

Voter turnout in EU elections up nine per cent on previous vote

Written by Martin Banks on 27 May 2019 in News
News

However big differences in participation levels across EU still a concern says Margrethe Vestager.

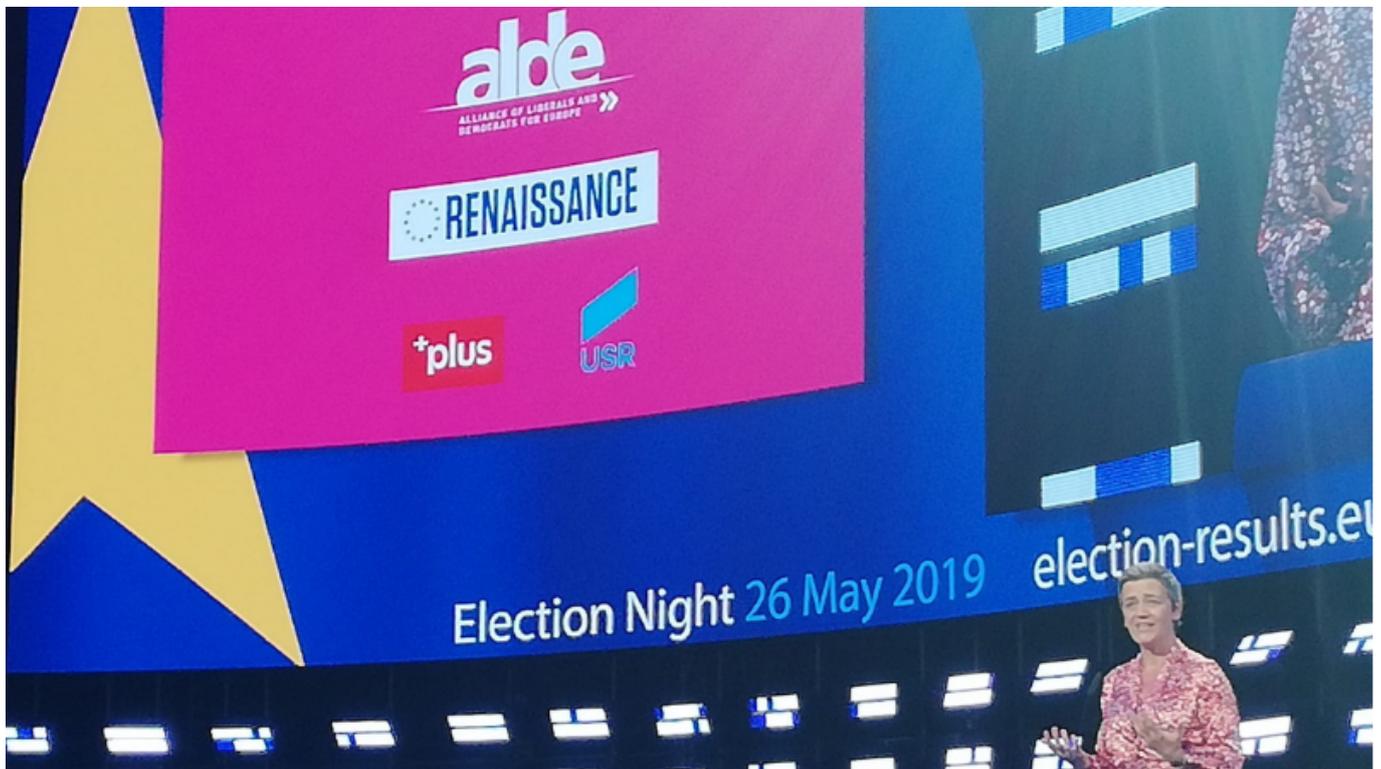


Photo credit: European Parliament AudioVisual

EU competition commissioner Margrethe Vestager has sounded a note of caution over the larger-than-expected turnout in the European elections.

Voter turnout has been declining for years - it fell to just over 42 per cent, an all-time low in the last elections - but, this year, participation has risen sharply passing the 50 per cent mark for the first time in over 20 years.

Several MEPs and EU officials heralded the improved turnout as a sign that voters still believe in the

future of the EU despite Brexit and other crises it has faced in recent years.

RELATED CONTENT

- [‘Green Wave’ dominates groups’ reactions to preliminary EU election results](#) [1]
 - [Exit polls in Netherlands suggest Eurosceptic gains not as big as expected](#) [2]
 - [UK Electoral Commission under fire as citizens denied vote in EU elections](#) [3]
 - [Concerns over EU citizens denied a vote in UK after online registration shutdown](#) [4]
 - [Media interest in EU elections doubles due to ‘unprecedented’ campaign](#) [5]
-

Frans Timmermans, a vice president of the European Commission, said as he arrived at the European Parliament on Sunday night that the predicted 50.95 per cent turnout across the EU was a "great, great signal" in public trust in the EU.

