

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS 6-9 JUNE 2024



Introduction

These resources are designed to inspire individuals, local churches and Evangelical Alliances to pray, think, ask questions and encourage others to do the same as they prepare to vote in the European Parliament elections in 6-9 June.

“I have come to the conclusion that politics is too serious a matter to be left to the politicians,” said Charles de Gaulle.

The word “politics” comes from “polis”, meaning the affairs of the city. Politics is what everyone – who chooses to get involved – can do and say to help shape the society they live in. If we opt out, then others will carry on doing the shaping almost certainly in ways we don’t like.

It may seem that citizens have little possible influence over the “affairs of the city”. But let’s hold on to what we can do.

We can learn. We can pray. We can be champions of truth. We can vote with discernment. These resources will help you. Please let others know about them. We welcome translations. Please send to info@europeanea.org

European Elections 2024 – Why it matters

Between June 6-9, 2024, the European Union is organising elections for the European Parliament. As the European Parliament will have an important voice in shaping the Union for the next five years, we call on all Christians to cast their votes. Let us explain why we feel your vote matters.

The European **Parliament** is one of the three main bodies of the European Union. The other two institutions are the European Council and the European Commission (more on these below). The Parliament is the only body that is directly elected by European citizens. Your vote counts.

The 705 members of the European Parliament represent the voice of over 500 million citizens from 27 member states. Members are elected for a five years' term. With elections set for June 6-9 of this year, the next Parliament will sit until 2029.

The European Parliament plays a crucial role, amending, negotiating, and adopting new laws. Furthermore, it approves or rejects the European Commission, and it has the power to approve the budget of the European Union.

The Parliament, representing you and me, plays an important part in shaping the future of the European Union, and therefore of our lives. This term, the Parliament, for example, debated joint responses to threats like Covid-19 and the Ukraine war and related sanctions against the Russian Federation. In addition, it discussed and eventually adopted new laws on the environment, migration and asylum, and the rules and limitations of Artificial Intelligence applications. These new laws will have an impact on all of us. And these examples are just a fraction of all the topics discussed.

Although the Parliament might have no direct authority over healthcare, family issues, and education, it adopted positions on women's rights, the definition of marriage, on what constitutes a family, and other moral and ethical issues as well. Over time, these positions might influence the work of the European Commission and our governments as well.

This is all to say that nobody can be indifferent about European elections, about who will be representing you and your nation in the European Parliament. Your vote or no-vote will have an impact. That's why the European Evangelical Alliance (EEA) calls on all Europe's



more than 20 million Evangelicals to participate in the European elections, June 6-9, 2024.

As EEA, we won't tell you how to vote but we trust that our articles "[Considering politics with Biblical lenses](#)" and "[Hope in stormy political times](#)", and "[Truth, trust and algorithms](#)", plus our [questions to consider](#), will help you to elect the next Parliament responsibly. It all starts with prayer. Therefore, we invite you to take a look at our suggested [prayer points](#) for the European elections too.

The key institutions of the European Union and how the EU makes decisions

The European **Council** consists of all government leaders of the EU member states. They set the general course and priorities of the Union. Charles Michel is the current president of the Council. Decisions of the council are laid down in Council conclusions.

The European **Commission** is formed by one commissioner for each member state. These commissioners, however, are not representing their country. They are responsible for a certain policy area and should act in the best interest of the Union as a whole. The President of the Commission is proposed by the Council and voted in by the Parliament. The current President is Ursula von der Leyen.

The President selects the Commissioners from those suggested by the member states and decides what portfolios they'll be responsible for. The Parliament then adopts or rejects the full college of commissioners (not individual members). Once adopted by the Parliament, the Council installs the Commission. The Commission monitors whether member states honour their obligations. Moreover, the Commission can propose new legislation that will then be discussed, amended, and voted on by the Parliament. Once Parliament, Commission and Council agree on the final text, the law is adopted.

