

*Panel "Procesos políticos en la Unión Europea en tiempos de crisis: respuestas de distintos actores en una gobernanza multinivel"*

**Evaluating the political implications of the EU citizenship in the electoral field: two decades after the Maastricht Treaty**

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**Very rough draft, please do not cite or quote at this stage. Comments would be much appreciated.**

**INTRODUCTION**

Two decades after its institutionalization in the Maastricht Treaty, the citizenship of the Union remains a key topic of the political parlance *vis-à-vis* the democratic future of the EU. Often presented as a powerful tool for the reconfiguration of the traditional paradigm of citizenship in the new era of increasing migration, this element of the European integration process has been analyzed mostly from a normative perspective. Hence, while some authors tried to highlight its limitations through the conceptual triangle national citizenship-EU citizenship-supranational citizenship, others emphasized its transformative potential, as an efficient way to "create" the European demos. A key element of this constructive potential rests in the electoral entitlements granted to EU citizens residing in other Member States, i.e. the right to vote and stand in EP and local elections in these host countries. As it shifted the electoral activism at the supranational level, this recognition has been evaluated as a remarkable step forward towards a political Union (Vink 2005; Shaw 2010) that can encourage, through participatory mechanisms, a sense of shared belonging towards the European *res publica* (Pocock 1995; Benhabib 2004; Bellamy and Palumbo 2010).

But transposing these normative debates to a more practical perspective, *to what extent EU citizens residing in other Member States actually make use of the voting rights arising from their status of citizens of the Union?* As few studies focused exclusively on the behavioural dimension of the EU citizenship in the electoral field (Besch 2004; Méndez 2007; Strudel 2002, 2004; Collard 2012), the answer to this question still remains uncertain. This paper is part of an ongoing doctoral research that addresses these unexplored issues, drawing on a comparative analysis of the voting patterns of intra-EU migrants in all EP and local elections held from 1999 onward in ten

EU Member States<sup>1</sup>. Within this broader research context, this piece of work focuses on the electoral impact of the voting rights granted to EU foreigners in Spain, France and Belgium. However, at this stage, the paper is very descriptive in its aims, as it only attempts to provide a first assessment on how the EU citizenship is translated into participatory practices at the electoral level. The paper is structured as follows. The first section briefly examines the concept of EU citizenship, emphasizing the relevance of the electoral entitlements granted in the Maastricht Treaty for the political project of the EU. The second section focuses on the Spanish, French and Belgian cases as ideal settings for analyzing foreigners' electoral engagement, also highlighting the practical arrangements that accompanied the transposition of voting rights for intra-EU migrants into their national legislations. The third section presents some preliminary findings on the voting behaviour of EU foreigners in EP and local elections held in these countries, also comparing their patterns of political participation with those of third-country nationals for the local elections in which the latter have been entitled to vote. We conclude with some general remarks *vis-à-vis* the political practice of the EU citizenship in electoral politics, and we point towards further lines of research.

## **I. THE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND THE ELECTORAL RIGHTS OF EU FOREIGNERS**

### *1.1. The citizenship of the Union: towards a new model of supranational citizenship?*

The concept of citizenship has been traditionally conceived as a legal status that bounds the individuals with the political community, by virtue of the rights and duties conventionally granted within national boundaries (Marshall 1963; van Steenberg 1994; Barbalet 1988). Given this narrow definition pointing towards the nation-state as the most appropriate *locus* for political belonging, rights have been traditionally reserved for those formally affiliated to the polis through their nationality (Lardy 1999; Weiler 1999; Bosniak 2006). However, recent changes related to the economic globalization, the intensification of migration flows and the increasing saliency of transnational institutions challenged this homogeneous understanding of citizenship (Benhabib 2004; Bauböck 1999). Thus, in the new era of "post-national" citizenship, rights are often decoupled from nationality, with a paradigmatic example in the case of foreigners who can enjoy nowadays different entitlements based on their residence (Soysal 1994; Sassen 1999; Kivisto and Faist 2007).

These debates over the possibility of formally creating a supranational form of membership gained particular relevance in the EU, the institutionalization of the EU citizenship being considered as the first systematic proof of the reconfiguration of the classic paradigm of citizenship. According to art. 8 of the Maastricht Treaty, the EU citizenship is granted based on the nationality of the Member States, and it allows its beneficiaries to: a) freely move and reside within the EU; b) vote in EP and local

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<sup>1</sup> The dissertation compares the electoral behavior of EU foreigners in Spain, Italy, Greece, France, Belgium, Luxemburg, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Austria.

elections in the host Member States; c) receive diplomatic protection in these countries; and d) petition the EP and apply to the Ombudsman. Although this definition might appear, at first glance, rather simple, the EU citizenship gained a broad range of interpretations, generally subscribing to two main approaches: whereas the first one highlighted its limitations and the potential problems arising from its implementation, the second one focused more on its positive effects for the European political project. More exactly, those authors assuming a critical perspective questioned the functionality of the EU citizenship by reducing it to a bundle of basic rights that puts Europeans in a position of "second class citizens" (Dell'Olio 2005). The main limitation guiding strong criticisms was that the EU citizenship lacks an independent status, its derived character reiterating that the Member States are still the gatekeepers of citizenship, even when the latter is defined at a supranational level (Weiler 1999; Vink 2005). Secondly, it has been argued that the EU citizenship does not bring major institutional changes at the EU level, as its associated rights are quite marginal compared to what the national citizenship brings to its beneficiaries; and, moreover, that these rights could not establish, as expected, a direct link between citizens and the EU as most of them are implemented within the framework of each Member State, and not at the Community level (Bellamy, Castiglione and Shaw 2006). Finally, the EU citizenship has been widely contested also because it lacks a pre-existent European *ethnos* or *demos*, the absence of the "European people" defining it as a limited attempt to unify several fragmented national *demoi*, or, going even further, a form of membership imposed from the above (Kostakopoulou 2001; Giesen and Eder 2001; Vink 2005).

Nevertheless, a second part of the scholarship adopted a more optimistic perspective on the EU citizenship, by considering it a "citizenship-in-the-making" that complements its national counterparts through the recognition of new entitlements and representation structures regulated at the Community level (Delanty 2000; Tambini 2001). Thus, despite its derivative character, the EU citizenship is still a new form of membership related to a post-national system of institutions and governance (Preuss 1996; Conti, Cotta and Pavares 2010); and its transnational character is reflected by the fact that it transformed the EU into the only international organization having its formally defined citizens and which allows them to directly express their political preferences to "supranational" institutions (Bellamy and Warleigh 2001). Secondly, against the idea that the rights granted to EU citizens are only a limited input for the Community law, it has been emphasized that the novelty of these entitlements rests not only in the fact that they are granted to "mobile" Europeans, but also because the authorities to which these individuals have to address to for exercising their rights are those of the EU or those of the host Member States (Lippolis 1998; Dell'Olio 2005). Finally, against the argument that the EU citizenship lacks an affective dimension, it has been noted that this new form of membership can strongly contribute to the creation of a sense of collective belonging towards the European polity: the EU citizenship *per se* does not require a prior collective identity, nor a unitary *demos* that might act as its constitutive basis; on the contrary, it can activate individuals' attachment towards the

EU by extrapolating the territorial model of *ethnos* to a new European horizon (Heldblum 1996; Benhabib 2004; Bruter 2005; Magnette 2007).

### *1.2. Moving beyond the conceptual analysis: the European citizenship and the electoral rights of non-national EU citizens*

Despite the relevant contribution of the above mentioned studies on the normative implications of the EU citizenship, the extent to which Europeans actually make a use of their rights granted at the EU level is still an unexplored issue. Twenty years after its institutionalization and despite the controversies related to its formal definition and conceptual boundaries, the EU citizenship still remains insufficiently explored, with limited evidence on how the nationals of the Member States assume their status of EU citizens in the political practice. A key indicator of this political practice rests in the electoral rights recognized to non-national EU citizens, i.e. the right to vote and stand in EP and local elections in the host Member States. Given their aim to reduce the inequalities of political opportunities based on residence between Europeans, these entitlements represent one of the most substantial benefits of the EU citizenship (Shaw 2007; Bellamy and Palumbo 2010; Vink 2005; Olsen 2011). Additionally, these electoral provisions stand out as the first systematic evidence of the separation of voting rights from nationality, especially since they were introduced in a context of great diversity in the way in which European countries responded to the inclusion of foreigners as part of their electorate. Finally, in the narrative of the EU institutions (COM (2010) 605), these entitlements could also support the constructive potential of the EU citizenship in affective terms: by making use of their “right to have rights” outside their countries of origin, Europeans might better perceive the substantive meaning of their EU citizenship and develop, in turn, a shared European identity (Dobson 2006; Kadioglu 2009).

However, in spite of the wide consensus *vis-à-vis* the relevance of these electoral rights, most studies carried out on this topic focused either on or their limited legal nature (Bauböck 1994; Closa 1995; Eder and Giesen 2001; Shaw 2007) or the conditions under which they have been transposed in the legislations of the Member States through Directives 93/109/EC and 94/80/EC (Santolaya and Díaz-Crego 2008; Lansbergen and Shaw 2010). Thus, the body of research looking exclusively at how these entitlements have been actually exercised by “mobile” Europeans is quite limited and generally focused on particular local contexts. In this regard, it’s worth mentioning the work conducted by Favell (2005) in Brussels, Amsterdam and London, the research carried out by Strudel (2002; 2004) in France, Besch (2004) in Luxemburg, Collard (2012) in UK or Méndez (2005; 2010) in Spain, most of these studies generally pointing towards low levels of electoral engagement of Community voters in local politics.

