

THE LABOUR PARTY

EUROPEAN MANIFESTO



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FOREWORD

BY ED MILIBAND, LEADER OF THE LABOUR PARTY



More than six years after the financial crisis swept across the world, the effects are still being felt – and no more so than in Europe. The focus for Britain at this time should be to promote growth at home and secure influence abroad.

Our priority is to make Britain better off by dealing with the cost of living crisis and building an economy that works for hardworking people. Labour MEPs will continue to take action to tackle the pressures facing families, and make the big long-term changes we need to build an economy that works for working people.

By contrast, David Cameron's approach has created unnecessary economic uncertainty during a cost of living crisis, at the precise time our economy needs stability based on growth and investment. He has committed to a major renegotiation of Britain's relationship with Europe, yet he can't tell us what he is negotiating for, has no strategy for achieving change and can't even tell us whether he will campaign to keep Britain in Europe. What he is guaranteeing is up to four years of damaging uncertainty and division, risking jobs and growth at home and British influence abroad.

Labour's position on Europe is clear and principled: we strongly believe Britain's future lies at the heart of a reformed EU. The benefits of being in the EU are strategic, economic and are about the character of our country – an outward looking, confident Britain. But if Britain's future in Europe is to be secured, we know that Europe needs to work better for Britain. That is why Labour is working for change in Europe so that it works for the hardworking people in Britain.

In addition, Labour believes that the public should have a guarantee that no future transfer of powers should take place without the public having their say. That is why we have announced that the next Labour government will legislate for a lock that guarantees that there cannot be any transfer of powers from Britain to the European Union without an in/out referendum.

Our position offers the British people a clear choice at the next election. A choice between a divided and ungovernable Conservative Party that threatens to inflict huge uncertainty on business and undermine Britain's influence on the international stage or Labour MEPs whose priority in the European Parliament will be creating more and better jobs; helping British business succeed; protecting our national interest; and raising living standards for all – not just the few at the top.

Ed Miliband

FOREWORD

BY GLENIS WILLMOTT MEP, LEADER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY LABOUR PARTY



With living standards under pressure, Labour MEPs have put jobs and economic growth at the heart of our work in Europe, standing up for a better deal for British families.

We have fought hard to regulate the finance sector, tackling the dangerous risk-taking culture and big bonuses that contributed to the financial crisis. We have championed new initiatives to reduce youth unemployment and challenged rip-off credit card charges. We have cracked down on the underhand marketing of cigarettes to children and stood up to the food industry to demand more openness about where our food has come from.

Labour MEPs are proud of these and many other successes, but we want to go further. Europe needs to change if it is to win back the confidence of the British public and to better reflect the issues that matter to hardworking people up and down Britain.

We are proud to have secured new funding to help young unemployed people find a job or training, but more must be done to reform the EU so that its primary focus is boosting jobs and economic growth. We are proud of our efforts to block those who seek to weaken the European safeguards that protect working people and consumers, but there are still loopholes that must be closed. On trade, we are proud of helping the EU to boost our economy through the European Single Market and new international trade agreements. But, we must remain vigilant to ensure that the Government does not use these deals as a tool to undermine our public services, including the NHS.

And we recognise that at a time of tough choices at home, we must argue not just for restraint of the EU budget but also for reform. There are further savings and institutional changes that must be made.

Of course we are also proud of the work we do at home in our constituencies, backing local projects to support jobs and investment, helping local businesses trade with Europe and supporting constituents who have had problems dealing with another EU country.

These elections are about who you want on your side representing your interests in the European Parliament. Time and again Labour has voted for progress to help hardworking Britain. Yet all too often the Tories have tried to block our efforts, choosing instead to stand up for vested interests.

From getting the European economy working, to tackling climate change, from equal rights to the pound in your pocket, decisions made in the European Parliament matter. That is why Britain is better off with Labour MEPs.

Glenis Willmott

JOBS AND GROWTH

EUROPE FOR YOU

The UK is currently facing a major cost of living crisis - people are finding that their wages are squeezed and too many of the jobs being created are low paid and insecure. Our economy has seen the slowest recovery for over 100 years and for millions of people across the country this is no recovery at all.

Britain deserves better than this.

Labour believes Britain must earn and grow our way to higher living standards for all and compete in a global market. Building a strong and stable economy is the only way to provide greater opportunity, jobs, security and to increase prosperity for British people. We are best placed to do so from a position of influence within a reformed EU.

The economic case for membership is overwhelming.

The EU Single Market is the biggest in the world, opening up a 500 million-strong consumer market to UK businesses - a market with 21 million companies generating £11 trillion in economic activity. Almost half of the UK's trade and foreign investment comes from the EU, providing around 3.5 million jobs. And it helps boost the living standards of people across Britain, encouraging capital and investment to flow into the UK.

