



EBA
European Biogas Association

SPECIAL REPORT

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 22 - 25 MAY 2014

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS AT A GLANCE

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Next week, **from 22 to 25 May**, European Union Member States will hold the **8th EU-wide election to the European Parliament**. Ever since 1979, when the election took place for the first time, the parliamentary institution has gained more and more legislative power being now one of the most powerful legislatures in the world – as described by its members. Today the Parliament shares equal legislative and budgetary powers with the Council (the governments of Member States) having therefore strong impact on policies and legislation that are implemented all over the EU.

In these days when the future of renewable energies, including biogas, is too often challenged and questioned by national politicians, it is of fundamental importance that the future MEPs will stick to the European Parliament's green ambitions preventing watering down the Commission's initiatives to decarbonise Europe. There are a number of important legislative and political files on the table that will be undertaken by the new parliamentarians: the possible second reading of the iLUC proposal, the revision of the EU's waste management targets, the new Fertiliser Regulation etc.

Therefore, all of us should go to vote in this year's election that will be the most important European election to date!

BASED ON THE ELECTION RESULTS, THE COMMISSION'S NEXT PRESIDENT WILL BE NOMINATED.

EBA SURVEY—OUTCOMES

In order to make it easier for you to find the right candidate, EBA asked all seven European political groups about their views on bioenergy and biogas. Six parties honoured the request and presented their position. Below, please find an overview of their replies.¹ and note that some views may not have been adopted officially by the political groups.

Q1: WHAT IS YOUR POLITICAL GROUP'S GENERAL POSITION ON INCREASING THE SHARE OF RENEWABLE ENERGIES IN THE EUROPEAN ENERGY CONSUMPTION?

Four (EPP, ALDE, S&D and The Greens) out of six political groups showed a positive attitude towards the increase of the renewable energies share in the European energy consumption. While **EPP** provided no further comments on this issue, ALDE, S&D and The Greens firmly underlined their commitment to achieve this goal.

ALDE: *We will work for a functioning emission trading system to reduce CO₂ emissions, and will work to strengthen it as a driver for innovation and energy-efficient solutions. An effective and well-functioning carbon market is a key tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions cost-effectively. This includes investment in a pan-European electricity grid and building even more upon renewable energy sources. We will promote a long-term and stable policy framework to promote energy and resource efficiency. This must include member states and the European Union working together to increase energy efficiency, decarbonise energy generation, develop carbon capture and storage technology, promote recycling, reuse and efficiency in the use of natural resources, and phase out environmentally harmful subsidies, including those for fossil fuel production and consumption.*

S&D: *The S&D Group has adopted a position of support for a binding 45% renewable energy target in 2030. [...] The group firmly supports a major increase in the use of renewable energies.*

Greens: *Politically we ask for a full implementation of the 20% RES target in 2020 but also for an ambitious and binding RES target in the energy and climate framework for 2030 of 45% (together with energy efficiency measures of 40% and greenhouse gas reductions of 60%).*

A different perspective was provided by **ECR** and **EFD**. Both political groups expressed their general discontent towards any sort of supportive mechanisms for the renewable energy sector, arguing that these policies have caused market distortions and have contributed to higher energy prices. Along these lines, both political groups ask for the removal of any form of state aid for renewable energy technologies. ECR also rejected any binding renewable energy target beyond 2020, stating that "Member States must be free to decide on their own cost effective pathways to achieving overall emissions reductions targets i.e. through using nuclear, CCS or renewables."

S&D - GROUP OF THE PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE OF SOCIALISTS & DEMOCRATS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

We want European countries to meet their target of reducing their energy use to 20% below projected levels by 2020

ALDE - ALLIANCE OF LIBERALS AND DEMOCRATS FOR EUROPE GROUP

Taking climate change seriously with an environmentally integrated society.

1) Please note that this report does not include the views of GUE/NGL, as it responded to EBA's survey only after the report was first published. See the page 8 for GUE/NGL's response.

Q2: WHAT IS, IN YOUR POLITICAL GROUP'S VIEW, THE ROLE THAT BIOGAS AND BIOENERGY IN GENERAL, HAVE TO PLAY IN REACHING THE RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGET IN 2020 AND IN FURTHER DECARBONISATION BEYOND 2020?

None of the political groups participating in the survey denied the contribution of biogas and bioenergy in general towards achieving the decarbonisation target in and beyond 2020.

In this regard, **EFD** referred to biomethane as “*one of the most concrete promises in the field of eco-sustainable mobility*”. At the same time, **ECR** stated that biogas “*will have a role to play [in reaching the renewable energy target in 2020 and in further decarbonisation beyond 2020]*”, but “*further uptake will be driven by advances and investment in R&D and innovation*”.