This paper aims to contribute to this ongoing literature, by examining, from a comparative perspective, the extent to which non-national EU residents made use of

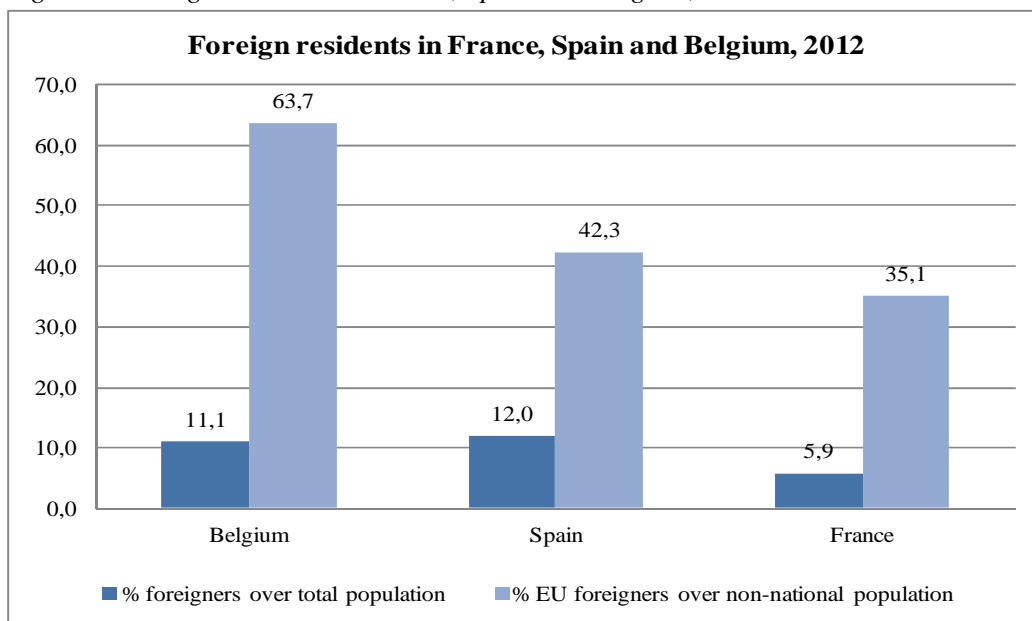
their electoral rights in all the EP and municipal elections held from 1999 onward in Spain, France and Belgium. Hence, in the following pages we briefly contextualize the Spanish, French and Belgian cases and we present some preliminary findings regarding the patterns of electoral engagement of Community voters.

## **II. PATTERNS OF IMMIGRATION AND THE RECOGNITION OF VOTING RIGHTS TO FOREIGNERS IN SPAIN, FRANCE AND BELGIUM**

Spain, France and Belgium represent ideal settings for analyzing the political practice of the EU citizenship in the electoral field for several reasons. First, these countries stand out as relevant host societies for immigrants, although with different migration experiences. On the one hand, Belgium and France count with a large tradition in receiving substantial migration inflows as, since the mid '40s, these countries increasingly attracted large number of immigrants via systematic programs of recruitment of foreign labour force. During the '50s, most immigrants came from Southern Europe- particularly Italy and Spain, the composition of the foreign population diversifying since the '60s, when European flows started to be replaced by migration waves from third countries like Morocco, Turkey, Tunisia or Algeria (Bousetta *et al.* 1999; Phalet and Swyngedouw 2003; INSEE 2005). Given this massive intake of foreign workers, at the beginning of the '80s, the amount of immigrants already reached 9% of the overall population in Belgium (Statbel) and 7% in France (INSEE). From this date onward, both countries experienced a certain stabilisation of the migration stocks until late '90s, when the share of immigrants increased again reaching, in 2008, 13% in Belgium and 8% in France. Moreover, given their large migration experience, most foreign-born residents already acquired the citizenship of these two host countries (Jacobs, Martiniello and Rea 2002; Collard 2010; INSEE 2005). However, at the opposite pole, Spain counts with a much more recent- although very intensive- migration trajectory. After experiencing substantial waves of emigration during the '60s and '70s, Spain became in a very short period of time one of the most important receiving societies in Europe, its foreign-born population increasing six-fold in just twenty years: from around 1 million in the early '90s to 6.677.839 in 2011, which represented 14% of the population. This unprecedented increase rapidly accelerated since 2000, being multiplied by five in just over a decade, with an average entry of around half a million individuals per year (Morales, Pérez-Nievas and Vintila 2012).

According to the latest Eurostat data (Figure 1), in 2012, 1.227.965 foreigners were residing in Belgium, a figure that accounted for 11% of the overall population. In France, the absolute number of non-national residents was substantially higher (3.858.295), although their share from the total population (6%) was lower than in the Belgian case. As for Spain, despite its recent migration experience, this country represents, among our cases, the host society where immigrants show the highest demographic representation in both absolute and relative terms: in 2012, 5.562.067 foreigners were residing in Spain, thus representing 12% of the population.

Figure 1. Foreign residents in France, Spain and Belgium, 2012.



Source: Own elaboration from Eurostat data, 2012.

Furthermore, the migration inflows towards these countries have been not only very intense, but also quite diversified. As pointed in Figure 1, in Belgium, the majority (64%) of non-national residents are intra-EU migrants. Within this group, immigrants from neighbourhood countries like France, the Netherlands or Germany count with a high representation, although Italians, Polish, Spaniards or Romanians also form important segments of the foreign population. Subsequently, non-EU stocks represent a smaller fraction given their high naturalization rates, with the most numerous groups coming from Morocco, Turkey and Congo (Statbel). However, in France and Spain, intra-EU migrants represent a smaller share (35% and 42% respectively) of all foreigners. In Spain, within this group, we might distinguish immigrants from EU15 countries- particularly British, French or Germans- generally socio-economically well-off groups labeled as "lifestyle migrants"; from most recent waves of immigrants from the new EU Member States- especially Romanians and Bulgarians- generally responding to an economic migration pattern. As for non-EU inflows, Latin America (Ecuadorians, Colombians, Peruvians) and Africa (particularly Moroccans) are the most frequent regions of origin (INE). Finally, in France, the largest communities of intra-EU migrants are those with the largest migration experience (Portuguese, Italians, Spaniards); but also German and Belgian citizens (generally responding to a border migration pattern) as well as Britons (mainly lifestyle migrants). As for TCNs, the most representative nationalities are Algerians, Moroccans and Turks (INSEE).

Anyhow, despite the high demographic concentration of immigrants, these countries only recently decided to extend voting rights to foreigners, for different reasons. In Spain, due to its recent migration experience, the electoral enfranchisement of foreigners was not a salient issue until 2006, when it entered the political agenda due to the proposals to extend local electoral rights to third-country nationals. In Belgium and France, this topic emerged during the 70's and '80s. However, the negative

politicization of immigration made by the National Front in France, and the strong opposition from the extreme-right party Vlaams Blok in Belgium impeded any step forward towards the recognition of voting rights for foreigners in the first case, whereas in the latter, it delayed this recognition until quite recently (Bousetta, Gsir and Jacobs, 2005; Jacobs 2010).

Against this general background, non-national EU citizens became the first group of foreigners allowed to vote in all three countries analyzed, although the transposition of the Directives regulating the exercise of these electoral rights was somehow problematic in all cases. More exactly, although Directive 93/109/EC on voting rights in EP elections was successfully implemented in all countries by the 1994 elections, the adaptation of Directive 94/80/EC on voting rights in municipal elections faced constitutional reforms. On the one hand, the Spanish Constitution reserves the right to vote for Spaniards, but for local elections, the active suffrage is also recognized to nationals of countries that signed reciprocity agreements with Spain. In practice, only Norwegian citizens had the right to vote in Spanish local elections<sup>2</sup>, although similar agreements have been recently concluded with other (mainly Latin American) countries<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, since the reciprocity basis is limited to the active suffrage, the Spanish Constitutional Court ruled that in order to ratify the Maastricht Treaty, an amendment to the Constitution was needed, as the passive suffrage was not mentioned in the wording of Article 13.1 (Closa 1992, 1998; Castillo 2012). Although this was only a technical amendment (Méndez 2005), even after the reform, the Spanish government postponed the nomination of EU foreigners as potential voters until the 1999 electoral contests, due to political considerations (Closa 1998).

On the other hand, Belgium had to implement the Directive 94/80/EC by January 1996, the text of the Directive already including a derogation for the Belgian case<sup>4</sup>. Although this derogation was not finally used, the recognition of local voting rights for EU citizens was postponed until the 1999 elections, the constitutional amendment raising strong controversies between the mainstream political parties. First, revising the Constitution required a two-third majority in the Parliament, a threshold that the governing parties did not reach at that time (Lafleur 2011). Secondly, the discussion over the enfranchisement of EU foreigners was extended also to TCNs (Rea 1998). Thirdly, this reform faced a strong reluctance from the Flemish parties, which feared that foreigners' electoral empowerment would weaken their position in Brussels and benefit the French speaking parties (Jacobs, Martiniello and Rea 2002). In fact, in 1997, the Flemish Parliament even recommended the restriction of EU citizens' electoral rights to additional requirements like the necessity to pay taxes or to satisfy a certain period of prior residence (Rea 1998). One year later, however, the ECJ condemned Belgium for not complying with the obligation stipulated in Directive

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<sup>2</sup> The agreement between Spain and Norway was signed in 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Citizens of Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Chile, Paraguay, New Zealand, Iceland, and Cape Verde have been allowed to vote for the first time for the 2011 local elections.

<sup>4</sup> The derogation allowed the Member States to apply additional requirements of prior residence to non-national EU voters when the latter group accounted for more than 20% of the overall electorate.

94/80/EC, and given this external pressure, the Constitution was finally amended in 1998 so that EU foreigners could vote for the 2000 elections. Moreover, in amending the Constitution, Belgium not only rejected the propositions to restrict EU citizens' voting rights, but it also opted for an open reform which allowed the extension of the active suffrage also to third-country nationals since the 2006 local elections.

