

European Elections Project  
May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## WEEKLY UPDATE

### Voting Advice Applications (VAAs)

VAAs are web applications that ask voters their opinion on relevant political and social issues and then compare these preferences to the position of relevant parties. Their goal, however, is much broader than just giving voting advice, as they aim to increase their users' knowledge about political parties and their positions.

Responding to a real information need on part of the citizens, VAAs enable voters to obtain more background information from party manifestos, websites, and news releases of political parties, through direct links to official documentation which verifies these issue positions or through the use of text boxes which explain more about the issue at stake.

Research shows that this increase in information could then, in turn, have a positive effect on the likelihood of users actually going to the ballots to cast a vote.



**ProDemos: Vote Match Europe.** Vote Match Europe is an international network among 14 EU countries (Germany, Great Britain, Belgium, Poland, Latvia, Greece, Bulgaria, Austria, Italy, Spain, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, France and the Netherlands), which presents a same set of 20 questions to users who, after completing the Vote Match questionnaire in their own country, can click through the results screen to see which parties best represent them in other countries. Their campaign [Vote Match](#) launched in occasion of the first European presidential debate.



**VoteWatch: Electio2014.** [Electio2014](#) is a platform in 24 languages

designed to help the citizens decide which candidate or party to vote for in the 2014 European Parliament elections. The platform was developed by [VoteWatch Europe](#), an independent organisation which monitors and analyses the decision-making activities of the EP and the EU Council of Ministers. By voting on 20 important issues that Members of the European Parliament have also voted on in the last five years, you can find out which sitting MEP or new candidate most closely matches your views.



**EUvox 2014.** [EUVOX](#) is a state-of-the-art, EU-wide VAA for the 2014

elections to the European Parliament. Its purpose is to help citizens to select the political party that best matches their own policy preferences and enable them to have quick access to information about the positions of all parties in these crucial elections. The project has been designed and implemented by a consortium of researchers based on [Kieskompas](#) and [PreferenceMatcher](#), two experienced organizations in the field of VAAs that have designed many such tools across four continents. EUvox has been featured in some European news sources such as [The Guardian](#) and [Trouw](#).

## Time to Vote



An online campaign endorsed by a coalition of OSIFE grantees informs the EU migrants of their rights ahead of the European Elections. The initiative focuses on Polish and Romanian Citizens working away from home, in particular those in the UK, Italy and the Netherlands, informing them about the upcoming elections, motivating them to vote and explaining them how to protect their right to work. A [webpage](#), a [Facebook page](#) and a [YouTube channel](#) have been created for this initiative.

## Breaking through the rising tide of conservatism in Europe

Looking at the state of public discourses and political debates in European countries today, there are indeed many reasons to be concerned with candidates feeding on fears and frustrations to win votes, write Evelyne Paradis (Executive Director of [ILGA - Europe](#)) and Michael Privot (Director of [ENAR](#)), whose organisations joined forces to push an all-out equality agenda through the EU election campaign, in an [article](#) featured by EurActiv.

## International Alert launches campaign to strengthen peaceful relations in Europe

The UK-based peacebuilding charity, [International Alert](#), is working with partners in Greece, Italy and the Netherlands to promote a balanced debate around migration and social marginalisation in the run up to the European elections. Barry Navarro, Senior Officer for the UK Programme, said: *“In times of austerity and economic crisis, the most vulnerable members of society are often scapegoated.*

*Inflammatory and divisive rhetoric about issues such as migration is increasing, which can fuel tensions between communities”.* The [#eUnify](#) campaign aims to contribute to a more balanced debate and provide a voice for those who are targeted by such attacks, including migrants and minorities. Check out their [Facebook page](#) and their [Twitter account!](#)

## For LGBTQ Youth in Athens, a Chance to Stand and Be Heard



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Check out the [latest voice piece](#) written by George-K. Charonis, member of [Colour Youth](#) – Athens LGBTQ Youth Community in which he explains the work the organisation has been doing, and their campaign [Vote For Your Rights](#), which has been launched as a call for the LGBTQ community to stand up and vote for candidates who prioritize the community’s rights and don’t stay silent where they see injustice.

## Participation of EU citizens in European Parliament and local elections in Italy

In the framework of the project [Operation Vote](#), a brand-new [research report](#) on the political participation of EU movers in Italy has been published last week. It contains recommendations addressed to political parties, associations, local and national institutions aimed at increasing the level of participation of EU movers in the political life of the communities where they reside. This project is promoted by [COSPE](#). The report is available in English and Italian. A similar report for Sweden is also available, in English and Swedish.

*This report contains some updates and information related to the European Elections Projects. The views expressed are not necessarily shared nor supported by OSF. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Francisco Malavassi ([osife.intern@opensocietyfoundations.org](mailto:osife.intern@opensocietyfoundations.org)).*