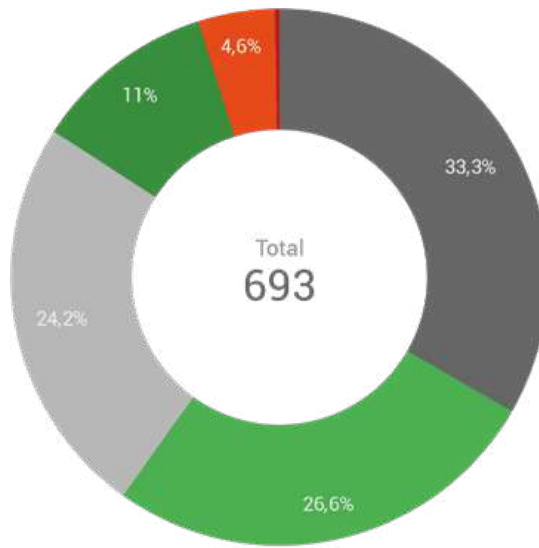
governing party - Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law & Justice) at the most often abided by national dimension, and the European one was only of a margin meaning in the election activity. Platforma Obywatelska (both in European Coalition and as independent party at the most often combined the European and national dimension, while Nowoczesna was the most national in its message (although generally it is a pro-European party). Eventually however, the strategy of the governing party PiS that was most skillful when joining national and European dimension turned out to be most effective.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

In the most coded cases Europe turned out not be represented at all (33,3%), However, when summing up the positive (26,6%) and strongly positive (11%) representations - the election campaign can be considered rather as pro-European (36,6% in total) than Eurosceptic (4,6% negative without strongly negative representations). The neutral picture of Europe was present in 24,2% of cases. Platforma Obywatelska (center-liberal) and

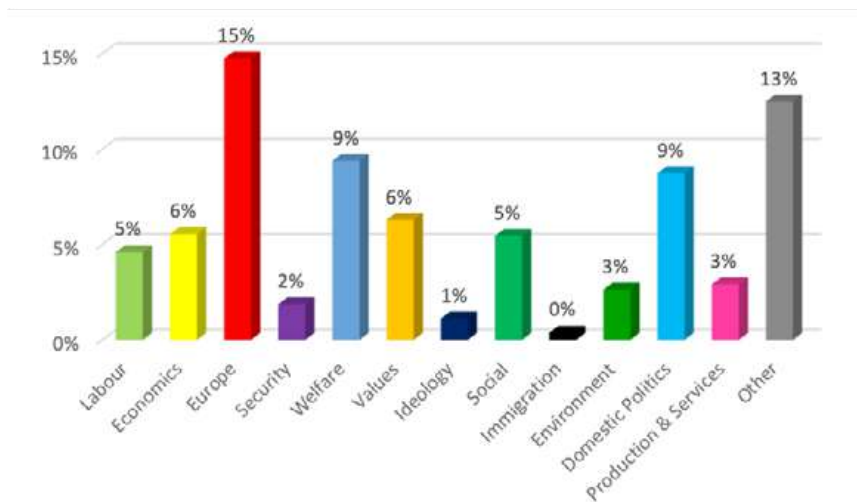
Nowoczesna (liberal) proved to be the most pro-European (opposition) political parties, while Kukiz'15 (right-wing) and Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (right-wing, governing) were the parties that used Euro-sceptic or even anti-European message at the most often. At the same time, governing party Prawo i Sprawiedliwość belong to those political groups that prepared the message where Europe was not represented or described neutrally.





## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The most popular topic of the election campaign was Europe as such (15%), but domestic politics (9%), including also welfare (9%), economic (6%), labour (5%) and social (5%) issues strongly impacted the election message. In this picture the domination of socio-economic national topics and marginalization of ideology or values can be noticed. The references to the European issues are not defined by the specific topic, instead Europe is communicated as general background of national political competition.

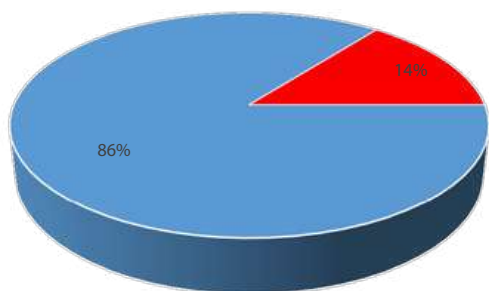


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

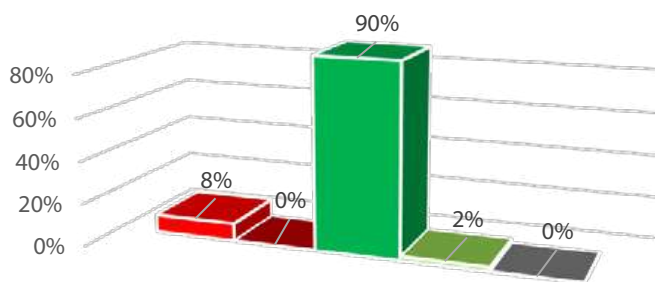
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

204

The marginal share of the negative message (14%) and the subject of this message, that is the national institutions or parties (90%), makes the picture of the campaign is very clear in this respect. The campaign was generally positive and national, which means that the EU institutions, like European Commission or the other EU agendas and its policies, were not the target of the open critic or attacks.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



- Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Inst. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

7  
N. Accounts monitored\*

1036  
N. Posts produced

522074  
Engagement\*\*

61,2%  
percentage of posts on  
EU campaign topics

Kukiz'15 was the most active political group when using Facebook as social platform is considered (271). The same group takes the second place in terms of engagement evoked by this activity. Taking into account that Kukiz'15 did not take any seat EP, it can be

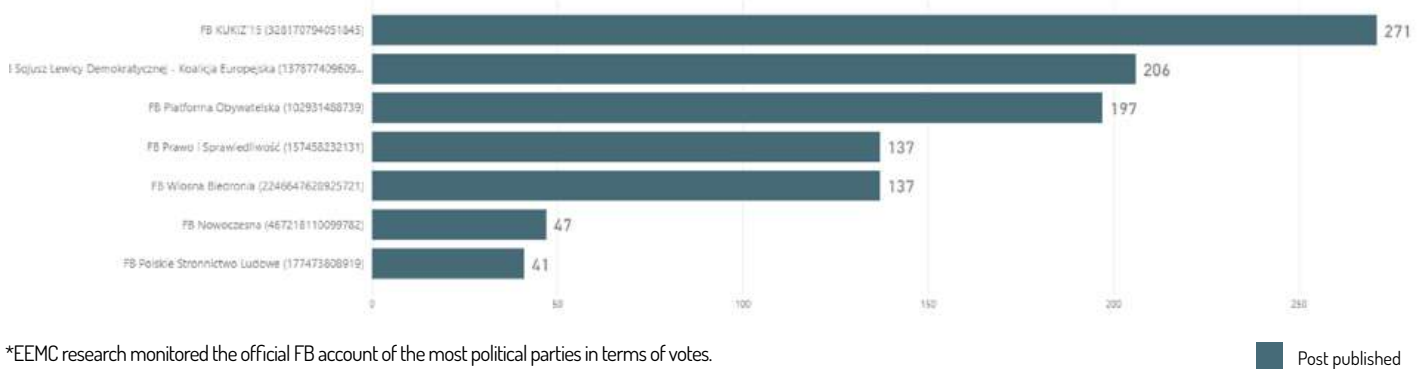
concluded that communication exercised by social platform is not enough to win the political election, or that not only the quantity but also the quality and relevance of political message matter. Similarly, the widest engagement evoked by Platforma



Obywatelska (191189) allowed this party to take 22 seats, but still, it did not ensure the party with the best election result - 26 seats for Prawo i Sprawiedliwość. This winning party got the medium scores on Facebook, but they were very active in direct campaigning, especially in small towns and villages, where the electorates of this party were reached. The most popular mood of the message communicated on social platform was: 'favourable' or 'Ironic/amused', which means that the campaign was rather positive in its tone. It is also in accordance

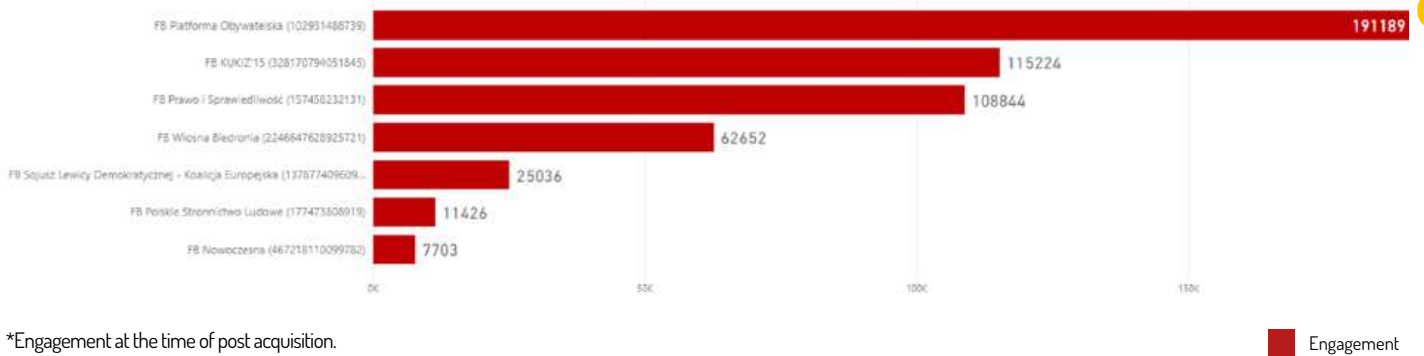
with the data of negative campaign with marginal score of negative message. The winning party Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, but also Wiosna and Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (left-wing parties) applied the favourable or ironic/amused message at the most often and got their representation in EP. The greatest share of 'angry' mood is present in case of Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe, Nowoczesna, and Kukiz'15, but they cannot boast of the best election results.

### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



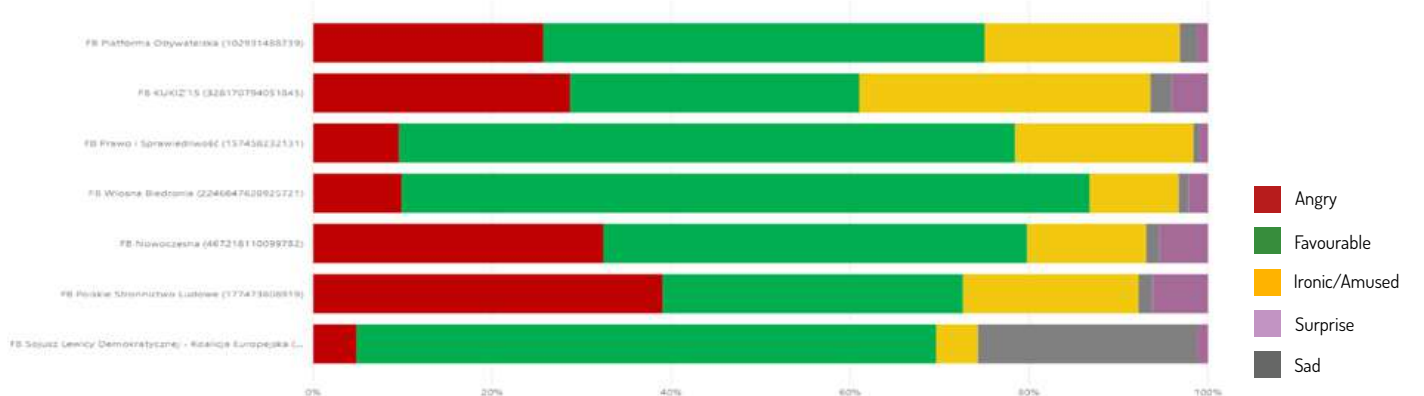
\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# PORTUGAL

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Membership: 1986

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **10,374,822**

Number of MEPs: 21

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

In Portugal, all Portuguese citizens over 17 years of age are officially and automatically inscribed into the electoral registration database (Article no. 3, decree no. 13/99 of 22 March), with an active voting capacity (Article no. 1, LEAR no. 14/79 of 16 May) in the 2019 European Elections. Foreigners who hold equal political rights can also vote as a civic right.

Despite voting as a right and civic duty being contemplated in article no. 49 of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, the abstention rate continues to increase. In these European Elections, the abstention rate reached 68.6%, surpassing that of 66.1% of the previous elections held in 2014, according to data collected by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Currently, the Socialist Party (PS) governs Portugal in a parliamentary alliance with the Left Party (BE) and the Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU), with socialist António Costa as Prime Minister. This year Portugal will hold legislative elections to elect a new Government and Parliament for the next four years. The national political situation is agitated for this reason, with these European Elections being considered as the primaries for the Legislative Elections of October 2019.

In the months that preceded the 2019 European Elections, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) suffered some internal unrest, resulting in the creation of two new political parties – the Enough and Alliance parties – led by André Ventura and Santana Lopes, two ex-PSD militants.

Despite approval by the Constitutional Court of the candidacy of Enough as a political party, this approval was not published in time for the 2019 European Elections either by the Official Gazette of the Republic nor the National Electoral Commission. Hence, Enough joined the BASTA (Enough) coalition with the Democracy 21 movement (also not recognized as a political party), the People's Monarchist Party and the Citizenship and Christian Democracy Party, thus being allowed to run in the European Elections. Today, the Enough party is completely legalized as a Portuguese political party.

In the pre-campaign electoral period, Portugal had 23 political parties inscribed in the National Electoral Commission, among which 19 ran in the European Elections. Among a total of 17 candidacies to the European Parliament, two were coalitions, namely that of the recently-created Enough Coalition and the already-existing Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU), to which the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) and the Ecologist Party/the Greens (PEV) belong.

According to Parliamentary Electoral Law (LEAR no. 14/79 of 16 May), electoral propaganda is understood as “all activity

which seeks to directly or indirectly promote candidacies”. Bearing in mind that freedom of expression is an inalienable right sustained by the Constitution (Article no. 37), such activity, including that of political parties, is “free and should be developed within or externally to the campaign periods’ (Article no. 61), independently of being of an electoral character or not.

The exception to the freedom of political party propaganda is contemplated in clauses 2 and 3 of Article no. 4 of Decree 97/88 and in Article no. 66 of LEAR, according to which municipal organs should anticipate, during electoral campaign periods, the allocation of specific spaces for the fixing of political propaganda and the creation of political events; moreover, the National Electoral Commission regulates political advertising in the media during this timeframe (for this study, we considered such media as means of diffusion for commercial purposes). As such, public and private spaces are made available to Portuguese political parties for the dissemination of campaign material, namely posters/billboards, broadcasting time on national closed or open-captioned television channels, both public and private, as well as national radio. Paid advertisement in the press is prohibited, with the exception of ads concerning select events, where only the party logo may be disseminated alongside concrete information on the event, without any allusions to ideological intentions (LEAR Article no. 10).

The official campaign period for the 2019 European Elections ranged from 13 to 24 May, with a ban on ideological content dissemination on the 25th – the day of reflection – and 26th – the day of the elections.

The most active parties in the electoral campaign were the Socialist Party (PS), the Left Party (BE), the Democratic United Coalition (CDU), and the Social Democratic Party (PSD). The parties which shared the most content on the European Elections through Facebook and invested most heavily in billboards and broadcasting time were the Left Party (BE) and the Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU). In the case of the Left Party (BE), this effort resulted in the doubling of votes and subsequent doubling of MPs elected to the European Parliament. However, in the case of the Democratic United Coalition, this effort bore no positive repercussion on the number of MPs elected, due to the latter being reduced by half in the 2019 European Elections.

The fact that the People-Animals-Nature Party (PAN) managed to elect its first European MP should be emphasized.

Also, the recently created Alliance Party obtained 1.86% of votes. Throughout the campaign, the National Renovator Party (PNR) maintained an essentially nationalist - but federalist

- discourse, obtaining 0.49% of the votes, rising slightly in comparison to its performance in the last European elections.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Coligação Democrática Unitária (CDU)	255	8	7	2
Partido Social Democrata (PSD)	205	2	4	6
Partido Socialista (PS)	200	4	6	9
Bloco de Esquerda (BE)	161	6	6	2
Centro Democrático Social-Partido Popular (CDS)	164	1	1	1
Partido Nacional Renovador (PNR)	101	1	7	0
(BASTA) - PP	77	-	9	0
Iniciativa Liberal (IL)	Not monitored	7	5	0
(PCTP/MRPP)	Not monitored	1	5	0
Movimento Alternativa Socialista (MAS)	Not monitored	1	1	0
Aliança (A)	Not monitored	5	5	0
Partido Unido dos Reformados e Pensionistas (PURP)	Not monitored	-	2	0
Partido Trabalhista Português (PTP)	Not monitored	1	1	0
Nós, Cidadãos! (NC)	Not monitored	2	-	0
BASTA	Not monitored	2	1	0
Partido Democrático Republicano (PDR)	Not monitored	1	1	0
Pessoas Animais Natureza (PAN)	Not monitored	1	1	1
LIVRE (L)	Not monitored	-	1	0

The Portuguese monitoring team sought to collect campaign material for all political parties running for these European Elections, due to Parliamentary Electoral Law stipulating freedom of propaganda for physical carriers, such as billboards, and dissemination of broadcast time on national radio stations and television channels. Only seven parties were monitored on Facebook: the Socialist Party (PS), the Social Democratic Party (PSD), the CDS-People's Party (CDS-PP), the Left Party (BE), the Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU), the National Renovator Party (PNR) and the Enough Party (Chega), represented in the ballot as the Enough (Basta) Coalition. Posts that did make any reference to either the European Union or European elections, focusing solely

on national politics, were excluded from the monitoring process.

The Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU) and the Left Party (BE) were the parties which shared the highest number of contents concerning the European Elections. The Left Party (BE) was also the party with the largest number of shares on Facebook, followed by the Socialist Party (PS).

This shared content also reflects the voters' engagement with posts from the BE and PS. All the parties running for the 2019 European Elections had both their broadcast time on public and private television, as well as their billboards monitored. The only exception was PURP and Livre, for which it was not possible to find any printed material.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

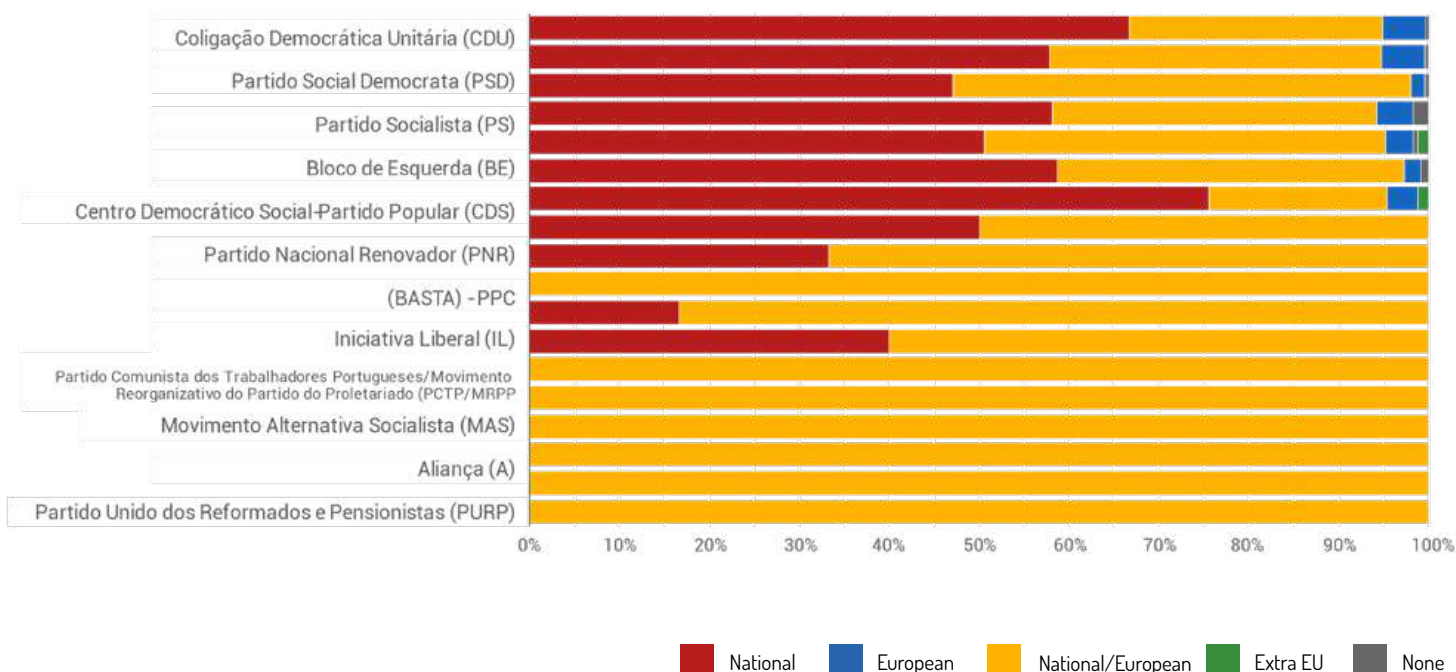
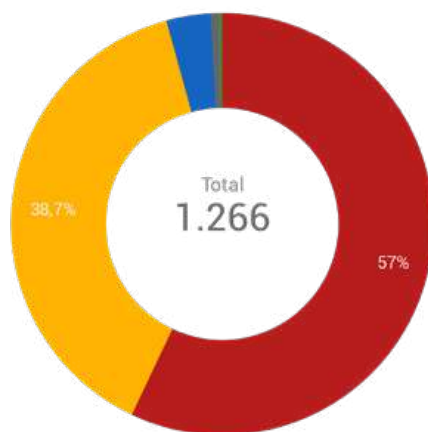
In October 2019, Portugal will return to the ballot boxes. Both the identity of the next Prime Minister as well as the composition of Parliament hinges on the results of this election. The fact that the political parties took advantage of this intense moment of propaganda allowed them to announce some of their policy proposals for national politics and attack, through discourses, the opponents of these and forthcoming elections.

This data becomes tangible in the graph, which indicates that 57% of the topics mentioned in Facebook posts, broadcast time on television channels and billboards are of a national character. More often than not, these topics concerned the national economy,

unemployment, public services, and corruption, serving to criticize the parties forming the previous PSD-CDS government as well as the one currently in power (PS).

In the introductory messages of the electoral program for the European Elections, it was possible to confirm the simultaneous presence of national and European themes, presenting a constructive discursive slant.

The recently-created coalition Enough (BASTA) presented a more exhaustive discourse on internal politics, followed by the Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU), characterized by ambiguous rhetoric on its position in Europe and the European Union.





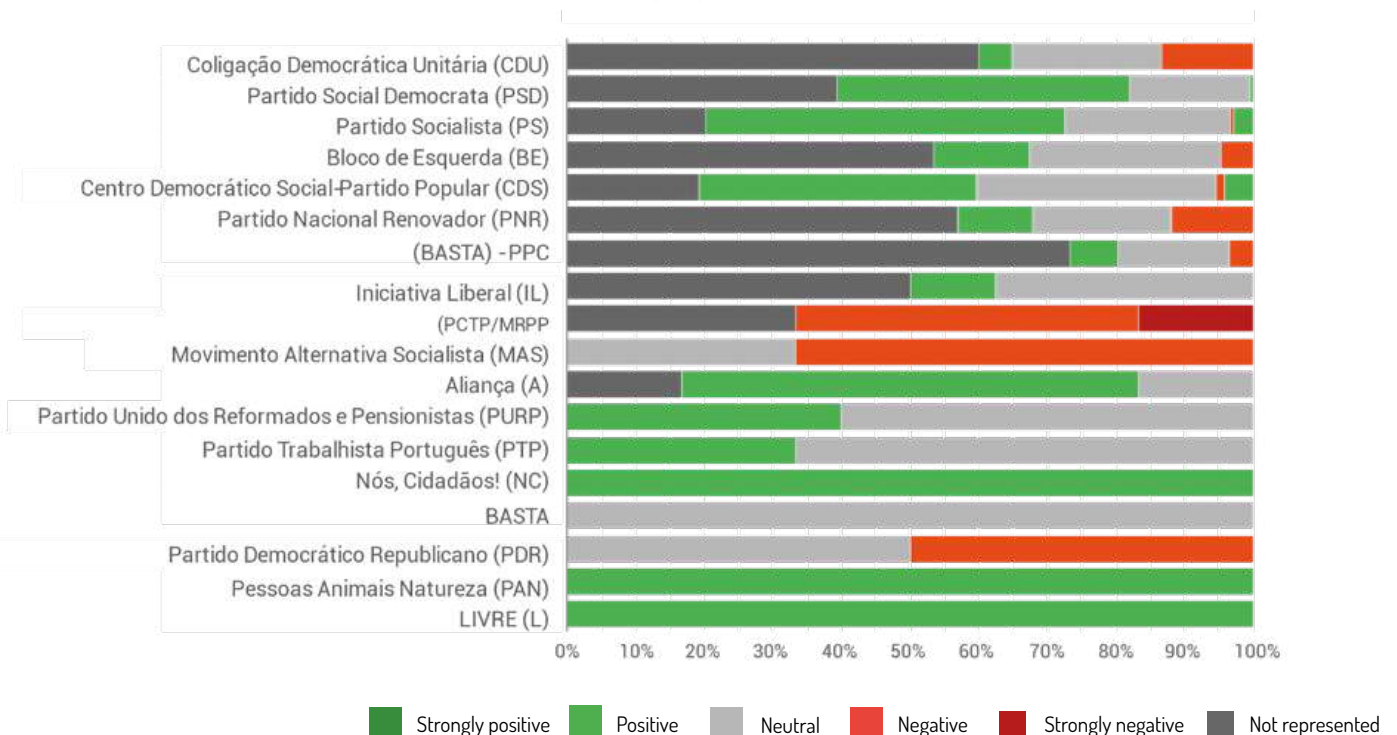
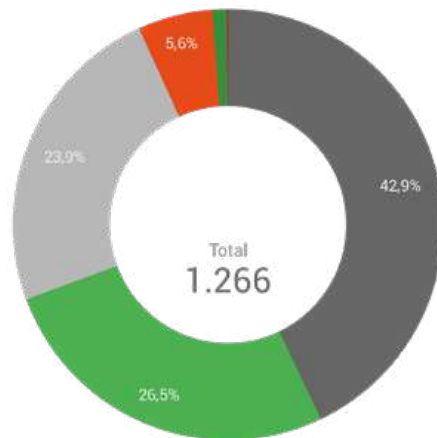
## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

As previously mentioned, we only monitored Facebook posts which had somehow been connected to the European Elections. A hashtag, such as #EleiçõesEuropeias, or a campaign slogan or furthermore an appeal to vote either for a party or for particular candidates of the European Parliament was common. Posts than only mentioned a party, a logo or a national political issue were ignored.

