

Priority	Medium
Event specific	4 June 2009 elections
Action required	No
Area	Great Britain
Retain	Until 30 June 2009

## Circular EC10/2009

### Promotion of electoral awareness – Electoral Commission election campaign and resources

24 April 2009

For the attention of:

**The Electoral Registration Officer**

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England  
 Unitary authorities in England and Wales  
 Unitary authorities and joint boards in Scotland

**The Local Returning Officer**

European Parliamentary local counting areas in Great Britain

**The Regional Returning Officer**

European Parliamentary electoral regions in Great Britain

**The Returning Officer**

County councils and unitary authorities in England

For the information of:

**The Acting Returning Officer**

Parliamentary constituencies in England and Wales

**The Returning Officer**

Parliamentary constituencies in Scotland

**The Returning Officer**

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England  
 Unitary authorities in England, Scotland and Wales

**The Chief Electoral Officer**

Northern Ireland

## Introduction

1. The purpose of this circular is to alert electoral administrators to the public awareness activities that the Electoral Commission will be carrying out across Great Britain for the European Parliamentary elections, and for the local government elections in England. It also acts as a reminder about the new stakeholder material available on our recently redesigned resources website, the Do Politics Centre, at [www.dopolitics.org.uk](http://www.dopolitics.org.uk).
2. The Commission is committed to helping Electoral Registration Officers in getting as many eligible people registered to vote as possible and this circular provides information which will assist them in fulfilling this role.

## New stakeholder materials

4. We've produced some new materials for electoral administrators and other stakeholders to increase public awareness in the run up to the elections. As you may be aware, information about these resources has already been disseminated via Public Awareness subgroups in the different electoral regions.
  - The European Parliamentary election leaflet explains the European elections happening on 4 June and includes some information on the European Parliament's role and how to vote. The leaflet will be available in a number of languages, including bilingual (with English) Welsh, Chinese, Polish and French.
  - The European Parliamentary election poster encourages voter registration before the deadline of 19 May. It is also available in a version that promotes English local elections as well.
  - To coincide with the campaign launch on 27 April we'll also be launching another European Parliamentary elections poster that ties in with the overall look and feel of the campaign. This will allow Electoral Registration Officers to benefit from the significant recognition that the Commission's campaign will generate. This will be available to order or download from 12 noon on 27 April.
5. We have also put together some press release templates that can be adapted for your local circumstances.
6. You can download all of these resources from [www.dopolitics.org.uk/electoral-event/european-parliamentary-election?queries\\_event\\_query=European-Parliamentary-election](http://www.dopolitics.org.uk/electoral-event/european-parliamentary-election?queries_event_query=European-Parliamentary-election). PDF artwork downloadable from the site includes space for local authority logos where appropriate.
7. Alternatively, you can order them in hard copy from our website [www.dopolitics.org.uk/order-form](http://www.dopolitics.org.uk/order-form), phone 0845 8500 501, or email [ecpublications@ecgroup.co.uk](mailto:ecpublications@ecgroup.co.uk).

## Do Politics Centre

8. We have recently redesigned and relaunched the Do Politics Centre, at [www.dopolitics.org.uk](http://www.dopolitics.org.uk). It is the Commission's online resource for electoral administrators, pulling together all of the Commission's public awareness and educational materials, along with advice and guidance for practitioners aiming to increase voter awareness and registration.
9. All materials are free to access and include good practice case studies, campaign techniques and templates for awareness raising activities among a variety of target audiences including young people, black and minority ethnic and other harder to reach communities.
10. You can also sign up at the website for our monthly Do Politics newsletter to stay up to date on electoral awareness issues.

## Campaign overview and key dates

11. We will be running a public awareness campaign across Great Britain in advance of the European Parliamentary and English local government elections on 4 June. A separate campaign is running in Northern Ireland, given the different registration requirements.
12. The campaign aims to increase the number of eligible people on the register, and to provide people with all the information they need to vote, if they choose to do so.
13. The campaign launches on **27 April**, and has two phases. The **registration** phase runs until 18 May (the day before the electoral registration application deadline). This phase is targeted at the groups we have identified through research to be less likely to be registered. The voter information phase, targeted at all electors, then runs from **19 May** until election day. This phase will inform voters about the elections, remind people about polling station opening hours and explain to them how to fill out their ballot papers.
14. The key media of the campaign include:
  - **TV:** channels including ITV, C4 and S4C
  - **Press:** major city and regional titles, as well as national titles in Wales and Scotland. We will also be running a partnership with the Metro across Great Britain which will include advertising and editorial coverage.
  - **Radio:** Major commercial stations, along with specialist stations focusing on young people or ethnic minority communities.
  - **Online:** major websites such as Facebook, Myspace and ITV.com, portals such as Yahoo, AOL and MSN hotmail, and Google sponsored search.
  - **Outdoor:** posters in London underground stations

15. There will be specific messaging to EU citizens living in the UK about their eligibility and requirements to register to vote at the European Parliamentary election. Advertising in Wales will be in English/Welsh bilingual or Welsh only, where appropriate.
16. You can view the campaign, from **Monday 27 April**, on our website at <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/news-and-media/public-awareness-campaigns>
17. The advertising will be supported by UK-wide PR activity, including a concentrated '**Register to vote week**' from **4–10 May**, when we are publicising electoral registration with a wide range of publications. If you would like to carry out some PR work to coincide with this, press release templates and stock photographs are available on the Do Politics Centre, as mentioned above.
18. Campaign support will be provided by a freephone helpline (0800 3 280 280) and our public information website [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk). We will also provide a service which will allow people to order an electoral registration form by text message.
19. The effectiveness of the campaign will be judged by response rates to the advertising and by quantitative research assessing the effectiveness of the campaign. This information should be available by September and we plan to put a summary of the results on the Commission's website.

## Contact

20. The Commission's public awareness activities are the responsibility of the Commission's Communication Directorate. Key contacts are:

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England

Electoral administrators in England should contact their local Electoral Commission office in the first instance. Contact details are available at

[www.electoralcommission.org.uk/contact/our-offices](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/contact/our-offices)

This circular was approved by Clinton Proud, Head of Campaigns & Public Information.