

Question for written answer E-003321/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)

Subject: Leaving home should not mean leaving democracy behind: guaranteeing the voting rights of citizens living away from home as a means of bolstering EU citizenship and territorial cohesion

The ability to effectively exercise one's right to vote is crucial to European citizenship and democratic participation. However, thousands of students, researchers and workers who are temporarily residing in Italian councils other than the ones in which they are registered are encountering significant voting barriers. Individuals hailing from Sicily, Sardinia and other parts of southern Italy are more likely to find themselves in this predicament.

The absence of established mechanisms enabling citizens living away from home to vote¹ is a drain on the latter's finances, undermines democratic participation and is exacerbating the plight of island and peripheral regions that are already affected by youth mobility and depopulation. This state of affairs is very much at odds with the economic, social and territorial cohesion objectives set out in Article 174 TFEU².

In the light of the Union's objectives of bolstering democratic participation and European citizenship³, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it not agree that the absence of instruments that can effectively uphold the voting rights of citizens who are temporarily living outside the municipalities in which they are registered could prevent the EU from achieving its economic, social and territorial cohesion objectives, particularly in island regions?
2. Will it promote, while respecting the competences of the Member States, discussions and exchanges of good practices with a view to making it easier for citizens living away from home to vote?

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¹ Decree-Law No 196 of 28 December 2025 laying down urgent provisions for the holding of elections and referenda on 22 and 23 March 2026 does not include provisions enabling voters living away from home to exercise their right to vote in a municipality other than the one in which they are registered. See <https://www.giustiziainsieme.it/articolo/3817-il-voto-fuori-sede%C3%B9>.

² Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), OJ C 202, 7.6.2016, p. 127, Article 174.

³ Directive (EU) 2025/1788 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2025 laying down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament in the Member State of residence (recast), in OJEU L, 2025/1788, 12 August 2025.