

# European Elections of 2024 in Cyprus

The European Elections of 2024 in Cyprus marked a significant shift in the political landscape of the country. One of the most notable outcomes of these elections was the election of 24-year-old TikTok and YouTuber Fidias Panayiotou as a Member of the European Parliament (MEP). Garnering 19.4% of the vote, Panayiotou's success is remarkable not only due to his background but also because he came close to the percentages of the two major parties, Democratic Rally (DISY-EPP) and Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL-GUE), and outperformed several historical and established parties, such as the Democratic Party (DIKO-S&D) and the Movement for Social Democracy (EDEK-S&D).

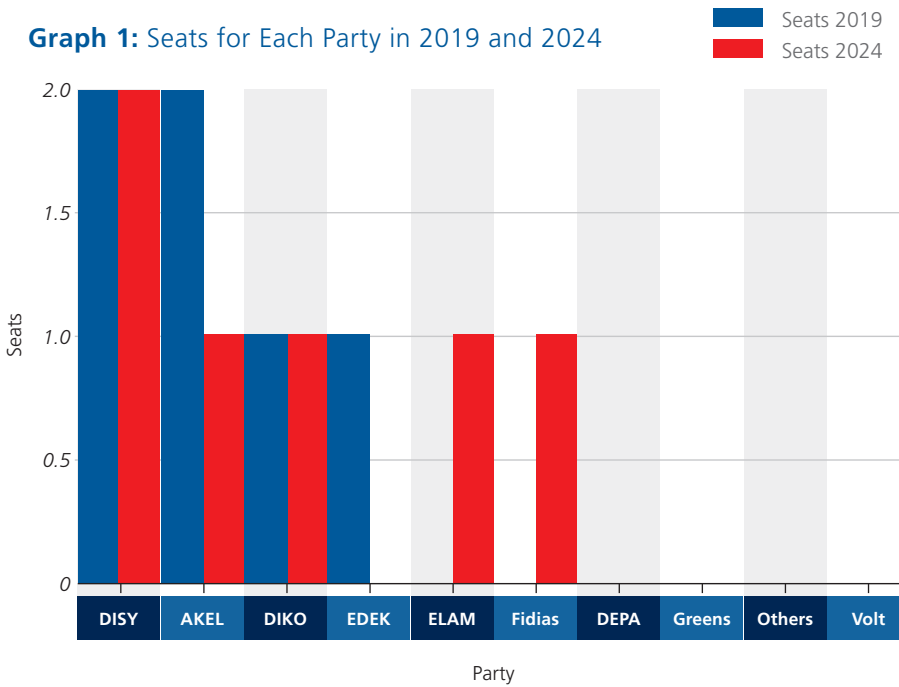
## THE FINAL RESULTS INDICATE THE FOLLOWING DISTRIBUTION OF VOTES AND SEATS (see Graph 1 and 2):

DISY: 24.7% (2 seats)  
 AKEL: 21.7% (1 seat) [-1 seat compared to 2019]  
 Fidias Panayiotou: 19.4% (1 seat)  
 ELAM: 11.2% (1 seat)  
 DIKO: 9.6% (1 seat)

