Vote for Scotland



Find out why voting SNP will give us a strong voice in Europe, protect our national interest, and make sure Scotland gets the best deal.

Discover how Independence in Europe will change all our lives for the better.

Read our European report card and see how we will continue to dedicate ourselves to protecting Scottish interests.

Finally, meet the people who will be elected for the SNP on June 10 and discover how your vote can ensure Scotland's voice is heard.

Foreword

The world is changing fast; Europe is moving on. In such a dynamic international environment our country must move on too.

In the great international forums of the world, like the EU, Scotland needs a voice. And we need it urgently.

It will be a voice to protect our vital national interests and to promote our values.

On May 1, ten new nations joined the European Union as full and equal independent nations.

If even tiny Malta can sit at the top-table of Europe, then why shouldn't Scotland?

Let's show the world that we in Scotland want to play our part in European and global developments.

Let's demonstrate our commitment to building international peace and reconciliation.

And let's leave no one in any doubt that we are totally committed to defending our country's interests.

The SNP is fighting to save our fishing and other great national industries. We are campaigning to restore fairness to our tax system and we are speaking up to let the world know Scotland is opposed to the war in Iraq.

Why? Because the SNP is Scotland's voice.

On June 10 let's make our voice heard. Vote SNP.



1 / The new Europe

We live in times of great change and opportunity.

The divisions that scarred Europe during the Cold War have gone, and 10 new nations joined the EU on May 1. The Europe of today is one of 25 proud, independent nations.

All these nations respect each other's history and culture, giving Europe strength in diversity. Despite this continent's turbulent past, the Europe of today and tomorrow offers peace, stability and prosperity.

To be one of Europe's 450 million citizens today is to enjoy rights to travel, trade, live and work across the continent, rights that a generation ago would have been unimaginable.



2 / Protecting our national interests

It is in this new Europe that the SNP believes Scotland should play a full and equal part.

We believe Scotland should enjoy the same ability to defend our national interests that all other nations take for granted.

On issues as varied as the fishing industry to European funding, Westminster has failed to stand up for Scotland.

And here at home, the Lib-Lab Scottish Executive has failed to defend our country. Over the last five years Executive ministers have attended just one in ten of the crucial EU Council meetings that take decisions affecting Scotland.

There are many issues which have a unique Scottish dimension; many issues which are important to Scotland, but of little relevance to

"Smaller states already take a more international view because we cannot afford to ignore the existence of bigger states. But we will take every opportunity to influence events because if we do not we will be just as affected by them, and have things done to us instead of playing our part in shaping events and preparing for them."

Kristiina Ojuland, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Estonia



London. Scottish interests will never be properly represented as long as we have no direct say in the European decision-making process.

Scotland's problem is not Europe - it is our lack of a voice in Europe.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

Scotland needs Independence to have a voice in Europe

Power in the EU lies firmly with the member states. Devolved parliaments within member states like the UK have no real say. Independent nations take the decisions that determine the future, size, and laws of Europe. And they decide policy on issues like fishing, trade, and working conditions.

At present our status in Europe is not that of a full member state, but of a region. And while we support moves to involve regional governments more fully in the decision-making processes of the EU, regional status will always be second best.

Only when Scotland is independent, will our nation be entitled to participate in the European decision-making process. Only when we take full responsibility for our own nation, can we expect to have a voice where it matters in Europe.

What would Scotland gain from Independence in Europe?

Independence would give us a voice in the most important decision-making bodies in the European Union.

i. The Council of the European Union

This is the most powerful institution in the EU, and has the real decision-making power. It consists of a government minister from every EU member state, although which government minister attends depends on what subject is being discussed. For example, all the EU



agriculture ministers will meet to take decisions on farming.

At the moment, Scotland has no direct representation on this body even when issues that are the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament are being discussed.

With Independence we would be entitled to send Scottish government ministers to put forward the Scottish case and vote in the Scottish interest.

ii. The European Council

Strategic decisions about the future of the EU are taken by the European Council. It consists of the heads of all the EU governments. At the moment, Scotland has no seat at the top table. That means our voice is not heard on the big issues of the day. Until Scotland is independent, our nation cannot take part in decision-making at the very heart of the EU.

