



Making Them Listen #EP2019

Want to do more than just vote? Then lobby your candidates to make sure your concerns are heard. We now have the opportunity to create a financially, environmentally and socially just Europe, but we need to make sure that the elected candidates will actively work towards these aims. This list might help!

This is a list of top tips to help you become a top campaigner for this upcoming election.

Written communication (emails & letters):

1. Make sure to tell the candidates that you are registered to vote. Give them your address so that they know you are part of their constituency.
2. Point out that you are considering whether to vote for them or if you have voted for them before, let them know. Give them a taste of your own political beliefs and a couple of lines why you might vote for them. If they feel you are somehow connected to them they will feel more accountable for their decisions. Think about candidates that are close to your political beliefs but still need convincing about a particular issue – reach out to them, they are a great target audience.
3. Don't just ask about broad issues – be specific!
4. You can ask the candidates how they will vote on specific issues, if elected. Additionally, ask how their MEP group will vote on these issues and in case they intend to vote differently, how will the candidate try to influence them?
5. Add a personal touch
Politicians are more likely to listen if they hear about your personal story and why this issue is so important to you, i.e. if you are a renter and have had negative experiences, outline them and highlight the detrimental effect of vulture funds on the current housing crisis.

Social media:

6. Move from private to public conversations
It is a good idea to initially reach out to your candidates via private communication such as email. Once this is on record, use twitter to follow up publicly. You can either remind them that you're waiting to hear back from them or you can shame/praise them for their stance on a certain issue. If politicians agree with your point and promise to work on it, if elected, make sure to give them public recognition – that will create peer pressure and encourage others to look into it. It is also an opportunity to call out whoever isn't standing up for that specific issue.



7. Be strategic!
When using twitter, make sure to get your timing right. TV debates are a great opportunity to raise concerns and ask questions. Don't forget to tag the TV programmes and the candidates.

In person:

8. Attend hustings events
Be there on time and sit in the front or on the edge of a row, that way you are never too far from a microphone when Q&A begins. If you intend to ask a question, don't shy away from being the first. Raise your hand high and keep it up!
9. When asking questions – be precise!
Ask them how they will achieve what you're asking for. Politicians often seem to be agreeing with what their constituents are saying. It is important to get a concrete commitment out of them for something that they will actually do. We don't just want them to say they agree with us, we want them to actively work towards resolving the issue. Find out what they have done in the past, i.e. ask them what their record is on opposing vulture funds in Ireland.
10. Stir up a debate
If you attend a public event i.e. hustings, ask questions that candidates won't all agree on. This can lead to a debate on your issue and can possibly lead to better media coverage and social media presence.
11. Be concise!
Put your message across as clearly as you can. Don't be afraid to make your main points a couple of times in different ways. If the candidate wants to talk about something complicated that you don't understand, just go back to your main point. You don't have to be particularly knowledgeable, it is your right to tell your political candidates how you feel about the issue.

Follow on:

12. Build allies for your issue – once you've engaged with your political candidates, think about how to get others involved.
13. Follow up
Make sure to follow up with politicians after they have been elected to see if they have achieved what they promised their voters.