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Get ready to vote in May's European Parliamentary Elections!

This May's elections will give us, the citizens of all 28 member states, the chance to influence the future political course of the European Union when we elect the 751 **Members of the European Parliament** (MEPs) to represent our interests for the next five years. Here in the UK we can vote on **Thursday 22nd May** (the same day as the local elections in England) to elect our 73 MEPs. The UK is divided into twelve electoral regions with between three and ten MEPs representing each region. Our region, Yorkshire and the Humber, elects **six MEPs**. If you live anywhere in the region, all six of these MEPs represent you and you can contact any or all of them.



**Go to the European
Elections website**
www.elections2014.eu

Unfortunately, each five-yearly election has seen a decline in turnout, especially among younger voters, from 63% for the first one in 1979 to a mere 43% in 2009. **A** higher turnout this time would help legitimize the composition and decisions of both the Parliament and the Commission. In the UK you have to be a British citizen or an EU or Commonwealth citizen resident in the UK in order to vote in European Parliamentary elections. You have the right to vote from the age of 18 but you can register to vote from the age of 16. If you are not already on the register of electors, you must register to vote by Tuesday 6th May 2014.



European Parliament

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Europe Direct Leeds, 2nd Floor, Central Library, Calverley Street, Leeds, LS1 3AB Tel. 0113 247 8282 Fax. 0113 395 1833 europedirect@leeds.gov.uk

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You can get more information at The Electoral Commission's [website](#) and at Leeds City Council's [website](#), which includes links to the relevant pages on the websites of the 20 other local authorities in the region.

The **European Parliament's** slogan for the 2014 elections is "[This time it's different.](#)" with parties across Europe able, for the first time, to select their candidates for the post of European Commission President. This will be followed by the nomination and confirmation of a new European Commission.

The [website](#) of the **European Parliament's Information Office in the UK** should be your first stop for information about our current MEPs. Once nominations for candidates close at the end of April, you will be able to view a final list for our region. There are also answers to Frequently Asked Questions and an explanation of the voting system employed, which is the *d'Hondt* system of proportional representation.

[MyVote2014.eu](#) is another very useful website. It aims to inform young and first-time voters about key decisions taken by the European Parliament, and showing what is at stake in key policy areas and by demonstrating that EU politics can be both interesting and fun. The website includes the following sections and tools, each of which is explained in more detail on the first page of each section:

Have you ever wondered what it is like to be a Member of the European Parliament?

Now you've got the chance: vote yourself on 15 items voted on in the European Parliament!

At the end you will see which MEPs most closely match your views! The votes of all users will be added up, to show what the result of a vote would have been if all users of MyVote2014 had voted, instead of MEPs.



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