An SNP prime minister with the powers of Independence would:

- veto any proposal to remove tax and social security from national control.
- veto any proposal to extend the influence of the EU over fishing policy and, in particular, to include fisheries as an exclusive competence in any EU constitution.
- support moves to strengthen co-operation on justice issues to ensure effective responses to cross-border crime and terrorism, while protecting Scotland's distinctive legal system.

iii. The European Commission

European Commissioners are the 'Executive' of the EU. They are appointed by the Council of Ministers. They are approved by and accountable to the European Parliament. They are responsible for drafting legislation and supervising its implementation, and for administering the EU's budget.



From 2004, every member state, however small, can appoint a Commissioner. But Scotland, not a member state, will continue to be denied that right. Commissioners are not representatives of their states, but the presence of a citizen of each state in the Commission guarantees that the Commission acts with an understanding of each country's political and social circumstances.

iv. The European Parliament

This is the only European institution directly elected by the citizens of Europe, with ever-increasing powers over law making.

The European Parliament works with the EU Council to develop European legislation.

All member states are obliged to implement EU law. So is the Scottish Parliament in devolved areas. The fact that Scotland has no seat in the EU Council - because we are not yet independent - makes it all the

more vital that we elect strong voices to Parliament.

Thanks to the Labour government in London, Scotland is about to lose one of its seats in the European Parliament. Instead of 8, we will only have 7.

When we are independent, we will have 14.

3 / Promoting our values

The SNP believes in the European Union as a confederation of states. We believe in the fundamental right of nations to their own sovereignty. And we believe that issues such as our national constitution, and our taxation system should be retained under national control. In view of the past failure of the Common Fisheries Policy, we believe that matters concerning fishing should be determined in Scotland, not Brussels.



But we recognise that there are some issues that are best decided collectively.

This commitment to co-operation reflects both our internationalist values and our belief that sharing sovereignty on certain issues is in our national interest.

Environmental protection, citizens' rights, equal opportunities, measures to guard against illness and poverty, the protection of children, and tackling international crime are all issues that require action across national boundaries.

Some say that Independence in Europe would simply shift sovereignty over Scotland from London to Brussels. This is untrue. Any matters for which the EU would take responsibility are already decided in Brussels, not London. The difference with Independence is that we would have the same rights to be heard and influence decisions as any other EU member - instead of relying on the UK to represent our interests.

"Malta has used its small size to advantage in negotiating its entry into the EU. Small states tend to be more flexible and can therefore adopt their negotiating positions more easily. At the same time this flexibility is usually strengthened by and linked to the fact that they exhibit stronger social coherence or unity in their domestic domains than is the case in larger countries."

Roderick Pace, University of Malta



The EU has made huge advances in guaranteeing fundamental human rights and freedoms of all citizens. We believe that more can be done to promote social justice, inclusion and tolerance, and to tackle poverty and inequality.

There is now an opportunity to work together to tackle global issues such as climate change and pollution, and to ensure that Europe's future prosperity is built on the principle of sustainability.

Changes in world order and stability mean that the old outlooks and structures for ensuring peace and security are increasingly out-of-date. Proposals for a common European international and security policy are welcome. Our security needs, as well as our international obligations to peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention, can best be met through a European framework.

We believe that the EU must pursue the establishment of a collective foreign and security policy within the framework of international law.

Recent events have demonstrated that Europe cannot allow itself, or the UN, to be marginalised.

If Europe is to develop effective policies for the Middle East, for Russia and the Ukraine, and for Africa, it must strengthen its focus on foreign and security issues. And it must do more to control the arms trade.

New European proposals for increased co-operation on justice and home affairs are also welcome in a frontier-less Europe, as they will help safeguard our citizens against terrorism and cross-border crime. But Scotland has a distinctive legal system and its values must be protected.

The new EU Constitution

The 25 independent EU nations are currently negotiating a constitution for the new enlarged Europe. A final decision could be reached in a matter of weeks.



Because we are not yet independent, Scotland is excluded from those negotiations.

It is sensible that the raft of treaties establishing and developing the EU should be simplified in a constitution; that European citizens should be guaranteed fundamental rights and liberties, and that the areas where common policies are to be developed are better defined.

