

WHY VOTE?

Turnout in the European elections was low in 2004. Many EU citizens seem to be unaware of the possibility of or interested in electing their representatives at the EU level. There are though as many good reasons to vote in the European elections as there are in other elections.

A brainstorming session on 'why vote in the European elections' in your team or with your members can be a fun way to get the discussion going. Should you not be able to do that, maybe the list below will motivate you to engage in further activities. Action sheet 2 can give you ideas as to how to engage in the European elections 2009.

In a brainstorming session we were looking for the reasons why we are all convinced that the European elections are a great opportunity and why civil society organisations should engage in mobilising their members/supporters to go and vote:

European Parliament and European Democracy

- The European Parliament elections are the only transnational elections in the world: The European Parliament represents over 500 million European citizens
- It is the first time that citizens of 27 European countries make known their views jointly: I don't want to miss this
- The European Parliament is the only directly elected institution at EU level
- The European Parliament decides on European laws that affect our lives
- The European Parliament has a key role in appointing the European Commissioners
- The European Parliament holds the Council and the European Commission accountable

European Parliament and me

- European Parliament decisions have an influence on my quality of life
- Democracy is not only a right, it is my responsibility
- EU legislation defines 80% of my daily life/national legislation: By voting I influence the decision-making
- I don't like my current European Parliamentarians: I want to change them!
- I want more women in the European Parliament
- I want my European Parliamentarian to spend taxpayers' money carefully

European Parliament and the EU I want

- I want the EU to show leadership in the fight against climate change
- I want the EU to realise equality between women and men
- I want the EU to fight against all forms of discrimination
- I want the EU to work towards the eradication of social injustice
- I want the EU to play a responsible role in the world
- I want the EU to work actively to achieve the Millennium Development goals

This is in no way an exhaustive list, so get together and discuss!