

# European Elections 2014

**Europe is a cultural peace project,  
not just a form of government!**

**culture  
ACTION  
europe**

The political platform  
for Arts and Culture





# European Elections 2014

The next **European elections** in May 2014 will be critical and should be prepared for well in advance to ensure that culture is included in the political agenda and encourage the election of competent and dedicated representatives at the European Parliament.

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# WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

## 1. Europe is a cultural peace project, not just a form of government!

The European Union is the most ambitious attempt to establish a form of democracy where local and global dimensions coexist. Building a shared European identity is an extraordinary challenge. It demands of ancient and well-rooted nations to reduce their sovereignty. Community is no longer defined by one language, one culture or one religion, but on the common will to organise social life around an intrinsically complex identity. Therefore, Europe's future depends on cultural factors in the broad sense: how will different countries and nations come together around a common project based on respect for cultural diversities.

Until now, EU integration efforts have prioritised an economic dimension. The coming years, beginning with the 2014 elections, should be taken as an opportunity to push for the development of the cultural and political dimension of the EU. A humanized Europe is necessary.

## 2. The gap between citizens and democratic institutions must be reduced

The European elections 22-25 May 2014 will impact strategies and policies that the Union will put in place, trying to recover from the economic and democratic meltdown currently faced. CAE and its members should advocate for sustainable, just and democratic models of development, rooted in Europe's cultural assets. European Parliament elections were held for the first time in Croatia in April 2013. The weak turnout (less than 20%) combined with a growing mistrust of citizens towards decision-makers and the EU in general, provides the context for 2014 elections. Mistrust for political representatives and institutions fuels anxiety and anger: an explosive mix in politics.

With Europe still bogged down in an economic failure, resentment towards Brussels is higher than ever. Too many Europeans blame the EU for the "crisis", citing the euro currency a failure. But this simplistic analysis ignores the fact that most responsibility still lies in the hands of national governments. Citizens resent the EU for continued rounds of austerity measures, where some communities lose vital services. Recent studies conducted by the Gallup in the framework of its World Poll show a clear correlation between the perception of decreased well-being and a growing mistrust in the political systems.

Populistic, anti-European and xenophobic forces must be confronted: it is a real risk that they gain (anti)political power in the European Parliament, no longer marginalized, maybe paralysing EU development.

## 3. Economic growth alone does not foster human development

Over the last two decades, inequalities have grown throughout Europe. The gap between the wealthy and all the others, with living standards sliding towards poverty has widened. In parallel, maybe as a result, cultural participation has dropped drastically in many EU countries. Economic instability goes hand in hand with cultural recession.

European governments face new challenges. They are called upon to ensure individual and collective well-being not only economically but also by ensuring social cohesion, health, education, a sense of community and respect of human rights for all citizens.

That implies heavy investments in social capital, which ultimately depends on cultural sophistication and on the quality of everyday life. Enhancing the capacity to cooperate, to create, to be curious, is just as essential as the development of logical thinking. Arts and sciences powerfully contribute to such capacities, including good quality and accessible education. We expect the European Parliament to adopt strategies in this direction, is essential to develop a fully sustainable society where human rights, civil liberties and shared well-being can be achieved. Cultural and human development is the basis on which Europe can flourish and on this basis the 2020 strategy (The EU strategy for the current decade) must be revised.

## 4. The EU political system is changing

The 2014 European elections will be the first to take place after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. One important change provides the EP with a say in the designation of the future President of the European Commission. Indeed, the European political parties have pledged to name their candidate for the Commission presidency. Choosing a candidate for Commission President might herald stronger leadership in the European Union and could fuel a more political campaign for the MEPs in May.

### CAE's message to candidates and parties

CAE elaborated, in collaboration with its members and partners, a draft political manifesto for the elections (see in annex 1) and sent it to European political parties, political groups in the EP and all current MEPs.

### CAE's message to members and citizens

We **call on all citizens and in particular on our members, cultural operators, artists, thinkers and activists to take action** and influence the political agenda at an early stage instead of just reacting to the parties' and candidates' programmes or statements. Therefore we ask you to be as pro-active as possible before the official kick-off of the campaign around February 2014 in your country.

The **overall goal** is to do as much as possible to include **culture as a necessity for sustainable development in the debate targeted to the general public**. We also aim to build **honest relationships with future MEPs** and encourage them to include culture in their personal priorities.

We will need everybody to help with **mapping the parties' and candidates' proposals and meeting national representatives** of the political parties. Moreover we will also ask you to help us identify potential or already declared candidates who we should dialogue with (see part 2 on the different electing systems existing in the EU, and check the toolkit for suggestions of actions according to the system in place in your country).

