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COMP.  
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2019/8

JANUARY  
2019

# FAIR EU SYNTHESIS REPORT: ELECTORAL RIGHTS FOR MOBILE EU CITIZENS - CHALLENGES AND FACILITATORS OF IMPLEMENTATION

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This report was funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020)

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Global Citizenship Observatory (GLOBALCIT)  
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies  
in collaboration with  
Edinburgh University Law School

**FAIR EU Synthesis Report: Electoral rights for mobile EU citizens – Challenges and facilitators of implementation**  
RSCAS/GLOBALCIT-PP 2019/8  
January 2019

© Alina Ostling, 2019  
Printed in Italy  
European University Institute  
Badia Fiesolana  
I – 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)

[www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Publications/](http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Publications/)  
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GLOBALCIT studies political participation in the context of the project Fostering Awareness, Inclusion and Recognition of EU mobile citizens' Political Rights (FAIR EU) and as a part of the EU-CITIZEN network.

This report was funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).

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# FAIR EU Synthesis Report

## Electoral rights for mobile EU citizens – Challenges and facilitators of implementation

*Alina Ostling\**

### Abstract:

The report discusses legal and administrative challenges to electoral participation of mobile EU citizens. It also covers voting methods, electoral outreach activities carried out by governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, openness of political parties towards mobile EU citizens, and mobilisations of mobile EU citizens outside of elections. The aim is to increase citizens' awareness of the conditions under which they can participate in elections and provide resources to organisations campaigning for participation. The report is complemented by specific recommendation on policy and administrative reforms aiming at increasing the turnout of mobile EU citizens, which are compiled in a separate document.

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## 1. Introduction

Many EU citizens have lived in another EU Member State for a period of time,<sup>1</sup> and a considerable share of them has probably experienced elections while abroad. The EU has almost 15 million mobile EU citizens who are of voting age and eligible to vote, which is 3.41% of the entire voting population in Europe.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the population of mobile EU citizens is growing. Their numbers have increased considerably in many Member States since 2012 (European Commission 2018, p. 5), and a slight rise has also taken place between 2016 and 2017, both in absolute number of voters and in their share of the total voting population.<sup>3</sup> The largest populations of mobile EU citizens reside in larger countries: Italy, France, Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany, which all have a population of over one million mobile EU citizens (see details in Table 1, Annex 1). The smallest populations reside in smaller countries that have joined the EU since 2004: in Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria and Croatia, which all have a population of under 15,000 mobile EU citizens. At the same time, the largest shares of mobile EU citizens as part of the total voting population reside in small and older Member States: in Luxembourg, Cyprus, Ireland, Belgium and Austria, which all have over 7% of mobile EU citizens. Luxembourg and Cyprus stand out from other Member States by having the highest shares of foreign EU citizens living in their countries (circa 40% and 14% of mobile citizens respectively). The smallest shares of mobile EU citizens are present in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) countries: in Poland, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Croatia, which all have under 0.5% of mobile EU citizens (Eurostat 2017).

While the rate of mobility in the EU is high, many citizens are not aware of their electoral rights and experience challenges when they want to participate in elections. According to Eurobarometer, a significant share of respondents incorrectly believe that EU citizens living in their country do not have electoral rights in European Parliament (EP) elections and in municipal elections (26% and 40% respectively), while another 7% and 6% for EP elections and municipal elections respectively answer “Don’t know”.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, despite the fact that the majority of respondents know that foreign EU citizens living in their country are allowed to vote in EP elections, in several countries the level of awareness is particularly low (e.g. in Lithuania and Denmark).<sup>5</sup> At the same time, mobile EU citizens who are aware and decide to participate in elections experience challenges when accessing their rights. A public consultation carried out by the European Commission found that 21% of respondents had experienced difficulties in trying to vote in EP or local elections whilst living in another EU country. About half of them (51%) had difficulties related to registering

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<sup>1</sup> 60% of respondents to the Public Consultation on EU Citizenship had lived or were living in another EU country for at least 3 months (European Commission 2015). <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b576034e-f74a-11e7-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1>

<sup>2</sup> The exact number is 14,733,015. The Eurostat data used for the purpose of this report comprises two age groups: (1) From 15 to 64 years and (2) 65 years or over given that the minimum voting age in EU-28 is 16 years old (and the age groups from 16 onwards or from 18 onwards are not available on Eurostat). Source: Eurostat (2017).

<sup>3</sup> According to the EC report citing the 2016 Eurostat data, there were almost 14 million mobile EU citizens of voting age in the EU, which accounted for 3.25% of the voting population (European Commission 2018, p. 5.) Presently, there are 15 million eligible mobile EU citizens, which is 3.41% of the entire voting population.

<sup>4</sup> “Electoral rights” are here defined as the right to vote or stand as a candidate. Source: Flash Eurobarometer 430. (2016). (Data from pages 47-51). [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2016-flash-eurobarometer-430-citizenship\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2016-flash-eurobarometer-430-citizenship_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Only a minority think citizens of the EU living in their country have electoral rights in European Parliament elections in Lithuania (46%); while Denmark (53%), Hungary (58%) and Cyprus (59%) also show relatively low levels of awareness. Source: Flash Eurobarometer 430. (2016).

on the electoral roll and another half (47%) declared that the information on how to vote was insufficient or unclear (European Commission 2015).

As emphasised by an earlier report produced for the EP, Member States do not apply a uniform procedure or set of rules on the franchise to elections, in particular EP elections, and citizens find it hard to navigate the complex patterns of entitlements based on nationality and residence. Moreover, the rights to found and join a political party also vary across the EU, which makes candidacy for mobile EU citizens more challenging. Ultimately, the uneven access to electoral rights across Member States results in inequalities in the democratic representation of mobile EU citizens (Arrighi et al. 2013, p. 16-17).

This report aims to provide a comparative overview of opportunities and challenges with regard to electoral participation of mobile EU citizens. Mobile EU citizens are defined as ‘EU citizens who have exercised their right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States’ (European Commission 2018, p. 1).<sup>6</sup> The report focuses on the following categories of mobile EU citizens and elections:

1. The participation of EU citizens who reside outside their country of nationality (non-resident citizens) in EP elections,
2. The participation of EU residents who reside in a Member State other than their Member State of nationality (non-citizen residents) in local elections and EP elections.

The report discusses legal and administrative challenges to electoral participation in section 2; examines how electoral outreach activities are carried out, by whom and through what channels across Member States in section 3; how political parties accommodate mobile EU citizens, whether mobile EU citizens mobilise outside of elections in section 4; and provides conclusions for the EU-28 in section 5. The aim is to increase citizens’ awareness of the conditions under which they can participate in elections and provide resources to organisations campaigning for participation. The report is complemented by specific recommendation on policy and administrative reforms aiming at increasing the turnout of mobile EU citizens, which are compiled in a separate document.

## 1.1 Methodology

This report is based on country reports drafted by national experts from EU-28, the on- and offline questionnaires that experts and stakeholders have completed in each Member State, and the GLOBALCIT database entitled “Conditions for Electoral Rights” (CER) 2017. The country experts have been selected from GLOBALCIT's pool of national experts. They all have previous experience with research on the topic of electoral rights. The offline questionnaires were distributed to the 28 country experts, who completed them on the basis of their expertise and the feedback from stakeholders consulted. The online questionnaires were in most cases completed directly by representatives of the stakeholders outlined below.

The on- and offline questionnaires were addressed to the following groups of stakeholders:

- NGO, association or civil society organisation

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<sup>6</sup> These rights are provided by Article 21 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and defined by Directive 2004/38/EC (2004).

- EU representation in Member States<sup>7</sup>
- Electoral body or public administration
- Others, such as universities and informal groups of citizens

The online questionnaire received 86 responses<sup>8</sup> from 24 Member States and represents the following categories of respondents:

- 32 NGOs, associations or civil society organisations
- 27 electoral bodies or public administrations
- 19 EU representations in Member States
- 7 other respondents (e.g. universities, research institutes, an EU official, a political party and an expert)
- 1 blank response

The majority of respondents (47) preferred to remain anonymous.

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<sup>7</sup> Liaison offices of the European Parliament: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/en/stay-informed/information-offices-in-the-member-states> and the European Commission representation offices in Member States: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-commission/contact/local-offices-eu-member-countries\\_en#commission-representation-offices](https://ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-commission/contact/local-offices-eu-member-countries_en#commission-representation-offices)

<sup>8</sup> A response from a public authority in Ireland was delivered as a PDF file instead of being completed online.

## 2. Legal and Administrative Challenges

Voting and Candidacy rights of mobile EU citizens in European Parliament and local elections are regulated by EU Directives 93/109/EC and 94/80/EC. These directives leave some leeway to Member States that has produced national variations with regard to eligibility and access to electoral rights. EU Directive 93/109/EC moreover aims to prevent double voting in EP elections by mobile EU citizens in the country of nationality as well as in the host EU Member State.

Article 4(1) of Directive 93/109/EC on voting and candidacy rights in European Parliament elections states that ‘voters shall exercise their right to vote either in the Member State of residence or in their home Member State’. Article 9(2) states that in order to have their name entered on the electoral roll, a non-citizen resident is obliged to produce the same documents as a voter who is a national. They also must submit a formal declaration stating their nationality and address in their host state; if applicable the constituency in their home Member State where their name was last entered, and crucially that they will exercise their right to vote in the Member State of residence only. This wording implies that non-citizen residents are under a duty not to engage in double-voting. It may even be suggested that Member States are under a duty to procure such a declaration from non-citizen residents upon entering them into the electoral roll even if the procedure is otherwise ‘automatic’. Note, however, that it is not clear how these provisions apply to EU citizens who possess the nationality of two Member States and reside in one of these.

Article 1(2) of the Directive states that ‘nothing in this Directive shall affect each Member State’s provisions concerning the right to vote or to stand as a candidate of its nationals who reside outside of its electoral territory’. This generates an important inequality of the franchise across Member States, some of which do not provide their citizens living in other Member States with the option of voting for a national list in their country of origin. The provision also seems to preclude the possibility of restricting automatic voter registration of non-citizen residents in order to prevent double voting under the Directive. The franchise of EU citizens residing in third countries is similarly regulated unequally by the Member States. While the risk of double voting does not arise in this context, there is a concern of selective opportunities to vote in EP elections depending on the Member States’ general policy towards its non-resident citizens, which upsets the democratic norm of universal and equal suffrage of EU citizens in EP elections.

Chapter III of the Directive provides for derogations and transitional provisions. Article 14 states that if on 1 January 1993 the number of EU citizens resident in a Member State who are not nationals exceeds 20% of the total population the authorities may restrict the right to vote for EU citizens to a minimum period which may not exceed 5 years, and the right to stand as a candidate for a period which may not exceed 10 years. A caveat is provided for individuals who may be disenfranchised as non-resident citizens in their home Member States due to taking up residence outside their Member State or by reason of the duration of such residence. The derogations will not apply to these EU citizens. Luxembourg was the only Member State that availed itself of this derogation until the law of December 20, 2013 removed this requirement.<sup>9</sup>

Only 19 of the 28 EU Member States guarantee voting rights in EP elections for non-resident citizens, independently of whether they live in the EU or in third countries. The remaining nine Member States either do not guarantee such rights at all (Cyprus, Czech

<sup>9</sup> <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/2013/12/20/n2/jo>.



Republic, Hungary, Ireland, Malta, and Slovakia,) or guarantee them only if the citizens are living in another Member State (Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, and Italy). A few Member States also allow certain categories of citizens to vote abroad, while this is not possible for ordinary citizens (e.g. Ireland for diplomats and their spouses, and Malta for public servants and members of armed forces). Moreover, Germany guarantees voting rights but requires at least three months' past residence in Germany within the last 25 years (since the 14th birthday of the citizen) or living at least three months in another Member State.

Similarly to the Directive on European Parliament elections, Article 1(2) confirms that the provisions of Directive 94/80/EC on voting and candidacy rights in municipal elections does not affect the provisions concerning the voting and candidate rights of nationals residing outside of the territory of a Member State. Furthermore, the Directive also does not affect the provision of voting and candidate rights to third-country nationals. Article 4 (3) provide caveats to the provision in Article 4(1) that periods of residence in another Member State shall count towards a minimum requirement for registration in the host Member State. If the right to vote and stand as candidates in municipal elections is conditional upon a minimum period of residence in that particular basic local government unit or the relevant constituent part of the Member State for nationals, then this obligation will also be applied to EU non-citizen residents. Furthermore, Article 4(2) confirms that if the right to vote and stand as candidates for nationals is limited to the basic local government unit in which they are resident then this condition will also apply to EU non-citizen residents.

A contrast to the Directive on European Parliament elections is that Article 5 provides for a margin of national discretion with regard to limiting local executive offices to nationals of a state. Paragraph 3 details that Member States may provide that only their own nationals may hold the office of elected head, deputy or member of the governing college of the executive of a basic local government. Article 7(3) details that Member States have the option to allow automatic registration for non-citizen residents provided that voting is not compulsory. Article 8 provides Member States with the discretion to require EU citizen voters to produce a valid identity document, along with a formal declaration stating his nationality, and his address in the Member State of residence. Article 9 makes similar provision for prospective candidates, including further measures such as a declaration of not being deprived of candidacy rights in the home Member States and an attestation of this, and a formal declaration that the candidate holds no office in their home Member State.

The Directive also provides for derogations analogous to those found in Directive 93/109/EC. Article 12 sets the date at which a Member State has more than 20% of its population as non-national EU citizens as 1 January 1996. The right to vote may be restricted to those who have been resident for a period no longer than the term of the representative council of the municipality, and the right to candidacy may be restricted to those resident for a period no longer than double the term of the municipal council. Again, Luxembourg availed itself of the derogation. The restrictions on candidacy rights were removed by electoral law on 13 February 2011, whereas the derogations on the residence required for voting and the composition of the lists were amended but not removed on 20 December 2013.<sup>10</sup> Paragraph 2 also details that a derogation is available for Belgium for a limited number of local government units, the list of which must be communicated at least one year before the local government unit elections. Belgium has not sought to apply this derogation in practice.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Luxembourg.

<sup>11</sup> REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on the application of Directive 94/80/EC on the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in municipal elections.