The study indicates that Europe is not represented in 42.9% of codified material, indicating that a significant percentage of video discourse, written text or published images did not reference European content. For example, 73.26% of messages from the Basta (Enough) coalition did not indicate Europe; however, there was an appeal towards voters' mobilization on the part of the main candidate, and propaganda means allowed by Portuguese Electoral Law were used.

26.5% of the codified messages reveal an optimistic character towards Europe and the European Union. Parties such as Alliance (Aliança), Us, Citizens (Nós, Cidadãos), People-Animals-Nature (PAN) and the Free Party (Livre) had a rather high rate of representation, due to the number of collected campaign material being below that of other parties.

On the basis of these considerations, the party with the most positive messages as regards Europe and the European Union was the Socialist Party, reaching 52.4% in this domain, being also the party which earned more votes in these elections in Portugal. 5.6% of negative messages refer to parties of a nationalist character, such as the National Renovator Party (PNR), the Socialist Alternative Movement (MAS) and the PCTP/MRPP.



## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

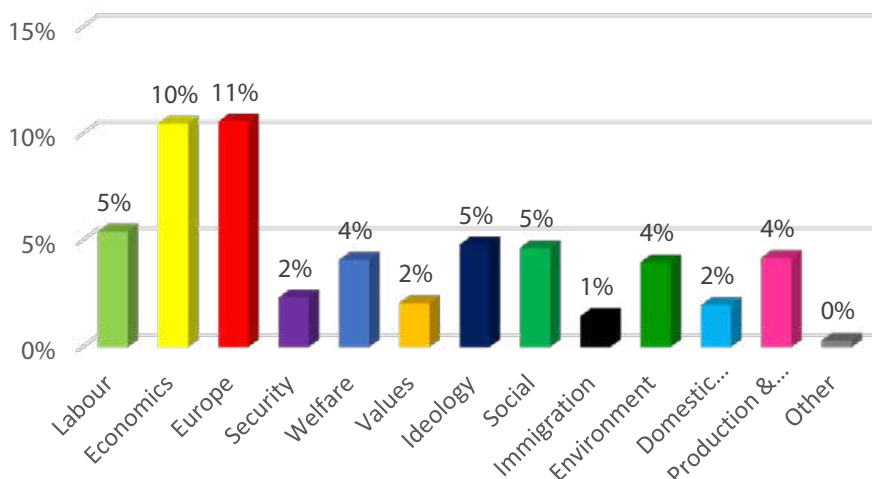
In the disseminated messages, four themes beyond European and ideological issues marked the political agenda of the parties running for the European Elections in Portugal. These topics were as follows: the economy, work, public services and the environment.

The economy is a topic essentially debated by the larger parties, both on the part of the previous (PSD-CDS) as well as current (PS) governments. One of the slogans of the Socialist Party (PS) was

“adding up right”, alluding to the economic crisis of the past years that Portugal managed to surpass only recently.

Work as well as social and environmental issues were on the campaign agenda of parties such as the Left Party (BE) and the Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU).

Values, ideology and anti-immigrant discourse were recurrent in the messages of the National Renovator Party (PNR).

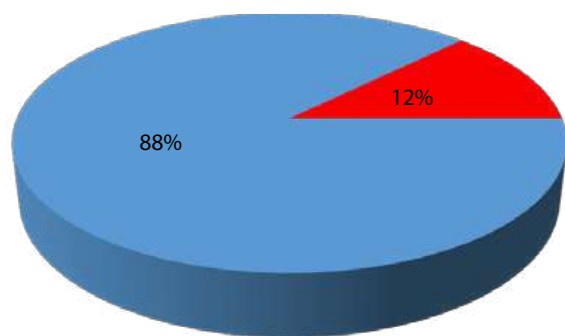


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

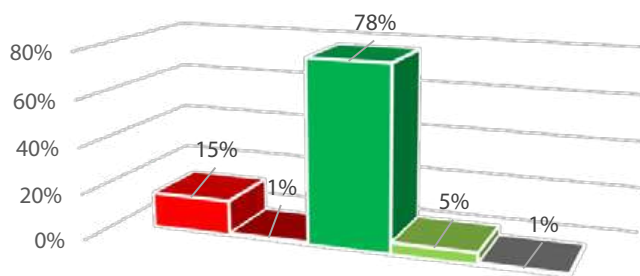
## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

It was previously possible to verify that 57% of the disseminated messages had content of a national nature. The tangible argument for this situation concerns the fact that Portugal will have elections in the near future. This becomes even more evident when one considers 78% of messages with a negative tone attacking national political parties and the government. Clearly, these attacks constitute political positioning strategies for the upcoming legislative elections in October 2019. Such messages are clear in the speeches of candidates Paulo Ranger, from the Social Democratic Party (PSD), and

Nuno Melo, from CDS-People's Party (CDS-PP). The Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU) and the ultra-left PCTP/MRPP accuse European institutions of being responsible for the national economic situation, accounting for 15% of negative messages. The 5% indicated as negative messages in the media refer to the isolated case of the National Renovator Party (PNR), which accused television channels of censorship, thanks to the fact that it was not invited to participate in the first television debates over the European Parliamentary Elections.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Inst. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other



## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



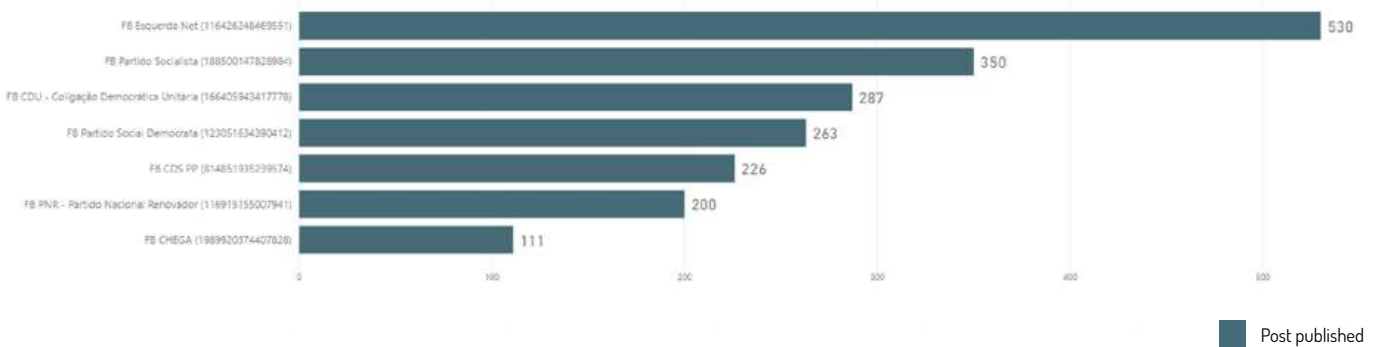
59,1%  
percentage of posts on EU campaign topics

This graph shows not only voters' engagement with the contents shared on Facebook - an important aspect that allows for the monitoring of public opinion - but also reveals that messages with positive engagement tend to reflect positively on the approval rate of voters and subsequent electoral results. For example, the National Renovator Party (PNR) shared contents with more negative messages. Despite the Facebook anger icon also representing agreement with the theme of any particular post, it did not allow for the creation of a more profound relationship of empathy with voters. This may have had some influence in the electoral results, which led the PNR

to only very slightly increase its result by 0.02% compared to previous elections.

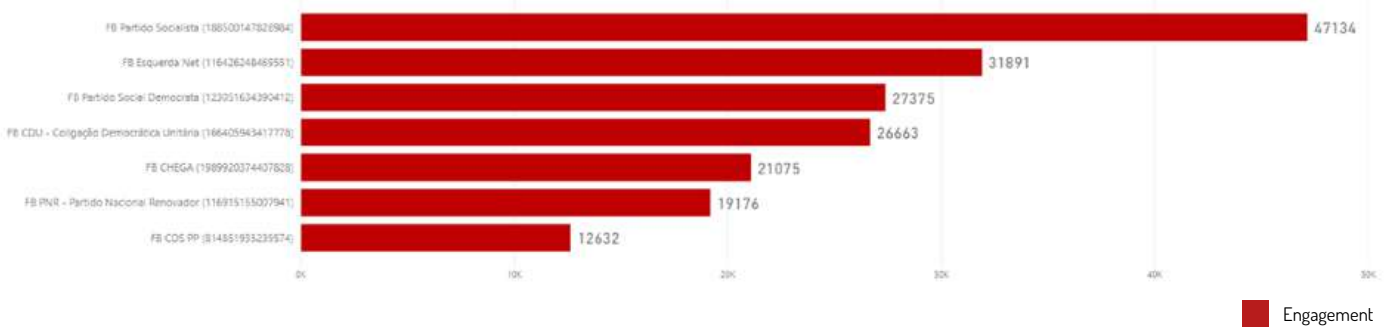
The campaign discourse of the Unitary Democratic Coalition (CDU) did not engage in heavy attacks against the opposition, maintaining itself neutral, but intensive, in its sharing of contents on social networks, and was the party with the highest number of posts with content referring to the European Elections. Curiously, despite this heavy engagement through Facebook, which one would presume to be positively reflected in electoral results, CDU reduced its MPs in the European Parliament by half in the 2019 Elections.

### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



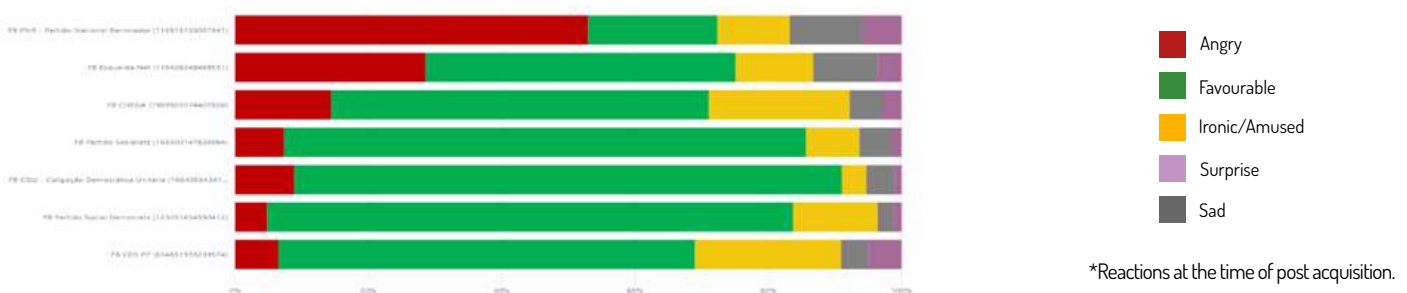
\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# ROMANIA

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Membership: **S2007**

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **10,374,822**

Number of MEPs: **21**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The 2019 EU election campaign in Romania took place in the midst of a political dispute between the President and the opposition over the Referendum for Justice. As a result, the EU election campaign was polarised into two contrasting campaign approaches: anti-corruption and anti-system, meaning anti-PSD and pro-European. The 2019 EU electoral campaign began 30 days prior on 25 April and ended on Saturday, 25 May at 7 pm. All Romanian citizens 18 years of age and over were eligible to vote. The entire territory of Romania constituted one single electoral constituency.

The 2019 elections for the European Parliament were held simultaneously with the Referendum on Justice: matters called by the President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis, following numerous previous amendments to criminal law, particularly to the anti-corruption law.

The media coverage of the EU election campaign by both public and private broadcasters is normally governed by multiple laws and regulations imposed mainly by The Audiovisual Council, which is the national authority in charge of monitoring broadcasters' compliance with laws and regulations. The public radio and TV broadcasters assure media coverage of all the candidates free of charge. In contrast, commercial radio and TV broadcasters charge a fixed fee for media coverage but during the EU election campaign they are constrained to charging the same rate per show or per unit of time for all parties and other entities entitled to participate in the elections, and the airtime offered to candidates must be proportionate to that offered by public service broadcasters. Placing electoral advertising spots in programs beyond the electoral ones is strictly forbidden.

Electoral advertising during the 2019 EU election campaign was very strict. Electoral posters displayed on approved panels had to be 500 mm length and 300 mm wide and posters announcing an electoral group meeting had to be 400 mm length and 250 mm wide. Electoral posters that combined colours in a succession that reproduces the Romanian national flag or another state's flag were forbidden. After the end of the electoral campaign, it was forbidden to broadcast electoral messages in audio, visual or mixed form on digital screens located in public or private areas, as well as disseminating any electoral messages by means of specially arranged vehicles placed in popular public spaces in the city.

Notes on the election campaign

The 2019 EU election campaign in Romania was for the first time more focused on internal political issues than EU issues: a campaign dominated by internal political conflicts, political protests, anger, desire for revenge and public attacks against other internal candidates. It was clear that the politicians used this campaign as

a platform for internal political battles rather than for discussing Romania's place and future in the European Union. There were a few pale efforts to explain why EU membership is good for the country and its citizens, and there were no anti-EU messages in this electoral campaign, the EU being mostly praised for opening up new development opportunities. Moreover, for the first time in history big names had dominated the internal political landscape for years, like the former president of Romania, Traian Basescu (whose daughter Elena Basescu was also an MEP between 2009 and 2014), former prime minister Victor Ponta, and former prime minister Dacian Cioloș, amongst others, returned to the political stage as candidates for the European Parliament.

Internal political conflicts dominated the EU election campaign of 2019 in Romania. There was a prevailing desire to promote their own political agenda and convince the electorate that the others are corrupt, hence the increased focus on mostly national issues. There were four main campaign approaches, as follows:

Focus on the national identity and patriotism – “Proud to be Romanians” (PSD, ALDE), “Romania first” (PNL), “Romania respected in the EU” (PSD, PNL, ALDE).

Anti-corruption – “No thieves in public institutions” (Alianta USR-PLUS)

Anti-PSD – ALDE, Alianta USR-Plus, PNL, ProRomania, PMP

Pro-European – PMP, USR-PLUS, ProRomania.

The EU electoral campaign unfolded mostly online. The most active party on social media was Alianta 2020 USR PLUS, followed by ALDE and PNL. Interestingly, despite the well-acknowledged power of social media to disseminate information and reach large audiences, there are a few parties that had almost no presence at all on any social media platform, such as: ProDemo Party, Social Democrat Independent Party (PSDI) and BUN. The campaign led by these parties was mainly through a very small number of print posters, participation in televised electoral debates, door-to-door campaigning, small meetings with voters and small-scale electoral protests. However, even if the above-mentioned political parties' social media accounts were inactive, their lead candidates were active on social media. This resulted in a number of disparate posts that seemed to be more the fruit of a personal initiative than part of a coherent political party campaign.

On 26 May 2019 voting generally proceeded in an orderly fashion. However, the EU elections day was not without controversy. Before the day of the vote, a few political parties started accusing each other of committing electoral fraud, for example Alianta 2020 USR PLUS was warning people on social media that PSD would steal their votes. Despite this row on social media, only a few violation

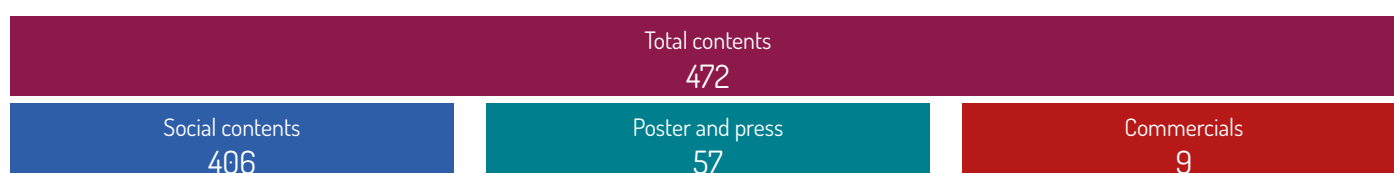
incidents were reported and none of them were investigated further.

The President of Romania Klaus Iohannis was heavily criticized for calling and organizing a referendum at the same time as the EU elections and was accused by the opposition (PSD and ALDE) that he was using the referendum as a pretext to gain popularity ahead of the presidential campaign due to start in October 2019.

Once again, Romanians abroad faced difficulties in being able to cast their vote. Reportedly people had to queue for over 5 hours in front of embassies and consulates before being able to vote, which

led to vociferous messages against the government for failing to ensure a smooth voting process by not allocating sufficient staff, voting booths and stamps. People felt they were denied the right to vote. In some European countries (e.g. the Netherlands) armed police interventions were reported because people were so angry they started climbing over the gates of the Romanian embassy when they realized they were no longer able to vote after spending hours waiting. They were chanting some of the slogans used in the electoral campaign by the political parties that led an anti-PSD campaign: "PSD we won't leave" or "Thieves!".

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
PARTIDUL ALIANȚA LIBERALILOR ȘI DEMOCRAȚILOR	114	12	-	0
ALIANȚA 2020 USR PLUS	116	7	1	8
PARTIDUL NAȚIONAL LIBERAL	68	8	3	10
PARTIDUL MIȘCAREA POPULARĂ	52	4	1	2
PARTIDUL PRO ROMÂNIA	29	4	-	2
PARTIDUL SOCIAL DEMOCRAT	22	7	1	8
PARTIDUL UNIUNEA NAȚIONALĂ PENTRU PROGRESUL ROMÂNIEI	5	4	1	2
PARTIDUL PRODEMO	Not monitored	8	2	0
PARTIDUL SOCIAL DEMOCRAT INDEPENDENT	Not monitored	2	-	0
BLOCUL UNITĂȚII NAȚIONALE	Not monitored	1	-	0

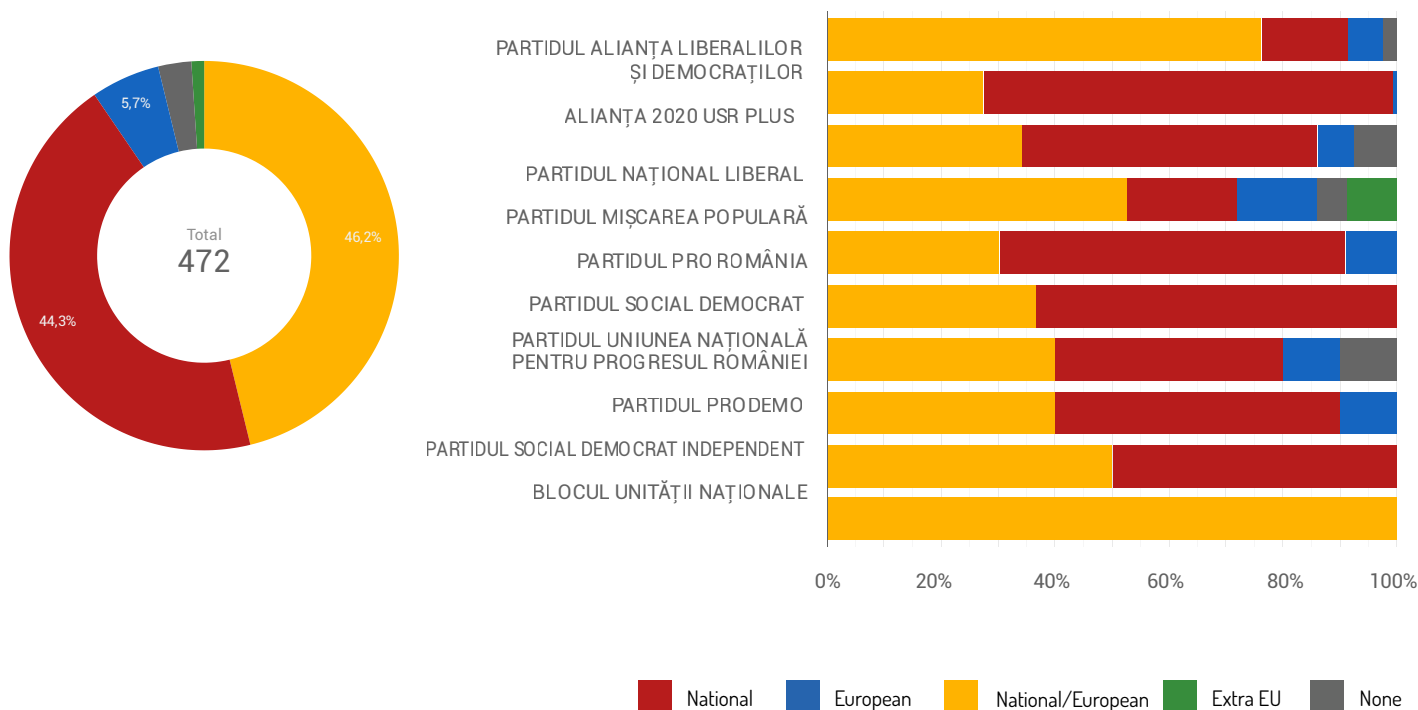
Out of a 472 contents analysed, 406 were social media posts. The most active parties on social media were Alianta 2020 USR PLUS and Partidul Alianta Liberalilor si democratilor. Interestingly, despite having a strong presence on social media platforms, Partidul Alianta Liberalilor si democratilor did not win any seats in the EP. The Social Democrat Party had a very weak social media campaign and still won eight seats, equal to Alianta 2020 USR

PLUS, which had a strong social media campaign. This shows that despite the penetration of social media in all aspects of life, the Romanian electorate is still loyal to two of the oldest parties: the Social Democrat Party and the National Liberal Party. Equally, newly formed parties like ProRomania and Alianta 2020 USR PLUS managed to win the electorate and secure respectively two and eight seats in the EP.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Given the national political context, it comes as no surprise that the content analysed here focuses mainly on the national/European (46.2%) and national (44.3%) dimension. Internal political conflicts dominated the EU elections campaign of 2019 in Romania. Only a few parties and candidates dedicated their campaign to discussing

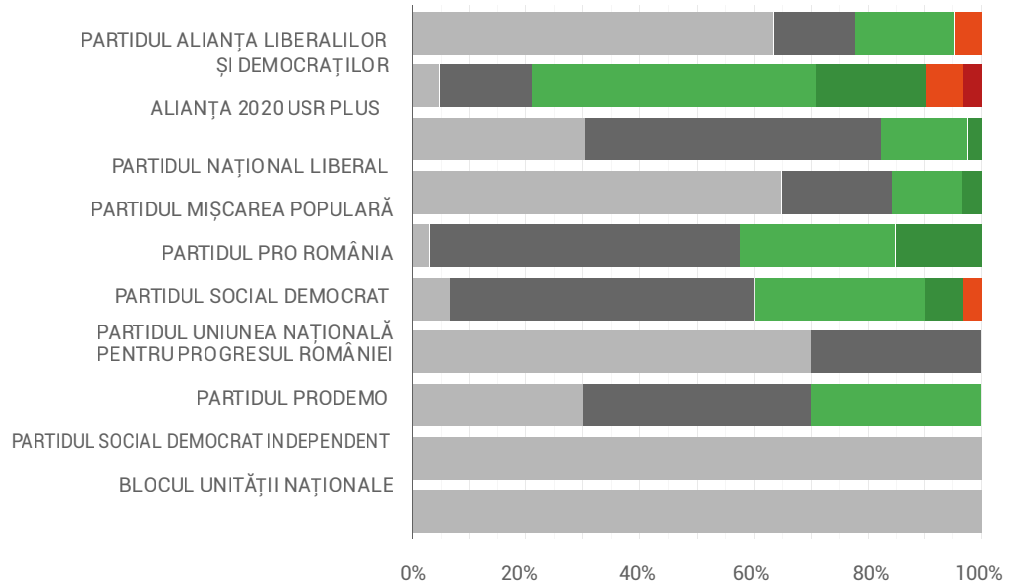
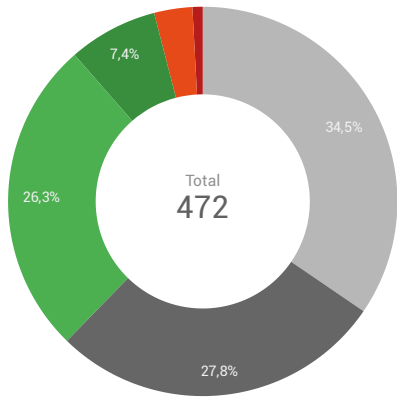
only European issues (e.g. Traian Basescu PMP), which shows that most Romanian politicians used the European election campaign as an opportunity to promote their personal political agenda and launch attacks against the opposition. Only one party (PMP) focused on extra-EU topics.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

The emphasis on the internal political battle led to Europe being represented in a neutral way (34.5%) or not represented at all (27.8%). When Europe and the EU were represented, they were mostly depicted in a positive or strongly positive manner. Only a few disparate electoral messages were negative or strongly negative. When represented in a positive way, Europe and the European Union was mostly praised for the opportunities to come and the potential for development that it is believed will help Romania's economy, infrastructure and education. In almost one quarter of the sample (27.8%) Europe is not represented at all, the message's

target being against other national parties or political opponents. As a distinctive note, the fact that Romania's 2019 EU elections campaign was not an anti-EU campaign cannot go unnoticed; only three parties (Alianta 2020 USR PLUS, PSD and ALDE) made a few disparate negative or strongly negative references to Europe and the European Union in their campaign. At the other end of the spectrum, three parties (UNPR, PSDI and BUN) avoided making any references to the EU at all or used only neutral references, perhaps in an attempt to avoid being caught in the Pro or Against the EU debate and being classified as pro or against the EU.

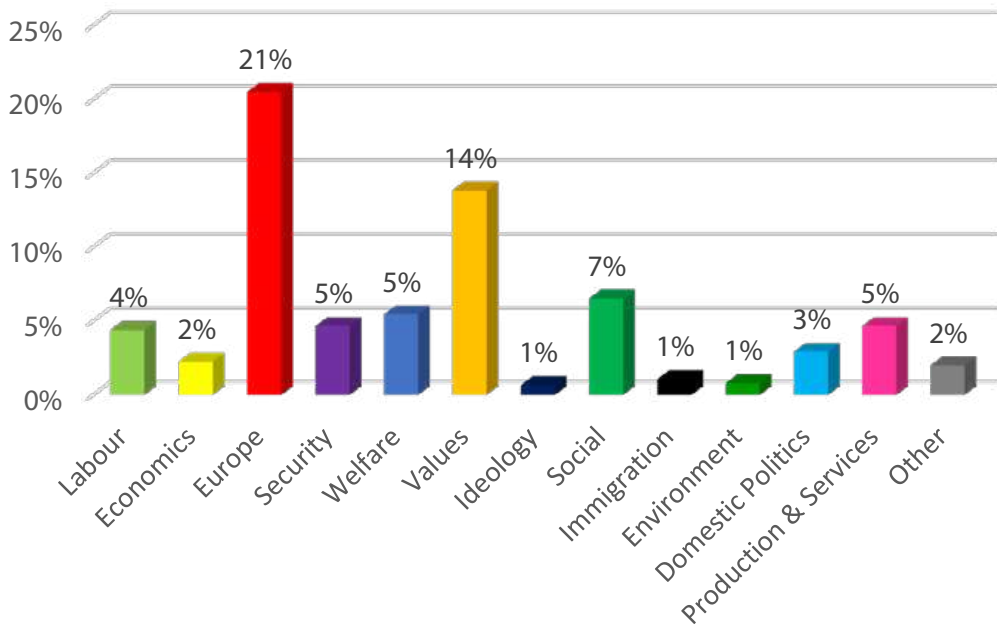


Legend: Strongly positive (dark green), Positive (light green), Neutral (grey), Negative (red), Strongly negative (dark red), Not represented (dark grey)

### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Major topics that led the European and international political and news agenda, such as immigration and environmental issues, were barely discussed by the Romanian candidates this voting round, appearing in only 1% of the analysed sample. The most frequently discussed topic in this election campaign was, as expected, Europe or the European Union, followed by values (in general) and social issues. Security, welfare, products and services, or labour-related issues were also sporadically present in some posters and political ads.

