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European Parties Elections

And Referendums Network

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTION BRIEFING NO 40 THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE AND EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS IN LUXEMBOURG, 7 JUNE 2009

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Key Points :

- National and European elections are held simultaneously in Luxembourg, but there is a debate about whether to separate them in order to make Europe more of an issue. However the winner of this election and the majority (over 70%) of public opinion are against this.
- Voting is obligatory but there was an increase in blank votes.
- The governing parties were not punished for the financial and economic crisis. The main governing party the Christian Social People's Party (CSV) achieved an impressive gain in the national elections (38.04%), while the smaller coalition partner, the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party (LSAP) won 21.56% of the votes.
- There is no change in the distribution of Luxembourg seats in the European Parliament. Luxembourg's population chose the safe way again, and did not choose a protest vote. There are again no Eurosceptic parties represented in the Luxembourg delegation to the EP. The Christian Social People's Party topped the poll with 31.32% and 3 seats, while the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party won 19.49%, the Democratic Party (DP) 18.65%, and the Greens (déi Gréng) 16.82%.
- Both elections were dominated by domestic issues and the financial and economic crisis but the EU was rarely present in the debates.
- Luxembourg's possible new EU Commissioner Viviane Reding was re-elected as MEP.

Institutional and Political Background and the Pre-Election Context

The national and European elections in Luxembourg of 2009 were heavily framed by the global financial and economic crisis. All the parties had to adapt their main election themes to this new situation. However, social and moral issues were not forgotten, like same-sex marriage or teaching Catholic religion in primary and secondary schools.

The centre-right Christian Social People's Party (CSV) had already achieved a historic gain of five seats and of one seat in the European elections in the 2004 national elections, which amounted to 24 seats and three seats respectively. Jean-Claude Juncker, leader of Christian Social People's Party and Prime Minister, was standing in both national and European elections in 2004, which certainly contributed to his party's success in the European elections. The question was whether it could sustain or even improve this record. As often happens in Luxembourg, the smaller coalition partner suffered losses in elections, and the 2004 elections were no exception for the then liberal democratic coalition partner (Democratic Party), who lost five seats in the national election. But even while the centre-left Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party (LSAP) won the election by 1 seat and became coalition partner, it lost a seat to the Christian Social People's Party in the European elections due to the 'Juncker effect'. The question in the European elections in 2009 was whether the Christian Social People's Party would manage to keep their 3rd seat without the double candidacies. The Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party, the Democratic Party, the Greens thus all had one seat respectively in the European Parliament. Meanwhile, the populist right-of centre Alternative Democratic Reform Party (ADR), a party founded in the 1980s as a single issue party based on pension reform and rebadged several times since, had lost 2 seats in the 2004 national elections and failed again to gain a seat in the European Parliament. It was interesting to see if the financial crisis would play into their hands and give them more support.

All the parties had to address the issue of the financial and economic crisis and all parties also addressed the issue framed as big member states imposing their wills and visions on the smaller member states. They all argued for upholding the principle that all member states are equal before EU law, which is a reflection of the recent diplomatic upheavals on the banking secrecy between Germany and France on the one hand and smaller member states, which sparked fears in Luxembourg of a 'cartel' of the big member states. All of the parties also argued that the Treaty of Lisbon had to be implemented as soon as possible in order to have the institutional decision-making means to overcome the financial crisis, except for the newly created Citizens' List (Biergerlescht) which campaigned in favour of referendums on any new or amended Treaties.

The institutional background is important to consider for the analysis of the national and European parliamentary elections. Several aspects distinguish Luxembourg from other countries' elections and electoral systems: first of all, both elections have been held simultaneously, candidates could stand for both national and European elections until 2009, voting is compulsory and voters can use the system of *panachage* (see below). National and European elections have been held simultaneously since 1979, which does not impede any comparison between turnouts of parliamentary and European elections, but the difference is much less significant than in other countries. This means, in practice, that all European elections in Luxembourg are second-order elections. The electoral system is also different for both elections: while the national elections are divided into four constituencies, the European elections are held in a single constituency. It is compulsory for anyone between the ages of 18 to 75 to vote in both elections.¹

¹ People above 75 years can, but do not have to vote. If a person does not want to vote, s/he has to write a letter to the Council asking for an exemption, or s/he will be fined. In practice however, no one has been fined in over 40 years if they do not vote.