## 2.1 Eligibility restrictions

### 2.1.1 Non-resident citizens: European Parliament elections

Disenfranchisement of mobile EU citizens in elections after a period of residence abroad is a matter of concern and one of the most common topics of complaints and questions received by the European Commission from individuals and from the European Parliament (European Commission 2017, p. 12). Our research shows that most of the EU Member States (23 of 28) guarantee voting rights in EP elections for non-resident citizens if they live in the EU. However, Hungary<sup>12</sup> and Slovakia<sup>13</sup> do not allow nationals abroad to vote, while Cyprus,<sup>14</sup> Ireland,<sup>15</sup> and Malta<sup>16</sup> guarantee such rights only to specific categories of the population. Moreover, British nationals residing abroad eventually lose their right to vote. The United Kingdom applies a 15-year non-residence bar to participation in EP elections,<sup>17</sup> as well as a requirement of having been previously registered with a UK address.<sup>18</sup>

Some GLOBALCIT country experts<sup>19</sup> perceive the disenfranchisement in elections after a period of residence abroad as justified, while others disagree. In the case of Hungary, the country expert assumes that long-term emigrants and transborder Hungarian citizens, who have never lived in Hungary, are not ‘stakeholders’ in the national polity, and should potentially not be allowed to vote. In the case of Ireland, where non-residents are also generally disenfranchised from elections, there is a concern regarding the large number of persons living abroad with a right to Irish citizenship. The Irish expert suggests that rules can be tailored (e.g. by imposing a 10-year residence abroad bar) to deal with this in relation to national elections. However, at the same time he considers that disenfranchisement of nationals abroad in EP elections is justified given that they still retain the possibility to vote in another Member State. In contrast, the Slovakian expert believes that the sole option of in-country voting for non-residents is not justified and asserts that remote voting should be introduced for EP elections.

In some countries, the loss of voting rights of nationals living abroad has been raised in public discourse. In Ireland, the issue was brought up by the ‘Home to Vote’ campaign in recent referendums, and considered by a citizens’ convention, which recommended voting

COM(2018) 44 final 25.1.2018. See also Jo Shaw, *The Transformation of Citizenship in the European Union: Electoral Rights and the Restructuring of Political Space* (CUP, 2007) at p. 149.

<sup>12</sup> In 2018, the law was changed to enfranchise Hungarian citizens in third countries. For Hungarian citizens voting in the EP elections is conditional on residence in Hungary rather than citizenship. Hungarian citizens residing in the EU who do not have official, documented residence in Hungary cannot vote in the EP elections. Note that the Hungarian GLOBALCIT expert asserts that most nationals who reside abroad still retain their formal address in Hungary, and thus have the right to vote as temporary absentees. See the following post for more details: <http://globalcit.eu/hungarian-citizens-in-non-eu-countries-to-get-voting-rights-in-ep-elections/>

<sup>13</sup> Slovak nationals who do not have a permanent residence in Slovakia or any other EU Member State may only vote in EP elections if present in Slovakia on the polling day.

<sup>14</sup> Voting rights are guaranteed to civil servants on state service and spouses, and temporary absentees (by discretion). Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Cyprus.

<sup>15</sup> Voting rights are guaranteed to diplomats and their spouses. Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Ireland.

<sup>16</sup> Maltese citizens are generally disenfranchised if they have not spent six out of the last 18 months in the country. Public servants and members of the armed forces posted abroad are counted as residents, and retain voting rights. Source: GLOBALCIT CER 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Except in respect of service persons in the armed forces and Crown servants.

<sup>18</sup> The 15-year restriction applies also to national elections and referendums. The requirement of having been previously registered with a UK address is waived for those who had left prior to the eligibility age (18 at present).

<sup>19</sup> With GLOBALCIT country experts we intend those experts who have written the country reports on electoral participation in the framework of the FAIR EU project.

rights for Irish residents abroad for Presidential elections.<sup>20</sup> In the UK, the Conservative Party manifestos for both the 2015<sup>21</sup> and 2017<sup>22</sup> general elections committed to introduce a ‘Votes for Life’ bill. On 23 February 2018, the Overseas Electoral Bill,<sup>23</sup> which aims to abolish the 15-year bar, passed second reading with a clear majority in the UK House of Commons<sup>24</sup> and will now proceed for scrutiny by a Public Bill Committee. The Bill seeks to enfranchise overseas electors irrespective of the length of their absence from the UK or whether they were previously registered to vote in the UK, provided they had a fixed address in the UK at some point in their lives or, absent a fixed address, make a ‘declaration of local connection’ in respect of such an address. The Bill does not enfranchise UK citizens born abroad who have never resided in the UK. Moreover, a recent petition that attracted over 10,000 signatories ‘proposes to introduce votes for life and to add overseas constituencies with a dedicated MP for each constituency to better represent British citizens living abroad’.<sup>25</sup>

In Romania, experts express concern about indirect challenges for political participation by nationals abroad caused by recurrent changes in electoral laws. For instance, postal voting was applied for the 2016 parliamentary elections, but it is still unclear if it will be extended for the EP and presidential elections scheduled for 2019. The lack of stability creates confusion among the electorate both at home and abroad. In particular for non-residents, it increases the so-called ‘cognitive costs’ of political participation and, potentially, feeds the lack of trust in political institutions. These changes also have a negative impact on the awareness raising campaigns organised by different public institutions. It increases the financial costs of these campaigns and limits their efficiency considering that these outreach activities are organised shortly before the elections, which limits the possibility to reach a wider audience.<sup>26</sup>

Not only long-term absentees but also citizens temporarily abroad encounter difficulties when it comes to voting. Some Member States only allow in-country voting in EP elections (e.g. Czech Republic and Slovakia), which means that temporary absentees are technically disenfranchised. Other States only provide the possibility of voting at diplomatic missions (e.g. Romania), or offer a limited number of polling stations abroad (e.g. Poland). Several Member States also put additional administrative burdens on voters abroad. For example, Greek absentees must be registered in a special electoral list. In practice this means that only voters who are aware long in advance of the election day that they will be absent from Greece can make the practical arrangements. French temporary absentees cannot cast a ballot in consular or diplomatic premises, by post or through early voting. Therefore, the only voting method available to them is by appointing a proxy in their municipality of residence. The Belgian practice of voting by proxy is all the more challenging: temporary absentees must request authorisation from the mayor of the municipality of residence. The proxy is required to submit the voter registration form signed by the Belgian citizen who is

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/convention-supports-voting-rights-for-irish-emigrants-1.1542915>

<sup>21</sup> Available at: <https://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/Blog/ConservativeManifesto2015.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Available at: <https://www.conservatives.com/manifesto>

<sup>23</sup> Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0016/18016.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Hansard Vol 636 col 486 (23 February 2018); available at: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-23/debates/9F6393F6-339C-4813-8C24-BDC41623DF10/OverseasElectorsBill>

<sup>25</sup> “Give all British citizens living abroad the right to vote and dedicated MPs” (Petitions, UK Government and Parliament, closed on 13 March 2018); available at: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/200005> The Government responded that it ‘remains committed to introducing “votes for life” ahead of the next scheduled General Election in 2022 but has no plans to create overseas constituencies’.

<sup>26</sup> This paragraph is based on answers to the GLOBALCIT offline survey question: “18. Do national electoral laws create indirect challenges for political participation by non-resident citizens in EP and national elections (e.g. electoral systems, regulations for party primaries and formation of candidate lists, thresholds for parliamentary representation, etc.)?”.

temporarily absent to the polling station where the latter was supposed to vote in person. In doing so, the proxy is also required to attach a proof that the person who is absent is indeed abroad. In Ireland, the level of complexity is even higher. There are two forms of temporary absentees and related procedures:

1. Those abroad temporarily for study or work purposes are able to exercise a postal vote. This postal vote must be filled in and posted prior to the election date and must be completed and sealed in the presence of a member of police services (An Garda Síochána). In order to be placed on the register for postal votes a form must be completed, signed by an employer (for employees), a university (for students) or a self-declaration must be made (for the self-employed) confirming the voter's absence and submitted to the local authority in advance of elections. Both the process of applying to be placed on the register and the actual voting process are cumbersome. Moreover, they are not very widely known.
2. Persons who have moved abroad and intend to return to the state within 18 months remain on the register in their place of residence in Ireland and may vote as normal in elections. To do so, they have to return to Ireland to vote, and vote in person in the constituency in which they are registered (at the polling station indicated on their ballot).

### *2.1.2 Non-citizen residents: local and European parliament elections*

All Member States grant foreign EU citizens the right to vote and to stand as candidates in local and EP elections in accordance with the provisions of the EU Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.<sup>27</sup> The EP Elections Directive (Directive 93/109/EC) also allows Member States to impose additional residence requirements on foreign EU citizens in order for them to access their voting rights, but only if the same requirements are also applied to nationals of the Member States, and if residence in other Member States are considered as equivalent.<sup>28</sup> Our research shows that Czech Republic applies additional residence conditions to the voting rights of non-citizens in EP elections: foreign EU citizens are allowed to vote if they have a permanent or temporary residence in the Czech Republic issued at least 45 days

<sup>27</sup> This right is enshrined in Article 22(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Articles 39 and 40 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ([https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/eu-citizenship/electoral-rights\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/eu-citizenship/electoral-rights_en)) Moreover, the arrangements for the exercise of electoral rights in local elections are laid down by Council Directive 94/80/EC. The 94/80/EC lays down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in municipal elections by citizens of the Union residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals (OJ L 368, 31.12.1994, p. 38).

<sup>28</sup> “Whereas the purpose of Article 8b (2) of the EC Treaty [now Article 22(2) TFEU] is to ensure that all citizens of the Union, whether or not they are nationals of the Member State in which they reside, can exercise in that State their right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament under the same conditions; whereas the conditions applying to non-nationals, including those relating to period and proof of residence, should therefore be identical to those, if any, applying to nationals of the Member State concerned”. and (Article. 5) “If, in order to vote or to stand as candidates, nationals of the Member State or residence must have spent a certain minimum period as a resident in the electoral territory of that State, Community voters and Community nationals entitled to stand as candidates shall be deemed to have fulfilled that condition where they have resided for an equivalent period in other Member States. This provision shall apply without prejudice to any specific conditions as to length of residence in a given constituency or locality.” Source: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:31993L0109&from=EN>

prior to elections.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, Denmark makes an exception by not granting voting rights to EU citizens residing in the Faroe Islands and Greenland, which are autonomous jurisdictions within the Danish Realm.<sup>30</sup>

Regarding local elections, Luxembourg is the only Member State that requires a minimum length of past residence (five years) for non-citizens from the EU to vote.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the Czech Republic requires permanent residence for non-citizens from the EU who want to vote in local elections (non-citizens can apply for permanent residence after five years of temporary residence in the Czech Republic). However, this requirement does not seem to be enforced in practice.<sup>32</sup> In addition, Austria makes exceptions for the city of Vienna, which is both a province and a municipality and where non-citizen residents from the EU can only vote and stand as candidates in urban district elections. In the German city-states of Hamburg and Berlin foreign EU citizens are allowed to vote for the communal organs of government, but not for the city-state parliaments,<sup>33</sup> which are considered to be legislative assemblies at the Länder level of the German federation. In addition, EU citizens cannot stand as candidates for local assemblies in the German state of Bavaria and the city-states of Hamburg, Berlin and Bremen.

Moreover, nearly half of the EU-28 Member States have restrictions to the right to be elected to certain executive offices for non-national EU citizens, as illustrated in Table X. The most common restrictions apply to the posts of mayor, and sometimes extend to the post of deputy mayor (i.e. in the Czech Republic and Italy). This is in line with the current EU legislation<sup>34</sup> but can still be considered a challenge to electoral participation of mobile EU citizens.

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<sup>29</sup> The same condition applies to candidacy rights (Act no. 62/2003 Coll., on European Parliament elections, paragraphs 5 and 6). (Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Czech Republic). Please note that Greece also requires non-citizen residents from the EU to know the local language (Greece). Only EU citizens residing in Greece who can demonstrate an 'elementary' knowledge of the Greek language are eligible to vote (although this condition is, in practice, not systematically evaluated by relevant authorities).

<sup>30</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Denmark.

<sup>31</sup> Source: Loi électorale du 18 février 2003 and Mémorial A n° 210 de 2008.

<http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-memorial-2009-38-fr-pdf.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Czech Republic.

<sup>33</sup> Bremen is also a city-state, however in 2009 electoral laws were reformed to allow EU citizens to vote for the city-parliament. Source: Martin Fehndrich and Willko Zicht, "Kommunalwahlsystem Bremen," Wahlrecht.de, January 6, 2009, <https://www.wahlrecht.de/kommunal/bremen.htm>

<sup>34</sup> Council Directive 94/80/EC Art. 5(3) permits excluding non-national EU citizens from candidacy for mayoral office (although it does not allow excluding from candidacy as local councillors).

Table 1. Overview of restrictions to the right to be elected to certain executive offices for non-citizen residents from the EU<sup>35</sup>

Country	Restrictions apply to the position of:
Austria	- mayor (except in the province of Lower Austria) <sup>36</sup>
Belgium	-mayor (but non-nationals can hold a seat in the city council and be appointed as alderman/alderwoman)
Cyprus	- mayor <sup>37</sup>
Czech republic	- mayor and deputy mayor - city councillors (applies to the city of Prague only)
Estonia	- rural municipality or city mayor, or member of the municipal administration - rural municipality and city secretaries
France	- mayor
Germany	- mayor in Bavaria and Sachsen (in other German states EU citizens can stand as candidates for mayor)
Greece	- mayor - secretary general of the region
Italy	- mayor, - deputy mayor
Netherlands	- mayor - alderman
Poland	- mayor <sup>38</sup>
Slovenia	-mayor <sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> This analysis is mainly based on the following question in the GLOBALCIT offline survey: “8. Are you aware of any restrictions to the right to be elected to certain executive offices for non-national EU citizens in your country?” from the GLOBALCIT offline survey.

<sup>36</sup> Eligibility for the post of a mayor is restricted to Austrian citizens in all those provinces, where mayors are directly elected (Burgenland, Carinthia, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Tyrol and Vorarlberg) and in two of the three provinces where mayors are indirectly elected. Lower Austria is the only province where EU citizens enjoy the right to stand for the post as mayor in Austria.

<sup>37</sup> Non-citizen residents cannot be elected as mayors in municipal elections and community leaders in community elections. Source: GLOBALCIT offline survey: Cyprus.

<sup>38</sup> Head of the local administrations (‘gmina’, similar to a municipality; and ‘voivods’ corresponding to a province).

<sup>39</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Slovenia, p. 1.

The GLOBALCIT offline survey also indicates that non-citizen residents who wish to stand as candidates or to form a party face some numerical challenges imposed by the law in some countries. For example in Hungary, 20,000 supporting signatures are needed to establish a candidate list, which may create a difficulty for non-nationals to run as candidates. Moreover, Hungary and Poland have electoral thresholds of 5%, and Austria of 4%, for the European Parliament that might make it difficult for non-citizens to establish parties targeting their peers (who are numerically inferior to the nationals) in EP elections. It is also worth noting that in 2014 Germany removed its general 5% threshold specifically for EP elections.