All other political groups (EPP, ALDE, S&D and Greens) recognised the potential of biogas to boost renewable energy targets and to reduce emissions beyond 2020, but stressed the importance of sustainable biogas production.

Especially the **Greens** showed themselves concerned about the implications that unsustainable practices might have on the environment and on the food production and pledged for more sustainable bioenergy. Along this line, Greens foresee an increase of biomass use of nearly 33% between 2010 and 2030, which would represent the equivalent of 32% of the total renewable energy consumption in the EU.

Although **ALDE** has not taken an official position on the specific role of biogas, ALDE's representative answering the survey mentioned ALDE's contribution to the formulation of long-term policies for a low-carbon, resource efficient economy. With regard to the latter, ALDE advocates for a circular economy, in which the use of waste as a resource takes a central place: “*The ALDE Group supports policies that provide incentives and enables particularly the use of waste products for energy production. For instance, the ALDE Group endorses the principle of setting end-of-waste criteria as part of such policies, and ALDE has supported an ambitious target for advanced biofuels in the context of the revision of the EU's biofuels policies. The ALDE Group has also promoted the use of the EU's research funds (Horizon 2020) for low-carbon innovations, and has defended the use of EU structural funds for climate projects.*”

**EPP GROUP - THE
GROUP OF THE
EUROPEAN PEOPLE'S
PARTY**

To increase the share of renewables in the energy mix beyond 20% after 2020, the EPP Group is working on a new, more ambitious and cost-efficient framework on renewable energy and advocates a more integrated European subsidies scheme to encourage technological innovation, in particular for innovative renewable energy technologies.

Q3: HOW IS YOUR POLITICAL GROUP GOING TO PROMOTE LOW CARBON ECONOMY IN EUROPE IN THE PERIOD 2014-2019?

While **EFD** firmly declared that it will not promote low carbon economy in Europe, as it means *“energy poverty, deindustrialisation, unemployment, less energy security and degrowth [sic!]”*, the other political groups presented their action points as follows:

EPP will support the Emission Trading System as most effective tool to decrease emissions in a cost-effective way. EPP will also support investments into research and development, to enable innovation and creation of sustainable green jobs.

The **ALDE** Group will put emphasis on the need to move to a resource-efficient low-carbon economy, including the decarbonisation of energy generation in the long term, as presented above (see answer Q1).

The **S&D** Group will defend binding targets for renewables and energy efficiency for 2030 and will seek that any revision of the renewable energy directive and energy efficiency directive is both ambitious and workable. As the upcoming reform of the Emission Trading System regards, the group plans to *“fight for a strong system which is able to set a high-enough carbon price to ensure the necessary investment in sustainable low carbon technologies and reduce emissions in the most cost-efficient way”*. Furthermore, the S&D Group opposes the Commission plans to discontinue the Fuel Quality Directive after 2020.

The Greens will continue to promote *“the transition to a nearly 100% renewable energy based and highly efficient economy”*, asking for ambitious and binding RES targets. At the same time, the group will strive to ensure fund allocations to RES projects and will further call on sustainability criteria for biomass and biogas.

ECR will:

- Promote the development of shale gas.
- Support an ambitious and equitable international deal on climate change, including campaigning for EU countries to continue to cut emissions.
- Support structural reform the EU Emissions Trading Scheme as the most cost-effective means for EU countries to cut emissions.
- Ensure that the proposed 2030 renewable energy target is non-binding on individual EU countries. In order to cut carbon as cost-effectively as possible, nuclear, carbon capture and renewables technologies should be allowed to compete on a level playing field.
- Support continued and further investment in research, development and innovation in low carbon energy technologies i.e CCS, renewables and nuclear fusion.
- Work with European partners to ensure that each country should have the right to choose their energy mix

EFD GROUP - EUROPE OF FREEDOM & DEMOCRACY GROUP IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Low carbon economy means: energy poverty, deindustrialisation, unemployment, less energy security, degrowth.

THE GREENS

Greens believe it is possible to completely rely on renewable energies for European energy consumption.