 The EU Single Market is the biggest in the world, with **21 million** companies generating **£11 trillion** in economic activity

Competing in that Single Market with the best companies in the world also drives competitiveness and innovation for firms in all parts of our economy: from cars to computers, phones to pharmaceuticals. Exit from the EU would put all these gains at risk. Either we would end up outside the Single Market or be under terms and rules dictated by others.

We are proud that Labour in government signed up to the Social Chapter which introduced measures including: minimum four weeks' paid holiday; a right to parental leave; extended maternity leave; a new right to request flexible working and the same protection for part-time workers as full-time workers. Labour will fight to protect these rights.

Our membership of the EU also allows Britain to make considerable economic gains as large markets open up. For example, recent efforts to secure a transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) deal between the EU and US could potentially see an increase in UK national income of between £4-10 billion annually, or up to £100 billion over a ten-year period, while opening up transatlantic trade for jobs and growth. And, as a member of the European Union, Britain also has even greater scope and opportunity to trade with emerging economies, such as Brazil, India and China.

LABOUR'S PRIORITIES

Labour will make long-term changes so that our economy works for working people. That's why Labour will cut business rates for small firms, reform our banks so that they work for the real economy, reform the energy market so that it works for consumers, and introduce a compulsory jobs guarantee for the long-term unemployed.

EU jobs and growth policy agenda

Labour will work with our allies in Europe to advance a reform agenda which promotes economic growth and more secure, better paid jobs across the EU. At a time of tough choices at home, this not only means restraint in the EU budget but also reform. The budget should focus on those items where spending at an EU level can save money at the national level, and resources should be shifted from areas such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and put into areas of more productive economic development, such as research and development for new technologies and industries.

Labour are proposing a new Commissioner for Growth, bringing together some of the existing Commission portfolios on economic policy, to help ensure the EU is focused on growth and held accountable for progress. Alongside this, Labour are proposing that the EU establish its own equivalent of the UK's Office for Budget Responsibility with the narrower mandate of auditing all EU spending decisions based on the impact that they have on promoting growth and jobs across the EU.

Labour will continue to argue for the completion of the Single Market in digital, energy and services, providing potentially huge gains for Britain and helping deliver the economic recovery that Britain needs. The operation of the Single Market in existing sectors must also be protected in the face of possible closer integration between Eurozone states.

State-aid, research and development, infrastructure spending and industry policy are key aspects of an industrial growth strategy that Europe must make more effective to help deliver for its Member States. That is why our approach must focus on how the areas of European policy can be reformed to make them more effective and better targeted.

“Labour will continue to argue for the completion of the Single Market in the digital, energy and services, providing potentially huge gains for Britain and helping deliver the economic recovery that Britain needs ”

Tackling high youth unemployment

Across Europe, there are currently over five million unemployed people under the age of 25 and almost 900,000 of those are living in Britain. Europe needs to get its young people into work. Labour MEPs stood up for our young people by securing a European youth jobs guarantee which could initially bring over £160 million to help British young people find employment.

Promoting trade

Our membership of the EU is a vital platform for agreeing bilateral EU trade deals, providing an additional engine of growth that will benefit not only the UK, but the EU as a whole.

Labour will continue to support the conclusion of Free Trade Agreements as a means of promoting economic growth and development. We will also continue to uphold our values, by ensuring the inclusion of binding and robust human rights clauses where necessary.

Labour supports EU-US trade and investment partnership (TTIP), which has the potential to bring significant benefits to British consumers, workers and businesses. Labour welcomes the ongoing negotiations on this deal and will continue to monitor its progress, in particular with regard to the impact the TTIP may have on vital national policies and services, such as the National Health Service.

European banking reform

Labour will continue to back reforms to big city bonuses by changing rules so bankers' bonuses are properly controlled.

Reforms must deliver a competitive, safe, stable, effective and efficient banking system that operates in a competitive market economy and serves the needs of the real economy, customers and consumers. It must stimulate much-needed economic growth by supporting the credit provision to the economy, in particular to SMEs and start-ups; it must provide greater resilience against potential financial crises; and it must restore trust and confidence in banks, which continues to be low.

“ Labour will continue to back reforms to big city bonuses by changing rules so bankers' bonuses are properly controlled ”

Tax avoidance

Labour also believes that more can and should be done to tackle tax avoidance. Labour is backing international efforts to prevent the erosion of tax bases and the shifting of profits, for example by increasing the transparency of what tax multinationals pay. But multinational action should not be used as an excuse for delaying reforms – there is more we can do domestically as well. Labour will extend the successful Disclosure of Tax Avoidance Schemes regime which we set up in Government, and we will open up tax havens, with the

introduction of requirements to pass on information about money which is hidden behind front companies or trusts. Labour is in favour of an international financial transaction tax – one that is agreed by all of the world’s financial centres, including those in the US.