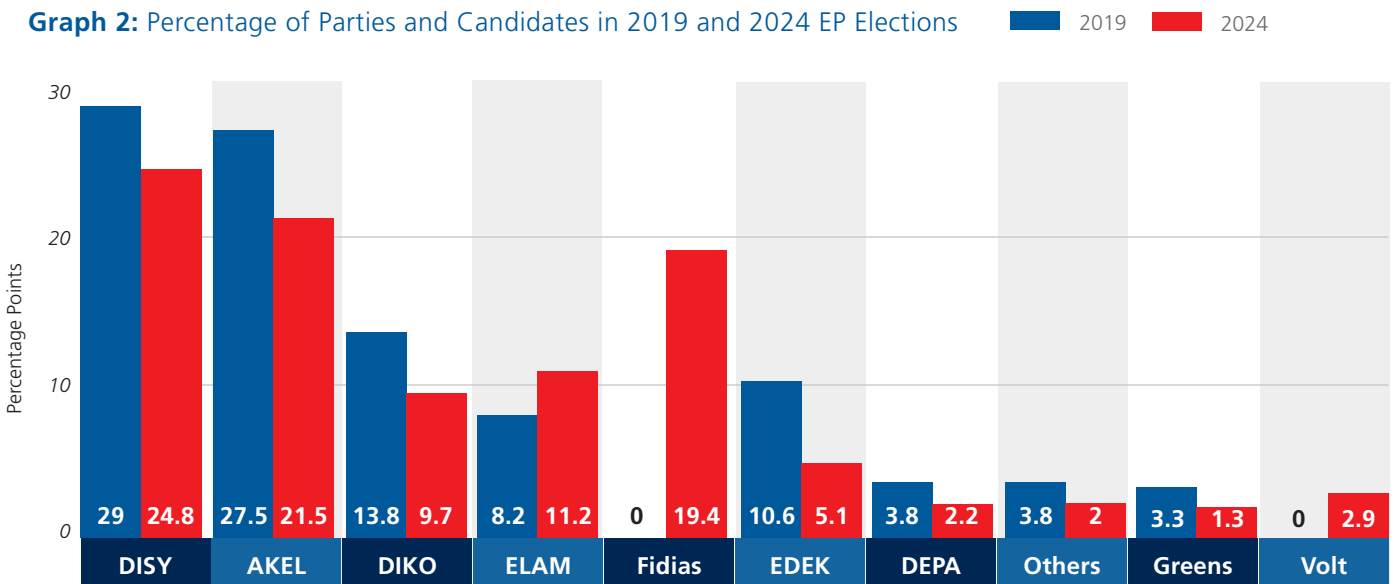
Fidias Panayiotou's unexpected electoral success deprived AKEL of one of its traditionally held seats. Moreover, the rise of the far-right National Popular Front (ELAM-ECR), which secured its first seat in the European Parliament, contributed to the shifting political dynamics. This shift resulted in EDEK losing its representation, a significant change for the second oldest party in Cyprus.

Fidias Panayiotou's success is particularly noteworthy due to several factors. Firstly, Panayiotou managed to resonate with a considerable portion of the electorate, especially the younger demographic. His ability to attract 19.4% of the vote is astonishing, considering he had no prior political experience or an established party apparatus supporting him. Panayiotou's campaign strategy relied heavily on his social media presence, where he leveraged platforms like TikTok and YouTube to reach out to potential voters.

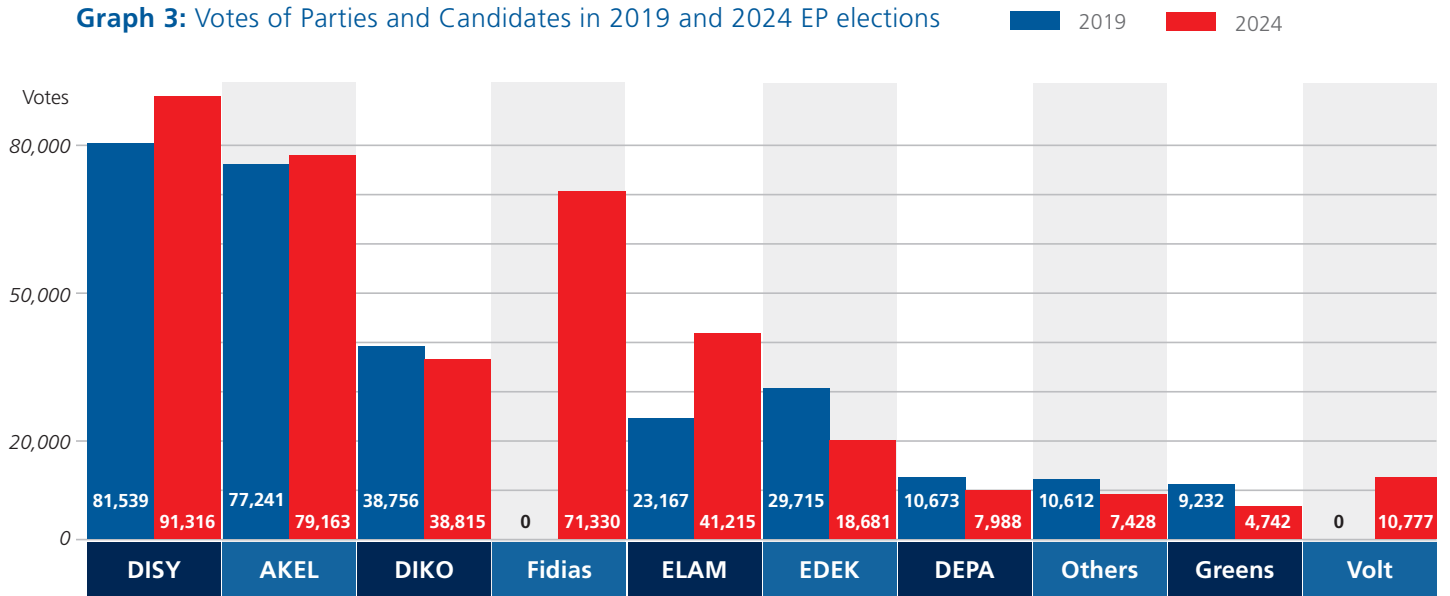
**Graph 1: Seats for Each Party in 2019 and 2024**