**Networks, national associations or cultural institutions** might play a crucial role when it comes to **establishing dialogue with national parties and influencing the political agenda** during the European election campaign. Grassroots cultural organisations and operators active in different cultural domains might be the best mediators and levers for awareness raising and mobilization of citizens. It is important to coordinate actions between these two different levels.

Taking all this into account, we call on CAE members to directly engage in advocacy actions and also to encourage their members and members' members at the very local level **to include the issue of the coming elections when communicating and exchanging with audiences and citizens**. (See the toolkit for suggestions of adapted actions according to the nature of your organisation).

# HOW DOES IT WORK

## Context and elements to take into account

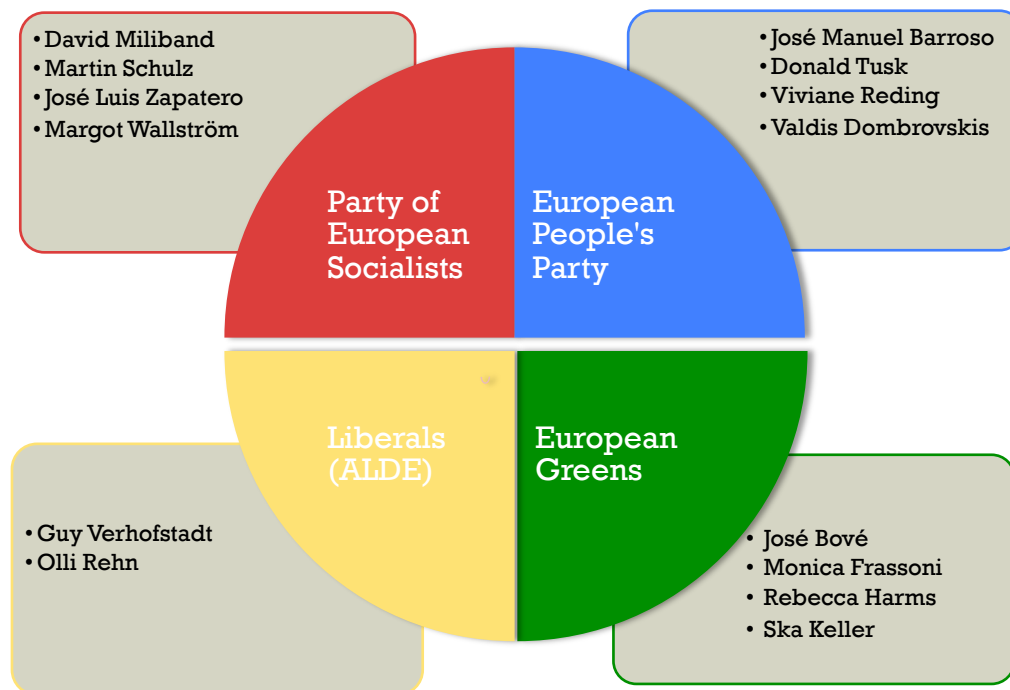
### 2014 Elections: What's new?

The 2014 European elections will be the first to be held under the Lisbon Treaty. The two main changes introduced by the treaty affecting the elections process are the following:

- The Lisbon Treaty sets up a limit of 751 seats in the EP. The EP currently consists of 754 MEPs. Croatia, that joined the EU in 2013, is entitled to 12 seats, temporarily bringing the total number of MEPs to 766. To comply with the maximum of 751 seats set forward by the Lisbon Treaty from next year's European elections, 15 seats must be given up. The allocation of seats by country for the 2014-2019 parliamentary terms is still under discussion.
- Members of the Parliament will elect the European Commission (EC) President on the basis of a proposal by the European Council taking into account the results of the European elections (Article 17(7) of the Treaty of the European Union). Some “big names” for candidates have already emerged while the different European Parties are organizing themselves in order to decide how to designate their respective candidates (see chart below).

Political parties on national level present their candidates for the elections but once MEPs are elected, most of them opt to become part of a transnational political group (in alphabetical order: green, liberal, popular, socialist & democrats, united left, ... ). Which of these European groupings will exert greater influence on the decisions taken in the next legislative term we will find out on the night of the elections.

It is very likely that European political parties will play a greater role in the EP elections in 2014, as recommended by the Commission but also by representatives of civil society, in order to mobilize voters by offering a more political campaign at EU level. One of the recommendations put forward by the EC is for the European parties to display their logos on ballot papers so voters can identify the political affiliation of the candidates at EU level.



For more detailed descriptions of the potential candidates see annex 2. A list of political parties can be found on p.15

## Voting system in different countries

Each Member State has the right to elect a fixed number of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). The allocation of seats is laid down in the European treaties: countries with a larger population have more seats than smaller countries, but the latter have more seats than strict proportionality would imply. For the 2014 election, according to the Lisbon Treaty, the number of MEPs ranges from 6 seats for Malta, Luxembourg, Cyprus and Estonia to 96 for Germany.