THE TORIES

Since David Cameron and George Osborne came to office, working people are now on average £1,600 worse off a year. Yet they gave people earning £150,000 a huge tax cut last year. Hardworking people are finding that their wages are stagnant. Official forecasts show the cost of living crisis will leave working people worse off in 2015 than in 2010. And on tackling this, together with growth and the deficit, this Government have failed every test they set themselves in 2010.

“ David Cameron’s approach has created unnecessary economic uncertainty during a cost of living crisis ”

The priority for Britain at this time should be to promote growth at home and secure influence abroad.

By contrast, David Cameron’s approach has created unnecessary economic uncertainty during a cost of living crisis, at the precise time our economy needs stability based on growth and investment. By setting a date of 2017 for a referendum on whether we should leave the European Union, companies around the world have come to the view that this is placing great uncertainty over decisions to invest in Britain. The CBI described the Government’s plan as a “diversion” and “distraction” from “the economy, jobs and the cost of living”, while global companies from Nissan to DHL have openly warned of the dangers of exit.

And further to this, David Cameron has no clarity about what he is negotiating for, no support from the rest of the European Union for his treaty change and no strategy for achieving it. He cannot even say whether he would recommend staying in or leaving the European Union.

David Cameron’s promises on Europe are undefined, undeliverable and are now unravelling. His approach could result in Britain sleepwalking out of the Europe Union instead of reforming and re-shaping it from within.

Britain deserves better than this.

LABOUR MEPs FIGHTING FOR YOU IN EUROPE

On growth

- Labour MEPs campaigned and achieved a real-terms cut in the EU budget at the last seven year budget negotiations, calling for it to be more streamlined and focused on delivering growth and jobs.

On European banking reform

- Labour MEPs delivered measures to clamp down on bankers' bonuses. These include measures to cap bonuses at a ratio of 1:1 with salary, or 2:1 with shareholder approval; and to defer bonuses so that they are linked to the longer term performance of the bank. Conservative MEPs failed to support these measures and George Osborne is still trying to stop them with a legal challenge.
- Labour MEPs battled against unfettered credit default swaps, against unstable speculation in commodities, such as food, and increased transparency for equity and derivatives trading.

LIVING STANDARDS

EUROPE FOR YOU

To tackle the cost of living crisis that people are facing across the country, Britain's access to and influence in, the world's largest Single Market is crucial. But so too is a seat at the table to make sure that, as the Eurozone emerges from an economic crisis, the EU stays focused on driving up our living standards. Labour will work to ensure that the EU does more to focus on tackling the cost of living crisis facing British families by:

1. Tackling insecurity at work by banning zero-hours contracts when they are exploitative and campaigning against David Cameron's repatriation of social rights
2. Tackling rising energy bills and climate change by reforming the European single market in energy
3. Prioritising transport through infrastructure development and protection of consumer rights

The impact of the EU on people's lives extends beyond simply the impact on creating jobs. The social market combines sustainable economic growth with protections around people's working conditions. This brings good quality jobs, equal opportunities and social protection for all.

It was a Labour Government that helped introduce sensible measures at an EU level that protect the rights of British workers. These are measures to which we are committed and which we will fight to protect.

LABOUR'S PRIORITIES

Tackling low pay and job insecurity

Labour will stop the race to the bottom on wages and conditions between EU workers and local workers. We will take action to ensure the minimum wage is properly enforced, close the legal loopholes in rules for agency workers and look at EU directives designed to prevent undercutting to make sure they are effective.

The next Labour Government will increase the fines for non-payment of the National Minimum Wage to £50,000 to provide a proper deterrent and give local government a role in enforcement. We will change the Minimum Wage regulations to stop employers providing overcrowded and unsuitable accommodation and offsetting it against workers' pay. Labour will work with British business and others to stop the loophole in the Agency Workers Directive being used to undercut the pay of non-agency staff, and we will ensure Directives like the Posted Workers Directive are effective.

And Labour will take the fight against exploitative zero-hour contracts to the EU pushing for legislation to stamp out the unfair practices and abuses associated with these contracts. We will ban employers from being able to require zero-hours workers to be available on the off-chance that they will be needed; stop employees from being required to work exclusively for one firm if they are on a zero-hours contract; and ban the use of zero-hours contracts when employees are in practice working regular hours.

We will also defend your existing protections and standards at work, such as the right to a minimum of four weeks' paid leave and the right not to be sacked for being pregnant.

Tackling the cost of living crisis through enhancing consumer rights

At home, Labour will help people facing a cost of living crisis by freezing energy prices until January 2017 and expanding free childcare for working parents. And we have called for a tax cut for 24 million working people on middle and lower incomes by introducing a lower 10p starting rate of tax.

