

Europe Referendum Key Issues Guide

2016

Liberal Democrats



#INtogether

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Introduction

This booklet sets out the facts, stats and information on the key arguments in the EU referendum debate. It is designed to give you the confidence to tackle as many of the Eurosceptic myths and false statistics as possible, and provide a positive case as to why Britain is better off in Europe. Although it is not exhaustive, it should help you to speak confidently in debates, on the doorstep, and to become a champion of Britain's membership of the EU.

Each topic covered within this booklet is separated between the benefits of our continued membership and answers to the questions likely to be posed by our opponents. This should allow it to be used as a template guide for public speakers and as a rebuttal guide for debates.

The Liberal Democrats are the only party that is united in saying only in Europe will we be stronger, more prosperous and create better opportunities for future generations. This booklet provides the material to allow all Liberal Democrats to confidently and authoritatively communicate that message in the run up to the referendum.

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Our Message

In Europe, Britain can thrive. Together we will be a stronger and more prosperous nation, creating opportunity for future generations, respected all over the world.

Together we created the world's largest free trade area, we delivered peace, and we gave the British people the opportunity to live, work and travel freely. History shows that Britain is better when it is united with Europe.

Together we are stronger in the fight against the global problems that don't stop at borders. We can stop international crime, we can fight climate change, and together we will provide hope and opportunity for the future.

It is not the time to turn our backs on Europe, leaving us isolated, side-lined and alone.

By voting to remain in, Britain can thrive.

Together we show the world an open, outward-facing Britain we can all be proud of.

Join the Liberal Democrat campaign today, to remain in together, and to stand up for the type of Britain you think we should be.

www.libdems.org.uk/europe

Trade

As our biggest trading partner, the EU is vital for the success of the UK economy. The EU is the largest economy in the world, the biggest exporter and importer and the leading investor and recipient of foreign investment. There is no evidence to suggest that we could leave Europe and negotiate a free trade agreement without losing the right to set the rules of the Single Market and vacating our seat at the negotiating top table.

Why we're #INtogether

Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)

The EU has FTAs with over 50 countries and is negotiating dozens more. Despite representing just over 7% of the world's population, it accounts for over one quarter of the world's wealth.¹ The EU is also the UK's main trading partner, representing more than half of our trade in goods and services.²

Exports

The EU remains the largest economy in the world and is by far our largest trading partner. Just below half of all goods exported from the UK go to the EU.³ Seven out of the top 10 countries the UK exports to are members of the EU.⁴

Investment

Being in the EU attracts foreign investment and creates jobs, with EU countries accounting for around half the stock of foreign investment in the UK.⁵ Close to three-quarters of foreign direct investors cite access to the European Single Market as important to the UK's attractiveness for investment.⁶

¹ http://europa.eu/pol/pdf/flipbook/en/trade_en.pdf

² 52% (2015) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-32793642>

³ Range from 41-49% (Jun. 2014 – Nov. 2015)

https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/OverseasTradeStatistics/Pages/EU_and_Non-EU_Data.aspx

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ 48% (2014) http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_426348.pdf

⁶ 72% (2015) <http://www.ey.com/UK/en/Issues/Business-environment/2015-UK-attractiveness-survey>

MYTHS

“Let’s just trade with Europe but get out of the EU”

- To secure access to European markets if we left, it's almost certain we would have to take on nearly all of the EU's rules, still pay into the EU budget, as Norway and Switzerland do now, yet we would have no influence in creating the rules governing the Single Market.

“The Commonwealth could provide an alternative trading area to the EU”

- This is a false choice - we have the best of both worlds. As a member of the European Union, we benefit from trade agreements with over 50 countries around the world such as Canada and South Africa and new deals in the pipeline with Singapore, New Zealand and Australia.
- If we leave the EU, we will lose existing trade deals – harming our trade with the Commonwealth and elsewhere. Almost all commonwealth countries have said they want us to remain within the European Union.

“They need us more than we need them – it’s in their interest to still trade with us.”

- Around half of the UK’s total trade is with the EU, but just 10% of EU trade is with the UK. Almost all of Britain’s trade deficit with the EU comes from trade with Germany and the Netherlands; other countries depend much less heavily on exports to Britain.