Finally, France was the last EU Member State in adopting the provisions of Directive 94/80/EC. In 1992, the French Constitutional Court declared unconstitutional the implementation of these rights. First, because it would contravene to Article 3 of the Constitution that reserves the active and passive suffrage in elections for the municipal assemblies or *Conseil de Paris* to national citizens (Collard 2010; Oriol 2003). Secondly, the Court argued that, since local councilors also participate in the election of the French Senate, the extension of local voting rights for EU citizens would imply that they would have a say in the election of an executive body invested with national sovereignty (Strudel 2003). The constitutional reform was carried out in 1992, and it consisted in adding the exception of EU foreigners as beneficiaries of local electoral rights, although they were excluded from the office of mayor or deputy-mayor as well as from the designation of the senators. Moreover, this reform did not habilitate EU foreigners to vote for the 1996 local elections, for which the European Commission threaten France with the infringement procedure for not complying with the obligations stipulated in Directive 94/80/EC. As a result, in 1998, France adopted the Organic Law no. 98 which allowed EU foreigners to vote for the first time for the 2001 elections. Furthermore, although several law proposals emerged after this date regarding the extension of local voting rights also for TCNs, these initiatives were finally rejected due to the strong opposition from right-wing parties (Wihtol de Wenden 2010).

In any case, a relevant institutional arrangement that accompanied the transposition of voting rights for EU foreigners in all countries under study was the requirement of prior registration in the Electoral Census, which clearly hindered foreigners' likelihood to vote. In Spain and France, all citizens entitled to vote have to be previously registered in the electoral roll in order to cast their ballot. In both countries, the registration is automatic for national citizens, whereas foreigners have to actively express their wish to be included in the Electoral Census. On the other hand, Belgium uses a compulsory voting system, non-voters being subject to progressive fines. However, as the European Directives did not allow the Member States to oblige EU foreigners to exercise their electoral rights, it was decided that intra-EU migrants have to previously register in a special electoral roll in order to be able to vote. Furthermore, although the registration is voluntary, once registered, foreigners are also required to comply with the mandatory voting procedure.

In all three countries, the application for registration is available to those who: a) are at least 18 years old and have not been deprived from the right to vote in their own countries and; b) are enrolled in the population register or the register for foreigners. Non-national residents who meet these conditions have to submit an application for



registration to the City Councils of the municipalities in which they reside, this application being required only once, as it is automatically renewed for the following elections. Moreover, two separate electoral lists are kept for each type of elections (EP and local); and the registration for one list does not entail inscription on the other, the participation thus being subject to enrolment on a separate electoral register for each type of elections. Additionally, as mentioned, Spain and Belgium recognize local voting rights also for third-country nationals although, unlike EU citizens, they have to comply with additional prerequisites in order to be able to cast their ballot. In Spain, non-EU foreigners are allowed to vote only after a certain period of legal residence that goes from 3 years for Norwegians to 5 years for other TCNs with reciprocity agreements. The same applies in Belgium, with the only difference that the period established by law is the same -5 years- for all groups, independently of their origin. Moreover, in Belgium, non-EU foreigners also have to sign a formal declaration by which they agree to respect Belgian laws and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. Finally, the registration requirement also applies in their case; however, whereas in Belgium it has a permanent character just like for EU migrants, in Spain, TCNs are required to enrol before each local election for which they want to vote.

Keeping in mind these differences, in the following sections we proceed to analyze the extent to which non-national EU citizens made use of their voting rights in EP and municipal elections in Spain, France and Belgium.

### **III. LOOKING AT THE POLITICAL PRACTICE: THE ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT OF NON-NATIONAL EU CITIZENS**

To what extent non-national EU citizens made use of their voting rights in Spain, France and Belgium? Can we identify a similar pattern of political participation between different foreign groups within the same receiving context, or, on the contrary, some EU citizens are more prone to engage in electoral politics than others? Moreover, do these patterns vary depending on the type of elections or the host country taken into consideration? The next sections address these questions by looking at the patterns of political participation of non-national EU citizens in different electoral contests, more exactly, the 1999, 2004 and 2009 EP elections in all three countries; the Spanish local elections of 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011; the 2001 and 2008 French municipal elections; and the Belgian local elections of 2000, 2006 and 2012.

For each one of these electoral contests, we analyze, first, the potential impact of the foreign electorate, by looking at the number of non-national EU residents entitled to vote. Secondly, we focus on their registration rates in the Electoral Census. In absence of the real figure for turnout among foreigners, derived from the secrecy of voting, we analyze the share of non-nationals registered to vote from all potential foreign voters for each electoral moment, this being considered, according to previous studies, as the most useful indicator for approximating the extent to which non-national EU residents made use of their electoral rights (Jacobs, Martiniello and Rea 2001; Strudel 2004; Méndez

2005; Shaw 2007). For the first elections in which each group was entitled to vote, the registration rate is an accurate indicator for turnout, as one can reasonably assume that those who made the effort to register are very likely to vote. However, this registration rate should be interpreted with caution for the following elections, as the electoral enrolment of EU foreigners is automatically renewed, thus having a permanent character once the first application is submitted. Hence, in these cases, we pay more attention to the incorporation of new voters, i.e. those who registered for the first time for each election. However, in Belgium, the additional compulsory character of the voting system makes the registration rate a good proxy for turnout not only for the first elections in which foreigners have been entitled to vote, but also for the following ones.

### III.1. The electoral engagement of non-national EU citizens in EP elections

As mentioned, the first aspect we consider in order to approximate the extent to which intra-EU migrants exercised their voting rights is their potential electoral impact. In this regard, Table 1 summarizes the number of EU citizens entitled to vote (potential voters) for the 1999, 2004 and 2009 EP elections in all three countries analyzed; and their share over the total potential electorate for each electoral contest. Furthermore, the table also distinguishes between EU15 citizens and migrants from the new Member States that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, thus aiming to test the argument of the extent to which Europeans' likelihood to vote also depends on their specific origin.

*Table 1. EU foreigners entitled to vote for EP elections in France, Spain and Belgium (Potential voters)*

<b>Elections/ Groups</b>	<b>EP 1999</b>	<b>EP 2004</b>	<b>EP 2009</b>
<i>EU foreigners (total N)</i>			
France	1.216.635	1.220.366	1.151.150
Spain	961.478	1.165.809	1.970.778
Belgium	496.056	513.988	594.507
<i>EU15</i>			
France	1.216.635	1.118.543	1.060.048
Spain	961.478	1.052.963	1.044.912
Belgium	496.056	500.781	530.013
<i>New EU MS</i>			
France		36.823	91.102
Spain		112.846	925.866
Belgium		13.207	64.494
<i>% EU foreigners over total potential electorate*</i>			
France	3,0	2,9	2,6
Spain	2,8	3,4	5,6
Belgium	6,8	6,8	7,3

Source: Own elaboration. In the Spanish case, the data is from the Municipal Census of the Spanish Institute for Statistics. The data for Belgium is from Statbel, Direction Générale Statistique et Information Économique. In the French case, the data for the 1999 and 2004 elections is from Strudel (2001, 2010) and Collard (2010) whereas for the 2009 elections, the data is from the INSEE Population Census conducted that year. \* The figures of total potential electorate are from the Ministry of Interior of each country.

The first aspect we can draw from this data is that, in general terms, intra-EU migrants counted with a strong electoral potential in all three countries under study.

However, their electoral visibility was substantially higher in Belgium than in Spain or France, to the point that around 7 out of each 100 potential voters for all EP elections analyzed in Belgium were foreigners. Thirdly, these figures also show that, whereas in France and Belgium, the fraction of Community citizens as potential voters maintained more or less stable over time, in Spain, it increased in a vertiginous manner in the last years: in light of the data, the percentage of EU foreigners from the overall potential electorate in Spain duplicated since 1999, reaching almost 6% for the 2009 EP elections. However, a closer look to these figures indicates that this difference is due to the variation in the distribution by origin of the foreign electorate between the three countries, which derives, in turn, from their different migration experiences.

As shown in the table above and Table 1 in Appendix, in Belgium and France, the large majority (more than 90% in 2009) of all potential foreign voters for EP elections were EU15 citizens, the best represented nationalities being those with the largest migration tradition: Italians, Dutch, French and Spaniards in Belgium and Portuguese, Spaniards, Italians and Germans in France. In these two cases, "new" Community voters from the 2004 and 2007 enlargements were less visible within the general map of the foreign electorate. However, the situation was different in Spain, where the recent EU enlargement waves- and especially the 2007 one- produced important electoral changes. Thus, before the last EP elections, most potential EU voters came from the UK, Germany, Italy, Portugal and France, whereas other nationalities counted with a considerably lower representation (around 25% of all foreigners entitled to vote). However, in 2009, due to the incorporation of Romanians and Bulgarians, the number of foreign potential voters from the new Member States almost equalled the amount of potential "old" Community voters.

Keeping in mind these differences, Table 2 illustrates the absolute numbers and share of EU foreigners who actually mobilised to register in the Electoral Census for EP elections, while differentiating, once again, between "old" and "new" Community voters.

*Table 2. EU foreigners registered to vote for EP elections in France, Spain and Belgium*

<b>Elections/ Groups</b>	<b>EP 1999</b>	<b>EP 2004</b>	<b>EP 2009</b>
<i>All EU foreigners</i>			
France	70.056 (5,8)	148.469 (12,2)	226.449 (19,7)
Spain	64.904 (6,8)	129.989 (11,2)	284.366 (14,4)
Belgium	38.233 (7,7)	59.368 (11,6)	66.203 (11,9)
<i>EU15</i>			
France	70.056 (5,8)	148.093 (12,5)	221.326 (20,9)
Spain	64.904 (6,8)	126.285 (12,0)	215.358 (20,6)
Belgium	38.233 (7,7)	58.003 (11,6)	63.180 (11,9)
<i>New EU MS</i>			
France		376 (1,0)	5.213 (5,6)
Spain		3.704 (3,3)	69.008 (7,5)
Belgium		1.365 (10,3)	3.023 (4,7)

Source: Own elaboration. The figures of EU foreigners registered to vote are from the Spanish Electoral Census for Foreign Residents (CERE), the French Ministry of Interior and the Belgian Electoral Service, SPF Interieur. The registration shares are calculated based on the numbers of EU foreigners entitled to vote in each case (see sources for these figures in Table 1).