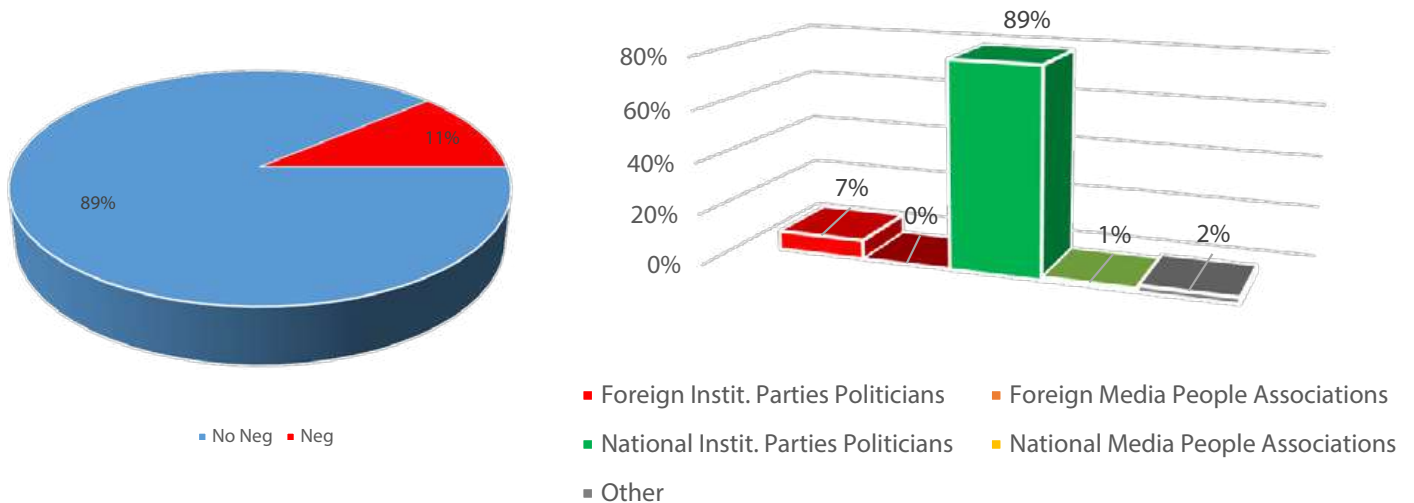
219



\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

Looking at the entire sample (print, TV and online), data shows that the EU campaign was not negative: only 11% of the data analysed here showed a focus on negative campaigning. However, this 11% was all online. The main targets of the negative campaign were other national parties and politicians. There were two parties in particular - Alianta 2020 USR PLUS and ProRomania - whose social media posts were a direct attack on PSD and its leader, Liviu Dragnea.



220

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

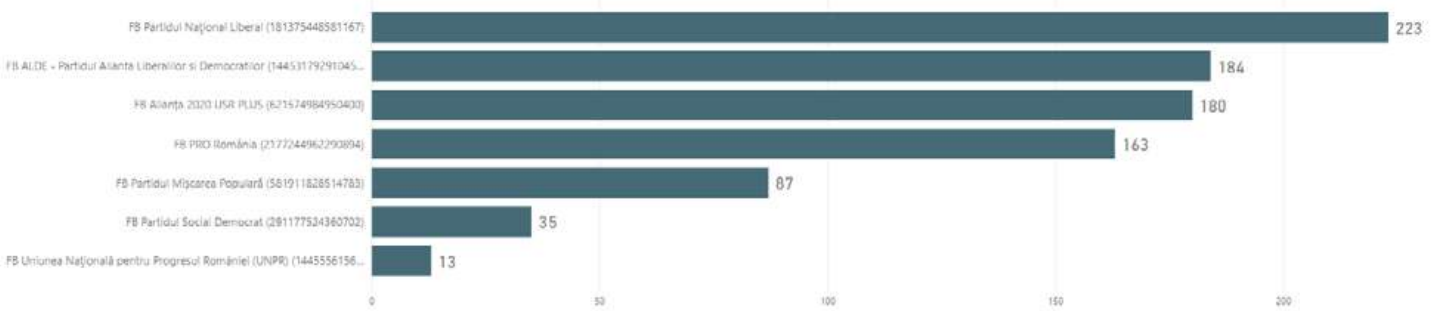


PNL (Partidul National Liberal) was the most active party on Facebook during the 2019 EU Election campaign, followed closely by ALDE and Alianta 2020 USR PLUS. The distinctive feature here is that while PNL and Alianta 2020 USR PLUS efforts resulted in winning 10 and respectively 8 seats in the European Parliament, ALDE who was equally active on Facebook did not manage to secure any seats in the European Parliament. For the first time

ever in an election campaign, a strong Facebook presence alone was not sufficient to engage people and gain their support and did not translate in winning any seats in the European Parliament. Moreover, this also stands as evidence for a considerable share of the eligible voters abandoning Facebook, not using it for political discussions or migrating from using Facebook to using other social networking platforms, like Twitter or Instagram.



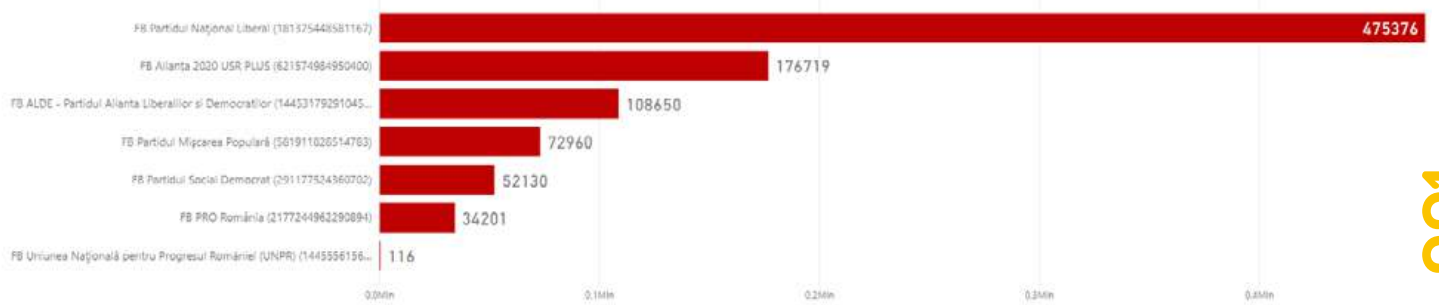
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

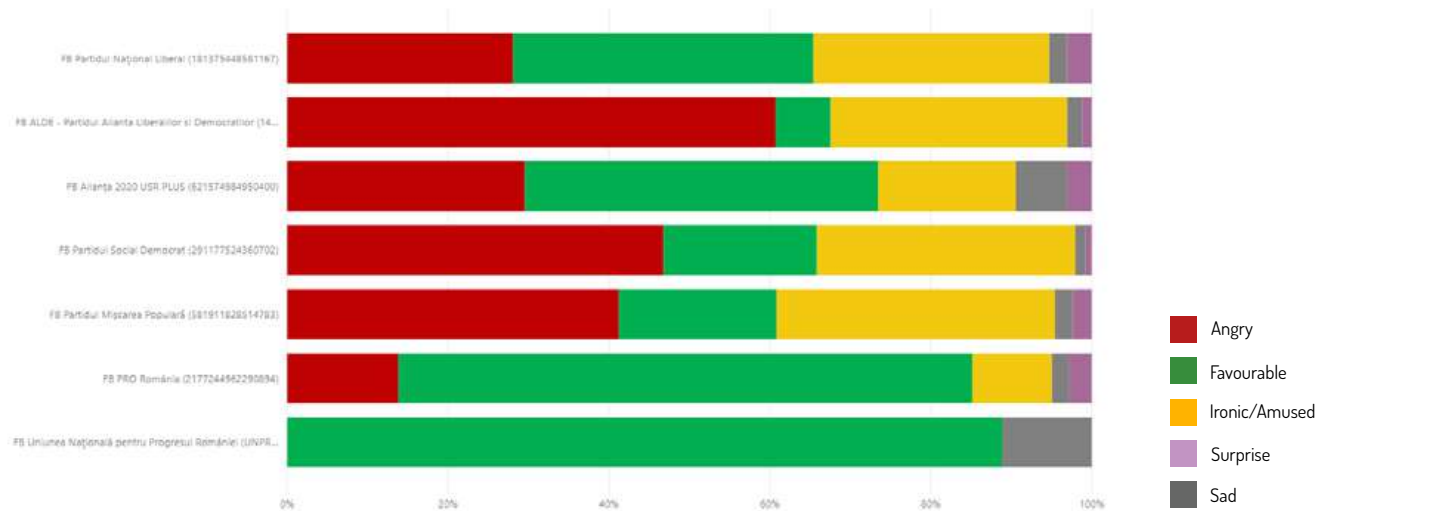


221

\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# SLOVAKIA

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Membership: **2004**

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **5,421,349**

Number of MEPs: **13**

Election day: **May 25, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **No**

**Veronika Oravcová**

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**Peter Plenta**

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**Radka Vicenová**

Comenius University

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The election law sets up a 5% threshold in the single constituency as the necessary condition to receive mandate in the European Parliament in Slovakia. There are two specific features of the election law in the country. The first is the ban on publishing opinion polls on the political parties two weeks before the election. As most of the population usually decides who they are going to vote for in the last few days before the election, the results have significantly differed from the polls in several cases. For instance, non-parliamentary KDH was able to score as the fourth strongest political party. Secondly, because of the recent, poorly prepared, "Brexit" amendment of the election law, the KDH party received just one mandate, and due to the changed counting system, it needs to wait until Brexit comes into force for the second mandate, despite the fact it has received more votes than fifth-placed SaS, which has two mandates from the outset. Due to the fragmentation of the political scene, very low turnout in past years, and the popularity of several parties being close to the threshold, surprises were expected. For instance, the Smer-SD party in government did not win the election and was not the strongest political party, for the first time since 2006. Two out of three government parties did not receive any seat, which could be interpreted as a strong message to the ruling coalition from its voters. On the contrary, the newly established coalition PS/SPOLU won the election, and far right ĽSNS achieved the best results ever, with around 12% of votes. Turnout in the European elections reached 22.74%, which is (again) the lowest among all member states, but the highest in Slovak history.

The turnout is, however, just one sign that proves that EP elections in Slovakia are classed as second-class elections. Another sign is the relatively low interest of the political parties, as the election campaign depended more on the financial possibilities and capabilities of particular candidates. To illustrate this, several leading representatives of parliamentary parties used the elections to increase their personal visibility and that of their parties, with several of them even openly declaring that they had no interest in gaining a seat in the European Parliament: leader of OĽaNO, Igor Matovič, withdrew his candidacy just a few days before the election. The campaign of government parties Smer-SD, SNS and Most-Híd was less visible compared to those of other parties in the running and, in the end, this was reflected in their results. Political parties spent only a fraction of the limit of 3 million euros allowed by the state. Smer-SD spent the most, at around 1 million euros, while four other parliamentary political parties – Most-Híd, ĽSNS, SNS and Sme Rodina, spent less than 200,000 euros.

Political parties focused more than ever before on promotion via social networks, but also used traditional billboards and posters. They also participated in debates held on public and private media. The newspaper and television campaigns were minimal. Public media provided space for political parties to present their main ideas via structured interviews with a moderator and, in the second stage, also debates between political parties and candidates.

Looking at the messages of the campaign, most of the political parties focused on the promotion of rather general statements or the need to "fight for Slovak interests in the EU." Several parties presented unspecified ideas to reform the EU or vague statements calling for the use of "common sense" in Brussels. Nevertheless, the most visible feature was a political struggle between pro-European political parties on the one hand and far right Euro-skeptical parties on the other. The PS/Spolu coalition profiled itself as the "only pro-European force", going openly and directly against extremist views in the Slovak political arena. Similarly, the political party OĽaNO changed its communication strategy, prioritising the promotion of its candidate of Roma origin (thus promoting minority protection) as the country-balance of predicted success of extremists in the elections.

On the other side of the spectrum, political party Sme rodina heavily promoted its European alliance with nationalists Matteo Salvini and Marine Le Pen. Representatives of PS/Spolu and the non-governmental sector organised protests against Marine Le Pen and other representatives of the far right who attended a conference organised by Sme rodina. Far right Kotleba-ĽSNS, which launched a petition for Slovakia to leave the EU only a few months before the election, has slightly toned down its anti-EU attitudes and called for significant changes in the EU as well as the fight against migration and the "Brussels nonsense."

Despite the more visible European dimension of the campaign in comparison to previous elections, only two important political parties openly promoted their European affiliation: Most-Híd (EPP) and Sme rodina (ENF). The campaign was not significantly innovative in terms of form – despite the series of street campaign events promoting national meals of EU member states by the SaS party – nor in terms of content. The main slogans of the political parties also support this claim: PS/Spolu (Truly European Slovakia), Smer-SD (Self-confident Slovakia in Europe), ĽSNS (For Slovak interests, against nonsense from Brussels, KDH (Strong Slovakia in Europe), SaS (Common sense is the best recipe) OĽaNO (Let's repair, do not destroy our European house).

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

Total contents  
424

Social contents  
269

Poster and press  
154

Commercials  
1

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Koalícia Progressívne Slovensko a SPOLU - občianska demokracia (PS/SPOLU)	65	17	-	4
Sloboda a Solidarita (SaS)	52	28	-	2
OBYČAJNÍ ĽUDIA a nezávislé osobnosti (OĽaNO)	53	21	-	1
SME RODINA - Boris Kollár (SME RODINA)	53	6	-	0
Kotleba - Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko (ĽSNS)	19	18	-	2
SMER - sociálna demokracia (SMER-SD)	13	17	1	3
Slovenská národná strana (SNS)	14	12	-	0
Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie (KDH)	Not monitored	17	-	1
Strana maďarskej komunity - Magyar Közösség Pártja (SMK)	Not monitored	10	-	0
MOST - HÍD (MOST)	Not monitored	8	-	0

The figure shows that the PS/Spolu coalition is the most active on social media, with the highest number of posts related to the EP elections, closely followed by OĽaNO, Sme Rodina and SaS. This can be most likely explained by the fact that, as a new political entity, it had to focus its campaign on increasing public visibility and recognition by targeting the younger generation in particular. Additionally, these four parties are well-known for using social networks for communication with voters in general. In the case of ĽSNS, we followed the FB profile of the deputy-chairman and candidate in the European election, as the official party profile has been taken down by FB in 2017 for violation of the rules. Consequently, the activity of the party representatives on Facebook has significantly decreased since then. On the other hand, ruling coalition parties Smer-SD and SNS produced relatively limited social media activity in relation to the election. This can be explained by their target group of older

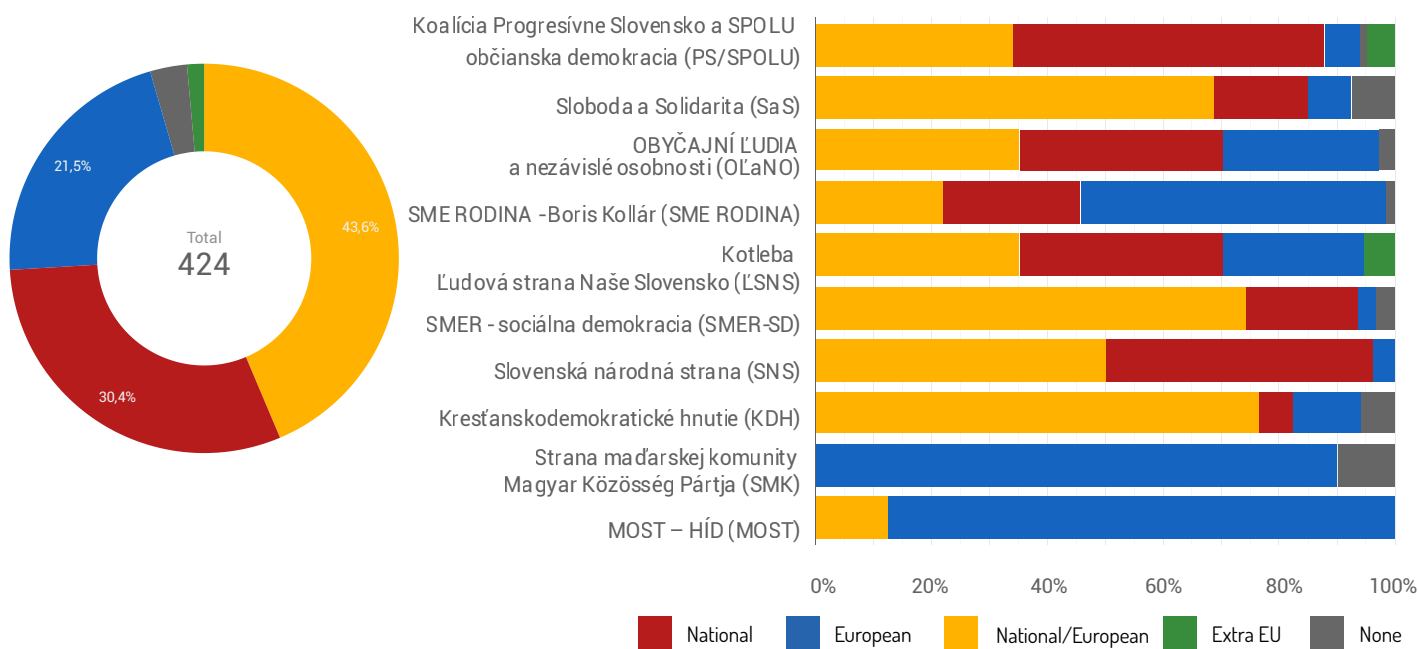
voters, who are less active on social networks, so the parties focus less on this channel. At the same time, it is in line with the aforementioned notion about this election being obviously of lesser importance for these political parties and thus receiving less attention by government parties. Slovak political parties across the political spectrum practically ignored advertisement in the press and on television, replacing these activities with social media and billboard/poster campaigns that were more effective and also cheaper. However, the candidates attended political discussions organised by media, which brought them high visibility. The differences in the figures related to the poster category are mainly due to variations in posters and in the individual campaigns of candidates. Some parties presented only the leader(s) of the candidate list, while others provided space for all party candidates.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

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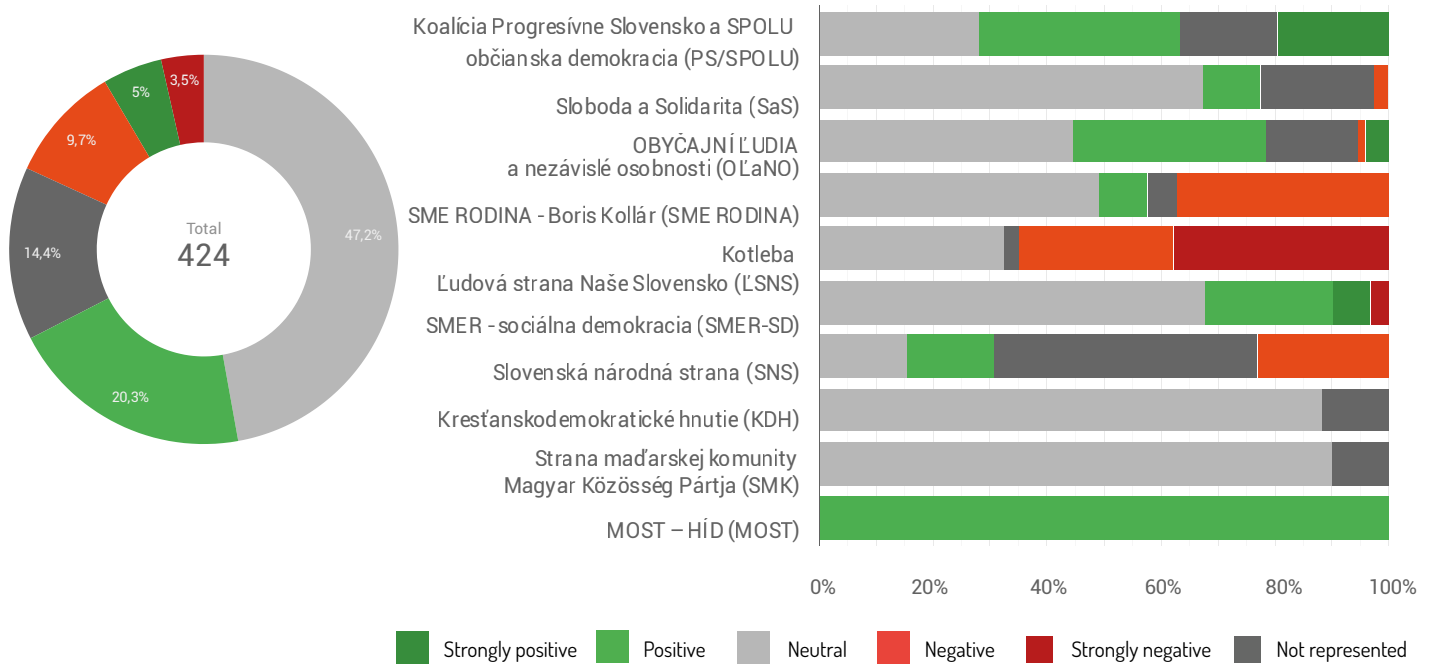
226



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Almost half of the contributions were in neutral terms. We can offer two explanations for this. Firstly, the political parties mentioned the EU or its institutions, without the element of regulatory evaluation. Secondly, the political parties in general offered both positive and negative views of the EU or membership in a balanced way. This was particularly valid for the KDH, Smer-SD, and SaS, which appreciated membership of the EU, while calling for substantial reform or change. The parties with the most positive view of the EU were PS/Spolu, Most-Híd and OĽaNO, which presented the EU mainly as an opportunity to improve the situation in Europe or in Slovakia. PS/Spolu and OĽaNO particularly highlighted their

pro-European attitude and counterbalance of the extremists and anti-EU forces. The most negative parties were far right ĽSNS, which sees the EU in terms of the “dictate of Brussels”, and Sme Rodina, which claims the need for a the return of most powers to the national states, while the focus on the Slovak dimension was typical for nationalist SNS. KDH and SMK were represented only by posters which took a neutral tone, mentioning the EU only in their slogans. In conclusion, most of the political parties presented the EU in positive terms, or as an opportunity. Even the parties with the most neutral content presented the EU also with its advantages.

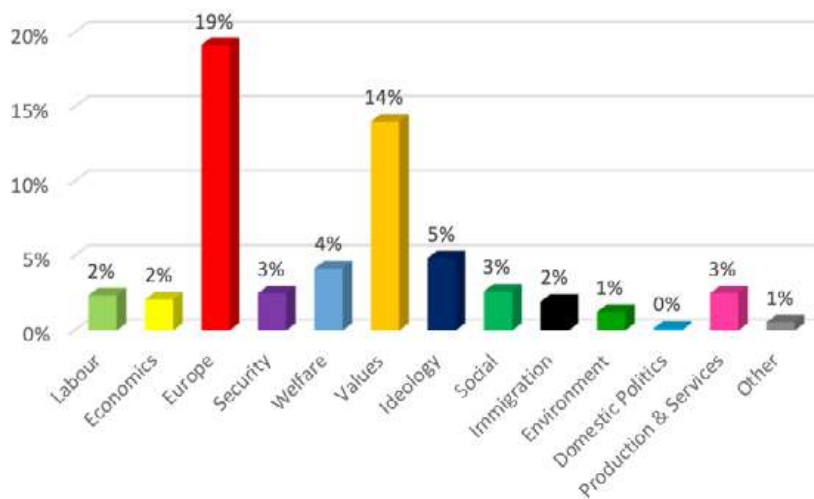


### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Quite naturally, the European Union and Europe were the main topics of the campaign. The party statements were divided into three groups. Firstly, those that were satisfied with the current situation or required even greater integration. Secondly, groups of parties dissatisfied with the current state of affairs and wanting a reform of the EU, assigning more powers to the national states. ĽSNS, for example, is part of the last group, with a highly negative attitude, but it is questionable what they would like to achieve. Another critical group of topics were values. Again, we can divide these contributions into two groups. The first represented by parties that have a positive opinion of the EU and some of the

ideas it represents, particularly opportunities, democracy, liberalism and tolerance. However, most parties claimed that Brussels is too liberal, non-democratic, supporting ideas of multiculturalism that, according to these parties, pose threats to traditional Slovak values. Then there are topics linked to ideologies. These consist of the rejection of various forms of fascism, extremism or nationalism, notably because Sme Rodina promoted its new alliance with Salvini and Le Pen and there was a prediction that far-right ĽSNS had a chance of winning the European election. PS/Spolu and OĽaNO in particular saw it as a threat to Slovak democracy and the cause of possible international shame.

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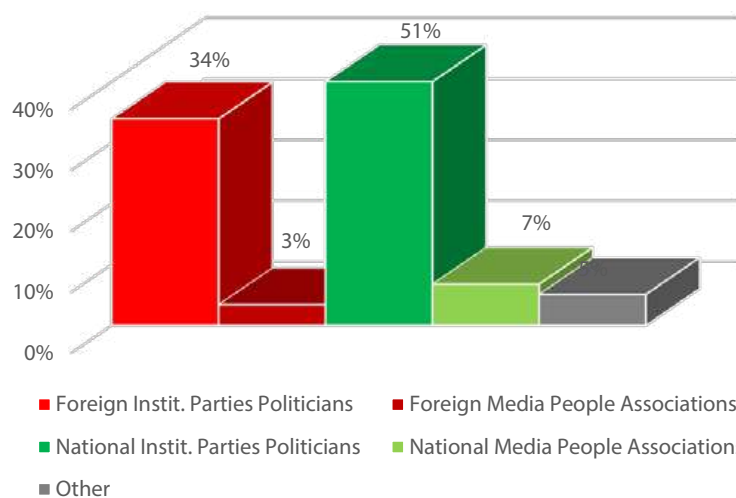
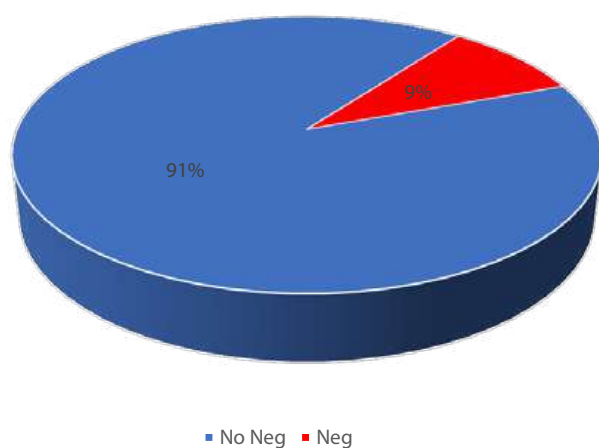
\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.



## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

The negative campaign, in general, played only a limited role before the election, and the parties focused more on their candidates and their ideas. This can be explained by low efficiency, as indicated by the results of the previous national election. The targets of the negative campaign were mostly representatives of the EU institutions or representatives of the other Slovak political parties or the government. There were three areas in which the negative campaign was used. Some of the parties criticised Slovak MEPs for supporting the quota system to relocate asylum seekers during

the so-called “migration crisis”. There were personal attacks, for example, when the SNS attacked the leader of the SaS party, who was MEP at the time, several times, claiming that he did nothing regarding the double food standards. PS/Spolu attacked primary opponents ĽSNS and Smer-SD, highlighting that they had no election manifestos for the European election. These confrontations took place mostly on social media. Otherwise the negative campaign was not visible.



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## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

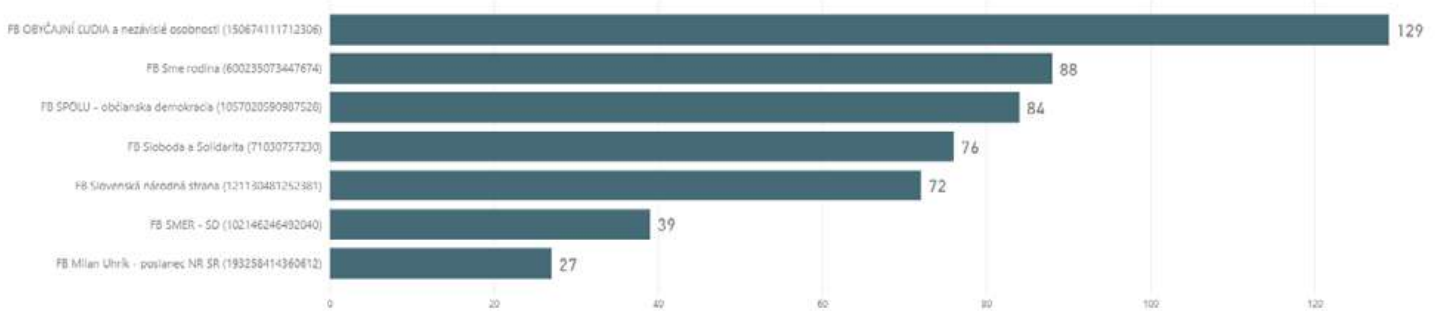
7 N. Accounts monitored*	515 N. Posts produced	151624 Engagement**	52,2 % percentage of posts on EU campaign topics
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The highest engagement of the followers was recorded on the OĽaNO Facebook profile. The party mostly promoted its candidates but also often pushed topics related to domestic politics, with strong criticism of the government and the ruling coalition. Similarly, Sme Rodina worked heavily with emotions, mostly related to the pride and enthusiasm of becoming member of MENF. Relatively low engagement with the Spolu and SaS party profiles was rather surprising, as both parties are heavily active on social networks. One explanation for this can be their focus on expert argument and rational campaign by presenting particular policy measures. In the case of the PS/Spolu coalition, their candidates were very active on

their individual profiles, while the coalition often only shared their original contributions. The three parties with the highest “anger” reactions of followers were OĽaNO, Sme Rodina and PS/Spolu. Sme Rodina was often critical of the EU, stressing its errors and areas that require significant reform. On the other hand, OĽaNO and PS/Spolu highlighted the danger of the rise of fascism and extremism. The very high share of the SaS party’s “ironic / amused” engagement was surprising because the party focused rather on rational arguments. However, they often made ironic allusions to some policy measures or presented their candidates in a more relaxed atmosphere during debates or in video testimonials.



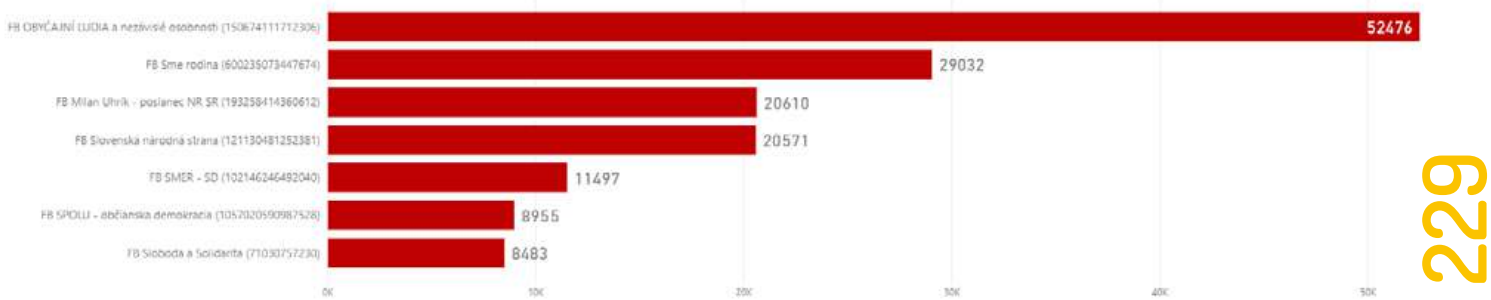
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

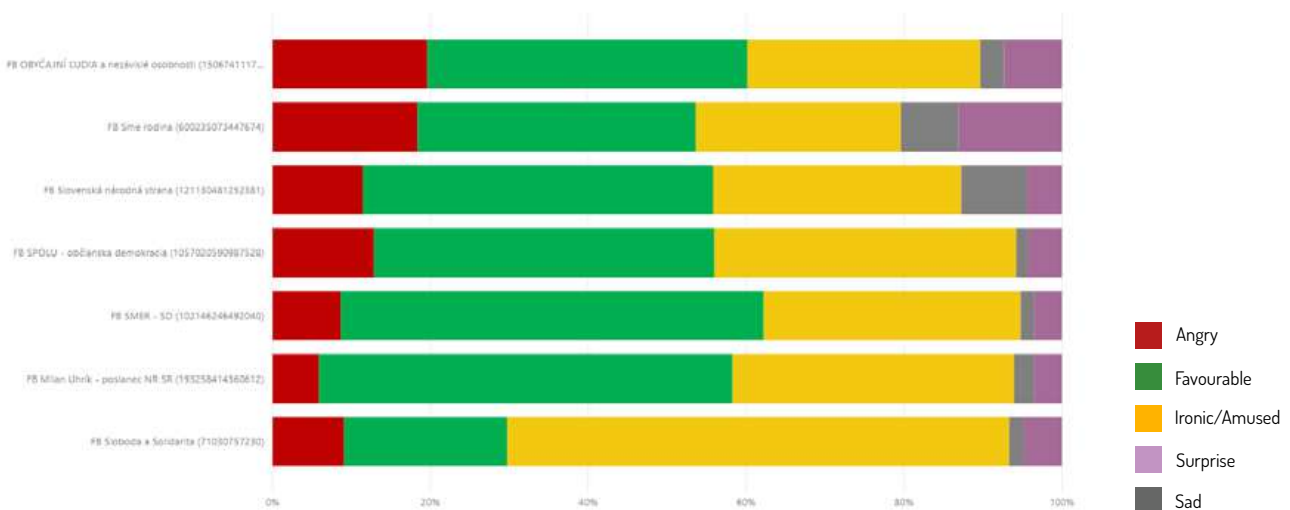
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# SLOVENIA

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Membership: 1973  
European area: **Northern Europe**  
Population: **64,875,165**  
Number of MEPs: **73**  
Election day: **May 23, 2019**  
Concurrent elections: **Local**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

In Slovenia there were 15 party lists that competed for eight seats in the European Parliament, among them nine parliamentary parties, each with its own list of candidates. During the campaign, which officially lasted for 30 days, most parties maintained a strong presence on social media (especially Facebook) and campaigned using posters in public spaces and TV debates. Some of them also prepared campaign events around the country where candidates went canvassing and met the local population. For posters, parties mostly used free spaces reserved for the campaign by the authorities on the basis of Slovenian electoral law or bought space on commercial advertising hoardings. None of the listed candidates used any kind of paid ads.

Most parties' posters were fairly generic, usually showing the candidates' portraits with a few added key words or values connected to their campaign, or some catchy slogans. Many of their Facebook posts were emotional, often filled with either light-hearted features such as when they were reporting from campaign tours around Slovenia or rather more frightening ones such as cases of right-wing parties posting about migration issues. That was very much the overriding sensation in the case of the SDS+SLS list, (which won the election by three seats).

The three most widely supported centre-right parties' campaigns retained their traditional tendency to address the peripheral and rural population. Within these, the SLS candidates of the SDS+SLS list addressed mainly agricultural issues, the NSi targeted Catholics with a narrative on Christian values, while the SDS more generally addressed people with conservative values. The centre-left parties that enjoy wider support among more left-leaning voters addressed those with progressive cultural views whose preference is to clearly separate the state and church, and who put solidarity high on their priority list.

One of the issues most discussed during the election campaign was the alleged migration crisis or its apparent inevitability. This topic spilled over also into questions about the politicization of

Slovenia's southern border and the implementation of the ruling of Slovenia's Court of Arbitration in the case of the border dispute with Croatia. In general, centre-right parties argued for a more water-tight approach to border control, while the centre-left parties defended governments policies of a common or at least harmonized approach to securing the external (Schengen) borders. Likewise, the government's centre-left parties defended European solutions of the border dispute while opposition parties had alternative visions for it.

There was no sense of any strong opposition to the European Union or European integration processes in the campaigns. And neither was there much in the way of sarcasm or irony in campaign materials, and direct attacks on opposition candidates were very few. However, none of the successful candidate lists defended the current EU status quo. In general, the parties competed on their visions of Europe, either by defending a tougher law-and-order approach accompanied by more intergovernmental mechanisms (SDS and NSi), or by putting forward either a more supranational vision of Europe (SD) or a more effective Europe (LMŠ).

Surprisingly, there was no real debate on environmental issues. Perhaps the parties' failure to demonstrate any knowledge of this was because this topic was very much a part of the perspective of the left-wing party (the Left) which was presenting environmental issues as a key element of their manifesto. This party in the end failed to win any seats in the European Parliament, despite having been forecast to win one seat. The mainstream media instead were looking for some drama and high audience ratings by focusing on MEP's high salaries, local issues and traditional topics that spice up all national or local elections. The lack of voters' interest in the European elections, especially among the young, was ultimately demonstrated by the low turnout of only 28.89 % of the entire population and only 10 % turnout among young people (18-30 years old).

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS

Total contents 214		
Social contents 170	Poster and press 44	Commercials 0

Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Slovenska demokratska stranka (SDS), Slovenska ljudska stranka (SLS)	55	6	-	3
Lista Marjana Šarca (LMŠ)	19	11	-	2
Levica	25	3	-	0
Socialni demokrati (SD)	25	2	-	2
Stranka Alenke Bratušek (SAB)	16	9	-	0
Stranka Modernega Centra (SMC)	14	9	-	0
Nova Slovenija – Krščanska ljudska stranka (Nsi)	16	4	-	1

All the parties analyzed produced posters that were either posted in free public spaces, or on commercial advertising hoardings.

The posters were quite generic, portraying candidates in formal or semi-formal clothes, with neutral or smiling expressions on their faces, and looking straight at the camera. Photos of the candidate lists were accompanied with key words (usually the values) of the campaign such as 'Trust' in the case of NSi; 'Freedom', 'Solidarity' in the case of SMC; 'Different', 'Progressive', 'Solidarity' and 'Fair' in the case of SD and 'Experienced' and 'Determined' in the case of SAB. Additionally, some lists included catchy phrases on their posters such as 'Together we are stronger' in the case of SDS; 'We want

Europe!' in the case of SD; 'We can do it at home. We can do it in the EU' or 'Solidarity at home. Solidarity in the EU' by LMŠ and 'For the Europe of people, not capital' in the case of Levica.

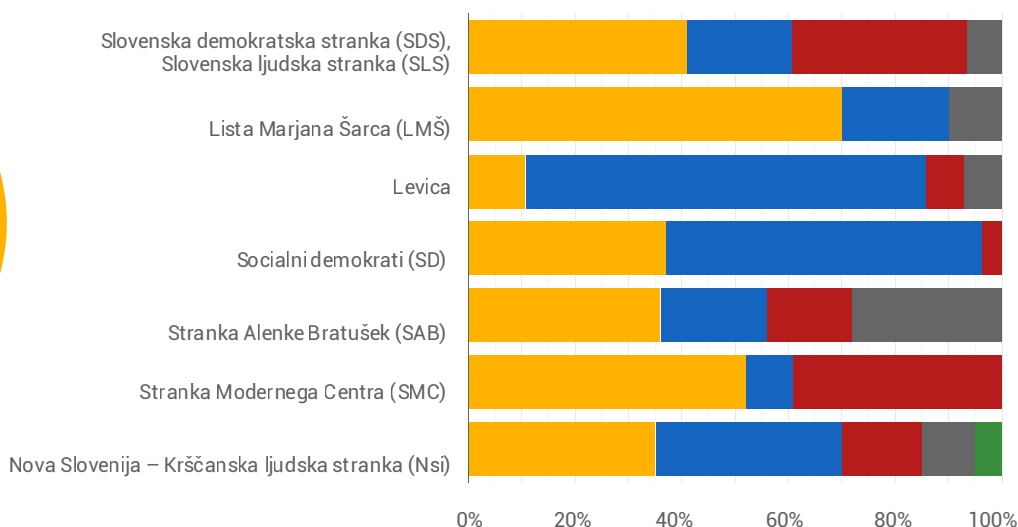
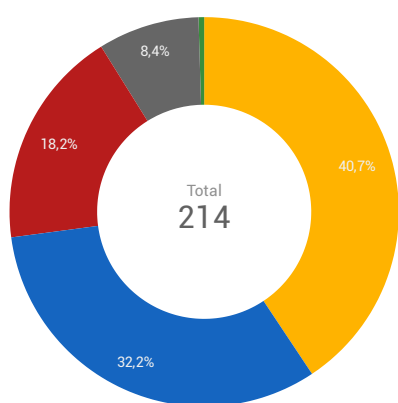
In terms of social media, the most active party was SDS, which posted numerous quotes of their candidates from TV debates they attended. Additionally, they strengthened their campaign by posting numerous (low quality) self-generated videos of "common people" who stated that they would vote for SDS.

One of the most popular topics on Facebook was the regular accurate reporting from campaign tours around the country by more or less all the candidate lists.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Most of the content (over 70 %) was either focused on the Slovenian national/European dimension, or on only on the European dimension (over 32 %). A surprisingly small percentage of the content was focused purely on the Slovenian national context (only around 18 %). Levica was a particularly notable example of the focus on the European level. The party failed to win any seats in the EP, however, and the comparison between SDS+SLS and SMC suggests that focus on the specific dimension did not play a crucial role in success. Both parties had a similar

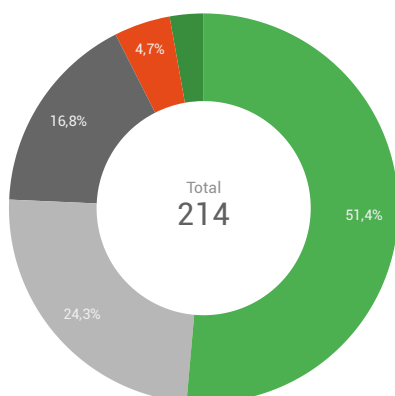
percentage in terms of their focus on the European or Slovenian national/European dimension and Slovenian national dimension, the latter of which was the main focus of these two parties specifically; yet the SDS+SLS won the elections, obtaining two seats with over 25% of voters supporting it, and SMC was one of the biggest losers of the elections ending up with only 1.6 % of votes cast. LMŠ, one of the winning parties (which also won two seats), focused their campaign mainly on the European/national dimension and did not focus on the national dimension only.

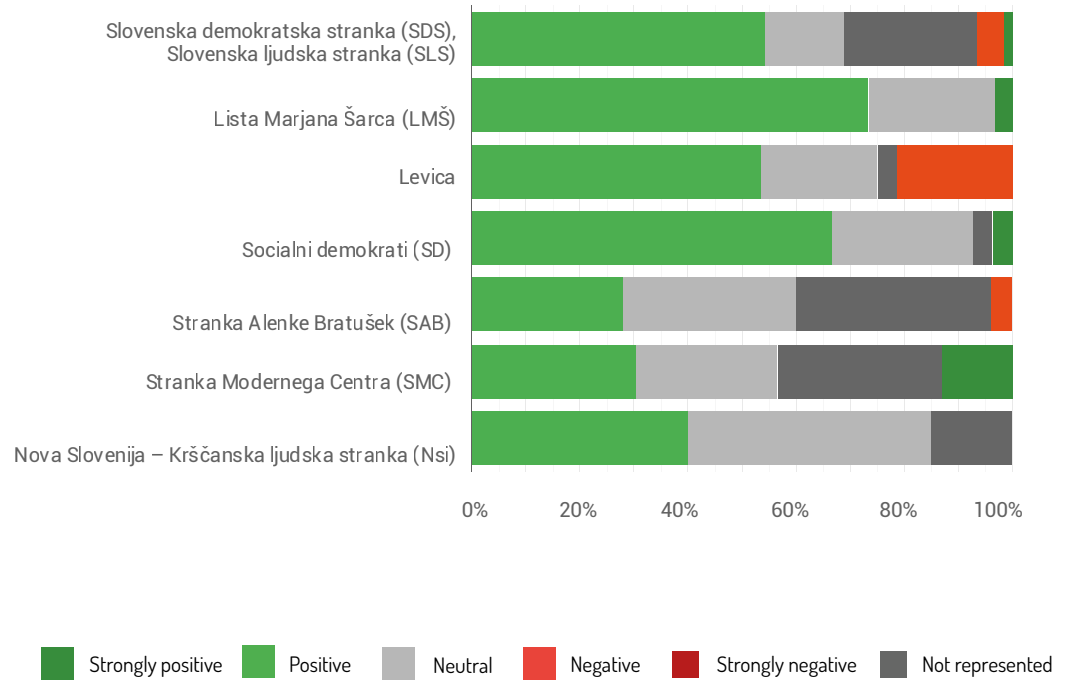


Legend: National (Red), European (Blue), National/European (Yellow), Extra EU (Green), None (Grey)

## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Although the candidate lists had wide-ranging views how the European Union could be improved or different, there were no strongly negative views on it, and certainly none of the candidate lists suggested that Slovenia should leave the EU. Adding together content on the EU that was strongly positive, positive, neutral, or in which it was not commented upon, we arrive at 95 % of all the analyzed content.

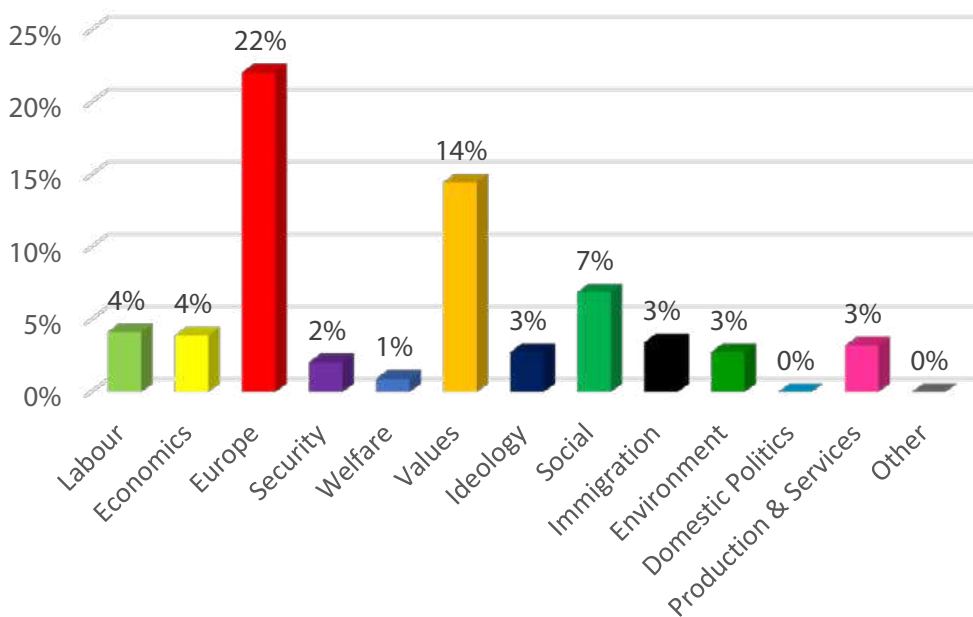




### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Europe was, unsurprisingly, the most common topic featuring in the campaign material. The second favourite topic for the candidate lists were values, as a quick glance at the posters would suggest. The candidate lists addressed voters by presenting their own values, rather than talking about real needs or concrete solutions.

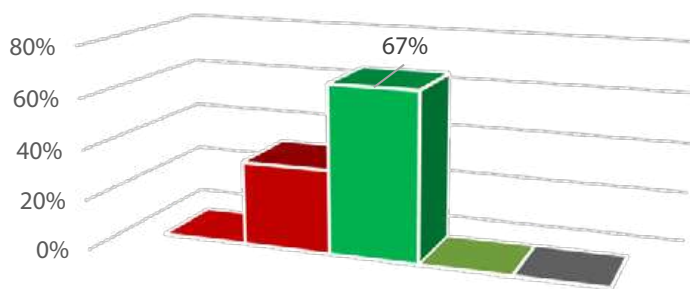
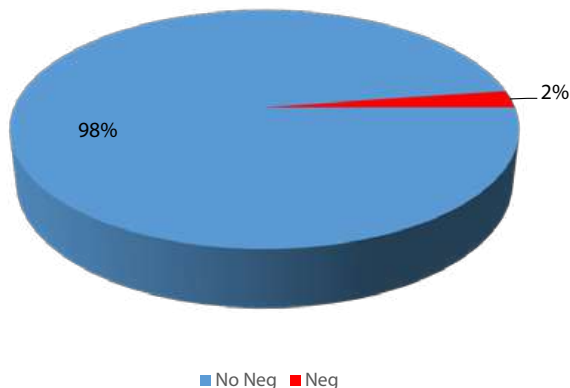
235



\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

There was no negative campaigning in the posters and virtually none on social media. There were a small number of examples of negative campaigning targeted mostly at national politicians and explicitly criticizing an opposing party's policies. One concrete example of this was SDS' use of these tactics in their attempt to beat off the competition and to delegitimize both LMŠ's policies and its leader, the current Slovenian Prime Minister.



- Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Instit. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

7 <small>N. Accounts monitored*</small>	987 <small>N. Posts produced</small>	80770 <small>Engagement**</small>	17,2 % <small>percentage of posts on EU campaign topics</small>
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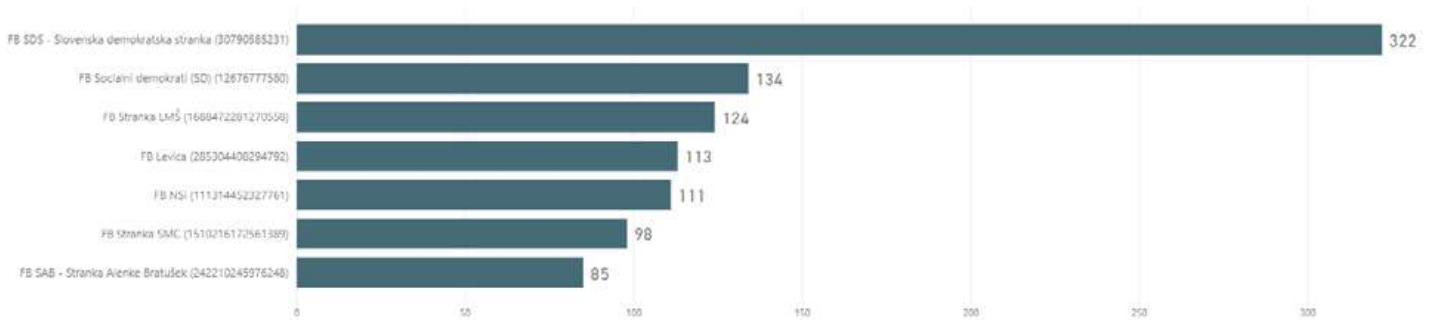
The most active candidates' list on social media was SDS, followed by SD, which produced less than half as much content as SDS. From this perspective, it is surprising that SD ended up with even more engagement than SDS. LMŠ and Levica obtained the third and the fourth place in both categories.

Most of the content produced and analyzed was good-natured or

light-hearted in vein (especially when reporting from events around the country when candidates were meeting local people). There was little recognizable sarcasm or irony in the content but there was a clearly strong sense of fear and foreboding in the content from SDS and NSi, particularly where relating to refugees.



