



european
movement
in Scotland

Annual Report 2024-25

European Movement in Scotland

Exec summary

The European Movement in Scotland (EMiS) had a productive year with significant engagement and activities. Highlights include:

- **Conferences and Engagements:** EMiS participated in the SNP and Scottish Greens Conferences in October 2025, engaging with activists and elected members. This led to over 70 new contacts and several new members.
- **35th Anniversary Annual Dinner Oct-25:** The event featured notable speakers such as Guy Verhoftstad, Lena Linnus, and John Swinney.
- **Webinars and Discussions:** A series of webinars focused on democracy, featuring discussions with prominent figures like David Martin, Alyn Smith, Lord John Kerr, Alex Hall-Hall, and Michel Gahler MEP.
- **Scottish Labour Party Conference:** Productive conversations were held with party members and politicians, including party leader Anas Sarwar.
- **Face the Music Campaign:** Scots singer Iona Fyfe supported the campaign with a social media video highlighting the impact of Brexit on musicians.
- **Festival of Europe:** EMiS supported the development of the festival, which included events across Scotland and a weekend of activities at the French Institute in Edinburgh.
- **Europe Day Celebrations:** Activities included a social media video message from Angus Robertson MSP and a parliamentary reception with over 100 guests.
- **Student Involvement:** Students from the University of Strathclyde provided support and capacity across the organisation.
- **Brussels Event:** EMiS launched a Brussels-based branch with around 40 Scots attending. The event featured speakers such as Jo Goodburn, David Martin, Ian Forrester KC, Martin Johnson, and Irene Oldfather.
- **Staff Changes:** David McDonald left his position as Organiser for Scotland, and Eva Bolander started in October.
- **Membership and Support:** EMiS has 463 members, 3278 registered supporters, and an email list of 27873 contacts.

Overall, EMiS has successfully consolidated cooperation with EMUK and looks forward to further exploring this collaboration for the benefit of the organisation.

Activities

Following from the 2024 Annual Dinner and the inspirational speech from Sir John Curtis about the challenges facing our democracy, we decided to focus on what we could do to 'revitalise' respectful conversations about democracy in Scotland and across Europe.

We held a series of **webinars** on issues of democracy starting with a discussion between David Martin and Alyn Smith on the common ground that exists between Scotland's political parties.

Days before President Trumps inauguration we held an **event with Lord John Kerr** on what Trumps presidency would mean for Europe and we rounded off this series with a webinar with Alex Hall-Hall and Michel Gahler MEP on defending democracy in Europe from the threat of Putin.

In February we attended the Scottish Labour Party Conference, having productive conversations with party members and politicians including party leader Anas Sarwar.

As we moved into the spring Scots singer Iona Fyfe once again lent her voice to the **Face the Music campaign** with an exclusive social media video as we continued to highlight the damage Brexit was causing to our musicians and performers.

Behind the scenes we supported the development of the **Festival of Europe**, which took place between the 3rd and 11th of May with events across Scotland and a bumper weekend of activity in the French Institute in Edinburgh, with EMiS led sessions on trade and competition and event exploring the cultural impact of Brexit.

For **Europe Day** itself we produced a social media video message from Angus Robertson MSP, while supporting eEurope Days events in both Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Later in the month we organised a **parliamentary reception for Europe Day** with over 100 guests at the Scottish Parliament, it was a multinational celebration of Scotland's link with Europe and a great way to boost engagement in the CPG, who gained more than 40 new members at the event.

This year we **worked with several students from the University of Strathclyde** who are in the Master's Studies in International Relations programme. They provided additional support and capacity across the organisation and we look forward to a further group of students joining us later in the year.

In October, we took our message directly to Brussels, with a well attended event where Scotland's voice in Europe became a little stronger. **A local Brussels based EMiS branch launched** with around 40 Scots in the Scotland House venue. The new group's Chair is Colin Brown, a senior trade and sanctions lawyer at the European Commission and an Honorary Fellow of Edinburgh University Law School.

Speakers at the event were EMiS Vice-Chair Jo Goodburn, David Martin, President of EMiS, Ian Forrester KC, who will serve as Honorary President of the Brussels branch. Martin Johnson, the Scottish Government's EU Director and Irene Oldfather of the Scottish Advisory Forum on Europe were also attending.

EMiS had **stalls at the SNP and the Scottish Greens Conference** in October -25 with great engagement from both activists and elected members. This was an opportunity for newly recruited Eva Bolander to present herself and connect to key people. The interactive activities with a European connections map and flipchart with opinion questions connected to EU and Europe were very popular. We signed up over 70 new contacts and a fair few new members over both conferences.

At the time of writing we are putting the final touches to our **35th Anniversary Annual Dinner**, which will be addressed by the President of European Movement International Guy Verhofstad, Lena Linnus, Head of the European Parliament Liaison Office in the UK, and John Swinney, First Minister of Scotland.

Membership

EMiS currently have 463 members and 3278 registered supporters, and an email list of 27873 contacts. There are a number of local groups active in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Stirling and Aberdeen.

Organisation

This has been a successful year in respect of **consolidating cooperation with EMUK** and we are looking forward to explore this further to the benefit of the whole organisation.

There has also been a change of staff as David McDonald has left his position as Organiser for Scotland in the summer, and Eva Bolander was started working in October, just in time for the Part Conferences in Scotland. EMiS want to thank David McDonald for his invaluable work and are thankful he is continuing in a consulting capacity.

EMiS is an organisation of volunteers and we owe all people who are offering help, hard work, knowledge and enthusiasm a big thank you.