First, the data shows that, despite their high demographic concentration, non-national EU citizens made a quite limited use of their voting rights in EP elections. In all three countries, the registration rates among Community voters were fairly low, especially when compared with the general turnout which was above 40% in all EP elections analyzed in Spain and France, and around 85% in Belgium, due to the mandatory voting system<sup>5</sup>. For the 1999 EP elections, the share of EU foreigners who registered to vote was quite similar in all three countries, barely reaching 6% in France, 7% in Spain and 8% in Belgium. Nevertheless, when we compare these figures with the ones for the 1994 EP elections when Community voters were allowed to cast their ballot for the first time, we observe that, whereas in France and Belgium, the number of registered EU foreigners almost duplicated, in Spain, this figure was even three times higher in 1999 than in 1994<sup>6</sup>. However, in relative terms, this increase was almost insignificant in all three cases, the electoral enrolment rates being only slightly higher in 1999 compared to the previous EP elections (around 3% increase).

As for the evolution of this pattern during the following European Parliament elections, the data illustrated in Table 2 suggests the 2004 electoral contests did not bring major changes in this regard. Once again, we observe a preoccupying level of electoral engagement among Community voters residing in these countries, as the registration rate of EU citizens maintained in alarming low levels, although it almost duplicated in all cases compared to the prior EP elections. Thus, in 2004, the share of registered Community voters reached 11% in Spain (with 65.085 EU foreigners registered for the first time for these elections), 12% in France (78.413 first-time voters) and 12% in Belgium (21.135 first-time voters). In all three cases, the absolute numbers of first-time foreign voters in 2004 almost equalled the total amount of registrations for the 1999 EP elections. However, most of them came from EU15 countries, as only few "new" Community voters that joined the EU that year expressed their willing to vote. At least in Spain and France, the general picture of their mobilization patterns was quite unsatisfactory, with an average enrolment rate substantially lower than that of EU15 citizens for the same elections; and similar or even lower than that of "old" Community voters during the first EP elections in which they voted in 1994. Nevertheless, the situation was somehow different in Belgium, where 10 out of each 100 potential Community voters from the new Member States enrolled in the Electoral Census, although their absolute number was also much reduced in comparison with the other two countries. However, this figure was not only similar to the one observed for EU15 citizens for the same elections in Belgium; but also three times higher than that of "new" Community voters in Spain and ten times higher in France, respectively, for the same elections held in 2004.

On the other hand, in 2009, the total figure of Community citizens registered to vote increased to 284.366 in Spain, 226.449 in France and 66.203 in Belgium. In

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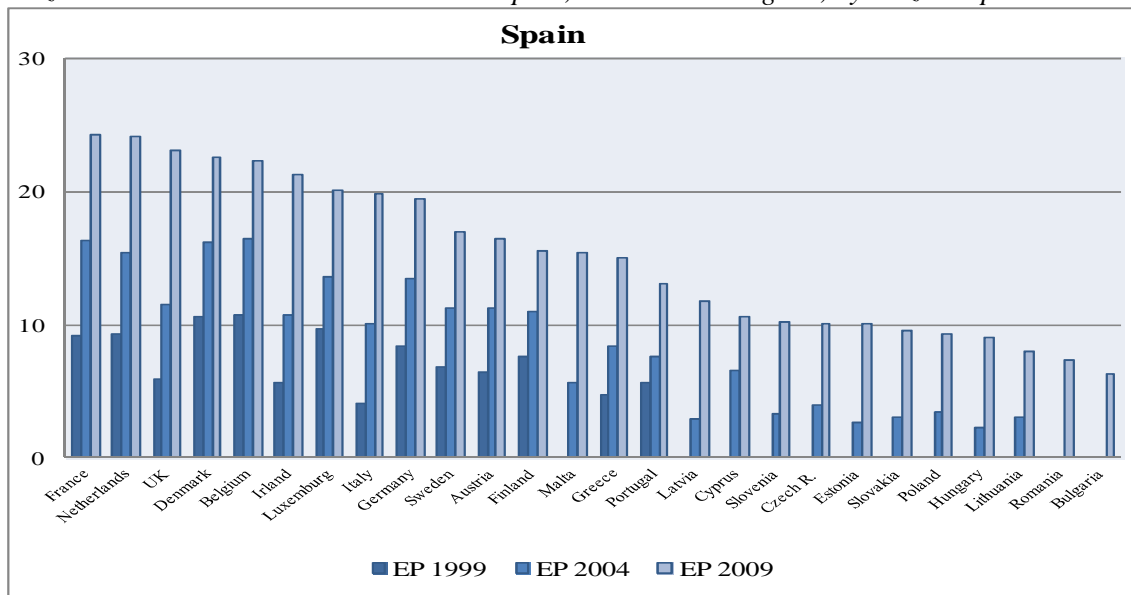
<sup>5</sup> In Spain, turnout reached 63,1% in 1999, 45,1% in 2004 and 44,9% in 2009. In France, the participation rate in 1999 was 46,8%, whereas for the following elections it decreased to 42,8% in 2004 and 40,6% in 2009. In Belgium, the turnout rate was 84,7% in 1999, 85,9% in 2004 and 84,8% in 2009.

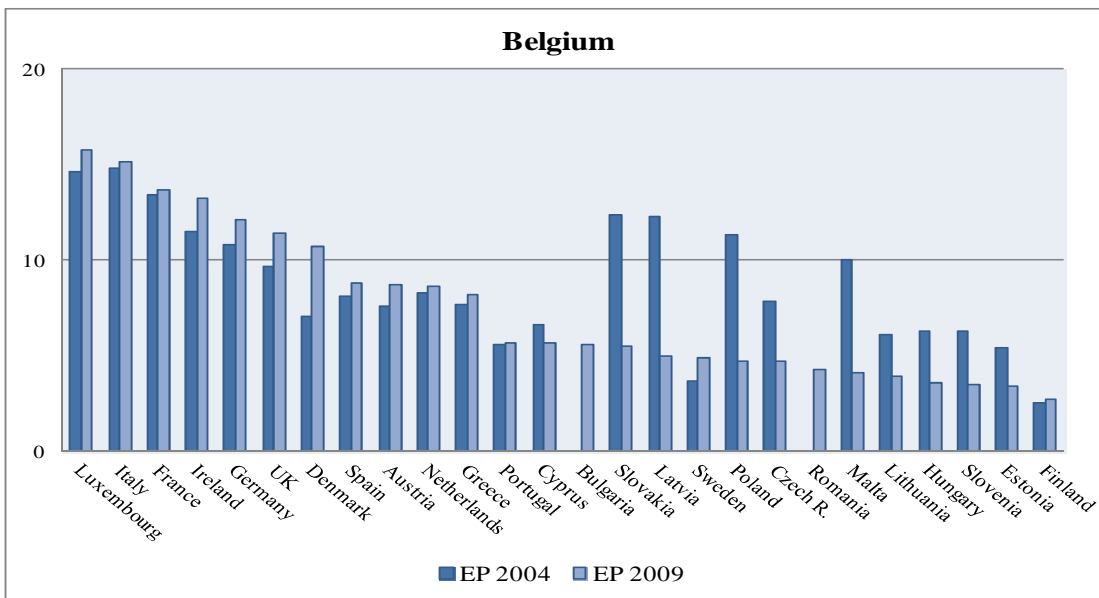
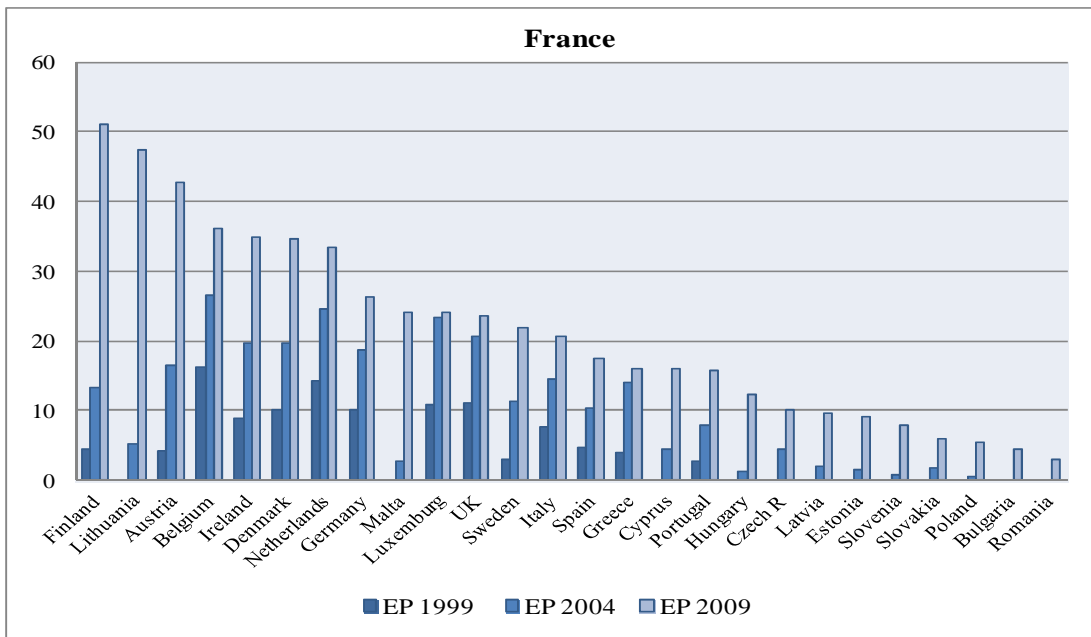
<sup>6</sup> For the 1994 EP elections, 47.632 Community voters registered in France, 23.999 in Belgium and 23.400 in Spain.

relative terms, this implies an average registration rate of 20% in France, 14% in Spain and only 12% in Belgium, with a quite unsatisfactory increase in the level of political participation, even below the one observed during the 2004 EP elections. By countries, the differential in the registration rate compared to the 2004 elections was higher in France than in Belgium and Spain although, in the latter case, the absolute number of registrations duplicated from 2004 to 2009. As for the breakdown by specific origins, in all three cases, the share of EU15 citizens enrolled in the Electoral Census was equal or higher than the average one for all foreigners. At the opposite pole, citizens from the new Member States maintained low levels of electoral engagement, well below the general average. This pattern became noticeable even in Spain where, as previously mentioned, the 2007 EU enlargement led to a substantial increase of foreigners' electoral potential. Despite of that, in 2009, the registration rate among these "new" Community voters increased with only 4% compared to 2004, with 8 out of each 100 potential voters from this group being included on the lists of the Electoral Census for Foreign Residents by the time of the latest EP elections. In any case, although this percentage is extremely reduced, it was quite similar to the one observed for EU15 citizens for the second EP elections in which they were entitled to vote.

