

For the Evaluation of the electoral pilot the criteria have been used as set out in the document Evaluation Criteria for the Pilot Central Electoral System. This was created by the Working group Evaluation Criteria Pilot Central Electoral System (ECPCS) and approved by the University Council of 2018 - 2019 during the Plenary meeting on the 2nd of September 2019. For the elections of 2019 a differentiation is made for the first round and the second round. In the first round not enough candidates came forward, eventually 8 were appointed without elections. By elections were held, which will be referred to as the second round for this document.

Below, first the criteria will be discussed and the observations based on them. Following the different criteria, a post scriptum will be offered on the observations made by the council member(s) who performed the evaluation. Finally, a preliminary concept will be given as a basis for an advice. Here observations are identified and further deliberated on, also a time line for decision making will be given.

General

Total number of candidates

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019		2020
					1	2	
21	34	22	25	21	10	16	36

The document stipulates the following indicators:

Below average	0 - 20 candidates
Average	21 - 23 candidates
Above average	24 or more candidates

In 2019 in the second round the total number of student candidates was therefore below average. while in 2020 it was above average. It is important to note that in 2020 the University Council adopted a more aggressive marketing campaign to promote itself and the elections. Furthermore, the COVID-19 crisis may also have had an impact as many students indicated that this was a reason for them to put themselves forward as candidates.

Voter Turnout percentage

In the previous years the voter turnout percentage was measured per faculty, differentiating between a percentage including and excluding faculties which didn't have elections. These numbers cannot be compared to the central electoral system and are therefore excluded.

2019	2020
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1	2	
n.a.	3%	10.5%

The document stipulates the following indicators:

Below average	0% - 10%
Average	10% - 12%
Above average	12% or more

In 2019 for the first round there were no elections due to too few candidates. In the second round the voter turnout was below average. In 2020 the voter turnout was average.

Composition of the UC

Number of faculties represented

In the table below the total number of faculties are presented with a specification on how many representatives per faculty for 2020.

2019	2020
6	5 ESE: 4 RSM: 4 ESSB: 2 ESL: 1 EMC: 1

The document stipulates the following indicators:

Bad	1 - 3 faculties
Okay	3 - 5 faculties
Good	6 - 8 faculties

In 2019 the University Council was doing good in diversity of faculty representation. In 2020 the University Council is doing okay in diversity of faculty representation.

Diverse group of students

The document stipulates no historical data nor indicators for measuring the diversity of the group of students on, for example, gender, nationality, background, idea, etc. There is, however, some data on gender and nationality diversity for 2019 en 2020.

In 2019 31% of the candidates were female and 62,5% were male. Within the composition of the students of the university council 50% were male and 50% were female. However, during the year a female council member dropped out and was replaced by a male council member who was next on the electoral list with the most votes. Furthermore, 25% of the council members had a different nationality than Dutch, and 75% had a Dutch nationality (not taking into consideration dual nationalities).

In 2020 27,7% of the candidates were female and 72,2% were male. Within the composition of the students of the university council 16% is female and 84% is male. Furthermore, 16% has a different nationality than Dutch, and 84% has a Dutch nationality (not taking into consideration dual nationalities).

The evaluation criteria of Faculty and Interfaculty could not be evaluated as no data is available.

Campaign finance

Use of campaign budget

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019		2020
					1	2	
n.a.	36,4%	36,8%	27,3%	29,4%	n.a.	12,5%	16,7% (up till now)

The document stipulates the following indicators:

Below average	0% - 28%
Average	28% - 33%
Above average	33% or more

In 2019 in the first round no elections were held thus no campaign budgets were used. In the second round the number of students using the campaign budget is below average. In 2020, with the numbers currently available, the number of students using the campaign budget is below average.

There is no data available of the average amount used in the campaign budgets for 2019 in the second round and in 2020.

Numbers of candidates participating in campaign workshops and their feedback

In 2019, to the best of the knowledge of those involved, no workshop(s) were given for the candidates in the second round due to the scheduling of the elections (EUREKA week). In 2020 one workshop was organized for digital campaigning, in which 12 out of the 36 candidates showed up. There is currently no feedback on the workshop itself.

Post Script

While working on the evaluation several questions were raised concerning the indicators used. For instance; what was the main aim of setting up this electoral pilot and how does this aim connect to the indicators? And; what numbers were used to establish these indicators? This resulted in a central question: do we measure what we want to measure? It can be imagined that the aim of the electoral pilot was to increase voter turnout, the number of candidates putting themselves forward for elections, diversity, representation of faculties, and so on. The problem with the current indicators is that they do not show their effectiveness as well as that of the pilot. In the end the question remains: what is the problem that needs to be solved?

