

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2024

EU: abstentionism appeals, but voting is advisable this time

POLITICS

28_05_2024



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In the next European elections, 6-9 June, as in every election round, citizens can choose whether to vote or abstain from voting. But, how should this choice be assessed at this particular moment in time and in the face of an appointment that many consider to be

important or even the bearer of a possible significant turning point in Europe? Here are a few considerations in this regard.

First of all, it is important to recognise that in some cases not voting may not only be licit but also a duty, provided it is not for a day out at the seaside. Voting is also a moral duty, and when the right to vote does not find a positive context in which to be exercised, and in any case corroborates evil, it would be proper not to vote. Participation through voting is not an absolute that applies always and on every occasion, but receives its legitimacy from the contents of public life that one supports and promotes with one's vote. Democracy, Saint John Paul II taught, is never automatic but stands or falls with the values it embodies. To absolutise participation in voting is to establish a merely procedural democracy.

In the specific case of the European elections, one of the main arguments in support of abstention is that the European Union is now an uncorrectable 'system', driven by an unnatural and perverse ideological logic, put in place and maintained precisely for this reason. Whatever parliamentary majority will emerge from the elections, nothing will change because the road is already mapped out by more or less occult powers operating before and under democratic formalities. There is a European Deep State, a Deep State that does not show up at elections, which are considered as a bamboozling practice reserved for the deluded, but nevertheless dictates the rules of the future, however the counting of ballots goes. It should be noted that this position does not merely argue the futility of elections due to the cumbersome nature of the European institutional system that calls us to vote for a parliament that has no legislative initiative. Nor does it appeal to a generic suspicion of inconsistency for politics and politicians. A variant of this is that if abstention were to take on very significant proportions over time, it would be a strong signal of political delegitimisation of this European Union.

Another reason for abstention is that all the main parties with a real chance of entering parliament are opposed to principles that the voter considers morally unavoidable. This may be the case, for example, for the Catholic voter who does not intend to vote for any party that is in any way in favour of abortion or other practices that do not respect human life.

These considerations have been made so as not to give the impression of being a priori opposed to abstention, which, when faced with a 'system of evil' such that in whatever way one votes one ends up collaborating with it, might make sense. The era of non expedit may not be over.

In the case of the next elections in June, however, in the light of moral and political prudence, it would be better to go to the polls, naturally with some guiding criteria. It is necessary to bear in mind that the 'systems of evil', which John Paul II called 'structures of sin', are the sedimentation over time of personal and social sins. They are not supra-human structures, they too ultimately depend on human beings. The acknowledgement of certain negative structural elements of the European Union must not lead to its being regarded as a monolith independent of historical events, human actions and God's providence. After all, history teaches us that political structures deemed omnipotent have also fallen, either by implosion since they were rotten from within, or by the actions of even a few men. A strongly negative judgement on the European Union 'system' can be fuelled, instead of abstention, by a participation in the vote that at least brakes the ongoing process and allows a phase of breathing space and reflection, but also and above all time to start again from the bottom. This would already be a good thing, because its opposite would mean the continuation of the evil denounced. Those who abstain from voting in order not to do evil must beware that they can do evil just the same: by abstaining they can confirm those who do it in their place. Omission can also contribute to evil.

Abstention in elections is on the increase everywhere, but this does not concern the powers that be, apart from declarations of convenience. In fact, they benefit from it, less effort and expense in campaigning and less conditioning for its actions. Increased abstention is what power desires. Moreover, abstention made for a political choice, and not for a day off, does not send a clear message because it can be interpreted in different ways depending on the interests of those who interpret it. Those who think that high abstention rates would delegitimise this European Union are deluding themselves.

Therefore it is worthwhile to vote, with three guiding criteria. The first is that the vote must be clearly against this European Union and thus open the way for a significant change, including a U-turn on many important points. The second is that the party being voted for does not allow threats to life and family in its programme. Here the going gets tough, but one possible way out is preferences for individual candidates. The third is to carefully consider voting for parties that will certainly not reach the quorum, because

scattered votes end up favouring someone it would be better not to favour, confirming them at the helm.