

EU citizens and voting in the UK

Every election and referendum in the UK has different rules about who is allowed to vote. These rules are defined by legislation. If you are an EU citizen, your residency and citizenship will affect which elections and referendums you can vote in.

In this factsheet, 'EU citizens' refers to citizens from every European Union member state, except for UK citizens and citizens from the Republic of Cyprus, Ireland and Malta living in the UK.

EU citizens voting rights

EU citizens living in the UK, can vote in:

- European Parliamentary elections
- Local government elections
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections

Depending on where you live, you may also be able to vote in the Northern Ireland Assembly, Scottish Parliament, London Mayor and Assembly, or National Assembly for Wales elections.

EU citizens cannot vote in:

- UK Parliamentary elections
- The 2016 EU Referendum

Offences

A person who knowingly gives false information when registering to vote faces a fine or imprisonment. If you are not eligible to vote in the EU Referendum, you should not attempt to vote in it.

If you have evidence that an electoral offence has been committed you should contact the police using the 101 non-emergency number.

The 2016 EU Referendum

Referendums are one-off events, so the rules about who can vote in them are different each time. For the 2016 EU Referendum, the UK Parliament set the rules about who can vote. These rules are covered in The European Referendum Act. The Act states that those who are entitled to vote in UK Parliamentary elections, as well as peers and citizens of Gibraltar, are also entitled to vote in this referendum.

As EU citizens are not allowed to vote in UK Parliamentary elections, they also are not allowed to vote in the 2016 EU Referendum. This excludes Republic of Cyprus, Irish and Maltese citizens living in the UK.

If you are an EU citizen and hold dual nationality, you will be able to vote at the referendum if you also hold a nationality that makes you eligible to vote. You must also be registered to vote. Full details about eligibility to vote can be found at:

aboutmyvote.co.uk/eureferendum.

EU citizens cannot vote in the EU Referendum unless they meet other eligibility criteria. You should check which upcoming elections or referendums you are able to vote in.