

Our Region in Europe: 40 Years of Labour Achievements



**Yorkshire & Humber Labour
European Policy Forum 2018**



**Labour
in Europe**
European Parliamentary Labour Party



Group of the Progressive Alliance of
Socialists & Democrats
in the European Parliament

European Policy Forum 2018

Since 1979, 14 directly elected Labour MEPs have represented the people of Yorkshire and the Humber in the European Parliament. Over that time, much has changed both in our region and in Europe, and a great deal has been achieved. As the UK stands on the brink of leaving the European Union it faces an existential crisis over how it interacts with and influences the world. An increasing number of people are now realising that far from being a distant 'faceless bureaucracy', the EU facilitates many of the things we now take for granted in our daily lives, not to mention an unprecedented 70 years of peace.



This booklet is a tribute to some of the things that have been achieved over the past 40 years of our membership of the European Union, and to the Yorkshire and Humber Labour MEPs who have played their part.

Richard Corbett MEP
Linda McAvan MEP

Prelude: 1973 to 1979

In 1972, at a summit of the six original Member States plus the UK, Ireland and Denmark, an agreement is reached to aim for economic and monetary union, to set up a fund to help less prosperous regions, and to work more closely together on social policy and on foreign policy cooperation.

On 1 January 1973 the UK, Denmark & Ireland join the European Community. In 1974 Labour comes to power, having pledged to renegotiate the terms of UK membership and then to hold a referendum on continued membership. In 1975, Labour's Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, tells the

House of Commons that his government would advise the British people to vote "yes" to continued membership, and on the 5 June 1975 the referendum reveals that 67.2% of voters are in favour of the United Kingdom remaining a member.

The 1975 December summit agrees to move towards direct elections to the European Parliament by universal suffrage, replacing the previous system of nominated members from national parliaments, of which John Prescott, MP for Hull East, the only elected representative from the Yorkshire and Humber region is leader of the Labour MEPs.



Richard Caborn MEP
Sheffield 1979-84



Derek Enright MEP
Leeds 1979-84



Brian Key MEP
Yorkshire South 1979-84



Thomas Megahy MEP
Yorkshire South West 1979-99



Barry Seal MEP
Yorkshire West 1979-99



Bob Cryer MEP
Sheffield 1984-89



Michael McGowan MEP
Leeds 1984-99



Norman West MEP
Yorkshire South 1984-98



Roger Barton MEP
Sheffield 1989-99



David Bowe MEP
Cleveland & Richmond | Y&H 1989-2004



Peter Crampton MEP
Humberside 1989-99



Veronica Hardstaff MEP
Lincolnshire & Humberside South 1994-99



Linda McAvan MEP
Sheffield South | Y&H 1998-2019



Richard Corbett MEP
Y&H 1999-2009 and 2014-19

1979 - 1984

1984 - 1989

1

First President of Parliament: Simone Veil

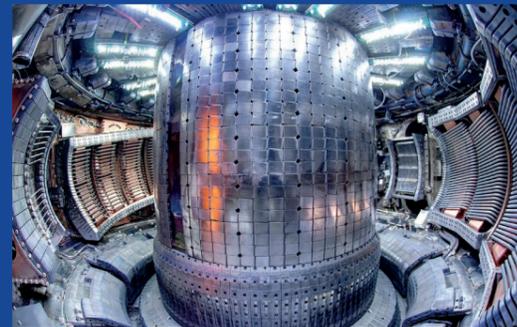
Simone Veil, an Auschwitz survivor who lost family members in the holocaust, is elected as a French MEP and becomes the first President of the European Parliament.



2

Joint European Torus (JET)

The JET research facility is established in Oxfordshire and is at the forefront of research in worldwide efforts to generate power from nuclear fusion, as opposed to fission. It is a testbed for the design of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor, the next generation of fusion reactors. It holds the world record for generating fusion power - the clean, limitless nuclear energy of the future.



3

Protecting Seal Pups

In 1982, a petition with over a million signatures supports a European Parliament proposal to ban the import of baby seal skins, which is adopted by Member States.

4

Wildlife and Habitat Conservation

Legal protections for wild plant and animal species in their native habitats, in Europe and beyond, are introduced.



In 1979, the first direct elections of MEPs take place.



5

Erasmus Student Exchange Programme

This flagship international education and training programme launches in June 1987, with the first exchanges of just over 3,000 students. By 2014 Erasmus had supported 3.3 million students and 470,000 staff.