European elections through Biblical lenses

In the article [Considering politics with Biblical lenses](#), we introduce a pair of glasses formed by a frame of Biblical truths holding two lenses of Biblical values.

The three **Biblical truths** are:

- Who God is,
- Who human beings are and why we exist,
- What went wrong with the Fall and what God will restore at the end of time.

The three **Biblical values**, leading in the article, are:

- Love,
- Justice,
- Freedom.

We trust that this pair of glasses will be helpful when considering what and whom to vote for in the European elections scheduled for June 6-9, 2024.

As European Evangelical Alliance (EEA), of course we won't tell you how to vote. It is not our place to do so. And, with different lists in all 27 EU member states, it would not be possible anyway. But we definitely want you to participate in the elections. If you want to know why, please read this article: [European Elections 2024 – Why it matters](#).

There will be no party or politician, no matter how like-minded, who fully shares all your interests and priorities. There is no politics without compromises. That's why we as Evangelicals, although we are all deeply rooted in the Bible, might not all vote for the same party or candidate. And that is fine. We can debate our priorities and positions, iron sharpening iron, but in the end, we might have to agree to respectfully disagree.

The European Union is facing several challenges: the war in Ukraine, regulating migration, climate change, trade and economic policies (including agriculture), power supply, societal fragmentation, worrying demography, and more. No matter what some candidates might tell you, there are no quick and easy fixes to any of these complicated issues.

Given the complexity of the issues the European Union is facing, we felt that a simple pair of worldview glasses could help to get a more comprehensive view on these issues and on the elections.

We trust that the questions listed below, will help you in your preparations for the European elections.

PS, Remember that the European elections are not about your own national government. If you want to express your opinion about the domestic policies of your government, you'll have to wait until the next national elections.

Biblical Truths

Who God is

God is the beginning and the end of all, the supreme power, and the ultimate source of truth and love. Only in Him can we be safe and secure.

Therefore, consider: To what extent does a political party or politician:

- acknowledge that there can be something bigger than themselves?
- respect and leave room for people who want to worship and obey God, even if they do not believe in Him themselves?

Who we are

As humans, we are all created in the image of God and therefore of infinite value and dignity.

Therefore, consider: To what extent does a political party or politician:

- acknowledge and protect the dignity of all human beings?
- value and protect diversity?
- protect the most vulnerable, both near and far?
- strengthen and protect the rights of minorities in society?
- fight dehumanisation and abuse, including online?
- foster a culture where all human beings can feel welcome, safe, and protected?

The Fall

Since the Fall, we live in a broken, imperfect world amongst imperfect people.

Therefore, consider: To what extent does a political party or politician:

- acknowledge their own limitations and shortcomings in the past?
- take responsibility for their own words and deeds?
- strengthen and protect democratic institutions?
- strengthen and protect independent courts and judges?
- strengthen and protect a diverse and independent media?

Biblical Lenses

Love

God is the ultimate and deepest source of unconditional love. He sacrificed His own Son to save us. Love cannot be regulated. It must be freely given.

Therefore, consider: To what extent does a political party or politician:

- show servant leadership?
- create an environment conducive to respectful and healthy relationships between people?
- promote and defend an environment conducive to strong and resilient families?
- promote policies protecting children?
- provide safety and support in case relationships and marriages fail?
- support self-help projects and neighbourliness?
- ensure the provision of necessary care and health care in all stages of life?
- consider the plight of those living in extreme poverty?
- require businesses to respect workers, suppliers, customers, and the environment?
- promote good quality education for all and facilitate life-long learning?

Justice

Biblical justice is about holding people accountable, about making things right, and about restoring relationships. There is no justice without a proper understanding of good and evil and without the truth.

Therefore, consider: To what extent does a political party or politician:

- promote a biblical understanding of good and evil?
- speak and protect the truth?
- practice what they preach?
- promote and defend a fair and effective transparent legal system, protecting society against evil whilst promoting merciful policing and imprisonment?
- accept and defend the verdict of the court, even if that would go against their own interest?
- take responsibility for creation and defend and promote climate justice?