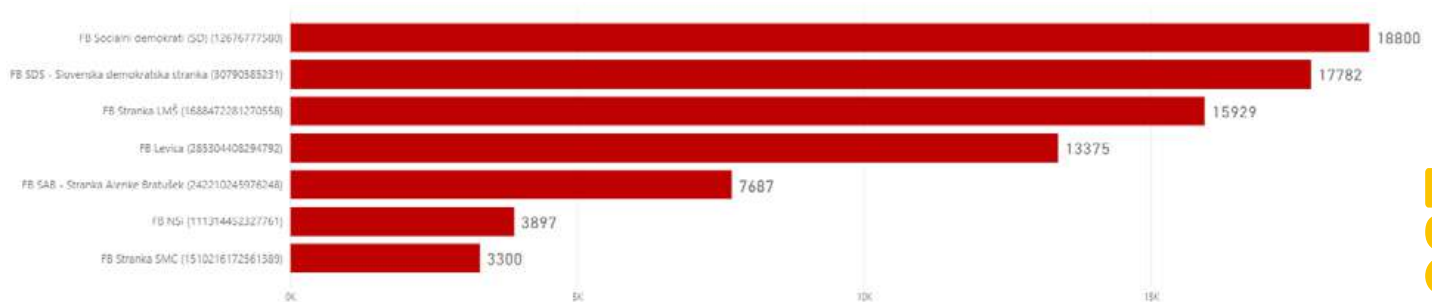
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

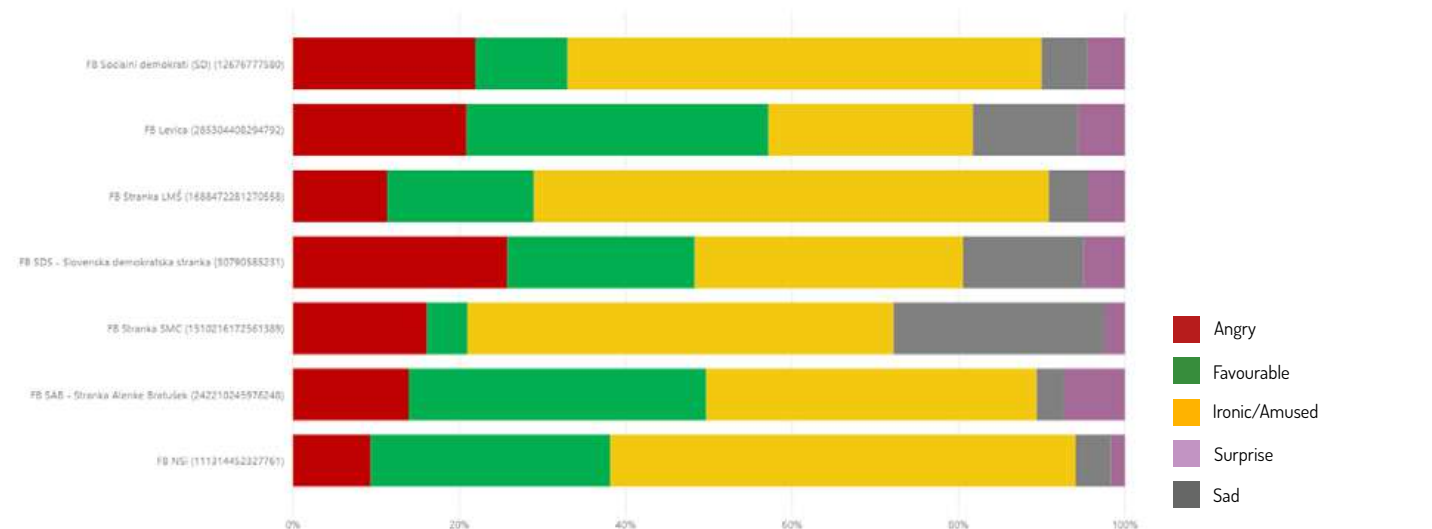


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\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# SPAIN

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Membership: **1986**

European area: **Southern Europe**

Population: **46,449,565**

Number of MEPs: **54**

Election day: **May 26, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Local, Regional**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Spain held its 8th European elections in a year that has been full of electoral calls. This 2019, the Spanish population has been called to vote twice in five months renewing almost all the legislative and government levels existing in the country. This has a tremendous influence in the electoral campaign's design and in the electoral outcome, even though there are some differences in the electoral system and law regarding the European Elections.

First of all, we have to state that opposite of what we have in the national elections, the constituencies are not the provinces but the country as a whole. This generates problems to the regional and non-state parties to get representation, forcing them to generate coalitions in order to get any seats in the European Parliament. In the same way, the barrage threshold is different, because there was none in Spain. This will change in the next elections due to a reform in the European Electoral Law. Regarding the electoral lists and the allocation formulas, they worked in the same way as in every election in Spain with closed lists and D'Hondt formula.

The second issue that we have to state is the electoral concurrence. These elections were held simultaneously with the local ones and, in almost all the regions, with the regional assembly ones. Even more, the elections held in May were only 27 days after the national elections for electing both Spanish Legislative Cameras. This generated a controversial climate during the campaign because there were no sure coalitions for forming a national Government. Of course, this issue was one of the most important ones during the campaign. In the same way, the regional and local elections were high intensity ones due to the possibilities of political change in most of the main cities and regions. In this sense, most of the issues that were debated during the campaign were focused on the possible pacts on Government formation. That is why the two main political parties (PSOE and PP) put some fight in the areas that they thought would be decisive such as Madrid (City Hall and region). It is important to remark that, thanks to this electoral concurrence, the turnout of the European elections has grown from 45.81% in 2014, to 64.3% in 2019.

The fact that we held national elections just a month away provoked that there was a low intense electoral campaign on the European issues. The main efforts during the 15 days that the law says that the campaign lasts were made by the local political communities and not by the national leaders. In this sense, the only ones that call for European Meetings were PSOE and UP, with the presence of the Spitzenkandidaten Frans Timmermans (PES)

and Nicolas Cué (GUE/NGL) respectively. The other formations held different electoral rallies in which they spoke about Europe, but as a part of other areas.

The third issue that profoundly affected the European elections was the fact that two of the candidates in non-state parties were actually in a judicial process. This process regards the unsuccessful independence attempt held in Catalonia in 2017. As heads of two different electoral lists Mr. Oriol Junqueras is held in preventive prison and in trial for the events that occurred in October 2017 while he was Vice President of the Catalan region. During the electoral campaign the trial was on and it affected public opinion. In the same sense, Mr. Carles Puigdemont –former President of Catalan regional Government– was head of the list with an electoral coalition, but the difference with the previous one was the fact that he is actually running away from justice and living in Belgium. This issue provoked that the Catalan issue was a top comment topic during the campaign.

On the same line, the only party that wants changes in the EU for Spain to recover sovereignty –VOX–, was not very strong on the campaign –even though it was their second one as it only works since 2019–. For them, the important issue regarding the EU is to get back some power to Spain. In this sense, experts thought that they will be very active in order to add more power to other European parties such as Italian Lega and French Rassemblement National. This lack of European campaign probably could explain the poor results that they got and that after a high intensity national campaign in April, the profile they got during this campaign was quite low.

One of the most outstanding issues during the campaign was on the one hand, the almost complete absence of press commercials regarding the European Elections. Almost all were about regional or local elections and not the European ones. This probably is because the politicians thought that, as there would be three ballots, is more likely for the citizens to take the same party ballot for every different election. This makes a difference with the previous elections held in 2014, when the European elections were the only ones that took place that year and the people were not very willing to vote, so all the parties made an effort to campaign for it. On the other hand, the active presence in Facebook of the analyzed political parties regarding European issues. While in the electoral videos and the posters the European campaign was reduced to the minimum, in the Social posts we have seen how

the presence is quite high, with at least 3 posts per day regarding European issues.

In general terms, we can say that the European campaign has not been very important during this electoral process. The fact that we had 5 elections in a month, combined with the electoral concurrence and the political situation, has focused the fights in

different electoral arenas, forgetting at some extent the European one. In the same sense, since June 2018 Spain has a high intensity political era that comes from the impeachment of the former Prime Minister Rajoy and the access of Pedro Sanchez to Office. Even though, this had not an effect on the electoral results, being them similar to previous calls.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Unidas Podemos (UP)	41	16	1	6
Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE)	47	3	2	20
Ciudadanos (CS)	31	1	2	7
Partido Popular (PP)	20	1	2	12
VOX (VOX)	17	2	1	3

As we stated in the first page of this report, the campaign was low intensity one in Spain with just 187 analyzed contents. Regarding the Social content, the leftist political parties were very active in social contents, with more than 50% of the posts about European issues. PSOE was the most active one (47 posts) follow very closed by UP (41). Again, these two parties were the most active regarding posters and press advertising. The combination of both overcomes 82% of the printed materials, being UP the most active one with 16 contents.

On the other side we have bot CS and PP. Cs has been more active that its competitor on the center-right ideological dimension, with 31 post on Facebook and same printed materials and TV ads than the PP. This had no effect on the electoral outcome, where

PP got five more seats than CS.

Regarding the TV Commercials, it is clear that the difference is made by electoral size. Thanks to the previous elections, PSOE, CS and PP got more public space on television (2 each) than UP or VOX (1 each). Again, this lack of commercials may be to the electoral concurrence to blame, with some parties focusing more on local and regional level an not si much on the European one.

The far-right party VOX was the least active in the campaign, regarding all the materials. This probably is because they are facing their second electoral process and it was more important for them to get into the local councils and regional assemblies than in the European parliament.

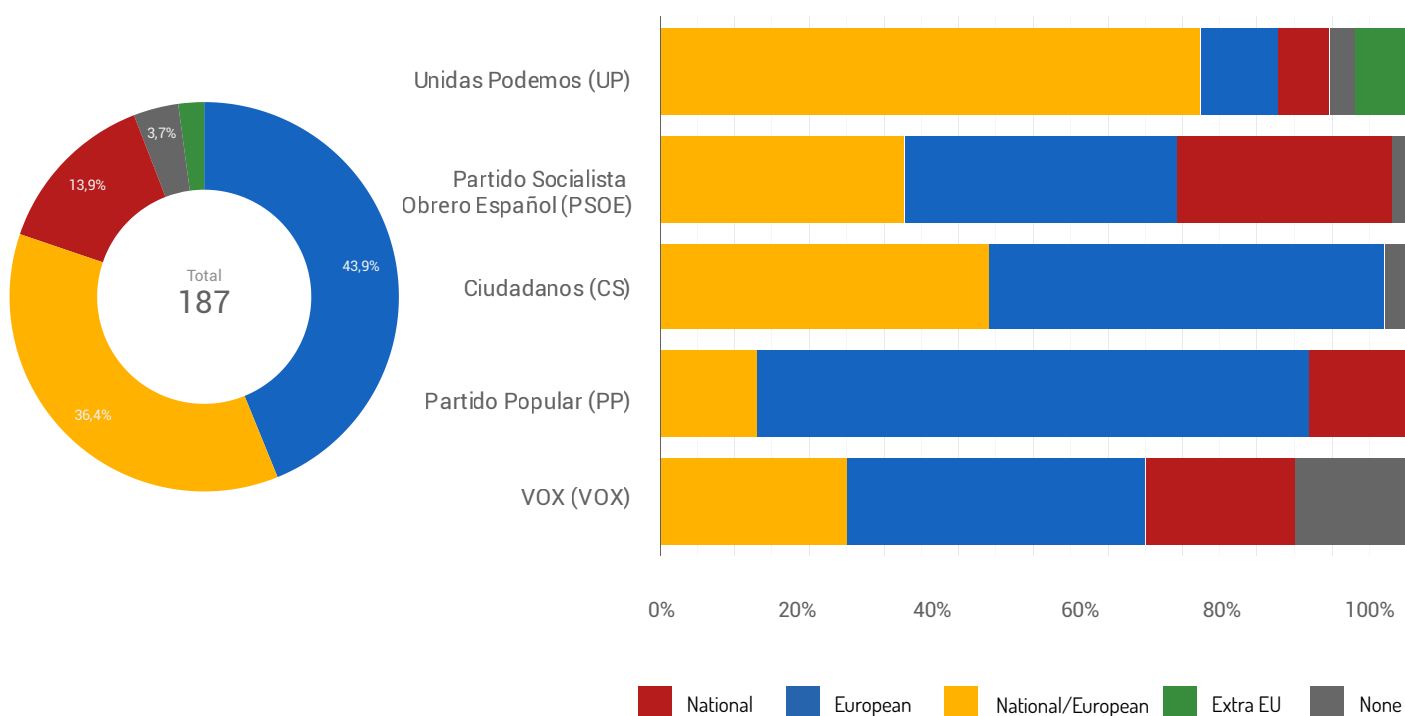
## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The dimension was clearly European and a combination of National and European topics, adding an overall of 80.3% of the posts about these issues. Here we see a difference from the previous page, with the centre-right political parties being more active on commenting European issues. The party that talked more about Europe was PP, with almost 80% of their issues being only European. They are followed by CS with a 60% of materials regarding only European issues.

The leftist parties have clear differences among them. PSOE had a very balanced content with one third of the issues being European, another one National and a final one a combination of both. UP

had most of his content (70%) focused on the combination of both the National and the European dimensions. This political party is the only one that talked about Extra-EU issues, with 5% of their posts focused on that dimension.

VOX has the record of contents regarding none of the analysed dimensions, with almost 15% of their content being non categorized. The rest is mainly focused on both European and National/European dimensions, adding a 65% of the contents speaking about these issues. The remaining 20% would be about National issues.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

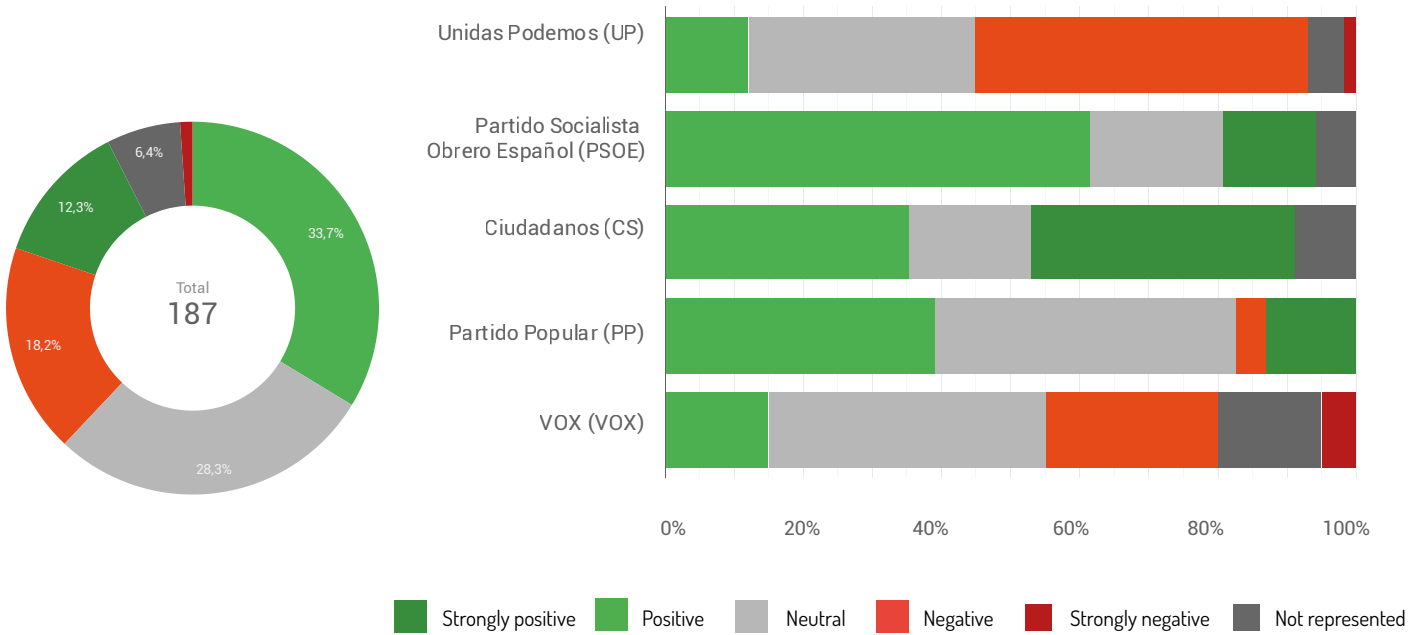
The Spanish electoral campaign has been characterized as mainly positive. There is not a tradition of depicting the Institutions as negative. This also may be seen in these graphs, where Europe is represented as a positive thing in almost half of the analysed contents (46%). Only in less than 20% of the cases Europe is pictured negatively (19.3%).

Analysing the monitored political parties, we find how PSOE and CS did present almost any negative materials regarding Europe. This changes for UP's contents, finding in almost 50% of the negative issues. The same thing works for VOX, with 30% of their content being negative about Europe. In the last position of negative comments, we have PP, with less than a 5% of the issues stating a negative representation of Europe. Therefore, the

two more polarized -ideologically speaking- parties are the ones with the more negative depiction of Europe.

CS and PSOE are the political groups depicting Europe as more positive, both being close to 80% of their materials presenting Europe as a positive way. They are followed by PP, with almost half of their materials following this trend. VOX and UP are very close here, only depicting Europe positively in 15 and 12% of their contents respectively.

In the neutral dimension we have a three-part tie among PP, UP and VOX. The three of them tend to represent Europe as neutral in almost 40% of the cases. Being almost 20% for PSOE and around 15% for CS.

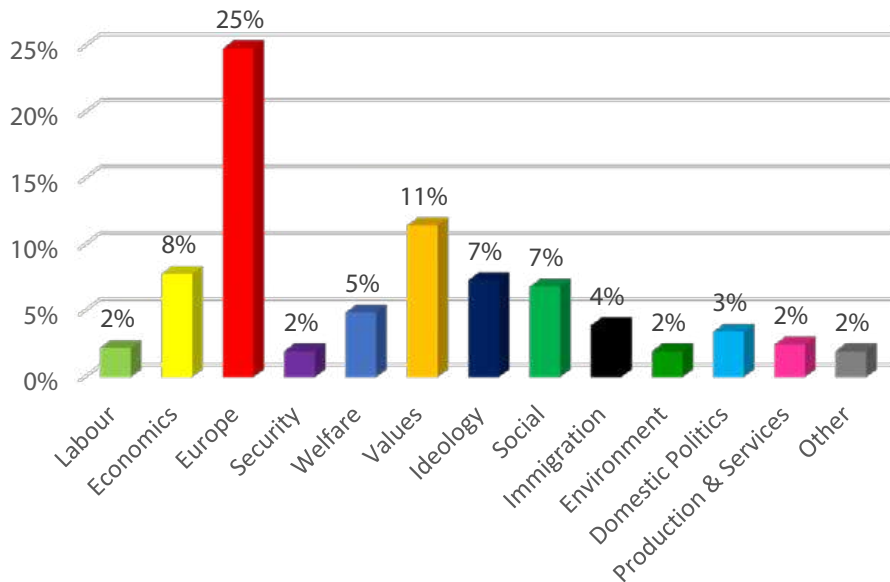


### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

About the main topics that the contents were about, we find that Europe is the most stated topic, with a quarter of the overall commented issues. This represents the importance that for Spain have to be a part of the European Union and how different European policies help Spain to develop itself. The second topic is regarding the values, with 11% of the posts being about this issue. This campaign has been quite emotional and almost all the political parties have been appealing to their voters' values. Elements such as identity, solidarity and justice have been used by all the parties in their materials. Economics, Ideology and Social topics ad together almost a quarter of the related topics. The need to change for a

Green economy, to Tax the biggest fortunes and the reminiscence of the finance crisis held in Spain in the first decade of this century has been quite present in the parties. In the case of UP. They have been stressing out the issue that the banks to pay back the money given by the government in order to avoid bankruptcy. Regarding the ideological topic, CS has been stating a lot their position as Liberals and not to be part of the right coalition. In the same sense, VOX has been working out the ideas about Spanish nationalism as main issue of their program. Finally, regarding the social topics, Gender inequalities, protection of Women and multiculturalism have been present in all the leftist parties' discourse and materials.

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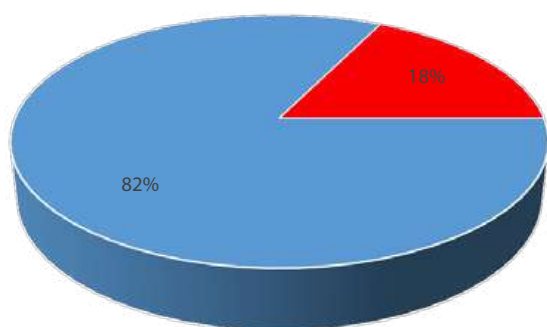
\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

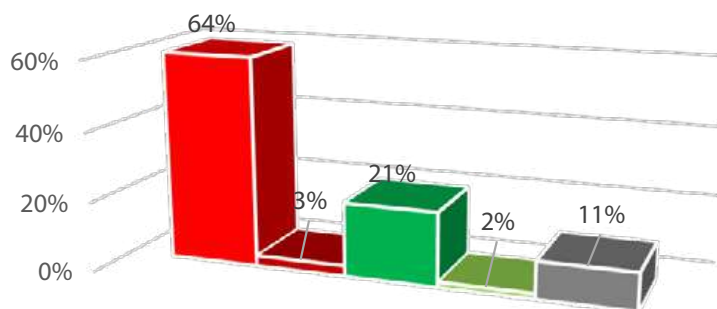
As previously stated, Spanish electoral campaign does not have a high presence of negative comments. In this sense, the European campaign makes no change, with 82% of the contents being positive. The 18% left has been focused mostly on foreign institutions, political parties, politicians and media, with an aggregate of 67% of the cases -12% of the overall information-.

The rest of the negative campaign have been focused against national institutions, parties and politicians. In this sense is proper

to remark that there has been a strong ideological competition both intra and extra block. In the left part of the dimension PSOE and UP have been fighting for the same voters and against the right-wing parties. CS, PP and VOX have also been trying to overcome one to the other in order to become the preminent force in the right spectrum. All this confrontation led to negative attacks against each other.



■ No Neg ■ Neg



■ Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Inst. Parties Politicians ■ National Inst. Parties Politicians  
 ■ Other

## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



The project monitored 5 Facebook accounts that produced 761 posts, engaging more than a million people overall. Only 20.6% of them were regarding EU topics. PSOE was the one with more social content followed by PP and UP. CS and VOX were in the last positions. Regarding the engagement, VOX was the one with a higher number of people engaging with almost half a million people engaging- They were followed by UP and PSOE in similar numbers (around a quarter of a million). Far from them and close to each other are PP and CS, with very little numbers in comparison with the others.

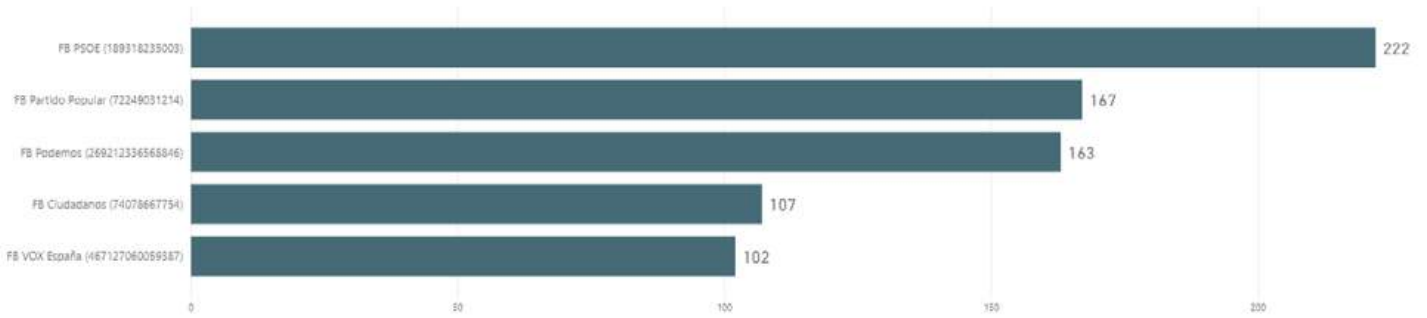
Regarding the mood of the analysed posts, we can see how the favourable feelings were the most stated by all the parties. PP had

almost a quarter of their contents with an angry mood -probably because of them losing the general elections held prior to the European ones-, followed by UP, VOX and CS. All of them did not get the results they expected in April and were trying to mobilize new voters.

One of the most outstanding data is the almost 40% of the posts published by PSOE with the mood 'Sad' on them. This is because the party decided to conduct a 'fear campaign'. It was focused on them being the only possibility for the three right-wing parties not to get in any Government. This is because two of those parties stated that they will work together in order to force out PSOE from the institutions.



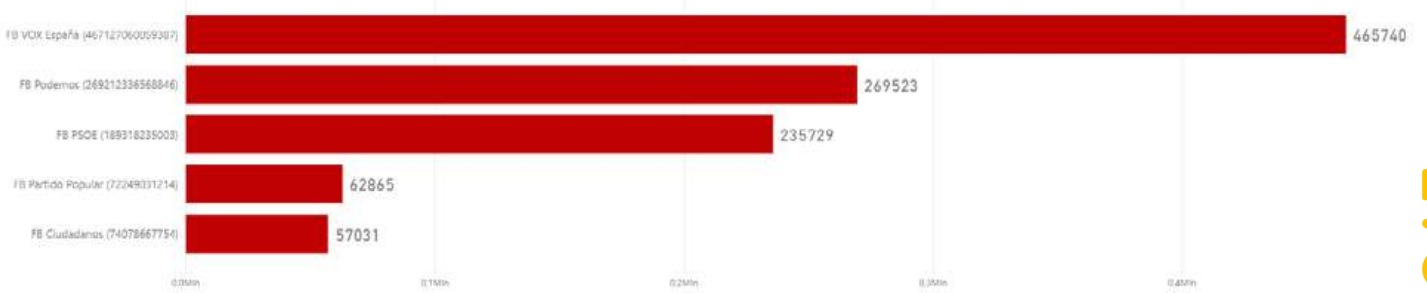
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

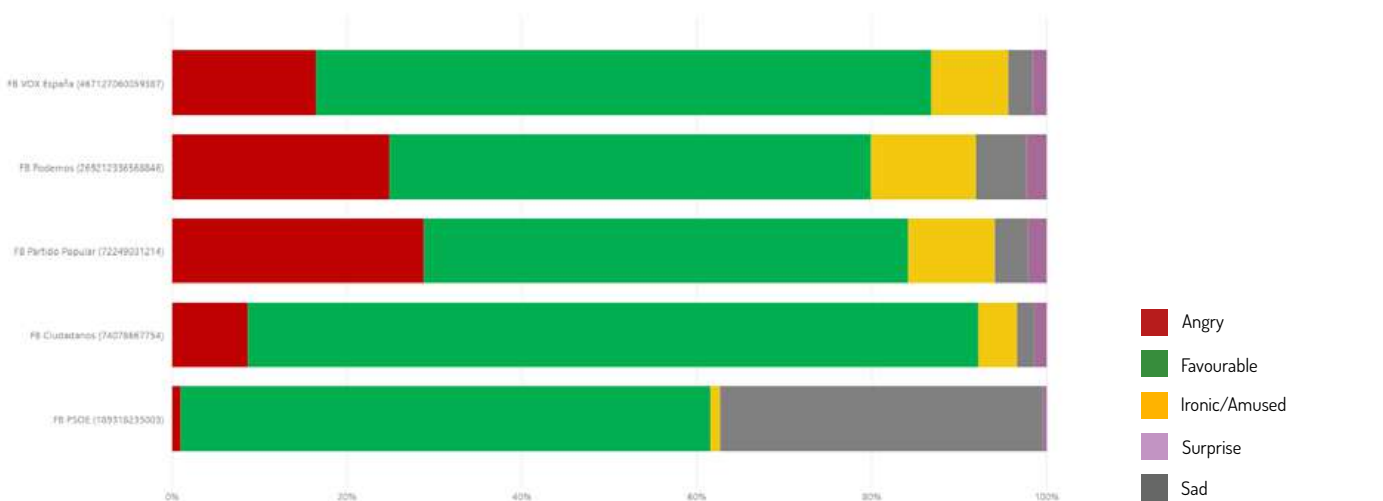


245

\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# SWEDEN

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Membership: 1995  
European area: **Northern Europe**  
Population: **9,747,355**  
Number of MEPs: 20  
Election day: **May 26, 2019**  
Concurrent elections: **No**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Sweden has 20 seats in the EUP, which are distributed by proportional list based elections where the country forms a single constituency. Just as in national parliamentary elections a threshold of 4 percent is applied.