There are two ways of voting: either one votes for a party, crossing the circle of the party list, thereby agreeing with the ranking order of the candidates established by the party, or one can choose “*panachage*”, which means that one can give up to two votes per person of any party until all the votes are distributed. Constituency seats are allocated by the Hagenbach-Bischoff method, in which an electoral quota is calculated by dividing the total number of valid votes by the number of seats to be allocated plus one. The number of votes polled by each list is then divided by the electoral quota, and the result, disregarding fractions, is the initial number of mandates allocated to the list; unfilled seats are then allocated in each constituency according to the largest average method, also known as the D'Hondt rule. List seats are assigned to the candidates with the largest vote totals within each list.

Until the 2009 elections, candidates could stand in both national and European elections. This has been changed in order to give more prominence to European issues in the European elections and to make it more democratic, as most candidates who were voted in both as national MPs and MEPs would rather take the national mandate than the European one. There is still an ongoing debate about whether to separate the timing of both elections in order to have a true European Parliament election. Apart from the centre-right Christian Social People's Party, most of the parties are in favour of separating the elections.

The campaigns

The Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party national campaign built on its record as coalition partner, and its emphasis was partly on continuing the reform process in the field of education and innovation. Their slogan, loosely translated as ‘We will deal with it’ suggested that they would ‘get things done’. The expansion of the University of Luxembourg and the reform of primary and secondary schooling both stood high on their agenda, with the emphasis on job creation and on expanding the university. The Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party European campaign was about maintaining jobs, the reduction of unemployment, the reinforcement of the social structures, a diversified economy, and an education adapted to the needs of all the children. However, the financial crisis put the socialists under pressure to present alternatives to the Christian Social People's Party proposals, as the Christian Social People's Party placed a heavy emphasis on social issues too. Furthermore, the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party was under pressure from the Communist Party and even more from “The Left”, a reformed Communist party that had split from the Communist Party. It was difficult for them to sell their promises that there would be no job cuts and they were the appropriate party to find a way out of the crisis, despite the fact that they held the Ministry of the Economy. Again, the problem of presenting oneself as being competent in dealing with political issues of importance overrode general ideologies.

The Christian Social People's Party national campaign was based on the slogan ‘Standing together- growing together’. The main themes were national social cohesion, solidarity and obviously how to deal with the economic crisis. The Christian Social People's Party described itself as the ‘Europe party’ of Luxembourg which wanted more integration, more social responsibility, more employment, education and sustainability. It argued that only through more integration a cartel of the big member states could be avoided. Its line was firmly pro-European and pro-integration, this being in the interest of Luxembourg. It advocated a stronger and Foreign and Security Policy in terms of more autonomy and as a complement to NATO. The Christian Social People's Party would not accept any further enlargement without the previous implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. It also was against the formation of a ‘directory of the large member states’ and consequently wanted

Luxembourg to have a European Commissioner and argued that it had the right people who could represent Luxembourg in the EU. It was against total liberalisation and privatization of services, especially for public transport, as security and service to the customer were seen as a priorities.

The Alternative Democratic Reform Party European campaign's slogan was "For a strong Luxembourg in Europe". It argued that it was the only party in Luxembourg which defended the preservation of the national identity, of the economic and financial interests and for a democratic EU on the basis of strong national parliaments. It demanded that Luxembourg should be represented always and on an equal footing in all the EU institutions and that referendums should be held on all new enlargements and treaty changes, that there should be minimum standards on workers' protection and thus protect Luxembourg jobs. It also intended to promote the Luxembourg language and culture in Europe, and finally spoke out clearly against the entry of Turkey into the EU. Its call for a 'Europe of Nations' was spelled out inconsistently throughout the manifesto, as exemplified by the fact that they advocated a deepening of the Common Foreign and Defence Policy, of illegal immigration, transport, energy, environment, agriculture, cross border criminality. It praised the Schengen agreement and the success of the Euro, yet argued that most matters relating to civil, penal, fiscal, family and health laws, most religious and moral themes, culture, should stay primarily under national law. Furthermore, it advocated a return to the increased use of the unanimity vote in the Council of Ministers.

