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VOTING MATTERS: IGNITING CHANGE IN THE NEXT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

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THE EUROPEAN UNION: WHAT IS IT?

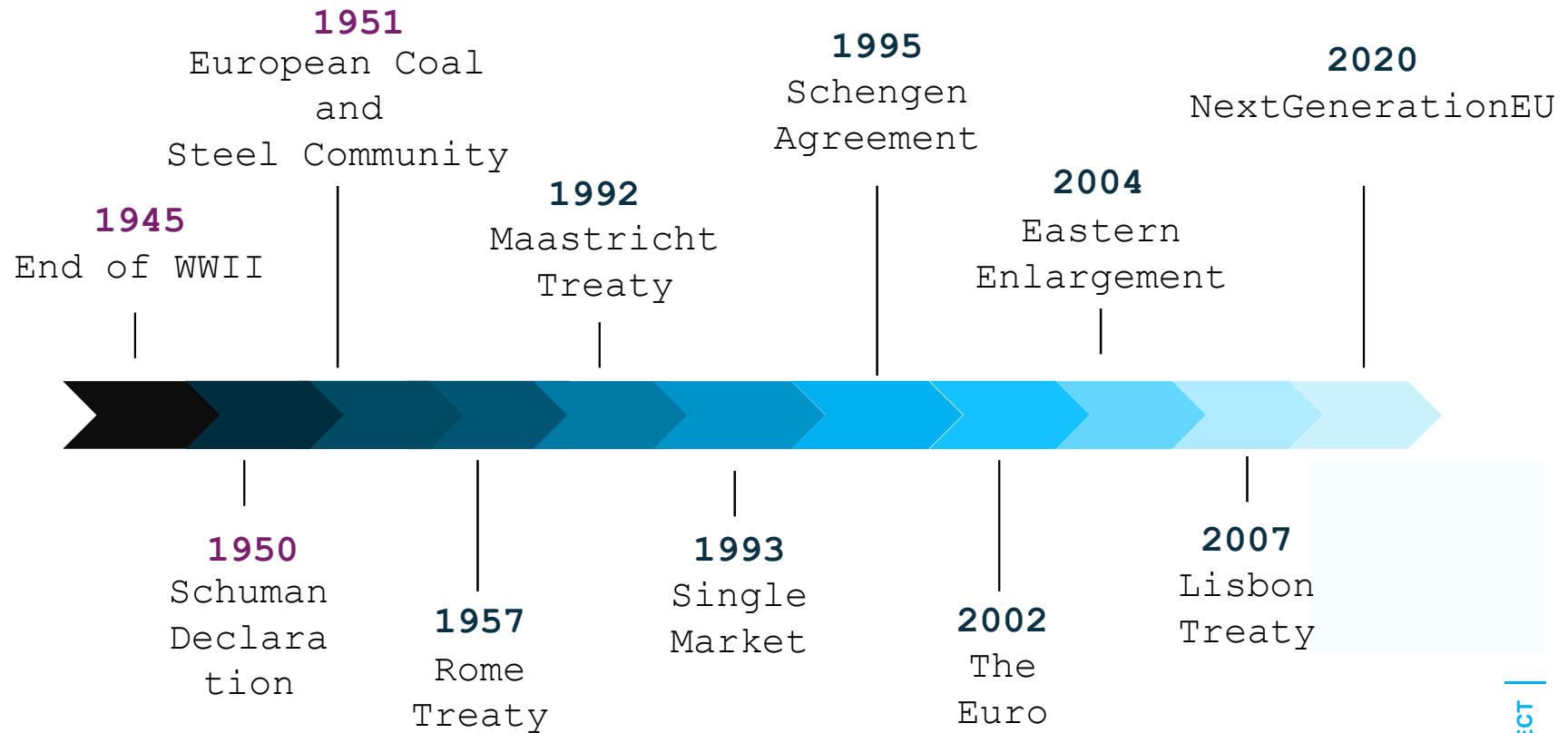
The European Union is considered one of the most successful examples of integration in the world, for good reasons: starting from the 1950s, it has managed to successfully establish a highly developed internal market, ensure free movement of people across its borders, set innovative standards of protection in a number of areas (consumer, environment, data protection, etc.), and, overall, ensure peace, stability and growth in the area. Yet, this development is not without problems: the European Community first, and the European Union, later, have experienced various challenges and crises, which have impacted both on its structure and policies, and also on its member States.