## 2.2 Electoral registration

The majority of citizens living in another Member State consider that automatic voter registration when citizens register as residents makes or would make it easier to vote in European or local elections in the country in which they live.<sup>40</sup> The importance of automatic registration is also confirmed by the GLOBALCIT country experts.<sup>41</sup> However, as illustrated in this section, only a minority of Member States offer mobile EU citizens automatic voter registration in EP and local elections. In addition, mobile EU citizens face challenges such as inadequate registration deadlines, inaccurate registries of voters and cumbersome registration procedures as described in the following sections.

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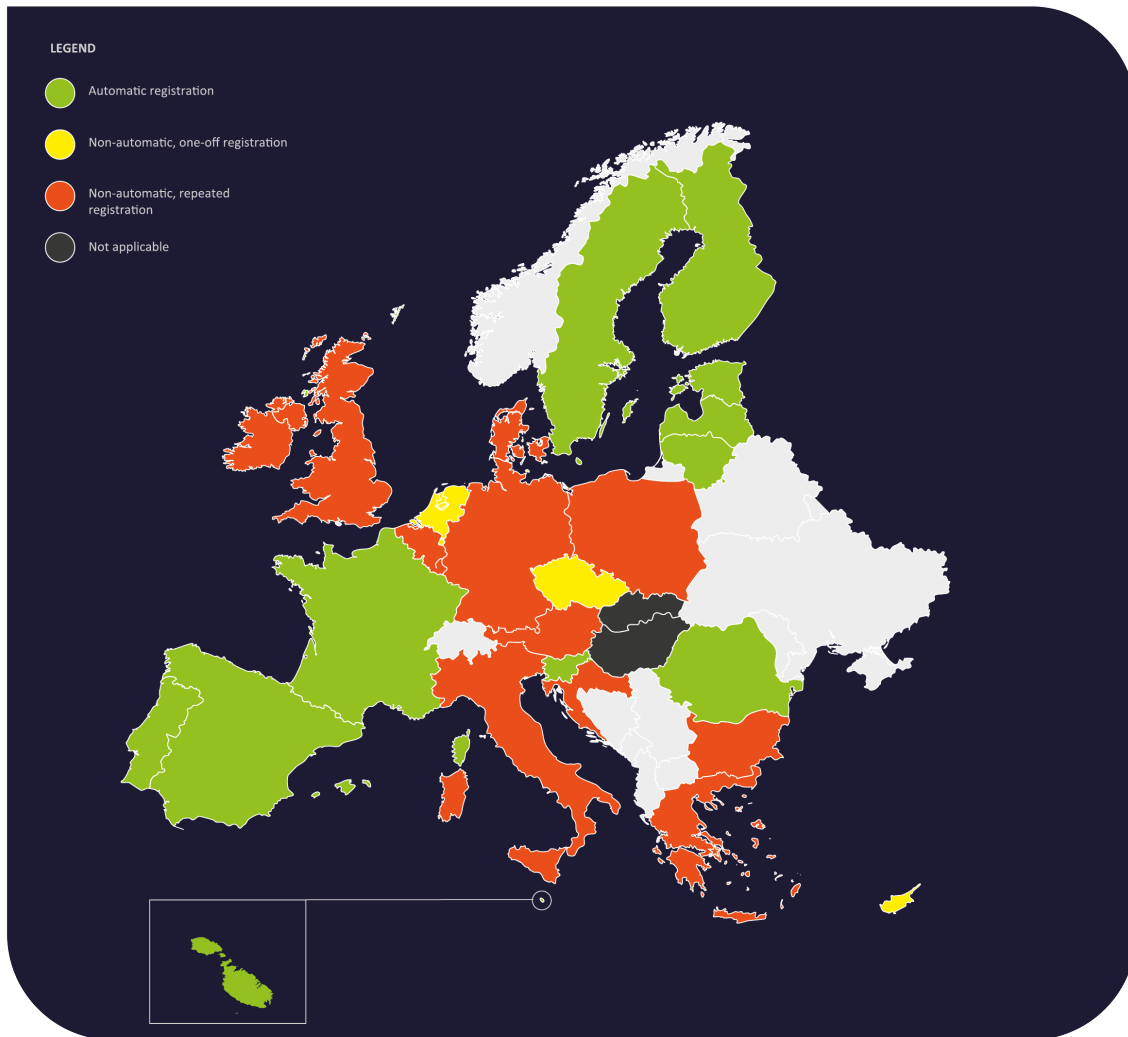
<sup>40</sup> 63% of citizens living in another EU country indicate “Automatic registration on the electoral roll when citizens register as residents” as a facilitator to vote in European or local elections in the country in which they live (European Commission 2015) and around eight in ten European Union citizens agree that it would be easier if registration on the electoral roll was automatic, as a result of registering as a resident (79%) (Eurobarometer fl\_431 2016).

<sup>41</sup> Please see the FAIR EU policy recommendations, compiled in a separate document.

### 2.2.1 Non-resident citizens: European Parliament elections

Voter registration is automatic in only ten of the 23 Member States that grant voting rights to non-resident citizens in EP elections (see Figure 1). Almost half of the 23 Member States (11) require repeated registration at each election, while two Member States have non-automatic, one-off, registration.

Figure 1. Voter registration modalities for non-resident citizens in EP elections



The GLOBALCIT offline survey suggests that non-automatic registration is a considerable challenge for non-resident citizens. Many voters are either not aware of the need to register due to lack of effective information, or simply miss the registration deadlines. Moreover, in some Member States the registration deadlines are very far away from the actual election day, e.g. in Austria, nationals abroad have to register for EP elections 71 days before election day. Another challenge is the lack of accurate registers of citizens residing abroad, e.g. Belgian citizens who are not listed in the consular registry cannot be contacted by authorities. In the case of Belgium, the compulsory voting system also deters some nationals abroad from registering since they fear that they will be fined or get into legal trouble with authorities if they are unable to vote. Some Member States also put an excessive administrative burden on citizens in connection to registration. For example British citizens who have not previously



been registered to vote anywhere in the UK are unable to apply to register as overseas electors.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, British overseas voters must re-register annually. In Spain, although registration in the electoral census is automatic, non-resident citizens have to meet another condition to be able to vote in EP elections: they have to specifically apply to the consulate where they are registered to receive the electoral ballots and the documentation needed in order to cast their vote. In practice, this application is equivalent to a renewal of the voter registration, since voters who fail to do so, will not be allowed to vote. The application must be done each time elections are called. This procedure, known as the ‘voto rogado’ (begged vote) system, was first implemented in 2011. Since then, it has been opposed by associations of non-resident citizens due to the complications introduced by this procedure.<sup>43</sup> The drawbacks of the ‘begged vote’ system are clear: there is a need to register as a local resident first; voters must ‘beg’ for the vote whenever a new election is called and the timeframe for doing this is short. The procedure is also not efficient due to delays and deficiencies of postal services.

Several GLOBALCIT country experts emphasise that there are difficulties with slow postal services in some countries and with the short timeframe for voter registration and voting. In the case of Austria, absentee ballot cards, which voters may use for postal or embassy voting, are sent out by post. Reportedly, these ballot cards sometimes get lost in the mail and do not reach voters, or reach them too late. In such cases, voting is not possible because new ballot cards cannot be requested. Moreover, there are cases when the completed ballot cards arrive at the competent authorities too late. According to one of the GLOBALCIT survey responses from Austria, the timeframe for sending out and sending back the ballot cards is too short, especially for countries outside Europe. A German respondent also asserts that the slow mail delivery services prevent timely arrival of absentee ballot papers for non-resident citizens and considers that the 4-6 weeks registration period is difficult to manage with different postal services. The Federal Election Officer ("Bundeswahlleiter"), who is responsible for overseeing elections, receives complaints from Germans living abroad claiming to have learned too late about the election after every European election. Moreover, at the last EP election, several voter registration applications from nationals abroad were received after the deadline. In the case of the Netherlands, most documents required for voting can be sent to nationals abroad at an early stage but the ballot papers can only be printed and sent after the candidate lists are completed. In case voters choose to have ballot papers sent by post (the email option is also available), there are chances that the voter will not receive them in time or that there is not sufficient time left for the voter to return them by post.

Finally, the GLOBALCIT expert for Estonia emphasizes that returnees from abroad are facing some difficulties. Estonian nationals who have previously registered to vote for the EP elections in another Member State are excluded from the Estonian electoral roll. Many people are not aware of having to re-register for voting in Estonia once they have returned, nor is there an institutional procedure to contact those persons.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Note that this rule does not apply if someone was too young to register when he or she left the UK. If voters left the UK before they were 18 they can be registered at their parents' or guardians' address, provided they left the UK no more than 15 years ago.

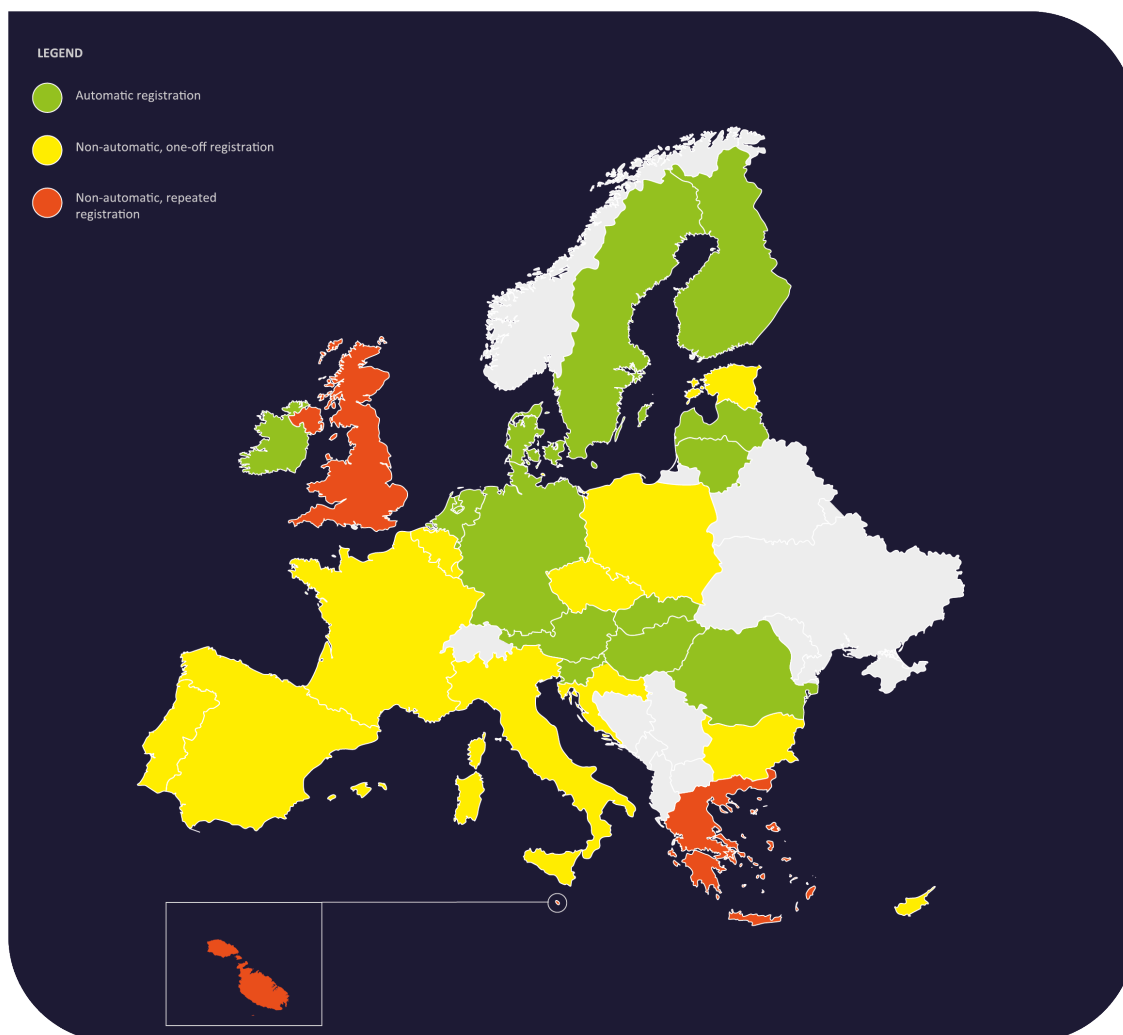
<sup>43</sup> See e.g. the discussion of the ‘Marea granate’ movement in section “4.2 Participation outside elections”.

<sup>44</sup> The information on Estonia is based on the analysis of answer to the GLOBALCIT offline survey question “17. Do any specific issues arise from the implementation of EU legislation on nationals’ voting rights abroad?”.

### 2.2.2 Non-citizen residents: local and European parliament elections

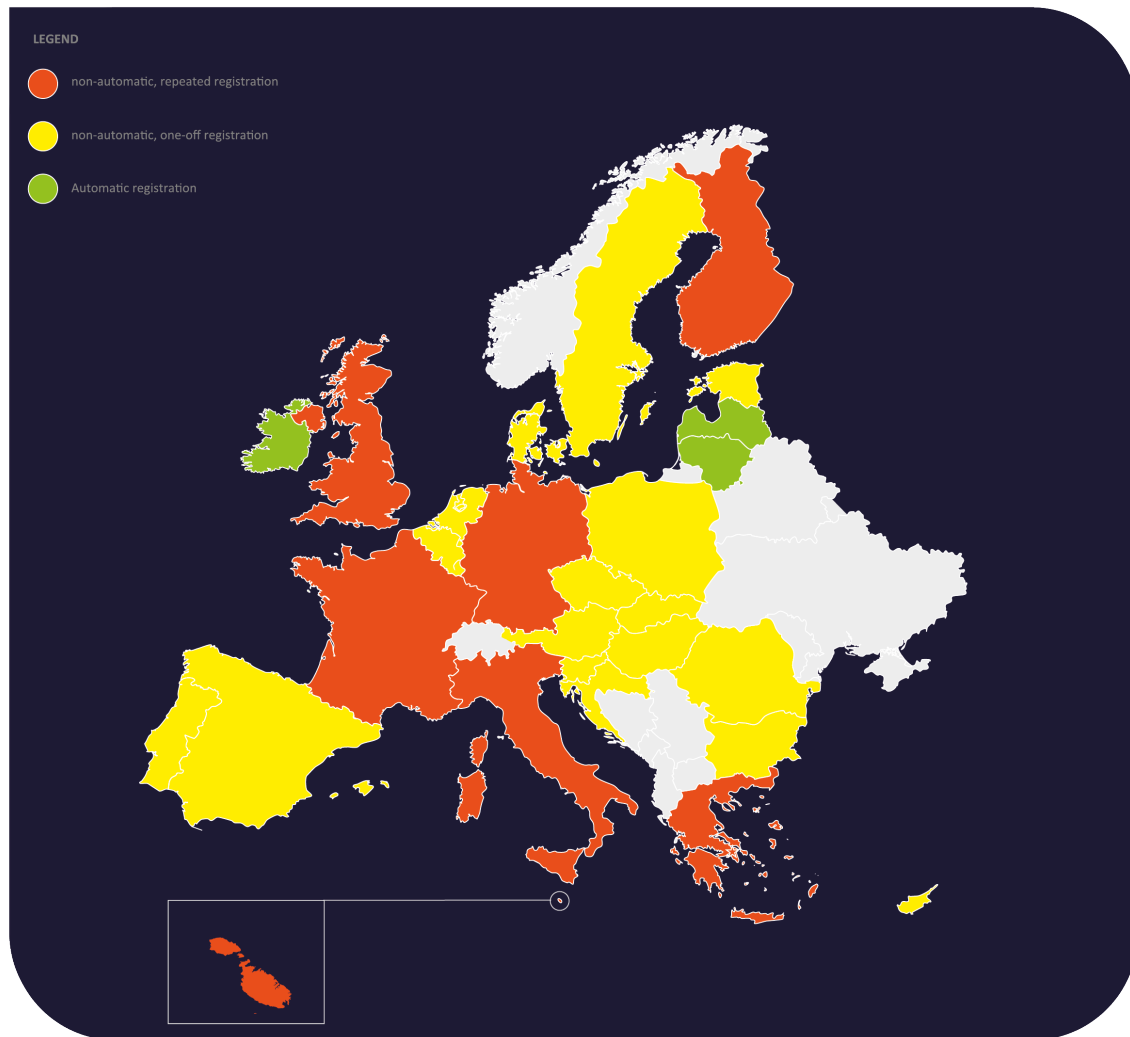
Voter registration is automatic for non-citizen residents in local elections in only 13 of 28 Member States (as illustrated in Figure 2). In 12 Member States registration is non-automatic but one-off, while three Member States require repeated registration at each election (Greece, Malta and United Kingdom).