The Democratic Party launched its European campaign with "a new momentum for a citizen's union" and sent Charles Goerens, a political heavyweight from the North Region as the first candidate in the race. The party had been going through something of a rejuvenation in the last years, and put lots of new young candidates up for election. It argued for a clearer defence of civil liberties in the EU, for a better business climate for small and medium enterprises and for a reduction of the administrative burden. Nationally they advocated tax cuts in order to re-launch the economy, a different system of education, more police patrols to stop thefts and burglaries and a reorganization of the job seeker's agency.

The Greens advocated a "Green New Deal" which would combine measures against climate change with job creation, thereby adopting the European Greens' position and transposing it onto the national level. Their campaign centered on "Environment-Economy- Education- the Greens now!" They reproduced largely the European Greens' positions but added a section on Luxembourg in the EU, where they advocated, for example, that European politics should be taught at school, that they would put forward a memorandum on transparency in the EU within civil society, and more generally find a balance between the specific interests of Luxembourg and general EU interests.

Looking at the number of campaign events organised by the different parties, it seems that most parties dedicated two events specifically to their European Parliament candidates². However, a lot of the events organised for the national candidates included the European Parliament candidates, but national issues always predominated over EU issues. Nationally, they organised between 30 and 50 events.

² Christian Social People's Party, Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party, the Greens: Questionnaire submitted to the party campaign managers by author.

One of the more contentious issues in education was whether the compulsory religion in primary and secondary school should be entirely replaced by a ‘moral values’ course, the Luxembourg Socialist Workers’ Party favouring this while the Christian Social People’s Party was against it, being the traditional party of churchgoers. The Alternative Democratic Reform Party was the only party who openly supported the existing system where the pupil can choose either a religious or a moral values course. The biggest issue however was the financial crisis. During the election campaigns in mid- May all the trade unions marched for a more social Europe in Brussels and against a reduction of social provisions, and for maintaining jobs, for purchasing power staying at the current levels, for social security and finally for maintaining the indexation of salaries and pensions. However the parties managed to appear as concerned as the trade unions as many of them had trade unionists as candidates in the national elections.

As for the selection of MEP candidates all parties, except the Alternative Democratic Reform Party, chose to present different ones for the national and European elections. Indeed, the Alternative Democratic Reform Party put all six of its nationally most prominent candidates in the running for both national and European elections. The turnover of candidates compared to the last European elections was over half in most parties. The Christian Social People’s Party presented four new candidates with only Viviane Reding, former EU Commissioner for telecommunications, and Astrid Lulling, a political *eminence grise* and MEP since 1970, having been on the last candidate list in 2004. The same turnover can be observed in the Luxembourg Socialist Workers’ Party and the Greens, with their Luxembourg Socialist Workers’ Party MEP Robert Goebbels and MEP Claude Turmes as lead candidates. The Communist Party and The Left also sent four new people into the race. In the Democratic Party, the turnover was more remarkable, with Charles Goerens being the only candidate who figured also on the 2004 list.

Considering that the elections are held at the same time, it is interesting to see how the media covered these events. The time frame from the 27 April to June 9 has been chosen as the official election campaign started exactly a month before the elections and it was useful to see if there were already reports on the elections a week before that. The results of the European elections could not be covered by the media on the 8th of June because of technical difficulties during the vote counts, which is why the 9th included as well. The results can be found in the table below. The articles are classified into three categories: those exclusively covering national elections, those exclusively covering Luxembourg’s European elections (European elections in other countries were excluded), and those covering both national and European elections.