Voting practices vary across the EU, although there are some common elements, the most important of which is proportional representation. This gives larger and smaller political parties the chance to send their representatives to the European Parliament in line with the number of votes they receive. However, each country is free to decide on many important aspects of the voting procedure. For example, some split their territory into regional electoral districts, while others have a single electoral district. Countries may also decide on the exact day of the elections according to their voting traditions. European elections usually span four days, with voting in the UK and the Netherlands taking place on Thursday and residents of most other countries casting their vote on Sunday.

### Some examples of the main trends at EU level ...

**UK:** The United Kingdom is split into constituencies representing Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and each of the regions of England. The constituencies of Great Britain (England, Scotland, Wales) use party lists.

Northern Ireland uses the *single transferable vote* that is used in the Republic of Ireland and in other elections in Northern Ireland. The single transferable vote (STV) is a voting system designed to achieve proportional representation through ranked voting in multi-seat constituencies (voting districts). Under STV, an elector has a single vote that is initially allocated to his or her most preferred candidate, and then, as the count proceeds and candidates are either elected or eliminated, is transferred to other candidates according to the voter's stated preferences, in proportion to any surplus or discarded votes. The exact method of reapportioning votes can vary.

The system provides approximate proportional representation, enables votes to be explicitly cast for individual candidates rather than for closed party lists, and minimizes "wasted" votes by transferring votes to other candidates that would otherwise be wasted on sure losers or sure winners.

**France:** France is split into 8 constituencies, each electing its members by party list proportional representation (PR). Party lists are closed and blocked, meaning that voters do not have any opportunity to express interests for any particular candidate.

**Belgium:** Belgium is split into 3 constituencies: the Dutch-speaking Electoral College, the French-speaking Electoral College, and the German-speaking Electoral College. The first two of these elect their MEPs using party list PR, but the German-speaking constituency only has 1 member, who is therefore not elected by a proportional method.

**Italy/ Germany/ Poland:** Germany, Italy and Poland use a different system, whereby parties are awarded seats based on their nationwide vote as in all of the states, which elect members from a single constituency; these seats are given to the candidates on regional lists. With the number of seats for each party known, these are given to the candidates on the regional lists based on the number of votes from each region towards the party's nationwide total, awarded proportionally to the regions. These subdivisions are not strictly constituencies, as they do not decide how many seats each party is awarded, but are districts that the members represent once elected. The number of members for each region is decided dynamically after the election, and depends on voter turnout in each region. A region with high turnout will result in more votes for the parties there, which will result in a greater number of MEPs elected for that region.

## How does it work in your country?

Find out what system is in place in your country, the number of seats allocated to your country in the EP and the results from the last European elections for your country using this elections database ([http://www.nsd.uib.no/european\\_election\\_database/country/](http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/)). The elections database might be out-dated for the most recent national elections but it remains a useful tool to understand European Parliament elections. When you select your country, you will arrive on a page with the results of previous elections. Then click on the title “EP elections” for info about the voting system in place. (See screenshots below)

### Data by Country

Click on the map below, or choose a country from the menu to access elections data for one of the 30 countries covered by the European Election Database. The menu also offers background information on historical political context, electoral system, political parties, and administrative division of each country.



### EP elections

Belgium elects 24 representatives to the European Parliament. The electoral system is based on proportional representation. The last elections to the European Parliament took place on 7 June 2009. Belgium was one of the few countries where turnout was not an issue: the 90.5 percent figure reflect the compulsory voting law rather than a surge in interest in the election.. [read more..]

#### Results, European Parliament election 2009. NUTS 2. Flanders

OPEN ORIGINAL LAST UPDATED 1/12/10

Party	CDBV	OpenVLD	VB	sp.a	N-VA	Groent	LDD	Valid votes
Region	14.43	12.75	9.85	8.21	6.13	4.90	4.51	84.76
Brussels/Bruxel	7.32	10.04	5.76	3.23	4.09	3.17	2.02	81.81
Prov. Antwerpen	21.90	17.47	19.81	13.66	10.75	8.86	5.27	87.18
Prov. Limburg (B)	25.60	18.05	15.59	16.89	10.79	5.08	6.10	88.23
Prov. Oost-Vlaanderen	21.17	24.87	15.34	12.11	8.81	8.23	7.40	87.81
Prov. Vlaams-Brabant	19.93	20.48	12.74	12.70	9.78	9.14	6.61	86.46
Prov. West-Vlaanderen	28.10	18.26	12.33	12.69	8.53	6.83	11.42	86.41

NSD EUROPEAN ELECTION DATABASE

NSD | Data Services | Software | eLearning | International

## Belgium

### European Parliament Elections

#### Electoral system

Belgium elects 24 representatives to the European Parliament. The electoral system is based on proportional representation. For administrative purposes Belgium comprises three electoral districts for these elections. The d'Hondt formula is used and there is no legal threshold of representation. The party lists are closed but non-blocked, hence, voters are provided with the opportunity of overruling the party ranking of candidates. In 1994, Belgium introduced a guaranteed seat for the German minority.