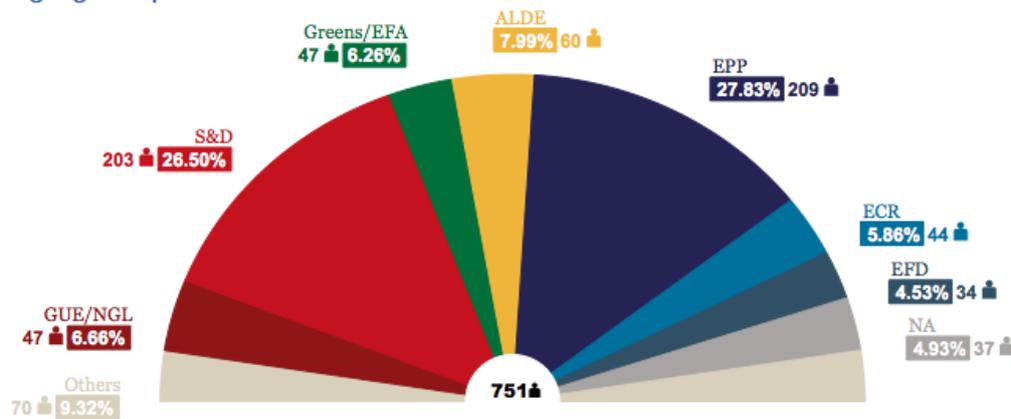
ECR GROUP - EUROPEAN CONSERVATIVES AND REFORMISTS GROUP

We believe that an extension of the 20% mandatory renewable energy target at EU level beyond 2020 would be inflexible and unnecessary.

LATEST PROJECTIONS OF SEATS IN THE PARLIAMENT

How the Parliament will look like after the elections is still an unanswered question. How the Parliament could look like after the elections is pictured below. Every week, the Parliament and its contractor TNS Opinion propose a projection of seats in the Parliament's hemicycle based on the current state of play of public opinion in the EU member states.²

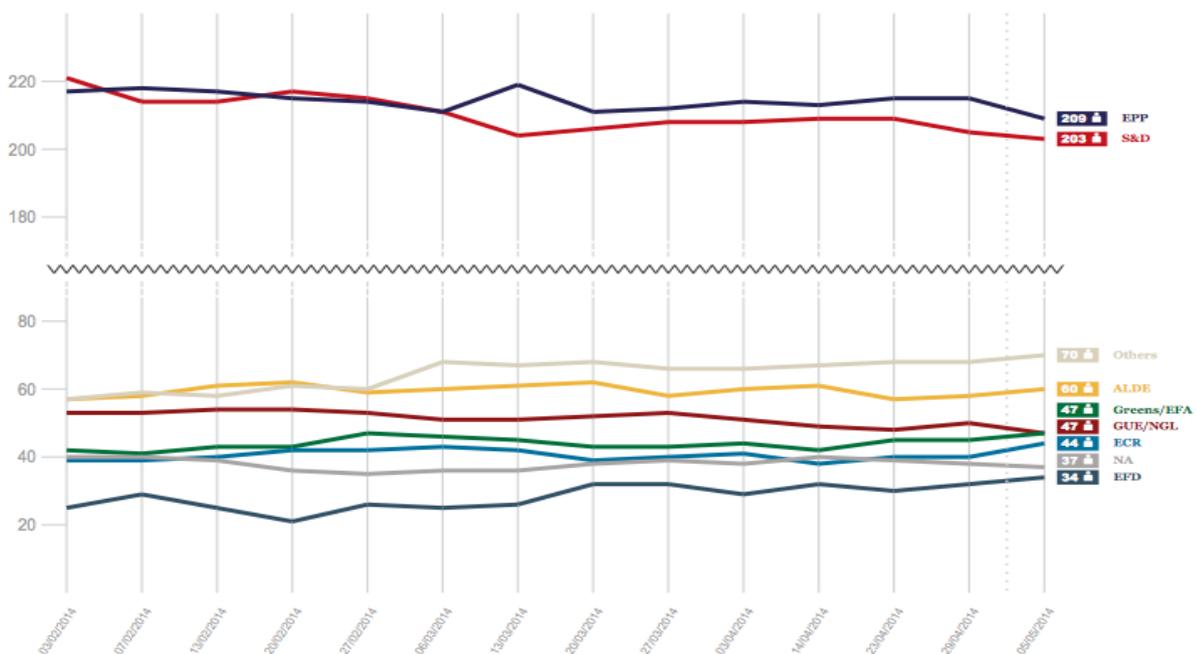
05-05-2014



Source: Collaboration between the EP and TNS Opinion

EPP	S&D	ALDE	Greens/EFA	ECR	GUE/NGL	EFD	NA	Others
27.83%	26.50%	7.99%	6.26%	5.86%	6.66%	4.53%	4.93%	9.32%
209	203	60	47	44	47	34	37	70

From 03-02-2014 to 05-05-2014



2) Please note that this is not a poll on voting intentions, but a snapshot of the current state of play of the public opinion in EU member states on the 2014 European elections. The final and official composition of the new Parliament will only be known on 1-3 July 2014.