The energy market does not work for ordinary families and Labour will change that. Labour's energy price freeze will save, on average, £120 each year for 27 million households and help 2.4 million businesses. Our plans to reset the market will deliver fairer prices in the future. Working in Europe Labour MEPs will tackle the cost of living crisis by ensuring that EU competition policies benefit consumers, particularly when it comes to energy.



Labour's energy price freeze will save on average **£120** each year for **27 million** households along with **2.4 million** businesses

Labour will also tackle the crisis in living standards by pursuing investment in European transport infrastructure and extending and defending consumer rights. For European competitiveness, economic development and sustainability, investment in European transport infrastructure is essential to securing a balanced economic recovery.

Protecting the NHS

This Government has deliberately tried to expose the NHS to the full force of EU competition law. The next Labour Government and our MEPs will work to make sure the NHS is protected from that body of law, so that patients are always put first.

THE TORIES

While Labour will tackle the cost of living crisis, standing up for the hard-working majority, David Cameron and the Conservatives are more focused on standing up for the privileged few than improving living standards for all.

David Cameron's approach to Europe today doesn't just risk jeopardising the prospects for growth in our economy, it also risks unravelling the fabric of rights and protections that are such a crucial part of what defines the standards and quality of life that so many today depend upon.

David Cameron has long cited social and employment law as one of the areas where he wants to see the EU do less, and the UK potentially opt out. Yet he has not set out the extent of the impact on British jobs, British employees and British companies and he has not said that equivalent domestic legislation will be introduced immediately to ensure that these valuable protections are maintained. Labour knows this would be hugely damaging for the vital employment protections and rights that we currently enjoy in our country.

Instead of tackling job insecurity in the UK, this Tory-led Government has made it easier to fire people by doubling the period an employee is required to work for a firm before they can file an unfair dismissal claim and by introducing charges for those who take their case to tribunal. Downing Street even toyed with the call from Tory donor Adrian Beecroft to give small businesses the power to fire at will – a proposal that could have affected more than 3.6 million private sector workers and which was only dropped when it was rejected by the business community.

David Cameron is out of touch over the rising cost of energy bills. Since he became Prime Minister, the average annual energy bill has risen by £300. He has failed to stand up to the energy companies and his claim to lead the greenest government ever are in ruins. The Tories have failed on renewable energy, with investment in clean energy halved on David Cameron's watch, costing jobs and threatening our energy security.

A Conservative government after 2015 would be dominated not by trying to tackle the cost of living crisis, protect the National Health Service or getting jobs for our young people, but by an all-consuming and damaging obsession with whether we should leave the European Union.

“ A Conservative Government after 2015 would be dominated not by trying to tackle the cost of living crisis, protect the National Health Service or getting jobs for our young people, but by an all-consuming and damaging obsession with whether we should leave the European Union ”

Britain deserves better than this.

LABOUR MEPs FIGHTING FOR YOU IN EUROPE

Standing up for families

- Labour MEPs tackled the cost of living by delivering cuts to mobile phone call and data costs to protect British families from rip-off prices when using a mobile phone abroad.
- Labour MEPs voted to make unfair credit card charges illegal. Thanks to these changes, from this year onwards, British consumers will be protected against sky-high credit card transaction fees.
- Labour MEPs moved to protect savers against losing everything by backing a new deposit guarantee to provide compensation for depositors if their bank goes bust.
- Labour MEPs voted to introduce clear food labelling - including labelling on which country our food comes from - against opposition from Government Ministers.
- Labour MEPs took on the big tobacco industry in order to protect children from aggressive marketing by backing new rules to introduce graphic warnings covering 75 per cent of cigarette packaging; a ban on chocolate, strawberry and menthol flavoured cigarettes a ban on slim cigarettes; and calls for better regulation of e-cigarettes.

Championing energy security

- Labour MEPs backed reforms to the EU's Carbon Market to protect our environment and get a better deal for British industry.
- Labour MEPs backed reforms to the European Emissions Trading scheme which would have allowed intervention in the auctioning timetable of carbon permits to try to restore the price of carbon following its collapse caused by the economic crisis.

STRONGER, SAFER COMMUNITIES

EUROPE FOR YOU

From fraud and human trafficking, to narcotics and terrorism, we know that the nature of crime is changing. In an era of increasingly integrated markets and greater ease of travel, crime is no longer confined to state lines and can spread to threaten our own national security. We need a capable and cooperative Europe to help make Britain's streets safer and our borders more secure.

Labour wants to see stronger, safer communities which is why we will never relinquish Britain's power over our criminal justice system. Yet the transnational nature of crime today reinforces the fact that we cannot fight these global challenges alone. We depend on our European partners for intelligence and operational support in order to protect the British public and the freedoms which they enjoy. Labour is committed to improving the EU's effectiveness to ensure that these goals are realised.

