

VOTE

FOR

CHANGE

*European
Election
Manifesto*

Vote Conservatives and Unionists on 4th June



Conservatives



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INTRODUCTION BY DAVID CAMERON AND SIR REG EMPEY



David Cameron
Leader of
Conservative Party

This year marks twenty years since the fall of the Berlin Wall – twenty years since the momentous events that brought the Iron Curtain crashing to the ground and ended the division of Europe.

We should not forget the great excitement of those days, as liberty rolled eastward across the continent.

One after another, proud nations which had found themselves trapped on the wrong side of history cast off oppression.

The Europe of today is very different to the Europe of 1989. For the most part, the countries of central and eastern Europe are now fellow members of the Atlantic Alliance and of the European Union, with their own distinctive views about the future.

Today's Europe faces challenges very different from before:

- We are in the midst of the greatest economic crisis in living memory.
- There are growing calls for protectionism, in Europe and beyond.
- We all face the threat from climate change, and the need to secure our energy supplies.
- The fight against global poverty cries out for urgent action.

These are challenges every bit as great as those our predecessors faced. And they demand courage and vision if we are to overcome them.

First and foremost, the European Union cannot just carry on as it is. That is not in the United Kingdom's interests. And it is not in Europe's interests either.

The European Union must change so that it is capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century. That will require a transformation in the outlook of the EU, and the way in which it runs its affairs.

The European Union has done much to reconcile the painful division in Europe, and to spread democracy and the rule of law in the former communist countries. The single market is a great achievement, which we strongly support. In recent years, a centre right-led European Commission, headed by Jose Manuel Barroso, has taken some steps towards deregulation which we welcome.

But too many in the EU remain stubbornly wedded to some of the dogmas of the past: to the concept of ever closer union; to the centralisation of power; to a focus on the EU's internal structures rather than the world beyond its borders. And these people are determined to press ahead with the renamed European Constitution.

This is not the right approach for tackling the big issues of today – too inflexible; too bureaucratic; too out of touch with the spirit of the age.

The EU doesn't have to be like this. Europe can change, and it has a responsibility to change – both for its own people, in order to foster the conditions for economic recovery; and it has a responsibility to the wider world, to be a force for good in tackling issues like global poverty.

The European Elections are your chance to vote for change in Europe, to end the status quo.

The Conservatives and Unionists offer a modern vision for Europe - one that is firmly in tune with the instincts of the British people.

- We stand for a Europe of nation states, working together on the issues that matter to all of us.
- We stand for open markets, and for a strong transatlantic relationship.
- We want an EU that looks out to the world, not in on itself; that builds strong and open relations with rising powers like China and India.
- We will be strong defenders of the single market within Europe, and free trade with the rest of the world, at a time when calls for protectionism at home and abroad are growing.
- We want the EU to cut waste and live within its means. We will insist on value for money, work for a firm cap on the EU budget, and defend the UK's rebate.
- We want Europe to rise to the challenge of climate change, and will be powerful advocates of concerted European action to tackle it.
- We want the EU to lead in the fight against global poverty.
- We want to keep the doors of the EU open to new members like the Balkan states and, in due course, Turkey.

This is a daunting 'to do' list in its own right. That's one reason why we believe that the EU's fixation with driving through the European Constitution is not just wrong-headed but perverse.

By voting Conservatives and Unionists at these elections, you can tell Gordon Brown that you do not want the EU Constitution.

- We have consistently opposed the Constitution and its near identical successor, the Lisbon Treaty.
- Conservatives and Unionists are the only UK-wide political force supporting a referendum on the Constitution.
- We pledge that if the Lisbon Treaty is not in force in the event of the election of a Conservative Government this year or next, we will hold a referendum on it, urge its rejection, and – if successful – reverse the UK's ratification. And if the Constitution is already in force by then, we have made clear that in our view political integration in the EU would have gone too far, the Treaty would lack democratic legitimacy, and we would not let matters rest there.

Just as we will argue strongly for our positive new agenda for Europe, we will not accept further moves towards central control from Brussels.

- We will not take the UK into the euro.
- A major goal of the next Conservative Government will be the return of social and employment legislation to British national control.

We will also make sure that our MEPs are committed to the highest standards in public life. We were the first British delegation in the European Parliament to require all its MEPs to publish a breakdown of their expenses. Our MEPs undertake to continue to publish their expenses online at regular intervals. We will urge other parties to follow suit.

Brussels believes that the default answer to every new issue – from foreign policy challenges



to fighting terrorism, from globalisation to regulating financial markets – is to demand more powers from Member States.

Labour – first under Tony Blair, now under Gordon Brown – has willingly agreed to such demands.

We fundamentally disagree with this approach. The answer to the challenges Europe faces is not greater centralisation of power in Brussels. What is needed is the political will to bring the EU up to date and the flexibility to respond to a fast-changing world. We would not agree to transfer further competences, as powers are called in EU jargon, to Brussels. And we are committed to passing legislation at Westminster to prevent any future government from doing so without holding a referendum.

You may think that you won't make any difference if you vote in these elections – the EU juggernaut will plough on regardless of what you think.

But these elections do matter, and they can make a difference.

Today, with so many EU members, both new and old, committed – like us – to open markets, to a Europe of nation states, and to the importance of the transatlantic relationship, we have a great opportunity to lead Europe in a new direction.

The more Conservative MEPs are elected in June, the greater will be the force for real reform.

- Conservative MEPs will drive forward the single market, and resist unnecessary regulation on British businesses, especially small businesses.

- They will champion consumer protection, just as they have done in recent years by cutting mobile phone roaming charges and getting airfares accurately advertised online – saving you money.
- Conservative MEPs will defend British farmers from excessive regulation and cost.
- And they will campaign for rigour in the EU accounts. They will continue to refuse to vote for the approval of the EU accounts until they have been cleared by auditors, just as they have done consistently since 1998 – the only Party to do so.

Three years ago, the Conservative Party and the Czech Civic Democrats, announced that Conservative MEPs would form a new centre-right, non-federalist group in the European Parliament directly after the 2009 election. The Ulster Unionist Party supported this initiative from the outset.

We will implement that pledge after these elections.

Our new group will be pioneers for a different vision for Europe – a Europe whose diverse nations work very closely together; a Europe whose governments take their direction from their electorates rather than Brussels; a Europe that is in the hands of its people, not a bureaucratic and political elite.

