

# **CODEBOOK**

**Europe Elects calendar**

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## **Abstract:**

This codebook documents the structure, definitions, and coding rules for the Europe Elects Calendar ([europeelects.eu/calendar](http://europeelects.eu/calendar)) dataset, which records elections and referenda across Europe, including classification schemes, variable formats, and metadata standards.

## Citation Guidance – Europe Elects Calendar

### 1. Citing the entire database or large parts:

Schminke, T. G., & Valgerist, G. A. (2025). *Codebook: Europe Elects calendar*. Europe Elects. <https://europeelects.eu/calendar>

### 2. Citing a single country or specific part:

Please cite the individuals responsible for that country, as listed on the Europe Elects team page: <https://europeelects.eu/team>.

### APA 7 Format Example for a Single Country:

*Author(s) responsible for the country*. (2025). *Title of dataset or page*. Europe Elects. URL

### Example (Germany):

Doe, J., & Smith, J. (2025). *Germany: Europe Elects calendar data*. Europe Elects. <https://europeelects.eu/calendar>

### Template for Users:

[Author(s) for the country]. (2025). *[Country]: Europe Elects calendar data*. Europe Elects. <https://europeelects.eu/calendar>

Sharing your publications: If you use this data in a peer-reviewed academic journal article or book chapter, please consider sending us a copy so we can reference it on our website.

## About Europe Elects

Founded initially as a volunteer initiative in 2014, Europe Elects is today an established organisation widely recognised for promoting democratic governance and civic participation across Europe. The platform undertakes activities to achieve this goal, primarily related to the collection, verification, and contextualisation of data.

### Data aggregation and analysis

Europe Elects aggregates political polling and electoral data from across Europe and makes it freely available in various formats, including maps, charts, and databases. It also analyses this data to produce insights into public opinion and electoral trends. Europe Elects' polling data aggregation and analysis is used by journalists, researchers, politicians, and citizens to understand public opinion and make informed decisions.

### Real-time coverage

Updates to databases are typically accompanied by reporting on social media, which includes results, exit polls, analysis, and infographics. Addressing a European audience and aiming to make political party positions clear, we report from a European perspective, for instance, by making European Parliament group affiliations as transparent as party membership information. This lowers the bar for a reader in Portugal to understand the political framework of Poland, while remaining grounded in objective group membership based on political ideologies.

### European Parliament seat projections and European Council tracking

Europe Elects provides the longest time series of European Parliament seat projections, praised for their accuracy and featured in major media outlets, including *The Financial Times* and *Euronews*. Europe Elects' election projections are a valuable tool for understanding likely election outcomes and their implications for European politics. Additionally, we track shifts in political leaders within the European Council by European Parliament group, serving as an indicator of the ideological direction of EU member states. Our resources are utilised by schools, universities, and civic organisations to educate individuals about the significance of voting and democratic participation.

### Awards and Recognition

Europe Elects has been widely recognized for its impact on European democracy. In 2024, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* described the project as having “somewhat transformed European democracy,” while Bayerischer Rundfunk found it to be the most cited Twitter account covering the European Parliament election, surpassing major outlets such as the BBC and Le Monde. That year, the European Media and Information Fund awarded Europe Elects a grant to develop the most comprehensive database on the credibility of political pollsters in Europe. Earlier, in 2022, the project received the Dalhousie University Impact Award.

## Instructions / How to Use This Codebook

### 1. Definitions

By-election: An election held outside the regular electoral cycle to fill a vacant seat or executive position.

Date status: Indicates whether the reported date is officially confirmed or an expected estimate.

Dependent territory: A non-sovereign territory with self-governing institutions that conducts its own elections (e.g. Greenland).

Direct election: A formal process in which voters select representatives or officeholders for political institutions at the national, regional, or subnational level.

Electoral event: A public vote in which political authority, representation, or policy is decided. Includes direct and indirect elections and referenda. In the context of this codebook, it excludes municipal/local elections unless they include the national capital as well as subnational referenda.

Europe Elects Calendar Dataset: A structured record of past and upcoming electoral events in Europe used for comparative political tracking, election monitoring, and data analysis.

Indirect election: An election in which voters do not directly choose the officeholder. Instead, representatives, an electoral college, or a parliamentary body elect the head of state or other officials on behalf of the electorate. The public participates only indirectly through selecting the members of the body that makes the final decision.

Local election: “Local” follows the 2020 Council of Europe definition (<https://web.archive.org/web/20240217062937/https://rm.coe.int/compilation-mandat-de-referen ce-pour-envoi-rp-et-ministres-28-08-2020/1680a07885>). Municipal or sub-municipal elections. Only included in the calendar if the vote includes the capital city or is conducted nationwide simultaneously, as defined by the Council of Europe (2020).

Mode: Differentiates between direct election and indirect election.

National election: Any election in which voting determines leadership or representation at the country level (executive or legislative).

Referendum: A direct popular vote on a constitutional, legislative, or policy question, in the case of this codebook, at the national level.

