

THE 2016

EU

REFERENDUM

VOTING

GUIDE

Overseas

The
Electoral
Commission

What is the referendum about?

On **23 June 2016** there will be a referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union.

A referendum asks you to vote on a question. For this referendum the question is: **Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?**

You can see how to fill in the ballot paper on page 8.

This booklet explains how you can take part.

Can I vote if I live outside the UK?

You can vote in this referendum if you are registered to vote in the UK as an overseas voter, are 18 or over on **23 June 2016** and are:

- a British citizen living outside the UK who has been registered to vote in the UK within the last 15 years, or
- an Irish citizen living outside the UK who was born in Northern Ireland and who has been registered to vote in Northern Ireland within the last 15 years

If you were too young to be registered when you left the UK, you can still register as an overseas voter. You can do this if your parent or guardian was registered to vote in the UK, as long as you last lived in the UK no more than 15 years ago.

If you are resident in Gibraltar, please see our Gibraltar EU referendum voting guide.

How do I register to vote?

If you're not already registered, you should register to vote as an overseas voter **as soon as possible** to vote in the EU Referendum.

If you (or your parent or guardian) were last registered to vote in England, Scotland or Wales you can register online at **www.gov.uk/register-to-vote**.

If you (or your parent or guardian) were last registered to vote in Northern Ireland you need to download a voter registration form from **www.aboutmyvote.co.uk**, complete it and post it to the local area electoral office where you (or your parent or guardian) were last registered.

The registration deadline is midnight on 7 June 2016 (BST) but in order to vote from outside the UK you will also need to apply for an 'absent vote' (see page 9-10). You may not have enough time to do so if you don't act quickly.

The deadline to register for an 'absent vote' in Northern Ireland is **3 June 2016** (BST) so you need to register and apply now.

Who has produced this booklet?

This booklet has been produced by the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission is an independent body that works across the UK. We have a duty to provide public information about voting in the referendum. We monitor how campaigners spend money campaigning in the referendum but we do not regulate or control what they say in support of their arguments.

Information from lead campaigners

On the next two pages there is information on the main arguments for remaining a member or leaving the European Union. The content is written by organisations who are campaigning either for the UK to remain a member or leave the European Union and is printed exactly as it has been provided. This content is not written by the Electoral Commission.

Each campaign organisation also has a page on their website that gives their view on what will happen after the referendum outcome. This information is not from the Electoral Commission.

Remain website: www.strongerin.co.uk/voteremain

Leave website: www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/yourchoice

MORE JOBS. LOWER PRICES. NHS PROTECTED.



Britain is stronger,
safer and better off in Europe

✓ STRONGER

A stronger economy - EU membership adds up to £91 billion a year to the UK economy (*Source: CBI*) - meaning more money to invest in the NHS.
Stronger leadership on the world stage - shaping our future by sitting at the top table.

Getting more out than we put in - for every pound we put into the EU, we get almost £10 back in lower prices, more jobs and more investment (*Source: HMT, CBI*).

✓ SAFER

Fighting cross-border crime - the European Arrest Warrant allows us to deport criminals from the UK and catch those fleeing justice across Europe.

Tackling global threats like terrorism and climate change - with global threats that don't stop at borders, strength in numbers through the EU keeps UK families safer and protects our future.

✓ BETTER OFF

More jobs - over 3 million UK jobs are linked to our trade with the EU, that's one in ten jobs. (*Source: HMT*)

Lower prices for families - competition between businesses across Europe means lower prices in UK shops, cheaper flights and lower energy bills (*Source: European Commission, CEBR*)

More trade for business - 200,000 UK businesses trade with EU countries and it's home to almost half our exports (*Source: HMRC, ONS*)



All this would be at risk if we left Europe.
Experts agree that jobs would be lost, prices
would rise, and there would be less money
for public services, like the NHS.

strongerin.co.uk

VOTE REMAIN FOR A STRONGER BRITAIN

OUR LAST CHANCE TO TAKE BACK CONTROL

Some facts

EU law controls UK migration policy. More than a quarter of a million people came to the UK from the EU in the last 12 months – the equivalent of a city the size of Newcastle. If this continues for a decade, there will be over two million extra people. EU law means all members must accept 'free movement of people'. Many migrants contribute to society. They also affect public services.