Before a decision is made on whether or not to adjust the electoral system to the format of this pilot, return to the old format, or construct a completely new format there are some important considerations. First of all, we have to identify what we aim to achieve by adjusting the electoral system. Once this is clear, we can establish indicators that clearly connect to these aims which can then measure the effectiveness of achieving them. Secondly, a longer period needs to be considered for measuring, two years is too short to establish a clear evaluation on whether or not a new system works. There are too much and too many variables that need time to adjust. Thirdly, consideration should be given, but not in a determining way, to how other universities work and what the impact of their system is in their university. In the end, at this point, there are too many questions to do a proper evaluation of the current pilot.

E.g. in 2020 we see an increase of candidates but what makes this trend happen? Is it because we had an improved marketing campaign? Or is it due to the Corona crisis? If we wish to improve the connection with the faculties and/or ensure the majority of faculties is represented in the UC which system can help us in this matter? The student body would like to implement an electoral party system. What does this mean for our main aims and does the employee body also wish to change their electoral system? How can we as UC be a better representative of our whole community?

Preliminary concept for advice

Looking at the evaluation and the post script it is clear that there is currently not enough data to support a data-based evaluation of the electoral pilot. Currently the workgroup on participation is discussing several different options on changes in the electoral system:

1. Returning to the original system in which each faculty held elections for a representative in the University Council.
2. Continuing with the electoral pilot for central elections. However, a review will be done to further "tweak" the pilot and make it more efficient. Allowing data to be gather over a longer period of time and giving a sounder advice.
3. Changing the system in such a way that it allows for parties to be on the election ballots for both student and employee representation.
4. Changing the system in such a way it allows for parties to be on the election ballots for only the student representation.

There is, however, one clear conclusion which can be drawn from the evaluation. Both in 2015 and 2020 there is a clear and sudden increase in candidates for the University Council. A closer look to these years shows that in 2015 the "basisbeurs" was abolished, this money was in turn used for the further development and increase of the quality of education. Here students would play a central role in deciding how and on

what the money would be spend. In 2020 there was the COVID-19 crisis where education moved from physical to online overnight. It has become clear that students are very concerned with the quality of their education online, and how this will affect their diploma.

In both cases a clear sense of urgency can be identified as urging more candidates to put themselves up for election. This observation is supported by the biographies of the candidates of the 2020 elections. Here we often find references to the COVID-19 crisis, online education, or the importance of the voice of students in the aftermath of this crisis. However, for 2020 we also need to consider the more substantive, clear, and “out there” marketing campaign of the University Council. New council members indicate that they were made more aware of what the council does and that it existed than in the years.

Overall there seems to be a relationship between a sense of urgency (caused by either decisions with great impact on the candidates, a public crisis, or through awareness of what the UC does) and the number of candidates for an election. It is therefore important that the University Council further develops and professionalizes its marketing and communication. This will allow the UC to create its own sense of urgency among the community on the topics it is dealing with to increase candidacy, voter turnout, but above all awareness. Therefore, in reviewing the different options for the electoral system special consideration should be given to how it supports and contributes to the positioning by and communication of the UC within/with the community.

Besides these considerations there should be a dedicated marketing and communication officer to help the UC. This would relief council members in the IdEA committee (which currently deals with the organization of events and marketing & communications of the council) from the burden to constantly manage social media, organize events, create content, engage with different media channels, and so on. The officer could, for instance, be a student doing marketing and communications studies, with a support/supervisor from the marketing and communications department of the EUR (creating a direct link between the UC and this department). With an independent outside expert on hand to further support the UC in their development and in an advisory role for the officer.

Timeline on decision making

For now, it is important to reach a decision on how to proceed with the electoral system. To ensure this is done before the next electoral cycle this timeline will be followed:

Date	What
01/09/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on this document within the UC. • Workgroup starts with preparing a balanced advice to the UC on the different electoral systems.
06/10/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workgroup presents balanced advice to the UC and sends a memo to the EB.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UC discusses the different options and decides which electoral system has its preference. This is communicated to the EB via a letter or by the UC Chair.
10/11/2020	Proposal by the EB for adjusting the electoral system and regulations is discussed during the consultation meeting and UC exercises its right of consent.