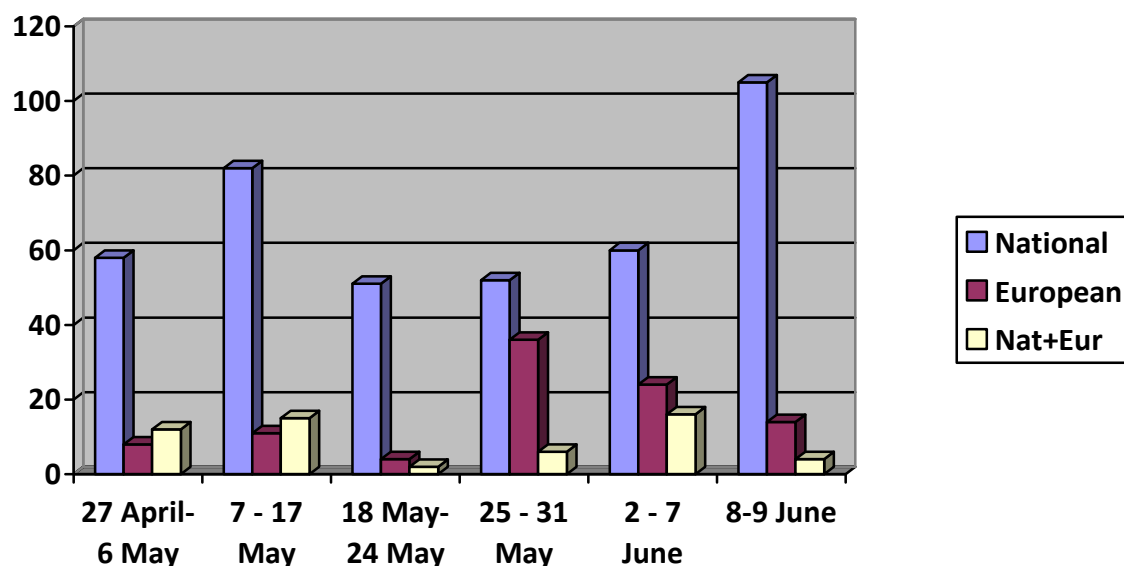
Table 1: Total number of articles written between 27 April 2009 and 9 June 2009 in four national daily newspapers³

Articles on national elections	Articles on European elections	Articles on both national and European elections
424	109	51

³ Articles written in *Wort*, *Tageblatt*, *Journal* and *Le Quotidien* from 27 April to 9 June 2009.

This result shows clearly that European elections received 25.96% coverage compared to national elections. It confirms that for the media at least, European elections were of a second order to national ones.

Table 2: Number of articles written in four national newspapers by weeks



Source: Research by author.

As this graph shows clearly, the national elections were more covered than the European elections in every period during the campaign. There is actually a drop in reporting on both elections in the middle of the campaign, which may be partly explained by holidays and therefore fewer published newspapers.

Even the parties themselves ranked the importance of the European elections in media coverage 4 or 5 out of 10, and some argued that most discussions centred exclusively on the national issues and even discussions on European issues did not lead to real debates on European policies. Campaign managers also felt that public opinion was only mildly interested (4-5 out of 10 compared to national elections) in the European elections.⁴

For the first time in Luxembourg politics, there was a live TV debate between the leader of the Christian Social People's Party, Juncker and one of the opposition leaders, Claude Meisch from the Democratic Party. This was widely followed but the format of this American-style stand-off debate seemed ill-suited to the consensual context of domestic coalition-building. It remains to be seen if this experiment will be repeated during the next election campaigns.

⁴ Christian Social People's Party, Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party, the Greens: Questionnaire submitted to the party campaign managers by author.

Turnout

At the beginning of May, an opinion poll by TNS-Ires showed that 82% would vote in the national elections, while 73% would vote in the European elections if there was no compulsory voting.⁵ This suggests clearly that the Luxembourg population is in line with most other European peoples' views that the European elections are second order compared to national elections. However, it also shows that the percentage of those who vote anyway was significantly higher than in most other countries, which goes against the current trend witnessed in neighbouring countries like the Netherlands or Germany, where participation was at a historic low. On the other hand a Eurobarometer survey of December 2008 showed that only 36% knew the date of the European elections and whilst this is the highest percentage in the whole EU, it still is quite low six months before the elections.⁶ Non-nationals are much less interested in Luxembourg politics, for reasons of language problems, lack of time because of job pressures, the negative image of politicians and finally, their lack of the right to vote.⁷

Table 3: For the national elections, the turnout was as follows in 2009 and 2004⁸

	2009	2004
Mandates	60	60
Registered voters	240 676	217 683
Number of votes	203 281	200 092
Postal votes	11 289	?
Valid votes	189 993	188 910
Blank votes	13 288	5 644
Invalid votes	?	5 538

The turnout was around 90 % in both cases.

