

RAISE YOUR VOICE FOR A FAIR, FREE EUROPE FOR EVERYONE

Call on MEP candidates to commit
to human rights change

#TURNITUP

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT, WE ARE ALL UNIQUE, WE ARE ALL EQUAL

No one should be left behind in society because of who we are, or where we come from. But right now, many of us share a sneaking feeling that Europe is heading completely in the wrong direction. We're seeing leaders spreading hate and fear, politicians cracking down on peaceful activists, and powerful people pushing for policies that are making us poorer and destroying our environment. To get things back on track, your voice matters. But we need to get loud to be heard. And the European elections in May are a unique opportunity to do just that. Together, we can turn up the volume about the things we want to change, and call on election candidates to commit to building fair, free, equal societies where:

→ we can all live free from hate, violence and oppression, be treated fairly and stay in control of our own bodies and lives.

→ we can all afford to look after ourselves and our families in a dignified way, leaving no one behind.

→ we are free to love who we want, can protest peacefully without fear, access independent media, and get justice in free and fair courts.

→ we welcome people who can't go home because of war, poverty and persecution.

→ our governments face up to Europe being one of the world's worst polluters, and immediately start protecting the environment and human

Note that Amnesty International is not encouraging people to vote for or against any candidates, parties or groups in this election. Also, in Ireland, Amnesty International is not calling on people to vote, due to the constraints of Ireland's Electoral Act's 'third party' provisions as potentially applying to NGOs.

SOME INFO ABOUT THE EU

- Elections happen every five years
- Candidates are elected by citizens of member states
- There are currently 751 members of the European Parliament
- The EU engages and promotes human rights issues
- This year, elections take place between 23-26 May across Europe and on 24 May in Ireland
- The role of the EU is legislative, budgetary and supervisory

What can you do?

- Encourage MEP candidates to push for human rights change and commit to working on human rights issues you care about
- Follow us on social media
- Raise your voice on social media #TurnItUp
- Speak to friends and family
- Share our stories of hope, share your own stories of hope



Q&A

WHY ARE THE EU PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS RELEVANT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS?

The European Parliament (EP) is the **only EU institution directly elected by citizens**. It can promote human rights issues in the EU and globally.

The EP deals with issues that affect the **human rights of all of us in the EU**. It can challenge our governments when they are directly threatening our freedoms and has a mandate to hold the European Commission and our governments to account when they fail to respect and protect our rights. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) also legislate on issues which impact on our human rights such as **migration, climate change, the operation and regulation of businesses and foreign policy**.

The Parliament can demand that European Union economic policies do not negatively affect people's **human rights, including the right to health, education, housing, and work**. They can hold the European Commission and member states to account if they directly threaten or fail to uphold our freedoms; push for ambitious climate action and for legislation guaranteeing gender equality; push to ensure that European companies do business responsibly wherever they operate; and they can stand up and support those **activists and organisations working to ensure everyone's rights worldwide are respected and protected**.

MEPs have also used official visits to other countries to investigate the human rights situation facing people there.

These European Parliament elections will determine not only the composition of the European Parliament, but influence who is chosen to lead the European Commission, which proposes legislation and guides the political direction of the European Union. **Therefore, the outcome of these elections will pave the way for Europe's human rights landscape over the next few years.**

WHY IS AMNESTY ASKING YOUNG PEOPLE TO RAISE THEIR VOICES IN THE RUN-UP TO THE EU ELECTIONS?

Young people are the present and the future of Europe. Their lives and their future are affected by the decisions politicians make, but too often their voice goes unheard. While traditionally, their participation in the EU elections is quite low (28% of young people turned out to vote in 2014), powered by new ways of organising, young people are coming together in their neighbourhoods, communities and across nations to shape the societies they want to live in.

Whether they are taking action for climate, helping refugees, speaking out against sexual harassment and discrimination, or volunteering in local initiatives, young people across Europe are coming together to build a fairer and more compassionate Europe, where no one is left behind. Amnesty's campaign is aiming to mobilise and support more young people to raise their voices, call on election candidates to commit to policies that respect and protect everyone's rights and create societies based on hope, not fear.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE BOTHER TO USE THEIR VOICE IN THE EU PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS?

'Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom. A man can't ride you unless your back is bent.' Martin Luther King

The rights and freedoms we enjoy were long fought for by people before us. Taking part in a march, a protest, striking, raising our voices on social media, signing petitions, writing to our representatives are all actions that can really make a difference, when we come together to demand change.

By raising our voices, we can call on candidates to commit to policies that protect everyone's rights and, if elected, we can make sure that those in power stick to their promises.

Some politicians across Europe are trying to divide communities using fear, hatred and prejudice; demonize people seeking safety; and stigmatize and incite hatred against minorities. They want us to be silent. It's a simple strategy: our silence is their power. We must show that we want and demand a fairer Europe for us all.

WHAT IS AMNESTY'S POSITION ON THE ROLE OF THE EU FOR HUMAN RIGHTS?

Amnesty does not take a position on the European Union as an organisation. We monitor and document the human rights impact, positive or negative, of EU policies, expose and campaign against policies that lead to human rights violations and put pressure on the EU institutions and member states to exercise leadership and step up their promotion and defence of human rights at home and abroad. Amnesty International has long campaigned for the EU to improve its policies and make them compliant with human rights – and with the founding values of the European Union; respect for human dignity and human rights, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law.

STEPS FOR REACHING YOUR MEP CANDIDATES



- 1. Email or send a letter** →
- 2. Request a meeting**
Use the meetings as an opportunity to encourage them to commit to our human rights calls, both privately and publicly, and to explain that if/when elected, you will be following up on those commitments
- ↙
3. Get commitment on your door step →
- 4. Reach out to them on social media**
Tweet, Facebook message and post and Instagram
@[MEP Candidate] I want to see a Europe that...Please commit to protect human rights [insert your message] #TurnItUp #EuropeanElections
- ↙
5. With Amnesty Ireland's support organise a constituency debate with MEP candidates (make sure to invite all candidates from your area)

SAMPLE LETTER/EMAIL

Dear Candidate,

I write to you as you embark on your election campaign for the European Parliament.

Europe is at a crossroads. The upcoming European Union elections on 24 May could change the course of our region. I urge you, as a European Parliament candidate, to commit to prioritising human rights and fairness over divisive, short-sighted policies.

The European Parliament (EP) is an important institution for promoting human rights internationally, as well as EU fundamental rights within the EU.

I encourage all candidates to put forward a vision of Europe based on human rights, solidarity, equality and dignity. The outcome of these elections will pave the way in Europe's human rights landscape over the next few years. I hope to see a European Parliament formed by members committed to upholding and promoting human rights at home and abroad and who are ready to hold other EU institutions to account for not doing so.

Some politicians in Europe are trying to divide communities with fear, hate and prejudice; demonising people seeking safety; stigmatising and inciting hatred against minorities; and allowing the destruction of our environment.

I call on you to commit to changing the direction of politics away from fear, towards hope. I ask you to commit to a Europe where human rights are enjoyed by everyone, and to deliver on this promise, if elected. **{Insert human rights concern, what Europe you want to see appendix for more information }**

I would appreciate meeting with you to discuss further. **(optional)**

Kind regards,

WHO ARE THE IRISH CANDIDATES?

DUBLIN

Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal, South Dublin and city of Dublin

Barry Andrews	Fianna Fail	barry@barryandrews.ie	@Andrews4Europe
Lynn Boylan	Sinn Fein	lynn.boylan@ep.europa.eu	@LNBDublin
Gillian Brien	People Before Profit	pbpcentral@gmail.com	@PBP_gillian
Ciaran Cuffe	Green Party	ciaran.cuffe@greenparty.ie	@CiaranCuffe
Clare Daly	Independents4Change	clare.daly@oireachtas.ie	@ClareDalyTD
Mark Durkan	Fine Gael	mark.durkan@finegael.ie	@mardurkan
Frances Fitzgerald	Fine Gael	frances.fitzgerald@oir.ie	@FitzgeraldFrncs
Gary Gannon	Social Democrats	gary@garygannon.ie	@1GaryGannon
Ben Gilroy	Independent	ben.gilroy@directdemocracy.ie	@bengilroy
Rita Harrold	Solidarity/PBP	rita4europe@gmail.com	@RitaHarrold1
Alice Mary Higgins	Independent	alicemary.higgins@oireachtas.ie	@aliceeire
Hermann Kelly	Independent	hermann.kelly@europarl.europa.eu	@hermannkelly
Tony Bosco Lowth	Independent	N/A	N/A
Aisling McNiffe	Independent	N/A	@McNiffecent
Mark Mullan	Independent	N/A	N/A
Eamonn Murphy	Independent	N/A	N/A
Gemma O'Doherty	Independent	N/A	@gemmaod1
Eilis Ryan	The Worker's Party	eilis.ryan@dublincity.ie	@eilistweets
Alex White	Labour	alex@alexwhite.ie	@alexWhite4EU