Last but not least, Figures 2, 3 and 4 provide useful information regarding the distribution of this registration data by citizenship, thus allowing us to point out some interesting differences in the way in which specific groups of Community voters used their status of EU citizens status in the electoral field.

*Figures 2, 3 & 4. Share of registered voters from the overall number of non-national EU citizens entitled to vote in EP elections in Spain, France and Belgium, by citizenship*





Source: Own elaboration. The figures of EU foreigners registered to vote are from the Spanish Electoral Census for Foreign Residents (CERE), the French Ministry of Interior and the Belgian Electoral Service, SPF Interieur. The registration shares are calculated based on the numbers of EU foreigners entitled to vote in each case (see sources for these figures in Table 1).

In general terms, this data indicates that the patterns of effective participation in EP elections of some groups of EU citizens is not necessarily correlated to their initial electoral potential. Thus, in each country, we observe that some foreigners counting with a high electoral visibility made a quite limited use of their voting rights, by showing registration rates lower than the general average. This is the case, for example, for Portuguese and Spaniards in France; Romanians, Britons and Germans in Spain; or Dutch and Spaniards in Belgium. At the opposite pole, however, some groups showed registration rates slightly than the general average. This pattern applied for Italians, Belgian, Dutch, British and German citizens in France; nationals of Belgium, the Netherlands, France or Denmark in Spain; or Italians and French citizens in Belgium. Generally, these differences seem to suggest that, although they are formally

empowered with the same electoral entitlements, EU foreigners do not act, at least in these three countries, like an homogeneous group in the electoral sphere, some of them being more prone to actively exercise their voting rights than others.

In sum, the analysis conducted so far suggests that only few Community voters exercised their electoral rights in EP elections in the three countries analyzed. However, to what extent, if any, do these patterns of political participation among Community voters also apply for local elections which represent the second administrative level for which EU citizens are entitled to vote while residing in other Member States? The next section addresses this issue, by closely looking at the extent to which non-national EU citizens made use of their active suffrage for all municipal elections held subsequently to 1999 in France, Belgium and Spain. In doing so, the first aspect we consider, once again, is the electoral potential of foreigners for each one of these electoral contests. Secondly, we pay attention to their mobilization patterns, by looking at their registration rates in the Electoral Census. Just like for EP elections, we use this percentage of electoral enrolment as proxy for turnout. Based on that, we focus on the potential differences in the patterns of electoral engagement of EU citizens in both types of elections- EP and municipal-; and we compare it with the case of TCNs in those local elections in which the latter were allowed to vote, in order see if the EU citizenship status is translated into a specific electoral behaviour that draws a differentiation line between intra-EU migrants and those coming from non-EU countries.

### III.2 The electoral engagement of EU foreigners in local elections

As already mentioned, the first municipal elections in which EU foreigners were entitled to vote have been celebrated in 1999 in Spain, 2000 in Belgium and 2001 in France. In Spain, local elections are held every four years, whereas in Belgium and France, the term of office at the municipal level is for six years. Thus, whereas in the Spanish case, we focus on the levels of electoral engagement of foreigners during four local elections (1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011), in Belgium, we look at three electoral contests at the municipal level (2000, 2006 and 2012) and only two (2001 and 2008) in the France. In all three countries, the local government represents the lowest administrative division, the number of councillors forming the municipal assembly depending on the size of the municipalities. In Spain and Belgium, the electoral system at the local level is based on party lists and proportional representation. In France, *communes* of less than 3.500 inhabitants use a pluri-nominal majority vote system in two rounds; whereas municipalities counting with more than 3.500 inhabitants apply a two-ballot system with partial proportional representation based on party lists. Finally, Belgium and Spain decided to extend the active suffrage in local elections also to third-country nationals, although in the latter case this applies only based on reciprocity agreements. In France, however, EU foreigners are still the only foreign group entitled to vote in municipal elections.

Keeping in mind these observations, Table 3 summarizes the figures of EU citizens and TCNs entitled to vote (potential voters) for the local elections held from 1999 onward in France, Belgium and Spain (see also Table 2, 3 and 4 in Appendix).

*Table 3. Foreigners entitled to vote in local elections in Spain, France and Belgium (Potential voters)*

<b>Elections/ groups</b>	<b>EU foreigners (total N)</b>	<b>EU15</b>	<b>New EU MS</b>	<b>TCN</b>	<b>% foreigners over total potential electorate*</b>
<i>France</i>					
2001	1.201.206	1.201.206			4,9
2008	1.234.172	1.164.785	69.387		4,5
<i>Belgium</i>					
2000	498.315	498.315			
2006	529.874	506.460	23.414	108.617	7,8
2012	653.903	542.590	111.313	146.721	9,3
<i>Spain</i>					
1999	961.478	961.478		16.004	2,9
2003	1.036.924	1.036.924		16.477	3,1
2007	1.559.050	882.483	676.567	14.276	4,5
2011	2.112.045	1.103.608	1.008.437	352.125	7,1

Source: Own elaboration. In the Spanish case, the data is from the Municipal Census of the Spanish Institute for Statistics. The data for Belgium is from Statbel, Direction Générale Statistique et Information Économique. In the French case, the data is from Strudel (2001, 2010) and Collard (2010). \* The figures of total potential electorate are from the Ministry of Interior of each country.

A first overview of the data suggests that, once again, foreigners counted with a substantial electoral representation in local politics in all three countries, their share from the overall electorate being even higher than for the European Parliament elections. Secondly, just like for EP elections, Belgium represents, among our cases, the country where non-nationals showed the highest electoral visibility as, by the time of the 2012 elections, 9 out of each 100 residents entitled to vote at the municipal level were foreigners. As for the evolution of this pattern, the data indicates that, whereas in France, foreigners' potential electoral impact maintained more or less stable over the period analyzed, in Belgium and Spain, due to the latest EU enlargements and the extension of voting rights to TCNs, the share of non-nationals eligible to cast their ballot increased during the last years and it even duplicated in Spain from 1999 to 2011.

Finally, the distribution by citizenship of these figures is largely consistent with the one previously highlighted for EP elections. In Belgium and France, EU15 citizens with a larger migration tradition constituted the most substantial segments of the foreign electorate at the local level. By the time of the last municipal elections held in each case, Community voters originating from EU15 countries accounted for 68% of all foreigners entitled to vote in Belgium, this share rising to 94% in France. By specific origins, the most representative nationalities within this group were Italians, French, Dutch and Spaniards in Belgium; and Portuguese, Italians, Spaniards and Germans in France. This confirms the observation already highlighted for EP elections, that the 2004 and 2007 enlargement waves did not lead to substantial changes within the foreign electorate in these two countries; not the extension of local voting rights to TCNs in Belgium, as for the 2012 local elections, non-EU migrants (mainly Moroccans and Turks) only represented 18% of all foreigners entitled to vote. At the opposite pole, however, in



Spain, we distinguish two relevant changes within the general map of non-national electorate over the period analyzed. First, if until the 2007 local elections, EU15 citizens (particularly Britons, Germans and Italians) counted with the highest electoral potential, after the 2007 EU enlargement, Romanians became the foreign group with the highest potential impact, the share of “new” Community citizens over all foreigners entitled to vote reaching 41%. Secondly, for the 2011 elections, ten new groups of non-EU migrants with reciprocity agreements were allowed to cast their ballot for the first time. Given that they were highly represented in demographic terms (particularly Ecuadorians, Colombians and Peruvians), their electoral empowerment changed again the distribution of the foreign electorate, such that for the latest Spanish local elections, TCNs already accounted for 15% of all potential voters.

Table 4 illustrates foreigners’ levels of political participation in local politics in France, Belgium and Spain by differentiating between EU15 foreigners, those originating in the new Member States and non-EU voters, thus allowing us to address, once again, the question of the extent to which “old” and “new” Europeans, as well as TCNs, are converging as far as their patterns of electoral engagement are concerned.

*Table 4. Foreigners registered to vote in local elections in Spain, France and Belgium*

<b>Elections/ Groups</b>	<b>All foreigners</b>	<b>EU foreigners</b>	<b>EU15</b>	<b>New EU MS</b>	<b>TCN</b>
<i>France</i>					
2001	166.122 (13,8)	166.122 (13,8)	166.122 (13,8)		
2008	258.703 (21,0)	258.703 (21,0)	255.008 (21,9)	3.695 (5,3)	
<i>Belgium</i>					
2000	87.858 (17,6)	87.858 (17,6)	87.858 (17,6)		
2006	128.038 (20,1)	110.973 (20,9)	109.607 (21,6)	1.366 (5,8)	17.065 (15,7)
2012	141.397 (17,7)	120.826 (18,5)	114.869 (21,0)	5.957 (5,4)	20.571 (14,0)
<i>Spain</i>					
1999	71.174 (7,3)	70.869 (7,4)	70.869 (7,4)		305 (1,9)
2003	153.405 (14,6)	152.896 (14,8)	152.896 (14,8)		509 (3,1)
2007	334.594 (21,3)	334.072 (21,4)	246.056 (27,9)	88.016 (13,0)	522 (3,7)
2011	489.816 (19,5)	427.771 (20,3)	289.629 (26,2)	138.142 (13,7)	52.045 (14,8)

Source: Own elaboration. The figures of EU foreigners registered to vote are from the Spanish Electoral Census for Foreign Residents (CERE), the French Ministry of Interior and the Belgian Electoral Service, SPF Interieur. The registration shares are calculated based on the numbers of EU foreigners entitled to vote in each case (see sources for these figures in Table 1).