Figure 2. Voter registration modalities for non-citizen residents in local assembly elections



In the case of EP elections, only three Member States offer non-citizen residents from the EU automatic voter registration (Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania). The majority of states (25) require active registration but most (18 of 25) allow a one-off registration, which is automatically renewed for subsequent elections (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Voter registration modalities for non-citizen residents in EP elections



In several Member States the need for active registration is perceived as a challenge to participation, in part because it is considered as a burdensome procedure and in part because potential voters risk missing registration deadlines. In some Members States, the registration deadlines are far in advance of elections; e.g. in Spain voters need to register as early as six months prior to local elections,<sup>45</sup> in Slovakia 40 days prior to EP elections,<sup>46</sup> and Italy 40 days prior to local elections and 90 days prior to EP elections.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, the lack of information about voter registration is relayed by several GLOBALCIT experts, who deplore the absence of targeted information campaigns by public authorities and civil society organizations, as well as limited information in different languages (e.g. in Romania, Hungary,<sup>48</sup> Slovenia,<sup>49</sup> Spain and Germany). Moreover, the Italian country expert also

<sup>45</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Spain.

<sup>46</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Slovakia.

<sup>47</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Italy.

<sup>48</sup> In the case of Hungary, certain forms necessary for registration are available only in Hungarian.

<sup>49</sup> In Slovenia, non-citizens get the same information as Slovenian citizens, which is available in the Slovenian, Italian and Hungarian languages (the latter two are official languages in parts of Slovenia).

stresses that information sent by municipalities sometimes reaches non-citizens only after the voter registration deadline.

Moreover, some Member States put additional administrative burdens on non-citizen residents. For example in the UK the voter registration must be renewed annually. In Romania, when putting forward their candidacy for EP elections, non-national EU citizens must submit a form signed by the competent authorities of their country of nationality proving that they have not been deprived of the candidacy right in their Member State. The GLOBALCIT expert for Spain also suggests that municipal administrations are sometimes not very interested in the electoral registration of EU citizens. Evidently, one of the reasons is that the electoral registration, unlike the registration in the municipal census, does not entail any direct benefit for the municipal administration (such as additional funds allocated by each registered citizen). Another reason is that administrations are not necessarily sympathetic to the idea of ‘foreigners’ deciding on local matters. As one of the people interviewed by the GLOBALCIT country expert for Spain put it, the whole process “depends completely on the functioning of the local administration, who [sic] is generally more interested in the registration of residents but not voters”.

In EP elections, most mobile EU citizens can either vote for the representatives of their country of residence or participate in EP elections as non-resident citizens. However, considering that the communication between the electoral rolls of Member States is not always efficient, some mobile EU citizens may be deleted from the electoral registry in the country where they intended to vote, because they were simultaneously registered in another electoral registry.<sup>50</sup>

In Belgium, the electoral registration of non-national EU citizens is voluntary for both EP and local elections. However, once registered, EU citizens become subject to the compulsory voting system that includes penalties in the case of non-participation, just like Belgian nationals. This compulsory voting system is not in line with the political traditions of most EU residents and is perceived as an element that holds back voter registration. Although the fine in case of non-participation has not been enforced in Belgium for decades, many EU citizens are still unaware of the potential consequences of when they abstain from voting.

Disadvantaged groups of citizens, in particular homeless EU citizens who do not have a fixed address, may experience even more difficulties with voter registration compared to the general population. However, solutions have been implemented in some Member States. For example the French GLOBALCIT expert reports that homeless persons in France are allowed to register for voting in the municipality where a centre of social assistance to which they are affiliated is located since 2012. Initially, the reform was reserved to French citizens but in 2014 the issue was brought to the attention of the French ombudsman.<sup>51</sup> The ombudsman found that the exclusion of homeless persons who are also EU citizens violated the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality, and the legislation was brought in conformity with EU law shortly after.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: France.

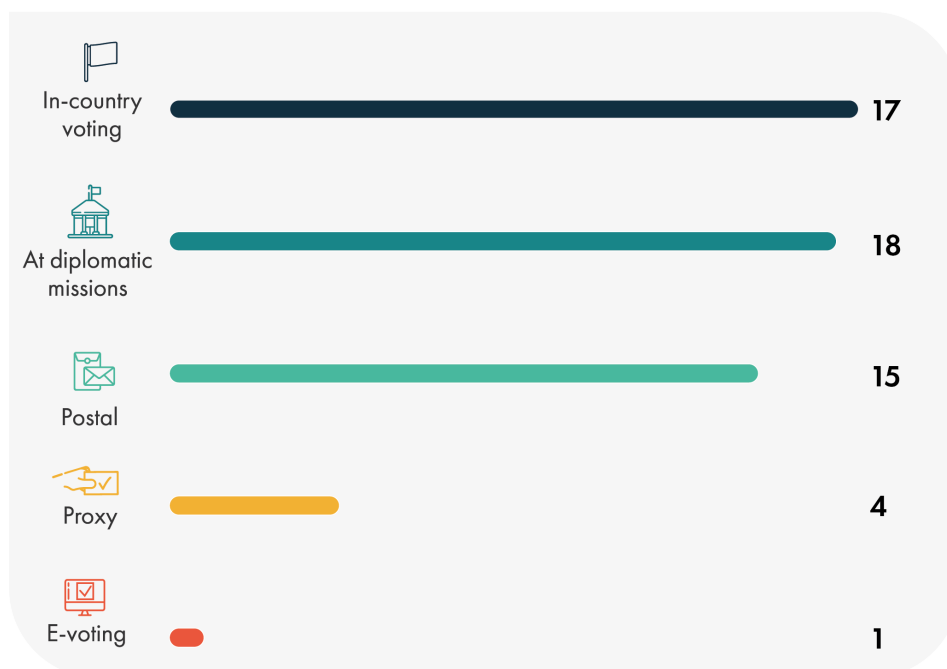
<sup>51</sup> “Défenseur des droits de la République française”.

<sup>52</sup> Moreover, in the UK a campaign was set up for the 2015 general election, “Your Vote Matters”, which provided information on the challenges of voting when homeless and activities to enable voter registration when being without a fixed address. <https://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/resources/your-vote-matters>

## 2.3 Voting methods available for non-resident citizens

Mobile EU citizens can vote from abroad in almost all Member States that guarantee non-resident citizens the right to vote in EP elections.<sup>53</sup> The only exception is the Czech Republic, where the law only provides for in-country voting. The available remote voting methods in Member States are: personal voting at diplomatic missions (18), postal voting (15), proxy voting (4), and e-voting (1), as shown in Figure 4 (a detailed representation of voting methods per country is available in Annex 3. “Voting methods for non-resident citizens in EP elections: EU-28”).

Figure 4. Voting methods for non-resident citizens in EP elections



As illustrated in Figure 4 above, postal voting is presently offered only in about half of the Member States (15 of 28). This is despite several studies and reports arguing in favour of expanding the remote voting possibilities in the EU-28 in order to facilitate electoral participation. An EU consultation<sup>54</sup> and a Eurobarometer survey<sup>55</sup> show that postal voting could make it easier for EU citizens living abroad to vote in elections in their country of origin. Moreover, a comparative study commissioned by the European Parliament even proposes to universalise the right to postal voting (Arrighi et al. 2013). While increased opportunities to vote by post are clearly desirable, postal voting also represents some challenges. In the case of Lithuania, the GLOBALCIT country expert stresses that the slowness of postal services in some countries and the tight legal deadline that requires that elections results are confirmed within seven days of the election, pose a challenge for having

<sup>53</sup> Note that citizens who are temporarily absent are technically disenfranchised in Slovakia and Czech Republic, where only in-country voting in EP elections is possible.

<sup>54</sup> “The possibility to vote by post” was indicated by 48% as a practice that could make it easier for citizens living in another EU country to vote in elections in their country of origin (European Commission 2015).

<sup>55</sup> Around three in five Europeans (62%) agree that being able to vote by post would make voting easier. Source: Eurobarometer fl\_431 (2016).

all ballots delivered in time for vote counting.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, in Estonia authorities also require citizens to apply for postal voting and to do it long before the election, which is perceived as a burden.

Furthermore other, more innovative, remote voting methods are lacking in Europe. Estonia is the only Member State that provides the possibility of electronic voting. Despite this dearth, there is clearly a demand for this voting method among EU citizens. Most citizens living in another EU country (68%) state that the possibility to vote using online tools would be a facilitator to vote in European elections in the country in which they live, and an overwhelming majority (81%) consider that "electronic/online tools" could make it easier for citizens living in another EU country to vote in elections in their country of origin.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, a Eurobarometer survey shows that around seven in ten Europeans agree that voting would be easier if they had the ability to vote electronically or online.<sup>58</sup> However, e-voting can exclude people without technical skills or resources, and involves risks related to online security. In the case of Estonia, not all nationals abroad have a fully functional eID card, and due to the security risks with the eID-card in the autumn of 2017, the certificates of over 760,000 cards were cancelled, which probably also affected many persons residing abroad.

Finally, the limited range of voting methods is a significant issue. Several countries offer only in-country and embassy voting (Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, Greece, Poland, Romania) or only embassy voting (Portugal). Having access to voting only at diplomatic missions, while abroad, makes electoral participation costly and time consuming for non-residents. Citizens that reside far from the designated polling station might refrain from voting, especially in countries where polling stations are scarce. As a case in point, the Polish and Estonian GLOBALCIT experts report scarcity of polling stations abroad. In the 2014 EP elections, voting at Estonian representations abroad was organised only in 37 countries and in 40 representations, which does not cover all Estonian communities abroad.

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<sup>56</sup> This sentence is based on the analysis of answers to the GLOBALCIT survey question "17. Do any specific issues arise from the implementation of EU legislation on nationals' voting rights abroad?".

<sup>57</sup> 68% indicate "The possibility to vote using electronic/online tools" as a facilitator to vote in European or local elections in the country in which they live. 81% indicate "electronic/online tools" as practices that could make it easier for citizens living in another EU country to vote in elections in their country of origin (European Commission 2015).

<sup>58</sup> Around seven in ten Europeans agree that voting would be easier if they had the ability to vote electronically or online (67%). Source: Eurobarometer fl\_431 (2016).

### 3. Election Campaigns

The lack of information as an obstacle for voting in EP elections has already been raised by the Public Consultation on EU Citizenship in 2015, where the majority of respondents said that more information should be provided on the European elections.<sup>59</sup> This section is mainly based on the GLOBACIT surveys and examines what type of organisations are carrying out outreach, what information channels are used, whether the information is timely, in what languages the information is provided, and whether it is efficient. One of the main challenges identified are the limited awareness and information available about whether governmental and non-governmental stakeholders are carrying out any outreach. Moreover, stakeholders and experts stress the lack of information in multiple languages, and the fact that the information is not provided at different points in time (i.e. well in advance and shortly before voter registration/elections).

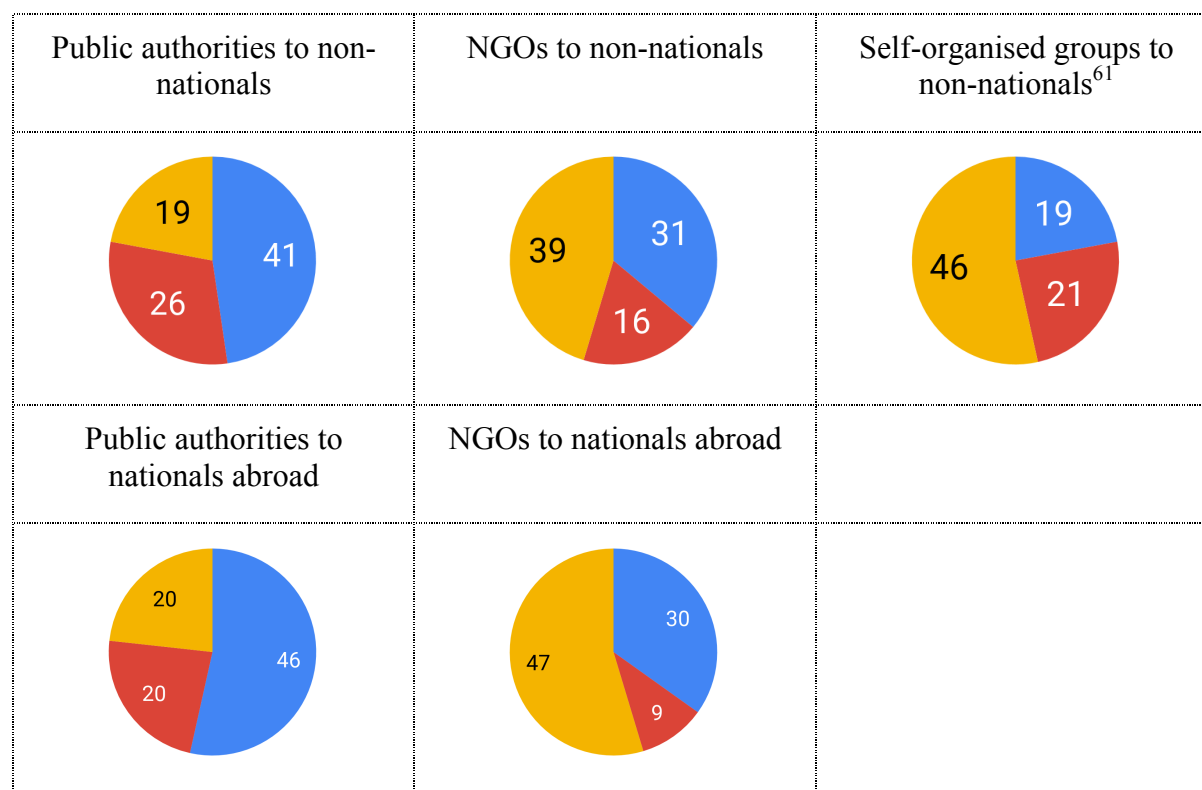
Firstly, the GLOBACIT online survey suggests that public authorities are more active when it comes to informing both non-national EU citizens and nationals abroad about their electoral rights, compared to non-governmental stakeholders (such as NGOs and self-organised groups) (see Figure 5). However, these results should be interpreted with caution since about half of the respondents (39 and 47 for non-nationals and non-residents respectively) stated that they do not know whether NGOs and self-organised groups are carrying out such information activities. Moreover, the No-answers regarding outreach by non-governmental actors are fewer (21 and 9) compared to those by the governmental actors (26 and 20).