Twenty years after the peoples of eastern and central Europe took their destiny into their own hands, we once again need champions for change in Europe.

We want Europe to be a force for good, to lead by example, and to deliver.

Northern Ireland

This election is not just an opportunity to change politics in Europe. It is also an opportunity to change politics in Northern Ireland. Our two parties – the Conservative Party and the Ulster Unionist Party – have come together to create a dynamic, new political and electoral force committed to building a new, and better, Northern Ireland.

Like many people in Northern Ireland, we believe in freedom and opportunity for every individual, with responsibility, fairness and security in our society.

We want you to be part of that United Kingdom-wide movement for change – and the great thing is, for the first time, you really can. That's good for Northern Ireland – and good for democracy.

That change starts now. On 4th June you will have the opportunity to vote for your representatives in the European Parliament.

At this election Jim Nicholson will be standing as a candidate of the Conservatives and Unionists. He

is Northern Ireland's most experienced MEP and has done more than anyone else to make Northern Ireland's voice heard in Europe. He is hugely respected for all the tireless work he has done for reform in the EU. He has our full support.

Jim Nicholson will be a full member of a strong, powerful group of Conservative MEPs. He will be part of the only group of UK MEPs committed to co-operating in Europe rather than centralising more power there, bringing some powers back to the UK where they belong.

If you share our values, join our movement for change today. Together we will build a better Northern Ireland and a stronger United Kingdom.

Now is the time for change in Europe, in Westminster and in Northern Ireland. Conservatives and Unionists are committed to bringing this change about. On 4 June, we hope you will help us to do that by voting Jim Nicholson no.1.

David Cameron

Leader of Conservative Party

Sir Reg Empey

Leader of Ulster Unionist Party



OUR PLAN FOR CHANGE IN EUROPE

Conservatives and Unionists believe that taking the right action in Europe can help us deal with the major challenges the United Kingdom faces. Our MEPs are unstinting in their pursuit of our national interest, and are working hard to make sure the UK gets the best possible deal from our membership of the EU.

Our MEPs have a record to be proud of. We've fought to save British business from over-regulation and to open up new markets that will bring economic growth at home and abroad. We've stood up for free trade and against protectionism – now more important than ever.

We've worked to spread the UK's high animal welfare standards throughout the EU and pushed hard for further reform of the Common Agricultural and Common Fisheries Policies. Our MEPs have defended the UK's vetoes so we can reject proposals that would harm us. And by voting against the EU Constitution every step of the way we've done all we can to stop moves to greater political integration.

We've taken the lead in cleaning up EU politics, imposing the highest standards of transparency of any British delegation in the European Parliament upon ourselves and pushing for those standards to be adopted through the EU.

The UK badly needs MEPs who will robustly promote our national interest in Brussels. Conservative MEPs are committed to cutting the cost of the EU and to opposing excessive EU interference. Our record shows why only Conservatives and Unionists can make change happen in Europe on the issues where the EU can make a difference: on the three 'G's of global competitiveness, global warming and global poverty.

The other parties have let the UK down

The other political parties have let the UK down. Labour and Liberal Democrat MEPs have taken every opportunity to give our power away without giving people a say – their broken promises on the referendum on the Lisbon Treaty betray their contempt for voters.

Labour and LibDem MEPs are still pressing for



the UK to join the euro, even though euro membership now would mean our interest rates would not necessarily suit the UK's needs, a catastrophe for British businesses. Labour MEPs have enthusiastically voted for endless layers of employment regulation which have cost the UK jobs. Most damagingly of all, they have even voted to scrap the opt-out from the Working Time Directive, which would be disastrous for our economy, our fire services and the NHS.

And Labour and LibDem MEPs are even now proposing to transfer more and more power to the EU on issues as important as policing, asylum and immigration.

Conservatives and Unionists – delivering for the UK

In the next five years Conservative MEPs will build on our achievements to make sure that the UK's key national interests are properly looked after. Only our MEPs will fight for our businesses and our farmers, for the environment, for transparency and accountability. Crucially, we need the EU to help our economies recover, not hinder it with more red tape or protectionism. That's why we need to return more Conservative MEPs to the European Parliament – to make sure the other political parties are not able to sell the UK short.

Timothy Kirkhope MEP,
Leader of the Conservative
Grouping in the European
Parliament

Jim Nicholson MEP
Conservatives and Unionists
Candidate in the European
elections - Northern Ireland

ROUTEMAP FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Our achievements

- Fought to protect the opt-out from the Working Time Directive and against the Agency Workers Directive – both of which would cost jobs and hit small firms hardest.
- Introduced the EU Small Business Act – targeted help for small businesses, including cuts to the administrative burdens faced by small firms in the EU and improved access to finance for small firms.
- Introduced a European Commissioner responsible for reducing the burdens on business, and made regulatory impact assessments compulsory for all EU legislation.
- Saved pints, pounds and ounces, so no British business is forced to use metric measures alone.
- Cut prices for consumers by opening markets in goods and services across Europe, for example by reducing mobile phone roaming charges and getting air fares accurately advertised online, saving people money.

Our aims

- Drive forward the Single Market, working to open up new markets, resist protectionism, and oppose all further moves towards harmonised taxes in the EU.
- Introduce new measures to help small firms, including a specific small business test for proposed new regulations.
- Decrease the amount of new EU legislation and roll back redundant regulation.
- Keep the UK out of the euro so our interest rates can be used to help businesses in the downturn.
- Support better co-operation in the EU between national financial regulators, but keep ultimate authority with national regulators who understand national markets and are properly accountable.
- Negotiate to restore British control of our social and employment laws, so that the British Government makes the decisions on how to help businesses and families.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT, SUPPORTING FARMERS AND FISHERMEN, AND RAISING ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS

Our achievements

- Secured early agreement in the European Parliament to cut carbon emissions by 20 per cent by 2020.
- Supported new requirements on car emissions that will see greener cars in future.
- Secured better rules on the use of chemicals and on the management of waste, water quality and air pollution without imposing excessive burdens on business.
- Defended British farmers against excess regulation and costs – for example, campaigning against costly and unnecessary sheep-tagging regulations.
- Campaigned against Labour incompetence over the Single Farm Payment system in England, which left thousands of farmers in financial dire straits for months.
- Secured protection for local British products, for example Stilton cheese and Welsh lamb, and campaigned for more honest labelling of food.
- Achieved better animal welfare standards in Europe, securing legislation that will phase out battery cages for chickens throughout the EU by 2012, improve pig welfare standards, and prevent the import of cat and dog fur into the EU.