#### Latest election

The last elections to the European Parliament took place on 7 June 2009. Belgium was one of the few countries where turnout was not an issue: the 90.5 percent figure reflect the compulsory voting law rather than a surge in interest in the election. The ruling Christian Democrats (CDBV) came out on top, winning 14.43 percent and three seats, ahead of the Liberal Democrats (OpenVLD) at 12.75 percent, also winning three seats. The far-right Vlaams Belang (VB) or Flemish Interest Party was the obvious loser, falling from over 16 percent in 2004 to 9.85 percent, about the same level as the francophone Socialist Party (PS). PS won three seats, while VB won two seats. Other parties winning seats were MR (2), Ecolo (2) and sp.a (2), in addition to N-VA, Groent, LDD and CDFP, all winning one seat each.

3 clicks: choose your country, click on the title/link “EP elections” in the country folder, and find info on the electoral system

In terms of lobbying, the first step is to understand whether it is possible to suggest or push for some candidates in particular or not, and if it's possible, how to do it. For example, it will only be possible to advocate for a candidate in particular when party lists are non-blocked and if the SVT is applying in a country.

On the contrary, when the party lists are closed and blocked, it will be impossible to back up a candidate after the closure of the list if he/she's not on the top of it. The rules applying in your country will therefore impact the calendar and the nature of your actions. (see the “case scenarios” according to your electoral system in the toolkit).



## **HOW TO ACT**

### ***Advocacy Toolkit***

Your strategy for the elections should be articulated around 2 main issues: “How to engage” and “what to expect from the future MEPs”. These address different types of audiences: your members/partners and the candidates to the European Parliament, as well as political parties, both national and European.

That’s why the first step will be to define the message you want to pass on and the goal you want to reach. Then, according to the nature of your organisation and the target you want to reach, you will define the most relevant action to take.

This toolkit will provide you with some arguments and ideas for concrete advocacy actions, to be used by you according to the nature of your organisation and the target you are aiming at.



Today only 33% of EU citizens trust the European institutions.  
*Public opinion in the European union first results - Standard Eurobarometer (Autumn 2012)*

EU legislation defines 80% of the national legislation and more concretely, of the citizens' daily life. At the same time EU decisions are strongly influenced by national governments.

### Meaningful figures

Voter turnout in the European Parliament elections was 43% in 2009, the lowest since direct elections began in 1979.

84% of people think turnout in European elections would increase with more information about the EU's impact on their daily lives, parties' programmes in the EP and about the elections themselves.

*Eurobarometer survey from March 2013*

## Arguments

→ Towards your member/constituencies, colleagues, family and friends

The next elections are crucial: fundamental decisions regarding our future and the future of the Union will be taken in the next years. We can influence these decisions by making our vision and demands clear to the Brussels-based representatives or we can stay silent and witness racist and extremist voices gaining power in Europe at the very time when the EP's role is made more important than ever before.

We raise our voices to advocate for a more relevant role of culture in the European strategy and policies during this long period of crisis-transition. Economies are the result of cultural choices: we should tone down references that justify the necessity of culture merely on the base of its economic value, as we have been convinced to do in the last years. Again, if we stay silent, the sole voices heard will be those speaking of growth and business, while those speaking of human development, cohesion, inter-culturalism and, in the end, wellbeing and happiness will be put aside.

It is therefore key to mobilize as many citizens as possible to strengthen our voices within the newly elected Parliament.

The campaign for the European elections will offer the opportunity to bring issues that European citizens really care about closer to the political debate, and advocate for the European project they want to defend, and not only about economic integration.

A practical but nevertheless strong argument is to recall what the EP can do for the citizens, for culture, and for the promotion of the role of culture in human as well as societal development, bearing in mind that EU legislation has an impact on 80% of national legislation. By influencing the EP, citizens will influence the decision-making in their country.

The following arguments can be used to convince citizens about why it is important to vote and to get involved in the European Parliament elections.

The EP plays a crucial role in reinforcing Democracy at European level.

- The European Parliament is currently the only directly elected Institution, and the only Institution representing the interests of the citizens (the Council represents the Member States and the Commission is the guarantor of the Treaties and of the community's interest). Moreover, the EP has a specific role to play in the European democratic system as it holds the Council and the Commission accountable.
- The European elections are the only transnational elections in the world and the unique opportunity for citizens of 28 European countries to make their views jointly known only comes once every 5 years.

The EP can play a more important role in building the European society you want and promoting the values you believe in.