6

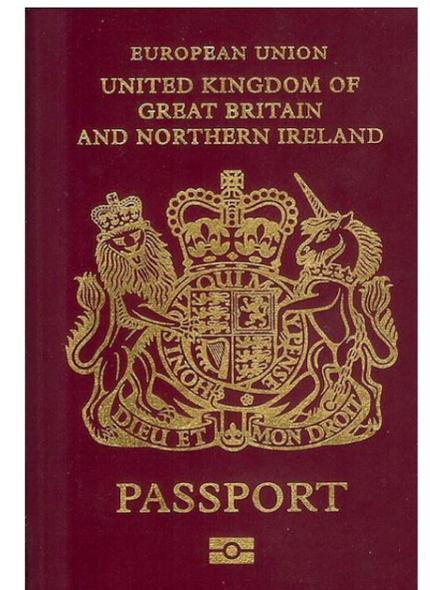
Single European Act

Following up on a proposal to reform the EU made by the European Parliament drafted by the legendary Altiero Spinelli, the Member States agree on a treaty revision called the Single European Act which sets a target date of 1992 to complete the internal market. It further strengthens the powers of the European Parliament, and gives greater force to actions on environmental protection.

7

European Passports

The first European Passports are issued by Member States. The words 'European Union' appear on the front cover, along with the issuing Member State. The EU does not publish passports, but Member States agree on a common format for their national passports. A burgundy colour is recommended, but not compulsory!



During this decade, EU membership increases to twelve. Greece joins in 1981 and Portugal and Spain, after decades under fascist dictatorships, join in 1986.

1989 - 1994

8

Action to Improve Health and Safety at Work

Labour MEPs are influential in setting out the general principles for the protection of workers' occupational safety and health across Europe, the foundation for all EU health and safety legislation for the next thirty years.

9

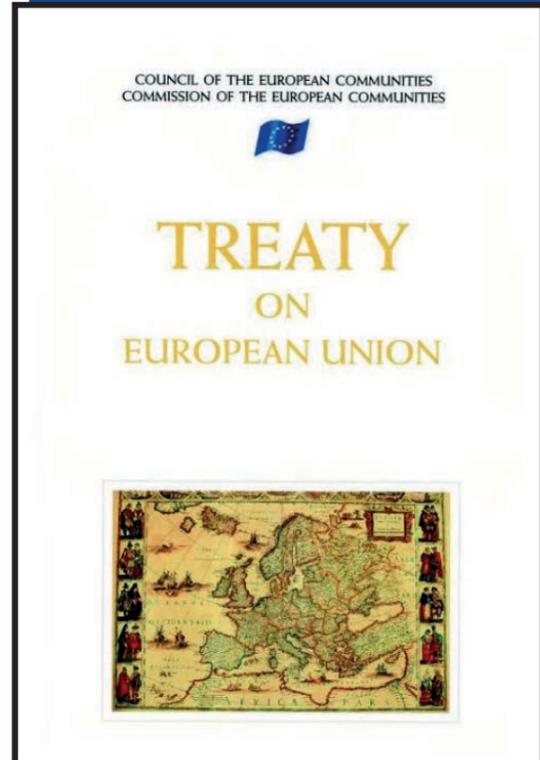
Biodiversity and Habitat Protection

Labour MEP Ken Collins, stewards the Habitats Directive through Parliament. The cornerstone of the EU's conservation policy, it promotes the maintenance of biodiversity and requires Member States to take measures to conserve or restore natural habitats to protect wild species.

10

Maastricht Treaty

Following proposals made by the European Parliament drafted by Labour MEP David Martin, this lays the foundations for a single currency and significantly expands cooperation among EU countries with the creation of European citizenship, a common foreign and security policy and closer cooperation between police forces and the judiciary. It also strengthens the powers of the European Parliament.



November 1989. Fall of the Berlin Wall.