Regional election: “Regional” follows the 2020 Council of Europe definition (<https://web.archive.org/web/20240217062937/https://rm.coe.int/compilation-mandat-de-referen ce-pour-envoi-rp-et-ministres-28-08-2020/1680a07885>). An election determining representation or executive authority at subnational first-order administrative units (e.g. state, oblast, canton, region) as defined by the Council of Europe (2020).

Sequence: The chronological order and structure in which voting rounds occur within an electoral process. A sequence identifies whether an event is part of a first, second, third or subsequent round (or session) of voting and is used to distinguish multi-stage elections or indirect selection procedures.

## 2. Country

- **Variable name:** country
  - **Description:** Country or territory in which the election or referendum occurs.
  - **Format:** Text (string)
  - **Notes:** Use **ISO 3166 English short names** when available.
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## 3. Subnational Unit / Constituency / Description

- **Description:** Constituency, district, state, canton, region, or description of the political unit where the event is held.
  - **Format:** Text (string)
  - **Examples:**
    - o National parliament by-elections: "Isère's 1st constituency"
    - o Regions as defined by the Council of Europe (2020): Burgenland
    - o National referendum: "Environmental Responsibility (Initiative)"
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## 4. Election Type

- **Variable name:** election\_type
- **Description:** Category of election or vote event.
- **Format:** Categorical (string)
- **Recommended coding:**

### a. Head of state / presidential

**Label:** head of state/presidential

**Description:** Election to choose the country's head of state, usually the president. May be direct (popular vote) or indirect (parliament/electoral college).

### b. Head of state / presidential by-election

**Label:** head of state/presidential by-election

**Description:** An election to fill a presidential or elected head-of-state vacancy.

### c. National parliament (lower house)

**Label:** national parliament (lower house)

**Description:** Election for the primary national legislative chamber in bicameral systems.

**d. National parliament (lower house) by-election**

**Label:** national parliament (lower house) by-election

**Description:** Election to fill a single vacant seat in the lower house between regular elections.

**e. National parliament (upper house)**

**Label:** national parliament (upper house)

**Description:** Election for the national upper chamber (senate or equivalent).

**f. National parliament (upper house) by-election**

**Label:** national parliament (upper house) by-election

**Description:** Election to fill a vacancy in the upper house of the national legislature.

**g. National parliament (unicameral)**

**Label:** national parliament (unicameral)

**Description:** Election for the single national legislative chamber in a unicameral system.

**h. National parliament (unicameral) by-election**

**Label:** national parliament (unicameral) by-election

**Description:** Election to fill a vacant seat in a unicameral national legislature.

**i. Regional parliament (unicameral)**

**Label:** regional parliament (unicameral)

**Description:** Election for the legislative body of a region (as defined by the Council of Europe (2020), which may be conventionally named province, state, canton, oblast in the national context, etc., with one chamber

**j. Regional government**

**Label:** regional government

**Description:** Direct election to choose the political head (executive) of a region (e.g., governors, cantonal executives).

**k. Regional government by-election**

**Label:** regional government by-election

**Description:** Election held outside the regular cycle to fill a vacancy in a regional multi-member executive body.

**l. Local (nationwide)**

**Label:** local (nationwide)

**Description:** Local elections (municipal councils, mayors) are held simultaneously across the entire country.

**m. Local (not nationwide but including the capital)**

**Label:** local (not nationwide but including the capital)

**Description:** Local elections (municipal councils, mayors) held in selected municipalities, including the national capital.

**n. National referendum**

**Label:** national referendum

**Description:** A nationwide popular vote on a law, constitution, initiative, or policy question.

**o. Dependent territory parliament (unicameral)**

**Label:** dependent territory parliament (unicameral)

**Description:** Election for the legislature of a non-sovereign territory with self-government (e.g. Greenland).

**p. Regional parliament + regional president (single vote)**

Duplicate of item 14, but if treated separately:

**Label:** single vote regional parliament and president

**Description:** A unified election where one ballot assigns power to both legislative and executive regional institutions.

**q. Regional government (executive) + by-election**

Already covered by items 10 and 11.

**r. European Parliament**

**Label:** European Parliament

**Description:** Election of members of the European Parliament (EU-level legislature).

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**5. Mode**

- **Variable name:** mode
- **Description:** Specific voting mechanism or round structure.
- **Format:** Categorical (string)
- **Recommended coding:**

Code	Label
single vote	Single-day single-round system
single vote (first day)	Multiday single-round system

<b>Code</b>	<b>Label</b>
single vote (second day)	Multiday single-round system
first round	First round of a multiround system
second round	Second round of a multiround system
third round	Third round of a multiround system
fourth round	Fourth round of a multiround system
multi-round single session	Multi-round vote within one day or legislative session

Note: Multiday multi-round systems are labelled in line with “first round,” “second round” etc.

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## 6. (Expected) Date

- **Variable name:** date
- **Description:** Date the election or event most likely occurs.
- **Example format:**
  - o 12 January 2025

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## 7. Date Status

- **Variable name:** date\_status
- **Description:** Indicates whether the date is confirmed or provisional.
- **Format:** Categorical
- **Recommended codes:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Label</b>
Confirmed	The authorities have confirmed the date of the electoral event
Not confirmed	The authorities have not confirmed the date of the electoral event; the date is the most likely date based on an estimate by the coder