LABOUR'S PRIORITIES

Cross-border crime is growing. And criminals can travel between countries more easily than ever before. That's why Labour supports a proper framework for police forces to work together across borders. Over 4,000 suspected criminals have been sent back to other EU countries to face justice – over 90 per cent were foreign citizens. The European Arrest Warrant has led to the successful extradition of one of the 21/7 bombers from Italy so they can face justice back in the UK.

We also believe it's right that if people want to come to this country, they abide by our laws. So Labour will consult on lowering the sentence threshold for EU migrants who commit crimes having only recently arrived in the UK, so that, for example, a migrant who committed common assault or robbery within a few months of arriving would be automatically considered for deportation.

“ We believe co-operation with our European partners on crime and intelligence is vital to making Britain's streets safer ”

THE TORIES

This Tory-led Government is taking policing backwards, cutting or privatising core functions and putting neighbourhood policing at risk. With the loss of 15,000 officers, 999 response times have increased and victims are waiting longer for help at the time when they are most afraid. 14,000 more violent criminals got away without charge and 9,000 more got off with no conviction last year with victims denied the vital justice they deserve.

The Government is also putting at risk Britain's ability to fight cross-border crimes, such as trafficking, online child pornography and terrorism here in Britain. By threatening to withdraw from crucial pan-European measures such as the European Arrest Warrant - which provides a vital legal process to stop people fleeing justice and to ensure that those responsible for crimes are held accountable - the Government is putting national security at risk.

Britain deserves better than this.

LABOUR MEPs FIGHTING FOR YOU IN EUROPE

- Labour MEPs were crucial in supporting a European victims' rights package that offers advice and practical support to UK victims and their families - especially when they have been caught up in the aftermath of a crime and serious injury abroad - so that people are not left to simply fend for themselves under what are often incredibly traumatic conditions.
- In the next Parliament, Labour MEPs will support a law which seeks to clamp down on cross-border money laundering.

“ With the loss of 15,000 officers, 999 response times have increased and victims are waiting longer for help ”

IMMIGRATION THAT WORKS FOR BRITAIN

EUROPE FOR YOU

Britain has benefited greatly from the contributions of immigrants welcomed to our shores over many centuries. British people greatly value the ability to move around Europe, with over two million of our own citizens estimated to live in other EU countries. And immigration brings benefits to our country, making it richer, economically, socially, culturally.

But there is a genuine concern about the impact that the pace of change has had here, especially about a race to the bottom in wages and working conditions between migrant workers and workers already here. And because immigration is so important it needs to be made to work for all, not just for some.

Labour's approach to immigration has changed under Ed Miliband's leadership and we have learned the lessons of the past. We will take action to better manage the pace of immigration, reform our economy to be less reliant on low skilled migrant labour, and do more to help migrants integrate into our society so they can play their part.

“ Labour believes that immigration needs to be properly controlled and the impact of immigration needs to be fair for all ”

LABOUR'S PRIORITIES

Labour believes that immigration needs to be properly controlled and the impact of immigration needs to be fair for all.

Controlling the impact of future enlargement

Labour has learned the lessons from past East European migration. We will ensure maximum transitional controls to place restrictions on workers from any future countries joining the EU. Immigration will be controlled, with people counted in and out at the border. We will do more to cut illegal immigration, with tougher action including the reinstatement of fingerprint checks at the border and closing down loopholes that enable people to exploit short-term student visitor visas. We are also committed to working within the EU to give Member States more flexibility over the transitional arrangements that they sign up to – including significantly lengthening the maximum permitted period of transition beyond the current seven years.

Fair rules

Labour is proud of Britain's diversity and believes it is something to be celebrated. But at the same time as celebrating what is good about diversity, One Nation Labour recognises that the pace of change in some communities has generated anxieties, which need to be confronted, not dismissed.

In particular, we need fair rules and clear expectations of those who come here to contribute

to Britain. Rights must be matched by responsibilities. In particular, everyone coming to live in Britain should speak English, or learn to speak English as a first step to integrating into our society. No-one living here should be excluded from the mainstream of society and the world of work by being unable to speak the language. With Labour, all public sector workers who work directly with the public will have to be able to speak English to a decent standard and we will encourage local authorities to prioritise English language learning rather than written translation materials.

Action is also needed to deal with the impact of immigration on the welfare system and public services. British people recognise that most people who come to Britain from the EU work hard and contribute more in taxes than they use in public services or claim in benefits. However, they also want the system to be fair. For example, they don't believe that people newly arrived should have exactly the same rights as people who have contributed throughout their lives. So Labour would look at increasing the period for which people have to be present in the UK before they can claim unemployment benefits from three months to six months. And we would pursue reforms in Europe so that child tax credit and child benefit are no longer paid to families living abroad.