Since the beginning of the 2000s, a number of crises (some of which internal to Europe, others coming from the external context), have challenged and significantly modified the European Union, forcing important changes, but also putting its development at risk, in particular of a backsliding of the integration process and a systemic change of its institutional framework and balance.

The next European Parliament elections are going to be a fundamental test for the capacity of the European Union to face the challenges and renew and strengthen its structure in light of a dramatically internal and international setting.



THE CREATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION





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THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN THE EU INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- Institutional balance in the EU: European Parliament, EU Council, Commission, Court of justice + other institutions
- Different interest representation and institutional balance
- European Parliament and democracy in the EU
- A significant evolution of the EP: from the Parliamentary Assembly to the European Parliament
- Composition of the EP: from an assembly of national MPs, to an institution directly and universally elected
- 1976 Decision – first EP elections in 1979
- Powers: from a consultative institution to a co-legislator (art. 14 TEU)
- Gradual strengthening of the democratic legitimacy of the EC/EU

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



is the voice of European citizens

has Members from all EU countries directly elected by citizens every five years

discusses new laws proposed by the European Commission

modifies (if necessary) and decides these laws together with the Council

elects the President of the European Commission

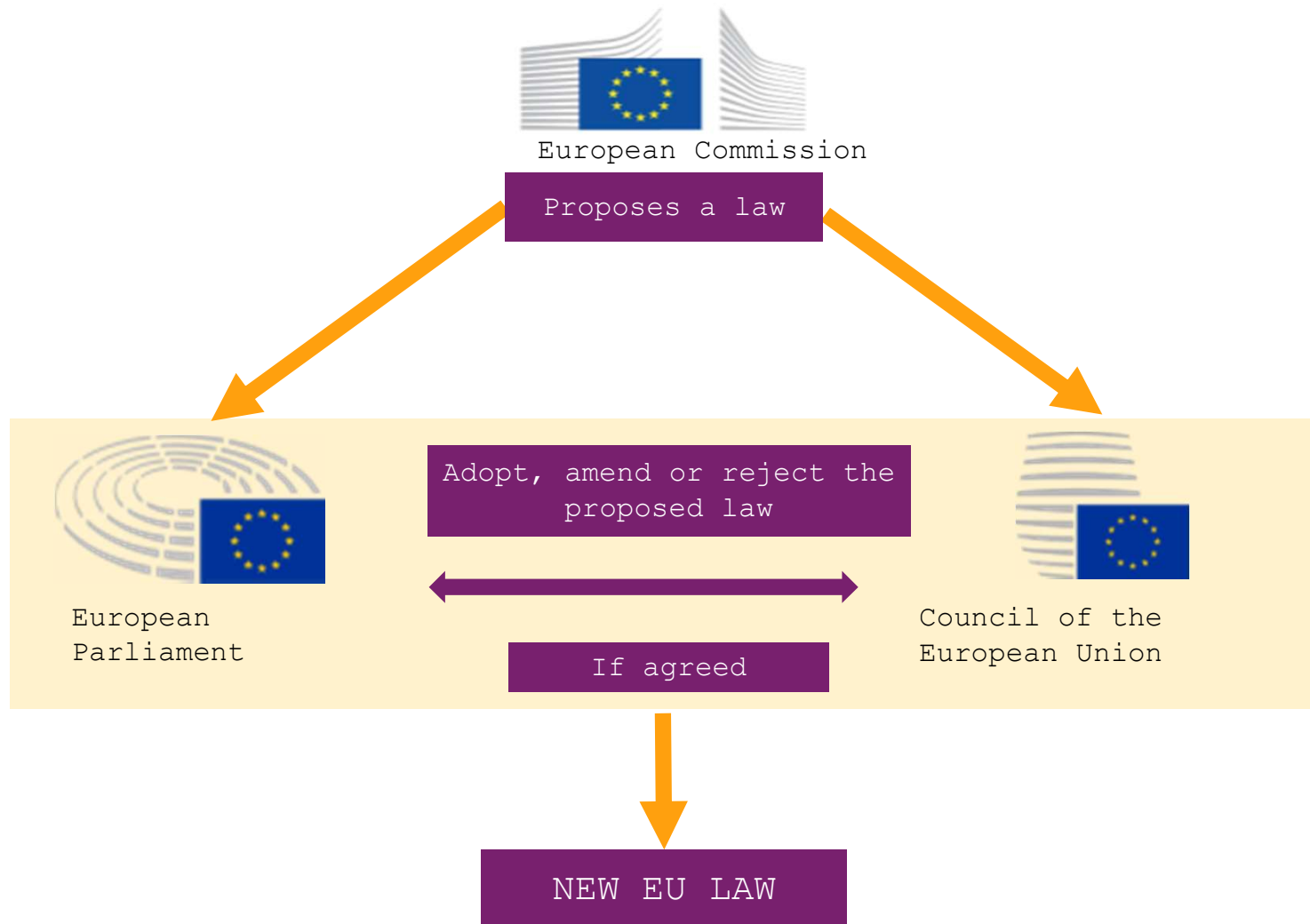
approves the EU budget

holds at least six sessions per year in Brussels (Belgium) and 12 in Strasbourg (France)



HOW DOES THE EU WORK?

EU LAWS: WHO DOES WHAT?





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HOW IS THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTED?

- Electoral act 1976 and reforms: some common rules, but lack of a common electoral procedure –
- Treaty of Maastricht (1993): common electoral procedural – lack of political agreement; Treaty of Amsterdam (1997): common electoral principles
- Treaty of Lisbon (2009): right to vote as a fundamental right (art. 39 European Charter of fundamental rights) + detailed rules (art. 223 TFUE)
- Decision 2002/772: principle of proportional representation + Decision 2018/994: voting systems, electoral thresholds (2-5%)
- Possibility to vote and be elected in other member States for EU citizens: principle of non-discrimination and free movement of persons



THE EUROPEAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM

- Date of the elections: decided by MS within a period from Thursday to Sunday – 2024 elections: from 6 to 9 June
- Decision on the number of seats in September 2023: from 705 (post-Brexit) to 720 (maximum number 750+1: art. 14(2) TEU)
- Right to vote and be elected: EU citizens + possibility to vote and be elected in another MS of residence (art. 22 TFEU + dir. 93/13, dir. 2013/1)
- Proposal for a reform in 2022 by the EP: minimal common rules; two votes: national + European constituencies (28 seats); *Spitzenkandidaten*; common election day (9 maggio); gender equality - lack of political agreement with the Council
- Proposal by the EP in November 2023 to amend the EU Treaties: change in the election of the Commission – stronger role of the EP