Table 4: For the European elections, the turnout was as follows in 2009 and 2004⁹

	2009	2004
Mandates	6	6
Registered voters	240 676	229 550
Number of votes	218 423	209 689
Postal votes	11 757	NOT AVAILABLE
Valid votes	198 364	192 185
Blank votes	20 059	10 184
Invalid votes	NOT AVAILABLE	7 320

Again, the turnout was around 90%. We can note that there is a significant increase in the blank votes in national and European elections. Furthermore, more voters chose a blank vote in European elections compared to national elections in 2009 and compared to the 2004 European elections. If one compares however the increase of blank votes compared to the

⁵ Tageblatt : *Politbarometer Süden : Juncker, Asselborn, di Bartolomeo*. 05.05.2009

⁶ Eurobarometer Survey 2008:: European elections 2009

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_303_brut_en.pdf, p 3

⁷ Tageblatt: *Kaum Interesse*. 19.05.2009

⁸ <http://wahlen2009.rtl.lu/index.html>, http://www.chd.lu/docs/pdf/Resume_elect2004.pdf

⁹ <http://wahlen2009.rtl.lu/europa/index.html>

previous elections, we can observe that in the European elections this has doubled, in the national elections it has almost tripled.

The increase in the number of votes for the European elections is due to the fact that non-nationals (European Union nationals) were also allowed to vote in these elections. 17,340 European nationals voted, which is a big increase compared to the 2004 elections, but still low compared with the total European-nationals population. This has two reasons: European nationals are not required by law to vote, but they have to register their intent with the local Council. In 2004 the deadline for a European national to register to vote was 18 months before the elections, which meant that many people did not register in time. This situation has been rectified and for the 2009 elections, the deadline was on 12 March 2009, so 86 days only ahead of the elections, and together with a big information campaign on the changes, produced a slight increase of European nationals' voting.

National Results

The Christian Social People's Party was the clear winner of these elections. The slogan of its last campaign being "The safe way" this idea certainly appealed to the voters in times of economic crises.

Table 5: The national elections and the % share of votes and seats won in 2009 compared to 2004¹⁰

Party	National election 2009	Seats	National election 2004	Seats
Christian Social People's Party	38.04	26	36.1	24
Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party	21.56	13	23.4	14
Democratic Party	14.98	9	16.1	10
Alternative Democratic Reform Party	8.13	4	10	5
Greens (Déi Gréng)	11.71	7	11.6	7
The Left	3.29	1	1.9	0
Communist Party Luxembourg	1.47	0	0.9	0
Citizens' List	0.81	0	/	0

The winners of this election were the Christian Social People's Party and The Left, with 2 and 1 seats respectively.

The Christian Social People's Party managed to increase its historic record of 2004 by 2%, gaining 26 seats out of the 60 in the national parliament. Its coalition partner Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party, and the Democratic Party and Alternative Democratic Reform Party all lost 1 seat. The Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party gained 13 seats; the Democratic Party, 9 seats, while the Greens kept their 7 seats. The Alternative Democratic Reform Party dropped down to 4 seats, not enough to reach the status of a parliamentary fraction, which would give it significant funds to operate its parliamentary business. The Left attained 1 seat, which may seem insignificant, but in fact .

¹⁰ <http://wahlen2009.rtl.lu/index.html>

Considering that the Christian Social People's Party has been in power almost uninterruptedly since the end of the Second World War, apart from one legislative period, this result can thus be seen as continuing and even reinforcing this trend. Indeed, since the 1960s, this party had not achieved such a result. The Christian Social People's Party had not made it a secret that it would work best with the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party before the elections, and so it comes as no surprise that coalition talks between the Christian Social People's Party and the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party have already started.

