



**Ulster
Unionist
Party**

For the Union

**I'M
STANDING
FOR
NORTHERN
IRELAND**



**Ulster Unionist Party
2019 European Manifesto**

“

I'M STANDING FOR A **SENSIBLE BREXIT DEAL**,
A DEAL THAT SECURES NORTHERN IRELAND'S
FUTURE WITHIN THE UNITED KINGDOM,
WITH **NO BORDER IN THE IRISH SEA.**

”

DANNY KENNEDY - EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE



Foreword by Leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, Robin Swann MLA

On the 23rd June 2016 the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. This was undoubtedly one of the most significant events to happen in our nation in generations.

The Ulster Unionist Party has been clear from the moment the result was first declared that the days of Brexiteers and Remainers are over. Along with the rest of the UK, Northern Ireland is leaving the European Union – it is up to us all now to make sure it does so on terms as favourable and beneficial as possible for the people of Northern Ireland.

It has always been widely recognised that Northern Ireland was the region of the UK that would be most impacted by Brexit, yet it was – and still remains – by far the least prepared. The ongoing absence of a local Executive over the entirety of the period from the triggering of Article 50 has compounded the already negligible voice being heard locally.

Shortly after the referendum we published the Ulster Unionist Party's vision for Northern Ireland outside the EU. In that document this Party detailed the vision, the plan to deliver that vision, and the ten key actions required to deliver success.

These were based on our desire to ensure that no one is worse off after we leave the EU, coupled with long-term, strategic actions that are designed to strengthen our economy and consequently, increase the prosperity and wellbeing of all our people. Many of those points remain as pertinent today as they did in 2016.

The Government and its partners have failed miserably in their handling of the negotiations. For me it is a matter of regret that we were not able to leave on the 29th March. For two years Theresa May repeatedly promised and reiterated to the British people that they would be leaving on that date. The reasons for not being able to do so were numerous, but individual politicians seeking to make political gain from the turmoil of Brexit was one of the foremost.

As a result, many people will rightly question with frustration why the UK is even taking part in these elections, three years after they voted to leave the European Union. Yet the reality of where we are right now means that a slightly delayed Brexit is inherently much more preferable to a bungled one. In the final phase of our membership of the EU it is vital that we return hard-working MEPs to act as Northern Ireland's voice on the European stage.

Jim Nicholson was an exceptional and widely respected MEP with one of the best records of attendance and participation of anyone in the European Parliament. As Leader I thank him for his decades of work on behalf of all the people of Northern Ireland.

I have known Danny Kennedy for many years. I served with him in the Assembly, I watched as he performed diligently as a Northern Ireland Executive Minister often proactively engaging at the European level and I am convinced that there is no one more capable than him to help represent Northern Ireland in the closing chapter of our membership of the European Union.

So, on May 23rd I would urge you to vote for the candidate who genuinely supports a sensible Brexit outcome, who remains totally committed to ending the uncertainty for jobs and business, but firmly opposes an unnecessary and divisive second referendum and calls for a border poll. Danny Kennedy wants a deal that secures Northern Ireland's future within the UK. I ask that you vote Kennedy 1.

Robin Swann



KENNEDY'S VIEWS ON THE UK - EU NEGOTIATIONS



I'M STANDING FOR:

- A sensible Brexit deal ✓
- A secure future for NI within the UK ✓
- An end to uncertainty for jobs and business ✓
- No new borders ✓

I'M OPPOSED TO:

- Crashing out of the EU ✗
- Northern Ireland being treated differently to rest of UK ✗
- A border in the Irish Sea ✗
- A second referendum ✗

For the delivery of increased economic growth, opportunities for our young people, future-proofing our agri-food industry, and greater community development.

Send a clear message to stop a border poll.

VOTE KENNEDY 1 ON THURSDAY 23 MAY

THEN OTHER PRO-UNION CANDIDATES OF YOUR CHOICE • POLLING STATIONS ARE OPEN ACROSS NORTHERN IRELAND; 7.00AM - 10.00PM

Email: kennedy.campaign@uup.org



Respecting the constitutional and economic integrity of the United Kingdom

Avoiding a no-deal Brexit

As the only part of the UK to share a land border with the EU, it is indisputable that Northern Ireland would be the most impacted by a flawed or no-deal Brexit. Key sectors such as manufacturing and agriculture would be particularly exposed to punitive and damaging WTO tariffs on exports, as well as facing the immediate restrictions on sending livestock and goods back and forth across, as of yet, unknown border controls. Even the UK Government's own contingency plan for a no-deal Brexit effectively proposed turning Northern Ireland into a smugglers paradise.

No new borders

Even though the United Kingdom and Ireland have both rightly and repeatedly reiterated that they will not erect a hard border on the island of Ireland in any circumstances, it remains hugely disappointing that the European Union is still repeatedly raising it as a threat. Now is not the time for bluster - such a threat or outcome should be unilaterally ruled out in order to ensure the continued peace and economic wellbeing for the many communities living alongside it. We will never support the creation of any new border down the Irish Sea.