The first consideration we can draw from the data is that, generally, our results seem to corroborate the pattern of low electoral engagement of foreigners previously identified for EP elections: in all three cases, only a small share of eligible Community voters took advantage of their local voting rights, this fraction being, once again, well below the general turnout for this type of electoral contests. Secondly, the registration shares in municipal elections among EU foreigners were, however, higher than the ones observed for EP elections. This result is consistent across all the countries analyzed, thus indicating that, after being formally empowered with electoral rights, non-national EU citizens show a higher likelihood to involve in the local politics of their host

Member States than to vote for EP elections. In any case, our data also points towards a higher variation in Europeans' electoral behaviour between the three countries under study than for the EP elections previously analyzed. For example, for the first municipal elections in which EU foreigners were entitled to exercise their voting rights, only 7% of them registered in Spain. However, in France and Belgium, this average registration rate for the first local elections in which they participated was approximately two times higher than in Spain: for the 2001 French local elections, 14% of all eligible Community voters took the effort to register on the complementary electoral lists; whereas in Belgium, this share reached almost 18% for the elections held in 2000. Moreover, it is interesting to note that, whereas in Spain, the fraction of EU foreigners registered for the 1999 local elections was similar to the one observed for the EP elections celebrated that year and only slightly higher than for the 1994 EP elections, in Belgium and France, the share of EU foreigners who mobilised to register for the first time for the 2000 and 2001 local elections was substantially higher than for the 1994 EP elections and it even duplicated the average registration rates for the 1999 EP elections.

Along with this, the evolution of the registration rates for the following local elections held in each case also allows us to pinpoint some interesting findings *vis-à-vis* the extent to which intra-EU migrants used their European citizenship rights in the electoral field. In this regard, we observe, first, that although Spain was, among our cases, the Member State in which EU foreigners showed the lowest levels of electoral engagement in the first local elections in which they were entitled to vote, for the following electoral contests the average registration rates increased substantially. Thus, if in 1999, only 7% of all eligible Community voters were enrolled in the Electoral Census, for the 2011 elections this share multiplied by three. In France, however, the increase in the registration rate for the 2008 elections in comparison with the previous ones was much more moderate (21% compared to 14% in 2001); whereas in Belgium, intra-EU migrants maintained more or less stable their level of electoral enrolment across all electoral contests analyzed.

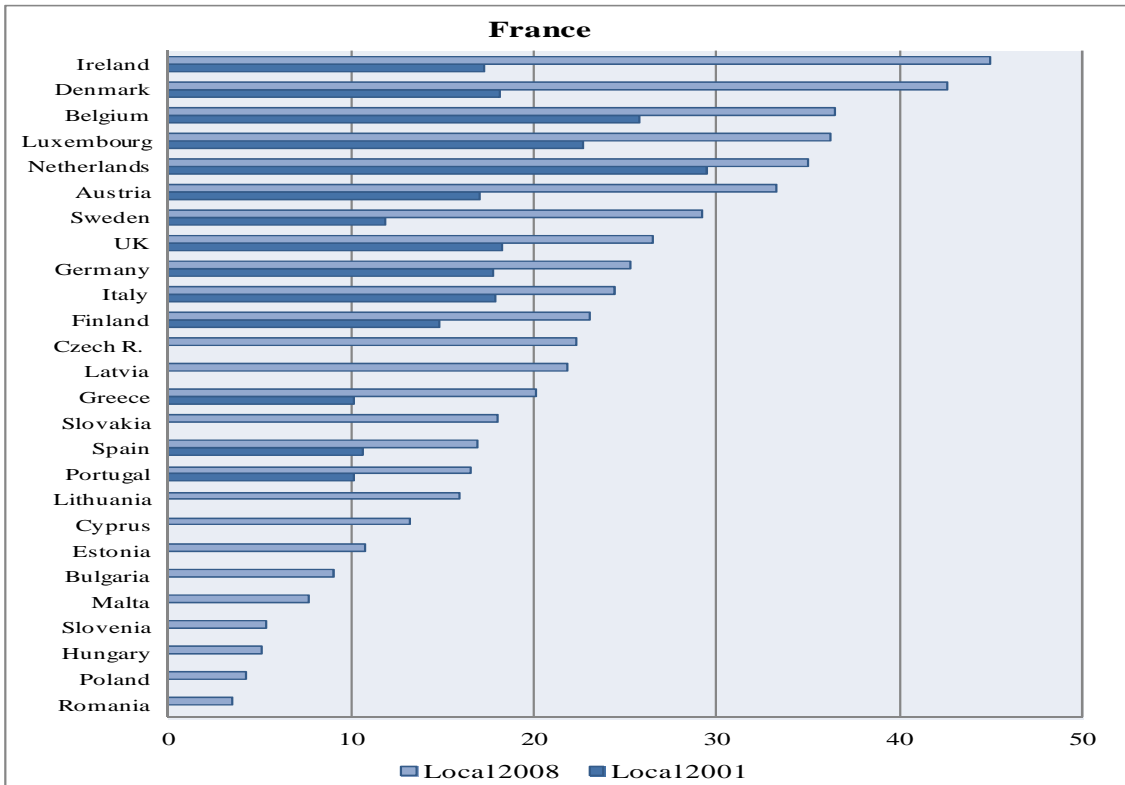
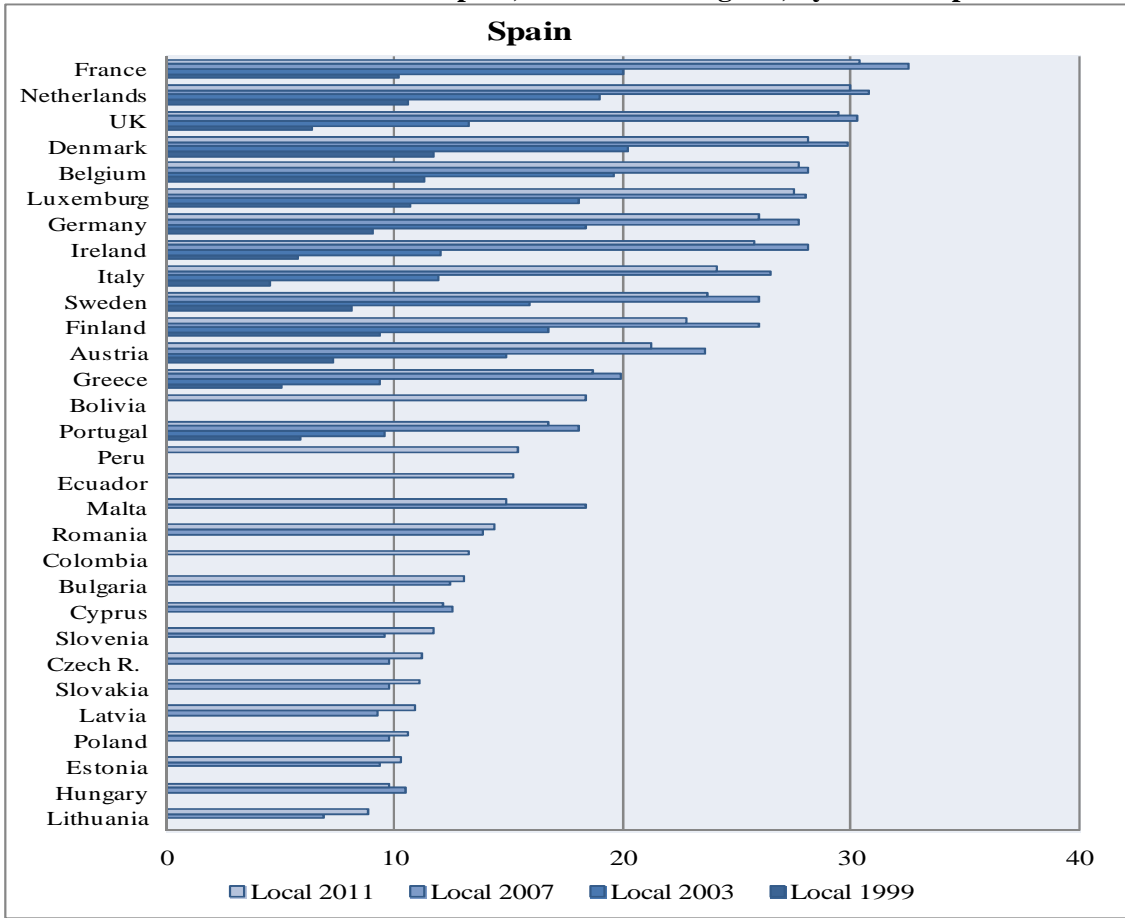
Moreover, the breakdown by citizenship reveals, once again, interesting intra-group variations suggesting that some EU migrants are more prone to actively engage in electoral politics than others. One of the most relevant aspects in this regard is related to the extremely low levels of political participation at the municipal level among "new" Community voters from the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. This result applies for almost all local elections analyzed and across all three countries under study and, in accordance with our previous findings for EP elections, it draws attention on the alarming electoral apathy of these "new" Europeans. However, we also observe some differences from this general trend. For instance, in France and Belgium, where EU foreigners from the new Member States counted, in principle, with a lower electoral visibility within the overall foreign electorate, their average registration rate for all municipal elections held since 1999 only reached around 5%. Nevertheless, in Spain, where "new" Community voters showed a quite elevated electoral potential given their high demographic concentration, this registration share was slightly higher (around