This is a huge task. All 25 nations have unique circumstances that need to be considered when drawing up broad and general policies that affect all. There are many special cases to be argued, and local interests to be protected.

In the negotiations each country has one over-riding consideration: is what we are doing in our national interest?

We too have unique national interests that must be taken into consideration when broad, uniform policies for the whole of Europe are being developed. But unlike the other 25 nations, Scotland has no one to speak up for our special circumstances.

The draft constitution gives a framework for the kind of EU the SNP wishes to see and to participate in - a more effective and democratic confederation of states choosing to share sovereignty over defined policy areas for mutual benefit. But for Scotland it has a major flaw. It entrenches an exclusive power over fishing in the hands of the EU institutions.

We have seen far too many of our great, national industries destroyed. We cannot sit back and watch another one - fishing - go the same way.

If Scotland were independent, we would use the power of veto to remove the proposal to make fishing an exclusive EU competence.

At present, tied to London control, we do not have that power. But we are campaigning hard to protect our national interest.



And the Prime Minister's decision to hold a referendum on the constitution, a decision we support, offers Scotland a real opportunity.

If the Prime Minister expects to win a referendum on the European constitution, he must do so with the support of Scotland, and the support of the SNP.

He can only win that support if the absurd clause that hands over control of Scottish fishing to Brussels is dropped.

4 / Our record

The only way to guarantee the most effective voice for Scotland in Europe is with the powers of Independence. But, short of Independence, we can ensure our country's voice is heard by electing SNP MEPs.

For over quarter of a century, Scotland has been represented by strong SNP voices. From Winnie Ewing and the late Allan Macartney,

"It is vital to elect MEPs who will, first and always, stand up for Scotland. Time and again, I have watched MEPs from the London parties sell out Scottish interests. The election of a strong team of SNP MEPs on June 10 will provide Scotland with a powerful voice at the heart of Europe - and start the process of putting our nation back on the map."

Winnie Ewing, SNP Euro MP 1975-1999



to the SNP's latest team of Ian Hudghton and Professor Neil MacCormick, the SNP has been the only party in the European Parliament fighting for Scotland.

Over the past five years, the SNP's team has led for Scotland on a host of issues. Key achievements have included: -

Standing up for Scotland in the future Europe - When SNP MEP Neil MacCormick became a member of the Convention tasked with drafting the new European constitution, he did so as Scotland's only elected politician on that body. The UK's representatives were happy to let specifically Scottish interests such as fishing and oil be ignored, but Neil MacCormick stood up for Scotland's national interests. The SNP will continue to stand up for Scotland in the new, emerging EU.

Standing up for Scotland on fishing - The SNP is the only party to have consistently defended Scotland's fishing communities - and MEP Ian Hudghton has led from the front. While Labour, the Liberals and

the Tories were all happy to support the new CFP, the SNP alone recognised the disastrous implications for Scotland.

Standing up for the environment - As members of the Green/European Free Alliance group in the European Parliament, the SNP has been at the forefront of the campaign to safeguard our environmental future. On issues such as GM crops and food safety, the SNP has stood up for our national, European and global environment. By fighting for a clean, green environment we will ensure a prosperous and safe world for future generations.

Standing up for cultural diversity - The SNP believes in a European Union that celebrates cultural diversity. At the core of the SNP's work in the European Parliament is the belief that Europe should guarantee the rights of all of her peoples - regardless of religion, race or nationality. That is why the SNP has worked tirelessly with colleagues for the protection of Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity.



Standing up for a better world - The European Parliament has a key role to play in the wider world. The SNP is committed to social justice and, in the last term of the parliament, fought for Europe to honour its wider global responsibilities. From issues as diverse as the outrageous treatment of asylum-seekers' children in the Dungavel detention centre to research into AIDS/HIV in the developing world, the SNP has demonstrated the compassion for which Scotland - and Scots - are renowned.

5 / Our pledge

The more SNP MEPs elected to the European Parliament, the more we can do for Scotland. And every vote for the SNP is a vote for the strongest voice for our country.

Each and every SNP MEP will go to Europe with six key aims: -

• To stand up for Scotland - the SNP will offer a powerful voice in

Europe for Scotland's people, communities and industries.

