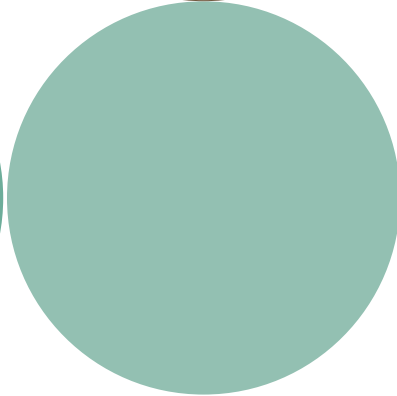
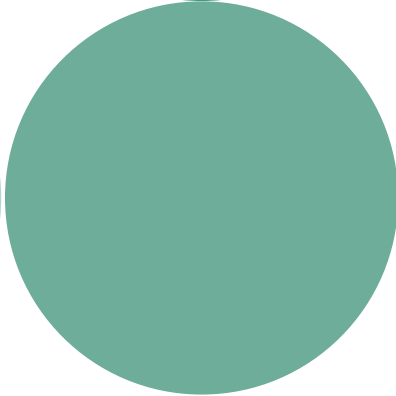
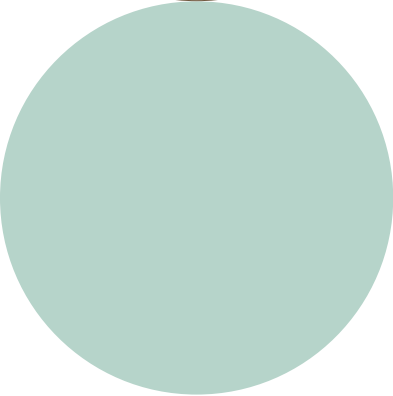
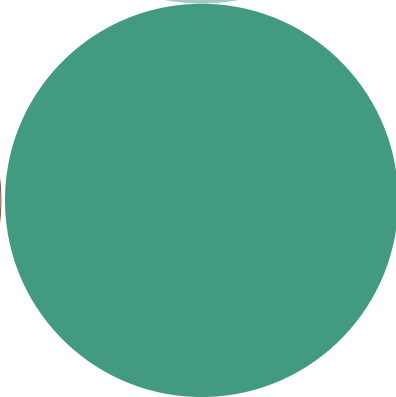
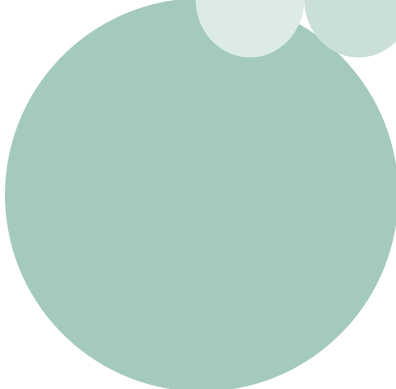




Usdaw

*Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers*



Europe

Executive Council Statement
to the 2016 ADM



On 23 June 2016, we will be facing an important decision in the referendum on the European Union. This is going to be one of the most significant and far reaching decisions facing the UK for many years.

Over the years, Europe has had a bad press at the hands of right-wing Tories and sections of the media. All you hear is reports of wasted resources and bureaucracy. There are many myths circulating about Europe. It is essential that people take a decision on whether we remain part of the European Union based on the facts.

We must not forget why we are in the European Union and what it delivers. The European Community was formed out of a Europe devastated by two world wars. The aim was to promote political and economic co-operation where previously there had only been division and conflict.

The European Union has helped to establish and underpin many important employment rights – from protection against discrimination to equal treatment for part-time workers. We must not take these rights for granted.

The Government has recently reached agreement on renegotiated terms of European Union membership. Usdaw is clear that the benefits of the European Union go much further than anything discussed as part of these renegotiations and that the forthcoming referendum is about protecting the provisions that Usdaw members value.

In the run-up to the referendum, we need to do what is in the best interests of Usdaw members. Usdaw needs to be campaigning to urge workers to vote to remain in the European Union. Yes, the European Union is far from perfect but if we want changes we will only get improvements if we remain in.

