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13 May 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lord Young of Cookham".

I am writing to provide further information in response to the question you raised in the House on 24 April, on the actions that are being taken to ensure both EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens resident in the EU can exercise their right to vote in the potential European Parliamentary elections.

It is the Government's intention to respect the 2016 referendum result and leave the European Union with a deal as soon as possible. However, the result of the vote on 29 March has removed the guarantee that the UK would not participate in European Parliamentary elections. We have therefore taken the necessary legal steps to ensure that Returning Officers, who are responsible for delivering these elections, can make appropriate preparations should they have to be held. It remains the Government's intention for the UK to leave the European Union with a deal before 22 May, in which case we will not participate in the poll.

Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) have a statutory duty to ensure that all people who are eligible to vote in elections are given the opportunity to do so, this includes for the potential European Parliamentary elections. EROs and the Electoral Commission are undertaking targeted communication activity to ensure EU nationals in the UK are aware of what they need to do to participate in these elections, and activity is also being undertaken by the Electoral Commission and FCO so that UK nationals in other EU countries are aware of what they need to do to participate in the poll.

In the case of EU citizens from other Member States who are resident in the UK, EROs have been advised by the Electoral Commission that they should contact EU citizens registered on their local government register and make them aware that they need to complete a form (commonly referred to as a UC1 or EC6 form) which is a declaration that the EU citizen intends to vote here rather than in their country of origin. This is to prevent double voting. The form is short and accessible on the Electoral Commission's and local authority websites.

Baroness Hayter  
House of Lords

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For UK citizens living in the EU, it is for individual Member States to make the necessary arrangements for their elections and to publicise them. Although targeted communications are being sent, it is not possible to send a communication that would be applicable across all Member States and all UK citizens resident in them. Requirements governing eligibility to register to vote differ across Member States, and some Member States may have now closed their registers for the poll in May. However, UK citizens not seeking to vote abroad who are registered in the UK can still vote here, and registration remains open until 7 May.

I hope you find this letter helpful. I will also place a copy in the House library.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lord Young of Cookham', written in a cursive style.

**LORD YOUNG OF COOKHAM**