- To support a European Union as a confederation of sovereign states, where certain issues are decided collectively but also as locally to the people they affect as possible. The SNP will always oppose unnecessary centralisation.
- To demand democracy people have the right to choice and informed debate and that means referendums on big issues like the Constitution and the euro.
- To protect the Scottish environment and Scottish consumers the SNP will use every avenue available to keep Scotland GM free.
 We will also demand clear labelling to ensure that consumers are
 aware of products containing GM ingredients.
- To promote and enhance human rights demand that across all nations of the EU, protection of human rights and open democracy

is paramount, and ensure that human rights are protected in the war against terrorism.

 To fight for European funding - the SNP will press for ongoing support to tackle our social and economic problems. We will call for money to be directed to support our communities, and we will demand an end to the CFP that has decimated the fishing industry in Scotland.

The more votes the SNP gets on June 10, the more SNP MEPs are elected, and the stronger Scotland's voice will be. These are the people you will be electing as Scotland's voice in Europe:

Ian Hudghton / Alyn Smith / Kenneth Gibson / Douglas Henderson / Alasdair Nicholson / Alex Orr / Janet Law

Standing up for Scotland on fishing

European stewardship of Scotland's fisheries has been disastrous. The Common Fisheries Policy has failed our fishermen, our coastal communities and Scotland as a whole.

The SNP is the only political party that consistently stands up for Scotland on fishing. The SNP group in the European Parliament will continue to - will always - regard fishing as a key priority.

Fishing matters to the whole of Scotland. As a nation we are more dependent upon the sea than most of our EU neighbours. Tens of thousands of jobs depend on the industry.

But for more than 30 years, London government ministers have betrayed our fishermen.

The betrayal started with the Tories - they described our fishing industry as "expendable" when they took us into the CFP. New Labour has proved no different - with one Scottish Labour MEP recently describing fishing as "a declining industry". And even the LibDems, in government in Scotland, have simply done London's bidding. Tories, Labour, Liberals: an unholy trinity of London parties committed to doing down our fishing industry.

The SNP demands that things change now. Our waters are rich - if managed properly. And proper management of Scotland's waters means management from Scotland - for the benefit of Scotland's fishing communities.

That is why the SNP is committed to ending the disastrous CFP. The current CFP has already created the situation where countries such as Spain have huge fleets but offer little in the way of fish resources, and land-locked countries have a stronger voice on fishing than Scotland.

"The Common Fisheries Policy is the fundamental problem. UK governments, Labour and Tory, have always sold the Scottish fishing industry down the river. Scottish fishing has never been a priority for the London parties. We need to return powers over fisheries from Brussels and London to Scotland, so that we can build a viable and sustainable Scottish fishing industry."

Alex Salmond MP - SNP Westminster Leader

The SNP believes that management of Scotland's fishing must be returned to the Scottish Parliament. At present, Scotland's fishermen suffer because London is known to be an easy touch; with Independence, Scotland's voice would be heard.

The SNP recognises the concerns about the quality of fisheries science and believes that the experience of fishermen must be listened to more. The EU must recognise that different fish species are found in different sea areas: that fishing of abundant stocks such as haddock can continue without affecting the declining cod stocks.

The SNP will continue to highlight the outrage of industrial fishing. In recent years, Scotland's fishermen, who use the largest net mesh sizes in Europe, have been on the receiving end of the harshest cuts. Meanwhile, industrial fishermen - who use tiny mesh sizes - have been allowed to continue fishing unabated. This scandal only highlights the failings of Brussels' fisheries management and must be brought to an end.

The SNP believes that funding should be directed towards retaining and renewing our fishing industry - not towards closing it down permanently.

The SNP is the only political party with a solid record of fighting for our fishing industry in the past and the only party that can be trusted to continue that fight in the future.

Standing up for Scotland's economy

The EU has been good for small independent European nations, guaranteeing them access to a wider market place - and countries like Finland, Austria and Ireland have embraced the economic opportunities offered to them with relish.

Finland, for example, with the same population as Scotland, has transformed its economy over the past few decades and now ranks as one of the most successful and competitive countries in the world.

And 30 years ago, Ireland's national income was just two-thirds of the EU average. Today Ireland is one of the wealthiest nations, not just in Europe but also in the world.