**Graph 2: Percentage of Parties and Candidates in 2019 and 2024 EP Elections**



**Graph 3: Votes of Parties and Candidates in 2019 and 2024 EP elections**

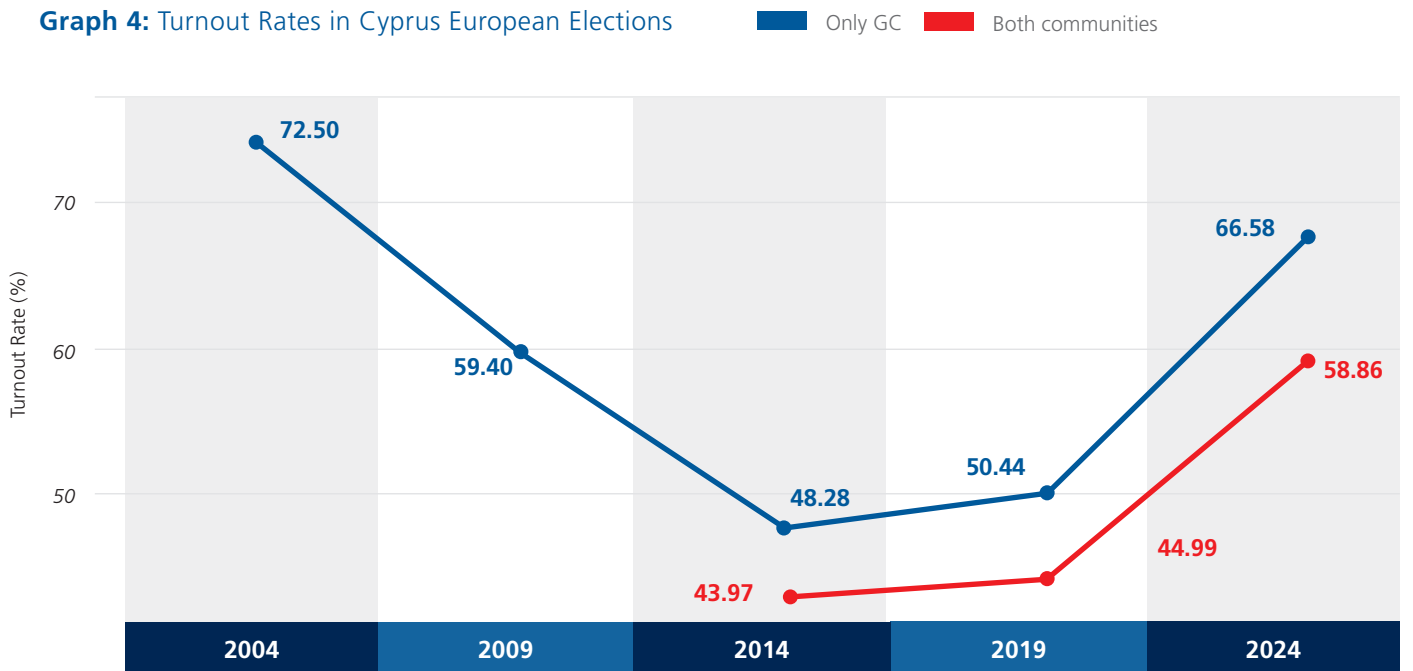


Panayiotou himself admitted that he did not expect to achieve such a high percentage of the vote. He stated that when he decided to run, he did not think he could be elected, as he would have to compete against well-established parties. His campaign was unique in that he did not express any position on political issues during the election period. Instead, he emphasized that he would learn about political matters and the European Union once elected and would consult YouTube and social media for guidance. He has also stated his intention to join the Committee on Education in the European Parliament and to remain independent, not aligning with any existing political group or to form his own political group if he can find sufficient support.

His success suggests that traditional political campaigns and party social networks may no longer be as effective as they once were, especially in engaging younger voters.

