



Alyn  
Smith  
Election 2014

Welcome to the May edition of my newsletter and the final one before the European election on 22nd May.

The last few weeks have seen me in full campaign mode and despite the diminishing hours of sleep, I must say that it's been absolutely fantastic.

With a busy schedule plus needing to be in Brussels or Strasbourg for at least two weeks of most months, on top of representing such a large area (the whole of Scotland), it can be difficult for MEPs to spend as much time getting around their constituency as they would like.

However, over the past few weeks I think I've managed to see almost every corner of the country. From Arran to Aberdeenshire, Wick to West Lothian, it's been a fantastic opportunity to visit some of Scotland's many great sights and meet up with some old and new friends whilst on the doorsteps.

The SNP is well-placed to win the popular vote in Scotland for the second successive European election, however the fight for that last remaining Scottish seat is a straight fight between the SNP and Nigel Farage's UKIP.

With a week to go (at the time of writing), I'll be focusing all my energy on ensuring an SNP victory and, once again, that UKIP are rejected overwhelmingly by the Scottish people as they have been in every election since UKIP were formed.

**“Mark me well: there's nothing wrong with our EU membership that won't be put right by Independence. Let's speak for ourselves, make our contribution and get the best deal.”**

Scotland has been a member of the EU for 40 years but we've allowed successive Westminster governments to set our priorities and argue them on our behalf. No wonder people are disillusioned with the EU! But mark me well: there's nothing wrong with our EU membership that won't be put right by Independence. Let's speak for ourselves, make our contribution and get the best deal.

That's why this Thursday is important and September even more so. It's not going to be much of a summer for holidays but it'll all be worth it when we

stand up for ourselves, as a constructive partner in the EU family of nations.

You'll find just a few things in this newsletter that I've been involved with this month that I hope you find interesting.

**As always, please get in touch if you have an issue you want to raise with me or if there's something you want to make me aware of. You can contact me via email, Facebook, twitter, the website or by picking up the phone.**

Yours for Scotland,

Alyn Smith MEP



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in the European Parliament

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# Alyn Joins Nicola Sturgeon to Launch SNP Manifesto

The SNP launched its European election manifesto with a call to use the vote on the 22nd May to secure further progress for Scotland by rejecting the anti-European, anti-devolution message of Nigel Farage's UKIP.

The SNP has set out its plans to work with Europe to secure jobs and investment, to stand up for our agriculture and fishing sectors and to advance Europe's social agenda, particularly when it comes to the living wage.

In stark contrast to these positive policies, UKIP has previously made clear that it wants to see everyone in the UK entitled to the same services in health, education and public services – a move that at a stroke would undo the real social gains that have been achieved by Scotland's devolved parliament.

UKIP's plan would see tuition fees introduced at £9,000 a head for people in Scotland, free personal care for the elderly abolished, prescription charges reintroduced and the NHS privatised along the same lines as is taking place in England.



The race for the final sixth seat in Scotland is between the SNP and UKIP. Whilst the SNP is focused on continuing to fight for jobs and investment, UKIP want nothing more than to undo all the progress that Scotland has seen.

It is clearer than ever that the only way to stop the anti-Europe, anti-devolution policies that UKIP and the Westminster parties are promoting is with a vote for the SNP on the 22nd May.

You can view the SNP's manifesto for Europe at: [goo.gl/rIhxWk](http://goo.gl/rIhxWk)

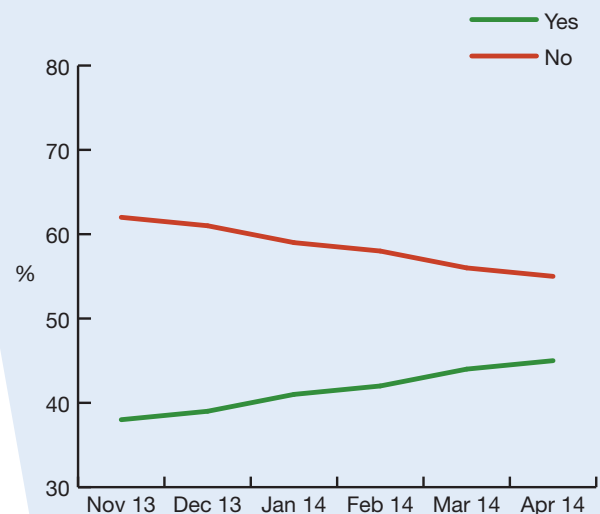
## Momentum with YES as Campaign Enters Final Months

The Yes campaign has continued to close the gap in the referendum campaign and looks poised to take the lead within the next couple of months.