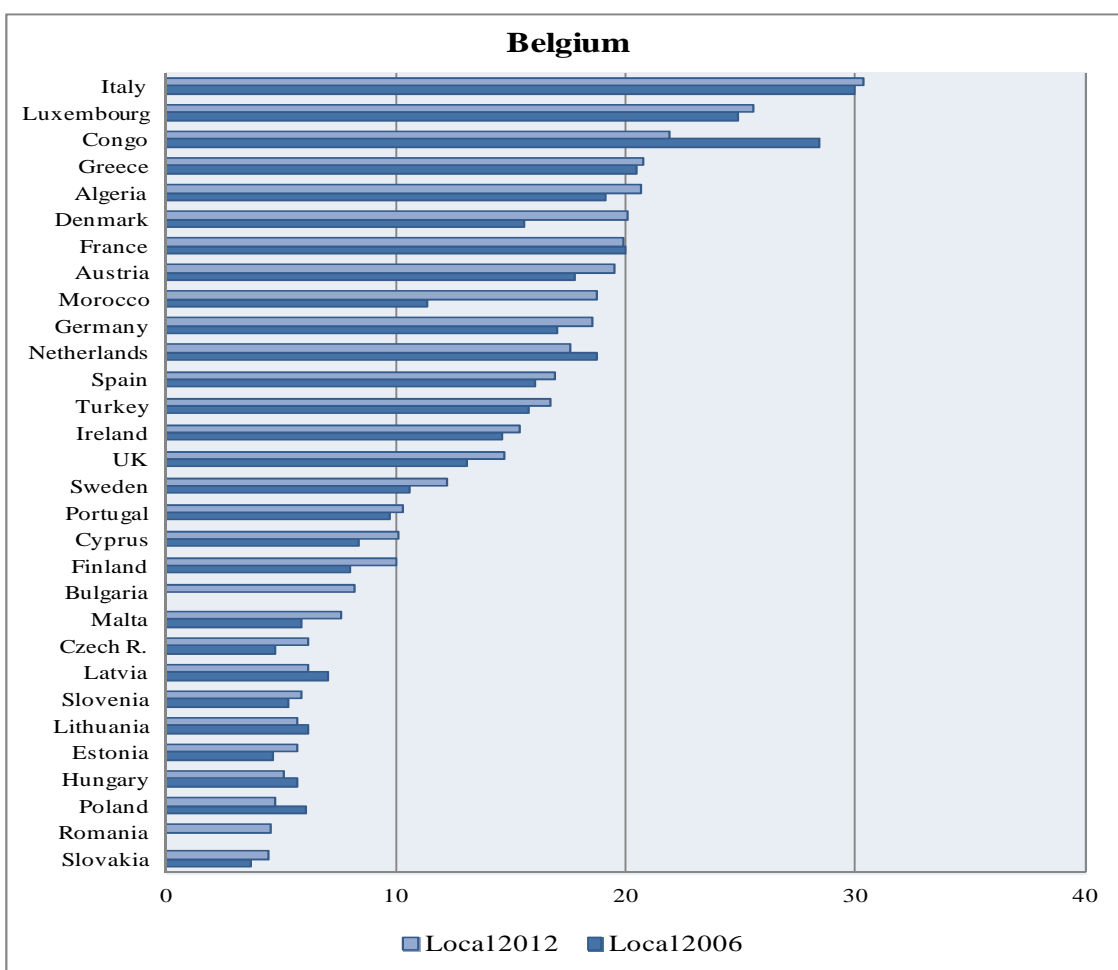
14%), although still very unsatisfactory. Furthermore, this level of political participation among foreigners from the new Member States was also well below the registration rates of EU15 citizens. This applied not only when we compare the participation rates of both groups for the same electoral contests (for all the local elections held in the three countries from 2004 onward, the registration shares of "new" Community voters was around four times lower than that of EU15 citizens), but also when we compare it with the first local elections in which EU15 citizens were allowed to vote in each country (in Belgium, the registration rate of EU15 citizens for the 2001 elections was two times higher than that of "new" Community voters in 2008, whereas in France, the enrolment rate for "old" Europeans in the 2000 elections was three times higher than for "new" Community voters in 2006). The exception, once again, was in the Spanish case, where foreigners from the new Member States registered for the 2007 local elections in a larger extent than EU15 citizens for the local electoral contests of 1999.

Along with this, it is also relevant to note that the electoral involvement of "new" Europeans in local politics was even lower than that of third-country nationals in Belgium and Spain, where the latter were also nominated a eligible voters at the municipal level. This differential is very relevant considering the fact that non-EU migrants have to face additional institutional barriers in order to be able to cast their ballot in both countries, such as the necessity to prove certain period of prior residence. In light of the data, this variation was particularly visible in the Belgian case, where non-EU migrants made use of their electoral rights in a substantially higher extent, their electoral enrolment level for the 2006 and 2012 local elections being almost three times higher than that of "new" Community voters. The same applied for the 2012 Spanish local elections when most non-EU foreigners were entitled to vote for the first time, although, in this case, the differential between the two groups was substantially lower.

Finally, regarding the distribution of these findings by specific nationalities, looking at those groups with the highest electoral potential, we observe that in France, Portuguese, Spaniards and Italians showed quite low levels of political participation, although their registration shares were higher than for the EP elections held in the same country. However, in Belgium, the most representative nationality within the foreign electorate- Italians- also showed the highest registration share among all EU foreign voters as, in 2012, 30 out of each 100 Italians entitled to vote in municipal elections were enrolled in the Electoral Census. However, other EU15 foreign groups that also counted with a high electoral potential in Belgian local elections - French, Dutch or Spaniards-, mobilised to vote in a lesser extent, their registration shares being below the general average for "old" Community voters. As for the Spanish case, although British, Germans and French citizens who counted with the highest electoral potential showed extremely low mobilization levels in the first local elections in which they were entitled to vote, their participation rates improved over time to the point that, in 2011, they were above the general average. On the other hand, Romanians and Bulgarians in Spain did not translate their high potential electoral force into effective mobilisation, their registration rates being still much reduced.

**Figures 4, 5 & 6. Share of registered voters from the overall number of foreign residents entitled to vote in local elections in Spain, France and Belgium, by citizenship**





Source: Own elaboration. The figures of EU foreigners registered to vote are from the Spanish Electoral Census for Foreign Residents (CERE), the French Ministry of Interior and the Belgian Electoral Service, SPF Interieur. The registration shares are calculated based on the numbers of EU foreigners entitled to vote in each case (see sources for these figures in Table 1).

### *General discussion*

The present paper aimed to examine the political practice of the EU citizenship in the electoral field in Spain, France and Belgium, three EU Member States that count with a high proportion of foreign residents within the overall population, although with different migration experiences. In doing so, we paid attention to the extent to which non-national EU citizens made use of their voting rights in both EP and local elections held subsequently to 1999 in all three countries. The explorative analysis conducted so far points towards low mobilization rates of EU foreigners in all cases, as although their potential electoral impact was quite elevated, only a small share of eligible Community voters took advantage of their electoral rights in these countries, independently of the electoral contest under analysis. Secondly, our results indicate that, in all three countries, foreigners coming from the new EU Member States seem to be less likely to make use of the voting rights arising from their status of citizens of the Union than non-nationals from EU15 countries. Furthermore, in Spain and Belgium, their mobilization

rates for municipal elections in particular, were even lower than the ones registered for third-country nationals, despite the fact that the latter represents a more disadvantaged group facing higher barriers for political participation. Additionally, some intra-group variations were also identified when attending to the distribution by specific nationalities of EU citizens who mobilized to vote. Hence, these different patterns seem to suggest that, despite the general principles applied to all EU foreigners in terms of legal access to voting rights in their host Member States, some groups are more prone to practically assume their European citizenship in the electoral sphere than others.

Finally, our findings also indicate that, despite their marginal engagement in the electoral life of their receiving countries, non-national EU citizens seem to be more prone to actively involve in local politics, as their registration rates in municipal elections were constantly higher than in EP elections in all three countries. In any case, further empirical research is needed in order to obtain a comprehensive overview of the way in which EU citizens make use of their voting rights outside their countries of origin. First, these preliminary findings for Spain, France and Belgium need to be contrasted with the situation in other EU host societies, in order to obtain generalized conclusions on how the legal entitlements associated to the European citizenship are actually translated into participatory practices in the electoral field. Secondly, special attention should be paid to those factors (individual and contextual variables) that might help to explain this low electoral involvement of non-national EU citizens, acting as potential barriers against their political mobilization.

