Dataset of Electoral Volatility in the European Parliament elections since 1979 (2024 update)

Vincenzo Emanuele (Luiss) and Bruno Marino (University of Padua)

Codebook (July 16, 2024)

Description

This dataset provides the 2024 update of the previous dataset of electoral volatility and its internal components in the European Parliament elections (1979-2019). Therefore, the dataset is the update and continuation of Emanuele, Vincenzo, Angelucci, Davide, Marino, Bruno, Puleo, Leonardo, and Vegetti, Federico (2019). Dataset of Electoral Volatility in the European Parliament elections since 1979 (v2.0.0). *GESIS, Cologne. Data File Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.7802/1905*.

How to cite this dataset?

Emanuele, Vincenzo & Marino, Bruno (2024). Dataset of Electoral Volatility in the European Parliament elections since 1979 (2024 update). *GESIS, Cologne. Data File Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.7802/2739*.

Content

Country: country where the EP election is held (in alphabetical order)

Election_year: year in which the election is held

Election_date: exact date of the election

RegV: electoral volatility caused by vote switching between parties that enter or exit from the party system. A party is considered as entering the party system where it receives at least 1% of the national share in election at time *t+1* (while it received less than 1% in election at time *t*). Conversely, a party is considered as exiting the part system where it receives less than 1% in election at time *t+1* (while it received at least 1% in election at time *t*).

AltV: electoral volatility caused by vote switching between existing parties, namely parties receiving at least 1% of the national share in both elections under scrutiny.

OthV: electoral volatility caused by vote switching between parties falling below 1% of the national share in both the elections at time *t* and *t+1*. It is important to clarify that this category is not computed by

aggregating the scores of each party falling below 1% and then comparing the overall sum at time *t* and *t+1*, unless in the few cases where disaggregated data of the 'Others' category were unavailable (see notes on individual countries on this point). Conversely, each party's volatility is counted separately and then added to the calculation of OthV. This choice has been made to avoid underestimation of Total Volatility but at the same time to maintain a distinction between parties above 1% and parties below 1% for the calculation of the two components of RegV and AltV.

TV: total electoral volatility in the party system, given by the sum of the previous measures. RegV + AltV + OthV = TV.

Sources

The sources for the electoral results in the EP elections have been the official data provided by the pertinent electoral authority in each country unless when specified otherwise. Details about sources and other methodological choices are specified below in the notes on the individual countries. The availability of complete electoral data including all parties contesting the EP elections has allowed for an accurate calculation of Total Volatility and its internal components.

Methodological criteria

The index of electoral volatility has been originally developed by Pedersen (1979). Given the emphasis on the internal components of the index of electoral volatility, the most important question has been that of understanding when a party can be considered as 'new' and included in the calculation of RegV. On this point, also for the sake of consistency with volatility data in the general elections, we have followed the same choices by Emanuele (2015) in the 'Dataset of Electoral Volatility and its internal components in Western Europe (1945-2015)'. Therefore, we have relied on the classic criteria set by Bartolini and Mair (1990 [2007] 283–284) regarding mergers and splits of existing parties: when two or more parties merge to form a new party, or when two or more parties merge with an existing party, electoral volatility is computed by subtracting the vote share of the new party from the combined vote share of the merging parties in the election immediately preceding the merger. When a party splits into two or more parties, electoral volatility is computed by subtracting the combined vote share of the new parties from that of the original party in the election immediately preceding the split. Following again Bartolini and Mair's choices, we have considered as splits all those separations that derive from official decisions of a minority within the structure of a given party. As a consequence, splits and mergers have been included in the calculation of AltV. On the contrary, when a party leader or deputy is expelled or simply exits from a party and then launches a new party, this latter has been included in the calculation of RegV. Moreover, 'genuinely new parties' – namely 'parties that are not successors to any previous parliamentary parties,

have a novel name and structure, and do not have any important figures from past democratic politics among their major members' (Sikk 2005, 399) – clearly enter the calculation of RegV. These criteria are also used, among others, by Dassonneville (2015), Chiaramonte and Emanuele (2017), Dassonneville and Hooghe (2017), and, also for the study of Central and Eastern European countries, by Lane and Ersson (2007), Ersson (2012) and Emanuele, Chiaramonte and Soare (2018). As underlined by Sikk (2005, 393–394), this approach is conservative, in the sense that it underestimates voters' mobility but it 'seems to better balance shortcomings and merits' with respect to alternative approaches. Furthermore, according to Ersson (2012, 4), this approach 'is the least troublesome one'.[1]