Public authorities seem to have a similar level of outreach both to non-citizen residents from the EU and to non-resident citizens (41 and 46 YES-answers respectively). Also NGOs have a similar level of outreach to these two groups of voters (31 and 30 Yes-answers respectively). According to the survey respondents, self-organised groups seem to have fewer outreach activities compared to NGOs and public authorities (only 19 Yes-answers). However, this result could be due to lack of information as the respondents did not include representatives of self-organised groups of non-nationals and the level of awareness among respondents about this group is limited (46 answer Don't know).

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<sup>59</sup> “57% of respondents said that more information should be provided on the European elections” (European Commission 2015). On lack of information as an obstacle for voting in EP elections, see also Eurobarometer 2018, 89.2, QA17T.

Figure 5. Outreach carried out by governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to non-citizen residents from the EU and to non-resident citizens (N=86)<sup>60</sup>



LEGEND: Blue colour stands for YES, red colour for NO and orange for DON'T KNOW.

### 3.1. Outreach to non-resident citizens

#### *Public authorities*

The types of public authorities engaging in outreach activities to non-residents are mostly electoral bodies and ministries (i.e. ministries of the interior, ministries of foreign affairs, and ministries of European affairs and justice), and embassies. Most respondents suggested that multiple channels of communication are used by public authorities to inform nationals abroad. An overwhelming majority of respondents (39 of 42) indicated that websites are used for outreach, followed by paper materials (24), social media (19), newspapers (16), TV (13), radio (10) and personal meetings (7).

Only a minority of public authorities seem to carry out outreach at different points in time. The information was mostly given either well in advance of voter registration (16 of 42 respondents) and shortly before voter registration (11)<sup>62</sup> (see Figure 3 in Annex 2 for details). A respondent from Hungary emphasised that there are differences in how public authorities

<sup>60</sup> Source: The GLOBALCIT online survey questions: Q15/Q21/Q26/Q32/Q37: "Did (electoral bodies or other types of public authorities/CSOs/self-organised groups) proactively inform (non-national EU citizens/nationals abroad) about their electoral rights?". Answer options: Yes/No/Don't know.

<sup>61</sup> Please note that we did not ask if self-organised groups proactively inform nationals abroad about their electoral rights because of the issue of space in the survey.

<sup>62</sup> Some respondents also indicated that information was provided shortly before elections (6) or both shortly before registration and elections (5). Only 3 respondents suggested that outreach was done both in advance and shortly before registration and only 1 respondent that it was done in advance and shortly before registration, as well as shortly before elections.



reach out to different groups of non-resident citizens, i.e. only non-resident Hungarian citizens received voter registration-related information early on in the last elections. Any information relevant to citizens with a residence in Hungary but de facto living abroad was sparse, not very actively disseminated, and published relatively late. The French GLOBALCIT expert also stresses that there is a general lack of pre-registration campaigns targeting non-citizens conducted by national and local authorities in France. The GLOBALCIT offline survey also reveals some good outreach practices implemented by public authorities, as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Good outreach practices by public authorities

- In Belgium authorities send invitations to register to each citizen abroad, and also partner with expatriate organisations, which in turn use their networks to encourage nationals abroad to register.<sup>63</sup>
- In Estonia, public authorities use an electronic identification (eID) solution to reach voters abroad. All persons in Estonia holding an ID-card have a national e-mail address (usually in the form of `firstname.lastname@eesti.ee`), which is used for sending official information. The voter cards are therefore sent by email using the eID system.<sup>64</sup> For citizens who prefer to receive the voter card by post, the email with the voting card can also be automatically forwarded to any address submitted by the person in the eGovernment portal. This allows a higher accuracy regarding residential addresses of citizens living abroad.

### *Non-governmental actors*

The respondents from across Europe named about 30 different organisations (NGOs and associations) that carried out outreach to nationals abroad in the last elections. For example, the AgitPolska Women Association in Berlin, the World Federation of Austrians Abroad,<sup>65</sup> the Finland Society,<sup>66</sup> the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, the Lithuanian World Community and the European movement in France.<sup>67</sup> Most respondents suggested that multiple channels of communication are used by NGOs to inform nationals abroad. An overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that websites and social media are used for outreach (24 and 21 respectively of 29 respondents). Other channels used are personal meetings (18), paper materials (11), newspapers (11), TV (6), and radio (6).

The information is mostly given either well in advance of voter registration (11 of 28 respondents) or shortly before voter registration (7)<sup>68</sup> (see Figure 4 in Annex 2 for details). In the comment section, a respondent from Romania emphasised that the information provided by the NGOs was not given sufficiently in advance and was too complex for people to

<sup>63</sup> The Belgian authorities mainly partners with the two main expatriate organizations: Union francophone des Belges à l'étranger (UFBE) and Vlamingen in de Wereld (VIW).

<sup>64</sup> The practice of sending voters cards by email was introduced in 2014 EP elections and will be applied in the coming elections.

<sup>65</sup> Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund: <http://www.weltbund.at/index.asp>

<sup>66</sup> [www.suomi-seura.fi](http://www.suomi-seura.fi)

<sup>67</sup> Le Mouvement Européen en France: <https://mouvement-europeen.eu/le-rapport-dactivite-2014-du-me-f-est-disponible/>

<sup>68</sup> Some respondents also indicated that information was provided shortly before elections (5) and almost as many (4) that it was done both in advance and shortly before registration, as well as shortly before elections. Only 1 respondent suggested that outreach was done both in advance and shortly before registration and no respondent indicated that it was done both shortly before registration and elections.

understand. A commenter from the UK stated that the NGOs did not have enough resources to conduct adequate outreach, while another respondent from France emphasised that the media did not give enough space to electoral information (e.g. public TV did not show debates between the ‘Spitzenkandidaten’ in the 2014 EP elections). The GLOBALCIT offline survey also reveals some good outreach practices implemented by NGOs, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Good outreach practices by NGOs

- In collaboration with the Open Society Foundations, the Milestone Institute, an educational organization which prepares Hungarian high school students for college and university education in English-speaking countries, ran a mobilisation campaign for Hungarians living in the UK to take part in the elections to the European Parliament in 2014. The campaign featured local mobilisation events and initiatives conducted by Milestone Alumni in up to 10 UK cities, and a range of online activities, including videos featuring Hungarian celebrities, slam poetry and information on voting procedures.
- The NGO “Swedes Worldwide” have a dedicated webpage, where they collect practical information about the voting process, link to national Voting Advice Applications, produce compilations of opinions of the political parties, and continuously post information and facts about the elections on apposite social media pages. They also send out questions considered important for Swedes abroad to all political parties in parliament (e.g. on taxing Swedes abroad, home move and electoral participation of non-resident).<sup>69</sup>

### 3.2. Outreach to non-citizen residents

This section focuses on outreach to non-citizen residents from the EU in both EP and local elections.

#### *Public authorities*

The types of public authorities carrying out outreach to non-nationals are mostly electoral bodies, ministries (mostly ministries of the interior but also other ministries such as ministries of foreign affairs, and ministries of European affairs), and local administrations. Examples of other actors involved are embassies of EU Member States and EU representations in the countries of reference. According to the responses most authorities use multiple channels of information and the most popular ones are websites (31 of 41 responses), paper materials (25), social media (11), newspapers (10), while personal meetings, radio and TV are the least popular ones (7 responses respectively). Some authorities also use personal letters, SMS, posters and a dedicated telephone hotline.<sup>70</sup>

The survey results indicate that the lack of electoral information in multiple languages is a potential challenge to participation. In the majority of cases, public authorities provided the information in English (in addition to information in the national language). Some provided

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.sviv.se/val-2018/>

<sup>70</sup> About half of the survey respondents (41 of 86) indicated through which channels authorities inform EU citizens about their electoral rights.

information only in the official language(s) of the country (9 of 39 responses), while a few respondents (8) indicated that information was disseminated in more than two languages. Moreover, only a minority of public authorities carry out outreach at different points in time. The survey responses suggest that information was mostly given shortly before voter registration (12 of 39 responses) or well in advance of voter registration (10), while few authorities carried out outreach both in advance *and* shortly before registration (4).<sup>71</sup> Other authorities provided information shortly before elections (7), or shortly before elections *and* shortly before registration (5) (see Figure 1 in Annex 2). Only one respondent indicated that information was provided at three points in time (in advance and shortly before registration, as well as shortly before elections). A respondent from Italy underlined that information was provided too late, when it was no longer possible to register to vote. Another respondent stressed that information campaigns during elections in Bulgaria are only allowed in Bulgarian, which makes it challenging for foreign EU citizens to access information about how to vote or how to become candidates in local elections. The GLOBALCIT offline survey also reveals some good outreach practices implemented by public authorities, as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. Good outreach practices by public authorities

- In Sweden, the Election authority provides practical information about elections in over 30 languages on their website, and sends out voter registration forms to all foreign EU citizens who are residents in Sweden and who have not previously registered for EP elections. Moreover, some progressive municipalities organise open lectures about democracy and elections for foreigners, and employ specific ‘election informers’ to inform about the voting process in low-turnout areas.<sup>72</sup>
- In France, the Paris City Hall runs an ambitious project entitled “INCLUDE”,<sup>73</sup> that aims at promoting the rights associated with EU citizenship and improve the inclusion of non-national EU citizens in the “Parisian civic life”. Among its main initiatives, the project will create a European Consultative Council composed of non-national EU citizens elected by lot, and organise a series of electoral registration and organise campaigns in neighbourhoods with a high concentration of mobile EU citizens.<sup>74</sup>

### Non-governmental actors

The respondents named over 30 different organisations (NGOs and associations) that carried out outreach in the last local and EP elections. The respondents indicated that multiple channels of information are used in most cases. As in the case of public authorities, the most popular channel are websites (29 of 31).<sup>75</sup> However, NGOs seem to use social media (26) and personal meetings (20) more frequently compared to public authorities,<sup>76</sup> while radio and TV

<sup>71</sup> Note that voter registration is automatic in some countries, hence the questions about information prior to voter registration only apply in cases when there is a need to register.

<sup>72</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: Sweden.

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.paris.fr/projetinclude>

<sup>74</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: France.

<sup>75</sup> Only a minority of the respondents (31 of 86) indicated through which channels NGOs inform EU citizens about their electoral rights.

<sup>76</sup> 11 respondents indicated “Yes” for social media use and 7 respondents for personal meetings use by public authorities.

are the least popular channels (2 and 1 YES-responses respectively). The use of paper materials (17) and newspapers (8) by NGOs was roughly in line with that of public authorities. In addition, NGOs use vote simulations, conference debates, emails and ads in minority languages.

In about half of the cases (13 of 27 responses), NGOs provided the information in English (in addition to information in the national language). One third of respondents (9) indicated that information was disseminated in more than two languages, while only few respondents (5) stated that information was provided only in the official language of the country. Similarly to public authorities, only a minority of NGOs seem to carry out outreach at different points in time. The information was mostly given well in advance of voter registration (16 of 29 responses)<sup>77</sup> (see Figure 2 in Annex 2 for details). The GLOBALCIT offline survey also reveals some good outreach practices implemented by NGOs, as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5. Good outreach practices by NGOs

- The Rome-based association Europaeus promotes European integration by providing electoral information and training to non-citizen residents from the EU, mainly to Romanians in Italy. In November 2018, they launched an information campaign #IOVOTOUE and #EUVOTER on the right to vote in European elections targeted EU citizens living in Italy.<sup>78</sup>
- In the Azores, an autonomous region of Portugal, AIPA (a representative platform for immigrants living in the Azores) has developed a project "Who does not vote doesn't count", with the aim to increase voter registration and political participation of foreign citizens in the Azores.<sup>79</sup>
- In Hungary, civic and electoral participation are promoted concomitantly by a local CSO in Budapest, which has organised campaigns during local elections in 2017. The CSO organized local events where issues of concern to local residents were discussed by experts and politicians, and which included movie screenings and information on how to vote.<sup>80</sup>

The respondents also named about 20 self-organised groups of mobile EU citizens that carried out outreach in the last local and EP elections. However, several of them named the same organisations as in the previous survey question about outreach by NGOs,<sup>81</sup> which suggests that they do not make a clear distinction between the two categories of actors (self-organised groups and NGOs). Some examples of self-organised groups are regional in nature (the association Romanians and Moldovans in the region of Veneto and the Italo-Bulgarian association in the region of Abruzzo in Italy); while other act on the national level with regional representations (the Federation of Poles in Great Britain and the Finnish Expatriate Parliament). Self-organised groups reportedly used multiple channels of information in most cases. In contrast to public authorities and NGOs, the most popular channel for self-organised

<sup>77</sup> Only a few respondents selected the options: shortly before voter registration (4), shortly before elections (1) or both (2) Likewise, few NGOs seem to have provided information both in advance and shortly before registration (3), or in advance and shortly before registration, as well as shortly before elections (3).

<sup>78</sup> <http://europiamo.blogspot.com/>

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.aipa-azores.com/projectos/vota.php?indiceMenu=3>

<sup>80</sup> "School of Public Life" [Közélet Iskolája]: <http://www.kozeletiskolaja.hu/page/valasztasok-2019>

<sup>81</sup> Q22: "Please state which NGOs/associations carried out outreach and provide links to relevant websites, if possible".

groups are personal meetings (12 of 16 responses). However, websites are still ranked high, at the third place (10), right after social media (11); and the difference in numbers of respondents that chose these three options is not very large (10, 11 and 12). The use of paper materials is moderate (7). Newspapers, radio, and TV are the least popular channels (2, 2 and 3 Yes-responses respectively). Almost half of the respondents (7 of 15) stated that information was provided only in the official language of the country. In one third of the cases (5), self-organised groups provided information in English (in addition to information in the national language). Only 2 respondents indicated that information was disseminated in more than two languages.

