



# Geoffrey Van Orden's eDispatch

From Brussels & Strasbourg  
FEBRUARY 2014

Under Conservatives

👍 UK jobs up  
👍 UK growth up  
Benefits tourism cut  
Immigration down  
Changing Europe

## ONLY CONSERVATIVES CAN DELIVER THE CHANGES YOU WANT

In recent weeks our country has been battered by the elements. In the East of England parts of our coast have been badly hit and our rivers and aquifers are brimming, but generally we have been spared. Now we have to gear up for another battle - to prevent electoral mistakes in the coming months that will bring Labour back into power next year. It would be an irreparable national disaster if a Leftist coalition became embedded - to set our economy back on the road to ruin, to take us deep into a federal Europe, and to remove the barriers to uncontrolled immigration.

## VOTE UKIP, GET LABOUR

The first step in Labour's strategy is to undermine confidence in the Conservatives with a defeat in the European elections on 22 May. I have always said that if UKIP - first and foremost an anti-Tory party - did not exist, Labour would invent them. If anyone imagines that the European elections offer a cost-free protest vote, they could not be more mistaken.

You only have to look at the County Council elections last May in Norfolk to see the evidence of this. If media-fuelled UKIP get a head of steam in May 2014, it will roll on to May 2015 - they won't then win more than one seat in the General Election. But they could prevent Conservatives winning 50 or more seats. So the UKIP bubble needs to be pricked. After all, it is your Conservative Prime Minister, Ministers, MPs, and MEPs that are delivering the change you want - rebuilding our economy, bringing immigration under control, and determined to reshape our relationship with Europe. Today, Chancellor Merkel arrives in London. A good degree of cooperation from her is vital in securing the changes that we want in our relationship with the EU.

As David Cameron has said, "this year's European Election is the most important in a generation... Since becoming Prime Minister, I've taken action to stand up for Britain: cutting the EU budget to protect taxpayers, vetoing a new EU treaty that would have given more power to Brussels, and refusing to spend British taxes bailing out the euro. But I believe the EU needs fundamental change so it works for Britain. I will do my best to negotiate a better deal for the British taxpayer and our country - and when those negotiations are complete, I'll give the British people a say on whether we should remain in the EU with an in-out referendum before the end of 2017." Both Labour and the Liberal Democrats oppose this plan and want to deny the British people a say - while UKIP simply can't deliver.

## REFERENDUM

The EU Referendum Bill, tabled by James Wharton MP, was intended to reassure those always willing to doubt the promises of politicians. Its recent defeat in the House of Lords by Labour and LibDems was something of a disappointment - but no more than that. After all, had it passed it would have bound any future government to a referendum before the end of 2017. As matters stand, the referendum now remains a uniquely Conservative promise.

## AN ASIDE ON THE UKRAINE

We continue to watch events in the Ukraine with great concern. However, I have one minor observation that I would like to share. The original "European" diplomatic intervention did not involve Baroness Ashton or the massed ranks of the EU's so-called "External Action Service" (EEAS) - it was a time-honoured visit by three Foreign Ministers - from Germany, France and Poland. Baroness Ashton turned up later to add window-dressing. I have long opposed the creation of an EU Diplomatic Service (the EEAS). Like the "EU Army" idea, it is all about advancing the EU as a state-like actor on the world stage and can only be detrimental to our global national interests. If concerted action is needed, then like-minded Foreign Ministers can meet and decide on a common position which we may or may not choose to support. That's how it's always been done.

FT FINANCIAL  
TIMES

## Free movement principle has changed and can do so again

30 January 2014

Sir, You quoted the German Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, as saying that the free movement of EU citizens "could not be changed or renegotiated" ("David Cameron faces EU isolation on anti-immigration stance", FT.com, January 19).

In fact, the free movement idea has been changed repeatedly over the past 60 years. In 1951, the European Economic Community's precursor, the European Coal and Steel Community, enabled workers in those industries to move countries. Six years later, the Treaty of Rome abolished discrimination between workers from different EEC member states. Then in 1968, the EEC allowed spouses and children to accompany workers. In 1971, EEC migrant workers were granted the right to the same benefits as nationals of the host country.

