

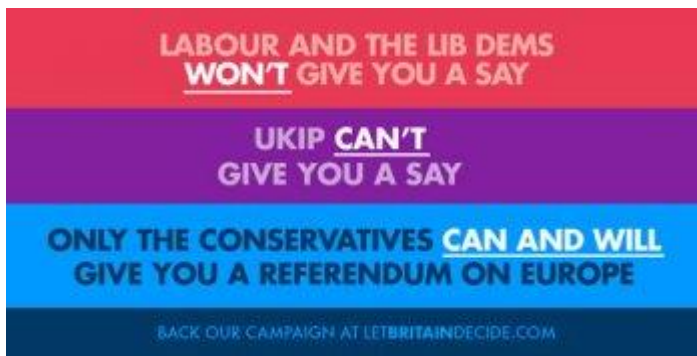
Vicky Ford MEP

**intouch**



Conservatives  
in the European Parliament

### **InTouch March 2014**



We are now in the countdown to the European Elections. It is very clear that only Conservatives offer change in Europe and only the Conservatives can and will deliver an EU Referendum. These elections are a once in a generation opportunity for change.

There has been a flurry of activity in Brussels and Strasbourg. Politicians are lining up arguments before this May's election and signalling what they will do if they get enough votes.

### **Yet more of the same old...**

Some want to put the financial transaction tax back on the table, claiming this "Robin Hood" tax will solve economic woes and pay salaries for young people. Experience shows otherwise, this type of tax has traditionally resulted in higher earners relocating to other parts of the globe, leaving the costs to fall on those with lower incomes. It's more of a Sheriff of Nottingham policy. We should learn from history and not repeat previous mistakes.

Others are suggesting old style protectionism. More rules and regulations, more laws on employment and the environment. But this is expensive. Too many manufacturers have already been frightened away from Europe because of high costs. These archaic policies don't help create jobs let alone pay salaries.



### **...or a new focus on unlocking opportunity**



Companies create growth and jobs. We need to listen to them. In the past few weeks I have met with local businesses in Suffolk to Southend, Norwich to Stevenage, Luton to Lowestoft and all around Cambridge. Where our businesses are competitive, they are growing and offering new jobs. They want access to Europe's single market, and trade across the world. But they also want less red tape and politicians to focus on competitiveness.

They also need a skilled workforce to fill the developing roles; especially in science, technology, engineering and maths. In the UK 1.5 million apprenticeships have been created since 2010 - there are some great local work-experience projects happening too, and just last week I visited a state-of-the-art post-graduate facility for engineers.



Creating opportunities like this needs politicians who support change. We have an alliance of forward-looking, reform-minded supporters for that change. Even Angela Merkel is a member!

### **Changing our relationship with Europe**

But the UK needs more. We are not in the Euro, so we also need to make sure that the costs of the Eurozone reforms and future bailouts don't fall on the UK. This week negotiations have moved ahead on the Eurozone "banking union". The UK will not be paying into their Eurozone funds. I have often been the only Brit in the room for many hours over many months - but this has already saved over £2 billion each year for the UK taxpayer.

The UK is winning negotiations because the rest of Europe knows that David Cameron has committed to give the British people a say in an IN/OUT referendum by 2017.

### **Keep InTouch and can you help?**

In the past 5 years I have seen how Conservative MEPs working with our Conservative colleagues in Westminster and locally are delivering real changes for good. But we can only do this if we are a strong team. We have one more month of parliament negotiations. Then from Easter, we will be campaigning every day across the East of England. We will be in every Westminster constituency.



This is a real chance for change. If you would like to help the campaign please do get in touch!

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