David Harley, a former deputy secretary general of the parliament, told this site that the turnout figure was "spectacular."

But in an interview with this website, Vestager, who tonight declared herself as the Liberal lead candidate for new European Commission president, said it was important to realise that the turnout would not be uniform across the EU.

In Germany, turnout was 60 per cent but in Croatia it was about 32 per cent.

Vestager, who was speaking shortly after arriving in parliament to hear the results, said, "Participation levels will be quite different from one member state to another. This shows that we still have work to do. What we have to do is put even more effort into getting the message across about the EU and what it does in those countries where turnout has still been poor in these elections."

"I think what we have seen is that people have actually realised what was at stake in these elections and gone out to vote in larger numbers... It is great to be in parliament on a night like this. There is a real buzz about the place" Margrethe Vestager

She said, however, that the parliament's promotional campaign for the 2019 elections was "wonderful" and had proved effective.

"A lot of effort went into this campaign in order to make this - the improved turnout - happen."

The Danish commissioner added, "I think what we have seen is that people have actually realised what was at stake in these elections and gone out to vote in larger numbers."

"They have seen people running for parliament who essentially want to destroy both it and the EU and decided that they want to do something about that."

She went on, "It is great to be in parliament on a night like this. There is a real buzz about the place."

However, Bill Etheridge, who was elected as a UKIP member in the 2014 elections but is now with the Brexit Party, predicted that it was "too early" to write off the threat posed by so called populist and nationalist parties.

He said that the results from Italy and Hungary, where populist parties are expected to score well, were still to be declared and he also pointed to the success of Marine Le Pen's Front National in France. He said the populist AfD in Germany had also increased its share of the vote.

Etheridge, who quit UKIP because he said he was disenchanted with the party, added, "Do not write off the chances of the so-called populists in places like Italy and Hungary. There are plenty of people in parliament tonight who are doing that and giving themselves a pat on the back but the populist wave is still coming, mark my words."

About the author

Martin Banks is a senior reporter at The Parliament Magazine

Tags

[Brexit](#) [6]

[EU Election 2019](#) [7]

[European Commission](#) [8]

Categories

[European elections](#) [9]



Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [EU Elections 2019](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2019](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)
[MonitoringDods](#)
[ResearchDods](#)
[EventsDods](#)
[Training](#)

Media & publishing titles

[Politics Home](#)
[The House](#)
[The Parliament](#)
[Magazine](#)
[Holyrood](#)
[Total Politics](#)
[Public Affairs](#)
[News](#)
[Civil Service](#)
[World](#)
[Public](#)
[Technology](#)
[Training](#)
[Journal](#)
[Dods](#)
[Parliamentary](#)
[Companion](#)
[Vacher's](#)
[Quarterly](#)
[The European Union and](#)
[Public Affairs](#)
[Directory](#)

Dods events

[Westminster](#)
[Briefing](#)
[Digital Health & Care](#)
[Scotland](#)
[MEP Awards](#)
[The Skills Summit](#)
[Scottish Public Service](#)
[Awards](#)
[Public Sector Procurement](#)
[Summit](#)
[Public Sector ICT](#)
[Summit](#)
[Cyber Security](#)
[Summit](#)
[Cyber Security 2017](#)
[Training](#)
[Journal Awards](#)

Partnership events

[The Health and Care Innovation](#)
[Expo](#)
[Civil Service Live](#)
[Civil Service Awards](#)
[Chief Nursing Officer for](#)
[England's Summit](#)
[Women into](#)

[Leadership](#)
[The Youth Justice Convention](#)
[Socitm Spring Conference](#)
[NHSCC Annual Members' Event](#)
[Dods at Party Conference](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)[Terms & Conditions](#)[Advertising](#)[Sponsorship](#) [Subscriptions](#)

Source URL: <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/voter-turnout-eu-elections-nine-cent-previous-vote>

Links

- [1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/%E2%80%98green-wave%E2%80%99-dominant-groups%E2%80%99-reactions-preliminary-eu-election-results>
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/exit-polls-netherlands-suggest-eurosceptic-gains-not-big-expected>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/uk-electoral-commission-under-fire-citizens-denied-vote-eu-elections>
- [4] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/concerns-over-eu-citizens-denied-vote-uk-after-online-registration-shutdown>
- [5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/media-interest-eu-elections-double-due-%E2%80%98unprecedented%E2%80%99-campaign>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/brexit>
- [7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/eu-election-2019>
- [8] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/european-commission>
- [9] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/european-elections>