## 4. Political Environment

### 4.1. Political parties: Campaigning and inclusion of mobile EU citizens

#### 4.1.1 Campaigns targeting mobile EU citizens

##### Non-citizen residents

The GLOBALCIT offline survey indicates that political parties carry out electoral campaigns targeting non-national EU voters only in a few countries. For example, in Belgium several Belgian political parties have approached non-national voters (including both EU citizens and third-country nationals) during their electoral campaigns. Fielding foreign nationals on party lists, especially for local elections, has been a direct strategy through which parties have targeted this electoral group. As a case in point, the Socialist Party (PS) has fielded non-Belgian candidates in several municipalities for the 2018 local election. Many of these candidates have been active in encouraging the electoral participation of their own groups of origin, e.g. Romanian candidates have campaigned on social media to encourage the members of their community to register to vote. Also the Green Party had an information campaign on the electoral rights of non-national residents in the run up to the 2018 elections.<sup>82</sup> The campaign aimed to encourage voter registration and consisted of online information in different languages (French, Dutch, and English), as well as a video encouraging voter registration.

In the UK, prior to the 2018 local government elections, The Liberal Democrats launched an online campaign in 21 European languages to encourage EU27 citizens to register and to vote for the party, in part as an expression of opposition to Brexit.<sup>83</sup> In neighbouring Ireland, political parties have made efforts to engage with migrant voters in the past, in the 2009 local and European elections. In the run-up to elections, the two largest political parties (Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael) created migrant liaison officer posts, and the Fianna Fáil party launched a Polish language section of their website. In Italy, the right-wing ‘‘Alleanza nazionale’’ candidate for mayor in 2011 (Gianni Alemanno) campaigned with

<sup>82</sup> [https://www.groen.be/govote\\_english](https://www.groen.be/govote_english)

<sup>83</sup> ALDC, ‘Lib Dems launch campaign to win local election support from EU citizens’ (7 March 2018); available at: <https://www.aldc.org/2018/03/lib-dems-launch-campaign-to-win-local-election-support-from-eu-citizens/>. See also Laura Hughes, ‘Lib Dems target EU nationals in council elections’ (Financial Times, 23 April 2018); available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/7f81e162-4491-11e8-803a-295c97e6fd0b>

Romanian citizens living in Rome, asking them to register to vote. The same year (2011), the centre left mayor candidate in Turin, Piero Fassino from the “Partito democratico”, also campaigned with the Romanian community.

In Estonia, an electoral list called “Hääled” (International and local voices for the prosperous future of Tallinn)<sup>84</sup> primarily consisting of foreign EU nationals emerged in the 2017 local elections in Tallinn municipality. This electoral list campaigned primarily in English and targeted foreign EU citizens residing in Tallinn. Finally, some GLOBALCIT country experts (e.g. in the Czech Republic and in Sweden) noted that several political parties have also created sections of their websites in English and in other languages where non-nationals can access information about voter registration and voting, about their party programmes, as well as about how to become party members.

### Non-resident citizens

The GLOBALCIT offline survey suggests that political parties in several countries carry out campaigns in the run-up to EP elections targeting non-resident citizens. In Romania, all parliamentary parties have a network of diaspora organisations abroad, and most parties discuss the creation and regulation of diaspora organisations in their statutes. These diaspora organisations campaign during elections and several also collaborate with similar parties in the host countries, e.g. the Romanian Social Democratic Party (PSD) partners with the Italian Democratic Party (PD). In a more or less intense coordination with Bucharest, these diaspora structures have generally been aiming to mobilise the Romanian community not only for elections in Romania but also for elections held in the host country.

In Belgium, some political parties have actively encouraged nationals abroad to register for elections, and have developed specific party section for nationals abroad, appointed party delegates for populations abroad, and even opened party sections in foreign cities. However, these initiatives are usually characterized by their very small scale and their limited visibility (Lafleur 2013). In Sweden, political parties generally do not assign high priority to voters abroad. However, several parties target non-residents by means of personal letters signed by the head of the party and videos with the party leader addressing Swedes abroad. The Moderate Party has also made several practical suggestions to facilitate voting for non-residents, which were approved by the parliament; as well as policy proposals regarding taxes for Swedes abroad and translation of school grades to harmonize the Swedish system with systems abroad. Moreover, the Sweden Democrats party claims to have numerous election workers (between 500 and 1,000) in areas abroad where there is a large proportion of Swedes (e.g. on the Spanish coast), who are tasked with building local networks of active participants.

Country experts from two countries, Belgium and Sweden, note that there seems to be a correlation between the engagement of parties and their expectations about the electoral behaviour of nationals abroad. The French-speaking and Flemish liberal parties in Belgium have been the most prominent supporters of external voting historically. Their position was based on the belief that Belgian expatriates had a similar socio-economic profile to that of their resident electorate (Arrighi and Lafleur 2018). Similarly, the Moderate Party in Sweden, which was the party receiving most votes from abroad in the 2014 general elections, has probably been the most active party in campaigning at non-residents in the run up to the 2018-elections.

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<sup>84</sup> The name of the list in Estonian: Rahvusvahelised ja kohalikud hääled Tallinna õitsva tuleviku jaoks ran.

### 4.1.2 Inclusiveness of party structures

#### Non-citizen residents

The GLOBALCIT offline survey suggests that non-citizen residents from the EU face challenges to found political parties and become members of political parties in several countries. The European Commission has expressed concern for these difficulties in the past and has used infringement proceedings against a number of Member States which did not allow non-national EU citizens to found, or become members of, political parties in the host Member State. According to a recent report by the Commission, proceedings were closed in three cases after the Member States provided satisfactory clarifications on the existing legal framework or adopted new legislation. However, proceedings were still ongoing against the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland (European Commission 2017). Our research shows that in these four countries, as well as in Greece and Slovenia the law dictates that political parties can only be founded by nationals. For example in Latvia, non-nationals can only join a political organisation after it has been registered with authorities, meaning that they cannot be the founding members of parties. Moreover, the share of Latvian citizens can never fall below 50% among party members; otherwise the party may lose its status of a registered political organization following a court decision.<sup>85</sup> An indirect barrier for non-nationals from the EU to establish a party, especially a party targeting the local level, is the fact that they cannot stand as candidates for the post of mayor in several countries (see “Table 1. Overview of restrictions to the right to be elected to certain executive offices for non-citizen residents from the EU”).

Most EU countries do not seem to impose any barriers for non-citizen residents from the EU to become ordinary members of political parties. The exceptions are the Czech Republic and Poland, where the law does not permit non-nationals to join a party. Moreover, in Lithuania and Slovakia EU citizens need to acquire permanent residence before joining a party, which takes time (e.g. Lithuania requires five years uninterrupted residency). In Estonia, it is not the law but (some of) the political parties that impose barriers to membership (e.g. the Conservative People's Party of Estonia (EKRE) and the Estonian Independence Party only accept Estonian citizens as members). In contrast, some Belgian parties specifically include non-national residents in their statutes, e.g. the statute of the Socialist Party (PS) emphasizes that one of its objectives is to encourage the political participation of non-Belgians in political life<sup>86</sup> and a similar objective is stipulated in the statute of ECOLO, a Belgian party focused on green politics.<sup>87</sup>

Challenges for becoming party leaders or members of parties' governing bodies are quite rare in Europe. As mentioned above, the legal frameworks in the Czech Republic and Poland do not permit non-citizen residents from the EU to join a party, while in Estonia some parties only accept Estonian citizens as members, which means that non-citizens cannot compete for party leadership positions. On the positive side, in Germany, one of the major parties, the Social Democratic Party, recently had a general secretary of dual EU nationality (Katarina Barley, British/German).<sup>88</sup>

Finally, several country experts emphasize that an indirect barrier to founding and being an active member of a party is linguistic. Most of the party-related information is available only in the national languages in e.g. Finland, Denmark and Hungary.

<sup>85</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT report: Latvia 2018.

<sup>86</sup> See Article 56 of the statute: [https://www.ps.be/#/maison\\_du\\_parti/Les\\_Statuts/6804](https://www.ps.be/#/maison_du_parti/Les_Statuts/6804)

<sup>87</sup> See Article 2 of the statute: [https://ecolo.be/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/20160604\\_STATUTS.pdf](https://ecolo.be/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/20160604_STATUTS.pdf)

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.dw.com/en/gabriel-to-announce-barley-as-spd-general-secretary/a-18820463>

### Non-resident citizens

The GLOBALCIT offline survey suggests that non-resident citizens rarely face challenges to found political parties, or to become members or leaders of political parties. Slovakia and Estonia represent two exceptions where the legal framework poses difficulties for non-resident citizens to establish a party. In Slovakia, only Slovak citizens with permanent residence in Slovakia have the right to vote and be elected to bodies of a political party.<sup>89</sup> In Estonia, the decision-making bodies and structural units of political parties must be located within the territory of Estonia. Thus, it would be difficult for Estonian citizens abroad to found a political party, unless they can locate the main office of the party and its governing bodies in Estonia. In the Netherlands, there are no direct legal barriers but most actions done by the party require that a person residing in the Netherlands is authorized by the person living abroad to act on his or her behalf. Moreover, some parties have restrictions in place with regard to membership by non-residents, e.g. two centre-right parties in Germany, namely the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) and the Christian Social Union in Bavaria (CSU). In the UK, the Labour Party rule book stipulates that members need to reside in the UK or Northern Ireland for more than one year to acquire membership.

In contrast, a Member State where it is easy to found a party is Sweden. There are no specific rules prescribing how to form a party. The party name can be registered with the election authority (although this is not mandatory) and even without registration, people can vote for the party simply by writing the party name on a clean ballot. The GLOBALCIT survey also presents some practical examples where political parties have been created by non-residents. In Romania, two political parties founded by non-residents have been registered: the Party of the Christian Democratic Diaspora and the Party of the Romanians from Abroad. In Slovenia, Andrej Bajuk, a non-resident citizen (later a returnee) became president of one of the major parties and later established a new party (New Slovenia).

#### **4.1.3. Candidacy by non-citizen residents from the EU**

##### Candidacy in local elections

Only limited data is available on the number of non-citizen residents from the EU standing as candidates in local elections. According to a recent European Commission study, 20 Member States do not collect such information or claim that it is difficult to obtain (European Commission 2018). The lack of information is confirmed by the responses to the GLOBALCIT online survey, which show that there is little awareness and data about non-national EU citizens placed as candidates and elected.<sup>90</sup> The following figures are therefore meant to be only indicative as they are based on incomplete information provided by respondents to our questionnaires. Respondents from 19 countries<sup>91</sup> indicated that political parties in their country had put non-national EU citizens on their list of candidates for the last local elections. A French respondent indicated the largest number of non-national candidates

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<sup>89</sup> Act No 85/2005 on Political Parties and Political Movements (section 3 (1)).

<sup>90</sup> In the GLOBALCIT online survey 41 of 86 respondents stated “don’t know” to the question “Did any political parties in your country put non-national EU citizens on their list of candidates for the last local elections?”.

<sup>91</sup> Respondents from the following 19 countries stated that political parties in their country put non-national EU citizens on their list of candidates for local elections: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom. In total, 29 respondents replied YES to the survey question “Did any political parties in your country put non-national EU citizens on their list of candidates for the last local elections?”.



(5,965) followed by a Belgian respondent (353 candidates) and a Cypriot respondent (55 candidates), as illustrated in Table 6. It is worth noting that there are discrepancies between the number of candidates (and elected) among respondents from the same countries (e.g. see the case of Belgium that shows a large discrepancy in numbers, and Croatia showing some minor discrepancies in Table X). According to the GLOBALCIT survey about half of the countries in Table X had only between 1 and 5 non-national EU citizen candidates.<sup>92</sup>

Table 6. The last local elections: Non-national EU citizens standing as candidates and elected, including women among candidates/elected<sup>93</sup>

Country	Non-national candidates (N)	Women among non-national candidates (N)	Women among non-national candidates (%)	Non-nationals elected (N)	Non-nationals elected (%)	Women among non-nationals elected (N)	Women among non-nationals elected (%)
Belgium	353	no data	N/A	32	9%	N/A	N/A
Belgium	6	1	17%	3	50%	1	33%
Croatia	2	1	<b>50%</b>	0	0%	0	N/A
Croatia	1	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Cyprus	55	16	29%	9	16%	3	33%
Denmark	1	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
Finland	5	2	40%	0	0%	0	N/A
France	5965	3097	<b>52%</b>	2932	49%	1566	<b>53%</b>
Germany	1	0	0%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
Ireland	15	no data	N/A	2	13%	1	<b>50%</b>
Italy	no data	no data	N/A	30	N/A	21	<b>70%</b>
Lithuania	1	0	0%	1	100%	N/A	N/A
Poland	10	2	20%	2	20%	0	0%
Portugal	no data	no data	N/A	0	0%	0	N/A
Romania	1	1	100%	0	0%	0	N/A
<i>Average</i>			<b>28%</b>		<b>35%</b>		<b>30%</b>

<sup>92</sup> About half is here intended as 6 of 13 country-specific responses in Table X.

<sup>93</sup> Please note that we are only reporting on those country respondents that indicated (i) any numbers or (ii) different numbers from other respondents from the same country with regard to candidates and elected (in total 15 of 19 responses).

According to the GLOBALCIT survey, the share of elected candidates among non-nationals standing in local elections varies substantially across countries (between 0 and 100%), with on average of 35% of EU citizens getting elected (see Table 6 above). The highest and lowest shares of non-citizen residents who get elected (100% and 0%) are found in cases where there were very few non-national candidates (1 to 5 candidates). If we focus on cases where non-citizen resident candidates were more numerous (above 50), which are somewhat more representative, the share of elected varies (e.g. in France 49%, in Cyprus 16%, and in Belgium 9%). The European Commission study examining electoral rights of mobile EU citizens in municipal elections (European Commission 2018) has also collected similar and complementary data from Member States, as illustrated in Table 7 below. According to the European Commission data, the share of elected non-nationals varies between 8% in Luxembourg and 22% in Malta (with an average of circa 16%). In the cases of Romania and Lithuania, there are quite large discrepancies in the GLOBALCIT and European Commission data. This might depend on the time frame of reference indicated to the respondents (in the case of the GLOBALCIT survey, reference was made to the last local elections, while in the case of the European Commission study, the time frame of reference is unclear).