Our aims

- Ensure that tackling climate change and moving to a low carbon economy are central priorities for the EU.
- Strive for a comprehensive global deal on cutting carbon emissions at the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference and support EU action to promote greener forms of energy.
- Ensure legislation to control the pollution of air, soil and water and the management of waste is drawn up in a balanced way and implemented evenly across the EU.
- Drive forward plans to end the scandal of fish ‘discards’ – the practice of throwing dead fish that have been caught back into the sea – as part of an overhaul of the Common Fisheries Policy.
- Push for further reform of the CAP, including simpler rules and transparent payments systems.

A TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE EUROPE THAT COSTS LESS

Our achievements

- Unlike Labour and the Liberal Democrats, campaigned for a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, having been elected on a pledge to oppose the original EU Constitution – a commitment we have pursued energetically.
- Spoken in every major constitutional and institutional debate, consistently arguing that the Constitution should be rejected.
- Refused to approve the EU accounts each and every year since 1998.
- Sought to cut the EU budget, especially on wasteful spending like tobacco subsidies and holding sessions in Strasbourg.
- Introduced the most far-reaching rules on transparency on MEPs' expenses of any British political party. Conservative MEPs detail how they use their expenses in a 'right to know' form that is published on our website twice a year – the only British political party in the European Parliament to publish this information.
- Consistently voted for greater transparency on the auditing of MEPs' expenses and for reform of MEPs' expenses.

Our aims

- Press on with the campaign for a referendum on the renamed EU Constitution.
- Resist the extension of EU power over our criminal justice system.
- Address the lack of trust in the EU – for example, by working for a greater link between MEPs and their constituencies and by pushing for greater scrutiny of EU legislation at home.
- Work for a firm cap on the EU budget, saving €1 billion a year.
- Defend the UK's rebate – the UK should not pay more than its fair share.
- Continue to vote against the EU accounts until they are cleared by auditors.
- Force a vote in the European Parliament on scrapping meetings in Strasbourg, which waste around £150 million each year.
- Push for other parties to follow our lead on expenses and sign up to our 'right to know' regime.

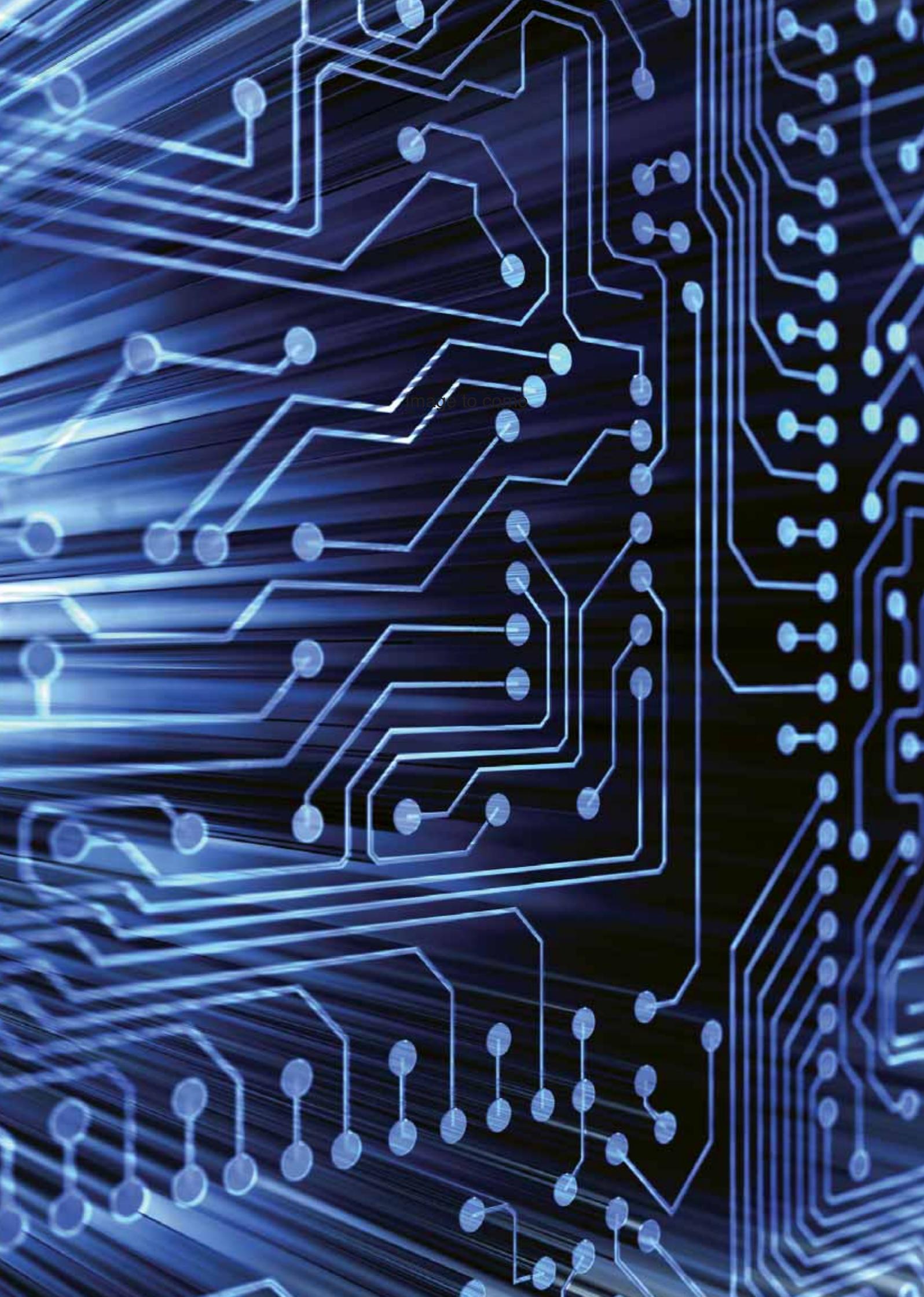
THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ROLE IN THE WORLD

Our achievements

- Played an active part in driving forward the further enlargement of the EU.
- Championed human rights in Africa, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Burma.
- Made every effort to ensure Economic Partnership Agreements deliver freer and fairer trade for developing countries.
- Took a leading role in the Transatlantic Economic Council, dismantling trade barriers between the EU and the United States.