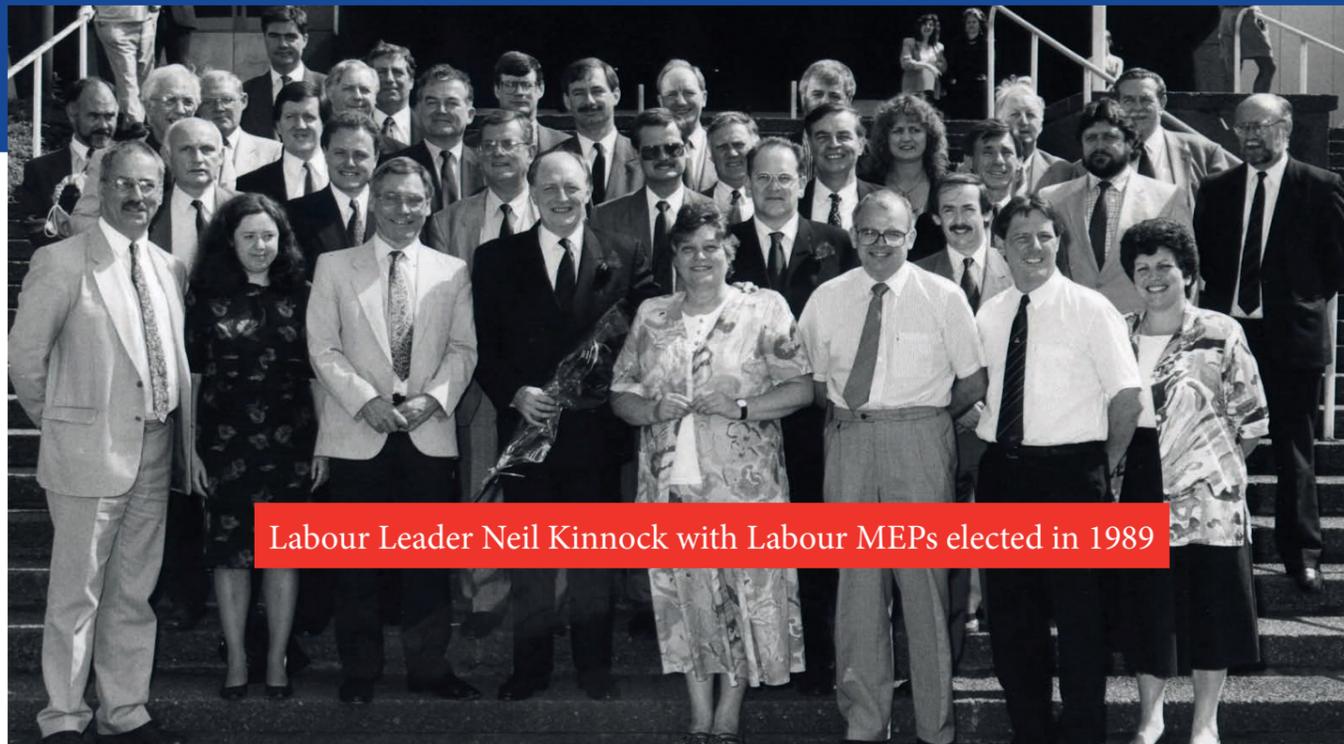


Barry Seal MEP with Richard Corbett

11

EU Funds Help Yorkshire and Humber Weather Tory Years

Between 1989 and 1993, £230 million of Regional Development Funds went to economically deprived areas. Bradford's integrated Development Operation brought in £206 million, for example, and created 12,000 new jobs. In addition, the European Social Fund brought millions of pounds to the region, including £10m for Humberside alone.



Labour Leader Neil Kinnock with Labour MEPs elected in 1989

1994 - 1999

12

European Climate Change & Energy Package

Leading the way on recognising the dangers of climate change by setting Europe-wide targets on emissions and renewable energy. The package plans to cut greenhouse gases by at least 20% and to have 20% of energy coming from renewable energy sources by 2020.

13

Rights for Part-Time Workers

Part-time workers' rights strengthened so that they cannot be treated less favourably than full-time workers by their employers. Millions of part-time workers, mainly women, get access to paid holidays, pensions and company training schemes for the first time.

14

European Medicines Agency (EMA)

EMA is established to improve safety, to cut costs and to speed up authorisations for new medicines for serious conditions like cancer by having a single authorisation at EU level. London is selected as the location for the agency headquarters, bringing jobs, expertise and funding to the UK.

15

European Driving Licence



A harmonised licence model for all drivers across Europe is introduced, helping to better protect against fraud and forgery. All driving licences issued by EU countries now have the same look and feel, meaning that a licence issued in one EU Member State is recognised and valid across the EU.

1999 - 2004

2004 - 2009

16

Charter of Fundamental Rights

Defines civic, political, economic, and social rights that the EU institutions (and all European legislation) must respect. It is signed in 2000, and comes into force with the Lisbon Treaty in 2009.

17

Discrimination Outlawed Across EU

Prohibits discrimination across Europe on grounds of race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age in workplace, vocational training, employer/employee organisations, social protection, education, access to goods and services available to the public.

18

Eurojust Established

Facilitates judicial cooperation between member countries, by coordinating investigations and prosecutions relating to cross-border crime including trafficking, terrorism, and money laundering.

19

Action On Food Safety After BSE

The European Food Standards Agency is set up in the wake of BSE and other food scares, to provide independent advice on food risks, such as monitoring risk of salmonella, investigating effects of chemicals on food and pooling research results across Europe.

20

General Product Safety Directive

Ensures only safe products are sold on the European market, with specific rules for toys, electrical and electronic goods, cosmetics and chemicals.

