



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
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PRESS RELEASE

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CHIEF MINISTER PROPOSES VOTING AGE REDUCTION

At a meeting of the full Cabinet this morning, Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar took the decision to propose extending the franchise at the next General Election to citizens from the age of 16. The Government will make this proposal at the next meeting of the Select Committee on Parliamentary Reform.

The decision comes in the wake of the Referendum in Scotland which included voters from the age of 16. There are also proposals in place in the United Kingdom for the same minimum voting age for future General Elections.

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, said: "With the referendum in Scotland having included 16 year old voters, any future referenda in the UK and Gibraltar are likely to have such a franchise. As a result, it is clear to us that voting at General Elections should also be extended to those who are 16 years and over. Referenda can sometimes be even more important than General Elections and therefore, there is no reasonable argument to resist such a move in respect of Parliamentary Elections. I am, therefore, delighted that the Cabinet agreed with my view that voters should qualify for enfranchisement from the age of 16. It is something we will be putting to the next Select Committee of Parliament for final discussion before implementation. I sincerely hope this will enjoy cross-party support. The sixteen year olds who I know are responsible young adults who know what they want and what they stand for. They have a lot to contribute and their voice should be heard at election time!"