Scotland has the potential to be the most successful of all. We have a superb location, abundant natural resources, a magnificent environment, talented people, a belief in the value of education and an international reputation for integrity and reliability.

Scotland even has an added bonus - oil. But, unlike the small independent nations of Europe, weak political institutions hamper Scotland, with no control over economic policy and no direct voice in Europe.

That's why we have been unable to capitalise fully on the economic opportunities Europe offers us. Because, far from thriving in the EU marketplace like the other small nations of Europe, Scotland has experienced 30 years of low economic growth - as a result our citizens are amongst the poorest and unhealthiest in Europe.

"A democratic Scotland, fully capable of accepting and exercising its responsibilities in the European Union, answers completely to the constitutional and statutory requirements of membership, and the EU with its customary practical ingenuity - would readily resolve the institutional questions that arise such as, for example, that of the number of Scottish MEPs, Scotland's right to nominate a member of the Commission, membership of the European Courts of Justice and so on."

Eamonn Gallagher, former Director General of the European Commission

None of this is inevitable. We could and should do better.

However if we are to succeed in raising our economic performance, and the living standards of the Scottish people, we must have the financial powers that our competitors take for granted. Only with these powers will we be able to create the right conditions for Scotland to succeed in the European and global marketplace.

As long as we allow our economic policy to be decided by London we will never release our full economic potential.

Instead, we will be tied to a policy designed for conditions in the overheated south east of England. The result is Scottish exports are priced out of the market. We are overpriced as a tourist location. Our transport links are poor and we pay for the highest fuel prices in Europe. Little wonder then that Scotland has such a low business survival rate. The current political framework is a recipe for economic failure.

And now with European enlargement, Scotland is facing the greatest economic challenge in our modern history.

The EU is the biggest single market in the developed world. It is an intensely competitive place to do business.

The new EU nations are desperate to catch-up with the economies of the established member states. They will be fighting hard, using all the normal economic powers available to independent countries to improve their living standards and maximise their competitive position.

We know it can be done because Ireland did it. Ireland has caught up and overtaken Scotland. How long before the new nations of Europe overtake us as well?

Scotland cannot afford to be left behind. We too must have the powers we need to compete in this new, ultra-competitive market.

Powers to vary personal and business tax, to offer research incentives, and to market our country abroad.

Never has it been more urgent: Scotland needs the powers of Independence to compete.

The euro

The SNP believes that the euro offers significant economic benefits to Scotland and would be preferable to sterling - but we will abide by whatever decision the people of Scotland reach on euro membership in a referendum.

But the Scottish people weren't given a choice - because the decision on whether or not the UK was ready to join the euro was made in London, for London, and nobody in Scotland was consulted.

"The level of Scottish Executive representation at EU Council meetings is pathetic and marginally worse than the record predevolution. In 90 per cent of cases, there is no Scottish minister present. The 10 new nations will be there at every single meeting, and fully represented in all of the institutions of the EU, ensuring that their interests are protected and promoted at every level."

Nicola Sturgeon MSP - SNP Shadow Europe Minister

Scotland has distinctive economic conditions requiring a distinctive assessment of the five tests on euro membership. For a start, our housing market is different and we have a much more open and export-oriented economy than the UK as a whole, with a major financial services sector and a chronic problem of low economic growth.

Joining the euro-zone would almost halve Scotland's interest rates, helping the average homeowner as well as boosting our economic growth. Isn't it time we started putting the needs of our own economy first, rather than sacrificing our interests for the sake of the south east of England mortgage market?

Standing up for Scotland's environment

Scotland is a nation of breath-taking scenery, rich energy resources and fertile agricultural land. These can all be developed for our nation's prosperity - but not at the expense of future generations. That is why the development and use of our natural resources must

be sustainable.

Scotland could be the green powerhouse of Europe, with 25 per cent of Europe's potential for generating renewable energy. It is essential that we have a balanced range of renewable energy sources including hydro, wind and wave power and other technologies. Crucial decisions on energy policy are now taken at EU level, and it is vital that Scotland's voice is heard to ensure that our country can enjoy the social and economic benefits of a Europe-wide move to green energy.