As regards thresholds, for the calculation of TV and its internal components, whenever data were available, all parties' scores between elections have been confronted. In the few cases where disaggregated data of the 'Others' category were unavailable (see notes on individual countries below) the residual category of 'Others' has been confronted across subsequent elections and the resulting volatility has been included in OthV. As in Emanuele (2015), we have set a threshold of 1% of the national share for parties in order to be included in the calculation of either RegV or AltV. The rationale behind this logic is that when a party casts 1% or more, it is already considered as a relevant component of the party system while a vote shift from, say, 1.9% to 2.1% is only considered as an alteration in the strength of an established party, devoid of any regeneration for the party system. We believe that, while any threshold could be considered arbitrary and has its own trade-offs, to not set any threshold would be even more distorting for the purpose of calculating the extent to which a party system is undergoing a regeneration. Therefore, a threshold is necessary to set a qualitative distinction between parties that produce a significant change within the system and parties that simply enter the election game.

Finally, once again following previous choices made by Emanuele (2015), Independents for which we do not have separate information have been treated as a unique 'party' and compared with the same aggregation in the previous election. They have been always included in OthV, so as to not inflate either RegV or AltV.

Notes on individual countries

Austria

In 2024, Europe (Peter Pilz List) disappears (RegV), while the Communist Party of Austria (KPÖ) and Democratic – Neutral – Authentic (DNA) emerge (RegV).

[1] For a further discussion on possible alternative methods for calculating electoral volatility, see Casal Bértoa, Haughton and Deegan-Krause (2017). For a detailed literature review about what has to be considered a 'new party', see Emanuele and Chiaramonte (2018).

Belgium

In 2024, the Popular Party (PP) disappears (RegV), while The Committed (LE – CSP) is considered in continuity with the Humanist Democratic Centre (CDH) (AltV).

Bulgaria

In 2024, Volya, the coalition The Way to the Young, and Attack disappear (RegV), while There is Such a People, Velichie, Solidary Bulgaria, and Centre emerge (RegV). The option 'None of the Above' (NOTA) has been compared with the same option in 2019 (OthV).

Croatia

In 2024, Bandić Milan 365 – Labour and Solidarity Party (BM 365) disappears (RegV), while the Homeland Movement (DP), Determination and Justice (OP), and Ričard Independent emerge (RegV).
Then, In 2024, the alliance Rivers of Justice (RP) includes the Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP), Centre (formerly named Pametno), the Croatian Peasants Party (HSS), the Civic Liberal Alliance (GLAS), and Dalija Orešković and People with a First and Last Name (formerly named START), while Fair Play List 9 includes a series of parties (Istrian Democratic Assembly (IDS), the Alliance of Primorje-Gorski Kotar (PGS), the Democrats (D), the Independent Democratics Serb Party (SDSS), the Croatian People's Party (HNS), Reformists (NS-R), and the Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSLS)), and the Croatian Party of Pensioners (HSU) runs alone. This situation shall be compared to the 2019 one, where SDP ran alone, while there were parties that run within the RP coalition in 2024 but contested the 2019 election within the Amsterdam Coalition (HSS, GLAS, PGS, D) or contested the 2019 election alone (SDSS, HNS, NS-R, HSLS), and there are also parties contesting the 2024 election alone but that, in 2019, ran within the Amsterdam Coalition (HSU). All in all, the 2024 results of RP plus Fair Play List 9 + HSU are compared to the 2019 results of SDP, Amsterdam Coalition, SDSS, HNS (which contested the 2019 election with the Liberal Democrats (LD), START, Pametno (which contested the 2019 election with Unija Kvarnera (UK)), NS, and HSLS (AltV).
Then, in 2024, the results of We Can! (Mozemo!) plus Green alternative - Sustainable Development of Croatia (ZA-ORAH, which is considered as a split from Mozemo!) are compared to the 2019 result of the list Mozemo! – New Left (NL) – ORAH (AltV).
Furthermore, the 2024 result of the Bridge (MOST) – Croatian Sovereignists (HS) – Croatian Party of Rights (HSP) is compared to the 2019 results of the Croatian Sovereignists list (which included two parties that later merged into the HS, that is, Croatian Growth (HRAST) and the Croatian Conservative Party (HKS)), MOST, and Independents for Croatia – Croatian Party of Rights (NHR-HSP) (AltV).
Moreover, Law and Justice (PP) in 2024 is the merging of, among others, a list of an individual candidate in 2019 (Mislav Kolakušić) and Human Shield (KH) (AltV).