- Traditionally, the EP is the Institution in the EU that is the most permeable to citizens' influence, advancing new ideas, pushing for political development on issues that go beyond the competences set up in the Treaties. More independent from national pressure than the Council, and less bound than the Commission by bureaucratic constraint, the EP is the place where values and principles concerning the future model of the society we want to promote, should be advocated for.

To conclude, if you consider that your MEPs are doing a good job, support their reelection by linking up with them and asking them to publicly commit themselves to represent your argumentation and stay in touch with you and with CAE in Brussels. If you are not, change them!

→ Towards the candidates and their political parties

You can use the arguments above and add these:

The main priority at all levels and at the EU level in particular is to fill the democratic gap in decision-making. The 2014 elections should be the opportunity to reconnect the Institutions with the European citizens. It is time for European leaders to wake up to what matters to real people, and to ensure that their hopes, fears and priorities are put above Big Business and the language of unaccountable and faceless markets.

It is time to develop the political project of Europe as an answer to a crisis that is not only economic but cultural and political. Europe is facing a raise of nationalism and the European project won't succeed if it fails to offer a political alternative.

This political Union should defend values and principles that impact citizens' lives and are key to building more sustainable and democratic societies. Future MEPs must ensure, amongst other values, freedom of expression and access to reliable information, realize equality between men and women, fight against all sorts of discrimination, place social inclusion and cohesion as a priority, play a responsible role in the world, ensure an equal access to education and public health services, fight against climate change, eradicate poverty, ... to ensure that everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share scientific advancement and its benefits.

Some demands towards candidates and their political parties:

- To present a real vision for Europe, through their manifestos, along with a credible political alternative to the shortsighted daily business approach.
- To integrate representatives from civil society in the drafting process of their manifestos, and invite them to participate in their political conventions at the beginning of 2014, when they should formally adopt their campaign strategy.
- To explicitly commit to guaranteeing that everyone has the right to freely participate in cultural life in their community, to enjoy the arts and share scientific advancement and its benefits. To include human development and social capital development in their political programme as key priorities.

European decision-makers must start to adopt an integrated approach of culture as a key resource for a sustainable model of development and promote culture as a set of capacities and capabilities and not only as an economic sector and a source for growth and jobs.

Indeed Europe is facing challenges today that are not comparable to previous decades:

people are living longer, natural resources are running out, and jobs are becoming scarce. Some of these conditions are irreversible. There is no going back. We are not living through a crisis but through a period of transition, the outcomes of which depends on the priorities and choices of today. The appropriate outcome of this transition for Europe should be to provide its population and the world with an aspiring model of human society based on full sustainability, adapted to its changing demography and alternative global influence. It is a vision of the future for which Europe has the needed assets, both tangible and intangible (democracy, rights, rule of law, freedom of expression, welfare/solidarity, education, science, broad artistic practice, immense heritage, vibrant cultural and artistic life, environmental sensitivity, increasing gender equality, public space, etc.). It is a possible future providing that Europe invests first and foremost in the development of social capital as a priority.

It's a future that Europe has the potential to achieve thanks to its culture.

Enhancing people's cultural capacities such as co-operation and creativity, openness to diversity and curiosity, lyricism as much as logical thinking, is essential to develop a fully sustainable society where human rights, civil liberties and shared well-being can be achieved. Art and science powerfully contribute to the enhancement of such capacities as well as cultural life, education and research. These are priority fields for policy and action on which to build the outcome of this transition period.

It is time for all decision-makers as well as for all of us to be aware that a broader discourse around the development of societal cultural capacities is needed and concerns us all as well as most of the policies which impact on the public sphere.

Some demands:

- To integrate culture within all development policies and programmes and assess them in relation to the impact they have in generating cultural development for people and communities, improving our social capital and competence to benefit human relations, ...
- To leverage culture for poverty reduction and inclusive economic development
- To strengthen the links between culture and education
- To facilitate access to culture in all its diversity especially for disadvantaged people, minorities and young people
- To promote the role of culture as a key element of external relations
- To enhance the public sphere and financially support cultural life as a common good
- To sustain the mobility of artists and cultural operators within the EU and beyond, notably by tackling administrative and financial obstacles, in order to further intercultural exchange
- Alleviate budget cuts by fostering experimentation and exchange of non-profit practices to ensure cultural diversity

**Support for culture at EU level:** You will also find specific arguments to promote EU support of culture as along with FACTS AND FIGURES to back them up, in the 'we are more' campaign's Message Book

<http://www.wearemore.eu/advocacy-tools/>

## Actions and targets

It is important to assess the different types of action to take according to the nature of your organization. A national alliance would have more weight in influencing national parties, based on its constituency. Alternatively, a local cultural institution or organization can convey a message directly to citizens and potential voters. In order to play a successful role in these elections, all types of organisations have to mobilize European voters and advocate towards current and future policy-makers.