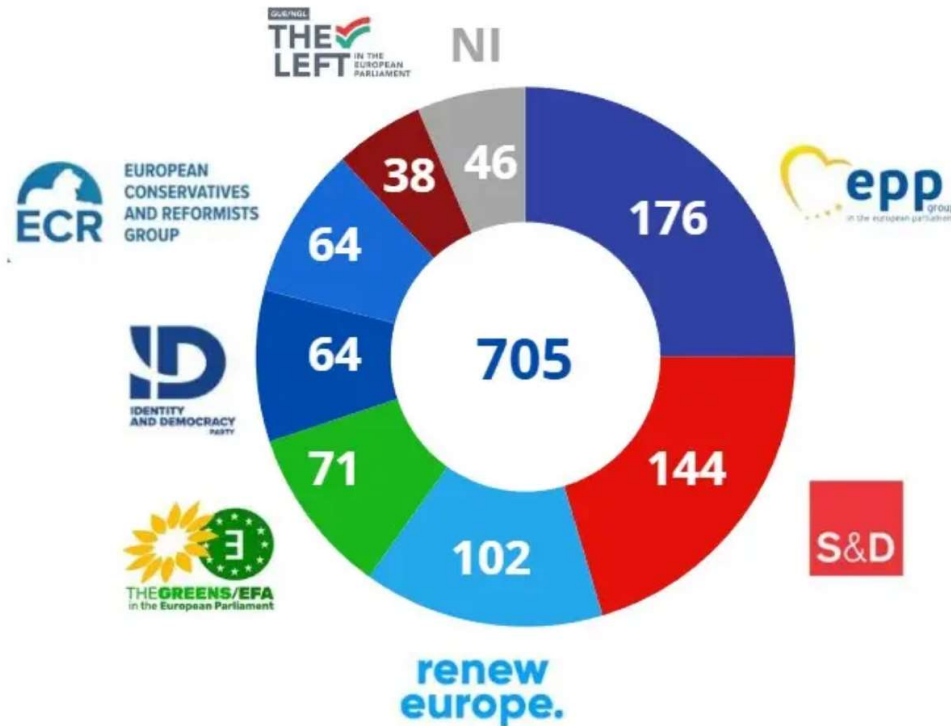


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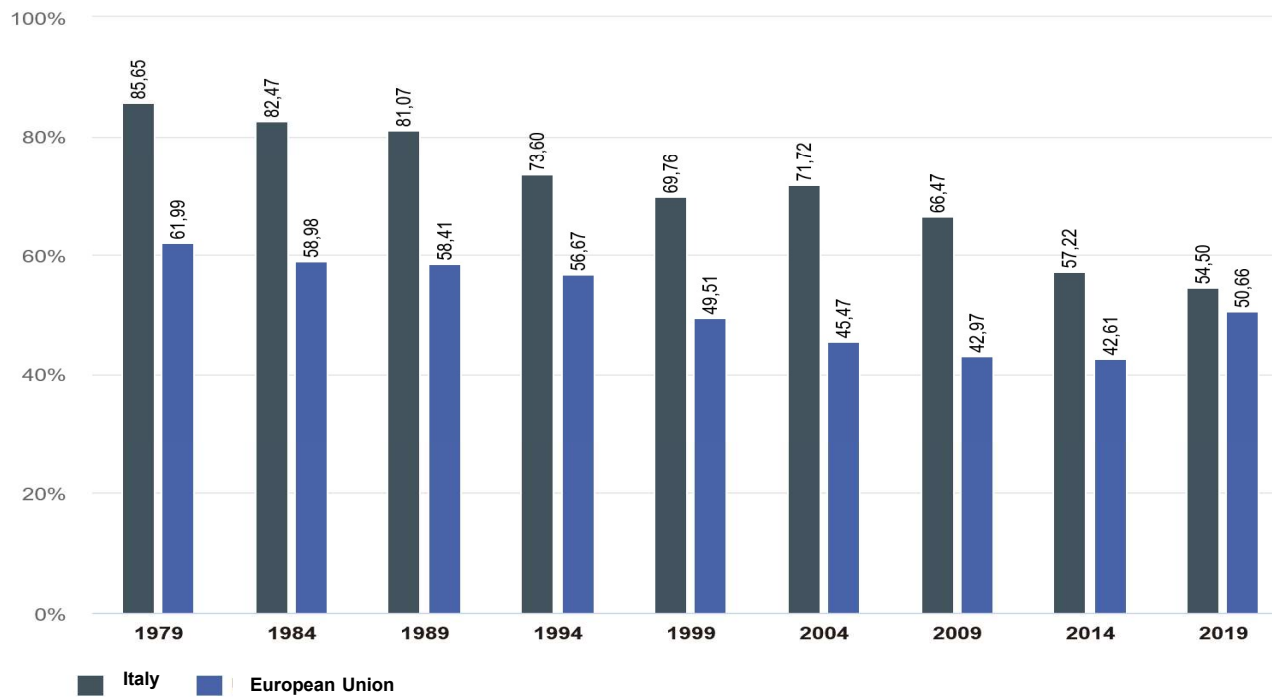
POLITICAL GROUPS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 2019-2024



