



MEMO+⁺

June 2016



Supported by



Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

MEMO+ is an occasional series of briefing papers on topics of interest to minority ethnic communities in Scotland. It is produced by the [Scottish Council of Jewish Communities](#) in partnership with [BEMIS - empowering Scotland's ethnic and cultural minority communities](#), and is supported by the [Scottish Government](#).

European Union Referendum 2016

The European Union Referendum

The Referendum on whether or not the United Kingdom should remain in the European Union will take place on 23 June 2016.

It is important that as many people as possible vote so that the result will reflect the views of the whole electorate.

If your name is on the Electoral Register you will automatically receive a poll card and be able to vote in the Referendum. So if you have not yet received a poll card, your name is probably not on the Register, and you should either complete the [online registration form](#) or else contact the local Electoral Registration Officer in your area as soon as possible.

NB: Although people aged 16 and 17 were able to vote in the recent Scottish Parliament election, the Referendum is carried out under UK law, so that you have to be 18 to vote. If will be 18 on or before 23 June you should check that your name is on the Register.

If you are unable to go to the polling station on 23 June, you can either vote by post or name another person to vote on your behalf at the polling station (voting by proxy). See below for details of how to register for either of these options.

You can find contact details for your local Electoral Registration Office in the phone book, or by typing your postcode into the relevant page of the [Electoral Commission](#) website.

Important dates for this Referendum

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| 7 June 2016 | Deadline to register to vote |
| 8 June 2016 | Deadline to apply for a postal vote (if you are already registered) |
| 15 June 2016 | Deadline to apply for a proxy vote (if you are already registered) |
| Note: <i>If you are prevented from voting by an emergency you may apply for a proxy vote until 5pm on polling day.</i> | |
| 23 June 2016 | Polling day – vote between 7am and 10pm |

Who can vote?

In order to vote in the EU Referendum you must be:

aged 18 or over on the day of the Referendum,

and

a UK or Republic of Ireland citizen,

OR a Commonwealth citizen who has, or does not need, leave to remain in the UK,

OR a British citizen living abroad who has been registered to vote in the UK in the last 15 years

and

listed on the electoral register.

How to vote?

The ballot paper will ask a single question:

**Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union
or leave the European Union?**

and offer you two possible answers:

Remain a member of the European Union

Leave the European Union

You should vote by putting a single cross (X) in the box next to your choice.

Why your vote matters

Whether or not Britain is a member of the European Union is important because many aspects of life in this country result from decisions of EU institutions that either apply directly in all EU countries, or require national governments to legislate to incorporate them into national law.

The European Union consists of 28 states in Europe that have come together to form a single entity within which common policies apply. For example, the “Single Market” means that businesses in one member state can trade freely in all the others, and the “Schengen agreement” allows the movement of people from one country to another without passport controls. Britain joined what was then called the European Economic Community in 1973 following a previous referendum, but is not part of either the Schengen area or the common currency, the Euro. Not all European countries are members of the EU, although most of the others have adopted EU standards on many matters, and form the European Economic Area.

Examples of areas of law that are decided at the EU level include consumer rights, the Common Agricultural Policy, employment law, fisheries policy, and environmental standards,, and there is also a Common Foreign and Security Policy. EU members are bound by the European Convention on Human Rights, and since the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union has also had legal force. These are overseen by the European Court of Justice, which can strike down national and EU laws that are incompatible with these rights.

Much of the argument between the “Remain” and “Leave” camps is about whether particular areas of EU legislation are good or bad for Britain. There are also opposing views about the principle of sovereignty – whether or not the UK should take back the right to legislate for itself in all areas – and about the cost of membership.

For more about the arguments on each side, see:

http://www.strongerin.co.uk/get_the_facts

http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/our_case

How to register to vote

If you are not already registered to vote, you can register online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>

or telephone to ask for a paper form:

0800 3280 280

**In order to be able to vote in the EU Referendum,
your application must have been received by 7 June 2016.**

If you are not able to get to the polling station, for example, because you will be on holiday or away from home on business, or because you do not have transport, or are unwell, you can vote by post or proxy.

If you choose to vote by post, you will be sent a ballot paper around ten days before the date of the Referendum. If your ballot paper has not arrived by Friday 17 June 2016 you should contact your local council for a replacement.

In order for your vote to be counted, the completed ballot paper must be received by your local electoral registration office by 10pm on the day of the Referendum.

In order to vote by proxy, you will need to ask someone you trust to go to the polling station to vote for you, and tell him or her whom you want to vote for. That person must also be registered to vote in their own right.

**In order to vote by post or proxy you must be registered to vote
and also fill in separate application forms.**

How to register for a postal vote

To apply for a postal vote, download and complete the form at:

<http://tinyurl.com/q8zvr8w>

or telephone to ask for a paper form:

0800 3280 280

and then post the completed form to your [local Electoral Registration Office](#).

**In order to be able to vote by post in this Referendum,
your application must have been received by 5pm on 8 June 2016.**

How to register for a proxy vote

To apply for a proxy vote, download and complete the relevant online form at:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-vote-proxy>

and then post the completed form to your [local Electoral Registration Office](#).

or telephone to ask for a paper form:

0800 3280 280

**In order to be able to vote by proxy in the EU Referendum ,
your application must have been received by 5pm 15 June 2016.**

**However, in case of emergency, for example, if you unexpectedly become ill, you
can apply for a proxy vote until 5pm on polling day.**

Useful Links

- **About my vote**
<http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/upcoming-elections-and-referendums/eu-referendum>
- **Electoral Commission Voting Guide**
<http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/upcoming-elections-and-referendums/eu-referendum-voting-guides>

The Voting Guide is also available in other languages and formats:

- Large Print
- British Sign Language video (Scotland)
- Audio
- Arabic
- Bengali
- Chinese
- French
- Gaelic
- Gujarati
- Hindi
- Punjabi
- Scots
- Urdu

To request Braille in English, call 0800 3 280 280

- **Electoral Commission partnership pack**
http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/203405/2016-EU-Referendum-Partner-Guide.pdf

Please circulate this issue of MEMO+ among your membership and encourage people to register and to vote in the Referendum on 23 June!



The **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC)** is the representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland. It advances public understanding about the Jewish religion, culture and community, and also works in partnership with other organisations to promote good relations and understanding among community groups and to promote equality. (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438) <http://www.scojec.org/>



BEMIS is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. <http://www.bemis.org.uk/index.html>



The **Scottish Government** is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and social justice for all those who live in Scotland. **One Scotland** is the Scottish Government campaign designed to tackle racism. It aims to raise awareness of racist attitudes, highlight its negative impact and recognise the valuable contributions that other cultures have made to our society – and make Scotland no place for racism. <http://www.scotlandagainstracism.com/>