### IF YOU ARE A NETWORK OR A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

#### To start with...

- Inform your members, supporters and partners about the European elections (disseminate this toolkit, post information of the elections in your newsletter, website etc.)
- Organize a brainstorming session with your members, to inform them on the elections, collect ideas of actions and political demands and coordinate your advocacy actions

#### To go further...

- Influence the draft of the political parties' manifestos at national level by sending your demands before their adoption. Once adopted, get to know the manifestos, compare them to your demands and disseminate the results to your members
- Try to set meetings with representatives of national parties to push for our demands. CAE is ready to join you during these meetings should you wish

### IF YOU ARE A GRASSROOT ORGANISATION

- Convince your members, your partners and your audiences at grassroots level to get involved in the elections, to participate in the vote and if relevant to support a candidate

- Support/monitor/push your candidate/s if you found one or more relevant, even when they are not on first position in the parties list (in case party lists are non-blocked or SVT system)

## IN BOTH CASES

### To start with...

- Get to know the candidates, study their profile, and monitor their programmes and their positions on the relevant issues. Disseminate the results of your research to your members/partners/audiences.
- Write to and meet with the candidates. You can send them a statement with your demands or a questionnaire, designed with your members if you are a network organisation, to raise their awareness and identify those who have the same priorities as you. Also, meet them directly when possible.

### To go further...

- Organize panel discussions with candidates from your constituency, giving them the opportunity to meet with the electorate and present their visions, and giving you the chance to raise your concerns. Be creative with the format!
- Raise media attention by dealing with the elections issue when holding a press conference, by raising awareness in public space especially if you are a local institution or organization, by distributing documentation about the elections during cultural events for example.
- Influence the political parties in the designation of candidates according to the electoral system in place in your country (see part 1 "how does it work in your country?"):

<b>CASE A:</b> Party lists are closed and blocked, meaning that voters do not have any opportunity to express interests for any particular candidate.	<b>Make your suggestion to the parties <i>before</i> the closing of list (The deadline for nomination of candidates is normally one month before the elections).</b>
<b>CASE B:</b> Party lists are closed and non-blocked thus enabling voters to express preferences among the candidates belonging to the party list of their choice.	It will be impossible to add new candidates after the closing of the list but you can encourage voters to vote for a chosen candidate.
<b>CASE C:</b> The single transferable vote (STV) that enables votes to be explicitly cast for individual candidates rather than for closed party lists, and minimizes "wasted" votes by transferring votes to other candidates.	First, make your suggestion to the parties in the design of the list of candidates. Then choose your candidate among those proposed and campaign for him/her if any is worthwhile.

For which target:



### **National political parties and candidates**

In some countries, the national parties design their list of candidates. They will have the power of proposing names and shaping the face of the representatives of their country in the future European Parliament. But even in countries that do not use party lists, national parties still play a crucial role in the election campaign, guiding the debate and the position of candidates on many key issues. That's why it is important to follow the development of the parties' campaigning and address their leaders in your advocacy actions.

### **National MEPs in the Parliament**

At national level, it is useful to map the MEPs from your country who will stand for reelection, as they are the most direct targets for the European Parliament from the national perspective. In addition, MEPs might pay more attention at demands coming from their country of origin. Find the MEPs from your country using the search engine [here](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/search.html): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/search.html>

### **European political parties**

It is important not to confuse European political parties with political groups in the EP. For example, the "Party of European socialists" (PES) gathers national socialists and democrates parties in an European umbrella party with a secretariat in Brussels whereas the "Socialist & Democrats" (S&D) group in the EP gathers the MEPs belonging to socialist and democrates national parties in the Parliament. European parties and political groups often share the same name or acronym, which makes it even more confusing (for example EPP and ALDE).

The role of the European political parties will be increased in this new process of presenting candidates for the Presidency of the European Commission. But the national parties will still be predominant in the campaign for electing MEPs, independently of the voting system in place, and easier to reach from national levels.

Regarding European political parties, the first critical step is the designing of their common political **manifesto** for the elections that reflect their views on European integration and their priorities. The second one is the designation of a common candidate for the election of the President of the European Commission. These two key moments of the campaign will allow us to advocate for the inclusion of our recommendations.

### **Political groups in the EP**

The Members of the European Parliament sit in political groups – they are not organised by nationality, but by political affiliation. There are currently 7 political groups in the European Parliament. Each takes care of its own internal organisation by appointing a chair (or two co-chairs in the case of some groups), a bureau and a secretariat. Before each vote in plenary, political groups discuss their position and propose common amendments. Besides this, they are supported by counsellors for many subjects, among which culture, in their secretariat. Having contacts in the secretariat of the groups, and with the chairs, will be useful as they also play a key role in drafting the manifesto of the parties and appointing a candidate for the EC Presidency.