Cyprus

In 2024, Jasmine Movement (KG) disappears (RegV), while Volt Cyprus and Active Citizens – Movement of Cypriot United Hunters emerge (RegV). Morover, Fidias Panayiotou, being an independent candidate, is considered as an individual candidate (OthV), while the Movement of Ecologists – Citizens' Cooperation (KOSP) is considered in continuity with Citizens' Alliance – Ecologist Movement (SP – KOP) (AltV) and Democratic Alignment (DiPa) is considered in continuity with the Democratic Front (DiPa) (AltV).

Czech Republic

In 2024, Voice and 'Yes, we will troll the EuroParliament' (EUTROLL) disappear (RegV), while Přísaha, and Motorists, Law, Respect, Expertise (PRO 2022), and Svobodní (FREE) emerge (RegV) (the result of this latter in 2024 is compared to its result in 2019 plus the result of For Health and Sport (PZS) in 2019, given For Health and Sport contested the 2024 election within the Svobodní lists). Moreover, in 2019, STAN, TOP09, and the Green Party formed a coalition while, in 2024, the coalition Spolu is made by the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), TOP09 and the KDU-CSL. Therefore, in 2024, Spolu plus Majors and Personalities for Europe (STAN) plus the Green Party is compared to the results obtained in 2019 by ODS plus the coalition among STAN, TOP09, and the Green Party plus KDU-CSL (AltV). Moreover, Enough! (Stačilo!) is considered in continuity with the The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia and Patriots for Neutrality (CSNS) (AltV). Finally, Social Democracy (SOCDEM) is considered in continuity with the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD).

Denmark

In 2024, People's Movement against the EU (N) disappears (RegV), while Denmark Democrats (DD) and Moderates (M) emerge (RegV). Moreover, the Green Left (SF) is considered in continuity with the Socialist People's Party (SF).

Estonia

In 2024, Together emerges (RegV), while the Greens (EER) disappears (RegV). Then, The Right (Parempoolsed) is considered as a split from Fatherland (Isamaa) (AltV).

Finland

No relevant information to be mentioned.

France

In 2024, France Arise (DLF) (continuation of Arise the Republic (DLR)) and Generation.s (GENS) disappear (RegV), while Reconquest – MC and Rural Alliance (AR) emerge (RegV).

Germany

In 2024, Volt Germany emerges (RegV), while Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance – Reason and Justice (BSW) is considered as a split from The Left (AltV).

Greece

In 2024, Golden Dawn (XA), the River (POTAMI), Greece, the Other Way (OAD), Union of Centrists (EK) and the Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS) disappear (RegV), while the Democratic Patriotic Movement "Niki" (NIKI), Voice of Reason (FL), Democrats (D), Patriots - Prodromos Emfietzoglou (PD) and Kosmos (K) emerge (RegV). Then, the European Realistic Disobedience Front (MeRA25) is considered in continuity with European Realistic Disobedience Front (Diem25) (AltV), while New Left (NA) is considered as a split from SYRIZA (AltV).

Hungary

In 2024, Respect and Freedom Party (TISZA) emerges (RegV), while Jobbik and Politics Can Be Different (LMP) disappear (RegV).

Ireland

In 2024, Independent Ireland, Unity (Aontú), Ireland First, and the Irish Freedom Party (IFP) emerge (RegV), while Spring Tide (Rabharta) is considered as a split from the Green Party (GP) (AltV). The data source is https://www.rte.ie/news/elections-2024/results/#/european/national.

Italy

Votes cast by Italians abroad excluded. In 2024, the alliance United States of Europe (SUE) includes Italia Viva (IV) – considered a split from the Democratic Party (PD) – and More Europe (+EUR) – which contested the 2019 EP election along with other minor parties. Therefore, in 2024, the result of the PD and USE is compared to the 2019 results of PD and +EUR (AltV). Furthermore, the list Peace, Land, Dignity (PTD) includes the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) which, in 2019, contested the election within the The Left, therefore, the 2024 result of PTD is compared to the 2019 result of The Left (AltV). Moreover, Azione (A) is considered as a new party (RegV), while the 2024 result of Freedom (L) is summed to the 2024 result of Popular Alternative (AP) – which, in 2019, ran within the People of Family-Popular Alternative in 2019 – and compared to the 2019 result of People of Family-Popular Alternative (RegV).