At the same time, the rise of the far-right ELAM is another significant outcome of the 2024 European elections in Cyprus, but less unexpected. Securing 11.2% of the vote and gaining a seat in the European Parliament for the first time, ELAM's success reflects a growing trend towards far-right politics in Cyprus. ELAM's success resulted in EDEK losing its seat in the European Parliament, which marks a significant shift in the representation of Cypriot political parties at the European level.

**Graph 4: Turnout Rates in Cyprus European Elections**



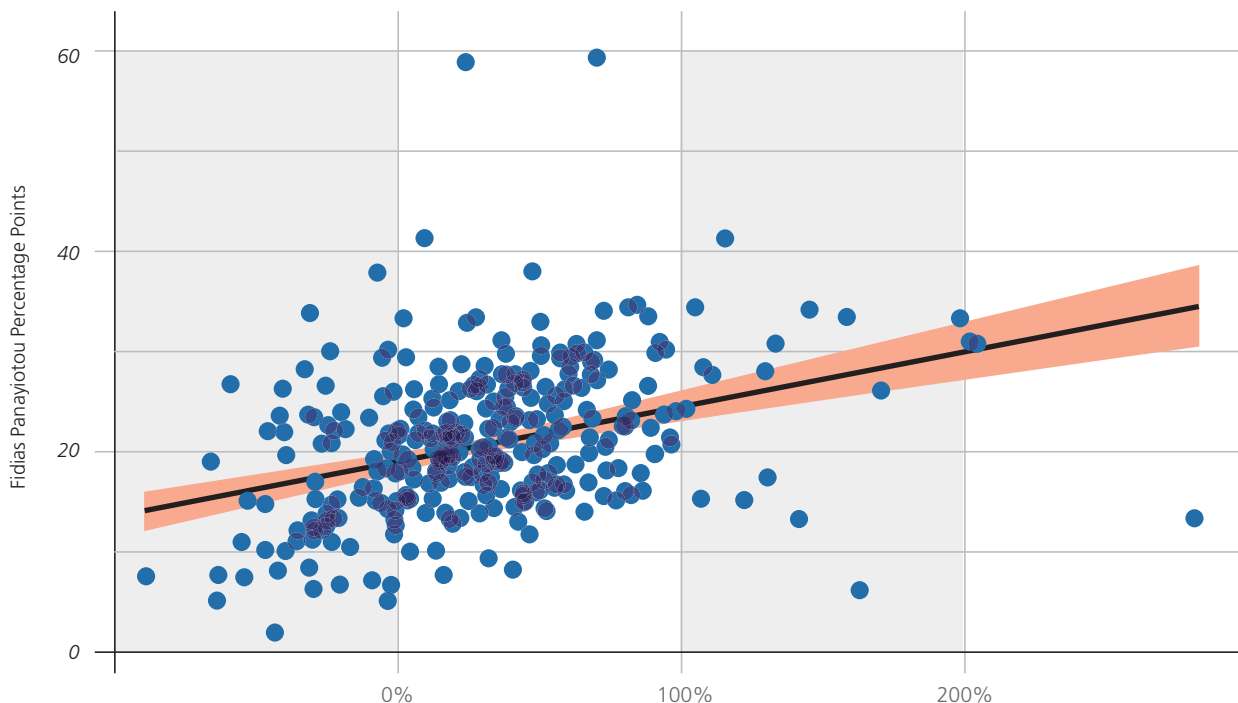
The 2024 European elections in Cyprus also saw a significant increase in voter turnout compared to the 2019 elections. Fidias Panayiotou appears to have benefited from this increased turnout, as in towns with higher voter participation he recorded his highest percentage points. The increase in voter turnout is attributed to the first ever simultaneous holding of local and regional elections with the European elections. In addition, the increase in turnout in 2024 election made the two major parties DISY and AKEL to increase their votes (by approximately 10,000 for DISY and 2,000 for AKEL) which nevertheless was not translated into higher vote shares as the respective percentages show. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that despite the overall decline of the party system in Cyprus, the two major parties seem to be resisting.