21

Air Passenger Rights

Stranded passengers now have the right to cash compensation, meals and, if necessary, hotel accommodation.

22

Testing Cosmetics on Animals Banned



A ban on testing of finished cosmetic products on animals comes into force, leading to a ban on testing ingredients on animals in 2013.

23

European Health Insurance Card



EHIC gives EU citizens access to medically necessary, state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in any of the 28 EU Member States and four EFTA countries with the same conditions and cost (or if free) as people insured in that country.

24

Huge European Union Investment in South Yorkshire

Following the collapse of the coal and steel industry, by the late 1990s South Yorkshire was one of the poorest industrial areas in Europe. Labour councils took their case to Brussels resulting in South Yorkshire being designated for "Objective 1", the highest level of EU aid, bringing an investment package worth £2.4 billion from 2000-08.



Doncaster Town Moor: £1million invested in Doncaster's Town Moor racecourse. EU funding supported conference and exhibition facilities.

The Source, Sheffield: A training and conference centre opens with £3.5m of ERDF support.



25

Foreign Aid and International Development



The EU is the world's biggest single donor of foreign aid. In 2005 Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair, as president of the European Council, signs an agreement that Member States commit 0.7% of national spending to developing countries.

26

Pet Passports



Allows pets and their owners to travel more easily throughout the EU. The passport provides proof of rabies vaccination and other information to give a clear picture of the animal's health.

Paid Holidays For All

27

Further strengthening workers' rights, this new EU law brings paid holidays, guaranteed rest periods and a maximum working week into UK law for the first time. It sets minimum daily and weekly rest periods and paid annual leave of at least four weeks.

Child Safety In Cars

28

Children under three must have a child seat when in cars and older children required to use a child seat or booster.

Cleaner Beaches

29

Revision of the 1976 Directive on cleaner beaches (the UK had been the 'dirty man of Europe') which leads to 85% of all EU bathing sites having excellent water quality by 2017.

European Arrest Warrant

30

This warrant makes it more difficult for fugitives, criminals or suspects to avoid arrest by moving between EU countries. This has helped speed up extradition proceedings between EU countries against dangerous or wanted individuals.

On 1st January 1999, 11 of the EU Member States adopt the Euro as a common currency.

In the 1999 European elections, the UK switches to proportional representation in regional constituencies for electing its MEPs, the last Member State to do so.

In 2004, 10 countries joined the EU. Many had suffered under the communist regimes of the Eastern Bloc, prior to the fall of the Berlin wall. Bulgaria and Romania follow in 2007.

2009 - 2014

2014 - 2019

31

EU Awarded Nobel Peace Prize

The EU receives the Nobel Peace Prize for having “contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe” over six decades.



34

New Controls on ‘Big Tobacco’



Linda McAvan is the lead negotiator on a new EU law which bans gimmick tobacco products - “lipstick” type packs and flavoured cigarettes - which tobacco companies had launched to attract a new generation of young smokers.

32

Ending Battery Farming

After a long phase-out period, a complete ban on the use of battery hen cages comes into force on the 1st January 2012.

33

Bankers’ Bonus Cap

Labour MEPs are influential in development of regulation to limit bankers’ bonuses in response to the financial crash, despite strong opposition and legal challenges from the UK’s Conservative government.



Labour’s newly elected MEPs in May 2014

35

Lowering Online Costs



Roaming charges abolished for users travelling across EU countries. Caps are introduced to costs of calls and messages between EU states. Restrictions are lifted on online subscriptions like Spotify and Netflix.

36

BAN CONFLICT MINERALS

Blood diamonds and other illegally mined minerals fuel many brutal conflicts, forced child labour, sexual violence and modern slavery. A new law obliges companies in the EU to ensure the minerals they source do not come from conflict-affected regions nor contribute to the funding of conflicts or militants.

Fund For Sustainable Development

A new EU fund aimed at mobilising up to €2 billion of investments in Africa and in the EU’s neighbourhood to foster sustainable economic and social development, address root causes of migration, and promote the resilience of the partner countries in these regions.

Lowering Plastic Bag Use

Member states are required to drastically reduce their use of plastic carrier bags and ensure that they are no longer given free to shoppers.

Paris Climate Agreement

Ratification of Paris Agreement fighting climate change, the first ever universal, legally binding global climate deal.

Sanctioning Right-Wing Government

Labour MEPs vote to trigger Article 7 which enables sanctions against Victor Orban’s right-wing government in Hungary for contravening EU values of “human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.” Most UK Conservative and UKIP MEPs vote against it.

March 29th, 2019

BREXIT? Or not?

Acknowledgements

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