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## APPENDIX

Table 1. EU foreigners entitled to vote in EP elections, by citizenship (Potential voters)

Country of origin	EP 1999			EP 2004			EP 2009		
	Spain	France	Belgium*	Spain	France	Belgium	Spain	France	Belgium
UK	328.859	65.353		341.257	73.626	21.433	332.715	129.242	20.992
Germany	163.921	65.353		175.208	72.775	29.520	175.709	80.577	32.373
Italy	134.853	212.023		160.246	194.546	171.170	154.121	161.813	157.955
Portugal	99.702	580.080		117.201	555.590	20.982	125.610	428.932	25.141
Spain		175.195			161.427	39.964		119.068	39.557
France	88.993			102.682		99.319	105.260		117.513
Netherlands	44.966	22.557		47.747	25.365	85.685	46.639	30.676	105.593
Belgium	29.925	61.113		32.010	66.691		31.942	74.324	
Sweden	19.905	7.997		21.756	7.806	3.577	21.395	7.099	3.529
Ireland	14.986	5.476		16.142	5.666	2.818	14.424	6.927	2.919
Denmark	11.106	4.913		11.693	5.571	2.657	11.563	4.712	2.430
Finland	11.250	2.798		12.033	2.755	2.337	10.934	2.502	2.340
Austria	8.816	4.191		9883	4.071	1.999	9.737	4.367	2.085
Greece	3.606	6.443		4.480	5.113	15.388	4.276	5.829	13.564
Luxemburg	590	3.143		625	2.541	3.932	587	3.982	4.022
<b>EU15</b>	<b>961.478</b>	<b>1.216.635</b>	<b>496.056</b>	<b>1.052.963</b>	<b>1.118.543</b>	<b>500.781</b>	<b>1.044.912</b>	<b>1.060.048</b>	<b>530.013</b>
Poland				66.917	28.751	9.215	72.065	36.783	28.584
Lithuania				16.683	683	263	18.419	1.476	1.012
Czech R.				8.110	1.566	929	7.994	3.087	1.998
Slovakia				7.060	1.328	712	7.257	2.413	2.443
Hungary				7.921	2.795	1.310	6.854	3.199	2.775
Latvia				3.171	382	195	2.527	790	668
Estonia				1.349	243	147	1.140	389	535
Slovenia				1186	661	240	1.091	660	576
Malta				249	140	120	194	162	269
Cyprus				200	271	76	161	376	231
Romania							668.985	33.131	16.903
Bulgaria							139.179	8.636	8.500
<b>New MS</b>				<b>112.846</b>	<b>36.823</b>	<b>13.207</b>	<b>925.866</b>	<b>91.102</b>	<b>64.494</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>961.478</b>	<b>1.216.635</b>	<b>496.056</b>	<b>1.165.809</b>	<b>1.220.366</b>	<b>513.988</b>	<b>1.970.778</b>	<b>1.151.150</b>	<b>594.507</b>
<b>% over total potential electorate**</b>	<b>2,8</b>	<b>3,0</b>	<b>6,8</b>	<b>3,4</b>	<b>2,9</b>	<b>6,8</b>	<b>5,6</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>7,3</b>

Source: Own elaboration. In the Spanish case, the data is from the Municipal Census of the Spanish Institute for Statistics. The data for Belgium is from Statbel, Direction Générale Statistique et Information Économique. In the French case, the data for the 1999 and 2004 elections is from Strudel (2001, 2010) and Collard (2010) whereas for the 2009 elections, the data is from the INSEE Population Census conducted that year. \*The distribution of the data for the 1999 elections by specific nationalities is not available. \*\* The figures of total potential electorate are from the Ministry of Interior of each country, the total potential electorate including all national citizens and foreigners entitled to vote for each election.

Table 2. Foreigners entitled to vote in Spanish local elections, by citizenship (Potential voters)

Country of origin	Local elections 1999		Local elections 2003		Local elections 2007		Local elections 2011	
	N	% over foreign electorate	N	% over foreign electorate	N	% over foreign electorate	N	% over foreign electorate
UK	328.859	33,6	338.917	32,2	285.677	18,2	352.718	14,3
Germany	163.921	16,8	173.215	16,4	156.401	9,9	182.873	7,4
Italy	134.853	13,8	156.198	14,8	121.549	7,7	168.712	6,9
Portugal	99.702	10,2	113.979	10,8	95.409	6,1	128.775	5,2
France	88.993	9,1	100.286	9,5	90.523	5,8	109.461	4,4
Netherlands	44.966	4,6	47.206	4,5	40.952	2,6	49.289	2,0
Belgium	29.925	3,1	31.630	3,0	29.251	1,9	33.065	1,3
Sweden	19.905	2,0	21.411	2,0	18.655	1,2	22.956	0,9
Ireland	14.986	1,5	15.928	1,5	12.000	0,8	16.176	0,7
Finland	11.250	1,2	11.876	1,1	9.658	0,6	12.105	0,5
Denmark	11.106	1,1	11.585	1,1	10.231	0,7	12.006	0,5
Austria	8.816	0,9	9.725	0,9	8.223	0,5	10.378	0,4
Greece	3.606	0,4	4.347	0,4	3.415	0,2	4.453	0,2
Luxemburg	590	0,1	621	0,1	539	0,0	641	0,0
<b>EU15</b>	<b>961.478</b>	<b>98,4</b>	<b>1.036.924</b>	<b>98,4</b>	<b>882.483</b>	<b>56,1</b>	<b>1.103.608</b>	<b>44,8</b>
Poland					54.638	3,5	73.955	3,0
Lithuania					15.748	1,0	19.642	0,8
Czech R.					5.958	0,4	8.691	0,4
Hungary					4.157	0,3	7.996	0,3
Slovakia					5.560	0,4	7.633	0,3
Latvia					1.893	0,1	3.443	0,1
Estonia					826	0,1	1.415	0,1
Slovenia					741	0,1	1.214	0,1
Malta					136	0,0	241	0,0
Cyprus					120	0,0	190	0,0
Romania					479.969	30,5	734.751	29,8
Bulgaria					106.821	6,8	149.266	6,1
<b>New MS</b>					<b>676.567</b>	<b>43,0</b>	<b>1.008.437</b>	<b>40,9</b>
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>961.478</b>	<b>98,4</b>	<b>1.036.924</b>	<b>98,4</b>	<b>1.559.050</b>	<b>99,1</b>	<b>2.112.045</b>	<b>85,7</b>
Ecuador							168.639	6,8
Colombia							95.192	3,9
Peru							38.244	1,6
Bolivia							27.502	1,1
Chile							10.078	0,4
<b>Total TCN</b>	<b>16.004</b>	<b>1,6</b>	<b>16.477</b>	<b>1,6</b>	<b>14.276</b>	<b>0,9</b>	<b>352.125</b>	<b>14,3</b>
<b>% foreigners over total electorate*</b>	<b>2,9</b>		<b>3,1</b>		<b>4,5</b>		<b>7,1</b>	

Source: Own elaboration from the data of the Municipal Census, Spanish Institute for Statistics (INE). \* The figures of total potential electorate are from the Spanish Ministry of Interior. For TCNs, the table only includes the data for the most numerous foreign groups.

Table 3. Foreigners entitled to vote in local elections in Belgium, by citizenship (Potential voters)

Country of origin	Local elections 2006		Local elections 2012	
	N	% over foreign potential electorate	N	% over foreign potential electorate
Italy	162.382	25,4	147.376	18,4
France	105.146	16,5	127.545	15,9
Netherlands	95.054	14,9	111.190	13,9
Spain	38.788	6,1	43.467	5,4
Germany	30.807	4,8	32.484	4,1
Portugal	22.320	3,5	29.485	3,7
UK	20.739	3,2	20.238	2,5
Greece	14.341	2,2	13.654	1,7
Luxemburg	3.873	0,6	3.890	0,5
Sweden	3.417	0,5	3.332	0,4
Ireland	2.761	0,4	3.233	0,4
Finland	2.306	0,4	2.324	0,3
Denmark	2.502	0,4	2.223	0,3
Austria	2.024	0,3	2.149	0,3
<i>EU15</i>	<i>506.460</i>	<i>79,3</i>	<i>542.590</i>	<i>67,8</i>
Poland	16.357	2,6	44.991	5,6
Hungary	1.809	0,3	3.854	0,5
Czech R.	1.391	0,2	2.387	0,3
Slovakia	1.656	0,3	3.562	0,4
Lithuania	628	0,1	1.535	0,2
Latvia	420	0,1	1.224	0,2
Slovenia	436	0,1	709	0,1
Estonia	380	0,1	654	0,1
Malta	170	0,0	328	0,0
Cyprus	167	0,0	288	0,0
Romania			35.234	4,4
Bulgaria			16.547	2,1
<i>New MS</i>	<i>23.414</i>	<i>3,7</i>	<i>111.313</i>	<i>13,9</i>
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>529.874</b>	<b>83,0</b>	<b>653.903</b>	<b>81,7</b>
Morocco	33.163	5,2	36.031	4,5
Turkey	19.209	3,0	21.149	2,6
Congo	4.790	0,8	8.344	1,0
Algeria	3.252	0,5	4.173	0,5
<b>Total TCN</b>	<b>108.617</b>	<b>17,0</b>	<b>146.721</b>	<b>18,3</b>
<b>% over the total potential electorate</b>	<b>7,8</b>		<b>9,3</b>	

Source: Own elaboration from the data of the Direction Générale Institutions et Population, SPF Interieur. For TCNs, the table only includes the data for the most numerous foreign groups.

Table 4. Foreigners entitled to vote in French local elections, by citizenship (Potential voters)

Country of origin	Local elections 2001		Local elections 2008	
	N	% over foreign potential electorate	N	% over foreign potential electorate
Portugal	566.078	47,1	492.000	39,9
Italy	204.160	17,0	178.000	14,4
Spain	167.807	14,0	135.000	10,9
UK	68.095	5,7	128.000	10,4
Germany	73.035	6,1	90.000	7,3
Belgium	63.731	5,3	79.000	6,4
Netherlands	24.058	2,0	34.000	2,8
Sweden	8.014	0,7	6.491	0,5
Greece	5.668	0,5	4.843	0,4
Ireland	5.621	0,5	4.270	0,4
Denmark	5.321	0,4	4.071	0,3
Austria	4.137	0,3	4.041	0,3
Luxemburg	2.776	0,2	2.469	0,2
Finland	2.705	0,2	2.600	0,2
<i>EU15</i>	<i>1.201.206</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>1.164.785</i>	<i>94,4</i>
Poland			35.000	2,8
Hungary			3.124	0,3
Czech R.			1.661	0,1
Slovakia			1.118	0,1
Lithuania			607	0,1
Slovenia			799	0,1
Latvia			408	0,0
Estonia			307	0,0
Cyprus			417	0,0
Malta			365	0,0
Romania			22.000	1,8
Bulgaria			3.581	0,3
<i>New MS</i>			<i>69.387</i>	<i>5,6</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.201.206</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1.234.172</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>% over the total potential electorate*</b>	<b>4,9</b>		<b>4,5</b>	

Source: Own elaboration from Strudel (2001, 2010) and Collard (2010). \* The figures of total potential electorate are from the Spanish Ministry of Interior.