Freedom

Real freedom is only found in God. It is a gift from God, enabling human dignity and flourishing for all. We are all meant to be free from oppression and crushing poverty so that we are free to worship, grow, learn, relate, create, and live. Real freedom is only found within the basic boundaries of the Ten Commandments.

Therefore, consider: To what extent does a political party or politician:

- promote freedom and the good of all people in line with the Biblical concept of Shalom – human flourishing for all, spiritually, relationally and economically?
- promote and defend a free society for all?
- promote both freedom and the responsibility that comes with it?
- promote an ethical framework of restraint to protect the freedom and flourishing of ‘the other’?
- exemplify freedom and respect in their own lives and in their campaigning?

Concluding remarks

We strongly believe that God’s vision for mankind, as found in the Bible, is Good News for all human beings and we call on all Evangelicals in EU member states to participate in the European elections and to vote for candidates who reflect some divine wisdom in their policies. We trust that the abundance of reflection questions provided above, will help you in making your choice on June 6-9, 2024.

Whomever you vote for, we trust that you will cover these elections in **prayer**. Check the [prayer point document](#) for suggestions.

Hope in stormy political times

For many, politics across Europe at the moment is exciting. For others, it is scary.

Radical parties are gaining in strength. Some are relieved that finally there are politicians championing critical issues that more centrist parties appear to have been ignoring. Others believe that these radical parties are offering simplistic and sometimes dangerous solutions.

This article is part of our [election pack](#) which is designed to help Christians pray, reflect and vote with discernment. Most of all, these resources are designed to remind us that our hope is in Jesus Christ alone, that He is the only one who can allay our fears.

What is really going on in politics?

We all have opinions. We all have helpful insights. But none of us fully understand. That includes media commentators and the politicians themselves. What follows are some thoughts to help Christians reflect, pray and be Good News People in this time of anxiety and division.

Fear of losing one's job. Fear of terror attack. Fear of invasion & war. Fear of losing one's cultural identity and community. Fear of climate disaster. Fear of demonization because of who I am or what I believe and say. Fear of freedoms disappearing. Fear of the world changing and I/we/my nation/Europe will be left behind. Fear of loneliness. Fear of a poor and painful old age.

There are so many understandable worries. Some have already come to pass and people are hurting, while some might never happen but we still worry. Many of us simply don't understand why others do not see the importance of our own concern but choose to prioritise another. Many of us look into the future and sense disaster approaching. We long for leaders who can save us.

We demand that politicians take our fears seriously and, indeed, it is their job to help. However, no politician has guaranteed solutions. This fallen world will be full of trouble until Jesus returns. Politicians cannot give us rock solid security. Promises of simple answers will disappoint. Divisive rhetoric fosters a sense of grievance and victimhood. It also makes finding genuine answers even harder; the well-being of nations is improved when people help to work towards it with each other, not just leaving it to the authorities to sort out.

Politics is about ideologies. Some are traditional political labels, e.g. left-wing, liberal or conservative. Laid over these are beliefs like secular humanism, faith heritage or loyalty to nation. Political parties offer different visions and disagreement is normal. However, things go wrong when any of these ideologies become idolatrous. This happens when they are given blind loyalty or claim that they alone have the answers. But it is only Jesus' return which will bring about true Shalom. While they may not know it, politicians are always under God's sovereignty and His law^[1]. The Lord will not tolerate those who blatantly act as if they are above Him.

So what should Christians do?

Firstly, we need to hold onto God in prayer, knowing that our security and satisfaction are in the Lord alone, our hope is in Him and that it is Jesus' return alone which will bring an end to all evil and suffering. God has not promised us an easy life. The future may mean that we face greater challenges than those of today but the Lord holds us safe. Our identity is in Him, our primary citizenship is of His eternal Kingdom. These things cannot be removed. We may be loyal to other identities but they must never have our ultimate allegiance.