The EU is growing. When we joined, there were 9 member states. Now there are 28, the most recent being Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia. Five more countries are in the process of joining, including Turkey. When they join, they will have the same rights as other members.

We pay about £350 million a week to the EU budget. That's about the same as the cost of building a new NHS hospital every week or hiring 600,000 nurses. We get less than half of this back and have no control over how it's spent.

If we vote 'remain'... The EU will continue to control migration, trade, VAT, and vital security policies such as counter-terrorism. EU law will carry on having ultimate authority over British law. The European Court will continue to overrule our laws and will keep taking powers over how our intelligence services fight terrorism. We will not be in control of who comes in to our country, on what terms, and who we can remove. We will keep handing over £350 million of your taxes to Brussels every week.

The EU costs us £350 million a week... Let's take back control and spend our money on our priorities like our NHS

If we Vote Leave... We will take back control. We will stop sending £350 million of our money to Brussels every week and instead spend it on our priorities like the NHS. We will control our borders. We will trade with Europe without handing over permanent control to people we cannot vote out. We will control our own economy and trade. We will retake our seats on international bodies. We will have more international influence and use it to encourage more friendly international cooperation.


It's safer to take back control than to keep giving away power and money every year to the EU.

For more information visit:
voteleavetakecontrol.org/yourchoice

 Vote Leave

How do I fill in the ballot paper?

The ballot paper will look like the one pictured here:

Referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union	
Vote only once by putting a cross  in the box next to your choice	
Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?	
Remain a member of the European Union	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leave the European Union	<input type="checkbox"/>

You show your choice by putting a cross (X) in the 'Remain a member of the European Union' box or 'Leave the European Union' box on your ballot paper.

Put a cross in only one box or your vote may not be counted.

If you are registered to vote in Wales, the ballot paper will be bilingual English/Welsh.

How do I vote?

You must be registered to vote before you can be given a postal or proxy vote (an 'absent vote').



By proxy (allowing somebody you trust to vote on your behalf):

To apply to vote by proxy, you need to complete a proxy vote application form. You can get an application form at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

If you are registered to vote in Northern Ireland as an overseas voter, you need to post the form to the local area electoral office where you are registered to vote to arrive by 5pm on **3 June 2016** (BST).

If you are registered to vote in England, Scotland or Wales as an overseas voter, you need to send the form to the electoral registration office where you are registered to vote to arrive by 5pm on **15 June 2016** (BST). You can send your application by post or you can scan it and send it by email. Please ensure your scanned image is clear.

You can find their postal and email address details at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

When you apply for a proxy vote you have to state why you cannot vote in person. Your proxy will vote on your behalf and you will have to tell them how you want to vote.

If you are registered in England, Scotland or Wales, your proxy must be aged 18 or over and be registered to vote in the referendum.

If you are registered in Northern Ireland, your proxy must be aged 18 or over and be a British, Irish or Commonwealth citizen.

By post (England, Scotland or Wales):

If you are registered to vote in England, Scotland or Wales as an overseas voter, you can choose to vote by post. To apply to vote by post, you need to complete a postal vote application form and send it to the electoral registration office where you are registered to vote to arrive by 5pm on **8 June 2016** (BST). You can send your application by post or you can scan it and send it by email. Please ensure your scanned image is clear. You can find their details and get an application form at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

You will receive your ballot paper by post and you will also need to return your ballot paper by post.

You need to think about whether you will have time to receive and post it so it arrives back by 10pm on **23 June 2016** (BST).

There may not now be enough time for ballot papers to be posted out from the UK, completed and posted back again in time for your vote to be counted. You should consider voting by proxy instead.

If you are registered to vote in Northern Ireland as an overseas voter, you are unable to vote by post as ballot papers cannot be sent to an address outside of the UK. You can register to vote by proxy (see page 9).



At your polling station in person on 23 June 2016:

If you are in the UK on **23 June 2016** you can vote at the polling station for your last registered address.

Contact your local council (England, Scotland or Wales) or local area electoral office (Northern Ireland) to find out where your polling station is.

Polling stations are open from 7am to 10pm.

You cannot vote in person at a polling station if you or your appointed proxy have already applied to vote by post.

How do I find out more?

For more information please go to www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

© The Electoral Commission 2016 (except for Pages 6 and 7 and the box on Page 8)

THE 2016

EU

REFERENDUM

VOTING

GUIDE

www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

Printed by The Electoral Commission,
3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ

The
Electoral
Commission