Our aims

- Secure a global, pro-development trade deal.
- Ensure that the EU keeps its commitment to support developing countries through the Millennium Development Goals, and reform the EU's aid programmes so that they deliver better value for money.
- Ensure the EU plays its part in promoting good governance, democracy and human rights around the world.
- Champion further enlargement of the European Union, including to the Western Balkans and Turkey, under a rigorous accession process.
- Achieve greater energy security through liberalised energy markets.
- Maintain the UK's independence on foreign affairs and defence, restating our commitment to NATO.
- Realise the achievement of a transatlantic market by 2015.



ROUTEMAP FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Free markets and free trade are the basis of wealth creation, providing the essential framework for enterprise and opportunity. We believe that the right role for the European Union in the downturn is to ensure that, first, its achievements in free trade and markets are sustained and built on, and that further unaffordable burdens are not foisted on business; second, that it aids the return to growth by making trade and enterprise across Europe easier; and third, that we advance the knowledge-based economy that underpins Europe's global competitiveness.

These goals are under threat. The rise of protectionism in Europe, hiding behind the name of economic nationalism, and the efforts of some to impose a one-size-fits-all social model on Europe's diverse cultures would stifle innovation and hurt our economic recovery. Both are driven by a fear of globalisation and a desire to give easy – but false – answers to the difficult challenges the nations of Europe face in the downturn.

Conservative MEPs in Europe will fight against the voices of protection and centralisation. There are a range of key issues where the UK needs to keep the flexibility to make our own policies in the interests of our country. We will stand against further tax harmonisation in Europe, work for better co-operation between national financial regulators instead of a European super-regulator, and aim to restore national control over our social and employment legislation. And a Conservative Government will not join the euro, so we can carry on setting interest rates in our own economic interests.

Increase Single Market benefits for British businesses and consumers

The Single Market, with its four freedoms of movement of goods, capital, services and labour, is crucial to our economic success. It is probably our greatest achievement in Europe. The benefits, such as cheaper telephone calls, air travel and internet access, are enjoyed by almost every Briton.

Conservative MEPs will work to **give British people greater opportunities in the European jobs market:** to work, study or draw a pension in another EU country, to access better education and training, and to enjoy greater freedom of choice in life.

We will drive forward the Single Market by **working to open up key markets such as energy, communications, financial services and public procurement.** Where we do not believe progress towards fully open markets is moving

fast enough, we will consider pressing for the use of the 'enhanced co-operation' mechanism, which would allow a vanguard of countries to pursue further liberalisation at a faster pace.

We will **put pressure on the European Commission to look for new ways to eliminate remaining barriers to a complete Single Market.** Improvements here need not always require new legislation. We will press for a 'Single Market Test' for all proposed new EU legislation to ensure that new laws do not undermine the Single Market. We will **support plans to extend patients' rights to treatment in other parts of the EU** as part of the Single Market and help EU countries work together in the event of pandemics.

Both the European Commission and European Parliament need to take a more proactive approach to monitoring the proper application and enforcement of the rules of the Single Market. Some countries drag their feet in putting Single Market rules into practice.



We will **support measures to make it easier for small businesses to take advantage of the Single Market**, such as consolidated information points. These would also serve as focal points for firms which suffer discrimination at the hands of authorities in other EU Member States. We will **press for a specific Small Business Test to form part of the impact assessment of proposed new EU legislation**, so small firms are not affected disproportionately.

Cut back on unnecessary EU regulation and red tape

There is still far too much European legislation that hinders the UK's competitiveness by imposing heavy regulatory costs on business. These are costs we cannot afford in the downturn.

So we will **press for the proper enforcement of Single Market rules** to be a priority for the European Commission, with a fast-track process to resolve these problems.

Thriving and properly functioning financial markets are vital to the UK's prosperity and wealth creation across the world. **We need the right kind of regulation to make sure that financial services never again subject the global economy to dangerous risks**, like those the banks and other financial services were allowed to take in the last decade. So Conservative MEPs will be particularly vigilant where new legislation covering financial services is concerned. All new regulations must be subject to proper consultation and research, including monitoring the operation of the markets and products, and be subject to appropriate review mechanisms. We will **resist plans for an EU 'super regulator' in any given sector, and instead promote better co-ordination between national regulators**.

Promote the interests of small businesses

The vast majority of businesses in the UK are small firms with fewer than 50 employees. They provide nearly half of the UK's private sector employment and are the backbone of the economy. Small firms often find it harder to take the opportunities the Single Market offers. They are also particularly affected by over-regulation. **Conservative MEPs will make a particular effort to promote the interests of small firms**. We will press for early implementation of the measures contained in the EU Small Business Act, and press for exemptions from EU regulations for the smallest firms.

Conservative MEPs are determined to establish a more muscular approach to deregulation throughout the EU's institutions, building on the important but unfinished work undertaken by the Barroso-led Commission. A major achievement by Conservative MEPs in the last European Parliament was the appointment of a European Commissioner with specific responsibility for deregulation. When the next European Commission is appointed we will insist on that responsibility continuing.

But we need to go further to reduce the burdens on business in the downturn, so we will **support efforts to cut the administrative costs of EU legislation by 25 per cent by 2012**.

Conservative MEPs were instrumental in introducing mandatory impact assessments for new EU legislation. Nevertheless, the quality of these assessments needs to be better. We will press for a role for the Court of Auditors in monitoring their quality. We will press for impact assessments to apply not just to the Commission's proposals but also to amendments adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers.

In all our work in the European Parliament, **Conservative MEPs will robustly pursue efforts to ensure that outdated and redundant legislation is rolled back**. We will make every effort to ensure that new legislation is proposed only as a last resort; that it is fully justified and subject to proper prior consultation; that it is as simple as possible; and, on the 'sunset clause' principle, that it is reviewed or repealed after a specified period.