## Calendar



If you wish to get involved in the campaign at the earliest stage possible and feel comfortable to promote the designation of relevant candidates, the time to do it is now, considering that the designation process and negotiations are currently going on at national level. If that seems too technical or too political to you, you might prefer to start acting once the candidates are known and the campaign has officially started, which might be around February 2014. Eventually, the day of the elections will not be the end of our efforts as we will need to follow up on our demands once the new Parliament will be starting to work and, in parallel, continue to advocate for our ideas towards the newly constituted European Commission.

## Useful Links

List of MEPs per country and political group:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/search.html>

European Parliament website:

[www.europarl.europa.eu](http://www.europarl.europa.eu)

Main European political parties website:

European People's Party [www.epp.eu](http://www.epp.eu)

Party of the European socialists [www.pes.eu](http://www.pes.eu)

ALDE Party | Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe [www.aldeparty.eu](http://www.aldeparty.eu)

European Green Party [www.europeangreens.eu](http://www.europeangreens.eu)

European Free Alliance [www.e-f-a.org](http://www.e-f-a.org)

Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists [www.aecr.eu](http://www.aecr.eu)

European Left [www.aecr.eu](http://www.aecr.eu)

European Democratic Party (centrism) [www.pde-edp.eu](http://www.pde-edp.eu)

## **Culture Action Europe's appeal for the European Elections 2014**

Europe faces challenges today that cannot be compared with earlier decades: people live longer, natural resources fade, jobs are scarce – and there is no going back.

Since 2008, Europeans have been told that we are living a crisis, the worst since 1929. Each year, we have been told that it will get better. Each year, reality proves differently.

The reality in Europe is not appropriately described as a crisis. Rather it must be seen as a transition, from one world order into another one. Either this transition will lead Europe to growing inequalities or to a **new social agreement** based on sustainability and the fulfillment of human rights for the current and future generations. The shape it will take **depends on choices we make now**. Europe has all necessary assets, tangible and cultural, to build a sustainable future: we must invest in them now!

Social, not economic, growth must be the priority for contemporary Europe. Enhancing people's cultural competence, our capacity for cooperation and critical thinking, our openness to diversity, our curiosity: all of this is essential to develop a sustainable society where rights, responsibilities and shared well-being can grow. The Arts and Sciences powerfully contribute to such capacities, as does accessible education for all and the scrupulous fulfillment of all human rights.

It is time for decision-makers and citizens alike to form a broader discourse on the **future of Europe**, underlining **cultural development as a strategic necessity**.

The **democratic gap** in decision-making must be filled. The 2014 elections are an opportunity to **reconnect institutions with European citizens**. Only 33% of EU citizens trust the European institutions, according to a recent opinion survey led by eurobarometer. This is a crisis of legitimacy. It is a failure.

People's hopes, fears and priorities deserve answers that cannot be subordinated to the demands of the financial markets. We must develop a political project based on culture and learning, an appropriate response to a political, social, cultural, and economic, emergencies. It is not more consumption that we need in Europe. We need ethics and quality in all aspects of life.

Europe faces rising nationalism, even racism. The European project must not fail to meet this challenge. An attractive and serious alternative must be formed to engage Europeans. A narrative of inclusion and shared space must be designed. This is a cultural mission. **Local governments** are in the frontline and major allies in this endeavour: their voices must count in the decision-making of a fully democratic Europe.

Therefore, Culture Action Europe appeals to all participants in the European elections:

To the European political parties and groups:

- To present, through their programmes, a **real vision for Europe and a credible political project**.
- To **integrate civil society into the drafting process of their programmes**, encourage wide **participation at conventions** where campaign strategies are adopted and propose **candidates** with ethical and cultural engagement, including expression of the civil society.
- To make their affiliation to the European parties or alliances clear. This is necessary information so that voters to understand the European positioning of the parties and candidates.

To the Candidates and future Members of the European Parliament (MEPs):

- To offer a long-term strategy and political vision that goes further than a restricted economic approach.



- To **clearly state their affiliation to the European parties** during the campaign.
- To **address the role of culture** in particular during the campaigns, insisting on **its necessary contribution to sustainable development** and to commit to actively fostering an ongoing debate on the cultural factor.
- To personally commit to **defending values that impact the citizens' lives directly as key to sustainable and democratic societies**, Among others, future MEPs must work to ensure freedom of expression, the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits, realize equality between men and women, fight against all sorts of discrimination, place social inclusion and cohesion as a priority, play a responsible role for a more healthy and just world, ensure equal access to education and public health services, invest relentlessly in environmental protection and green economy.
- To create an **Intergroup** of the European Parliament dedicated to Culture in order to cultivate cross-sectoral synergies and debate as well as to promote the **integration of culture** as a primary resource for sustainable development in all relevant policy and programmes - from external relations to cohesion, from education and learning to economy and labor - as well as in the revision of the treaty and all relevant political and legislative processes.