Business

Our membership of Europe opens up a market of 500 million consumers. This benefits many of our small and medium sized enterprises which use the Single Market as a springboard for growth and trading with the rest of the world. Having a level playing field with standardised regulations, similar legal systems, low transport costs and visa-free travel has proved invaluable for many SMEs. By putting all of this at risk, 'outers' show a complete disregard for those British businesses that form the backbone of our economy.

Why we're #INtogether

Manufacturing

85% of UK manufacturers want to stay in the EU,⁷ with 50% of large manufacturers agreeing they would be less likely to increase investment if the UK were to leave.⁸ Currently, over half of the cars manufactured in the UK are exported to the EU⁹ - but if the UK was outside the Single Market then car producers would be faced with a 10% tariff.¹⁰

Small Businesses

Being in Europe means small businesses can sell their goods easily to the world's largest market of over 500 million consumers. The EU Single Market provides a single set of rules, which allows our companies to trade easily. 9 out of 10 small business exporters sell their products into the EU¹¹ and small businesses are on average supportive of staying in.¹²

⁷ (2013) <http://makeitbritain.eef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Skills-and-Innovation-Our-Future-In-Europe.pdf>

⁸ Ibid

⁹ 53.1% (2014) http://www.smmmt.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/100049_SMMT-Facts-Guide-2015_UPDATES.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-32793642>

¹¹ (2014) http://www.fsb.org.uk/campaigns/assets/fsb_manifesto_2014.pdf

¹² 47% Yes/ 40.9% No (2015) <http://www.fsb.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/the-first-comprehensive-study-of-fsb-members-views-on-the-uks-membership-of-the-eu>

Big Business

Many of the world's largest companies choose to base their headquarters in the UK because of our EU membership – in 2012 the UK was the most popular country for companies looking to set up their HQ. If the UK were to choose to leave the EU, those companies that may have looked favourably on the UK would look elsewhere – they will chose a market of 435 million over 65 million. Many companies, from Honda to Siemens, have already said that they may have to consider their relationship with the UK if we left. What's more 71% of CBI members support remaining in Europe.¹³

MYTHS

“EU Regulation is crippling UK business”

- Five EU members, including the UK, are ranked in the top ten most competitive countries in the world.
- The UK has successfully led a campaign to streamline and reduce the burdens of EU legislation - substantial progress continues to be made.

“The UK government will negotiate free trade deals on behalf of British businesses.”

- The EU's trade agenda is hugely ambitious. We are currently negotiating with the USA, Japan, India, Brazil, New Zealand and Australia – all huge potential markets for our companies.
- No one knows how long the renegotiation will take. No one knows what day 2 will look like. Uncertainty is bad for business and will undoubtedly have an impact on the futures of many of our companies trading with Europe.
- The EU is a much larger economy than the UK and so has better sway in negotiating better terms in trade deals than we would be ourselves.

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/204004/UK_European_Headquarters_Brochure.pdf

Immigration

Our membership of the EU has enabled the UK to recruit a skilled workforce from Europe which has, in turn, contributed massively to the UK economy. Key public services such as the NHS and our schools and universities, have benefitted from much-needed support from European workers. That's not to say Liberal Democrats aren't pragmatic in our approach. We believe we should learn from the lessons of the accession of Eastern European states and work closely with our EU partners to ensure that if new states join the EU their access to our labour market is done in a controlled and properly managed way.

Why we're #INtogether

Contribution to our Economy

Since 1995, a steady three quarters of European migrants between 16 and 65 in Britain have been in employment. Far from being a drain on the Economy, EU migrants made a net contribution of more than £20 billion in the previous decade.¹⁴

Two Way Street

Migration around Europe is a two-way street. There around 2million Britons living in the EU, 15,000 students studied in Europe thanks to the EU's Erasmus scheme in 2013-14 and Brits benefit from cheap travel to Europe with Spain continually topping the most popular holiday destination.

Skilled Workforce

Research shows the UK is far more successful than other EU countries (including Germany) at attracting highly skilled migrants. More than 60% of European migrants coming to the UK have a degree. What's more one in seven academic staff in UK universities are from the EU, contributing positively to the cultural diversity of UK education.¹⁵

¹⁴ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/1114/051114-economic-impact-EU-immigration>

¹⁵ 14% (2015) <http://wonkhe.com/blogs/even-more-important-than-the-future-of-universities/>

MYTHS

“The UK has been flooded with scrounging migrants”

- The vast majority of EU citizens come to look for work and the UK should welcome those that are willing to work hard.
- EU migrants are estimated by UCL to contribute a third more in taxes than they receive in benefits while an estimated 40,000 Brits are claiming benefits in other EU countries.¹⁶
- When in Government, the Liberal Democrats ensured that EU migrants can't claim benefits for the first three months of residency.