The most fundamental change came in 1992, when the Treaty of Maastricht created the idea of "European Union citizenship" and provided that "every citizen of the Union shall have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States". Since then, EU directives have continued to break down restrictions.

Today there is widespread demand, not just in the UK, for free movement to be limited to those who work or create jobs, obey the law, and are not a call on benefits to which they have not contributed. Clearly, the free movement principle allows great scope for change, which until now, regrettably has always been in one direction.

Geoffrey Van Orden  
Conservative Member of the European  
Parliament for the East of England

## LET'S TALK IMMIGRATION



**It has always been my view that "EU enlargement" and "migration" (free movement) should be treated as separate, but inevitably related, issues.** Conservatives have always been strong supporters of enlargement for several good reasons - to increase the geographical spread of stability and prosperity, keeping trouble as far from home as possible while opening new economic opportunities. Migration is a different matter. The precise terms of accession of any new country, including the timing of any 'free movement', has always been a matter of negotiation and Labour were seriously neglectful.

However, you only have to look at events in Kiev and more widely across the Ukraine in the last week, to understand how right it was to admit Bulgaria to the EU in 2007. Bulgaria was long regarded by Moscow as the 16th state of the USSR. Most of its people had a different view but needed assurance of a safe haven in the West. The Ukraine is now violently torn in even more momentous choice.

While the UKIP scaremongering about mass movement from Romania and Bulgaria has been exposed as just that, it has long been obvious that 'free movement' cannot be an unqualified right. It is not acceptable for those with no prospect of real employment, seeking to access benefits to which they have not contributed, or intending to commit crime, to come to Britain. Steps have already been taken to clamp down on abuse and, as I have long argued, redefinition of 'free movement' will be high on the list of EU reforms that Conservatives will be demanding.

## HELPING OUR SMALL BUSINESSES

**I have been asked what we are doing to help small businesses, which are the lifeblood of our economy.** Government measures include a scheme to provide essential business mentoring, £2000 off National Insurance when a business takes on its first employee, extending the small business rate relief, increasing lending through a 'Funding for Lending' scheme, and establishing a British Business Bank to ease access to finance. Not least we are cutting burdensome red tape for small businesses - for instance on health and safety. (I can provide more information on all of this). Conservative Small Business Ambassadors have also been appointed to help grow local businesses in the East of England - these are Brooks Newmark MP and Richard Fuller MP.

## STRASBOURG

**I am constantly asked why we continue with the nonsense of Parliament's 'second seat' in Strasbourg.** The reason is, it's a legal obligation written into the Treaties and therefore agreed by all governments at the time. It will take unanimous agreement among governments to change this. However, the pressure is on thanks to Conservative-led efforts. We now have a majority of MEPs, from right across the Parliament, in favour of scrapping The Strasbourg seat. This is a powerful political signal. I feel sure success (as part of our wide-ranging reform agenda) will depend on what bait the French are offered! (I seem to recall that our Euro opt-out was the prize for originally agreeing to two seats over 20 years ago).

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The terrible violence between the Christian and Muslim population in the Central African Republic (CAR) has been steadily increasing. If external help is needed it is essentially France's responsibility. The French have already sent 1,600 troops to assist some 4,600 African Union peacekeepers. The UN is now considering further action. There is no reason for the EU to try and put a notch on its imaginary military gun. As I made clear in my intervention in the Parliament's debate, "the EU should focus on its civilian contribution to crisis management... the December summit of EU leaders put an end to the ambitions for a European army - it's time for the European Parliament and the European Commission to catch up".

## VISIT BY SAFFRON WALDEN STUDENTS



It was great to host Sixth Formers from Saffron Walden County High School in the Parliament and to have a good exchange on the realities of Brussels.

## *Eastern Region Ball*

*Hatfield House*

**7pm Saturday 12 April 2014**

**Black Tie event, with a top Cabinet speaker, entertainment and a chance to support our 2014 Election Campaign.**

**Tickets: £150 p.p.  
Full details from Robert Sears:  
robert@searsbros.co.uk  
Tel: 07836 220021**

**Please do not hesitate to ask for more information on any of the many topics on which I am engaged.**

**I welcome invitations to speak throughout the East of England**

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