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Answer given by Mr McGrath
on behalf of the European Commission
(12.3.2026)

The European Democracy Shield¹ consists of a wide range of concrete measures to empower, protect, and promote strong and resilient democracies. One fundamental feature of European democracy is that all citizens, as well as political, media or other actors should have the right to freely express their views and opinions. They should also be able to access and partake information in a reliable and trustworthy information space, free from interference. This is key to exercising democratic rights. Strengthening transparency, accountability and integrity in the information space is therefore an important priority of the European Democracy Shield.

The Commission has published a report on the 2024 elections to the European Parliament². Among others, it analyses voter turnout in different Member States and highlights some factors which may influence it.

The organisation and conduct of elections are the competence of the Member States. Under Article 22 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Commission can draw up proposals³ to facilitate the exercise of electoral rights by mobile EU citizens⁴.

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/2539eb53-9485-4199-bfdc-97166893ff45_en?filename=JUST_template_comingsoon_standard_1.pdf.

² COM(2025) 287 final, https://commission.europa.eu/publications/report-2024-elections-european-parliament_en.

³ As part of the Reinforcing Democracy and integrity of elections package adopted on 25 November 2021, the Commission adopted proposals to update the relevant rules. On 24 June 2025, the Council Directive (EU) 2025/1788 laying down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament for Union citizens residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals (recast) was adopted. Member States have until June 2027 to transpose the Directive into national laws. The proposal for a Council Directive laying down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in municipal elections by Union citizens residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals (recast) is still under discussion in the Council.

⁴ EU citizens who have moved to another Member State to work, live or study.