



Your Vote Counts in the European Elections

Make a difference on 4 June 2009 ... use your vote to tackle extremism

The European Parliamentary elections are different than a local or General election. Because of the proportional voting system used for electing MEPs:

Your Vote Counts

- every vote is important.
- you have a much higher likelihood of affecting the result, no matter where you live.

Vote Your Values

- you can vote for the party you really believe in; for the agenda you want advanced in/by Europe.
- you have a higher chance of ending up being represented (in your region) by a party you voted for.

Vote to reduce the chances of extremists being elected

- the higher the turnout, the harder it likely becomes for parties like the BNP to win seats.
- you can make your vote count twice: once for the party you support, and once to minimise the electoral threat from extremists.
- to maximise the effect of your vote, it is better to either vote for one of the main parties (to stop the BNP taking one of their seats), or vote for a smaller party which has a chance of getting more votes than the BNP (and so come above them in the order when seats are allocated).

Voting = Easy

The ballot paper is very straightforward. You have one vote, which is used to elect a list of MEPs who will represent the whole region. Simply vote for the party you prefer – put an X in the column next to that party's name. That's it, job done! To check if you are registered to vote, go to www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

How MEPs are elected

Each region has a certain number of MEPs dependent on its population size. Parties win seats roughly in proportion to their share of the vote. It works like this: the party with the highest vote gets one seat allotted in the first round. Its vote is then divided by two. The party with the highest vote in the second round then wins a seat and its vote is divided by two. If a party which has already won a seat wins another round then its percentage vote is divided by the number of seats it has won plus one. This continues until all the seats are allocated.

Why campaigning across your region matters:

The push by extremist parties for an MEP can be opposed by voters throughout each region. This means competing in every ward, every borough and every county – yes, those where there has been lots of recent fascist activity, but also areas with diverse populations or communities with long anti-Fascist traditions. We can all organise, campaign and get out the vote in our own areas, and make that difference.

If you want briefing materials or a visit from a speaker who can help your group understand more clearly how the voting system works and how best they can use their vote on 4 June, then get in contact with us.

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