Table 7. Non-national EU citizens that have stood as candidates in municipal elections, and those elected (European Commission 2018)<sup>94</sup>

<b>Country</b>	<b>Non-national candidates</b>	<b>Non-nationals elected (N)</b>	<b>Non-nationals elected (%)</b>
Spain	1913	no data	
Sweden	419	87	21%
Luxembourg	225	17	8%
Denmark	65	6	9%
Romania	53	8	15%
Hungary	41	5	12%
Latvia	10	2	20%
Malta	9	2	22%
Lithuania	5	1	20%
<b>Average</b>			<b>16%</b>

Considering the limited availability and reliability of data, it is difficult to say anything conclusive about candidacy of non-nationals in general and about the gender balance among candidates and the elected in particular. However, the GLOBALCIT survey data suggests that women are generally underrepresented. The baseline used for an equal distribution is

<sup>94</sup> This Table is elaborated on the basis of ‘‘Figure 5: Mobile EU citizens standing as candidate and elected in their State of residence’’, p. 7 (European Commission 2018).

between 40-60% of each sex, bearing in mind that if a group is comprised of more than 60% of one sex, it means that it is dominated by that sex (Statistics Sweden 2014). The 40-60% range is based on the logic of a 10% deviation from the perfect parity situation (50%). Considering this baseline, the GLOBALCIT survey indicates that men dominate among both candidates and the elected: women make up only 28% of non-national EU citizen candidates and 27% of the elected ones on average (see Table 7 above). At the same time, there are more than 40% women only in a few cases (among non-national EU citizen candidates in Croatia, Romania, France; and among the elected in France, Ireland and Italy).

### Candidacy in EP elections

Awareness about the number of non-citizen residents from the EU standing as candidates in EP elections is limited.<sup>95</sup> The following figures are therefore meant to be only indicative as they are based on incomplete information provided by the survey respondents. Only 17 respondents from 13 countries<sup>96</sup> indicated that political parties in their country had put non-national EU citizens on their list of candidates for the last EP elections.

According to the survey respondents, Ireland, Belgium, France and Austria had the largest number of non-citizen candidates (between 31 and 15 candidates), as illustrated in Table 8. The rest of the countries in Table X had only between 1 and 3 non-citizen candidates. It is worth noting that there are discrepancies between the number of candidates indicated by respondents from the same country in the case of Belgium. The survey responses suggest that the number of elected non-citizens was very low (9 of 12 respondents state that none of the non-citizen candidates was elected), even in cases where there was a notable number of non-citizen candidates (e.g. in Austria, Belgium, and France).

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<sup>95</sup> In the GLOBALCIT online survey 36 of 86 respondents (42%) stated “don’t know” to the question “Did any political parties in your country put non-national EU citizens on their list of candidates for the last EP elections?”. 33 of 86 respondents stated “no” and 17 stated “yes” to this question.

<sup>96</sup> Respondents from the following 13 countries stated that political parties in their country put non-national EU citizens on their list of candidates for EP elections: United Kingdom, Sweden, Poland, Lithuania, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Germany, France, Estonia, Czech Republic, Belgium, Austria.

Table 8. The last EP elections: Non-national EU citizens standing as candidates and elected, including women among candidates/elected<sup>97</sup>

Country	Non-national candidates (N)	Women among non-national candidates (N)	Women among non-national candidates (%)	Non-nationals elected (N)	Non-nationals elected (%)	Women among non-nationals elected (N)	Women among non-nationals elected (%)
Austria	15	no data	N/A	0	0%	N/A	N/A
Belgium	31	17	55%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
Belgium	1	0	0%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
Estonia	3	1	33%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
France	24	13	54%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
Germany	1	0	0%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
Greece	1	1	100%	1	100%	1	100%
Ireland	31	no data	N/A	2	6%	1	50%
Italy	2	1	50%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
Poland	1	1	100%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
Sweden	1	1	100%	1	100%	1	100%
UK	2	1	50%	0	0%	N/A	N/A
<b>Average (%)</b>			<b>54%</b>		<b>17%</b>		<b>83%</b>

Considering the limited availability and reliability of data from the GLOBALCIT survey, it is difficult to say anything conclusive about candidacy of non-nationals in general and about the gender balance among candidates and the elected in particular. However, the available data suggests that women are generally well represented. Considering the baseline (between 40-60% of each sex), the GLOBALCIT survey indicates that women make up a considerable share of candidates (54% on average) (see Table 8 above). Although this average is mostly based on a very low number of total candidates (1 to 3), in instances where there are more than 20 total candidates (in Belgium and France) the gender balance is confirmed (55% and 54% of women among candidates respectively). The share of women among the elected is very high (83%) but this average is based on a very limited number of observations (only three data points are available, and they each represent one elected woman).

<sup>97</sup> Please note that we are only reporting on those country respondents that indicated (i) any numbers or (ii) different numbers from other respondents from the same country with regard to candidates and elected (in total 12 of 17 responses).

## 4.2 Participation outside elections

### Non-citizen residents

The GLOBALCIT offline survey shows that there are not many prominent examples of groups of non-national EU citizens who have been involved in non-electoral political participation (e.g. in political initiatives or protests) in recent times. Given the presence of European institutions in Brussels, Belgium is an exception. Many political initiatives and protests involving large groups of non-national EU citizens have taken place in Brussels. In recent times, some examples are the demonstrations regarding the independence of the Spanish region of Catalonia,<sup>98</sup> headed by the former regional president Carles Puigdemont, along with representatives of the Catalan National Assembly (ANC) and Òmnium Cultural, an organisation promoting Catalan culture; and the anti-Brexit protests by British expats in Brussels.<sup>99</sup> In the UK, “British in Europe”, a self-described coalition of organisations representing circa 35,000 UK citizens in several European countries,<sup>100</sup> and “The 3 Million”, a grassroots organisation of EU27 citizens living in the UK launched a joint campaign (‘the last mile’)<sup>101</sup> calling for ring-fencing of the citizens’ rights chapter of the draft UK-EU-27 withdrawal agreement<sup>102</sup> irrespective of whether the UK leaves the EU with an overall agreement. One of the protest actions organised by the movement in November 2018 involved forming a human chain to deliver a letter to the British prime minister and a mass lobby of members of parliament.<sup>103</sup>

Examples from other countries are more local in nature. In Germany, Agitpolska, a Polish-German initiative for cultural cooperation in Berlin, is active politically (e.g. by inviting various electoral candidates to panel debates). This initiative is important at city-level since Poles constitute the biggest group of foreign residents in Berlin, and the biggest group with voting rights in EP elections. In Spain, SOHA was formed by a group of non-citizen residents from the EU, mainly consisting of aging people, with the purpose of campaigning for the establishment of an amnesty for homeowners in the province of Malaga in Andalucía.<sup>104</sup>

### Non-resident citizens

In contrast to the few cases of non-national EU citizens involved in non-electoral participation, there are plenty of examples of nationals abroad who have mobilised for political initiatives or protests (see Table 9). These examples range between Brits who campaign for the rights of UK citizens in the EU and EU citizens in the UK (“British in Europe”), online and environmental activism by Romanians with protests organised in 34 cities, Polish and Irish citizens that mobilise for abortion rights, Hungarians abroad that organise protests against the incumbent government, and Finns that have lobbied both multiple citizenship into the Nationality Act and postal voting into the Election Act. In some cases, these groups have lobbied their home governments regarding electoral and citizenship

<sup>98</sup> <https://www.politico.eu/article/45000-turn-out-for-pro-catalan-protest-in-brussels/>

<sup>99</sup> <http://www.brusselstimes.com/eu-affairs/9799/british-expats-in-brussels-protest-brexit>

<sup>100</sup> <https://britishineurope.org/list-of-groups/coalitionmembers/>

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.the3million.org.uk/thelastmile2>

<sup>102</sup> <https://britishineurope.org/thelastmile>

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.thelocal.no/20181105/brits-in-europe-take-citizens-rights-fight-to-westminster>

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.lavanguardia.com/local/sevilla/20181221/453679046447/propietarios-viviendas-irregulares-acudiran-a-constitucional-si-no-cambia-ley.html>

issues of concern for non-residents, e.g. Dutch non-resident citizens have brought a joint action to court in order to extend the deadline for postal voting and Lithuanians abroad have campaigned for legal amendments to allow dual citizenship. Some of them have also had impact, e.g. Belgian associations have lobbied through dual citizenship, and their Finnish equivalents have pressured the government into accepting multiple citizenship and postal voting.

Table 9. Cases of non-resident citizens involved in non-electoral participation (EU-28)

Country	Name	Type of initiative
UK	British in Europe	A coalition of British citizens in several European countries, with a membership of around 35,000, that campaign for the rights of UK citizens in the EU and EU citizens in the UK. <sup>105</sup>
Romania	Declic Community	Online activism focused on the fight against corruption that has promoted the organisation of a massive protest in Bucharest with the participation of non-resident Romanians. <sup>106</sup>
Romania	Rosia Montana	Environmental activism against a controversial mining license issued for an open cast gold mine, potentially the largest in Europe, in Rosia Montana, in 2013. Protests have also been organised in 34 cities outside Romania. <sup>107</sup>
Poland	Black Monday/Black Protest	In 2016, Polish women have engaged in a nationwide protest against a proposal to ban abortion in 2016. At the same time “in-solidarity” protests abroad took place (e.g. in Berlin, London, New York, and Brussels), where Polish migrant women voiced concerns about becoming subject to the proposed law on their potential return to Poland. <sup>108</sup>
Netherlands	NA	In 2017, 154 non-resident citizens brought a joint action to court in order to extend the deadline in which postal votes could be received. <sup>109</sup>

<sup>105</sup> <https://britishineurope.org/list-of-groups/coalitionmembers/>

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.declic.ro/stiri/zona-libera-de-coruptie>

<sup>107</sup> A detailed description of the Rosia Montana protest can be accessed at: [https://www.theepochtimes.com/romanian-canadians-protest-against-rosia-montana-mining-project-photos\\_311605.html](https://www.theepochtimes.com/romanian-canadians-protest-against-rosia-montana-mining-project-photos_311605.html) and <https://www.rosiamontana.org/archive/201309?language=en>

<sup>108</sup> Agnieszka Król & Paula Pustulka (2018) Women on strike: mobilizing against reproductive injustice in Poland, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*.

<sup>109</sup> <https://uitspraken.rechtspraak.nl/inziendocument?id=ECLI:NL:RBDHA:2017:2723>

Lithuania	The Lithuanian World Community, Global Lithuanian Leaders and the World Lithuanian Youth Association <sup>110</sup>	For over a decade Lithuanian communities abroad have been particularly active in seeking to amend the Constitution so that all persons of Lithuanian descent could have dual citizenship. The initiatives undertaken for this purpose included amendments to the Law on referendums and amendments to the Law on citizenship.
Ireland	Home to Vote	In the last two referendums on social issues (same-sex marriage and abortion rights) there have been efforts by Irish living abroad to engage in the referendum process and in particular to encourage those who are temporarily absent to return to vote. This was primarily an organic movement, with a loose organisation, promoted via social media. <sup>111</sup>
Hungary	Momentum	Momentum, a recently formed political party in Hungary, has organized events in London and Berlin, trying to build a constituency among emigrant voters who study or work abroad and are opposed to the current Hungarian government, e.g. they have provided voters with support by a mobile app to organize car-sharing for those who wanted to cast their vote abroad but live far away from embassies. <sup>112</sup>
Hungary	Creative Resistance	"Creative Resistance" is a civic initiative of Hungarian nationals living abroad, mostly organized online in bigger cities of Western Europe, such as London, Berlin and Amsterdam. The initiative has also organized offline protests (e.g., in Trafalgar Square, London). <sup>113</sup>
Hungary	Freie Ungarische Botschaft	A Berlin-based community of Hungarian nationals who occasionally organize protests against the autocratic tendencies of the incumbent Hungarian government (e.g. in front of the Russian or Hungarian embassies in Berlin). They have also organized voter mobilization events for eligible

<sup>110</sup> The most active communities are: The Lithuanian World Community: [www.plbe.org](http://www.plbe.org) the public institution Global Lithuanian Leaders: [www.lithuanianleaders.org](http://www.lithuanianleaders.org) and the World Lithuanian Youth Association: [www.pljs.lt](http://www.pljs.lt)

<sup>111</sup> <https://hometovote.com>

<sup>112</sup> <https://momentum.hu/momentum-london-alapszervezet/><https://szavazz.momentum.hu/>,[https://index.hu/belfold/2018/01/11/momentum\\_valasztas\\_2018\\_kulfoldi\\_szavazas\\_telekocsi/](https://index.hu/belfold/2018/01/11/momentum_valasztas_2018_kulfoldi_szavazas_telekocsi/)

<sup>113</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/crldn/> <https://refugeecrisisinhungary.wordpress.com/2015/09/14/volunteers-welcome> <http://magyararancs.hu/lokal/no-to-internet-tax-londoni-magyarok-a-netado-ellen-92358/?orderdir=novekvo>

		voters in Hungary before the general parliamentary election of 2018. <sup>114</sup>
Germany	Pulse of Europe	A pro-European citizen movement, founded in Germany in 2016. Their events include live music and an open mike, and are taking place on city squares across Europe regularly. <sup>115</sup>
Belgium	Union francophone des Belges à l'étranger (UFBE) and Vlamingen in de Wereld (VIW)	The two organizations have historically been lobbying Belgian authorities in order to resolve key issues for the Belgian population abroad. Dual citizenship has been one of their strongest battles (which eventually passed) but other issues include social security coverage, issuance of driver's license, improvement of services by consulates/embassies, fiscal issues related to residence abroad. Both organizations also recurrently invite people to register via publications and emailing campaigns and, before each election, they inform voters abroad about the positions of parties on key issues of interest for Belgian nationals abroad.
Finland	Finnish Expatriate Parliament and Finland Society	The Finnish Expatriate Parliament is very active in non-electoral political participation. Furthermore, non-resident Finns have many active organisations around the world, hundreds of them being members of the umbrella association, Finland Society. These two organisations have lobbied both multiple citizenship into the Nationality Act (in 2003) and postal voting into the Election Act (in 2018).
Estonia	Estonian World Council (EWC)	There is a large network of Estonian associations abroad and an umbrella organisation, the Estonian World Council (EWC). The Estonian associations abroad occasionally make political statements, usually related to diaspora policy. For instance, in 2018 the EWC issued a public statement addressed to the government of Estonia, where they encouraged to create a working group that would deal with the issues concerning Estonians abroad and appointing a special representative of the Estonians abroad, and also restoring the budget allocated to the Estonian Compatriot Programme

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/FreieUngarischeBotschaft/https://444.hu/2018/04/14/berlin-is-kiallt-budapest-mellett>

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/unite-unite-europe-a-protest-in-favor-of-the-european-union>



		(the national diaspora policy strategy) to the same level as before the financial crisis in 2008. <sup>116</sup>
Spain	Marea Granate	“Marea Granate” (the maroon wave) is a social movement formed by emigrants and supporters, aimed at fighting against economic emigration. The wave is labelled maroon after the colour of Spanish passports, the symbol of a forced migration. One of the leading causes of Marea Granate is to encourage Spanish expatriates to vote. They have led a campaign against the “voto rogado” system, which lead to an agreement between the main political parties in Parliament about the need of legal reform on the subject. <sup>117</sup>

<sup>116</sup> <http://eesti.eu.com/et/organisatsioonid/ekn-valimised/8016-uelemaailmse-eesti-kesknoukogu-resolutsioon-eesti-vabariigi-valitsusele-ja-riigikogule>

<sup>117</sup> <http://mareagranate.org/en>

## 5. Conclusions

The population of mobile EU citizens of voting age totals circa 15 million and has been growing over the past few years, which means it is an increasingly important group of potential voters. However, many of these citizens are either not aware of their electoral rights and official voting procedures, or encounter practical difficulties when they want to vote. The Member States do not have uniform voting procedures that apply to mobile EU citizens, and people find it difficult to navigate the complex systems of entitlements based on nationality and residence. Ultimately, the uneven access to electoral rights across Member States results in inequalities in democratic representation of mobile EU citizens (Arrighi et al. 2013, p. 16-17).