The progress of turnout in European Elections in Cyprus has seen significant fluctuations over the years. Prior to the 2014 European Elections, a law was passed which automatically registered Turkish Cypriots in the electoral registry solely for European Elections. However, this did not yield the expected increase in voter participation; instead, turnout decreased as the vast majority of Turkish Cypriots showed little interest in the electoral processes of the Republic of Cyprus. This disinterest contributed to a drop in overall turnout rates. Notably, in the 2024 European Elections, there was a marked surge in voter turnout. This increase can be attributed to the simultaneous conduction of European, regional, and local elections for the first time. This integrated approach effectively mobilized voters, resulting in a significant rise in turnout compared to previous election years.

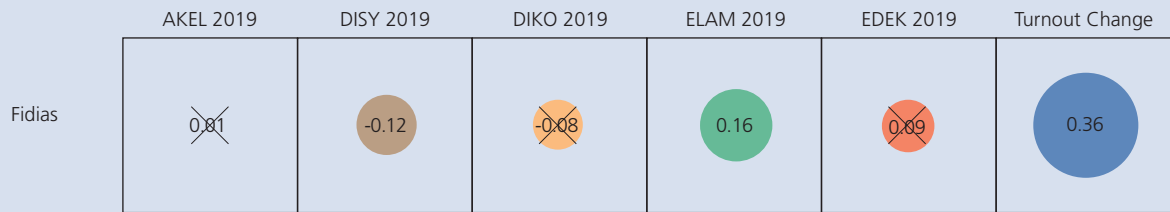
In Graph 5, we see a visual representation of the relationship between the proportional change in turnout and Fidias Panayiotou's percentage points in the 2024 European elections. The x-axis represents the proportional change in turnout, while the y-axis displays the percentage points secured by Fidias. The graph includes a scatter plot of individual data points, each representing a town, and a fitted linear model that illustrates the trend. The plot indicates that towns with a higher proportional change in turnout tend to show higher support for Fidias.

■ Only GC ■ Both communities

**Graph 4: Proportional Change in Turnout**



Moreover, the correlation plot demonstrates the relationship between Fidias Panayiotou's percentage points in the 2024 European elections and main parties' percentage points and turnout change. The analysis reveals positive correlation with the proportional change in turnout, suggesting that increased voter engagement significantly benefited Fidias. Weak negative correlations with DISY and ELAM may imply slight voter shifts.



*Fidias percentage points correlation with 2019 traditional parties' electoral results and change in turnout rates (per election centre)*

The European Elections of 2024 in Cyprus have brought about significant changes in the political landscape. The election of Fidias Panayiotou, a 24-year-old social media influencer, as an MEP is a testament to the evolving nature of political engagement and the growing influence of digital platforms. These elections have not only reshaped the representation of Cypriot parties in the European

Parliament but also raised important questions about the future of established parties. Fidias success, along with the rise of the far-right ELAM, marks a departure from traditional political norms. Cyprus, along with many other European counties, is going through an era of significant political reshuffling marked by the phenomena of metapoliticization and/or de-ideologisation.

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