MIDLANDS NORTH WEST

Cavan, Donegal, Galway, Kildare, Leitrim, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Roscommon, Sligo, Westmeath, City of Galway

Cyril Brennan	Solidarity/PBP	cyrilbrennan1@gmail.com	@BrennanCyril
Matt Carthy	Sinn Fein	matt.carthy@sinnfein.ie	@mattcarthy
Peter Casey	Independent	Peter@petercasey.ie	@CaseyPeterJ
Patrick Greene	Direct Democracy Ireland	ddigreenepat@gmail.com	@Greene_DDI
Luke 'Ming' Flanagan	Independent	lukeming.flanagan@europarl.europa.eu	@lukeming
Dominic Hannigan	Labour	dominic.hannigan@oireachtas.ie	@domhannigan
Fidelma Healy Eames	Independent	fidelma.healy.eames@oireachtas.ie	@fidelma4Europe
Dilip Mahapatra	Independent	N/A	@DrDilipMahapat1
Mairead McGuinness	Fine Gael	mairead.mcguinness@ep.europa.eu	@maireadMcGMEP
Saoirse McHugh	Green	saoirse.mcHugh@greenparty.ie	@saoirseMcHugh
Michael O'Dowd	Renua	modowd@gmail.com	@modowdmichael
Olive O'Connor	Independent	N/A	N/A
Anne Rabbitte	Fianna Fail	anne.rabbitte@oir.ie	@AnneRabbitte
Brendan Smith	Fianna Fail	brendan@brendansmith.eu	@BrendanSmithTD
Maria Walsh	Fine Gael	maria@mariawalsh.ie	@MariaWalshEU

IRELAND SOUTH

Carlow, Clare, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Laois, Offaly, Limerick, Tipperary, Wexford, Wicklow; the cities and counties of Limerick and Waterford and Cork City

Deirdre Clune	Fine Gael	deirdre.clune@europarl.europa.eu	@DeirdreCluneMEP
Sean Kelly	Fine Gael	sean.kelly@europarl.europa.eu	@SeanKellyMEP
Andrew Doyle	Fine Gael	andrew.doyle@oireachtas.ie	@ADoyleTD
Malcolm Byrne	Fianna Fail	malcolmbyrne@hotmail.com	@malcolmByrne
Billy Kelleher	Fianna Fail	billy.kelleher@oireachtas.ie	@BillyKelleherTD
Liadh Ni Riada	Sinn Fein	liadh.niriada@ep.europa.eu	@LiadhNiRiadaMEP
Sheila Nunan	Labour	sheila@sheilanunan.ie	@SheilaNunan
Grace O'Sullivan	Green	grace.osullivan@oireachtas.ie	@GraceOSilvn
Mick Wallace	Independents4Change	mick.wallace@oireachtas.ie	@WallaceMick
Jan Van de Ven	Direct Democracy Ireland	info@janvandeven.ie	@Jan_Vandeven
Peter O'Loughlin	Identity Ireland	info@identityireland.org	N/A
Breda Gardner	Independent	bredakkcc@gmail.com	@BredaGardner
Diarmuid O'Flynn	Independent	N/A	@Ballyhea14
Walter Ryan Purcell	Independent	N/A	N/A
Theresa Heaney	Independent	N/A	N/A
Paddy Fitzgerald	Independent	N/A	N/A
Dolores Cahill	Independent	dolores.cahill@irexitfreedom.ie	N/A
Maurice Sexton	Independent	N/A	N/A
Allan Brennan	Independent	N/A	N/A
Colleen Worthington	Independent	N/A	N/A
Peter Madden	Independent	N/A	N/A
Adrienne Wallace	People Before Profit	Awallace120@yahoo.com	@AdriennePBPA
Liam Minehan	Independent	liamminehan@gmail.com	N/A