Preventing a race to the bottom on wages and conditions

We know that as a result of low skilled migration, some of those in low paid work have seen downward pressure on wages. The availability of cheap labour from abroad has been exploited by some employers who have sought to get round minimum wage laws by offsetting people's wages against their accommodation. There are also examples of employers using recruitment agencies to recruit directly from abroad, with local workers frozen out. Exploitation like this is wrong; bad for those who are exploited, bad for other local workers who end up being undercut and bad for responsible businesses that play by the rules.

There are a series of things we would do straight away here in Britain. We would ensure that the law on the minimum wage is properly enforced, raising the fines for employers found to be breaching it from £5,000 to £50,000. We would ban recruitment agencies from hiring solely from abroad. Jobs must be open to all qualified to do them. We would extend the remit of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority so that they could remove licenses from employers exploiting workers in other sectors of our economy where there is abuse. And we would close loopholes in rules for agency workers which allow wages to be unfairly undercut.

“We would ensure that the law on the minimum wage is properly enforced, raising the fines for employers found to be breaching it from £5,000 to £50,000. We would ban recruitment agencies from hiring solely from abroad. Jobs must be open to all qualified to do them”

Ultimately we want clearer, stronger laws so businesses know where they stand and responsible employers know they won't be undercut, but so that it is clear that employers who use pressure or force to exploit people and get round employment law are committing a crime. That is why Labour will consult on the case for strengthening the laws around exploitation and the undercutting of wages and jobs.

THE TORIES

There are practical measures the Government could be taking right now to address people's concerns about immigration, yet instead the Tories are choosing to engage in divisive and cheap gimmicks. They prefer to send out ill-judged ad-libs than taking the basic steps necessary to tackle illegal immigration.

David Cameron promised to get immigration down, but he is failing. Net migration is up, and his target is in tatters. And the focus on net migration isn't just failing on its own terms: it counts British people leaving the country as a success and has focused on reducing the wrong types of immigration. Top business visas are being delayed and university students – together with the billions they bring in investment – have been put off from applying to study in our higher education institutions by this Government's approach. Meanwhile, the problem of illegal migration, which isn't covered in the net migration figures, has been getting worse.

“ Under David Cameron's leadership, border controls have been reduced, electronic checks have been delayed and more people are absconding ”

Under David Cameron's leadership, border controls have been reduced, electronic checks have been delayed and more people are absconding. Fewer foreign criminals are being sent home and the number of people here illegally is growing.

David Cameron has also failed to take action to prevent exploitation of migrant workers, which leaves workers here undercut. Only two firms have had prosecutions brought against them for not paying the minimum wage since 2010.

And while the new Schengen Information System will share information on migrants travelling within the EU and guarantee the authenticity of documents and help identify illegal residents, so far the Home Secretary is refusing to sign up.

Britain deserves better than this.

LABOUR MEPs FIGHTING FOR YOU IN EUROPE

- Labour MEPs and the last Labour Government strengthened rights for agency workers to help protect the living standards of Britain's families, but there is still work to do. There is a loophole in the laws around Britain's interpretation of the European agency rules which allows firms to avoid paying agency workers at the same rates as directly-employed staff. Labour MEPs will work with the next Labour government and with British business to close this loophole and ensure that agency workers cannot be used to undercut non-agency staff.
- Labour's MEPs have campaigned for tough new laws, so that no firm across Europe can use your personal data to 'blacklist' or prevent you from working, just because they don't like your views or activities.

A GLOBAL VOICE

EUROPE FOR YOU

In a globalised world, where common threats permeate national borders, global challenges need global solutions and the European Union acts as a power multiplier for Britain. Being part of the biggest Single Market in the world brings not just trade and jobs, but gives us a better chance of partnering with major powers and tackling global issues, from climate change to security. Membership of the EU gives us the power of collective action and pooled resources that help make Britain safer and more secure – whether through tackling environmental challenges, targeted EU sanctions on Iran and Russia, or EU neighbourhood funds to help counter the spread of extremism.

“ Membership of the EU also gives us the power of collective action and pooled resources that help make Britain safer and more secure ”

Some of the most striking sights of this year have been the pictures of young Ukrainians waving the EU flag. For them Europe is an ideal: a symbol of a better future, of peace and prosperity. This was the original case for the European Union: securing peace among the countries of Western Europe as they emerged from the horrors of the Second World War.

Today, the EU continues to foster peace and prosperity worldwide. Multilateral action taken in response to the Arab Spring aimed to promote political participation, dignity, freedom and employment opportunities for affected populations. In the Western Balkans, the EU is supporting economic and political reforms as countries move closer to EU membership.

