

## European electoral systems (Elections June 1999)

**Caption:** The electoral systems in the Member States of the European Union applicable to European elections of June 1999.

**Source:** CVCE.

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European electoral systems

|         | Proportional representation                                | Preferential voting  | Allocation of seats   | The right to vote   | Eligibility  |
|---------|--|--|---|---|--|
| Austria | Yes<br>At national level                                   | Yes<br>Electors must vote for a list and can, in addition, vote for a given candidate on this list<br>One vote per elector                     | D'Hondt system<br>Count held at national level<br>Lists obtaining less than 4% of the votes cast are excluded<br>Seats are allocated according to the number of votes per list  | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens with full voting rights in their countries of origin<br>Vote by polling cards for Austrian citizens residing abroad  | EU citizens<br>19 years of age or over<br>Full eligibility in the country of origin  |
| Belgium | Yes<br>4 electoral constituencies and 3 electoral colleges | Yes<br>Electors can vote for a list or for individual candidates<br>Some parties indicate their preference<br>One vote per elector             | D'Hondt system  | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens with full voting rights<br>Belgian citizens residing abroad (by postal vote)<br>Compulsory vote for electors registered on electoral rolls   | Citizens appearing on the register of Belgian electors for the European Parliament<br>21 years of age or over<br>French, Dutch or German speakers (according to the college) |
| Denmark | Yes<br>At national level                                   | Yes<br>Electors can vote for a list or for individual candidates<br>Some parties indicate which candidates they prefer<br>One vote per elector | D'Hondt system<br>Votes for individual candidates and their lists are added together<br>The candidates who obtain the greatest total number of votes are elected                | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizen living in Denmark and with permanent residence in Denmark, holding full voting rights there<br>Danish citizen residing in another EU Member State, not deprived of electoral rights in Denmark<br>Postal vote | EU citizen<br>18 years of age and over<br>Full eligibility in the country of origin  |
| Finland | Yes<br>At national level                                   | Yes  | D'Hondt system<br>Once the number of seats for each party, electoral alliance and joint list is determined, candidates are ranked according to the total number of preferential | Minimum age: 18 years<br>Finnish citizen<br>EU citizen living in Finland, listed on the electoral registers or having requested voting rights, and holding full voting rights in their countries of origin  | EU citizen<br>18 years of age and over<br>Holder of voting rights<br>Exception: persons in custody   |

|         |   |   | votes obtained  |   |   |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|
| France  | Yes<br>At national level  | No<br>Lists bearing 87 names are voted for in their entirety  | D'Hondt system<br>Allocation on the basis of the highest average<br>Lists obtaining less than 5% of the votes cast are excluded   | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens with full voting rights in their countries of origin and with a their home or permanent residence in France<br>French citizens abroad (vote by proxy or at 'polling stations' in embassies or consulates)<br>Inhabitants of overseas territories | EU citizens<br>23 years of age and over<br>Home or permanent residence in France<br>Full eligibility in country of origin |
| Germany | Yes<br>Lists of candidates, either at federal or Länder level   | No<br>Lists are voted for in their entirety   | Hare-Niemeyer system<br>Count at federal level<br>Lists obtaining less than 5% of the votes cast are excluded   | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens with electoral rights in their countries of origin<br>German citizens residing in the FRG, in a Council of Europe Member State, or in any other country (for less than 25 years and registered on the German electoral roll)<br>Postal vote      | EU citizens<br>18 years of age and over<br>Full eligibility in the country of origin                                      |
| Greece  | Yes<br>At national level  | No  | Seats allocated in accordance with the national quotient system, with remaining seats allocated on the basis of the highest average<br>Lists obtaining less than 3% of the votes cast are excluded  | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens with full voting rights in their countries of origin<br>Greek citizens in another EU Member State (vote at consulates)<br>Compulsory vote for Greek citizens   | EU citizens<br>21 years of age and over<br>Full eligibility in the country of origin                                      |
| Ireland | Yes<br>4 constituencies<br>Simple transferable voting system: electoral quotient = $1 + \frac{\text{votes cast}}{\text{seats} + 1}$ | Yes<br>No list voting<br>Vote for one candidate, marking the order of preference of candidates, in the event that the first choice has already obtained the | Election of candidates having obtained the electoral quotient<br>Proportional allocation of all votes obtained above the quotient amongst the other candidates, according to the preferences of the | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens living in Ireland, with full voting rights in their countries of origin  | EU citizens<br>21 years of age and over<br>Full right of eligibility in the country of origin                             |