Latvia

In 2024, Latvian Russian Union (LKS) disappears (RegV), while Latvia First (LPV), Sovereign Power (SV) (this latter is considered as a split from LPV), Alliance of Young Latvians (AJ), and the Centre Party (CP) emerge (RegV). Moreover, in 2024, the United List (AS) includes a party (Latvian Association of Regions (LRA) that contested the 2019 election and also two parties (the Latvian Green Party (LZP) and the Liepāja Party) that, in 2019, contested the election within the Union of Greens and Farmers (ZZS). Therefore, the 2024 results of AS and ZZS are compared to the 2019 results of LRA and ZZS (AltV). Moreover, For Stability! (ST!) is considered as a split from Harmony (SPDS) (AltV). Then, in 2019, the For Latvia's Development (LA) was part of the list Development/For! while, in 2024, Movement For! is considered as a split from Development/For!. Therefore, the 2024 results of LA and Movement For! are compared to the 2019 result of Development/For!. Finally, in 2024, People. Land.

Lithuania

In 2024, Freedom Party (LV), National Alliance (NS – in turn compared to the result of the independent candidate Vytautas Radžvilas in 2019), and Coalition for Peace (an alliance between the Lithuanian Christian Democracy Party (LKDP) and the Samogitian Party (ZP)) emerge (RegV). Then, the Union of Democrats "For Lithuania" (DSVL) is considered as a split from the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union (LVŽS) (AltV). Moreover, the People and Justice Union (TTS) is considered in continuity with the Lithuanian and Centre Party (LCP) (AltV). Furthermore, the Lithuanian Regions Party (LRP) is considered in continuity with the Social Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania (LSDDP) (AltV). Then, the Christian Union (KS) is considered as a split from the Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats (TS-LKD) (AltV). Finally, Freedom and Justice (PLT) is the merge of Lithuanian Freedom Union (LLS) and Order and Justice (TT) (AltV).

Luxembourg

In 2024, Fokus emerges (RegV) while the the Communist Party (KPL) disappears (RegV).

Malta

No relevant information to be mentioned.

Netherlands

In 2024, Denk and 50PLUS disappear (RegV), while the Farmer-Citizen Movement (BBB) and New Social Contract (NSC) emerge (RegV). The Correct Answer 21 (JA21) and Interest of the Netherlands (BVNL) are considered as split from the Forum for Democracy (FvD) (AltV).

Poland

In 2024 we compare disaggregated party votes in 2024 and 2019 rather than coalitions and independents running within each coalition in 2024 are compared to independents running within each coalition in 2019 and always included in OthV. In 2024, Agreement (P) disappears (RegV), while Polish Initiative (iPL), the party Confederation (K), New Hope (NN), Confederation of the Polish Crown (KKP), Poland 2050 (PL2050), and Left Together (Razem) emerge (RegV). Moreover, Sovereign Poland (SP) is considered in continuity with Solidary Poland (SP) (AltV), while Centre for Poland (CdPL) is considered as a split from Civic Platform (PO) (AltV). Then, New Left is a merge of Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and Spring (W) (AltV).

Portugal

In 2024, Alliance (A) and We, The Citizens! (NC – its result is summed to the 2024 result of the Earth Party (MPT) given this latter ran within the NC list in 2019) disappear (RegV), while Liberal Initative (IL) and National Democratic Alternative (ADN – in turn, considered in continuity with the Democratic Republican Party (PRD)) emerge (RegV). Then, in 2019, the People's Monarchist Party (PPM) ran within the Chega! (Enough!) list while, in 2024, the PPM ran within the Democratic Alliance (AD) (which also includes the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the People's Party (CDS-PP)). Therefore, the 2024 results of AD plus Chega! are compared to the sum of the results obtained in 2019 by PSD, CDS-PP and Chega! (AltV).

Romania

In 2024, Pro Romania disappears (RegV), while the AUR Alliance (AUR), S.O.S. Romania (S.O.S. RO), United Diaspora Party (PDU), and the Social Liberal Humanist Party (PUSL) emerge (RegV). Then, in 2024, the United Right Alliance (ADU) includes Save Romania Union (USR) that, in 2019, ran within the 2020 USR-PLUS Alliance along with the People's Movement Party (PMP) and the Force of the Right (FD): this latter is considered as a split from the National Liberal Party (PNL). Finally, in 2024, Renewing Romania's European Project (REPER) is considered as a split from USR. This is why the 2024 results of the alliance (PSD-PNL) between the PNL and the Social Democratic Party (PSD) plus the results of the ADU plus the results of REPER are compared to the 2019 results of PNL, PSD, 2020 USR-PLUS Alliance, PMP, and Alliance of Liberals and Democrats ALDE (AltV).