Campaign activities are not regulated as such, but traditionally the EUP election campaigns go on during the two weeks preceding the election. Most media outlets are available for the parties to use, including the public service channels of TV and radio, which uphold principles of objectivity and impartiality. There is no free airtime for parties in the campaigns; instead, party representatives are invited to debates and interviews in major broadcast media. Moreover, parties campaign through social media and newspapers, as well as in public space in the form of posters and billboards. Since a decade ago, parties also have the opportunity to purchase political advertising on television in the commercial Channel 4.

After the general election of 2018 the Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterna) formed a government with the Greens (Miljöpartiet – de gröna), with support from the Liberals (Liberalerna) and the Centre party (Centern). Thus, the political landscape changed significantly, as this ended a long-standing divide between a leftist and a rightist bloc contending for power.

In recent years Sweden has also experienced an increasing voter polarization on a cultural values dimension, where among others issues concerning migration, crime and gender equality have gained prominence. At the same time, the sentiments toward the EU membership among Swedish voters are more positive than ever. According to exit polls only 11 percent of EP voters wanted Sweden to leave the EU. Neither do any political parties actively forward a “leave” agenda, although some parties express dissatisfaction with “Brussels” and advocate against deeper integration.

When asking the voters about their rationale for casting their ballot it is quite obvious how classic issues on the left-right scale – such as economy, unemployment, and social welfare – were less important in the campaign and trailing behind in saliency when voters made up their minds. Issues important in recent European elections in Sweden – such as food quality, euro currency, and the free movement of labour – were considered much less important for voters, even if labour was an important appeal in the campaign of the Social Democrats. Other issues were more significant this time. In the mind of the voters migration, crime and gender equality were higher on the agenda – three issues that all belong to the cultural dimension. However, environment and democracy in the EU were also salient when voters decided how

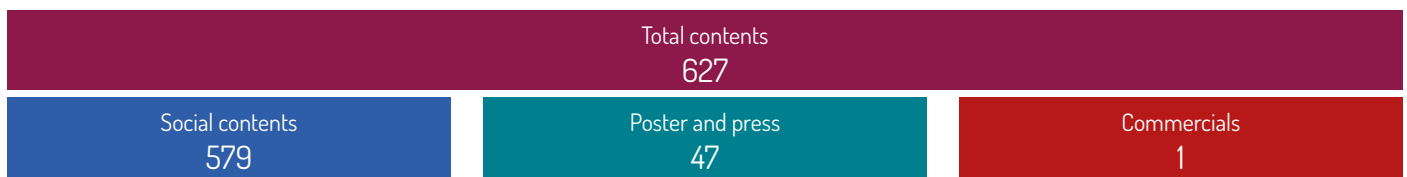
to vote.

If one wants to capture the image of the Swedish European campaign, it can be seen as centered around three major themes. The first one was environment, where all parties used appeals on posters, ads and Facebook on how to counter climate change. Pro-Europe parties as well as less EU-enthusiastic parties promoted cooperation in the EU to prevent climate change.

The second theme concerned what the EU was supposed to be. Even if no Swedish party embraced a Swexit, some of them used slogans like “Make EU moderate again” (Christian Democrats) or “More Sweden, less Brussels” (Sweden Democrats), which indicated no wish for further EU-integration. Another way to address the future of EU was the ght against right-wing extremism. The prime minister also dubbed the election “a referendum on right-wing extremism” and other parties used slogans like “Hope instead of hatred” (Greens) or “Vote extremists and nationalists out” (Liberals). The third theme was gender equality, which initially was no a major issue, but became increasingly prevalent as the campaign evolved. The background was about different events during the campaign. A scandal was revealed when one candidate of the Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna) was accused of sexual harassment. In the aftermath of the event, other parties questioned how the party handled the situation and their position on gender equality. Even more important was the debate on abortion rights, where a Christian Democratic (Kristdemokraterna) MEP was accused of having voted in a much more conservative way, than their campaign rhetoric displayed. Taken together, the Swedish EU election of 2019 was in many ways rather polarized. Even if actions to prevent climate change united all parties and no one proposed a Swexit, there were significant disagreements about EU as a project and opinions along the cultural dimension of politics. The election ended with a gain of one seat for four of the parties: The Centre party (2 seats in the new EP), Christian Democrats (2 seats), Sweden Democrats (3 seats) and the Moderate party (Moderaterna) (4 seats). Two parties made seat losses compared to 2014: The Liberal party, minus one (1 seat) and the Greens, minus two (2 seats). Social Democrats (5 seats) and the Left party (Vänstern) (1 seat) were unchanged. The Feminist party (Feministiskt Initiativ), who had 1 seat from the EUP election in 2014 did not manage to repeat the success and attracted less than 1 percent of the votes.

The turnout of the election was 55.3 percent, which was up 4.2 since 2014, and a record high for European Parliament elections in Sweden.

## ELECTORAL MATERIALS



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
Socialdemokraterna	109	4	1	5
Vänsterpartiet	89	7	-	1
Moderaterna	84	8	-	4
Miljöpartiet – de gröna	87	4	-	2
Liberalerna	82	7	-	1
Sverigedemokraterna	73	6	-	3
Kristdemokraterna	55	4	-	2
Centern	Not monitored	7	-	2

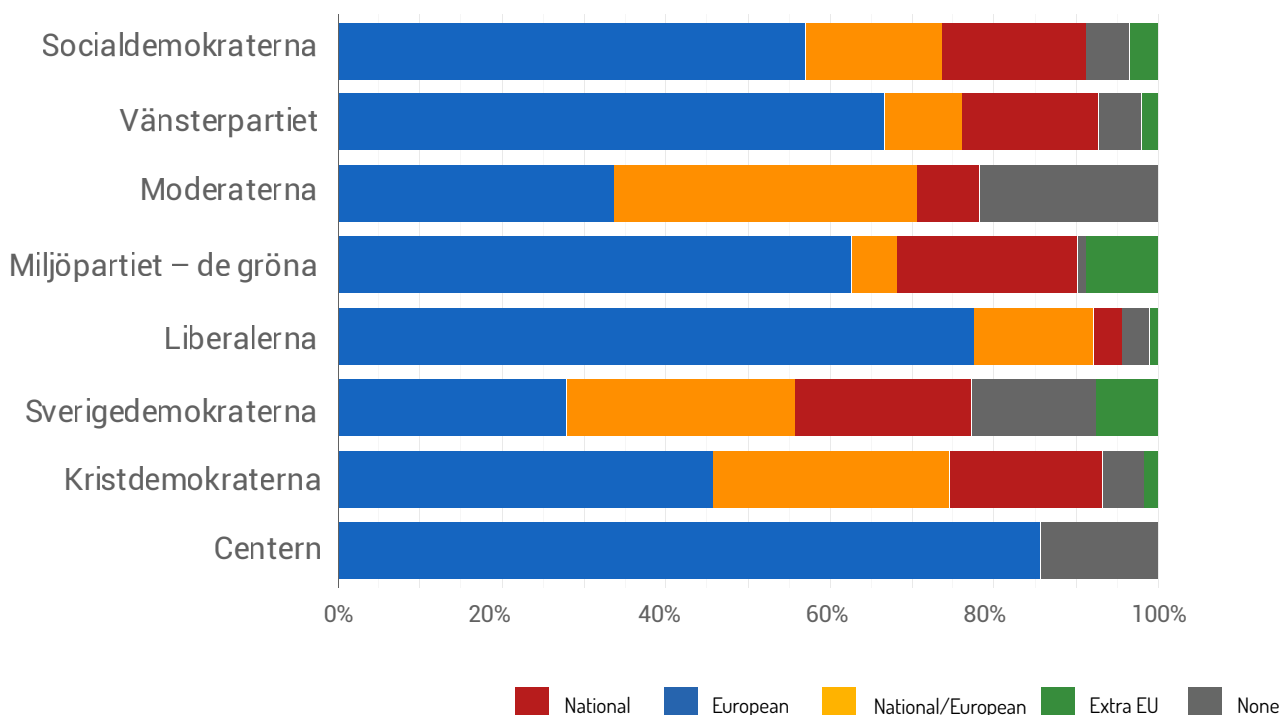
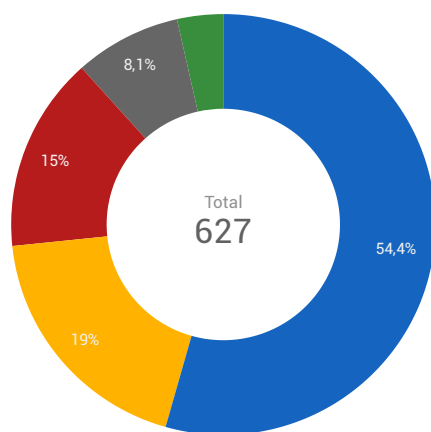
Swedish political parties spend less resources on EU campaigns compared with the national elections. This was also true for the 2019 campaign. Newspaper ads and TV commercials were less used. Instead, posters and above all social media - like their Facebook accounts - were more central in the campaign. The Social Democrats and the Centre party spend more money than other parties on campaigning, and were the only ones who published ads in the leading newspapers. TV commercials had its breakthrough a decade ago in the Swedish elections, but this channel was only used by the Social Democrats in the EU elections 2019.

All parties were active on their Facebook accounts, publishing campaign webcards, webcasts, videos, photos, but also linking to media performances (interviews, debates, open editorial pieces) and to some extent sharing posts from other accounts. The Social Democrats were also the most active party in this regard. Christian Democrats seems to be a little less active on the party account, but it could be an effect of top candidates being more active on their own accounts. There has been information available that top-candidate Sara Skyttedal spent more money on Facebook than all other candidates.

### ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

The Swedish campaign had a predominantly European focus (54%), followed by a comparing/contrasting perspective between EU and Sweden (19%). Only 15 % had a clear national dimension of the campaign messages. Even if some material of the campaign was related to EU, it occasionally (8 %) did not address neither EU nor national conditions. Sometimes this was the case when EU candidates appeared without having a clear appeal or when posts on Facebook only advertised upcoming webcasts or the like. The extra-EU dimension mostly concerned environmental issues like climate change or migration and EU borders, where sometimes a global perspective was applied.

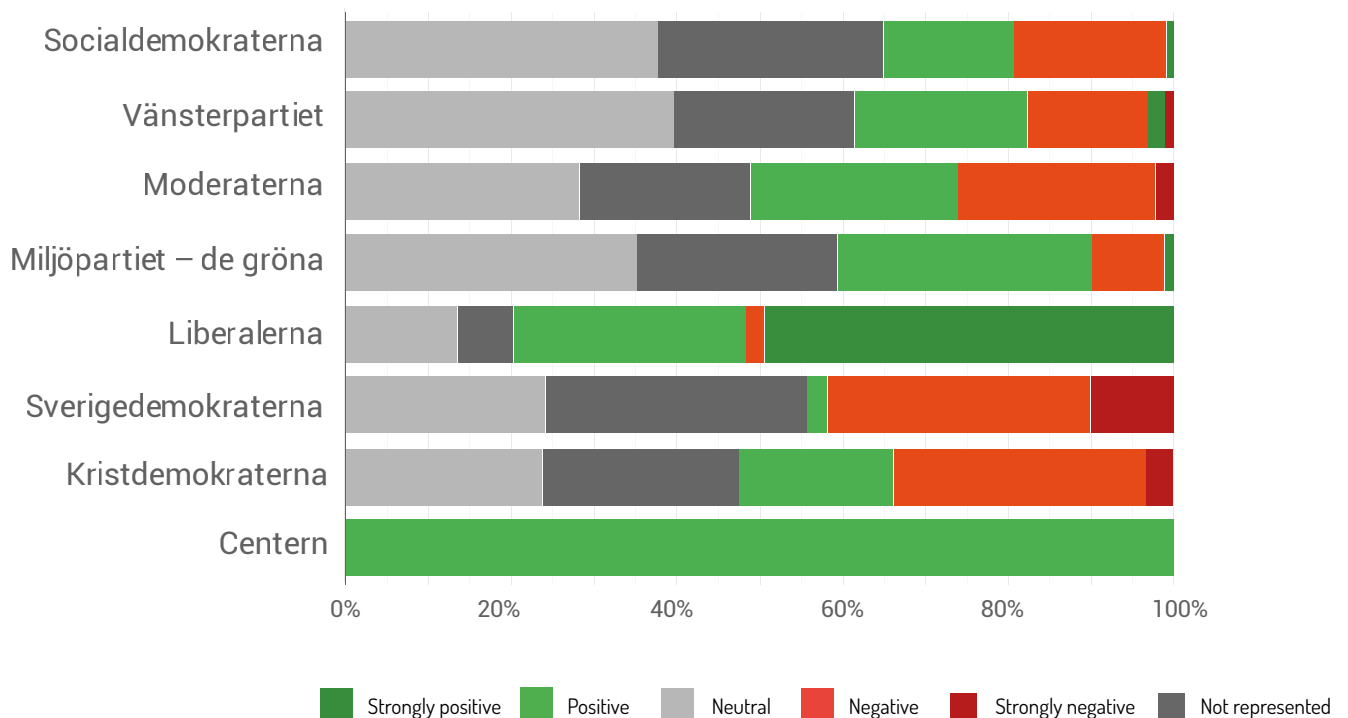
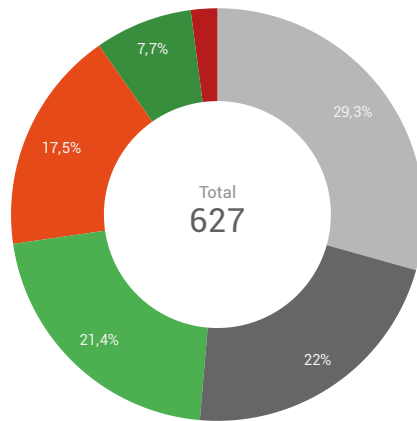
Three parties stand out having a less European perspective in their campaigns. The Moderate party, the Christian Democrats and the Sweden Democrats. All these had a higher proportion of national dimensions in their appeals, but even more a contrasting message where the EU dimension was related to the national. For the Moderate party it was probably a strategy to make EU issues more relevant to voters using slogans like “stop foreign theft bands”. For Christian Democrats and Sweden Democrats the contrasting message was a way of showing their more critical view on increased EU integration. The slogan “Make EU more moderate again” (Christian Democrats) is an example of this.



## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

Around one fifth (22%) of the Swedish campaign material have no evaluation of EU or Europe at all. As mentioned earlier, many Facebook posts are reminders of upcoming campaign events or other type of content without addressing Europe. The larger part where EU is addressed (29%) has no evaluation of Europe. When limiting the scope to positive and negative evaluations of Europe (and EU), the main conclusion is that positive assessments dominate (29 % vs 20 %). However, there are significant party differences. Pro-Europe parties, like the Liberals and Centre party, have the most positive view of EU. The Liberals used slogans like “Vote for Europe” and in their campaign Europe is almost never viewed in a more critical light. The same goes for the Centre party where all content has been categorized as being

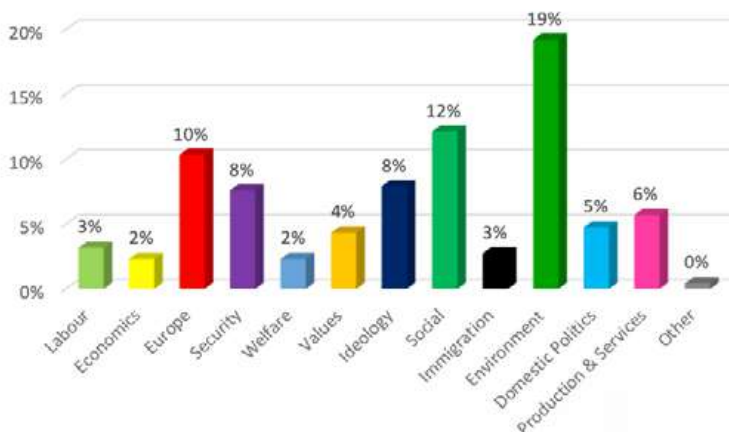
positive to Europe. It should be noted that the Facebook account of the party was not monitored and the results are therefore only based on the posters and press ads. Even so, the party used only positive rhetoric when Europe was addressed. The Greens also had more positive than negative views on Europe/EU in their campaign, in which European collaboration was seen as a prerequisite for successful prevention of climate change. Again, we can see a more critical perspective in the campaign of the Moderate party, Christian Democrats where Europe is framed more negatively than positive. The most critical view on Europe is not surprisingly found in the Sweden Democrat campaign. Here we almost find no positive assessment of Europe, and especially EU, at all.



## MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

Almost one-fifth (19%) of the content of the Swedish campaign focused on environment issues, which in practice means climate change and nuclear power. The Moderate party and the Christian Democrats launched nuclear power as an effective way to prevent climate change. Environmental issues thus became the dominating issue during the Swedish EU campaign. All parties tried to find a way to talk about how they would promote ways to stop the climate change. In second place, we find social issues (12%), which to a large extent comprised gender equality and a debate about abortion. The revelation by the newspaper Dagens Nyheter of how the Christian Democratic MEP Lars Adaktusson voted on abortion became one of the dominant issues during the last week of the campaign. The scandal became an effective tool for the other parties to attack the Christian Democrats, who so far had a successful campaign with

rising numbers in the polls. Europe is in third place (10%) and in the Swedish campaign this mostly contained appeals about the EU integration, which was both criticized (Christian Democrats/Sweden Democrats) and promoted (Liberals). Security and Ideology share fourth place on the agenda (8%). The debate on security largely focused on crime and to some extent terrorism. This was one of the profile issues for the Moderate party, with slogans like “No terrorists on our streets” and “Stop foreign theft bands”. When Ideology came into focus of the debate, it primarily concerned criticism against right-wing extremism, which was a main message from the Social Democrats, Liberals, Center party and the Greens. One should note that issues often given much attention in political debate, such as labour, welfare and economics only received 7% of the campaign appeals during the EU election campaign in Sweden.

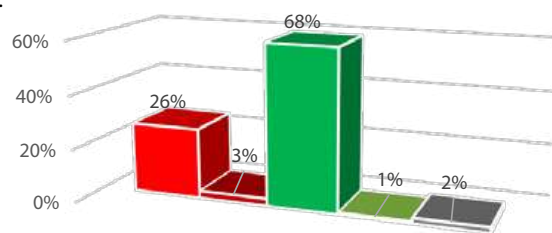
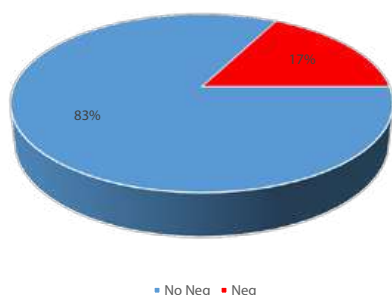


\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.

## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

Negative campaigning did not dominate the Swedish campaign during the EU elections. Only 17% of the campaign appeals characterized as attacking opponents. This can to some extent be explained by the large number of Facebook posts focusing on announcements for upcoming campaign events, such as webcasts, meetings or debates and interviews with candidates on TV. Apart from campaign announcements, a large part of the campaign also focused on the party agenda, promoting the party policy instead of attacking opponents. When looking at targets of negative attack two-thirds (68%) were related to national politicians and parties.

The attacks are predominately mirroring the political debate between candidates and parties where the appeals criticizes political proposals and ideology/positions on different issues. One-third (26%) of the attacks are directed against foreign politicians and political institutions. Behind this category is more or less exclusively attacks on the EU and what is labelled as foreign right wing extremist parties. Media – national and international – or other actors were almost never the target of attacks, not even by populist parties.



■ Foreign Inst. Parties Politicians ■ Foreign Media People Associations  
 ■ National Inst. Parties Politicians ■ National Media People Associations  
 ■ Other



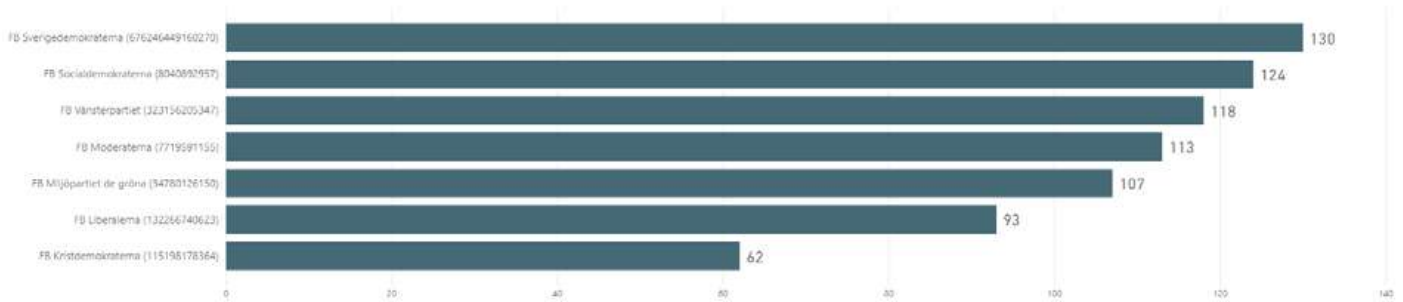
## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



Even if majorities of the posts (77,5 %) are relevant for the EU campaign, parties regularly posted content discussing domestic politics instead of the EU campaign. This was more common in the beginning of the campaign and especially around May 1th, when Social Democrats and the Left party made a number of posts focused on International Workers Day. The rank order is more or less the same with one exception. The Sweden Democrats published more posts on their account than any other party (n=130), but the party was among those with the least number of posts dealing with the EU election (n=73). The engagement of the Sweden Democratic Facebook account is also by far the highest, with strong and intense

interaction and activity. Even if the Moderate party is far behind, the Facebook account of the party seems to create somewhat more engagement compared with social media accounts of other more mainstream parties. Those interacting with the Sweden Democratic account are also by far angrier when it comes to showing their mood. More than 50 % reacts with anger on what is posted. The Moderate party posts are not only the second most engaging, they are also ranked number two when it comes to anger response. On the opposite side we find the Greens where almost no posts are reacted upon with anger. More than 70 % receive a favorable reaction, which maybe reflects the party slogan "Hope not hatred".

### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY

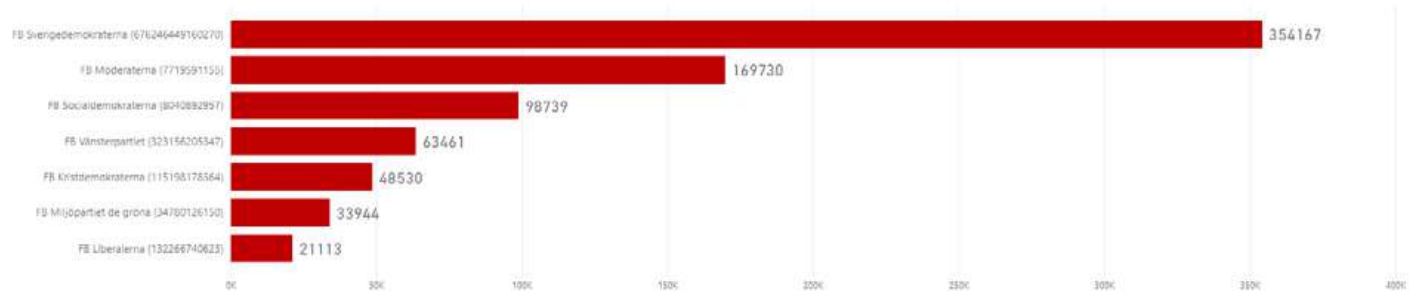


253

\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

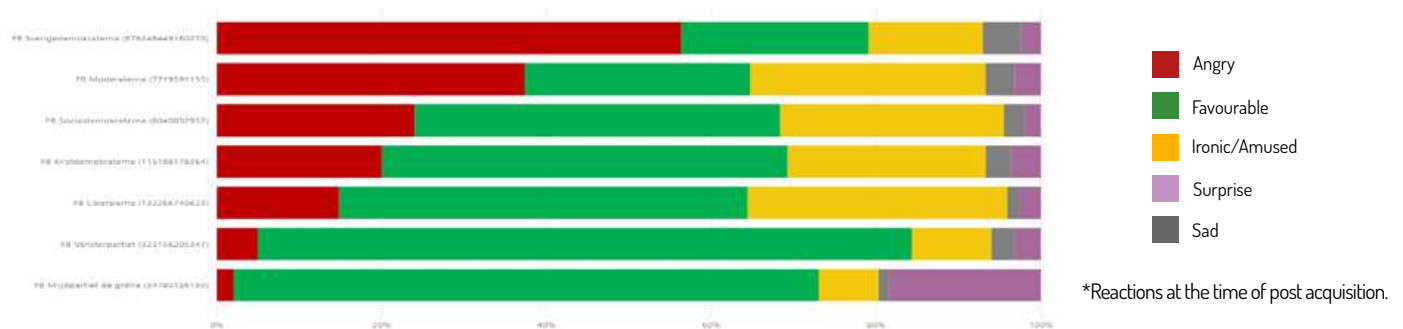
### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.





# UNITED KINGDOM

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Membership: 1973

European area: **Northern Europe**

Population: **64,875,165**

Number of MEPs: **73**

Election day: **May 23, 2019**

Concurrent elections: **Local**

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## ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The 2019 European elections were not supposed to have happened in the United Kingdom. Theresa May and her government had strenuously tried and failed to deliver Brexit before a deadline that was consciously set just before polling day for the EU elections. It was therefore a source of further embarrassment for an administration already in crisis when May's de facto deputy David Lidington formally announced on 7th May that voting would take place just over two weeks later. The inability to make progress on Brexit meant the UK remained a member state and would be obliged to hold elections and a campaign which would mark the beginning of the end of the Prime Minister's three years in Downing Street.

Polling day was 23rd May (a Thursday as is the tradition) using the Additional Member System of Voting. 73 members were elected to represent the various Nations, English regions and Gibraltar. Everybody aged 18 or older could vote although there were widespread reports that many EU citizens residing in the UK as well as several British expatriates living on the continent were unable to participate. Foremost among the reasons why people were excluded were reported problems with registration arising from the lateness with which the election was finally confirmed. By then the campaign was underway.

