

# European Parliament 2024: elections communication

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State Electoral Office

# Objectives

- Urging citizens to use their right to vote
- Defending the trust in the election process
- Fast up-to-date relevant info on elections

# Channels

Press releases, press events, press briefings

Social media: Facebook (+Meta elections reminder), X

Direct comms: e-mails, phone calls, text messages

Media monitoring

Voters' inquiries via help desk, e-mails, social media

Direct communication with voters (via state portal eesti.ee)

# Campaign

Message: Vote, i-vote, this is what elections are for

Channels: online media outlets, TV, radio, social media, local newspapers, outdoor, bus and train stations



Riigi  
valimisteenus



# Challenges

False information on i-voting

Members of two running parties spreading rumours  
and campaigning against i-voting

Details of i-voting (how and to do it), cybersecurity

# General approach

- In 2016 Electoral Office chose network approach
  - by engaging partners from other government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, civil society, social media companies, and the press
  - to identify and monitor disinformation and to work with the press to correct false statements.

# Communications Working Group

- State Electoral Office
- State Chancellery (Stratcom dept)
- State Information System Authority
- Ministry of Economics and Communications
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of External Affairs
- European Parliament (local office)



# Before the elections

- Media briefings
  - keep journalists informed (bigger media events + newsrooms separately)
  - be a good and open partner who is available
- Cooperation with other state institutions
  - being “on the same page”
  - weekly meetings, quick information sharing channels
- Prepare against predictable disinformation
  - i-voting fact check
- Cooperation with Meta, X, TikTok

# I-voting fact check

✓ **REALITY:** No political party gains an advantage at i-voting. The decision of the voter is not affected by whether they vote at the polling place or i-vote.

✗ **MYTH:** I-voting favours certain political parties that get more i-votes than others.

Facts: Kristjan Vassil and Mihkel Solvak, researchers at the University of Tartu, have analysed the behaviour of the e-voters and reached the conclusion that i-voting does not favour specific political parties. The voter makes their decision on the basis of the issues that are important to them and will not change it according to the way of voting.

However, the research shows that the share of i-votes and paper votes received by political parties is influenced by the attitudes of the specific party and its voters towards i-voting. It still does not influence the voting result. People would give their vote to the same candidate and the same political party also when using other ways of voting.

## References

Article by Vassil and Solvak

Profile of a typical i-voter (animation in Estonian)

I-voting statistics

- For the voter, journalist, visitor
- Ready-made talking points
- In 3 languages
- Modelled after CISA Rumor Control

<https://www.cisa.gov/rumor-vs-reality>

# During the election week

- Fast up-to-date relevant info on elections, via valimised.ee webpage, press releases, social media
- Monitoring: media monitoring (online, TV, radio, paper), social media, foreign press, feedback loop from e-mails and calls from voters
- Good cooperation with the press - quick rebuttals of suspicious content

Thank you for your attention!