A second referendum

The 2016 Referendum was one of the largest ever democratic exercises in the history of our nation – as such the vote should be respected. A second referendum would be a travesty for British democracy.

A new vote – even wrapped around new ambiguous language such as a peoples vote - would merely stoke the deep divisions between those voting remain and leave. Instead of bridging the divide in public opinion, a second referendum would be even more divisive and disruptive than the first. Such a vote would only further prolong the political and economic uncertainty and instability.

As such the Ulster Unionist Party is determined that the vote from June 2016 must be respected and implemented in full.

Border Poll

It is a matter of huge regret that some politicians are using the turmoil of Brexit as an opportunity to advance their own narrow political priorities. Whether it is the SNP using it as an excuse to call for a second referendum on Scottish Independence, or now Sinn Féin with their false pretence of concern using it as an opportunity to call for a Border Poll, both have shown themselves incapable of demonstrating responsible judgement and leadership just when it is needed the most.

It is not only inaccurate, but a deliberate and calculated distortion of the truth by Sinn Féin to suggest that those Unionists who voted to remain in 2016 voted to leave the United Kingdom or even could be construed as voting in favour of the backstop.

There is absolutely no indication, or even serious suggestion, that the conditions have yet been met to facilitate a border poll, so we will continue to firmly reject any underhanded calls for one.

The backstop – a threat to the Union of the United Kingdom

Since its inception in December 2017, the Northern Ireland backstop has been the single greatest obstacle to the passing of the Withdrawal Agreement in Westminster. The Ulster Unionist Party is clear - we will not countenance any deal with the European Union that includes the current backstop and which so adversely introduces new trade barriers between Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

It is imperative that Northern Ireland is not treated differently to the rest of the UK. We joined Europe together as one United Kingdom and we must leave as one United Kingdom. The Ulster Unionist Party is committed to achieving a workable alternative to the Withdrawal Agreement.

From the outset, the European Union has insisted that any deal between the EU and the UK must respect the Belfast Agreement in all its dimensions. In reality, however, the EU has simply cherry-picked aspects of the Agreement which suits their own selfish needs. Rather than respecting the Belfast Agreement, they have sacrificed it for the maintenance of their single market.

By insisting that Northern Ireland remains within the single market for goods while the rest of the UK does not, the backstop violates the very heart of the Belfast Agreement - the principle of consent. Northern Ireland would have to follow swathes of EU single market legislation and regulation whilst Great Britain would be free to adopt its own. Over time, this would lead to a divergence in various policy areas between Northern Ireland and Great Britain. The seriousness of this was outlined by Attorney General Geoffrey Cox in his legal advice to the House of Commons in January 2019

"The implications of NI remaining in the EU single market for goods, while GB is not, is that for regulatory purposes GB is essentially treated as a third country by NI for goods passing from GB into NI"



The Belfast Agreement clearly states that there can be no change to the constitutional status of Northern Ireland without the express consent of the majority of people in Northern Ireland. By forcing Northern Ireland to treat the rest of the UK as a third country, the backstop quite clearly breaches the Belfast Agreement. This is totally unacceptable.

Not only does the backstop infringe upon the constitutional position of Northern Ireland, it also poses a serious risk to our economy. Great Britain is Northern Ireland's largest external market with total sales of £11.3bn in 2017. In comparison, exports from Northern Ireland to the Republic of Ireland numbered £3.9bn. The creation of a border down the Irish sea would seriously disrupt trade between Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

There are those who would have you believe that the only two options on the table for the UK's departure is either the current Withdrawal Agreement – a deal which annexes Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK - or crashing out with no deal. The Ulster Unionist Party believes that a workable alternative is still within reach.

For instance, we would still call on the UK and EU negotiators to give serious consideration to reaching an agreement which replicates the Common Travel Area for people - which already exists and operates perfectly well - and create a Common Travel Area for goods which would work throughout the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

We need a Withdrawal Agreement that respects the constitutional integrity of the UK, whilst simultaneously maintaining a frictionless border with the Republic of Ireland.



Priorities for post-Brexit Northern Ireland

Sustaining our agri-food industry

After Brexit the United Kingdom will require an entirely new agriculture policy. Whilst some ambiguity still remains in relation to the proposals for England, Scotland and Wales – as a result of the ongoing absence of a locally devolved Assembly - there have been no proposals made at all for Northern Ireland. That isn't good enough. Exiting the European Union allows for new opportunities for our agri-food industry, but only if we use this time to take decisions that secure and sustain the sector for future generations.

We want to see the development of a sustainable agriculture and land-use policy that is good for nature but which also financially supports our farmers. That will require a land-based payment system which reflects the reality and recognises that farmers are ultimately the best custodians of our natural environment.

