

Follow-up to the European Parliament non-legislative resolution on the stock-taking of the European elections 2024

- 1. Rapporteur:** Ľubica KARVAŠOVÁ (RENEW / SK)
- 2. References:** 2025/2012(INI) / A10-0156/2025 / P10_TA(2025)0198
- 3. Date of adoption of the resolution:** 11 September 2025
- 4. Competent Parliamentary Committee:** Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO)
- 5. Brief analysis/ assessment of the resolution and requests made in it:**

The European Parliament's resolution acknowledges increased voter turnout and efforts to raise awareness about elections and increase visibility of candidates but also highlights divergent participation rates among Member States, limited youth engagement, and under-representation of minorities. It emphasizes the necessity of transforming elections into a genuinely European democratic process by moving beyond nationally focused campaigns.

The resolution criticizes democratic backsliding, especially in Hungary, and warns of mounting threats from anti-EU parties, disinformation, foreign interference, and political violence. It calls for a coordinated EU strategy to address these challenges, including stricter regulation of online platforms, bans on foreign donations, enhanced protections for media freedom, and improved cybersecurity.

Furthermore, Parliament reaffirms its calls for institutional and electoral reforms, such as harmonised voting procedures, easier access for mobile and under-represented voters, and the consolidation of the lead candidate process. It also advocates for deeper institutional changes, including granting Parliament legislative initiative powers and expanding its inquiry capabilities.

- 6. Response to requests and overview of actions taken, or intended to be taken, by the Commission:**

13. ... Recalls that the upcoming report of the Commission on the application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations (pending recast) should pay particular attention to the rules governing the financing of European political foundations and should propose amendments to the Regulation if necessary;

Political agreement was reached on the revised Regulation on the statute and funding of the European political parties and European political foundations in June 2025. The text of the revised Regulation was approved by Parliament on 21 October 2025.

Under the terms of Article 45 of the new Regulation, the European Parliament must publish a report on the application of the Regulation six months after the entry into force of the regulation. Article 45 in turn requires the Commission to present its own report on the application of the Regulation no more than one year after the publication of the report by the European Parliament. Both co-legislators agreed that in this report the Commission should pay particular attention to the implications of the Regulation on “the position of small European political parties and European political foundations and for the rules governing the financing of European political foundations.” The Commission may propose amendments to the Regulation based on this report, if deemed necessary.

The Commission looks forward to the entry into force of the revised Regulation and is committed to fulfilling all obligations set out under the new text. Upon receipt of the Parliament’s report the Commission is ready to assess the impact of the Regulation in accordance with the procedure and requirements set out in Article 45 of the new Regulation.

*19. Reiterates its **call on the Commission and the Member States to ramp up efforts to combat foreign interference and disinformation through a multilayer, coordinated and cross-sector strategy, supported by adequate financial resources, to equip the EU and its Member States with appropriate foresight and resilience policies and deterrence tools**; in this regard, calls on the Commission, the European External Action Service and the Member States to further reinforce the Union’s strategic response to disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference, and points to numerous EU policy efforts undertaken in recent years, including the DSA, the strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation and the initiatives under the Democracy Action Plan;*

The Commission regrets its report on the 2024 elections to the European Parliament as adopted on 6 June 2025¹ could not be reflected in the European Parliament’s resolution.

The Commission’s report on the 2024 elections to the European Parliament, which is accompanied by a comprehensive Staff Working Document, highlights that the 2024 elections took place amidst significant and deep changes in the information ecosystem. It also notes that the pressure on the electoral process has increased online and offline, hostile interference and disinformation attempts are increasing, and manipulation methods are more diverse and sophisticated. The information environment was difficult.

At the same time, no major incidents capable of disrupting the 2024 elections to the European Parliament were reported. The EU and the

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Report on the 2024 elections to the European Parliament, COM(2025) 287 final.