Election reporting in the UK is regulated by the normal legal statutes that ensure broadcasters are obliged to adhere to guidelines requiring radio and television to be impartial during campaigns. By contrast British newspapers are under no such obligations to provide balanced coverage. That said it was noteworthy as to how largely indifferent the more popular press was towards reporting on the EU elections. This lack of media interest is nothing new and was characteristic of previous campaigns. This factor also supported the rationale behind this analysis, specifically the decision to focus on Facebook posts from the different parties. The platform provides an ideal opportunity to document and understand the main priorities of the rival politicians, especially in the absence of other forms of promotion like print and outdoor advertising that were unavailable due to the delayed confirmation that the elections would be taking place.

The campaign in the UK was overshadowed by the Brexit crisis. Paradoxically this meant the election was more preoccupied with the European issue that it had been in any of the eight previous contests dating back 40 years to 1979. The following commentary primarily draws on the Facebook material posts by the seven UK wide parties during three weeks prior to polling day. Two of these were the newly formed (pro) Brexit Party and the pro-

EU Change UK which, although diametrically opposed, shared a singular focus on the In/Out issue in their promotions. But it was the Liberal Democrats who were ultimately more successful in positioning and presenting themselves as the leading Remain grouping. Although the Greens and UKIP were pro- and anti-Brexit respectively their campaigns also shared a common approach in the way they attempted to make the elections about a wider range of topics, albeit several of these were closely linked to EU governance. Labour did something similar but conspicuously avoided the Leave/Remain issue. Most striking of all, however, was the failure of governing Conservatives to post any substantive commentary about the EU prior to the eve of polling day when a statement was put out attacking the Brexit and Labour Parties.

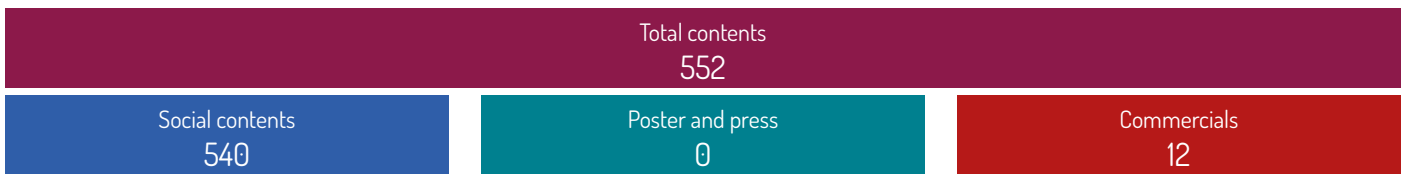
The campaign outcome reconfirmed the split in the British public opinion already memorably identified by the 52-48% vote to endorse Brexit in 2016. Buoyed by their success in local government elections on 2nd May, the Liberal Democrats and Greens used this momentum to help eclipse their pro-remain rivals Change UK, a party which consciously decided not to campaign for town hall representation. Even more dramatic was the spectacular collapse in support for UKIP, who nominally 'won' the last elections in 2014, but this time saw their supporters desert them for their former leader Nigel Farage's Brexit Party. Nigel Farage was very much front and centre in what was a highly presidential campaign on behalf of his new Brexit Party which duly topped the polls and claimed victory in this election. Theirs was a reasonably vibrant advertising campaign that mercilessly focused on the failure by the established parties to honour democracy through ensuring the UK would leave the EU. The Liberal Democrats were similarly single minded in making their appeal about the same issue if from a completely different perspective. The two politicians who have subsequently emerged as the rival candidates for the now vacant party leadership were noticeable in their prominence in successive Facebook promotions. The other UK wide party that made significant progress in these elections were the Greens and what was noticeable about their online presence was the appearance of several less well known candidates such as Majid Majid and Alex Phillips who would go on to be elected.

The EU elections were important in underlining the impotence of some of the parties. The now increasingly irrelevant UKIP struggled to assert itself and lacked message discipline despite (or perhaps because) it posted so many promotions on a varied range of topics. This in part reflected an apparent power struggle

between the leader of the party and a deputy who publicly challenged his authority during the campaign. Internal tensions were also revealed to have hampered the ability of Change UK to promote themselves and this was reflected in their relatively limited Facebook activity. The EU elections should have provided an ideal opportunity for a party set up to fight Brexit but ended in recriminations and a split among the politicians that could

yet prove terminal. But ultimately the elections may be best remembered as sealing the fate of the Prime Minister May who was conspicuous by her absence from a campaign which culminated in one of her colleagues dramatically resigning her cabinet position on the eve of polling day. I was a highly unusual end to an atypical campaign that some believed would never take place.

**ELECTORAL MATERIALS**



Political party	Social contents	Poster and Press advertising	Commercials	Number of seats
UKIP	227	-	1	0
Brexit	135	-	1	29
Greens	65	-	1	7
Liberal Democrats	56	-	1	16
Labour	29	-	1	10
Change UK	26	-	1	0
Conservative	2	-	1	4
Social Democratic & Labour	Not monitored	-	1	0
Democratic Unionists	Not monitored	-	1	1
Alliance	Not monitored	-	1	1
Scottish National	Not monitored	-	1	3
Plaid Cymru	Not monitored	-	1	1

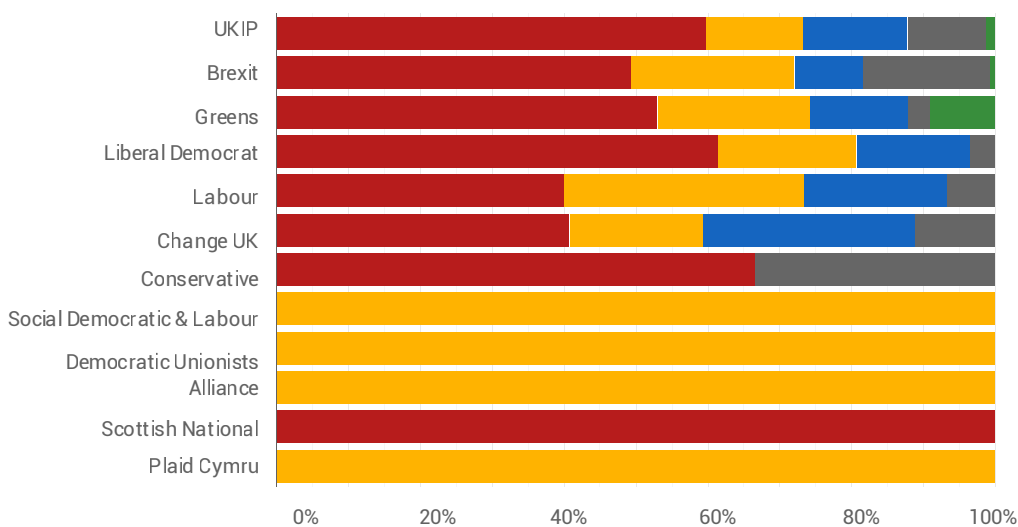
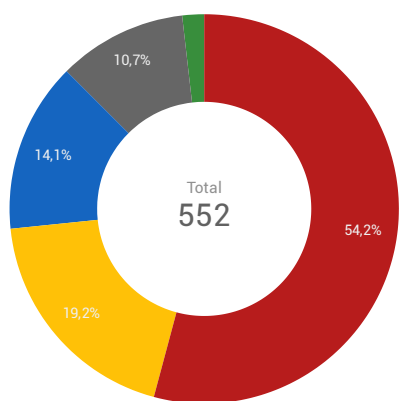
As previously mentioned, many expected these elections to not occur. When they became inevitable, many parties hurriedly put together a campaign. Most politicians had just competed in local elections and were thus ill prepared for the European campaign. Consequently most campaigning was done via social media. UKIP already have a considerable Facebook following and posted most aggressively throughout the campaign. The Brexit Party ran a professional campaign in terms of consistent messaging and its production, as they focused on their core theme that democracy was at risk and that the existing party system was failing the nation through

its inability to deliver on the 2016 Referendum result. The Greens and Liberal Democrats, two staunchly Remain parties, used their successful local elections to post upbeat copy at a high frequency. Labour, who entered the campaign only late on, were more cautious in their approach and this was reflected in their amount of online activity. Change UK, the newly formed pro-Remain party, posted at a low rate relative to rivals which was perhaps surprising given this was their first real test as an electoral force. They hardly appeared on Facebook although they did manage more EU related content than the governing Conservatives who posted their first substance commentary about the elections on the eve of poll.

## ON WHICH DIMENSION ARE THE CONTENTS FOCUSED ON?

Brexit dominated these European elections: the actual return of MEPs to the European parliament was a secondary factor. UKIP and the Brexit Party, the two Leave parties, were vociferous in their attacks on the two main Conservative and Labour parties for failing to deliver through enacting the ‘will of the people’ as expressed through the Referendum. The Remain parties - Change UK, Liberal Democrats and Greens- were favourable towards the

EU but did not pursue positive campaigns. The Remain parties were not so interested in promoting the merits of the EU as they were on undermining the Brexit position of other parties including, most notably, Labour. Labour came under sustained attack by both Leave and Remain parties as they sought to attract voters discouraged by the former party’s ambiguous stance on the issue.

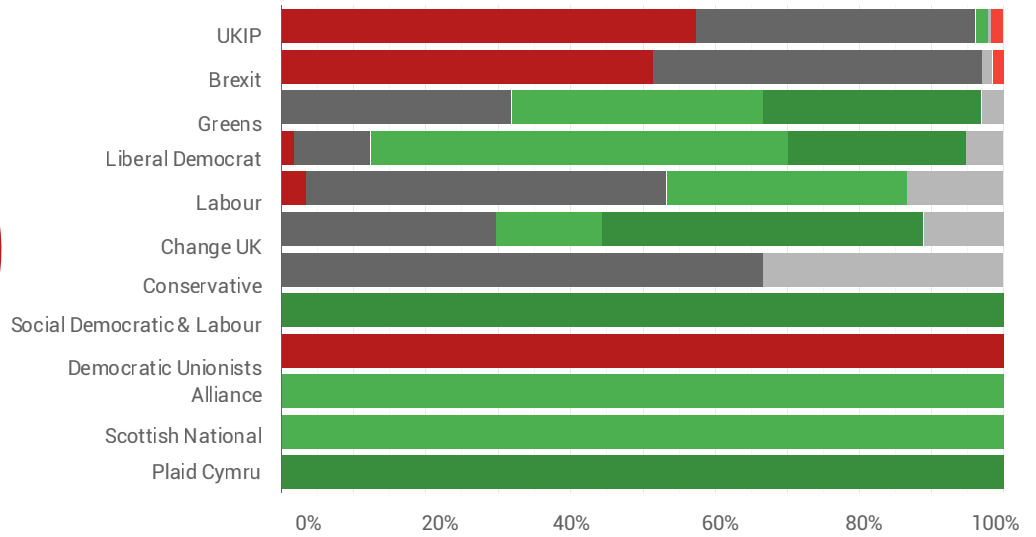
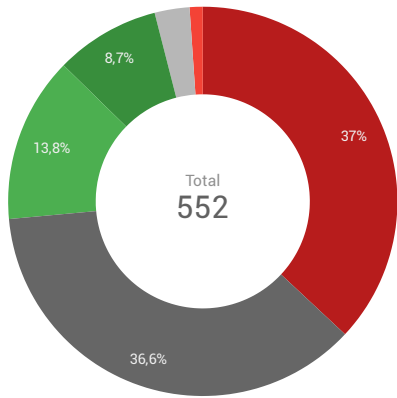


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## HOW IS EUROPE REPRESENTED?

The anti-EU UKIP and the Brexit Party were by far the most active on social media. This explains why 37% of all UK posts were very negative towards the Europe, as opposed to 13.8% that were strongly positive. The chart below demonstrates the different stances each party took on Brexit. The two staunch leave parties Brexit Party and UKIP were unsurprisingly highly critical of the EU, the three remain parties, Change UK, Liberal Democrats and The Greens were either strongly positive or positive towards the

EU, this is to be expected given their Remain status. Labour who have struggled with their message over Brexit are seen here as more positive than negative towards EU as they discussed working closely with their EU partners to achieve certain goals such as preventing climate change. SDLP, Plaid Cymru, SNP and Alliance were also positive towards the EU in their party election broadcasts, whilst DUP promoted their anti-EU stance.



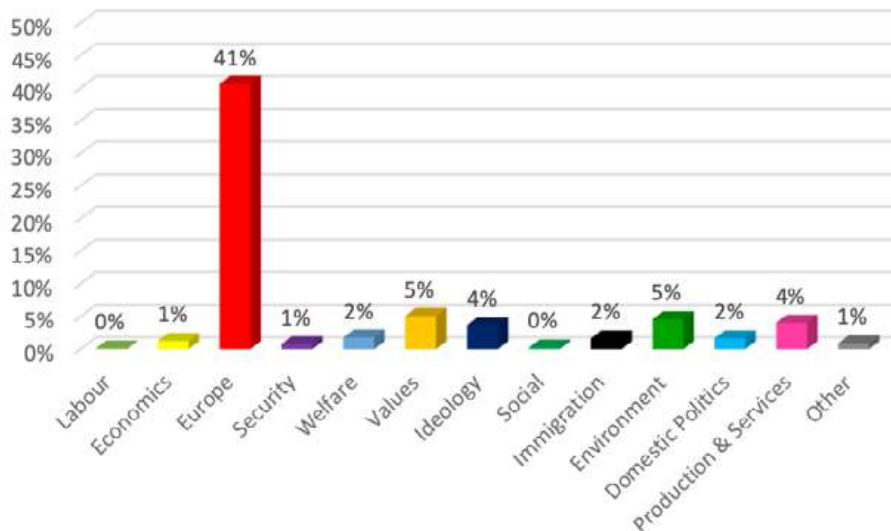
Legend: Strongly positive (dark green), Positive (light green), Neutral (grey), Negative (red), Strongly negative (dark red), Not represented (black)

### MAIN TOPICS OF THE CAMPAIGN

As noted, the focus in this election was the UK's departure from the EU. This is demonstrated in this chart with the topic of Europe clearly being the most dominant. The Leave parties, The Brexit Party in particular solely focused on Brexit, this was a conscious choice of the campaign as they did not want to 'murk the waters' with other policies. They did post about values such as honesty, to question the integrity of the two main parties and their commitment to delivering Brexit. UKIP, whilst also focusing on Brexit, were more likely to hark back to previous campaigns, mentioning issues around fishing and migration. The Liberal Democrats also concentrated on Brexit and

Brexit alone, not posting on any other issue. The Greens, true to their name, posted around the theme of environment, specifically, climate change. This was often framed around needing to stay in the EU to make a positive impact on the environment. Labour were less Brexit oriented, posting about issues such as trade and the NHS. For a large portion of the campaign, Labour were in cross-party talks with The Conservatives about leaving the EU and their stance on Brexit has often been characterized as vague and this may be the reason why they were looking to avert attention from this key issue and focus on their strengths.

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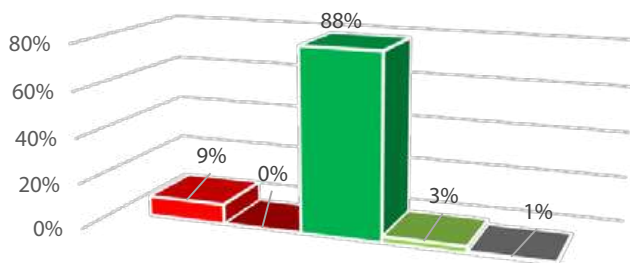
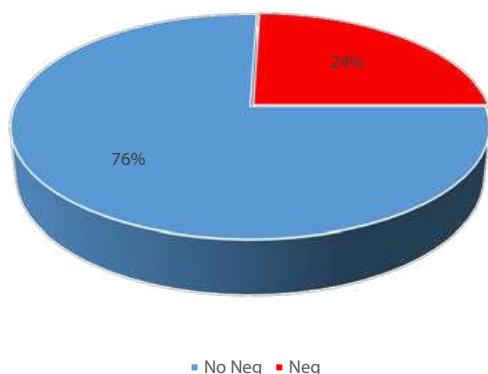
\*Multiple variables - the % values could be over than 100%. In the chart are not included the values related to the electoral campaign issues.



## NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN

A majority of negative posts were focused towards rival parties rather than the EU or European politicians. UKIP and The Brexit Party focused on the two major parties as they looked to gather votes from those disillusioned with the two main parties handling of Brexit. UKIP were the only party that attacked European gures, namely Guy Verhofstadt. Theresa May was a particular target of ridicule by both of the Leave parties. The Brexit Party honed down on the Labour Party as they attempted to depict the party as betraying the people and call into question whether they still represent the working class. Labour were also under attack by the remain parties, who in contradistinction to the two Leave parties, painted the Labour Party as a Leave party. Jeremy Corbyn in particular faced scrutiny for previous comments he had made that were anti-EU in

nature. The Remain parties also fought between themselves as both Greens and LibDems vied for the position of the strongest remain party. The Greens in particular attacked the LibDems based on their time in Coalition government with The Conservatives. The Labour Party decided to warn the public against insurgence of the far-right in the UK. In what can be seen as an attack mainly towards the Brexit Party, they likened their leader Nigel Farage, to far-right gure Tommy Robinson and UKIP leader Gerard Batten. They highlighted previous anti-Islamic comments made by the three gures. Despite the Conservatives posting very little election material, one of the videos warned the public about Nigel Farage and explained that he cannot deliver Brexit.



- Foreign Instit. Parties Politicians
- Foreign Media People Associations
- National Instit. Parties Politicians
- National Media People Associations
- Other

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## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

7 <small>N. Accounts monitored*</small>	1260 <small>N. Posts produced</small>	1557706 <small>Engagement**</small>	42,8 % <small>percentage of posts on EU campaign topics</small>
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Reactions to posts made by the rival parties illustrates the divide between that exists between the Remain and Leave sides. The pro-Remain Green Party, received the most favourable reactions to its postings which mixed their declaration of wanting to stay in the EU with a traditional appeal for stronger action against climate change. A similar pattern of favourability can be found in response to most of the Liberal Democrats' pro-EU promotions. There were also examples of ironic/amused reactions to posts, most often in response to attacks from other parties, or else because of the LibDems' 'Bollocks to Brexit' campaign slogan. Some applauded the light-hearted, cheeky advertising approach while others saw it as lowering political discourse. The majority of Labour posts were also favourable with their youthful following getting behind the party's message of opposing the far-right. The amount of ironic and/or amused responses were relatively high as people expressed

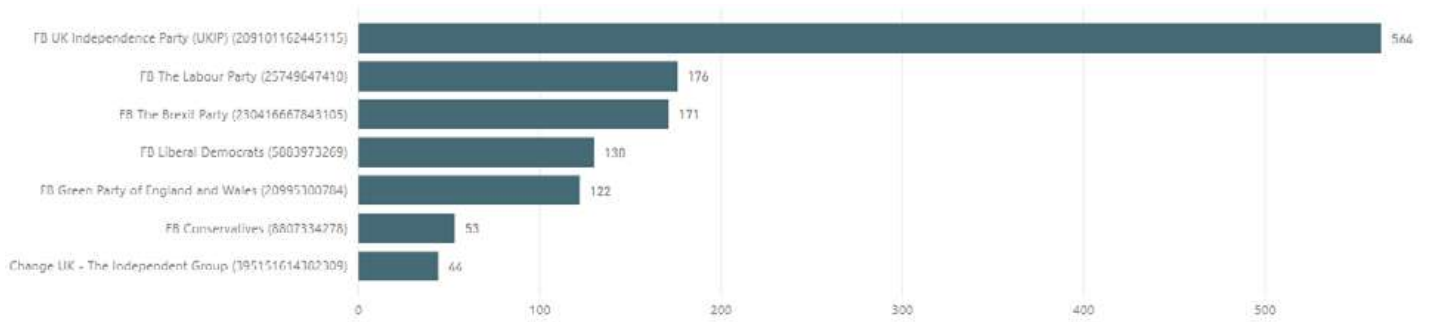
negative feelings about the parliamentary deadlock and reports of cross-party talks between the two parties. The new Brexit Party experienced a largely favourable response to its posts. The core message of wanting to leave the EU imminently played well with their vocal anti-EU followers. The Party hosted several online Facebook rallies that often witnessed highly positive messages in the chat section towards the speaker live on stage. Conservatives, UKIP and Change UK all fared badly on Facebook and, of the UK wide parties, receiving the least amount of votes in this election. Conservatives had the most ironic and/or amused responses, as well as the third most angry feedback ; this was likely due to growing public frustration with how Brexit was being handled. The governing party's postings appeared to be at variance with what many respondents claimed was happening in the country. The feedback received by Change UK was noteworthy in that it



demonstrated people were frustrated with the new party's seeming inability to make any significant electoral in-roads not to mention their anger over Brexit. The other major loser in this campaign, UKIP, received a considerable number of negative responses following

their posting of a range of messages on various subjects. The party was also forced to try and defend highly offensive comments by one prominent candidate and activist following his misogynistic comments about a high profile feminist politician.

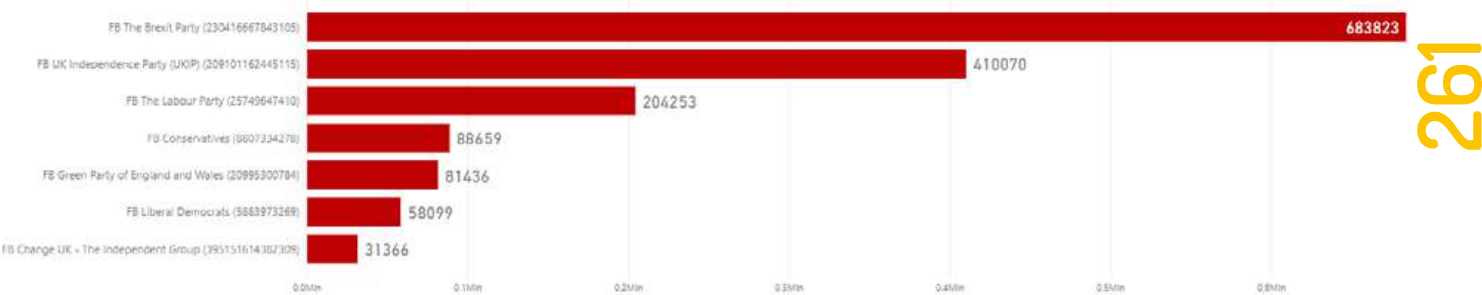
### NUMBER OF FB POSTS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*EEMC research monitored the official FB account of the most political parties in terms of votes.

■ Post published

### ENGAGEMENT BY POLITICAL PARTY

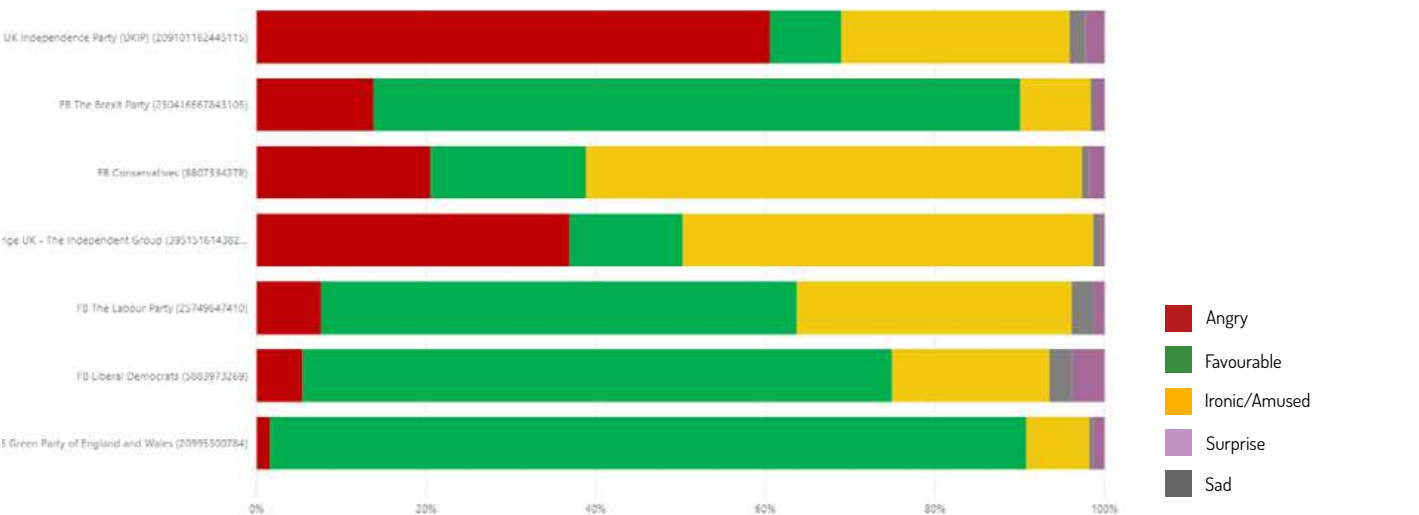


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\*Engagement at the time of post acquisition.

■ Engagement

### REACTIONS BY POLITICAL PARTY



\*Reactions at the time of post acquisition.



# APPENDIX

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## MEMBERS OF NATIONAL LOCAL UNITS

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University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg
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University of Turin, Italy
University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom
University of Zagreb, Croatia
University Paris-Est Créteil, France
Vilnius University, Lithuania
Vrije University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

## WORKSHOP

COUNTRY	WORKSHOP	UNIVERSITY	DATE
Netherlands	European Parliament Elections, discussing a future worth voting for	Vrije University of Amsterdam	April 30
Sweden	Europe is voting	Gothemburg university	May 6
Croatia	2019 European Parliament Elections - Second-order elections?	University of Zagreb	May 6
Austria	Why Europe	University of Innsbruck	May 6
Spain	EU for you: you for EU	University of Burgos	May 8
Greece	Discussing Euroelections 2019	University of Athens	May 8
Hungary	Discussion on the European Parliament Elections 2019	Szeged university	May 9
Finland	Youth and the EU elections	Abo Akademi	May 14
Slovakia	Workshop on the 2019 European Elections	Comenius University	May 14
Italy	Information and electoral campaign	Roma Tre University	May 14
Estonia	Debate!	University of Tallin	May 14
Bulgaria	The image of the EP'19 Election campaign	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"	May 15
Denmark	The European elections 2019 and the future of Denmark.	Centre for the European Studies	May 15
Czech Republic	Reforms or plasts? Czexit or more integration?	Charles University	May 17
Malta	Social media and the European Elections 2019	University of Malta	May 17
Portugal	New Opportunities for Europe	Lusõfona University	May 20
Poland	European debate. European Election Monitoring Center	Maria Curie-Sklodowska University Lublin	May 20
France	The European elections during the campaign - actors and strategies	Journalism practical institute	May 21
Romania	Discussing European Elections	University of Bucharest	May 21
Cyprus	the upcoming elections and the role played by Cyprus i	Cyprus university of Technology	May 21
Latvia	why young people do not participate in European elections?	University of Latvija	May 22
United Kingdom	2019 European Elections Special: Reflections on the UK Experience	Loughborough University	May 22
Slovenia	Workshop on the 2019 European Elections	University of Ljubljana	May 22
Luxembourg	Europe votes. Let's talk about the European Elections in Luxembourg	University of Luxembourg	May 23
Germany	Quo vadis, EU? The electoral campaign between European integration and national divergence	Freie Universität of Berlin	May 23
Lithuania	European Parliament election - Experiences and insights	Martynas Mazvydas National Library	May 23





## CODEBOOK OF THE MONITORING

For the research three different codebooks have been produced in order to analyse three different types of electoral materials: poster and press advertising, Tv commercials and social contents.