Fisheries industry and coastal communities

There is huge potential for the Northern Ireland fisheries industry post-Brexit. Our fishermen and processors are resilient and innovative - a framework must be put in place to help them fully realise this potential. As an independent coastal state, outside the disastrous Common Fisheries Policy, the UK will soon have control over access to its own territorial waters and marine resources for the first time since joining the then EEC in 1973. The government must resist EU efforts to link access to UK waters and access to EU markets in the longer term – the industry will not tolerate being used as a bargaining chip again. Yet we also recognise that having good access to markets is needed for fish and shellfish landed locally. How the Government intends to redistribute fishing opportunities in UK waters is of course a key issue. It is vital that the importance of this sector is recognised and key areas developed with assistance from government.

Northern Ireland's fisheries industry would benefit from an increased share of fishing quota, indeed being out of the EU would open opportunities to review the fishing quota system in its totality; this must however be backed up by other measures. A meaningful package of investment is needed to support the Northern Ireland fleet and crucially on-shore infrastructure at our harbours. Access to crew is a significant issue for the industry. The Government must work with local stakeholders to improve the system in relation to issuing work visas to skilled non-EU/EEA crew. Investment is needed to attract people to the fisheries industry and to equip them with the required skills.





Environmental protection

This generation has an obligation to create and maintain a clean and healthy environment to pass on to the next. Future generations will rightly judge us by how we responded to the key global issues at present such as climate change. The Ulster Unionist Party has consistently said that Brexit should not be considered an opportunity to dilute or weaken our existing environmental standards and as such we believe immediate action is needed to plug gaps in environmental protection post-Brexit.

Supporting a skills based immigration system

When the British people voted to leave the European Union they also categorically chose to end the free movement of people. The United Kingdom has benefitted enormously from the flow of labour across the European Union in the past, however we now agree that it is time for the United Kingdom to take charge of its own borders once again. We welcome the Government's commitment to replacing the free movement of people with a new single, skills based system – however we firmly reject the proposed arbitrary earnings threshold of £30,000 as it simply will not work in Northern Ireland.

Access to healthcare and drugs after Brexit

Brexit will have major and immediate implications for health and social care across Northern Ireland. A no-deal Brexit in particular could have a drastic impact on patient care as the availability of medicines and vaccines is greatly limited.

The ongoing uncertainty of Brexit has already had an impact on the health system – particularly in relation to the recruitment and retention of EU nationals. This is now exacerbating an already crippling shortage of key staff across the health and social care workforce.

The Ulster Unionist Party believes that it is essential that no matter the final Brexit outcome there is no immediate impact on the day to day provision of health and social care services.

Workers' rights

The Ulster Unionist Party believes that Brexit should not threaten existing workers' rights which have developed through our membership of the EU. These rights and protections are perhaps taken for granted and include; paid holiday entitlement, rights for part-time workers and working time protection.

We therefore fully support the Government's pledge to protect and improve workers' rights after the UK leaves the EU.

Science, research and innovation

The UK has an excellent reputation when it comes to attracting the best scientists and students and fostering collaboration in relation to research and science. UK researchers and innovators have benefitted greatly from Horizon 2020, the EU's flagship science and innovation programme. Northern Ireland's universities and many local businesses have participated in or led projects within this programme – these experiences have been hugely beneficial to everyone involved. Investment in research and science must be boosted post-Brexit to strengthen the UK's position in this field. We also want to see collaboration with our EU and global partners continue post-Brexit.

Given the UK's expertise in many areas of research our participation in Horizon Europe, the successor to Horizon 2020, and other EU-wide programmes would benefit both the EU and UK. Arrangements must be put in place to ensure that the UK continues to attract the best researchers and students from across the EU and beyond in the future. Initiatives such as Erasmus+ have provided opportunities for and broadened the horizons of many UK and EU students, the UK should continue to participate in these educational and cultural programmes.



Security

Intelligence chiefs have stressed that security cooperation will continue between the UK and our NATO allies post-Brexit. Given the importance of operational cooperation it is vital that future arrangements maintain the close, mutually beneficial working relationships that have developed between the UK and our EU neighbours and allies in relation to this key issue once the UK leaves the EU. Our membership of Europol has for example helped the UK's security agencies and police forces to respond more effectively to a range of threats. We have seen the benefit of this partnership in terms of coordinating joint responses to organised crime, terrorism and cyber-attacks and given the nature of these and other cross-border threats it is in the interests of both the EU and UK that this cooperation continues. The Ulster Unionist Party believes that future arrangements must maintain this close security cooperation.

PEACE Programme and community development funding

In the early 1990's, Ulster Unionist MEP Jim Nicholson was instrumental in securing the PEACE Programme. To date, Northern Ireland and the border regions of the Republic of Ireland have received over 2 billion euros.

We welcome the commitment to continue the programme beyond PEACE IV from both the British Government and the European Union post Brexit. This funding must not, however, be used as a political bargaining chip. Any attempt to link the continuation of these funds to support for the Government's Withdrawal Agreement is unacceptable. The future programme must continue to deliver long term benefits for Northern Ireland. We must ensure that Northern Ireland continues to benefit from this programme both as a Member State and following our departure from the EU.





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