Member States took significant steps, some of which are summarised in the Commission's report, to safeguard electoral processes and ensure free, fair and resilient elections.

The Commission put in place a wide range of preparedness measures to support the competent authorities and other stakeholders, such as a comprehensive Commission Recommendation addressed to Member States, political parties, political foundations and campaign organisations² and the updated Compendium on Election Cybersecurity and Resilience³. It also promoted the use of campaign pledges and codes of conduct on election integrity and fair campaigning, published guidelines on elections⁴, facilitated numerous discussions in the European Cooperation Network on Elections, including in different thematic settings, supported the organisation of various tabletop exercises and the use of the Rapid Response System under the Code of Practice on Disinformation⁵ as well as information campaigns.

The European Digital Media Observatory, in particular its Task Force dedicated to the European Parliament elections, also contributed to this effort. These measures contributed to heightened preparedness, easier exchange of information and quick detection and follow-up of incidents during the 2024 elections to the European Parliament.

The Commission's report stresses that unprecedented preparedness and cooperation structures, supported by a wide range of communication measures to boost societal resilience, have proven essential to address the risks of foreign information manipulation, interference and disinformation during the elections. Proactive measures by data protection authorities helped to address data protection issues and ensure compliance with data protection rules in the electoral process. A high level of cybersecurity was ensured, and fair campaigning was supported. Nevertheless, continued vigilance is needed. Threats continue to evolve very quickly, highlighting the need to reinforce efforts and operational capability in terms of situational awareness and response, building on cross-sectoral stakeholder cooperation.

On 12 November 2025, building on the European Democracy Action Plan and the Defence of Democracy Package, as well as the lessons learned from the 2024 European elections, the Commission adopted the **European Democracy Shield**, as announced in President von der Leyen's Political Guidelines.

² Commission Recommendation (EU) 2023/2829 of 12 December 2023 on inclusive and resilient electoral processes in the Union and enhancing the European nature and efficient conduct of the elections to the European Parliament, C/2023/8626.

³ By the Network and Information Systems Cooperation, supported by the Commission, the European Cooperation Network on Elections and the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity.

⁴ Guidelines for providers of VLOPs and VLOSEs on the mitigation of systemic risks for electoral processes published in April 2024.

⁵ Now a Code of Conduct under the framework of the Digital Services Act.

The European Democracy Shield puts forward a set of new measures in three priority areas, aimed at empowering strong and resilient democracies by (1) reinforcing situational awareness and support response capacity to safeguard the integrity of the information space, (2) strengthening democratic institutions, free and fair elections and free and independent media, and (3) boosting societal resilience and citizens' engagement.

To support better cooperation and coordination in addressing several aspects under these priority areas, a **European Centre for Democratic Resilience** will bring together expertise and capacities across participating Member States, EU candidate countries and potential candidates, and EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, including the European External Action Service (EEAS), as relevant. The Centre will facilitate information sharing and support operational cooperation and capacity building to withstand evolving common threats, in particular foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) and disinformation.

The Commission will support **implementation of EU legislation and the efforts of national authorities**, as well as strong oversight building on collaboration between the various authorities involved in the electoral process. Exchanges of experiences on elections, including the assessment of incidents and unexpected events affecting the smooth conduct of elections will continue to be important. The Commission facilitates valuable exchanges and mutual support through the **European Cooperation Network on Election** (ECNE), which brings together national authorities with responsibilities in electoral matters. In this framework, the Commission published a **checklist on election integrity** and a **risk management matrix for elections** to serve as accessible points of reference for national preparedness, including as regards information manipulation and disinformation.

New thematic settings will foster exchanges on topics such as election integrity and election-related risk management and preparedness, election observation in the EU, new ways of political campaigning including regarding financing, the safety of political candidates and elected representatives and the impact and role of Artificial Intelligence and other new technologies regarding electoral processes. Based on exchanges in ECNE, the Commission will prepare a **repository of common references and standards for electoral processes**. The Commission will promote the use of the **joint mechanism for electoral resilience**, encourage peer-to-peer exchanges, mutual voluntary assistance, common training and tabletop exercises. It will also promote short-term exchanges of national experts among Member States.