The right laws for the UK's workplaces

The laws that regulate the workplace are crucially important to ensuring that businesses maintain their competitiveness, that public services are efficient, and that employees are able to have a good work-life balance.

National cultures differ but EU legislation has too often disregarded the particular needs and practices of the British workplace. To take one example, the Agency Workers Directive, backed by Labour MEPs, which makes it more burdensome for companies to employ temporary staff, has been predicted to cost hundreds of thousands of jobs for agency workers.

That is why Conservatives and Unionists believe that these laws are best decided at the national level and why **the restoration of British control of social and employment legislation will be a major goal for the next Conservative Government.**

In the meantime, our approach to new employment regulation will be guided by three principles: whether a proposed new law should be decided at the EU or national level, whether it would help or hinder job creation, and whether it moves us closer or further away from making the UK's workplaces more family friendly.

Labour MEPs and other members of the Party of European Socialists have been unrelenting in their efforts to scrap our opt-out from the Working Time Directive, regardless of the cost to business, the right of employees to work overtime or the disastrous effect on the NHS, care workers and fire-fighters. **Conservative MEPs will do everything possible to defend the opt-out.**

Advance the knowledge-based economy

The knowledge economy is crucial to our future success. Without our knowledge advantage Europe's global competitiveness would be shaky. Conservative MEPs will continue to play a leading part in promoting policies that will advance the UK's role in the knowledge economy.

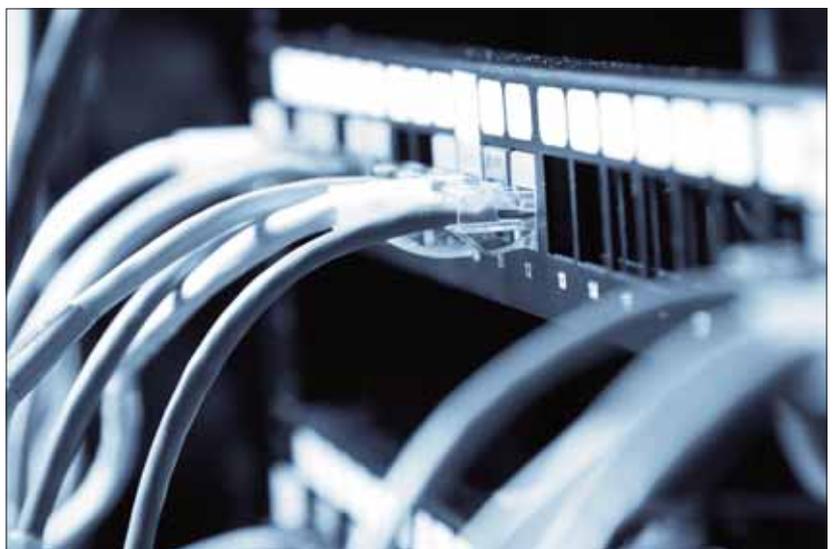
The first place to start is with the EU's budget. **Conservative MEPs want the overall budget of the EU capped, and within that capped budget we will support the transfer of funding to science and technology,** so that money is used to support the research and innovation needed to help us meet today's global challenges. We will continue to scrutinise EU research spending to ensure that its aims are achieved,

that participation is widened and that smaller innovative companies are involved. We remain concerned about the heavy bureaucratic procedures for researchers engaged in EU Framework programmes. We will look for more flexibility in research support and to promote more joint projects held between Member States.

We strongly support the new European Research Council and its focus on cutting-edge research projects. Making sure Europe does everything it can to harness the power of information technology, we will continue to **support competition and promote investment in the high capacity broadband networks.**

We will **encourage European programmes that support innovative companies** and facilitate the transfer of research knowledge into job and wealth-creating enterprises. We have taken a leading role in the European Parliament in promoting a far stronger commitment by public authorities, which spend more than 16 per cent of Europe's GDP to driving innovative solutions and offering market opportunities to innovative providers.

We believe that national regulators, such as OFCOM in the UK, are best placed to provide a dynamic and open communications and broadcasting market, working under a common set of rules. In the recent negotiations on telecoms reform, Conservative MEPs successfully led opposition to a power-grab by the European Commission to take more central control, and we will continue to **maintain our defence of national telecoms regulation** during the next Parliament. Bearing in mind the need to balance open access with strong user protection, we will **promote crucial data protection measures at the European level** and stronger participation in global forums, particularly on cyber crime and child protection.





PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT, SUPPORTING OUR FARMERS AND FISHERMEN, AND RAISING ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS

The EU has taken the lead on action to deal with climate change and other environmental threats, but turning rhetoric into reality is a major challenge. Delivering a greener society is a progressive goal we are committed to, and we have led the debate on environmental issues both at Westminster and in the European Parliament.

Conservatives and Unionists have consistently supported and strengthened the EU climate change package and resisted the argument that efforts to tackle climate change should be watered down in the light of the global economic downturn. Instead, as economic times get harder, there are more reasons to make our consumption of resources more sustainable, to move towards a new low carbon economy, and to step up our efforts to make the UK greener and more secure.

Promote a greener economy

Conservatives and Unionists believe that pursuing a low carbon economy is essential to move into sustainable growth and protect our environment for future generations. This means promoting skills in green technologies and investing in their development to create new jobs. Conservative MEPs will **promote investment in long-term research and development into green technologies**, for example the use of funding from the European Investment Bank for the development of smart energy grids. The EU's role must be to act as a catalyst to research and investment, not to attempt to direct policy from the centre.

Conservative MEPs will **take action to help consumers go green**, for example by overhauling the EU's eco-labelling scheme to make it more flexible and less bureaucratic and by pressing for a clearer system for rating the energy efficiency of domestic appliances. We will **promote greener transport solutions**, including less polluting cars and investment in rail infrastructure to ease pressure on airports.

Conservative MEPs ensured the adoption of a balanced EU package on car emissions at the end of 2008 and will work to ensure that it is implemented in a fair way. We are determined, however, that British motorists and car manufacturers should not be unfairly penalised by EU rules.