European Parliament Results

There is not much point in comparing the percentage share of the vote for the European elections of the governing parties compared with their vote at the most recent parliamentary elections, as both elections are held simultaneously. This also means that the results are mostly consistent between national and European elections, as we can see below. The European elections are held in a single constituency whereas in national elections, there are 4 constituencies. There was no change compared to the 2004 European elections. The distribution of the 6 seats was as follows: 3 seats for the Christian Social People's Party and 1 each for the Democratic Party, Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party and the Greens.

On the EP level, none of the "Eurosceptic" parties managed to get representation, just as in 2004. The parties that could be classified as "soft Eurosceptic" in a Luxembourg context would be the Alternative Democratic Reform Party and the Citizens' List, which was created by a former member of the Alternative Democratic Reform Party, Aly Jaerling. There is no hard Euroscepticism as no party advocates leaving the EU, but the Alternative Democratic Reform Party and the Citizens' List advocate institutional reforms and policy changes. The Alternative Democratic Reform Party is in favour of Luxembourg being represented in every EU institution, against Turkish EU membership, for a better social protection in the EU, and for more referendums and that Luxembourg's national interests are well defended in the EU. The Citizens' List is against the Lisbon Treaty, and for a better defence of Luxembourg's interests, and for more democracy. The vote for the Eurosceptic party Alternative Democratic Reform Party has actually decreased in 2009 in the national election but only very marginally in the European elections. Significantly, its party president was not reelected in the national parliament, and in total it lost 2% of the vote, receiving only four seats, which kept it under the threshold for receiving funds as a parliamentary fraction. As we can see, the total vote for soft Eurosceptic parties amounts to 8.8 %.

European issues were not highly prominent but instead the national election issues such as unemployment, the financial and economic crisis; transport and housing were debated. However, it is interesting to note that most parties combined their national and European campaigns, so that MEP candidates were present at national rallies and national candidates present at EU campaign rallies. Therefore, it is difficult to disentangle the importance of EU issues, but obviously "European" issues were second-order.

It is however interesting to note that especially the Christian Social People's Party, and the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party to a lesser extent, mentioned Europe as a solution to the crisis, rather than a problem, and that Luxembourg has an important role to play in the EU. These two parties also played heavily the "competence card", in the sense that they argue that the EU is too important for Luxembourg to vote for anyone who has no experience at the EU level and is not well versed in the issues that arise at EU level. This is confirmed by one

of the campaign managers, who argued that the citizens vote for candidates “knowing how to represent Luxembourg in the EU” rather than for a European political ideology.¹¹

Table 6: Comparison of the results between national and European elections in 2009¹²

Party	2009 National election in %	2009 European election in %
Christian Social People’s Party (governing party)	38,04	31.32
Luxembourg Socialist Workers’ Party (governing party)	21.56	19.49
Democratic Party	14.98	18.65
Alternative Democratic Reform Party	8.13	7.38
The Greens	11.71	16.82
The Left	3.29	3.41
Communist Party Luxembourg	1.47	1.54
Citizens’ List	0.81	1.38

Table 7: Comparison between the European elections in 2009 and 2004

Party	European election 2009	Seats	European election 2004	Seats
Christian Social People’s Party	31.32	3	37.1	3
Luxembourg Socialist Workers’ Party	19.49	1	22.1	1
Democratic Party	18.65	1	14.9	1
Alternative Democratic Reform Party	7.38	0	7.4	0
The Greens	16.82	1	15	1
The Left	3.41	0	1.7	0
Communist Party	1.54	0	1.2	0
Citizens’ List	1.4	0	/	0

It has been noted above that there was a significant increase of *panachage* in both national and less in European elections in 2009, denoting a general decrease of party allegiance and an increase of personality-based voting. Comparing the results of 2004 with 2009, we can see that the Christian Social People’s Party especially lost a significant share of the vote. The “Juncker effect” was less pronounced in the European than in the national elections in 2009. The significant increase of votes in the European elections in 2009 for the Democratic Party is due mostly to one very important personality: Charles Goerens, former minister, MEP and MP had decided to stand for the European instead of national elections, and received an impressive 111,589 votes, compared to the first candidate of the Christian Social People’s Party, former Commissioner for Telecommunications Viviane Reding, who received 104,900 votes. The Greens also sent in the race a popular and experienced Claude Turmes who has been an MEP since 1999 and who received 76,774 votes.