|                 |                             |   |   |   |  |
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|                 |                             | necessary<br>quotient or has<br>been<br>disqualified  | electors  |   |  |
| Italy           | Yes<br>At national<br>level | Yes   | Allocation of seats<br>on the basis of<br>votes obtained by<br>each national list,<br>divided by the<br>national electoral<br>quotient<br>Subsequently, seats<br>are allocated on the<br>basis of<br>constituencies, to<br>candidates who<br>have obtained the<br>largest number of<br>votes<br>Remaining seats<br>are allocated to<br>national lists with<br>the largest ratio | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens with full voting<br>rights in their countries of<br>origin<br>Italian citizens in another EU<br>Member State (vote at the<br>consulate)<br>Italian citizens outside the<br>EU: vote in Italy   | EU citizen<br>25 years of age<br>and over<br>Full eligibility in<br>the country of<br>origin   |
| Luxemb<br>ourg  | Yes<br>At national<br>level | Yes<br>Six votes per<br>elector<br>Electors can<br>either cast all six<br>votes for one<br>list, or split them<br>among<br>candidates from<br>the same or<br>different lists<br>A list is credited<br>with as many<br>votes as it has<br>candidates | D'Hondt system<br>Seats allocated<br>according to the<br>number of votes<br>obtained by<br>candidates and by<br>lists   | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens residing in<br>Luxembourg, and having<br>spent 5 of the last 6 years in<br>the Grand Duchy, with full<br>voting rights in their<br>countries of origin.<br>Compulsory vote for<br>Luxembourg citizens<br>residing in the Grand Duchy,<br>and for other EU citizens<br>listed on the electoral<br>rollsLuxembourg citizens<br>abroad and other categories<br>of elector (postal vote) | EU citizens<br>21 years of age<br>and over<br>Living in the<br>Grand Duchy and,<br>if not<br>Luxembourgish,<br>having lived there<br>for 10 of the last<br>12 years<br>Full eligibility in<br>the country of<br>origin |
| Netherla<br>nds | Yes<br>At national<br>level | Yes   | D'Hondt system  | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens with full voting<br>rights in their countries of<br>origin<br>Dutch citizens abroad (vote<br>by proxy or postal vote)  | EU citizens<br>18 years of age or<br>over<br>Full eligibility in<br>the country of<br>origin   |
| Portugal        | Yes<br>At national<br>level | No<br>Lists are voted<br>for in their<br>entirety   | D'Hondt system  | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens with full voting<br>rights in their countries of<br>origin   | EU citizen<br>18 years of age or<br>over<br>Full eligibility in  |

|                |   |   |  |  |   |
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|                |   |   |  | Portuguese citizens in another EU Member State (vote at the consulate)   | the country of origin   |
| Spain          | Yes<br>At national level  | No<br>Lists are voted for in their entirety   | D'Hondt system   | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens holding full voting rights in their country of origin<br>Spanish citizens abroad (postal vote)  | EU citizen<br>18 years of age and over<br>Full eligibility in the country of origin                       |
| Sweden         | Yes<br>At electoral level   | Yes<br>Electors vote for a political party and can vote for one of the candidates on the list of the chosen party | Modified St. Lagüe system<br>Lists obtaining less than 4% of the votes cast are excluded<br>The candidate must obtain a minimum of 5% of the votes won by his or her party | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens holding full voting rights in their countries of origin<br>Citizens of any nationality other than Swedish must declare their intention to vote<br>Swedish citizens abroad: previous residence in Sweden, voting rights renewed in writing after 10 years spent abroad | EU citizens<br>18 years of age and over<br>Full eligibility in the country of origin                      |
| United Kingdom | Yes<br>Voting for lists in their entirety in 11 regions<br>Simple transferable voting system (Northern Ireland) | No<br>Lists are voted for in their entirety   | D'Hondt system (11 regions)  | Minimum age: 18 years<br>EU citizens appearing on electoral rolls, with full voting rights in their countries of origin<br>Members of the House of Lords<br>British citizens abroad and members of the armed forces (declaration of eligibility)   | EU citizens<br>21 years of age and over<br>UK residents<br>Full electoral rights in the country of origin |