The **Regulation on political advertising**⁶ provides common EU

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2024/900 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2024 on the transparency and targeting of political advertising.

standards that make it easier for citizens to recognise political ads, know if they are targeted by such ads, and distinguish them from other types of content. To prevent foreign interference, the Regulation bans the provision of ads to third country sponsors in the three months before an election or referendum in an EU country. The new rules help safeguard the integrity of electoral processes and support an open and transparent democratic debate. Information on online political ads will be available from an online repository, including about who paid for them.

Under the **revised Council Directive on the voting rights in elections to the European Parliament of EU citizens who reside in a different Member State than their state of nationality (“mobile EU citizens”)**⁷, adopted on 24 June 2025, Member States will have to provide more information to mobile EU citizens about the status of their registration, the date of the election and how and where to vote. General information on elections will also be available in a language that is broadly understood by the mobile EU citizens. The information exchanges to prevent multiple voting will be reinforced by additional data and a common timeframe and will be supported by a secure framework made available by the Commission.

The **Code of Conduct on Disinformation** will continue to play a key role in addressing election-related threats through its voluntary multistakeholder approach, in particular through the **Rapid Response System** for elections which allows non-platform signatories such as civil society organisations to swiftly report time-sensitive content or accounts that they deem to present threats to the integrity of the electoral process to the online platforms, ensuring the latter can take appropriate actions in light of their respective policies. **New election-related work** under the Code will focus on mapping and analysing novel and emerging threats linked to information manipulation campaigns, that are increasingly observed during the electoral periods.

Influencers play an increasingly significant role in online political campaigns. Building on the EU Influencer Legal Hub, the Commission will support the setting up of a voluntary **network of influencers** to raise awareness about relevant EU rules, including on their responsibilities when engaging in political campaigning and promote the exchange of best practice. The Commission will also encourage ethical standards and voluntary commitments, including regarding information integrity, and support work by influencers to promote digital literacy.

To protect our media and independent press in their crucial role in democracy, the Commission will also launch a new Media Resilience

⁷ Council Directive (EU) 2025/1788 of 24 June 2025 laying down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament for Union citizens residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals (recast)

Programme to support independent journalism and media literacy.

*21. Condemns all forms of political violence in the strongest terms; expresses deep concern over a series of incidents that occurred in the run-up to the 2024 elections; **encourages the Commission and the Member States to prioritise the prevention of political violence by strengthening laws, frameworks and policies that protect politicians, political candidates, activists, journalists and citizens from violence and harassment during the electoral period;***

Politicians and political candidates can face undue pressures and threats to their security, which has negative spill-over effect on inclusive democratic representation and may discourage broader political engagement. Ensuring their safety emerged as a recurring topic of discussion in the context of the 2024 elections to the European Parliament. This is also a recurring topic in the meetings of the European Cooperation Network on elections, with Member States exchanging on practical and concrete arrangements and measures. Discussions started ahead of the 2024 elections to the European Parliament.

The Commission's report on the 2024 elections to the European Parliament acknowledges that there is a need to foster a positive and secure environment, to enable political candidates and those elected to exercise their political responsibilities, with confidence and without fear. Improved data gathering with a view to better understanding the increased threats to candidates and elected representatives, including at regional and local level, would be helpful.

The European Democracy Shield highlights that the rapid change of the information landscape, tensions and polarisation have resulted in political candidates and elected representatives, being increasingly exposed to threats, attacks and violence, online and offline. Women in politics are a particular target of such behaviours, which can discourage them from running for office and in some cases drive them to resign from elected positions, which has a clear negative effect on democratic representation, whereas they continue to be underrepresented in politics. To better ensure the safety of political candidates and elected representatives, the Commission will adopt a **Recommendation on safety in politics**.