To the parties, the candidates and the future MEPs:

- To promote the institution of a **cultural impact assessment** to be performed prior to the adoption of policies in fields such as education and learning, urban planning and architecture, civil and economic rights as well as naturally arts and heritage.
- To **take measures necessary to implement international engagements** in the domain of culture and heritage (e.g. the UNESCO convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions – 2005).
- To **integrate civil society in the process of the European institutions decision-making processes**, by ensuring a higher level of transparency, informing them at an early stage in the legislative process, consulting them regularly and building stable relationships with all citizens.
- To operate for the good of all European citizens and in order to do so, when necessary, show **independence** from the national interests
- To **push for a revision of the Europe 2020 strategy, putting well-being and development of social capital at the centre of a strategy** for a sustainable Europe
- To **support** the cultural and artistic circulation throughout Europe (**‘Erasmus for the arts’**) and to **remove all barriers** to it, including byzantine visa regulations and taxation/welfare conditions impossible to reconcile. In general to further promote the coordination of European social protection systems to guarantee the **wellbeing of citizens and decent conditions of work and production for all**.
- To adopt the necessary regulation to **recognize the economic rights of creators and producers** with respect for those of distributors and intermediaries.
- To actively oppose any **erosion of the role of the public sphere**, especially in the fields of **culture, arts, education, science/research, citizenship, and human rights** - all fundamental European values to be invested in.
- In particular, to ensure that the negotiations on a **US-EU trade agreement (TTIP) do not water down our environmental and social standards, lead to the reduction of the public sphere in our societies or the relinquishing of the creators' rights**.

## **ANNEX 2: Leading candidates for the main European political parties**

The PES (Party of European Socialists) organized some primaries to designate its candidate. The 4 candidates to primaries were:

- David Miliband - MP for South Shields since 2001, former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from 2007 to 2010. Declined to become a candidate for the EU High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.
- Martin Schulz - German politician and Member of the European Parliament for the Social Democratic Party of Germany, since 2004 leader of the Socialists in the European Parliament Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the Parliament, since 2012 President of the European Parliament.
- José Luis Zapatero - Spanish Prime Minister since 2004, who stepped down in 2011.
- Margot Wallström - Swedish social democratic, currently first Vice Presidents of the European Commission, also currently the European Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Prior to this post, she served as European Commissioner for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy.

On 6 November, **Martin Schulz was confirmed as the front runner** of the European Socialists for the position of Commission President.

For the EPP, although the EPP President committed the party to an "open, transparent and competitive process for selecting (their) presidential candidate", some of the party's leaders have rejected the idea of an open procedure, such as a primary to designate the party's candidate for Commission president. However internal negotiations are under way in order to determine the "profile" of the party's next top candidate, and prominent EPP leaders are taking sides. Possible candidates for the European People's Party are:

- Donald Tusk - Prime Minister of Poland since 2007. He was a co-founder and is chairman of the Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska) party.
- Viviane Reding - currently serving as Vice-President responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship in the EC. In her first term as European Commissioner Viviane Reding, she was Commissioner and Culture and Education.
- Valdis Dombrovskis - a Latvian politician who has been Prime Minister of Latvia since 2009. He served as Minister of Finance from 2002 to 2004 and was a Member of the European Parliament for the New Era Party.

Concerning the liberals (ALDE), two names stand out from the crowd and ALDE Party candidate for Commission President to be announced 1 February 2014:

- Guy Verhofstadt, former Belgium Prime minister, MEP and Chair of the ALDE group in the EP.
- Olli Rehn, the European Commission's vice president in charge of economic and monetary affairs, has reportedly told the Finnish press that he may run to head the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) group's list in European elections next year, so becoming their candidate to be the next president of the EU executive.

The European Greens are organizing open primaries from November 2013 to January 2014 to elect their two leading candidates for the elections. The 4 green candidates are:

- José Bové (FR), member of the EP since 2009, started his activist career in France in the fight against GMO
- Monica Frassoni (IT), member of the EP and co-chair of the Greens/EFA group in the EP until 2009,
- Rebecca Harms (DE), her political work began in 1975 in the German anti-nuclear movement. She's Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group in the EU Parliament
- Ska Keller (DE), since 2001 she is a member of the Green Youth. From 2005 to 2007 was spokesperson of the Federation of Young European Greens.

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Culture Action Europe is supported by the European Commission's Culture Programme and the European Cultural Foundation. This publication reflects the views of Culture Action Europe and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



We are grateful for the support of NEMO



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We would like to thank the following members for their contribution: Intercult, Trans Europe Halles, Relais Culture Europe, the European Music Council, Res Artis, the Roberto Cimetta Fund and Interarts.



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