

explainity explains

topic: elections to the European Parliament 2019

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YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efCMww6dBZc> (Deutscher Clip)

## explainity explains: Elections to the European Parliament 2019

It is almost time: Between May 23<sup>rd</sup> and May 26<sup>th</sup> the election of the European Parliament will be held! Every 5 years the citizens of the European Union get to elect their favorite representative to the European Parliament. In Germany the election is traditionally held on a Sunday, so it is going to be May 26<sup>th</sup> this year.

However: People have a lot of questions about the election of the European Parliament. Chris from Germany for example knows the election is about choosing representatives for the European Parliament. But who determines what parties are represented in the Parliament? The European Parliament is the single European institution that is elected by the EU citizens directly.

With some things the election of the European Parliament is the same in every country. The election is general, direct, free and anonymous. The basis for the election is a proportional representation. That means: the more votes a ticket gets, the more seats it wins in the Parliament.

But since there is no uniform for anything else, there are different regulations in every country.

In Germany the election works as a closed-ticket system, that means the order of the representatives for a party has been previously defined. Eligible to vote is everyone older than 18 with a German ID. In addition, you have to have a permanent residence in Germany for at least three months. Chris has **one** vote for **one** ticket.

Chris' friend Aurora, who lives in Germany, but has an Italian ID, can cast her vote in either the German or the Italian election. However, she can't do both. To vote she has to apply for voter registration. Casting the vote as an absentee ballot is a valid option for both of them as well.

Chris wonders what the representatives do in Parliament all day. Well the European Parliament for example controls EU processes in general. With the help of the council of ministers it determines the EU budget and elects the president of the commission. In addition, it revises proposals of the EU commission with the council of ministers and enacts them.

This is for example how the roaming provision came to be, that enables Chris to use his German mobile plan to search the web and make calls when he travels within the EU.

The representatives mostly work in parliamentary committees like the committee for agriculture, the judiciary committee or the committee for culture and education.

Every member state sends different numbers of representatives. How many depends on the population of the state. The higher the population the more seats the country has in the Parliament. This time Germany has 96 seats. To prevent smaller states from being underrepresented, these get additional seats. That is called "degressive proportionality".

When the final results are in, the seats are allocated. Most national parties like to merge in European Versions of their parties, too. There is for example the European Green Party, or the European People's Party. Some form fractions with other parties to expand their political influence.

By the way: the election of the European Parliament is not funded through the EU-Budget: the member states have to fund the election themselves.

Chris reads that countless German laws are based on decisions of the EU. He didn't realize just how vast the influence of the EU is on our daily lives. That's why the election of the European Parliament is more important than many people think. Because every vote counts.

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