“The upcoming European Elections, taking place 23-26 May 2019, are going to be decisive for all European citizens. To help you engage your national members in the campaign leading up to the elections, the EESC Workers’ Group has prepared an EU Election Special that provides you with several resources outlining the importance of the European Union in citizens’ everyday lives and its accomplishments for working people. I invite you to share these resources with your national networks. The EU is by no means perfect – we need a Europe that works for everyone and leaves no one behind. To achieve this we must encourage trade unionists across the EU to vote for progressive politicians who support the trade union agenda for a fairer Europe based on democracy and social justice, quality jobs, decent wages and a socially fair and just transition to a low-carbon and digital economy.”

Oliver Röpke, President of the EESC Workers’ Group

Today’s challenges - including climate change, the future of work, inequality and poverty, rising populism, external and internal security threats, misinformation, and the imminent departure of a member state - can only be effectively addressed by working together as a union.

Despite the problems, it is essential not to lose sight of the many benefits European integration has had for workers and other citizens and to engage them in the decision-making processes.

By voting in the EP Elections, working people and their families can make sure their interests are represented in the European Parliament. European-elections.eu provides practical information in all EU languages on how the elections work and how to vote in each Member State.
The European Parliament has developed a tool that gives clear and concrete examples of how the EU has improved the lives of its citizens. It not only allows you to see what Europe does in your region, but also in your sector of work. We believe this is a great way for unions to point out some key benefits the EU has had for their members, but also an opportunity for citizens to explore these benefits themselves and engage in a more meaningful way with the EU on their needs. What Europe does for me is continuously updated with new information and available in all EU languages.

The EESC enhances the democratic representativeness of the European decision-making process by giving a voice to organised civil society by making recommendations to the European institutions. This way, it has for example contributed to the development of the European Pillar of Social Rights, which aims to improve the welfare of citizens across the EU. In a recently adopted opinion, the EESC sets out its vision for the future of Europe. The opinion, ‘The Future of the EU: Benefits to citizens and respect for European values’, is available in all EU languages.
WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE MEMBER STATES?

NATIONAL POLITICS

National politics have become increasingly influential at the European level. Knowing what is happening in terms of politics and economics in other EU Member States, is essential to understand the context in which the EP Elections are taking place. There are several tools that can help you get a quick overview of the political situation in all EU countries.

Euractiv is developing a series of EU Country Briefings that give a concise summary of the economic and political situation of each Member State. Several are already available (in English), and more briefings will be added shortly.

POPULISM TRACKER

The support for populist parties, that claim to have quick-fix solutions for complex problems and are often Eurosceptic, is rising steadily - a development that demands our close attention. The Progressive Post has launched the Populism Tracker, which includes a report on The State of Populism in Europe, analysing the trends and types of populism in all European Member States. They have also developed an interactive map that gives a quick overview of the populist parties of Europe and their level of support.

Populist Parties Support in Europe in 2018

[Graph showing support for populist parties in different European countries]
Several European trade union organisations have published manifestos for the European Elections, in which they present their priorities for the future of Europe. The European Trade Union Confederation, for example, sets out 23 points for a fairer Europe for workers. The full ETUC Programme for the 2019 European Elections can be downloaded from their website in 19 languages. Together with 22 other civil society organisations, the ETUC has also published a joint appeal titled #ElectNoHate, for an EU election campaign that is free from intolerance and discrimination.

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF JOURNALISTS

The European Federation of Journalists emphasises the importance of journalism in a democracy and calls to endorse 8 principles for free media.

EUROPEAN TRADE UNION COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) calls for good quality education for all, and significant investments in the teaching profession.

INDUSTRIALL

IndustriALL calls for a transition to a sustainable industry that leaves no one behind and a strong, inclusive, democratic Europe as the best way to support workers’ rights and jobs.

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS FEDERATION

With their Fair Transport Europe campaign, the European Transport Workers’ Federation (ETF) calls for the full implementation and enforcement of the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

WORKERS’ GROUP

INFO.GROUPE2@EESC.EUROPA.EU

AUTHOR: JEDDE HOLLEWIJN

FIND THE PDF VERSION OF THIS FILE AT HTTPS://WWW.EESC.EUROPA.EU/EN/MEMBERS-GROUPS/GROUPS/WORKERS-GROUP/NEWSLETTERS