Analysis of all opinion polls from November to April has shown support for independence has risen from 38% to 45% (when don't knows are excluded). The no campaign has seen a similar shift in their support: however, in the opposite direction; with support for the union falling dramatically from 62% to 55%.

The fall in support comes as no surprise as the people of Scotland have begun to grow sick of Better Together's negativity and scaremongering over the future of the country.

With a little over 100 days until the referendum, the independence movement looks set to capitalise with its message of positivity and inclusiveness.



source: Poll of polls excluding Don't Know

# Alyn Takes Erasmus+ to Glasgow

Alyn joined Glasgow MSP Bob Doris in his constituency recently as part of his European campaign tour of Scotland.



The SNP duo met with young people at North United Communities to talk about the benefit of Erasmus+, a new scheme which is being developed to promote exchanges for young people from more deprived communities. The programme is committing €1 billion to helping over 30,000 people from the UK and across the EU expand their horizons over the next seven years.

Bob and Alyn met Jill Mackay, who runs NUC, to discuss the opportunities presented by the Erasmus+ scheme.

Alyn, who himself was an Erasmus student in Heidelberg, Germany, in 1992 said that 'of all the EU programmes, Erasmus adds the most value'.

Alyn also produces a guide, 'Opportunities for Bright Scots in Europe', which sets out the wide array of opportunities for Scots inside the European Union from Erasmus to internships. You can view the guide on the publication section of Alyn's website: [alynsmith.eu/booklets](http://alynsmith.eu/booklets)

## Only the SNP and Independence Can Deliver for Scotland's Farmers

On the day of the Tory European campaign launch, Alyn - who is a member of the European Parliament's Agriculture Committee - highlighted that it is the Conservatives in Westminster who handed Scotland the worst CAP deal in Europe and negotiated Scotland to the bottom of the CAP funding league tables.

Scotland currently receives the lowest level of direct farm payments (pillar 1) of any part of the UK and lower than all other EU member states except Estonia and Latvia - both of whom will move ahead of Scotland by 2019. Meanwhile Scotland also receives the lowest rate of rural development funding (pillar 2) anywhere in the EU.

Were Scotland already independent, an EU commitment that no member state will receive less than €196 per hectare by 2019 would automatically have seen funding for Scotland's farmers increase by €1 billion over the funding period. Instead, farmers in Scotland will receive just €128 per hectare by 2019 - the lowest rate in the EU.

Under the current system the UK has received an additional €230 million, purely because Scotland receives such a low level of financial support. Despite receiving these funds only because of Scotland, the Westminster Tories have failed to pass all of it on to Scotland's farmers, despite cross-party agreement in the Scottish Parliament that they should.

We have released our priorities for agriculture in Europe ahead of the 22nd May poll, pledging to fight for Scotland's fair share



Alyn with Stephen Gethins, another SNP candidate for the European election

of CAP money, to back moves to rebalance the food supply chain, fight to reduce red tape and to improve revenues for the farming sector through encouraging greater protections when it comes to labelling. The full document can be viewed here: [goo.gl/7IMq5V](http://goo.gl/7IMq5V)

A vote for a strong team of SNP MEPs on the 22nd May and a Yes vote in September will let Scotland make our mark in Europe and ensure that people here are no longer paying the price of Westminster's failings.



# Westminster Agenda Risks Our Research Sector

Since the SNP came to power in 2007, Scotland's universities and research institutions have secured over €500 million in funding from the EU, helping to cement Scotland's place at the cutting edge of research and innovation in a host of sectors.

It's no surprise, given that The Times Higher Education world rankings shows that Scotland has more universities in the Top

200 per head of the population than any other country on earth – with five institutions making the top 200.