Our high-quality environment goes hand in hand with our high-quality reputation for farming and food production. Europe plays a key role in agricultural policy, and recent changes to the Common Agricultural Policy are welcome. Agricultural policy shouldn't just be about securing a quality, affordable food supply, it should also attempt to ensure that rural farming and crofting communities prosper, and that issues such as depopulation and rural degradation are tackled.

Scottish farming has a high-quality, high value international reputation, and it is on these strengths that our agriculture should be developed.

The introduction of genetically modified crops to Scotland would undermine this reputation and fly in the face of public opinion, introducing a product which customers do not want, and threatening Scotland's high quality natural environment.

Releasing genetically modified materials into the environment is irreversible and could have long-term health implications and devastating environmental consequences.

EU legislation currently provides some protection against the release of genetically modified materials into the atmosphere, and the SNP demands that this legislation should be used vigorously to keep Scotland GM free.

"Anybody who believes the UK does a good job of representing Scotland's interests in Europe should reflect on the fact that the Highlands & Islands have lost potentially hundreds of millions of pounds in EU funds because the UK office of national statistics got their sums wrong. The region should have qualified for Objective One status - but the office of national statistics used out of date figures, so the Highlands & Islands lost out on EU money they were entitled to."

Prof Neil MacCormick MEP

Standing up for Scottish workers

Scottish workers put in longer hours and have fewer rights than their continental counterparts. The average UK working week is the highest in Europe, much of it unpaid overtime. The UK was the only country that opted out of the EU 48 hour working limit introduced in 1998.

The UK Government is notorious for opting out of, or delaying the implementation of EU legislation to protect workers' rights. The Tories did it by opting out of the Social Chapter - and Labour hasn't been much better.

Denying workers in this country equal rights and expecting them to spend longer at work than their European colleagues does nothing to increase our competitiveness - it merely results in low productivity, increased stress and family breakdown, as well as discriminating against women and men with caring responsibilities.

It's time to stop treating Scottish workers like skivvies. The SNP wants to implement and enforce all EU legislation protecting workers, so we can deliver a high-skill, high-wage, smart, successful Scotland - where workers are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

The SNP is also concerned about the widening pay gap between male and female earners in Scotland and the lack of affordable childcare. The UK has the biggest gender pay gap in Europe and the most expensive childcare, acting as a barrier to work for many women and keeping them, and their children, in poverty. With an ageing and declining population, Scotland must do more to deliver equal pay for women, as well as delivering a high quality, affordable and accessible childcare system, so that we can offer families a route out of poverty and give our children the best possible start in life. The Scandinavian countries have done it - an independent Scotland could do it too.

Standing up for a better world

We are living in an age of global markets and global communications. We must also be prepared to face up to our global responsibilities.

The EU represents some of the world's richest societies and has considerable influence on world affairs. All too often, however, the needs of the world's poorest communities are brushed to one side.

The SNP has a proud tradition, over three decades, of fighting in the European Parliament for a more just world. During the last five years, as part of the Greens/EFA Group we have pursued this goal tirelessly and helped to shape the EU's position on global equality. Nevertheless, much more needs to be done.

The SNP fundamentally believes that all EU states should meet their commitments to international development aid. At present only four of them do so - and the UK is not one of these. The SNP will continue

to campaign on this issue and will press the EU and the various national governments to improve their records on making the world a fairer place.

Independence in Europe will give Scotland the opportunity to promote our values on the international stage.

In particular we will be able to transform Scotland from an unwilling accessory to illegal war into a global centre for reconciliation and conflict resolution.

Other small independent nations have made lasting contributions to building peace by influencing the work of the EU and other international forums. That is the vision we share for Scotland.

Giving Scotland a voice - your vote

The European Parliament elections will take place on Thursday 10 June 2004. By voting SNP you will be supporting our campaign to give Scotland a strong voice in the European Parliament. Scotland can elect just seven Euro MPs, with seats allocated to reflect each party's total share of the vote. The more votes the SNP gets, the more SNP Euro MPs are elected, and the stronger Scotland's voice will be. Polling stations are open from 7am - 10pm on June 10. Make your vote count and make Scotland's voice heard - vote SNP.

For more information, click www.voteforscotland.info



Vote on 10 June / Vote for Scotland

Polling stations open 7am - 10pm Thursday 10 June