Composition of the European Parliament according to political groups

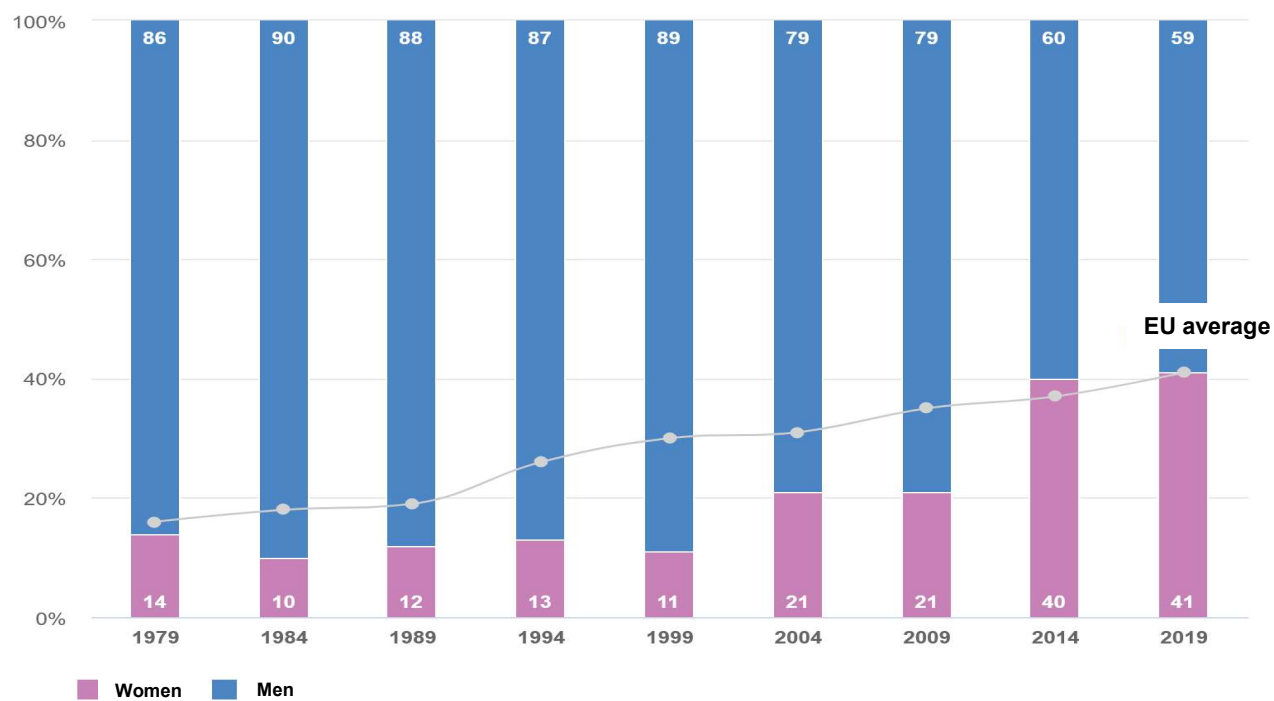


Voter turnout by year
Italy – Final results





Gender balance of MPs by year
Italy – Constituent session



EU PRIORITIES



Green Deal



NextGenerationEU



Digitalisation



Equality

WHAT DOES THE EU DO? |



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CHALLENGES FOR THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS AND DEMOCRACY

- Expansion of integration: from economic to social and political integration: which limits?
- Tension between intergovernmentalism and «Community method»
- Democratic deficit: role of European and national parliaments, parties, civil society
- Nationalism and limits to European integration – reform and exit strategy (Brexit)
- Is there a vision for European integration?
- Challenges to multilateralism and impact on Europe: regional/world integration
- Impact of multiple crises: financial/economic, migratory, political, health, energy, security
- The role of the European Union in a changing world