Ensure effective and timely implementation of the EU climate and energy programme

Conservative MEPs played a central role in securing agreement on the climate and energy programme in the European Parliament. We are determined to see it implemented without delay so that the EU can meet its targets on emissions and energy generation. Conservative MEPs will **support further reform of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme to improve transparency and create better incentives for business to invest in green technology.**

Conservative MEPs will support work towards an international agreement on reducing carbon emissions through a successor agreement to Kyoto. We will **strive for an environmentally and economically sustainable deal at the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen** in December 2009. Conservative MEPs will **support EU action to promote 'greener' forms of energy**, including renewable energy and new technologies such as carbon capture and storage. In the interests of providing long-term energy security for the UK, we believe that nuclear power has a role to play in energy generation in the UK but it should not be given privileged treatment.

Ensure proper implementation of all environmental legislation

A clean environment is essential for a good quality of life. Conservative MEPs will **support legislation to control the pollution of the air, soil and waterways** and make sure it is implemented evenly across the EU. We will continue to **insist on firm action to improve air quality** in the light of growing evidence of the impact of air pollution in our cities. We will **resist efforts by Labour to push through Heathrow expansion.** Pollution of this kind knows no boundaries so it is appropriate to tackle it at EU level – but a pan-European approach will be fatally undermined if countries do not apply the laws in the same way and with the same rigour.

Thanks to the efforts of Conservative MEPs, the EU now has a forward-looking and comprehensive regulatory regime for waste. However, because of Labour's failure to prepare properly at home for measures they sign up to in Brussels, local councils have often had to implement measures that are both unpopular and costly – with council taxpayers picking up the bills. **Conservative MEPs will seek to make sure waste regulations are properly implemented in all EU countries.**



Reform the Common Agricultural Policy and promote higher standards of animal welfare

At a time of increasing concern about food security, our farming industry is vitally important in providing high quality food produced to high standards. But despite the dramatic reforms of 2003, the CAP it is still not a stable or sustainable policy on which farmers can plan their future.

We want to see the link between production and subsidy broken right across the EU, not just in the UK. The role of the CAP should be to regulate the market where necessary and to set an overall policy framework so individual countries have greater freedom within a clear set of rules. This further CAP reform must also provide a fair deal for farmers in the developing world by ensuring that the CAP does not either undermine or restrict their access to markets.

Conservative MEPs **support a shift of resources to enable farmers to meet the challenges of the future**, including their ability to compete in the market-place while paying them to maintain and enhance our rich natural environment. We will also **press for greater co-financing, so that the support countries receive under the CAP better reflects the amount they put in.**

These reforms must be brought in uniformly across Europe in a timescale that allows farmers to adapt, thereby creating a level playing-field and ensuring British farmers are no longer unfairly disadvantaged.

Conservative MEPs have led a large number of successful campaigns to promote animal welfare, from phasing out battery hen cages, to banning imports of cat and dog fur into the EU. Conservative MEPs will build on this excellent record to **promote the even and rigorous application of higher animal welfare standards across the EU.**

Overhaul the Common Fisheries Policy

Conservative MEPs believe that the Common Fisheries Policy has completely failed to meet either its environmental or its economic objectives. It has failed to develop sustainable fisheries or to tackle over-capacity in the fishing fleet, failed to address poor compliance and uneven enforcement, and failed to address dwindling fish stocks and the unacceptable practice of fish discards, which currently produces 800,000 tonnes of by-catch a year in EU waters.

The next major review of the Common Fisheries Policy is due to conclude in 2012. We welcome the European Commission's realisation that change is needed. Conservative MEPs will insist that more is done to **conserve fish stocks and ensure our seas are used in a sustainable way.** This can best be achieved through more decentralised and rights-based management of fisheries. There must be **concerted action to tackle illegal fishing and illegal fishing practices** and more action taken to **promote conservation of the marine environment.**

The practice of fish discards is a scandalous aspect of the Common Fisheries Policy. Throwing dead catch back into the sea is wasteful, environmentally destructive and makes no economic sense. Conservative MEPs will **drive forward our plans to end the scandal of fish discards.** We will also press for proper scrutiny of fisheries agreements with developing countries.





A TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE EUROPE THAT COSTS LESS

The Conservatives and Unionists are committed to the UK's membership of the EU. We are proud of the EU's achievements, such as the progress made in widening the freedom to do business, travel and find work, and in anchoring democracy and stability across the continent. But we are equally clear that the EU needs to change if it is to be fit for the challenges of the new century, not stuck arguing over the debris of the last.

The modern world places a premium on diversity over uniformity. It forces a focus on results over procedures. The old, rigid, ever-centralising EU model is out of date. The European Union must make itself relevant by giving its peoples the freedom and flexibility they need to deal with the complex and varied challenges we face.

We believe in a Europe where nations can work together to achieve goals they cannot attain on their own, with decisions taken at a level as close as possible to the people they affect. It is a basic political truth that lasting political institutions can only be built with the people's consent, and it is on that basis that we want to see the European Union develop.

Oppose the renamed EU Constitution and campaign for a referendum

While Conservative MEPs have consistently and vigorously opposed the EU Constitution and its successor, the Lisbon Treaty, Labour MEPs have been among its most fervent supporters. Having been rejected in its two versions by voters in France, the Netherlands and the Republic of Ireland, we believe the Constitution should have been pronounced dead. The Lisbon Treaty cannot enjoy democratic legitimacy in the UK in the absence of the referendum that was promised by all three main parties at the last General Election. Nothing destroys trust in politics more than parties putting pledges in their manifestos and then doing the complete opposite.

Our campaign for these European elections is also a campaign for the referendum on the EU Constitution that Labour promised but never delivered. **We believe that such a significant handover of powers from the UK to the EU**

should not be made without the British people's consent. The Conservatives and Unionists believe the Constitution would be bad for the UK and the EU, but whatever the verdict it should be for the British people to decide.

So if a Conservative Government takes office in time, while the Lisbon Treaty is not yet in force, we will suspend ratification of the Treaty, hold the referendum the British people want and were promised, and recommend that the Treaty is rejected. Whatever the result, a Conservative Government would abide by it. If the Treaty is rejected a Conservative Government will withdraw ratification and the Treaty would be finished.

If, in the end, this Treaty comes into force before a general election, then clearly it would lack democratic legitimacy in this country and we would not let matters rest there. In our view, political integration in the EU would have gone too far. We would set out the consequences of that and how we would intend to proceed.

