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Directorate-General for Communication  
Directorate for Information Offices  
European Parliament Information Office in the United Kingdom  
Head of Office

London, 25 February 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

On 22 May, EU citizens living in the United Kingdom will have the power to influence the decisions that touch their own lives as well as the lives of 500 million people throughout the European Union.

Every five years voters choose who will represent them in the European Parliament, the world's most open and only international directly elected parliament. The countdown has now begun with fewer than 100 days to go before the European elections take place.

These are turbulent times, and at the centre of the UK political debate are all the controversies about the European Union and the United Kingdom's membership of it. We do not participate in that debate, nor do we voice any views on whether decisions made by the European Parliament are good or bad. What we do know is that these decisions have a huge impact on daily lives of UK citizens' daily lives and that it makes a huge difference who makes those decisions on behalf of the voters.

The European Parliament legislates for more than 500 million EU citizens, and a big portion of the laws adopted by the House of Commons and House of Lords actually are EU-laws that are made into national laws by the national parliaments. Nowadays, following the Lisbon Treaty by which Governments and national parliaments gave the European Parliament greater powers, basically all new EU laws have to be agreed on by both the Governments and the MEPs, and the same goes for the EU budget.

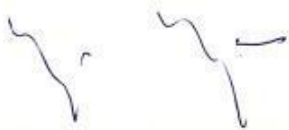
On top of this, this year's European election is different. For the first time it gives voters a say about who shall become President of the European Commission, nominated by

the Heads of Governments on the basis of the results of the elections and elected by the European Parliament.

Clearly, not all citizens are aware that possibly a majority of the laws that have an impact on their daily lives are decided on by MEPs in the European Parliament. That is a democratic problem, and you and other journalists are better placed than anyone to explain what the European Parliament and the European elections are all about.

Attached is a press kit that I hope will be useful for this purpose. If you would like to know more, we would be delighted to help.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Björn Kjellström', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Björn Kjellström  
Head of Office