**Please note that not all candidates' contacts and twitter accounts were found/available at the time this booklet was created. Please email act@amnesty.ie if you have any queries.*

RAISE YOUR VOICE FOR ISSUES YOU CARE ABOUT

1. MAKE THIS A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE

CLIMATE

- Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, politicians need to face the fact that Europe is one of the worst polluters in the world
- Environmental groups say that Europe is not doing enough
- Europe must reset emission reduction targets so that they can meet the goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5%
- More ambitious policies, like shifting to 100% renewable energy, moving to a zero carbon economy, as well as helping people in developing countries who are most affected by climate change
- We're constantly being told that young people are the future, so people need to listen when we demand action for our futures!

2. Enough is Enough! Women Demand Change

GENDER

- It's 2019. It's time that we lived in a world where people of different genders are treated equally
- In some parts of Europe this is still not happening
- The 2018 historic referendum in Ireland overturning the abortion ban marked a huge victory for women's rights. Nevertheless, women still don't necessarily get to choose what happens to their own bodies in all European countries. In Poland, a 'stop abortion' bill is still pending despite nationwide protests
- Northern Ireland still retains a near total ban on abortion and it's laws carry the harshest criminal penalties in Europe
- Sexual violence is still widespread; 1 in 20 women aged over 15 in the EU have been raped
- Despite this, only 7 out of 28 EU countries have laws that say sex without consent is rape
- The gender pay gap means women in the EU earn 16% less than men per hour

3. SAY IT LOUD: Opportunity For All

We all want the opportunity to build the life we want and pursue our ambitions

-This includes having **work that pays enough, being able to afford somewhere to live, having access to education, access to a doctor or hospital**, regardless of our circumstances

-However, all over the EU, budget cuts and austerity mean that these things are not guaranteed for everyone

-Unemployment across Europe has risen in the last 10 years

-Too many people live in overcrowded housing or are becoming homeless

-But we can turn things around. Young people across Europe are doing amazing things to **shape the societies we all want to live in**

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL &
CULTURAL RIGHTS

4. What Unites Us is Greater than What Divides Us

We're all different, we're all unique, and all equal. No one in our societies should be left behind or pushed aside because of who they are, or where they come from

-A 2015 survey showed increasingly tolerant attitudes towards people at **risk of being discriminated** for who they are or where they come from. However, this varies between EU countries, and does not extend as far for some people, including Muslim people, Roma and transgender people

-In 2015, across the EU 21% of people said they had felt discriminated against in last year. Up from 16% three years earlier

-**Transgender people** in the Europe face disproportionate levels of bullying, violence and discrimination, and are still fighting for legal gender recognition

DISCRIMINATION

5. Humanity first: Helping people fleeing their homes to start anew

Kindness, compassion, solidarity - these values are part of being human. When people are forced to flee their home because of war, poverty, or persecution, we want to help them get back on their feet -So, why - when we care - are refugees and migrants being treated with callousness by EU leaders?

-We see leaders trying to divide us with fear and hate, stoking up fear of refugees and migrants in the media and implementing cruel and ineffective policies that not only turn a blind eye to human suffering, but even punish those trying to help

-The EU-Turkey Deal has left thousands of refugees trapped in disgusting conditions on the Greek islands

-European governments are complicit in violence and abuse of refugees at the Croatian border

6. Raise your voice for the right to speak out

Your voice matters. You have the right to say what you think, express your hopes and wishes and demand a better world. You have the right to agree or disagree with those in power, and to peacefully protest. But in parts of Europe, the freedom to do this is being restricted by governments who are afraid to be challenged

-In Poland, many have been put under surveillance. Hundreds have faced fines and legal action simply for gathering and protesting against restrictions of their rights

-Hungarian authorities are trying to silence critical voices with new laws that have come in to criminalise people working to help refugees and migrants and to make it extremely hard for NGOs to operate

-And in other attempts to further restrict our freedoms, there has been widespread securitisation across Europe with the expansion of counter-terrorism powers, which has seen a shift from governments providing security so that people can enjoy their rights, to governments restricting people's rights in the name of security.