

AFRICA ACTION SHEET



May 2014

European Election: **EVERY VOTE COUNTS!**

Elections for the European Parliament will be held in the United Kingdom on **22 May 2014** on the same day as the Municipal Elections. Voters will choose 73 MEPs in eleven regional constituencies.

Each region has a different number of MEPs based on its population. MEPs are elected by proportional representation, in order as listed by their party. The number of MEPs each party gets is calculated using a formula called *d'Hondt*.

The basic idea is that a party's vote total is divided by a certain figure which increases as it wins more seats. As the divisor becomes bigger, the party's total in succeeding rounds gets smaller, allowing parties with lower initial numbers to win seats.

Names of the candidates standing for election in each region are listed under their different parties at www.europeanvoice.com Go to: www.elections2014/candidates. Select :*United Kingdom*.

On election each UK MEP joins a political party in the European Parliament, for example, a UK Liberal Democrat will join the *Alliance of Liberal Democrats in Europe (ALDE)*, a Labour MEP will join the *Socialists and Democrats (S & D)*.

A political party at European level is composed of members of national parties and individuals represented in several Member States. . . To read the **manifestos** of the various European Political Parties go to: www.elections2014.eu/en/european-political-parties

Existing MEPs who are standing for re-election can be contacted through their personal websites. *In your browser type in the name of the person followed by MEP.*



2014: EUROPE AT A CROSSROADS

The 2014 European Parliament elections come at a pivotal time for the European Union. Europe is in a period of existential discontent after years of economic turbulence, and Europeans are increasingly directing their ire at the EU. Given the sour mood, this election may bring a record number of Eurosceptics to the Parliament who could bring EU lawmaking to a halt.

AEFJN-UK has a NEW WEBSITE!

www.aefjn.org.uk

News, meeting dates, information and much more!

Suggestions welcome

Kept under constant review

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VOTING SYSTEM. MEPs are elected under a proportional representation system called the 'closed party list'. **Each party puts forward a list of candidates and you vote once for a party or an independent candidate.** The MEP seats are then allocated to the parties and independent candidates based on their share of the votes.

STILL CONFUSED? NEED HELP? Visit a non-party, impartial website to help you chose which party you want to vote for. **Go to:**

www.votematch.eu. On the map click on: UK / ? / England.

The Europe we want

Putting people first

Against inequality at home and abroad

For a fairer world

For the safeguarding of the Earth

AEFJN' s concerns regarding some aspects of EU policy

Agricultural and food sovereignty.

The current globalised food system is failing our farmers, our health and the environment. Mass food production and industrial agriculture have failed to eliminate hunger for millions of people. **The EU** liberalised trade policies and the lack of market regulation that follows has led farmers worldwide to sell at prices below the cost of production, making farm livelihoods unsustainable, especially for 'family' farmers'.

Exploitation of raw materials

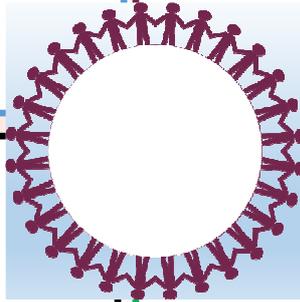
European international trade and investment agreements drive the growth of polluting sectors like industry and intensive agriculture that destroy the earth. This contributes to the relentless destruction of the environment and climate-regulating forests and seas. European companies exploit natural resources in African countries with less constraint than in Europe, and sometimes even without control mechanisms, adequate legislation or transparency requirements in their economic transactions. The extractive industry in Africa impoverishes the people, has a detrimental effect on their health, destroys the environment and exhausts the natural resources

Climate change and energy.

The EU has been a pioneer in setting targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However the EU promotes biofuels as an alternative to depleting fossil fuels in order to secure future energy supply. Currently, biofuel production for EU-markets is causing rising food prices, harmful large-scale land acquisitions and deforestation in developing countries. Some biofuels emit more greenhouse gas than fossil fuels when taking into account the change in land use.

Trade and access to medicines.

The current neoliberal system favoured by the EU and the WTO has supported the profits of European enterprises while putting developing countries at risk of increased poverty, conflict, environmental degradation and unfair distribution of wealth. The EU trade and investment policies are being used to dismantle public services while the strengthening of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) hinders access to affordable, good quality generic medicines, putting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in developing countries in jeopardy. To avoid this, economy and trade need to be **at the service of all people**, wherever they live. The current crises show the failure of a system that lacks regulation, transparency and accountability



For **AEFJN recommendations to the EU** on these issues go to

www.aefjn.org *Letter to European Parliamentary Candidates*. You can download this letter and either send it in its entirety or copy the issue which concerns you most and insert it into your letter/email to EU candidates.