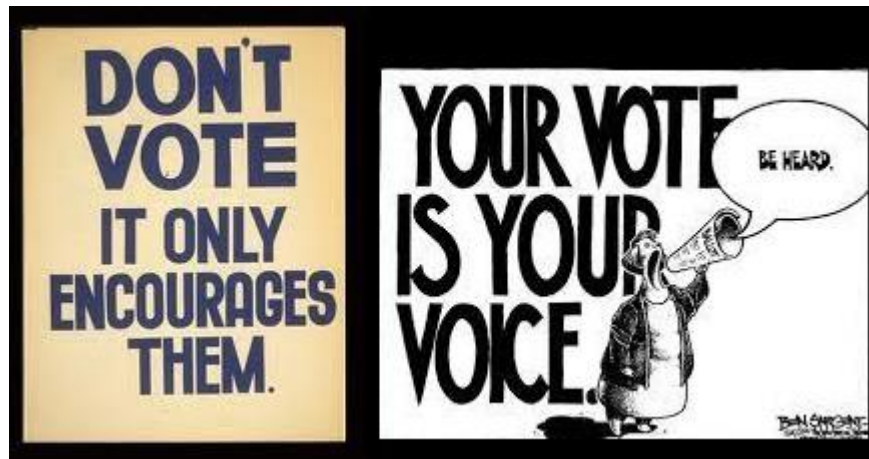


Election is coming... To vote or not to vote?

In fact, I didn't even leave the house on Election Day! Therefore, I am in no way responsible for the mess you created and I have every right to complain!

George Carlin, American comedian (1937-2008)



The first election for European Parliament representatives since the EU entered the current multilevel crisis and the Lisbon Treaty was ratified is upon us. It constitutes one of the few occasions where the importance of the outcome is so clearly overshadowed by the importance of participation rate.

According to the last Eurobarometer survey for 2012, public distrust in and disenchantment with the European Union has lately hit a record level. Thus, as EU's input (based on institutions) and output (based on effectiveness) legitimacy fades away, the upcoming election and the public stance towards it becomes critical for the overall viability of the EU project.

In addition, for practical reasons, the June 2014 **EP** elections are the most important in EU's history. The European Parliament after Lisbon Treaty has been given more powers and competences and has, therefore, become increasingly visible, assertive, and definitive for EU policy making. Moreover, the 2014 EP elections are taking place in an awkward political framework. The economic crisis and the lack of convincing European answers to it, have led to the rise of anti-EU forces along with frustration and loss of confidence of pro-EU forces. If this trend continues until the EP elections in May 2014, it could lead to an absurd Parliamentary balance where the less pro-European or anti-EU forces will control the only representative supranational EU instrument.

Both voting and not voting could make good sense and, in the present context, can be persuasively defended. However, this collection does not aim at bringing together a series of rationalizations. It is about **ACTION**. What are you going to do – **vote or not vote**? And for what reasons? Democratic values, ideology, partisanship, habit, apathy, frustration, distrust?

This collection will aim at helping each reader make a more well-informed decision about voting or not voting, through crystallizing the stakes and providing diverse perspectives (level of education, occupation, social class, family status, etc.). It can also help policy makers better understand what is expected of

them or, in other words, what *they* can do for Europe, thus, rendering political discourse more relevant to the very tangible European problems that EP representatives will have to face upon their election.

This is an open call towards all EU citizens with no restriction whatsoever to age, education level or occupation.

This collection will be **equally** divided into two parts. The first will present arguments in favor of voting for the European Parliament elections 2014 and the latter will present views for abstaining. **All texts** will be available on our website in order to secure the transparency of the selection process.

Please send your answers (up to 250 words) by 30 June 2013, which should include a brief analysis of your main argument(s) for or against voting for the European Parliament elections between 22 – 25 May 2014. It is required from all participants to enclose some personal details: Name, title, status, affiliation (if applicable) corresponding address, telephone number, and e-mail.

Writers' consent on the final text will be asked before publishing.

All answers should be submitted to Inter Alia by e-mail to:

Nikos Papakostas

Inter Alia

epelections@interaliaproject.com

TEL: 0030-6980 742 148

Important dates

30 June 2013: Submissions deadline

1 September 2013: Notification of selection

September 2013: Results presentation

22-25 May 2014: EP Elections

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