The EU is also vital for Britain’s national security and defence. While NATO remains the primary forum for our military cooperation, bilateral defence agreements with our European partners are becoming increasingly important. For example, Britain’s Defence and Security Co-operation Treaties with France, signed in 2010, have enabled us to undertake joint action in conflicts in Libya and Mali in recent years. The EU is also providing vital resources to tackle piracy in several Eastern and Southern African countries.

The size, geographical reach and partnership dimension of the EU’s development programme makes it a formidable global development actor. Between 2004 and 2009, EU aid helped enrol more than nine million children in primary education, vaccinate five and-a-half million children against measles, and connect more than 31 million people to clean water across the world. EU development assistance also increases the UK’s international impact. The money Britain channels through the EU encourages other European countries to raise their spending on development, maximising the impact of our contribution. The EU also has a presence in over 130 countries which allows the UK to reach places, particularly fragile states and post-conflict situations, where the Department for International Development is not currently operating on the ground.

LABOUR'S PRIORITIES

Labour has always been an internationalist party. In today's world, the UK's influence can be maximised by working with partners and the EU is crucial to achieving UK foreign policy goals that are central to our national security. We recognise that the strategic opportunities are changing but the constraints endure – the finite nature of our military capacity and the need to continually renew our bilateral and multilateral relationships with key players around the world. Being a part of Europe can help us to overcome some of these constraints.

The increased interconnectivity of the world will bring challenges. Some we can predict – climate change, growing pressure on resources and the ongoing threat of conflict and instability. Some we cannot. But what will not change is the responsibility that we all have towards our fellow citizens – whether they live in rich, poor or middle-income countries. It is clear that the impacts of conflict or environmental damage will affect us all. We must work together and share the responsibility for meeting those challenges. A Labour approach is rooted in notions of global solidarity and justice, framed by our commitment to partnership and cooperation, and it is underpinned by mutual accountability – ours to the world and the world's to us. This is where the real British national interest lies – in helping to create a world that reflects the best of our values.

Britain will always retain an active and independent foreign policy, but Labour believes we can enhance our influence in the world by engaging with our European partners to forge common positions where we share a common approach. The European External Action Service (EEAS) has already had some successes: Baroness Catherine Ashton and her officials have successfully mediated between Serbia and Kosovo, and have worked to secure an interim agreement on Iran's nuclear programme while negotiating on a more comprehensive agreement together with the Six Powers. In Burma, the EEAS has helped to persuade the regime to embrace reform and in Somalia the EEAS has successfully co-ordinated the EU naval operation against piracy.

“ Britain will always retain an active and independent foreign policy, but Labour believes we can enhance our influence in the world by engaging with our European partners to forge common positions where we share a common approach ”

Ending extreme poverty

Given that the European Union is the world's largest provider of development aid, we will work to ensure that every single pound of taxpayers' money will deliver the maximum value for money and impact. Labour has pressed other European countries to fulfil their promises to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and will work to ensure maximum European support for robust, new Sustainable Development Goals and the future post-2015 development framework.

Enhanced defence cooperation

Labour will seek to enhance our defence cooperation with allies in Europe where it is in our interests to do so, but we will not support the creation of a European Army. We do, however, recognise that it is in Britain's interest for sovereign forces from European countries to engage in joint EU missions for peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance, in full coordination with NATO. And we will continue to lead the way in tackling global poverty, making sure that everyone has an equal chance in life.

Tackling climate change

Europe has been leading the fight globally in tackling climate change: it has led the drive to build a low carbon economy and has been creating green jobs thanks to the commitments agreed with our partners in Europe under a Labour Government. This is a vital new industry for our economy and we will work within the EU to ensure Britain benefits from research and development of good quality green jobs in this area. Continued leadership within Europe to tackle climate change remains vital to protect our environment for generations to come.

THE TORIES

David Cameron is putting party interest before national interest. His weak leadership has led him to concede to those on the eurosceptic right of the Conservative Party, and he now risks sleepwalking Britain out of the European Union and the power we gain from being a part of it.

David Cameron's approach has undermined our leverage and political capital in Europe at a time when our voice could be most significant. It has also caused our allies and trading partners concern over our future in Europe.

NATO, the G7 and the G20, the Commonwealth, the United Nations Security Council and the EU are not mutually exclusive power bases that we have to choose between. They are overlapping and interdependent spheres of influence. Should the UK withdraw from the EU, our influence will wane in other spheres too.

LABOUR MEPs FIGHTING FOR YOU IN EUROPE

Human trafficking

- Labour MEPs secured new EU wide laws which for the first time introduced legally binding sanctions and criminal penalties against human trafficking.

Arms trade

- Labour MEPs led the European Parliament ratification of the International Arms Trade Treaty, first proposed by Labour in Government. The Treaty has the potential to significantly boost efforts to stem the flow of arms to some of the world's most volatile places. Labour will continue to show international leadership, and ensure a progressive interpretation of the Treaty and its measures.