“We need to leave the EU and re-gain control of our borders again”

- The UK enjoys a permanent opt-out from the EU's passport free Schengen zone, which means the UK maintains the right to control entry for non EU nationals. That means recently arrived refugees in Germany will not qualify for EU citizenship for at least 10 years.
- Walking away from the EU could actually make it harder for the UK to control immigration. Under a UK-French agreement, the British border is currently on French territory, but senior French Government ministers have said that this agreement could be jeopardised if Britain left the EU.

¹⁶ <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id=2014-02-04a.25.3&s=speaker%3A13442#g25.4>

Security

In a globalised world, criminal gangs and terrorists operate across borders and that means we must too. As the US and NATO have made clear, continued UK membership of the EU is vital for global security, the fight against terrorism and the threats posed by a resurgent Russia. The only global leader supportive of a British exit from the European Union is Vladimir Putin. A British exit would considerably weaken the European Union's ability to deal with the refugee crisis and ongoing terrorist threats to our continent.

Why we're #INtogether

European Arrest Warrant (EAW)

Thanks to the European Arrest Warrant, criminal suspects can be easily extradited from EU countries back to the UK and vice versa, putting an end to the days of the "Costa del Crime". This has led to 7,000 criminals being deported from the UK to face justice at home¹⁷ and has allowed over 1,000 serious criminals to be brought back to face justice in the UK, including runaway teacher Jeremy Forrest and attempted London bomber Hussein Osman.

Europol

Europol, the EU's crime-fighting body, helps British police exchange crucial information and enables criminals that cross borders to be tracked and arrested much more easily. This includes Operation Rescue, which smashed the world's largest online paedophile network, and Operation Golf which led to the arrest of 126 suspected human-traffickers operating in the UK.¹⁸

Eurojust

Eurojust, the EU's Judicial Cooperation Unit, helps the UK fight serious cross-border organised crime by stimulating investigative and prosecutorial coordination among agencies of the EU. This includes cracking down on organised criminal networks involved in the transportation of thousands of illegal immigrants into the UK a year.¹⁹

¹⁷

[http://www.strongerin.co.uk/are we more at risk of a terror attack if we leave the eu/#ysBX0QrKv0OJYZa9.97](http://www.strongerin.co.uk/are-we-more-at-risk-of-a-terror-attack-if-we-leave-the-eu/#ysBX0QrKv0OJYZa9.97)

¹⁸ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/page/operational-successes-127>

¹⁹ <http://www.eurojust.europa.eu/press/PressReleases/Pages/2013/2013-02-06.aspx>

Counter-Terrorism

Close coordination across the EU is vital in fighting the increasingly global threat of terrorism. The EU is stepping up cooperation between national governments to tackle the financing of terrorism, crack down on the trafficking of firearms and exchange information on known terrorist threats. This includes EURODAC, an EU asylum fingerprint database, which has recently been extended to allow national police forces and Europol to compare fingerprints linked to serious crimes and terrorism.²⁰ Counter-terrorism action will also be aided significantly by the recent setting up of the European Counter Terrorism Centre.

MYTHS

“The European Arrest Warrant leads to miscarriages of justice”

- The European Arrest Warrant is a crucial tool that has helped make our communities safer. It has brought about a big increase in the numbers of extraditions and has reduced delays and costs.
- Before the EAW was introduced, extradition used to take an average of one year, but now that has been cut to an average of 48 days.²¹

“The EU has been unable to prevent the increase in terrorist attacks across Europe”

- The UK is working closely with European partners to tackle the terrorist threat posed by so called Islamic State. The Paris attacks highlighted how necessary it is that European countries work together. The new European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC), set up in January 2016, is a major strategic opportunity for the EU to focus collective efforts in the fight against terrorism.
- ECTC will be an enhanced central information hub by which member countries can increase information sharing and operational coordination.
- The ECTC is already playing an important part in the European response to terrorist threats. A significant quantity of information has been received from France and Belgium resulting in 800 intelligence leads and more than 1600 leads on suspicious financial transactions.²²
- There is no credible evidence to suggest that we will be safer, or better able to deal with terrorist threats on our own.

²⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/identification-of-applicants/index_en.htm

²¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-23239493>

²² <https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/ectc>

Freedom of Movement

EU membership gives UK citizens the right to travel, work, retire and live elsewhere in the European Union, free from discrimination on the grounds of nationality. Those who are campaigning for us to leave the EU cannot tell us what will happen to these rights, were we to walk away.

Why we're #INtogether

Free Movement

Freedom of movement is a two-way street. Just over 2 million EU citizens live here, and around 2 million Brits choose to live elsewhere in the EU. Young people are more likely to use the right to live and work across the EU whether it's a ski season in France, a summer spent working in a bar or studying at European universities.

Erasmus

Over 15,000 Brits get EU grants to study or train with the Erasmus programme, gaining important language and cultural skills.²³ In 2015-16, €50 million in Erasmus grants will be available for 2015-16 to support UK higher education staff's teaching and training and students who want to study or train in Europe.²⁴ Leaving the EU could put this in jeopardy, with Switzerland's participation being suspended after they voted to limit freedom of movement in 2014.²⁵

MYTHS

"We don't benefit from freedom of movement"

- We believe that EU migration is a two way street and benefits our economy hugely. According to the Centre for Economics & Business Research, it could cost £60 billion if it were curbed.
- Because of the EU, you can live, work, study and retire in the rest of Europe, and between 1.4 and 2.2 million Brits already do. Would you want to close off that opportunity for you and your children?

²³ 15,566 (2013/14) <http://go.international.ac.uk/content/erasmus-figures>

²⁴ <https://erasmusplus.org.uk/higher-education-study-or-train-abroad-grant-rate-2015-16>

²⁵ <http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2015/nov/09/lets-stay-together-why-universities-should-support-the-eu>

Travel

Being in Europe entitles us to visa-free travel across the continent and protection abroad in case of illness and injury. What's more the EU has driven down prices in everything from flights to roaming charges. Leaving the EU could mean waving goodbye to more convenient, safer and cheaper travel across Europe.

Why we're #INtogether

Passenger Rights

EU legislation gives you the right to a refund and compensation of up to 600 euros if your flight is cancelled or delayed by more than 3 hours.²⁶

Cheaper Flights

The EU has also opened up the aviation market meaning more routes and cheaper fares for passengers. Easyjet and Ryanair have even said it wouldn't exist without the EU Single Market, while Airbus have stated that their success is dependent on European industrial organisation.²⁷ EU countries also work together to blacklist 'dangerous airlines'.

Roaming

Last year the EU scrapped mobile roaming charges, achieving a massive win for British consumers. Driving down roaming fees and making it easier to travel shows what can be achieved when Britain plays a leading role in Europe.

Health Care Abroad

Thanks to the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), UK citizens travelling to any EU country can access state-provided emergency health care services if they become ill or injured.

Protection Abroad

UK citizens who fall victim to a crime when travelling in the EU are guaranteed a set of minimum rights thanks to EU law, including translation, protection and compensation. Victims of domestic violence are also given special protection across the EU through the mutual recognition of restraining and protection orders.

²⁶ http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/passenger-rights/air/index_en.htm

²⁷

http://www.gazetteseries.co.uk/news/14166498.Airbus_president_backs_Britain_to_remain_in_EU_during_visit_to_Filton_site/

MYTHS:

“We’d still enjoy visa-free travel across Europe.”

- Whether or not we are still able to enjoy visa-free travel across Europe would be determined during the exit negotiation process.

“Hospitals abroad would still have to treat me if I have travel insurance.”

- An EHIC card provides you with a useful safety net and will ensure you get speedy care to the same level of state-provided healthcare to citizens of that country.

Influence

Britain is recognised as a leading voice in Europe, not just by its European neighbours but countries all over the world, including America and China. Leaving Europe won't make the EU go away - it will only strip us of our right to influence it, leaving us isolated in our own back yard, less recognised on the world stage and with many of the rules still imposed on us.

Why we're #INtogether

Influence in Brussels

The UK has huge influence in Brussels – we have 10% of MEPs and all decisions made have to be signed off by UK ministers. Leaving Brussels would give us the illusion of sovereignty but actually tie our hands and give us no power to influence EU legislation.