Secondly, we need to understand our responsibilities as Kingdom builders, sharing the Gospel of salvation in word & deed, shining brightly as people of hope to all, including to those who vote differently to us.

When Paul urged Timothy to pray for rulers^[2], it was at a time of horrific persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. We are called to intercede for all in politics. If we do not like the political choices on offer, let's pray for better people to step forward to stand for election next time. Let's pray for people of integrity, servant hearts and good will, including many Christians, to join different political parties. Let's pray that there will be more Christian salt and light, fighting the rot, bringing flavour and life to public life. But we should also welcome the good that non-Christians contribute.

Christians are called to be peace makers. Part of this is to model how to discuss politics well, including how to respect those with whom we profoundly disagree. There are people sitting next to you in church, at work or along your street whose views you hate. Maybe we avoid political conversation, maybe we have argued too strongly. Can we initiate an opportunity for respectful listening, seeking to understand, discovering some common ground and beginning to break down the walls between us?^[3] Or maybe there is a longer journey of understanding, forgiveness and reconciliation that is needed. The Lord can help us to make steps in the right direction.

We are called to pray, discern and reflect as politicians compete for our vote. This election pack can help you with thoughts about biblical foundations and questions to ask. These are helpful for individuals but they can also be used in church and small group contexts.

Ultimately, we need to remember that the command to “Love your neighbour” has socio-political dimensions. All Christians are called to be salt and light, at home, in our neighbourhoods, at work, in all our lives. Let’s allow our hearts and minds to be shaped through prayer and Bible study so that we have a renewed, biblical vision for what Shalom looks like and can offer the hope that this dark world needs.

If you want to explore political ideologies & idolatries in more depth, including secularism, liberal dogmatism, nationalism, left-wing populism and the yearning for security, we recommend EEA’s Issachar papers found at <https://www.europeanea.org/resources-issachar-project/>

^[1] Bible verses include Deuteronomy 17:18-21 and 1 Kings 21.

^[2] 1 Timothy 2:1-2

^[3] The European Evangelical Alliance has developed 2 discussion resources to support respectful conversation. On issues of refugees & migration, go to <https://www.europeanea.org/peace-between-dialogue/>. On nationhood, go to <https://www.europeanea.org/loving-our-nation-well-a-resource-for-christians-and-churches/>

European Parliament Prayer Points

Any election season usually comes with some tension in society. Media coverage will include some intense campaigning and heated political debates. We will all have to decide whether to participate in the vote, and if we vote, which party or candidate to support.

Christians may vote for different political parties but there is great significance in praying together in humility and unity for our nations and our continent.

Here are suggestions for united intercession. We invite people to pray in non-partisan ways so that all Christians can say AMEN.

Let's pray for

- respect for the dignity of all candidates, both online and offline,
- the well-being of all candidates and their families during this stressful time,
- peaceful and safe campaigning and voting,
- truth to be sought, seen and heard, valued and accepted,
- opportunities for respectful debate, with a variety of voices being heard,
- growing support for core biblical values, including love, justice, and freedom (as introduced in the article [Considering politics with Biblical lenses](#)), truth, righteousness, forgiveness, integrity, respect, service and generosity,
- the success of politicians who will
 - preserve and strengthen democracy and freedom,
 - fight injustice and work for the good of all, including the weakest and most vulnerable,
 - be a blessing to their nation and all its inhabitants, but also work well with politicians from other nations.
- The next 5 years of the European Union to be a period
 - where mutual respect and listening increase, in political debate and in society as a whole,
 - where every Member State of the EU is able to be and to offer its best to the whole and to be humble enough to learn from others,
 - where there is greater understanding of the value of every human being,
 - where wise and just decisions are made to face the many economic, technological, environmental, social and security challenges Europe faces, and where the weakest are better protected,

- where freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression are advanced, both in Europe and through Europe's external relations.
- where decisions are made at the appropriate level – European, national, local,
- where there is a stronger connection and trust between politicians and officials and the citizens of the European Union.