This report has provided a comparative overview of opportunities and challenges with regard to electoral participation of mobile EU citizens in EU-28. Our research covers key areas of concern including eligibility, electoral registration, voting methods available to nationals residing abroad, informational outreach carried out by governmental and non-governmental actors, and the political environment across Member States. Our findings are summarised under the headings below.

### Eligibility

All Member States grant foreign EU citizens the right to vote and to stand as candidates in local elections in accordance with the provisions of the EU Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. However, several Member States apply additional requirements, such as a minimum length of past residence in the municipality where the election is held. Moreover, some Member States make exceptions at the city or state level (Germany and Austria), or exclude some jurisdictions (Denmark). About half of the Member States that do guarantee voting rights in local elections still apply restrictions to the right to be elected to certain executive offices for non-national EU citizens. The most common restrictions apply to the posts of mayor.

With respect to non-resident citizens, most of the Member States (23 of 28) guarantee voting rights in EP elections if they live in the EU. The remaining five Member States do not allow nationals abroad to vote, or guarantee such rights only to specific categories of the population. Moreover, some nationals residing abroad eventually lose their right to vote. Also citizens temporarily abroad encounter difficulties when it comes to voting. For example, some Member States only allow in-country voting or at diplomatic missions, while others put excessive administrative burdens on temporary absentees' access to the franchise. In some Member States, the challenges to voting rights of nationals living abroad have stirred public debate and action. In Ireland, the issue was brought up by the 'Home to Vote' campaign in recent referendums and considered by a citizens' convention. In the UK, the Conservative Party manifestos have committed to introduce a 'Votes for Life' bill, and a recent petition proposing votes for life and overseas constituencies to better represent British citizens living abroad has attracted over 10,000 signatories.

The implementation of EU legislation regarding EU citizens' voting rights in host countries also faces some technical challenges. In particular, the information exchange with other Member States regarding where citizens wish to vote in EP elections could be improved. There are different standards for managing population registries across Member States, (including data specifications and formats) and the electoral rolls are created at

different points in times. This means that the registries are not always compatible and registration deadlines cannot always accommodate voters who wish to switch the country of voting.

## Electoral registration

Our research shows that only a minority of Member States offers mobile EU citizens automatic voter registration in EP and local elections. In several Member States the need for active registration is perceived as a challenge to participation, in part because it is considered as a burdensome procedure and in part because potential voters risk missing registration deadlines, which can be a long time before the actual elections. Moreover, some Member States put additional administrative burdens on non-citizen residents, such as annual renewal of registration or the need to apply for ballots.

In addition to non-automatic voter registration, one of the key challenges for *non-citizen residents* is the lack of information and targeted campaigns about voter registration, as well as limited information in different languages. For *non-resident citizens*, an important challenge is the lack of accurate registers of citizens residing abroad, which hinders both contacting of citizens by authorities and limits the research about their electoral behaviour. Even more importantly, in EP elections, where most mobile EU citizens can decide whether they want to vote in their home country or in their host country, some mobile EU citizens risk being deleted from the electoral registry in the country where they intended to vote, because they were simultaneously registered in another electoral registry. The lack of coordination regarding voter registration across Member States may produce unintended consequences, e.g. a French citizen who is already registered to vote in EP elections in another country (where voter registration is automatic) may still register on the consular electoral list, but subsequently be automatically deleted, after the French electoral commission has received the list of French voters registered in another Member State.<sup>118</sup> Finally, slow and inefficient postal services in combination with short timeframes for voter registration and voting create considerable difficulties for nationals living abroad.

## Voting methods

Mobile EU citizens can vote from abroad in almost all Member States by means of personal voting at diplomatic missions (18), postal voting (15), proxy voting (4), and e-voting (1). Several Member States offer only in-country and/or embassy voting, which makes electoral participation costly and time consuming for non-residents that live far away from (the few available) polling stations. Previous studies suggest that postal voting increases turnout by as much as 10% (Gronke et al. 2007) and recent consultations among EU citizens<sup>119</sup> indicate that expanding the remote voting possibilities in Member States would facilitate electoral participation. The need to amplify the offer of remote voting methods across Europe is also emphasized by several country experts consulted for this report. However, the ‘truly remote’ voting methods – postal and e-voting – are offered only by 16 of 28 Member States. While increased opportunities to vote remotely are clearly desirable, they also represent some challenges. As mentioned above, postal services are inadequate in some countries and often

<sup>118</sup> Source: GLOBALCIT country report: France, p. 22.

<sup>119</sup> “The possibility to vote by post” was indicated by 48% as a practice that could make it easier for citizens living in another EU country to vote in elections in their country of origin (European Commission 2015). Moreover, according to Eurobarometer fl\_431 (2016) around three in five Europeans (62%) agree that being able to vote by post would make voting easier. .

fail to deliver votes in time, while e-voting can de facto exclude people without technical skills or resources, and involves risks related to online security. We would argue that the most inclusive voting methods for non-resident citizens are therefore those that combine several options, such as embassy, postal and electronic voting.

## **Outreach**

A previous consultation carried out by the European Commission shows that many mobile EU citizens consider that information on how to vote is insufficient or unclear.<sup>120</sup> At the same time, although most of the consulted stakeholders work on topics related to EU citizens' participation in elections, the awareness among them of outreach to mobile EU citizens is limited actors. Stakeholders identify the lack of information in multiple languages, and the fact that the information is rarely provided at different points in time (i.e. well in advance and shortly before voter registration/elections) as main challenges. In most cases, information to non-citizens is provided in the official language and in English, while outreach in multiple languages is infrequent among both public authorities and NGOs. Moreover, most actors seem to concentrate their information provision in one electoral phase, either shortly before registration or well in advance of registration. It is also worth noting that NGOs and self-organised groups of citizens seem to use social media and personal meetings to a greater extent compared to governmental stakeholders.

## **Political environment**

Our research reveals that political parties carry out electoral campaigns targeting non-national EU voters only in a few Member States. This involves campaigning in different languages, meeting with communities of non-citizens, and proposing names of non-citizens on electoral lists of parties. At the most basic level campaigning among non-citizens simply involves creating sections of party websites in other languages, where non-nationals can access information about voter registration and voting, about party programmes, and membership. At the same time, non-citizen residents from the EU face challenges to found political parties and become members of political parties in several countries. These challenges relate to laws that reserve party formation to nationals or impose limits on the share of members that can be non-nationals. Moreover, the law in some Member States does not allow non-nationals to join a party, or requires them to first acquire permanent residence in the country. An indirect challenge to founding and being an active member of a party is linguistic in cases when party-related forms and information are available only in the national languages. Regarding candidacy the limited data emerging from our study suggest that political parties in a majority of Member States put some non-nationals EU citizens on lists of candidates, but the share of elected non-nationals varies considerably across countries.

Compared to non-citizen residents, non-resident citizens are more favoured by both Member State laws and political parties of their home country. They rarely face legal challenges to found political parties, or to become members or even leaders of political parties. Moreover, political parties in several Member States are quite active in campaigning with nationals abroad. Some of them have broad networks of diaspora organisations which campaign abroad

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<sup>120</sup> A public consultation carried out by the European Commission found that 21% of respondents had experienced difficulties in trying to vote in EP or local elections whilst living in another EU country. About half of them (51%) had difficulties related to registering on the electoral roll and another half (47%) declared that the information on how to vote was insufficient or unclear (European Commission 2015).

on their behalf, while others have specific party sections for non-resident citizens, appoint party delegates for abroad communities, and open party sections in different countries. There are also parties that send out personal letters to voters abroad, produce targeted videos, and file proposals that would favour nationals abroad (e.g. on facilitated voting from abroad and on tax policies for expats).

Non-resident citizens are also more often involved in non-electoral participation compared to non-citizen residents. Our research suggests that non-citizen residents rarely engage in protests or other political activities, apart from a few exceptions including mobilisations in Brussels that aim at influencing the EU, Brexit-related campaigns in the UK and local initiatives at city or province-level in other parts of Europe. In contrast, there are plenty of examples of nationals abroad who have mobilised for political causes. Some of the most prominent examples are British citizens in the EU and those of EU citizens in the UK who campaign for their rights after Brexit, online and environmental activism by Romanians with protests organised in numerous cities, Polish and Irish citizens that mobilise for abortion rights, Hungarians abroad that organise protests against the incumbent government, and Finns that have managed to lobby both multiple citizenship and postal voting into electoral legislation.

## Annex 1. Statistics of mobile EU citizens of voting age: EU-28

Table 1. Statistics of mobile EU citizens of voting age: EU-28

country	share of voting population	absolute numbers
Austria	7.43%	558,129.00
Belgium	8.02%	756,186.00
Bulgaria	0.21%	12,928.00
Croatia	0.39%	13,911.00
Cyprus	13.79%	98,691.00
Czechia	2.18%	194,897.00
Denmark	3.76%	179,810.00
Estonia	1.38%	15,202.00
Finland	1.80%	83,140.00
France	2.50%	1,370,149.00
Germany	5.00%	3,572,796.00
Greece	1.96%	180,632.00
Hungary	0.89%	74,604.00
Ireland	9.94%	375,460.00
Italy	2.48%	1,298,645.00
Latvia	0.33%	5,478.00
Lithuania	0.21%	5,118.00
Luxembourg	40.39%	199,822.00
Malta	6.96%	27,508.00
Netherlands	3.02%	431,511.00
Poland	0.09%	27,760.00
Portugal	1.23%	109,080.00
Romania	0.31%	51,406.00
Slovakia	1.10%	50,773.00
Slovenia	1.01%	17,778.00
Spain	4.37%	1,729,064.00
Sweden	3.29%	270,912.00
United Kingdom	5.59%	3,021,625.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3.41%</b>	<b>14,733,015.00</b>

Source: Eurostat (2017). Population on 1 January 2017, by age group, sex and citizenship [migr\_pop1ctz] extracted on October 26, 2018. The Eurostat data used for the purpose of this report comprises two age groups: (1) From 15 to 64 years and (2) 65 years or over given that the voting age in EU-28 is minimum 16 years old (and the age groups from 16 onwards or from 18 onwards are not available on Eurostat).

## Annex 2. The timing of information provision to mobile EU citizens

The results of the online survey regarding the timing of information provision to mobile EU citizens are presented in the tables below.

Table 1. Public authorities: “At what stage did the information to non-citizen residents take place?” (N=39)<sup>121</sup>

<b>Outreach stage</b>	<b>Number</b>
Shortly before registration	12
Shortly before election	7
Shortly before registration and election	5
Well In advance of registration	10
Well in advance and shortly before registration	4
Well in advance of registration, shortly before registration and shortly before election	1
<b>(N)</b>	<b>39</b>

Table 2. NGOs: “At what stage did the information to non-citizen residents take place?” (N=29)<sup>122</sup>

<b>Outreach stage</b>	<b>Number</b>
Shortly before registration	4
Shortly before election	1
Shortly before registration and election	2
Well In advance of registration	16
Well in advance and shortly before registration	3
Well in advance of registration, shortly before registration and shortly before election	3
<b>(N)</b>	<b>29</b>

Table 3. Public authorities: “At what stage did the information to non-resident citizens take place?” (N=42)<sup>123</sup>

<sup>121</sup> The GLOBALCIT online survey respondents were asked at what stage the information took place (a multiple choice answer): (1) Well in advance of voter registration, (2) Shortly before voter registration or/and (3) Shortly before elections, (4) Other.

<sup>122</sup> The respondent were asked at what stage the information took place (a multiple choice answer): (1) Well in advance of voter registration, (2) Shortly before voter registration or/and (3) Shortly before elections, (4) Other.



<b>Outreach stage</b>	<b>Number</b>
Shortly before registration	11
Shortly before election	6
Shortly before registration and election	5
Well In advance of registration	16
Well in advance and shortly before registration	3
Well in advance of registration, shortly before registration and shortly before election	1
<b>(N)</b>	<b>42</b>

Table 4. NGOs: “At what stage did the information to non-resident citizens take place?” (N=28)<sup>124</sup>

<b>Outreach stage</b>	<b>Number</b>
Shortly before registration	7
Shortly before election	5
Shortly before registration and election	0
Well In advance of registration	11
Well in advance and shortly before registration	1
Well in advance of registration, shortly before registration and shortly before election	4
<b>(N)</b>	<b>28</b>

<sup>123</sup> The respondent were asked at what stage the information took place (a multiple choice answer): (1) Well in advance of voter registration, (2) Shortly before voter registration or/and (3) Shortly before elections, (4) Other.

<sup>124</sup> The respondents were asked at what stage the information took place (a multiple choice answer): (1) Well in advance of voter registration, (2) Shortly before voter registration or/and (3) Shortly before elections, (4) Other.

## Annex 3. Voting methods for non-resident citizens in EP elections: EU-28

Table 1. Voting methods for non-resident citizens in EP elections: EU-28

Country	In country	Postal	At diplomatic missions	Proxy	e-voting
Austria	1	1			
Belgium		1	1	1	
Bulgaria	1		1		
Croatia	1		1		
Cyprus					
Czech Republic	1				
Denmark	1	1	1		
Estonia	1	1	1		1
Finland	1		1		
France		1	1	1	
Germany	1	1			
Greece	1		1		
Hungary					
Ireland					
Italy	1	1	1		
Latvia	1	1			
Lithuania		1	1		
Luxembourg		1			
Malta					
Netherlands	1	1	1	1	
Poland	1		1		
Portugal			1		
Romania	1		1		
Slovakia					
Slovenia	1	1	1		
Spain		1	1		
Sweden	1	1	1		
United Kingdom	1	1	1	1	
<b>total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

Legend: 1 signifies that the voting method is available.

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