

MEPs

There are six of these who represent people living in Scotland.

[George Lyon](#) is a farmer from Bute. This is his latest written question to the European Parliament.

“Can the Commission outline the reasons why it is not possible for Member States to introduce new zero tax rates for designated products?

Would the Commission agree that granting such an exemption for sun screen (sun protection products) would prevent avoidable skin cancers, which would in turn save health services considerable expenditure every year?

Under these conditions, would the Commission reconsider the idea of granting powers to Member States for making such an exemption?”

[Ian Hudghton](#) is SNP MEP from Forfar... with a very very very yellow website..... He is doing very important things and is also the SNP president...so could someone tone the yellow down a bit please? His latest news is [here](#).

Former Lothian Region councillor, [David Martin](#), is Labour MEP. This means that his website is mainly red... and white thank goodness. He is Scotland's most senior MEP. Former Stockbroker's assistant and animal rights campaigner. His latest question to the European Parliament concerns freedom of religion in India:-

“The EU-India Joint Action Plan (JAP) describes India as a paradigm of ‘how various religions can flourish in a plural, democratic and open society’. It is true that India boasts extraordinary religious diversity. However, India also has a tragic history of communal violence affecting religious minorities, which in recent years has included the 2002

violence against Muslims in Gujarat and the 2008 violence against Christians in Orissa, which attracted considerable concern from among EU citizens. Communal violence in India also takes the form of ongoing and less high-profile patterns of sporadic but frequent attacks on Christians and Muslims in certain states, which usually go unpunished. Communal violence is viewed by the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) as being most likely to occur when there is a sense among perpetrators that violence is justifiable and that the police would fail to act against them, or would act in a partisan or ineffective manner.

The Indian Government is in the process of drafting legislation to prevent, control and deal with the aftermath of communal violence, and is to be congratulated for pioneering such legislation in South Asia. The Communal Violence (Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation of Victims) Bill 2009 is welcomed in principle by groups who have suffered from communal violence. However, such groups have voiced certain significant concerns with the substance of the bill, including the following: it defines communal violence too narrowly; it risks reinforcing the impunity of officials complicit in this violence; and it offers little to protect and rehabilitate witnesses and victims.

The JAP commits the EU and India to an open engagement on human rights issues. Following from the recent EU delegation visit to the site of communal violence in Orissa, will the Commission offer support to the Government of India in drafting this legislation?

Will the Commission encourage the Government of India to implement the recommendation of the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief in 2008 to the effect that the Government should consult with and take into account the views of religious minorities when drafting this legislation?"

[Struan Stevenson](#) is Tory MEP and has been since 1999. One of his recent press releases relates to rat poison which would

have been largely banned by the recent EU directive against biocides. These biocides make up around 95% of rat poisons in use. The compromise now allows the poisons to be used in certain controlled ways – for example by farmers and pest controllers. Struan has a [Flickr](#) Photostream...so you can see what he has been up to.

[Catherine Stihler](#) is Labour MEP with her office in Inverkeithing. She is a career politician going straight from University at St Andrews to becoming an MP's researcher. She is editor of Parliament magazine. Again the website is a bit red and white – but she certainly seems to be busy and her website is probably the most informative The Reporter has seen with all manner of downloads and newsletters.

Finally there is [Alyn Smith SNP MEP](#). Alyn is a very energetic MEP, and former solicitor. He is Scotland's youngest representative in Brussels and in line with that he is on [Facebook](#). He is a member of the European Parliament's agriculture committee. He advertises a job on his site. If you are a recent university graduate then you might like to go to Brussels for a three month unpaid internship? If so then [apply here](#). His last question relates to the fruit fly:-

“Imports of all live animals from countries outside the European Union are subject to the entry controls laid down in Council Directive 91/496/EC(1). This directive requires that all consignments of animals are checked on entry at an approved Border Inspection Point (BIP) to ensure that they comply with the EU's animal health and welfare rules.

The directive does not make any distinction between species of animal and applies to all animals, including insects such as *Drosophila*, which are not vectors for animal diseases. The directive does not make any exemptions for the intended use of the animals and therefore invertebrates for research purposes must be checked on entry at an approved BIP. This can often lead to delay, or the insects being destroyed, which is an

inconvenience to scientists and researchers.

Can the Commission clarify whether it has any plans to review the legislation? Would the Commission consider revising the legislation in order to exclude *Drosophila* from veterinary entry checks?"