Election promises of such magnitude should never be broken again. So we have also pledged that **a Conservative Government will amend the 1972 European Communities Act so that any new EU Treaty that transfers competences, as powers are called in the EU's jargon, from the UK to the EU would be subject to a referendum of the British people.**



Resist the 'Europeanisation' of the British justice system

Conservatives and Unionists support European co-operation to tackle international crime and terrorism. At the same time, national systems of justice must be accountable to national opinion and responsive to national views. Conservative MEPs will **press for mutual recognition rather than harmonisation in the field of Justice and Home Affairs and oppose grand centralising schemes** such as the proposed new European Prosecutor or the extended jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice into criminal law matters. Conservative MEPs will support practical action where it makes a difference to everyday lives, such as cross-border enforcement of judgements against motorists who have committed driving offences.

Conservative MEPs will uphold civil rights, and will work to avoid a repeat of the lack of safeguards in the European Arrest Warrant. We will **insist on robust measures to ensure data protection for British citizens** where their data is controlled by EU agencies and bodies, for example in the safeguards that exist when records of airline passengers are transferred to authorities in other countries. Conservative MEPs will seek to ensure that EU rules covering the collection and encryption of personal data are clear and robust,

and ensure that data collected as a counter-terrorism measure is used only for that purpose. We are gravely concerned that the Labour Government has also signed up to the incorporation of the Prüm Treaty into EU law, facilitating the sharing of DNA, fingerprint and vehicle registration details across Europe. Given Labour's dreadful record on safeguarding our data in Whitehall, we have serious doubts that it would be safe once transmitted to other parts of the EU. And since we have the biggest DNA database in the world – including samples of a million innocent people – this would have a disproportionate impact on the UK.

Address the lack of trust in the EU

Trust in political institutions is at an all-time low and urgently needs rebuilding. There are actions that can be taken to improve trust in the European political institutions without the need for any new Treaty.

The current regional list system for electing MEPs is open to the criticism that it makes MEPs too distant from, and unaccountable to, their constituents. A Conservative Government will **review the European voting system to consider how individual MEPs can be more closely linked to individual constituencies**, while respecting the required element of proportionality.

The European Parliament must act more responsibly and take on a greater role in scrutinising the implementation of existing EU laws rather than just focusing almost exclusively on generating new ones. Our MEPs will **press for more robust scrutiny and objective cost-impact assessments of items of European legislation, specifically including amendments by the European Parliament, before they are enacted**. Conservative MEPs will **press for legislation to ensure greater transparency, access to documents and freedom of information** in relation to the EU institutions.

We will maintain the right for people to petition the European Parliament and develop the powers of the European Ombudsman so that British citizens have the opportunity to raise issues that cross European countries' borders directly and in a formal way. This has been done to great effect over Equitable Life, Spanish property laws and business directory scams, all of which are petitions championed by Conservative MEPs.

In the UK, we will **examine carefully proposals for joint committees of MPs, MEPs and Peers, and in the devolved Parliament and Assemblies joint**

committees of MSPs, MLAs or Assembly Members and MEPs, to oversee the implementation of EU laws and guard against ‘gold-plating’ – the practice where national legislators add even more costs to regulations imposed by Europe. A Conservative Government would also move to strengthen the House of Commons’ powers of scrutiny over Ministers’ actions in the EU.

Overhaul the EU budget

In the current economic climate, the EU can ill-afford costly, wasteful spending by expensive institutions. Conservative MEPs will insist upon tough controls on EU spending at all levels. Overall, **the EU budget must be capped at 1 per cent of GNP** – and **what remains of the UK rebate following Labour’s botched negotiations in 2005 must be maintained** until further meaningful budget reform is achieved. The UK should not pay more than its fair share. The EU must only act in areas where it adds value and this must be determined by rigorous cost benefit analysis.

Conservative MEPs will take action to ensure the EU budget spends less on old priorities, in particular agriculture and regional funding, and more on dealing with the new challenges Europe faces. We will work to save up to €1 billion every year, including proposing to abolish the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, and removing all subsidies for tobacco farmers. The European Parliament must end its absurdly wasteful practice of meeting in Strasbourg as well as Brussels, so Conservative MEPs will **force a vote on making Brussels the permanent, full-time home of the Parliament.**

Although we will target an ongoing reduction and progressive repatriation of EU regional and social funding, Conservative MEPs will **work with local authorities in the UK to help ensure effective applications for, and distribution of, EU funding.**

Conservatives and Unionists believe it is completely unacceptable that the EU Court of Auditors has been unable to provide a certificate of assurance on the EU’s accounts for 14 years and Conservative MEPs will therefore continue to **refuse to vote to sign off the EU accounts until they have been signed off by the auditors, as we have done every year since 1998 – the only British delegation of MEPs to do so.** We will also promote reform of the management of EU funds at Member State level, for example, requiring national audit offices to audit and sign off EU funds spent by national and local authorities, with stiff penalties in terms of withheld payments for countries that do not meet agreed standards.

Promote transparency in MEPs’ expenses and push for other MEPs to sign up to our ‘right to know’ regime

There is a growing crisis of confidence in many modern democratic countries, fuelled in part by the conduct of politics itself. Many people believe that too many politicians fall short of the high public standards expected of them. We believe that the vast majority of politicians in all parties, and in all European nations, are honest men and women who just want to do what is best for their countries.

In the past the EU has not helped itself or the image of politics. Too many of its rules are easy to exploit for personal gain and there is a worrying lack of transparency over things like expenses. The EU accounts have not been signed off for a decade and fraud besets many programmes.

We have taken the lead in cleaning up politics in Westminster and in Europe. We believe that the way to address these problems is for the workings of politics and politicians to become completely transparent, so the public can see how we work and what we do. We will not rebuild trust in politics unless politicians are seen to be cleaning up their act.

All Conservative MEPs have signed up to our ‘right to know’ regime, making them subject to the most rigorous disclosure regime of their expenses of any national delegation in the European Parliament. We will **encourage other MEPs to follow our lead**, starting with our colleagues from the other British parties.

We will **push for all EU institutions to be subject to maximum transparency on financial matters.** The European Commission should be subject to an enhanced Code of Conduct for Commissioners, including the requirement to list not only any gifts they receive (at present only those over €150) but also whom they are from, and to register all hospitality over €250, again with details of the donor.





THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ROLE IN THE WORLD

The UK's ability to project our values and advance our interests is enhanced by membership of international organisations, including the European Union. As the world's largest trading bloc the EU's trade policies have a significant impact on global development, as does its handling of the substantial quantities of aid it dispenses. And the EU's enlargement policy has been highly successful, facilitating the transformation of countries across Europe for the better over the past thirty years.

When used well and wisely, the EU's global reach can be employed not just for national and European interests but to achieve ambitious goals such as the alleviation of global poverty. The EU is most effective when it is open to the world beyond its borders and has the political will and focus to deliver results. It is at its most counterproductive when inward-looking 'fortress Europe' policies are pursued, or political and institutional grandstanding fails to engage with the world's realities.

Achieve an ambitious, pro-development global trade deal

The only sustainable way to eliminate poverty is through wealth creation in developing countries. Trade will do more to eliminate poverty than anything else. Conservative MEPs will **ensure that promoting world trade and securing a new, pro-development WTO agreement will remain a high priority** on the EU's agenda. However, governments do not conduct trade, companies and businesses do. So as well as pressing for a trade deal and granting access to EU markets, the EU must take further steps to **encourage developing countries to engage in trade by helping them create the conditions in which business and enterprise can flourish** – for example, by helping them to build the legal, financial, physical and digital infrastructure they need.

The developed world, just as much as the developing world, would benefit from greater free trade. That is why Conservative MEPs will **press for the realisation of a transatlantic common market-place by 2015**, building on the work of the Transatlantic Economic Council.

Ensure that the EU keeps its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals

Conservatives and Unionists support the Millennium Development Goals, including the

promise to devote 0.7 per cent of national income to international development aid by 2013. The EU is one of the largest aid donors in the world, but by no means all of this funding is spent effectively. Conservative MEPs will **work to sort out the severe failures in the EU aid programmes caused by ineffective bureaucracy and administrative shortcomings**. Our priority will be to ensure that every single pound of taxpayers' money delivers the maximum impact. We believe that a higher share of EU aid should be targeted towards poverty reduction in the poorest countries: it should promote social sustainability by increasing access to education and healthcare, and promote environmental sustainability by highlighting responsible stewardship of natural resources.

The EU's poverty-fighting strategy can only be properly effective if people enjoy fundamental freedoms such as the right to elect their government and to live under the rule of law, free from oppression. Conservative MEPs will **continue to work to promote good governance, democracy and human rights** – vital elements in the EU's relationships with developing countries. The EU and its Member States must uphold their moral authority, rejecting illiberal solutions to security challenges and never turning a blind eye to human rights abuses committed by our allies or strategic partners.

Support further enlargement of the EU

Conservatives and Unionists have long championed the enlargement of the European Union because we believe that EU membership or its prospect has been crucial in firmly establishing democracy across the continent. The economic benefits are also profound: trade between the UK and the ten countries that joined the EU in 2004 increased by almost 400 per cent between 1992 and 2005, ten times the rate of growth in trade between the UK and the rest of the world. Our MEPs will **support the further enlargement of the EU, including to the Ukraine, Belarus, Turkey, Georgia and the countries of the Balkans**, if they wish to achieve EU membership, however distant that prospect may be in some cases.

All applications for EU membership should be subject to rigorous, but fair and objective, assessment and must proceed on their own merits. We will **resist efforts to set target dates for future members or to draw up a 'final border' for the EU**. As an interim measure, applicant countries should be able to participate in the EU's Neighbourhood Policy, without that being seen as a potential alternative to EU membership.

Ensure that the UK retains national control over our response to global terrorism and insecurity

Of all the grave challenges that face our world, the threat of terrorism and the need to protect our security are among the most pressing. While the EU does have a role to play in confronting these challenges, it does not need to acquire additional powers to do so more effectively. So Conservative MEPs will **support initiatives to increase cross-border police co-operation to fight cross-border crime and terrorism, but oppose the extension of EU powers in the field of criminal law in the UK**, including extending the powers of EUROPOL and EUROJUST. Structured intergovernmental co-operation has delivered results; excessive centralisation at the EU level would compromise national policy flexibility and intrude on areas where national accountability is vital.

Conservative MEPs will **oppose harmonisation of policy on asylum, visas and immigration** while supporting EU co-operation where it adds value. These sensitive matters are best dealt with as policies for national governments' competence and control. Where the UK has the right to opt-in to initiatives in these areas, we will maintain a close interest in developments and co-operate where we can, but without any presumption that we will participate. We also believe **it is of fundamental**

importance that the UK retains control over her own borders, although this will only benefit British citizens if our borders are properly managed with a proper border protection force.

Energy security is an important and growing concern for all European countries. That means diversifying sources of supply from outside Europe – mainly a matter for national governments but also an area where EU action can help. In the UK that means **putting right Labour's failure to ensure we have sufficient gas storage** to withstand external supply shortages. At the EU level, it means **completing a liberalised single market in energy and allowing energy to flow freely across the EU** by facilitating the construction of necessary interconnectors. EU Member States must also be ready to show solidarity with each other when other countries seek to exert undue influence through their position as exporters of energy to the EU.

Preserve the UK's right to act in its own interests on foreign policy and defence

There are many important issues where all EU Member States would benefit from more collective action. EU governments can and should work co-operatively together, for example in developing the European Neighbourhood Policy, establishing common positions towards countries such as Russia and Iran, and in imposing targeted sanctions against unacceptable regimes like Burma's.

But the UK must always retain its right to its own foreign policy through the ability to use the veto on proposed EU actions or positions. This is vital to the defence of our national interests. The European Union's problem in influencing international affairs is not the lack of institutional powers but the absence of political will and consistency. Conservative MEPs will **oppose plans for the EU to acquire additional powers on foreign policy and defence**, such as proposals for an EU Foreign Minister or an EU diplomatic corps, however named.

We believe that **NATO must remain the cornerstone of European Defence**. The EU was not established for defence purposes and should not set up expensive and wasteful structures that merely duplicate what NATO does already. For the EU to have a constructive role it needs to do something NATO does not do, for example by acting as a delivery mechanism for NATO where the US will not, or cannot, be involved. We **want the EU to work in partnership with NATO, not pose as an alternative**. Otherwise it risks driving a wedge between us and our transatlantic allies.

