



Easy Read Guide to voting in the European Union referendum

This guide is about
how you can help
people with a learning
disability register to
vote and vote





The European Union Referendum

An easy read guide for people with a learning disability and their supporters



This is a guide to help people with a learning disability and their supporters.

It is useful for people in England, Wales and Scotland.



It has information about voting in the European Union referendum.



It has been produced by Royal Mencap Society and the Electoral Commission.

Mencap is a charity for people with a learning disability, their families, carers and supporters.



The Electoral Commission is an independent organisation. They provide the public with information on voting and they are in charge of organising the referendum.



If you need any more information you can call Mencap on 0207 696 6952.



What is a referendum?

A referendum asks you to vote on a question.

What is the question?



The question you are asked to vote on is: Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?



When is the referendum?

The referendum is on **Thursday 23 June 2016**

What is the European Union?



The European Union is often called the EU.

It is an economic and political partnership made up of 28 European countries.

The United Kingdom is a member of the EU.

The United Kingdom is often called the UK.

Why are we having a referendum?



Some people think that the EU is a good thing for the UK and we should continue to be a member.



Some people think that the EU is a bad thing for the UK and we should stop being a member.

The Government said that the people of the UK should decide and so we are having a referendum.



I'm having trouble making up my mind which way to vote. Where can I get more information?

There are two big campaigns working on the referendum.

The '**Stronger In**' campaign want the UK to remain in the EU.

The '**Vote leave**' campaign want the UK to leave the EU.



Mencap has asked both of the campaigns to produce easy read information.

Go to the Mencap website to find out more.

www.mencap.org.uk



Who can vote in the European Union referendum?

You can vote in the referendum if you are registered to vote, aged 18 or over on 23 June 2016 and are:

- a British or Irish citizen United Kingdom (UK),
- a Commonwealth citizen living in the UK who has leave to remain in the UK or who does not require leave to remain in the UK, or
- a British citizen living overseas who has been registered to vote in the UK in the last 15 years.



What do I need to do if I want to vote at the EU Referendum?

If you want to vote, you must be registered.

The deadline for registering to vote for the EU referendum is midnight on **Tuesday 7 June**.



You can register online here: <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>

If you were registered to vote at elections on 5 May 2016 and you are still living in the same place you do not need to register again.



When do I receive my poll card?

Before the referendum, you will be sent a poll card in the post.

This will tell you where your polling station is.

If you have registered to vote by post the poll card will tell you when you will get your ballot paper in the post.



Where is my polling station?

The address of your polling station will be written on your poll card.

You will receive this before the referendum.



Polling stations are often at churches, community centres and schools. However, they can be in all sorts of places. They will be clearly sign-posted.



When are polling stations open?

Polling stations will be open on referendum day (Thursday 23 June) from 7.00am to 10.00pm.



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	☐
Leave the European Union	☐

What will the ballot paper look like?

You will get a ballot paper at the polling station.

In England and Scotland your ballot paper will look like this:

Referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union Rfferendwm ar aelodaeth y Deyrnas Unedig o'r Undeb Ewropeaidd	
Vote only once by putting a cross ☒ in the box next to your choice Pleidleiswch unwaith yn unig drwy roi croes ☒ yn y bwlch wrth ymyl eich dewis	
Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union? A ddylai'r Deyrnas Unedig aros yn aelod o'r Undeb Ewropeaidd neu adael yr Undeb Ewropeaidd?	
Remain a member of the European Union Aros yn aelod o'r Undeb Ewropeaidd	☐
Leave the European Union Gadael yr Undeb Ewropeaidd	☐

If you are in Wales, your ballot paper will look like this:



You should 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 the ballot paper. **Put the X in one box only.**

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	☐
Leave the European Union	☐

Do I need to take my poll card to vote at a polling station?

No, you do not have to bring your poll card to a polling station but it may make it easier for you if you do take it.

Will there be people at the polling station to help me?



Yes, there will be people there to help you. You will need to tell them your name and address. They will then check that you are registered to vote and give you your ballot paper.



Can someone support me to vote?

Yes, if you need help to vote you have two options:

- You can ask the Presiding Officer at the polling station (this is the person who is in charge) for help, or
- You can ask someone to come to the polling station and support you.



They have to be someone who is either:

- a close family member (father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, civil partner, son or daughter – if they are aged 18 years or over), or
- a person who would be entitled to vote at the referendum.

If you want someone to support you to vote, you should talk to the Presiding Officer.



They will ask your supporter to sign a form saying that they will be supporting you to vote. A person may only support up to two voters at the referendum.

Your supporter can help you by reading out instructions and explaining what the vote is about.

Your supporter can also mark your ballot paper for you.



Can I vote by post?

Yes, if you can not vote in person at your polling station, you can apply to vote by post. Your ballot paper will be sent to you in the post.



The deadline to apply to vote by post is **5pm, Wednesday 8th June 2016**



I was going to vote by post but forgot to send it, can I still vote?

Yes, you can take your postal vote to the polling station, or to the elections office.

You will need to do this by **10pm on 23 June**.



Can someone vote for me?

You can ask someone you trust to vote for you. This is called 'voting by proxy.'

The deadline to apply to vote by proxy is 5pm, **Wednesday 15th June 2016**



What happens when the vote is over?

When the poll has closed all the votes will be counted up. The side with the most votes will be the winner.

The result will be on television.

If you have any more questions about the EU referendum you can call Mencap on: 0207 696 6952. Or email: help@mencap.org.uk

The
Electoral
Commission

produced in partnership with the
Electoral commission



This guide is available to download at
www.mencap.org.uk/eureferendum

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mencap Direct

We provide a wide range of services and advice for people affected by learning disability, to find out more please contact us.

Telephone: **0808 808 1111**
Email: **help@mencap.org.uk**

Northern Ireland Learning Disability Helpline
Email: **helpline.ni@mencap.org.uk**

Wales Learning Disability Helpline
Email: **helpline.wales@mencap.org.uk**