The Commission, under the leadership of Commissioner McGrath, will also work, within the framework of the ECNE and in close consultation with relevant stakeholders, on the preparation of a **dedicated guide of best practices** and support capacity-building, practical support, collection of data and voluntary commitments (e.g. pledges and codes of conduct) and ethical standards in this field. Particular attention will be paid across this workstream to women and other groups at heightened risk of discrimination, and to the situation of local politicians.

The Commission is also committed to strengthening the capacity of the independent fact-checking community across the EU. An independent **European Network of Fact-Checkers** will be set up with the

Commission's support to boost fact-checking capacity in all EU official languages, especially during situations such as elections, health emergencies or natural disasters where access to reliable information is critical. It will also provide access to a **protection scheme for fact-checkers** in the EU against threats and harassment, including legal and psychological protection. In supporting fact-checkers to reach a broader audience, the network will make a substantial contribution to societal resilience.

*23. Commits to an evaluation of these frameworks through its Special Committee on the European Democracy Shield, whose mandate, received from the plenary, includes addressing interference in democratic processes and policies, and implementing measures to preserve the fairness and integrity of elections as well as policies contributing to EU democratic processes; highlights that the committee thus serves as a key tool to prevent malicious interference by identifying possible loopholes, gaps and overlaps that could be exploited; **calls in parallel on the Commission to enforce these regulatory frameworks in full and without undue delay, particularly in the case of those platforms that continue to openly defy EU regulatory authorities;***

The Commission is fully committed and actively engaged to support the application of existing EU digital and democracy rulebook, which is relevant to the protection of democratic values. The Digital Services Act (DSA), the Regulation on the transparency and targeting of political advertising, the General Data Protection Regulation and the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act among others are key to ensuring transparency, accountability and integrity in the information spaces, championing free speech and protecting citizens online. The European Democracy Shield will strengthen efforts to better protect our sovereignty and freedoms, as the basis for democracy at EU, national, regional and local level.

The Commission has committed to take rapid and effective enforcement actions under the Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act whenever necessary. Long-term compliance dialogues are being established with the regulated entities, and these will also contribute to the work on disinformation, notably as part of the European Democracy Shield.

The Commission continues to closely monitor very large online platforms' compliance with the DSA and is diligently proceeding with the open investigations into platforms that are suspected to be in breach of their DSA obligations. Already three formal proceedings have been opened due to suspected infringements with regards to systemic risks to civic discourse and electoral processes. The Code of Conduct on Disinformation is now integrated into the framework of the DSA, and it serves as a relevant benchmark regarding disinformation risks. Its Rapid Response System is also a good example of how the Code fosters collaboration between civil society and online platforms.

Additionally, the Commission is engaging with stakeholders and national authorities to support compliance with the Regulation on the

transparency and targeting of political advertising in a sustainable and effective manner. For instance, on 9 July 2025, the Commission published an Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/1410 on the format, template and technical specifications of the labels and transparency notices of political advertisements. On 8 October 2025, the Commission published guidelines to support the effective implementation of the Regulation. These guidelines include practical measures and detailed explanations to streamline and support the implementation of the new rules and offer simple steps on how to identify a political advertisement and clarify transparency and due diligence obligations. The Commission also released a portal with election dates, in line with Article 26 of the Regulation on which Member States are required to introduce information about elections being organised at all levels. The Commission also released a portal linking national websites on the registered legal representatives of providers of political advertising services established outside the EU, in line with Article 21 of the Regulation. These portals support easy compliance by economic entities with the relevant obligations and contribute to the integrity of the information space around elections.

Overall, the EU's strong toolbox, including the framework of the European Cooperation Network on elections, has improved cooperation of online platforms, civil society organisations and national authorities in the run-up to elections. This has proven to be efficient in ensuring quick reaction in case of emergencies.