



Welcome to the February 2013 edition of my regular enewsletter which provides an update on my latest work as Member of the European Parliament for Wales.

EU Budget negotiations - a missed opportunity for reform?

Last week's EU summit saw the first stage of a deal being struck by European leaders on the next 7 year EU budget, otherwise known as the multiannual financial framework (MFF). The two day summit has resulted in an overall cut compared to current MFF. This was a real chance to reform the EU budget, to identify areas for savings and to reprioritise spending to make sure it delivers for regions, jobs and growth. What we now have on the table is a budget that makes no reform to the Common Agricultural policy and doesn't make significant enough savings in administration. We can see that massive cuts have been made to the Connecting Europe Fund, a fund that aims to better connect areas through infrastructure, technology and ICT and that the area of the budget that deals directly with competitiveness and jobs and growth is being hardest hit. Most worrying for Wales is the amount of money we could stand to lose in regional funding, which could be as much as £1bn.

Next steps

The European Parliament will now need to give its consent to a redrafted proposal from the Commission. The European Parliament has been calling for a bigger EU budget, so getting its consent on this agreement could be difficult. A series of negotiations will take place between the Council, Parliament and Commission to get a final agreement on the proposal. If the European Parliament do not give their approval to the proposal, the EU will work on the basis of annual budgets instead of a seven year framework.

Sound level of motor vehicles

Last week in Strasbourg I voted in favour of new legislation that will tighten up current regulations regarding noise pollution caused by motor vehicles. Around half of those living in large towns and cities are exposed to unacceptably high levels of traffic noise, which not only contributes to severe sleep deprivation and stress but is also linked to 250,000 heart attacks and 50,000 early deaths across the EU every year. Thanks to this new ruling, however, new limits on car noise will be phased in gradually over the next few years, protecting both motorists and wider public health. Furthermore, the legislation also recommends that manufacturers of quiet electric and hybrid engines make their products more audible, a move that will make roads safer for pedestrians and the blind and visually impaired.

President Hollande visit

French President Francois Hollande visited Strasbourg last week to speak to MEPs, delivering a confident speech that was his first to the European Parliament since his election last year. He outlined the need to promote jobs and growth over austerity, the necessity of providing job guarantees for young people and to reignite enthusiasm for the European project. Hollande's optimism about the European project is a welcome antidote to the Tories' uncompromising Euroscepticism and his commitment to a pro-growth agenda on a national level is one that other EU member states would do well to emulate.

Work and family life

During times of recession, it becomes even more important to ensure that the well-being of a country's citizens is preserved. One way of doing this is to maintain a healthy balance between work and family life, which is why I have signed a Written Declaration encouraging the EU to take action to meet the challenges posed by an uneven work-life balance by designating 2014 as European Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life. Providing support for families to better manage this important arbiter of well-being would improve gender equality, result



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in a more motivated workforce and have a positive impact on the quality of life for everyone in our society.

Victory for reform of EU Fisheries policy

MEPs voted overwhelmingly this week for a massive overhaul of the Common Fisheries policy, which is currently unsustainable and allows tonnes of perfectly good fish to be thrown back into the sea. I supported measures to put an end to overfishing and to introduce a ban on discards, which currently account for almost a quarter of all catches. What we need is a more sustainable fisheries policy, which puts an end to overfishing. I welcome calls from the European Parliament to introduce a "maximum sustainable yield", which will allow fish stocks to recover by 2020 and contribute to the sustainability of the industry. This reform will in turn help to produce thousands of jobs in the fishing industry. I believe the ongoing negotiations on the CFP will result in positive change which will help fishermen across Wales catch more fish in a sustainable way.

In the constituency



I have continued to meet with organisations, groups and constituents across Wales and recently had the pleasure of seeing how European Funding is making a difference in North Wales when I made a series of visits in early February.

In Mold, I visited Y Corlan, which is run by Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC) and plays host to a number of third sector organisations all under one roof. I also took the opportunity to see the European Regional Development Fund sponsored Communities 2.0 project (pictured above) involving FLVC, its counterpart in the Wrexham area (AVOW0, Wrexham and Flintshire County Councils and the Co-op Centre which encourages more people to get online and provides technical support to voluntary organisations.

I also addressed the Deeside Industrial Park Forum on how the European Union can work for them and met with ECTARC (European Centre for Training and Regional Co-operation) in Llangollen to discuss ways in which more young people from Wales can benefit from living and working on other parts of the EU.

Advice Surgeries

I will be holding advice surgeries across Wales in 2013 for anyone who wants to meet with me to discuss EU related issues of concern. Appointments are necessary and can be made by contacting my Cardiff office. My next session is as follows:

Friday, 22nd February 2013 at 5pm
CARDIFF
Welsh Labour European Office, 4th Floor, Transport House, 1
Cathedral Rd, Cardiff, CF11 9SD

EU Policy Events



On Friday, 1 February, I held the first of a programme of meetings across Wales designed to encourage discussion and debate on topical European issues in Rhyl, joined on the speakers panel by Chris Ruane MP and Ann Jones AM (pictured above).

Similar events are scheduled as follows:

Friday, 1 March, 2013 at 7pm
CWMBRAN - Cwmbran Community Council Chamber
With Alun Davies AM

Friday, 26 April 2013 at 7pm
LLANELLI – Thomas Arms Hotel
With Nia Griffith MP and Alun Davies AM

Friday, 10 May 2013 at 7pm
NEATH – Gwyn Hall
With Owen Smith MP and Alun Davies AM

Friday, 7 June 2013 at 7pm
PONTYPRIDD – Pontypridd RFC Clubhouse
With Owen Smith MP and Vaughan Gething AM

Entry to all of the events is free and places can be reserved by getting in touch with my Cardiff office.

For those of you who will be attending Welsh Labour Conference in Llandudno at the end of March, I will also be hosting an a fringe meeting on the Saturday lunchtime (23 March) at Venue Cymru entitled "The Patriotic Case for Wales in Europe".

If you require any further information on any of the issues covered in this edition then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best Wishes



Derek Vaughan MEP

Member of the European Parliament

Labour, Wales

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