RECOMMENDED CANDIDATES

EBA has put together a list of candidates that have actively participated in promoting policies supportive to the bioenergy sector over the last five years and/or are committed to continue on the same path in the 2014-2019 term. Despite tremendous efforts to identify all suitable candidates, EBA has experienced difficulties in receiving feedback from every member country. Therefore, please keep in mind that the list below does not represent a comprehensive list of recommended candidates but offers rather a general guideline.

Name of the candidate	Political group EU	National political group	Nat.
Elisabeth Köstinger	EPP	Austrian People's Party (ÖVP)	AT
Bart Staes	Greens	Groen	BE
Jens Rohde	ALDE	Danish Liberal Party – Venstre	DK
Bendt Bendtsen	EPP	Conservative People's Party	DK
Anneli Jäätteenmäki	ALDE	Centre Party	FI
Sirpa Pietikäinen	EPP	National Coalition Party	FI
Tarja Cronberg	Greens	Green League	FI
Sophie Auconie	EPP	Union des Démocrates et Indépendants	FR
Britta Reimers	ALDE	Free Democratic Party (FDP)	DE
Albert Deß	EPP	Christian Social Union (CSU)	DE
Peter Liese	EPP	Christian Democratic Union (CDU)	DE
David McAllister	EPP	Christian Democratic Union	DE
Reimar Böge	EPP	Christian Democratic Union (CDU)	DE
Niki Tzavela	EFD	Independent	GR
Béla Glattfelder	EPP	Fidesz	HU
Lambert van Nistelrooij	EPP	Christian Democratic Appeal	NL
Elena Oana Antonescu	EPP	Democratic Liberal Party	RO
Kent Johansson	ALDE	Centre Party	SE
Marita Ulvskog	S&D	Social Democratic Party	SE
Lars Adaktusson	EPP	Christian Democrats	SE
Alyn Smith	Greens	Scottish National Party	UK
Jill Evans	Greens	Plaid Cymru - Party of Wales	UK
Anthea McIntyre	ECR	Conservatives	UK

USEFUL LINKS

[ALDE - Key Priorities for a Green Economy](#)

[ECR Group - Industry, Research and Energy Committee](#)

[EFD Group - Newsroom](#)

[EPP Group - A clean environment for our children](#)

[European Parliament - Elections 2014](#)

[European Parliament - Latest projections of seats in the Parliament](#)

[European Parliament - Elections Press Kit Environment, Climate Change and Energy](#)

[GUE/NGL - Environment, Climate Change and Energy](#)

[S&D - A sustainable Europe](#)

[The Greens—Securing our climate and energy future](#)

GUE/NGL'S RESPONSE TO EBA'S QUESTIONS*

1. What is GUE/NGL's general position on increasing the share of renewable energies in the European energy consumption?

GUE NGL strongly supports increasing the share for renewable energies in the global EU energy consumption as well as improving energy efficiency. The GUE NGL group contributed in stressing the urgency in achieving such objectives in delivering the EP resolution on a 2030 framework for climate and energy policies even asking going beyond the adopted binding target of producing at least 30% of total energy consumption from renewable energy sources. The challenge undertaken by GUE NGL was to propose a share of at least 40%.

GUE/NGL GROUP -
CONFEDERAL GROUP OF
THE EUROPEAN UNITED
LEFT/NORDIC GREEN
LEFT

*We must protect
Europe's
biodiversity and
champion
renewable energy.*

2. What is, in GUE/NGL's view, the role that biogas and bioenergy in general, have to play in reaching the renewable energy target in 2020 and in further decarbonisation beyond 2020?

In order to avoid being dependant from fossil fuels biomass plants should be increased allowing a better and effective use of biogas, providing in large populated urban areas central natural heating facilities, limiting the inefficient use of biomass resources. To this end sustainability criteria should be developed for solid and gaseous biomass, affordable policies regarding energy prices addressed to the more disadvantaged rural areas and to vulnerable people should be urgently enhanced by Member States in order to ensure equal access to electricity, heating and cooling facilities to all citizens.

3. How is GUE/NGL going to promote low carbon economy in Europe in the period 2014-2019?

GUE NGL is strongly committed in achieving reliable results in reducing CO2 emissions mainly in the transport sector: the recent conclusions leading to adopted agreement with the Council on new targets for CO2 emissions reduction both for cars and Light Commercial Vehicles were neither sufficiently ambitious nor consistent with the innovative technics already available in the automotive industry. Completing the legislative pathway of the draft MRV Regulation and the ILUC directive are considered by our group as essential milestone to easy a coherent way in achieving the 2020 energy efficiency targets and in promoting in all sectors low carbon innovative research tools. Moreover stopping and urgently phasing out all existing subsidies to fossil fuels should be considered a key objective for all Member states to achieve a real low carbon economy in all Europe.

* GUE/NGL's response arrived only after this special report was first published. This page has been added to the report subsequently