Environment

- Labour MEPs delivered an overhaul of European fishing rules including a new ban on throwing unwanted fish back into the sea.

Tackling corruption through rules on transparency of extractive industries

- Labour MEPs took on the big extractive industries and drafted new rules to tackle bribery and corruption in European oil, mining, gas and logging companies. The Labour-drafted transparency reforms will ensure local communities can benefit from the natural resources in their country by making those companies disclose the payments they make to foreign governments to secure access to natural resources.

REFORM AND VALUE FOR MONEY

MAKING EUROPE WORK FOR YOU

While the initial shock of the financial crisis which swept across Europe seems to be subsiding, the EU continues to face enormous challenges. These must be addressed and European institutions must be reformed to be more effective and better suited to meet the needs of its Member States, including the UK. Labour has a robust European reform agenda which seeks to achieve this.

“Labour’s reforms will re-focus the EU on the core priority of economic stability and job creation”

Firstly, in some areas the EU needs to re-focus on where it adds both value and capacity. That’s why Labour’s reforms will work to ensure the EU is focused on the core priority of economic stability and job creation. Reforming Europe so that it delivers on growth is vital for Britain’s ability to tackle the crisis in household living standards.

Secondly, Labour will work to achieve changes that help maximise British influence over reform in the EU to make it work better for Britain.

Through full and active engagement with our European allies we can ensure that the EU becomes more effective and more accountable to its citizens.

Britain’s national interest lies in remaining at the heart of the EU. Therefore Labour will deliver reform from within the EU, not exit from it.

LABOUR’S PRIORITIES

Value for money

Labour will seek ways to make the European Parliament and Commission more streamlined and effective.

Labour will continue to campaign for the wasteful second seat of the European Parliament in Strasbourg to be scrapped. Labour believes we can bring down the cost of the Parliament and reform the Commission to help it operate more effectively as well as reforming how the EU spends its money and how Britain gets best value.

Deliver better British influence

Labour is calling for national parliaments to have more of a say over the making of new EU legislation. Currently the ‘yellow card’ system – which the Lisbon Treaty initiated – gives national parliaments the ability to push legislation into review if there is significant opposition to it from a third of member states. Labour is looking at extending this to form a collective emergency brake procedure – a ‘red card’ system - that could further amplify the voice of national parliaments within the EU law making process.

As well as reforming how the EU takes decisions, Labour is also calling for improvements to the scrutiny system in the House of Commons to allow MPs the opportunity for intervention at an earlier stage in the EU's policy making process. These changes would enhance the quality and legitimacy of EU legislation.

Legal lock

There are no proposals for a further transfer of powers to Brussels. But given the uncertainty about the future of Eurozone integration, the British people know that although it's unlikely, it remains possible.

Therefore the next Labour Government will legislate for a lock that ensures no future Government can transfer powers to Brussels without the explicit consent of the British people.

This would not just be a referendum on the narrow question of whether to allow a transfer of powers from Britain to Brussels; as we have seen in other countries, such votes are too easily ignored. This position, setting out the conditions in the next Parliament under which a Labour Government would hold an in/out referendum, offers the British people a clear choice at the next election.

“ the next Labour Government will legislate for a lock that ensures no future Government can transfer powers to Brussels without the explicit consent of the British people ”

THE TORIES

When it comes to the reform which European institutions so need, David Cameron seems incapable of addressing this task in a serious and sensible way due to his fear of his own backbenchers.

Before becoming Prime Minister, David Cameron acknowledged his party had to stop “banging on” about Europe. However, the same old Tories have re-emerged and the gap between the minimum the Tory backbenchers will demand on Europe and the maximum our European partners can accept remains unbridgeable.

David Cameron's submission to those who seek European impotence, combined with the consistent alliance between Conservative MEPs and vested interests, shows the Tories are not prepared to make the big changes and long-term decisions required to help families across Britain.

In these difficult times, isolation and cutting ourselves off from our European allies is not the answer.

Unlike David Cameron who walked away from the main centre-right party group in the European Parliament, reducing Britain's influence in Europe and leaving him isolated from the mainstream, Labour will work with our European partners to deliver real and effective reform from within the EU.

Britain deserves better than this.

LABOUR MEPs FIGHTING FOR YOU IN EUROPE

British influence and value for money

- Labour MEPs supported restraint in EU annual and long-term budgets.
- Labour MEPs back the scrapping of the Strasbourg Parliament.
- Labour MEPs backed more transparency in meetings of EU Ministers and for national parliaments to play a stronger role in the making of new EU rules.
- Labour MEPs have also supported changes to the European Parliament to make sure votes are more transparent and the expenses system for MEPs is reformed.