Ability to shape our own future

Our influence and ability to shape our own future is tied up with our membership of the EU. If we want to leave Europe but maintain our access to the Single Market we would have to comply with many of the laws and contribute to the budget. Take Norway for example – they are forced to comply with 75% of EU law. What's more, Norway is the 10th largest contributor to the EU budget²⁸ without having any say over how the money is spent. Former Norwegian Europe Spokesperson, Nikolai Astrup, has warned: "If you want to run Europe, you must be in Europe. If you want to be run by Europe feel free to join us in the EEA."

UK influence on global stage

Europe is one of the five emerging global superpowers. Our membership entitles us to a seat at the top table and a voice in shaping its future. By turning our back on Europe we risk our position not just in Europe but in relation to the rest of the world with the U.S Trade Minister already saying the U.S would not be keen to pursue a separate free trade deal with Britain if it were to leave the EU.²⁹

²⁸ http://www.cbi.org.uk/global-future/case_study06_norway.html

MYTHS

“We have no say in EU legislation, the Commission imposes diktats”

- The UK has huge influence on all EU legislation. The Commission cannot “impose diktats” - all legislation must be amended and approved by elected MEPs, of which the UK has 73 (10% of total). In the Council, where the UK is represented by a Minister, it is the most powerful country alongside France, Germany and Italy.

“Leaving Europe would give us our sovereignty back”

- We would lose sovereignty. For example, Norway has taken on around 75% of EU legislation³⁰ without having any say and they still pay £106 per person each year³¹ to the EU budget.
- ***“The EU makes 75% of our laws – we have no say in anything that goes on in our own country anymore”***
Untrue. The House of Commons Library estimates the figure for UK laws implementing EU legislation is just 13%.³²

³⁰(p9) <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06522#fullreport>

³¹<http://www.civitas.org.uk/content/files/TheNorwegianWay.pdf>

³²<http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07092>

Rights

The EU has secured so many of our rights. Minority groups, the vulnerable and workers are all better protected as a result of laws from Europe. These laws affect each and every one of us day to day. By leaving, we risk our ability to shape these laws which impact right across the world.

Why we're #INtogether

Maternity Rights

European law entitles women to at least 14 weeks of maternity leave before or after childbirth³³, the right to paid leave to cover ante natal classes and prohibits dismissal on the grounds of maternity. In the UK this has led to a raft of new laws to protect pregnant mothers.

Youth Employment

EU funding helps young, unemployed people into work. Since 2007, around 450,000 young people in the UK have been helped through the European Social Fund.³⁴ Five years after graduation, the unemployment rate of Erasmus students has been 23% lower.³⁵

Protections

Being a member of the EU guarantees equal opportunity and provides protection from discrimination on a number of grounds. The race equality directive³⁶ and the employment quality directive³⁷ oblige countries to adopt anti-discrimination legislation in the areas of social protection, education and access to and supply of goods and services. There are also a huge number of schemes proposed to tackle persisting gender inequality in the EU, which include provisions on equal pay, gender employment gap, cracking the 'glass ceiling' and minimum base levels of maternity and parental leave.

³³ <https://osha.europa.eu/en/legislation/directives/10>

³⁴ (2007-2013) <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=66&langId=en>

³⁵ (2014) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-1025_en.htm

³⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0043:en:HTML>

³⁷ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0078:en:HTML>

Consumer Rights

The EU guarantees strong consumer rights when you buy goods, including a 2-year guarantee on all products and a ban on hidden charges. EU labelling rules protect consumers against misleading claims and help ensure products and food sold in Europe meets the highest safety standards.

Human Rights

The EU is committed to human rights and European countries work closely together within the framework of the European Union to ensure they are respected universally, for example, campaigning globally for a moratorium on the death penalty and funding awareness raising programmes to tackle human trafficking and Female Genital Mutilation globally. The EU uses its numerous trade agreements, vast economic power and diplomatic credentials to leverage improvements in human rights standards in external countries. The European Convention on Human Rights, drafted by British lawyers in the aftermath of the atrocities of the Second World War, provides a framework to protect individuals from human rights violations. To walk away from the HRA and ECHR would remove a vital safeguard for UK citizens and would weaken our moral standing in the world.