Find below these codebooks which are divided in three sections:

- 1. Posters and Press Pathway**
- 2. Political Commercials Pathway**
- 3. Social Contents Pathway**

Some variables are the same for all paths because of in this way it is possible to compare and cross-reference data and results related to every typology of materials.

The first pathway (posters and press) is completed and it is possible to read all the variables, meanwhile in the following pathways (political commercials and social contents) there is the complete path, but only the new variables are presented in details.

### V01 TIPOLOGY OF DOCUMENT

1	Print (posters or press advertising) → go to Posters and Press pathway
2	Political Commercial (commercials broadcasted on public or private Tv, and in public spaces as train stations, subways, etc) → go to Political Commercials Pathway
3	Social content → go to Social Contents Pathway

## 1. Posters and Press Pathway

### V01\_1 DOCUMENT TIPOLOGY

1	Poster (free or paid announcement published in public areas: street billboards, train stations etc.)
2	Press advertising (paid announcement published on the two most read national tabloids/newspapers)

### V02 EXPLICATIVE DOCUMENT TITLE (ENGLISH)

Free text (max 50 characters)

### V03 PARTY AND/OR COALITION NAME (LATIN ALPHABET)

Free text (max 80 characters)

### V03\_2 EUROPEAN PARTY, ONE FOR THE POLITICAL PARTY AND ALL FOR THE COALITION (MULTIPLE CHOICE)

1	EPP – European People’s Party
2	PES – Party of European Socialists
4	ALDE – Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party
5	EDP – European Democratic Party
6	EGP – European Green Party
7	EFA – European Free Alliance
8	ACRE - Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe
9	ECPM – European Christian Political Movement
10	PEL – Party of European Left
11	MENF/MENL – Movement of a Europe of Nations and Freedom
12	APF – Alliance of Peace and Freedom
13	EAF – European Alliance of Freedom
14	AENM – Alliance of European National Movements
15	ADDE – Alliance of Direct Democracy in Europe
16	EUD - EUDemocrats
17	None

### V04 UPLOAD FILE

Uploading Button

### V05 DOCUMENT’S MAIN TEXTS IN ENGLISH

Free text (max 400 characters)

**V06 POSTER/PRESS ADVERTISING TYPOLOGY**

1	Textual (only text, no images except political logo and flags)
2	Photographic
3	Drawing (handmade or by computer)

**V08 IS/ARE THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT?**

1	Yes (they could be candidates or members at national/local level of the party that produced the document, and candidates or members at national/local level of other parties)
2	No → skip to V15

**V09 INSERT THE NAME/S OF THE POLITICIAN/s (MAX 3 NAMES)**

Free text (max 50 characters)
-------------------------------

**V09\_1 THE POLITICIAN/GROUP OF POLITICIANS GENDER IS**

1	Male
2	Female
3	Other gender identity
4	A combination of the above (for mixed group of politicians)

**V11 WHAT KIND OF POLITICIAN/S IS/ARE PRESENT**

1	Friend/s
2	Against/s
3	A Combination of the above

**V11\_1 WHICH IS THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE PERSON/PEOPLE IN THE CONTENT? (MULTIPLE CHOICE)**

1	Head of the party or Party leader
2	Prime Minister
3	Candidate at the European elections
4	Member of political institution (local, national, European)

**V12 THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT IS/ARE**

1	National
2	Foreign
3	A combination of the above

**V10\_1 IS THERE A SPITZENKANDIDAT?**

1	Yes
2	No → skip to V13

**V10\_2 WHAT IS HIS/HER NAME?**

1	Frans Timmermans
2	Manfred Weber
3	Jan Zahradil Nico Cué
4	Violeta Tomič
5	Ska Keller
6	Bas Eickhout
7	Oriol Junqueras
8	Nicola Beer
9	Emma Bonino
10	Violeta Bulc
11	Katalin Cseh
12	Luis Garicano
13	Guy Verhofstadt
14	Margrethe Vestager

15	Team Europe
----	-------------

**V13 HOW THE MAIN POLITICIAN/S IS/ARE DRESSED?**

1	Formal: business suit (jacket and tie) for man or office wear for women
2	Semi-formal (jacket or tie)
3	Casual (no jacket and no tie)
4	More than one outfit

**V14 WHAT IS THE MAIN EXPRESSION OF THE POLITICIAN/S? /HOW DO THE MAIN POLITICIAN/S APPEAR?**

1	Smiling/Friendly
2	Worried/Angry
3	Blank/Neutral
4	Funny (in particular in the Negative and Humours documents)
5	More than one expression

**V15 ARE VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MEMBER STATE PRESENT?**

1	Yes (buildings, symbols, cities, flags, etc)
2	No

**V17 ARE VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE EU PRESENT?**

1	Yes (buildings, symbols, cities, flags, etc)
2	No

**V19 IS/ARE THE OFFICIAL SYMBOL/S OF THE POLITICAL PARTY OR COALITION PRESENT?**

1	Yes
2	No

**V20 IS/ARE THE OFFICIAL SYMBOL/S OF EU PARTY FAMILY MEMBERSHIP PRESENT?**

1	Yes
2	No

**V21 IS/ARE THERE OTHER POLITICAL SYMBOL/S?**

1	Yes
2	No → skip to V23

**V22 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES**

Free text (max 50 characters)
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**V23 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES OF THE MEMBER STATE?**

1	Yes to the People (the Italians, the French, the Italian/French people, the Italian/French voters, etc)
2	Yes to the Territory (Italy, France, Nation, State, Land, Country, Cities, National Institutions)
3	Yes to People and Territory
4	No

**V24 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES TO THE EU?**

1	Yes to the People (the Europeans, the European people, the European voters, etc)
2	Yes to the Territory (Europe, EU, Cities, European Institutions)
3	Yes to People and Territory
4	No

**V25 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCE TO THE POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSION?**

1	Yes
2	No → skip to V27

**V26 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES (E.G. COMMUNISM, FASCISM, LEFT, RIGHT, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERAL, HAMMER AND SICKLE, STARS, FLAMES)**

Free text (max 50 characters)

**V27 ON WHICH DIMENSIONS THE DOCUMENT MAINLY FOCUSED?**

1	National
2	European
3	National and European
5	International (extra EU)
4	None

**V28 HOW IS THE EUROPE REPRESENTED?**

1	Strongly Positive (totally positive)
2	Positive (on one issue: opportunity, resource, develop, etc)
3	Neutral
4	Negative (on one issue: threat, risk, inflation, etc)
5	Strongly Negative (totally negative)
6	Not represented

**V29 ISSUES OF THE DOCUMENT (MULTIPLE CHOICE – MAX 3)**

<b>A</b>	<b>Labour</b>
A1	Employment
A2	Development
A3	Liberalization
A4	Salaries
A5	Unemployment
A6	Other Labour issues
<b>B</b>	<b>Economics</b>
B1	Crisis
B2	Banks
B3	Finance
B4	Inflation
B5	Taxes
B6	Green Economy
B7	Other Economic issue
<b>C</b>	<b>Europe</b>
C1	Euro policies
C2	Anti-EU
C3	EU politician members
C4	Euro Banks
C5	Euro crisis
C6	Euro finance
C7	Euro funds
C8	Euro Institutions
C9	Euro Taxes
C10	Euro (currency)
C11	European Union
C12	Brexit
C13	European Treaties
C14	Another Europe

C15	EU integration
C16	Other European issues
<b>D</b>	<b>Security</b>
D1	Corruption
D2	Crime
D3	Justice
D4	Public Safety
D5	Violence
D6	Terrorism
D7	Other Security issues
<b>E</b>	<b>Welfare</b>
E1	Social services
E2	Grants
E3	Housing Policy
E4	National Health Service
E5	National Educational Service/School
E6	Public Services
E7	Other Welfare issues
<b>F</b>	<b>Geographical</b>
F1	North
F2	South
F3	East
F4	West
F5	Other Geographical issues
<b>G</b>	<b>Values</b>
G1	Peace
G2	Honesty
G3	Justice
G4	Solidarity
G5	Traditions
G6	Multiculturalism/cultural differences
G7	National identity
G8	Religion
G9	Others value issues
<b>H</b>	<b>Politics</b>
H1	Alliances/coalitions
H2	Candidacies
H3	Electoral lists
H4	Party families
H5	Political parties
H6	Leader (Biography/Who he-she is)
H7	Call to voting/voting instructions/procedures
H8	Other Political issues
<b>I</b>	<b>Ideology</b>
I1	Antipolitics
I2	Left

I3	Right
I4	Liberal
I5	Conservative
I6	Populism
I7	Nationalism
I8	Racism
I9	Fascism
I10	Communism
I11	Capitalism
I12	Other Ideological issues
<b>L</b>	<b>Social</b>
L1	Old People
L2	Sport
L3	Tourism
L4	Women
L5	Young people
L6	Children
L7	Civil rights
L8	Cultural Heritage
L9	Gender inequalities
L10	Social inequalities
L11	Other Social items
<b>M</b>	<b>Immigration</b>
M1	Integration policies
M2	Migration crisis
M3	Borders/Repatriation
M4	Other Immigration items
<b>N</b>	<b>Environment</b>
N1	Climate change
N2	Nuclear
N3	Energy and environmental sustainability
N4	Other environment items
<b>O</b>	<b>Internal Politics</b>
O1	Reforms
O2	Autonomy/Federalism
O3	Rule of Law
O4	Other internal politics items
<b>P</b>	<b>Productive sectors and services</b>
P1	Agriculture
P2	Industry
P3	Fishing
P4	Transports
P5	Trade
P6	Science and technology
P7	Media and information system
P8	Other productive sectors and services issues

<b>Q</b>	<b>Other items</b>
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**V30 IS THE DOCUMENT AGAINST SOMEONE OR SOMETHING? (EXPLICIT ATTACK TO PEOPLE, POLITICAL ACTORS OR INSTITUTIONS)**

1	Yes
2	No → skip to V32

**V31 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE NEGATIVE ATTACK? (MULTIPLE CHOICE – MAX 3)**

1	Foreign Countries
2	Foreign/European Political Parties/Associations
3	Foreign/European Politicians/Leaders
4	Foreign/EU Institutions/Government
5	Foreign/EU Economic institutions
6	Foreign Media
7	Foreign common people
8	Foreign famous people
9	Foreign civil society
10	National Political Parties/Associations
11	National Politicians/Leaders
12	National Institutions/Government
13	National Economic Institutions
14	National Media
15	National common people
16	National famous people
17	National civil society
18	Other

**V32 DOES THE DOCUMENT USE HUMOR, SATIRE, IRONY, PARODY? (TOWARDS PEOPLE AND POLITICAL ACTOR/S, OR INSTITUTIONS, AS EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT)**

1	Yes
2	No → skip to V37

**V33 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE HUMOUR, SATIRE, IRONY, PARODY? (MULTIPLE CHOICE – MAX 3)**

1	Foreign Countries
2	Foreign/European Political Parties
3	Foreign/European Politicians/Leaders
4	Foreign/EU Institutions/Government
5	Foreign/European Economic institutions
11	Foreign Media
12	Foreign common people
13	Foreign famous people
14	Foreign civil society
6	National Political Parties
7	National Politicians/Leaders
8	National Institutions/Government
9	National Economic institutions
15	National Media
16	National common people
17	National famous people
18	National civil society



10	Other
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**V37 THE MESSAGE OF THE THE CONTENT IS MAINLY**

1	Emotional → go to V38
2	Rational → go to V39
3	Neutral / Other → end

**V38 WHICH EMOTION DOES THE DOCUMENT USE AS LEVERAGE? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

1	Amusement – Feeling good – Enthusiasm
2	Empathy – Compassion – Solidarity
3	Pride – Membership – Ambition
4	Fear – Threat – Insecurity
5	Anger – Disgust – Hate

**V39 SWHICH KIND OF RATIONALITY DOES THE DOCUMENT CALL FOR? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

1	Competence – Knowledge – Reliability
2	Justice – Honesty
3	Concrete data – Statistic

## 2. Political Commercials Pathway

**V02 EXPLICATIVE DOCUMENT TITLE (ENGLISH)**

**V03 PARTY AND/OR COALITION NAME (LATIN ALPHABET)**

**V03\_2 EUROPEAN PARTY, ONE FOR THE POLITICAL PARTY AND ALL FOR THE COALITION**

**V04\_1 UPLOAD LINK**

Uploading button

**V34 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENT**

Free text (max 400 characters)
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**V35 POLITICAL COMMERCIAL TIPOLOGY**

1	Animation/Cartoon/Computer graphics
2	Documentary (historical images)
3	Fiction (a story or a comedy sketch played by actors, background actors, politicians or common people)
4	Graphic texts animated
5	Real life (speeches or contemporary general images)
6	Talking Head – Speeches
7	Other

**V36 MAIN GENRE OF POLITICAL COMMERCIAL/VIDEO**

1	Political program or realizations (what we want to do, or we have done) → skip to V27
2	Negative/Attach (against a person or a party) → go to V31
3	Feeling good (by eliciting positive emotions such as hope, enthusiasm, even pride) → skip to V27
4	Satire/Humor/Parody → go to V33
5	Common people (usually electors or citizens) → skip to V27
6	Testimonial (with stars or famous people. In case of presence of common people and famous people chose this one) → skip to V27
7	Biographical/Leader (focused on the history and the life of one person, usually the leader) → skip to V27
8	Other → skip to V27

- V31 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE NEGATIVE ATTACK?**
- V33 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE HUMOUR, SATIRE, IRONY, PARODY?**
- V27 ON WHICH DIMENSIONS THE DOCUMENT MAINLY FOCUSED?**
- V28 HOW IS THE EUROPE REPRESENTED?**
- V29 ISSUES OF THE DOCUMENT**
- V37 THE MESSAGE OF THE THE CONTENT IS MAINLY**
- V38 WHICH EMOTION DOES THE DOCUMENT USE AS LEVERAGE? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**
- V39 SWHICH KIND OF RATIONALITY DOES THE DOCUMENT CALL FOR? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**
- V08 IS/ARE THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT? (ONLY IN IMAGE AND NOT IN TEXT)**
- V09 INSERT THE NAME/S OF THE POLITICIAN/S**
- V09\_1 THE POLITICIAN/GROUP OF POLITICIANS GENDER IS**
- V11 WHAT KIND OF POLITICIAN/S IS/ARE PRESENT**
- V11\_1 WHICH IS THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE PERSON/PEOPLE IN THE CONTENT?**
- V12 THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT IS/ARE**
- V10\_1 IS THERE A SPITZENKANDIDAT?**
- V10\_2 1 WHAT IS HIS/HER NAME?**
- V19 IS/ARE THE OFFICIAL SYMBOL/S OF THE POLITICAL PARTY OR COALITION PRESENT?**
- V20 IS/ARE THE OFFICIAL SYMBOL/S OF EU PARTY FAMILY MEMBERSHIP PRESENT?**
- V21 IS/ARE THERE OTHER POLITICAL SYMBOL/S?**
- V22 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES**
- V23 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES OF THE MEMBER STATE?**
- V24 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES TO THE EU?**
- V25 ARE THERE VERBAL REFEENCES TO THE POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSION?**
- V26 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES (E.G. COMMUNISM, FASCISM, LEFT, RIGHT, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERAL, HAMMER AND SICKLE, STARS, FLAMES)**

### **3. Social Contents Pathway**

- V02 EXPLICATIVE DOCUMENT TITLE (ENGLISH)**
- V03 PARTY AND/OR COALITION NAME (LATIN ALPHABET)**
- V03\_2 EUROPEAN PARTY, ONE FOR THE POLITICAL PARTY AND ALL FOR THE COALITION**
- V40 TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL DOCUMENT (IN THE ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL CONTENTS HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED THE COMPLETE POSTS – VISUAL AND TEXTUAL)**

1	Shared content (not produced by the monitored social account, but shared from a different account) → Skip to V42
2	Original content (produced by the monitored social account)

**V41 WHO IS THE AUTHOR/S OF THE SHARED CONTENT?**

1	Information sources (newspaper, television, mainstream media, official blog, etc)
2	Common users/journalists/analysists/famous people
3	Candidate/politicians
4	Institutions

5	Other
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**V42 SOCIAL CONTENT TIPOLOGY**

1	Webcard
2	Video
3	Text (without images)
4	Photo (image without graphic and textual elements on)

**3.1 WEBCARD - Social Pathway**

**V05 DOCUMENT'S MAIN TEXTS IN ENGLISH**

**V43 WEBCARD TYPOLOGY**

1	Agenda of the campaign
2	Political program (points of the political manifesto)
3	Thematic/theme-based (focused on one issue)
6	Comparative (regardless of the topic webcard)
7	News (related to current affairs)
8	Statement/quote (regardless of the topic webcard)
9	Call to action (subscribe, share, write to, phone, join us)
10	Fundraising (buy something, give/send money)
11	Campaign in general (vote, support)
12	Other

**V30 IS THE DOCUMENT AGAINST SOMEONE OR SOMETHING? (EXPLICIT ATTACK TO PEOPLE, POLITICAL ACTORS OR INSTITUTIONS)**

**V31 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE NEGATIVE ATTACK?**

**V32 THE DOCUMENT USES HUMOR, SATIRE, IRONY, PARODY? (TOWARDS PEOPLE AND POLITICAL ACTOR/S, OR INSTITUTIONS, AS EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT)**

**V33 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE HUMOUR, SATIRE, IRONY, PARODY?**

**V08 IS/ARE THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT? (ONLY IN IMAGE AND NOT IN TEXT)**

**V09 INSERT THE NAME/S OF THE POLITICIAN/S)**

**V09\_1 THE POLITICIAN/GROUP OF POLITICIANS GENDER IS**

**V11 WHAT KIND OF POLITICIAN/S IS/ARE PRESENT**

**V11\_1 WHICH IS THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE PERSON/PEOPLE IN THE CONTENT?**

**V12 THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT IS/ARE**

**V10\_1 IS THERE A SPITZENKANDIDAT?**

**V10\_2 WHAT IS HIS/HER NAME?**

**V13 HOW THE MAIN POLITICIAN/S IS/ARE DRESSED?**

**V14 WHAT IS THE MAIN EXPRESSION OF THE POLITICIAN/S? /HOW DO THE MAIN POLITICIAN/S APPEAR?**

**V15 ARE VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MEMBER STATE PRESENT?**

**V17 ARE VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE EU PRESENT?**

**V19 IS/ARE THE OFFICIAL SYMBOL/S OF THE POLITICAL PARTY OR COALITION PRESENT?**

**V20 IS/ARE THE OFFICIAL SYMBOL/S OF EU PARTY FAMILY MEMBERSHIP PRESENT?**

**V21 IS/ARE THERE OTHER POLITICAL SYMBOL/S?**

**V22 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES**

**V23 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES OF THE MEMBER STATE?**

**V24 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES TO THE EU?**

**V25 ARE THERE VERBAL REFEEENCES TO THE POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSION?**

**V26 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES (E.G. COMMUNISM, FASCISM, LEFT, RIGHT, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERAL, HAMMER AND SICKLE, STARS, FLAMES)**

**V27 ON WHICH DIMENSION IS THE DOCUMENT MAINLY FOCUSED?**

**V28 HOW IS THE EUROPE REPRESENTED?**

**V29 ISSUES OF THE DOCUMENT**

**V37 THE MESSAGE OF THE THE CONTENT IS MAINLY**

**V38 WHICH EMOTION DOES THE DOCUMENT USE AS LEVERAGE? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

**V39 SWHICH KIND OF RATIONALITY DOES THE DOCUMENT CALL FOR? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

### **3.2 VIDEO - Social Pathway**

**V34 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENT**

**V44 TYPOLOGY OF THE VIDEO**

1	Streaming online/live broadcasted
2	Video excerpts (frame Tv programs, Tv rallies, electoral events)
3	Commercial (short video, edited like tv commercial)
4	Infomercial (2-10 minutes long video containing lots of information on one or more issues)
5	Self-generated recorded live (video recorded especially for the transmission on social network sites)
6	Animation/cartoon/computer graphics
7	Gif (short and simple graphic animation)
8	Other

**V36 MAIN GENRE OF POLITICAL COMMERCIAL/VIDEO**

**V31 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE NEGATIVE ATTACK?**

**V33 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE HUMOUR, SATIRE, IRONY, PARODY?**

**V08 IS/ARE THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT? (ONLY IN IMAGE AND NOT IN TEXT)**

**V09 INSERT THE NAME/S OF THE POLITICIAN/s**

**V09\_1 THE POLITICIAN/GROUP OF POLITICIANS GENDER IS**

**V11 WHAT KIND OF POLITICIAN/S IS/ARE PRESENT**

**V11\_1 WHICH IS THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE PERSON/PEOPLE IN THE CONTENT?**

**V12 THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT IS/ARE**

**V10\_1 IS THERE A SPITZENKANDIDAT?**

**V10\_2 WHAT IS HIS/HER NAME?**

**V19 IS/ARE THE OFFICIAL SYMBOL/S OF THE POLITICAL PARTY OR COALITION PRESENT?**

**V20 IS/ARE THE OFFICIAL SYMBOL/S OF EU PARTY FAMILY MEMBERSHIP PRESENT?**

**V21 IS/ARE THERE OTHER POLITICAL SYMBOL/S?**

**V22 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES (E.G. COMMUNISM, FASCISM, LEFT, RIGHT, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERAL, HAMMER AND SICKLE, STARS, FLAMES)**

**V23 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES OF THE MEMBER STATE?**

**V24 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES TO THE EU?**

**V25 ARE THERE VERBAL REFEEENCES TO THE POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSION?**

**V26 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES (E.G. COMMUNISM, FASCISM, LEFT, RIGHT, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERAL, HAMMER AND SICKLE, STARS, FLAMES)**

**V27 ON WHICH DIMENSIONIS THE DOCUMENT MAINLY FOCUSED?**

**V28 HOW IS THE EUROPE REPRESENTED?**

**V29 ISSUES OF THE DOCUMENT**

**V37 THE MESSAGE OF THE THE CONTENT IS MAINLY**

**V38 WHICH EMOTION DOES THE DOCUMENT USE AS LEVERAGE? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

**V39 SWHICH KIND OF RATIONALITY DOES THE DOCUMENT CALL FOR? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

### **3.3 TEXT - Social Pathway**

**V05 DOCUMENT'S MAIN TEXTS IN ENGLISH**

**V23 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES OF THE MEMBER STATE?**

**V24 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES TO THE EU?**

**V25 ARE THERE VERBAL REFEEENCES TO THE POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSION?**

**V26 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES (E.G. COMMUNISM, FASCISM, LEFT, RIGHT, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERAL, HAMMER AND SICKLE, STARS, FLAMES)**

**V27 ON WHICH DIMENSIONIS THE DOCUMENT MAINLY FOCUSED?**

**V28 HOW IS THE EUROPE REPRESENTED?**

**V29 ISSUES OF THE DOCUMENT**

**V30 IS THE DOCUMENT AGAINST SOMEONE OR SOMETHING? (EXPLICIT ATTACK TO PEOPLE, POLITICAL ACTORS OR INSTITUTIONS)**

**V31 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE NEGATIVE ATTACK?**

**V32 THE DOCUMENT USES HUMOR, SATIRE, IRONY, PARODY? (TOWARDS PEOPLE AND POLITICAL ACTOR/S, OR INSTITUTIONS, AS EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT)**

**V33 WHO/WHAT IS/ARE THE TARGET/S OF THE HUMOUR, SATIRE, IRONY, PARODY?**

**V37 THE MESSAGE OF THE THE CONTENT IS MAINLY**

**V38 WHICH EMOTION DOES THE DOCUMENT USE AS LEVERAGE? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

**V39 SWHICH KIND OF RATIONALITY DOES THE DOCUMENT CALL FOR? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

### **3.4 PHOTO - Social Pathway**

**V34 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENT**

**V45 MAIN SUBJECT OF THE PHOTO**

**V08 IS/ARE THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT? (ONLY IN IMAGE AND NOT IN TEXT)**

**V09 INSERT THE NAME/S OF THE POLITICIAN/s**

**V09\_1 THE POLITICIAN/GROUP OF POLITICIANS GENDER IS**

**V11 WHAT KIND OF POLITICIAN/S IS/ARE PRESENT**

**V11\_1 WHICH IS THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE PERSON/PEOPLE IN THE CONTENT?**

**V12 THE POLITICIAN/S PRESENT IS/ARE**

**V10\_1 IS THERE A SPITZENKANDIDAT?**

**V10\_2 NAME OF SPITZENKANDIDAT?**

**V13 HOW THE MAIN POLITICIAN/S IS/ARE DRESSED?**

**V14 WHAT IS THE MAIN EXPRESSION OF THE POLITICIAN/S? /HOW DO THE MAIN POLITICIAN/S APPEAR?**

**V15 ARE VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MEMBER STATE PRESENT?**

**V17 ARE VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE EU PRESENT?**

**V21 IS/ARE THERE OTHER POLITICAL SYMBOL/S?**

**V22 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES**

**V46 IS THE PHOTO ACCOMPANIED BY A TEXT?**

1	Yes
2	No → end

**V23 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES OF THE MEMBER STATE?**

**V24 ARE THERE VERBAL REFERENCES TO THE EU?**

**V25 ARE THERE VERBAL REFEEENCES TO THE POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSION?**

**V26 PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH ONES (E.G. COMMUNISM, FASCISM, LEFT, RIGHT, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERAL, HAMMER AND SICKLE, STARS, FLAMES)**

**V27 ON WHICH DIMENSIONIS THE DOCUMENT MAINLY FOCUSED?**

**V28 HOW IS THE EUROPE REPRESENTED?**

**V29 ISSUES OF THE DOCUMENT**

**V37 THE MESSAGE OF THE THE CONTENT IS MAINLY**

**V38 WHICH EMOTION DOES THE DOCUMENT USE AS LEVERAGE? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**

**V39 SWHICH KIND OF RATIONALITY DOES THE DOCUMENT CALL FOR? (IN THE CONTENT ANALYSIS, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE ENTIRE POST – BOTH VISUAL AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS)**









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