¹¹Luxembourg Socialist Workers’ Party: Questionnaire submitted to the party campaign managers by author.

¹²<http://www.elections.public.lu/fr/elections-europeennes/2009/resultats/index.html>

<http://www.elections.public.lu/fr/elections-legislatives/2009/resultats/index.html>

Generally, we can see that apart from the Christian Social People's Party decrease, not much has changed from 2004 to 2009. But even this marked decrease of 7% did not alter the final allocation of the six MEP seats, allocating half of the seats available with only 31% of the votes to the Christian Social People's Party.

Conclusions

It seems that the economic and financial crisis strengthened the conservative impulses of the population of Luxembourg, but this effect has to be combined with the extraordinary personal charisma of the Prime Minister of 14 years, Jean-Claude Juncker. The Christian Social People's Party recognised this potential and played its ace very effectively, with its eight popular "Juncker on Tour" events all across the country and with slogans like "We tell you what the story is. Now! Not after the elections", thereby portraying itself as a party which is honest and clear spoken and knows how to deal with the economic crisis. Furthermore, the Christian Social People's Party was very effective in appropriating other parties' pet subjects. Its economic policies were more left-wing than many other European Christian Democratic parties, thereby stealing votes from the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party. Its Catholic roots and promotion of the Luxembourg identity attract many electors who would otherwise vote for the Alternative Democratic Reform Party.

The Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party meanwhile experienced similar problems to many of the socialist parties in Europe, namely a certain scepticism by the citizens if it would be able to deal with the economic crisis and keep its promises of keeping jobs, job creation in the face of the economic and financial crisis. Furthermore, the increase in votes for The Left in the industrial South, the heartland of the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party, also hurt the party electorally.

Perhaps not so surprising after all is the result of the Alternative Democratic Reform Party, which after years of internal squabbling and dissent, combined with the economic crisis, seemed to have alienated many voters. The Democratic Party clearly had hoped that its strategy of bringing in new candidates and new ideas would produce a better result, but the voters did not seem to be convinced about their governing competences.

The Greens' votes stabilized and they had to make do with the status quo, suggesting that they have a faithful base of voters on which they can count. However, it remains to be seen if they can broaden their appeal in the next election.

As for the European election results, the second-order character of the election has been made abundantly clear. The question is whether separating them from the national elections will make them less so. The separation of the lists has been a success though, even though some parties mentioned the difficulties of finding appropriate candidates, as the chances of being elected if one is at the bottom end of the list are very slim.¹³ Considering the distribution of seats between the parties, nothing changed, the Christian Social People's Party managing to keep their third seat and thus confirming the broad European trend of voting for the centre-right in times of economic turmoil. Where Luxembourg goes against the trend is in voting for Eurosceptic or anti-establishment parties. Those views are not taken seriously in one of the

¹³ Christian Social People's Party: Questionnaire submitted to the party campaign managers

most pro-European and smallest countries in the EU, who recognise the importance of having competent representatives in the supranational institution that is the European Parliament.

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This is the latest in a series of election and referendum briefings produced by the European Parties Elections and Referendums Network (EPERN). Based in the Sussex European Institute, EPERN is an international network of scholars that was originally established as the Opposing Europe Research Network (OERN) in June 2000 to chart the divisions over Europe that exist within party systems. In August 2003 it was re-launched as EPERN to reflect a widening of its objectives to consider the broader impact of the European issue on the domestic politics of EU member and candidate states. The Network retains an independent stance on the issues under consideration. For more information and copies of all our publications visit our website at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/1-4-2.html>.