MYTHS:

“We’d keep these rights anyway if we left”

- All of these rights would be at risk if we were to vote to leave Europe.
- UKIP have already made it clear they see leaving as a way to pare back women’s and employment rights.

“British values are being overruled by European judges”

- The European Convention was largely drafted by British lawyers and strongly reflects British values – based on common laws dating back 800 years to the Magna Carta.
- Our Human Rights Act, voted through in UK Parliament, enshrines the European Convention into our law.
- The UK has an opt-out of EU justice and home affairs measures. We have the freedom to pick and choose which EU measures we wish to take part in.

“The outcome of human rights cases are decided in Brussels by unelected judges”

- Judges in the European Court of Human Rights are all elected by a body made of elected representatives from each member country.

Environment

Issues such as climate change and air pollution don't stop at borders and must be tackled at the international level. As a member of the European Union, Britain has worked closely with our European partners to tackle climate change, for example the recent COP21 Paris agreement on climate change. Walking away from Europe would weaken our ability and the ability of the European Union to work together to tackle environmental damage and climate change.

Why we're #INtogether

Climate Change

Climate change diplomacy is the most important thing to enable us, as a world, to tackle climate change. Our membership of the EU means that we are at the top table during negotiations. The UK exercised its strong negotiating power in delivering 28 ratifications for the EU's joint pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030. Single Market rules on energy-efficient appliances and fuel-efficient cars will save consumers a total of £500 a year by 2020.³⁸ EU negotiators played a central role in helping to deliver this year's global COP21 Paris agreement on tackling climate change.

Air Pollution

It is hard to imagine how we can effectively reduce air pollution by attempting to tackle it independently. In the UK, air pollution costs the UK economy approximately £54 bn per year and results in around 29,000 premature deaths.³⁹ As much as 40% of the most harmful pollutants⁴⁰ in the UK are reported to come from mainland Europe, it's only possible to tackle air pollution at the European level and by enforcing EU standards through the EU air quality directive.

Clean Beaches

EU regulations on water quality have played a vitally important role in cleaning up Britain's beaches. Nearly 600 coastal bathing areas are monitored for potentially dangerous bacteria such as E.coli, with minimum standards set out for safe bathing which have to be displayed. This has seen significant improvements in water quality, with 99% of England's bathing waters meeting the minimum European standard, and over 82% meeting the tighter guideline standard.⁴¹

³⁸ <http://ukandeu.ac.uk/paris-climate-summit-the-uk-eu-and-un/>

³⁹ http://www.euro.who.int/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/276772/Economic-cost-health-impact-air-pollution-en.pdf

⁴⁰ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-17704116>

⁴¹ <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/eu-referendum-what-europe-has-done-for-the-uk-environment-a6835501.html>

MYTHS

“This should be left to countries to decide”

- Climate change, pollution, even fish and animals, cross borders. We have to work closely with our neighbours to manage these challenges.
- When in Coalition Government, our former Energy Secretary Ed Davey worked tirelessly with our EU partners to deliver ambitious EU renewable, energy efficiency and emissions targets for 2020-2030. Leaving the EU would put these at risk.

“EU energy policy means we subsidise windfarms that produce no energy and harm our landscapes”

- Windfarms are not inefficient or costly. Wind energy projects currently reduce over 14million tonnes of CO2 a year in the UK and power an equivalent of over 8million homes a year.⁴²

“No one cares – the environment is not an important issue to people”

- The UK Government’s own balance of competences review showed that environmental protection emerges as one of the key EU actions to deliver the best results.
- The review states that: “The majority of respondents believed that EU competence has increased environmental standards in the UK and across the EU.”

“The Common Fisheries Policy is a disaster”

- Victories have recently been made to ensure overfishing will stop, throwing dead fish back into the sea stops and power is devolved back to local communities. Europe remains the largest export market for our fishing industry. Those supporting a UK exit from the European Union have yet to outline what an alternative to the CFP would look like and what tariffs may apply to our exports.
- In 2014, it was announced that cod and haddock quotas would rise after we saw a dramatic recovery in these species. This has been attributed to the success of previous quotas.⁴³

⁴² <http://www.renewableuk.com/en/renewable-energy/wind-energy/uk-wind-energy-database/figures-explained.cfm>

⁴³ <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/eu-referendum-what-europe-has-done-for-the-uk-environment-a6835501.html>