Slovakia

In 2024, We are Family (SR), Most–Híd, Christian Democracy – Life and Prosperity (KDŽP), and the Christian Union (KÚ) disappear (RegV), while Hungarian Alliance. Then, Republic (HR) is considered

as a split from Our Slovakia (L'SNS) (AltV). Moreover, Voice – Social Democracy (Hlas–SD) is considered as a split from Direction – Social Democracy (Smer-SD) (AltV). Furthermore, Democrats (D) is considered as a split from Progressive Slovakia (PS) (AltV). Then, Hungarian Alliance (MS) is considered in continuity with the Party of the Hungarian Community (SMK-MKP) (AltV) and Slovakia – For the People is considered in continuity with Ordinary People (OĽaNO) (AltV).

Slovenia

In 2024, the Slovenian National Party (SNS), the Patriotic League (DOM), Let's Connect (PS), and the Modern Centre Party (SMC) disappear (RegV), while Vesna-Gren Party, Resni.ca, and None of the Above (NOT) emerge (RegV). Moreover, the Freedom Movement is considered as the merge of the List of Marjan Sarec and the Alliance of Alenka Bratusek (AltV)

Spain

In 2024, Citizens (CS) and the Animalist Party Against Mistreatment of Animals (PACMA) disappear (RegV), while The Party is Over (SALF) emerges (RegV). Then, Sumar (Unite) (which also includes United Left (IU)) is considered as a split from Podemos, while Feminists to the Congress (PFAC) is considered as a split from IU and, given that, in 2019, Podemos and IU contested the election together, the 2024 results of Podemos, Sumar, and PFAC are compared to the 2019 results of Podemos and IU (AltV).

Sweden

No relevant information to be mentioned.

References

Bartolini, S. and Mair, P. (1990 [2007]), *Identity, competition, and electoral availability: The stabilisation of European Electorates 1885-1985*. Colchester: ECPR Press.

Casal Bértoa, F., Deegan-Krause, K. and Haughton, T. (2017), 'The Volatility of Volatility: Measuring Change in party vote shares'. *Electoral Studies* 50, 142-156.

Chiaramonte, A. and Emanuele, V. (2017), 'Party System Volatility, Regeneration and De-institutionalization in Western Europe (1945-2015)'. *Party Politics*, 23(4), 376-388.

Dassonneville, R. and Hooghe, M. (2017), 'Economic Indicators and Electoral Volatility: Economic Effects on Electoral Volatility in Western Europe 1950–2013'. *Comparative European Politics* 15 (6), 219–243.

Dassonneville, R. (2015), Net Volatility in Western Europe: 1950–2014. Dataset. Leuven: Centre for Citizenship and Democracy.

Emanuele, V. (2015), 'Dataset of Electoral Volatility and its internal components in Western Europe (1945-2015)', Rome: Italian Center for Electoral Studies, http://dx.doi.org/10.7802/1112.

Emanuele, V. and Chiaramonte, A. (2018), 'A growing impact of new parties: myth or reality? Party system innovation in Western Europe after 1945'. *Party Politics* 24 (5), 475-487.

Emanuele, V., Chiaramonte, A. and Soare, S. (2018), 'Does the Iron Curtain Still Exist? The Convergence in Electoral Volatility between Eastern and Western Europe'. *Government and Opposition*, https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2018.25.

Ersson, S. (2012), 'Electoral volatility in Europe: Assessments and potential explanations for estimate differences'. In: Elections, Public Opinion and Parties (EPOP) Conference, Oxford, UK, 7 - 9 September 2012.

Lane, J-E. and Ersson, S. (2007), 'Party System Instability in Europe: Persistent Differences in Volatility between West and East?' *Democratization* 14 (1), 92-110.

Linek, L. and Lacina, T. (2010), 'Czech Republic'. *European Journal of Political Research Political Data Yearbook* 49 (1), 939-946.

Pedersen, M.N. (1979), 'The Dynamics of European Party Systems: Changing Patterns of Electoral Volatility'. *European Journal of Political Research* 7 (1), 1-26.

Sikk, A. (2005), 'How unstable? Volatility and the genuinely new parties in Eastern Europe'. *European Journal of Political Research* 44 (3): 391-412.