However, with Westminster's anti-Europe agenda, there is a real threat to Scotland's world leading research sector, which in turn could have major impact on our entire economy.

The only way to protect our research sector from Westminster's agenda is with a vote for the SNP in the European elections and a Yes vote in September.

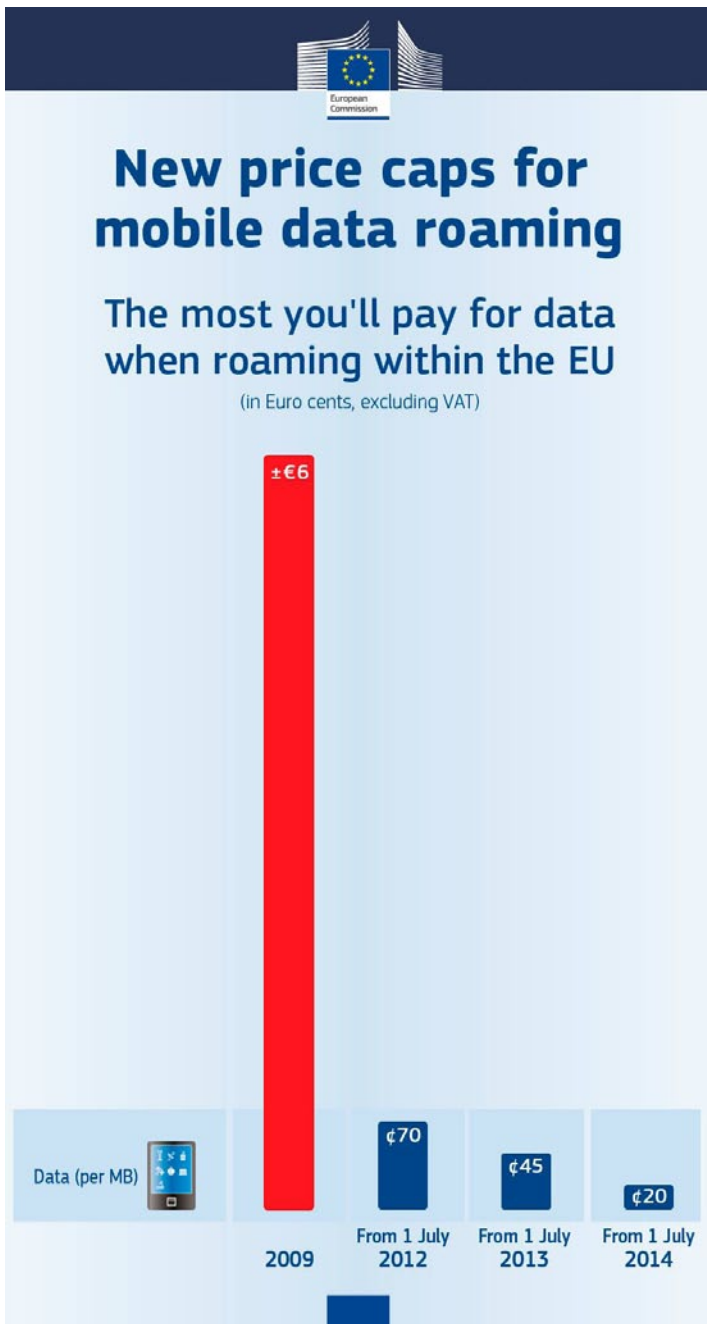
## Roaming Charges

A vote in the European Parliament to abolish roaming charges last month has left the anti-independence campaign looking even more ridiculous after scaremongering on the issue.

In June last year, the Westminster Government published an anti-independence paper which claimed that people in Scotland would be forced to pay mobile phone roaming charges when travelling south of the border – just days after the European Commission announced its intention to abolish the charges across the whole EU.

The European Parliament voted to abolish roaming charges across the EU by the end of 2015 and expects final agreement to do so to be reached with member states by the end of this year.

You don't have to wait until next year to escape the high cost of roaming when on your summer holidays, however. Roaming is now a fraction of the price it was just a few years ago after the EU decided to take action.



## Contact Alyn

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