We need a pro-Europe campaign that will address the issues and concerns of trade unionists and ordinary working people. The launch of Labour In For Britain, the Labour campaign for a ‘Yes’ vote, is to be welcomed.

We don’t have long until the referendum takes place. We need to be using that time to do what we can to encourage as many Usdaw members as possible to vote for the UK to remain in the European Union.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "John Hannett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

John Hannett
General Secretary

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Section 1

What is the European Union?

The European Union, made up of 28 Member States, describes itself as a family of democratic European countries, committed to working together for peace and prosperity.

The original foundations for the European Union were built out of the ruins of Europe after the Second World War. After two world wars that devastated the continent, an agreement developed that there needed to be positive moves towards encouraging European co-operation.

Six countries – Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Italy and Luxembourg – formed the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951. This became the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957. Denmark, Ireland and the UK joined the EEC in 1973. The original six had become nine.

In the 1980s, Greece, Portugal and Spain – countries with recent pasts as military dictatorships and a track record of oppressing political oppositions and trade unions – all embraced democracy and joined the European Community.

The EEC became the European Union in 1993. From 1995 to the present, a further 16 countries joined the European Union – it is now a European Union of 28 countries.

Over the last six decades the concept of the European Union has developed. Today, workers have the freedom of movement across Europe, and the European Union has established guaranteed minimum policies on workers' rights and other social issues.

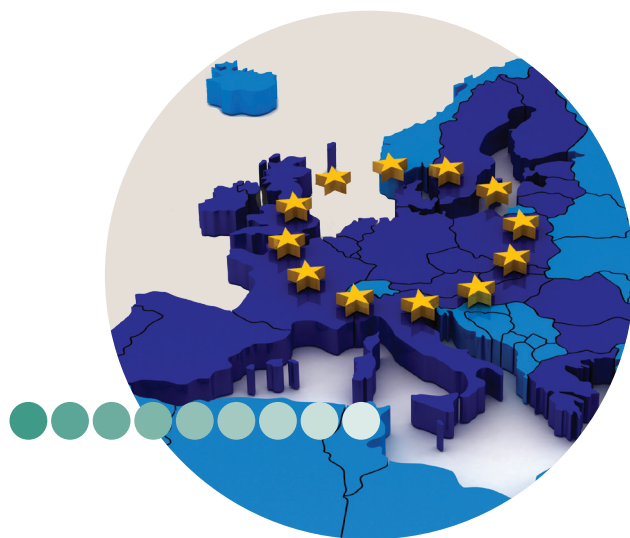
The UK initially opted out of the Social Chapter. However, British workers got the protection of these rights when the Labour Government signed up to the Social Chapter following Labour's General Election victory in 1997.

The Free Trade Area

From the origins of the European Economic Community, one of the major aims has been to provide free trade across the borders of all Member States.

This means not only the elimination of import and export tariffs but also ensuring a common set of rules and quality standards; guaranteeing that products and services produced in one Member State can be freely traded in another.

To ensure that the free trade area works effectively, the European Union has various institutions that create, monitor and enforce regulations to promote free and fair trade.



The European Union Decision Making Process

The European Union is an economic and political partnership between independent European states.

The European Union needs to take on board and balance the decision making process in each country with the desire for co-operation and policy co-ordination across Europe.

In line with this, there are four main decision making bodies within the European Union:

- The European Parliament plays a key part in agreeing European Union laws and Directives. It has the power to oversee the European Union budget. It is made up of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) elected by the population of each Member State. The UK currently has 73 MEPs.
- The European Council is made up of the Prime Ministers and Presidents of the European Union Member States, along with the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Council. It meets at least four times a year to set out the European Union's political priorities and goals. These meetings are commonly referred to as European Union Summits.
- The Council of Ministers – consisting of government ministers from each Member State – meets regularly to agree policies and proposals for European Union legislation. The agenda of each meeting will determine which ministers attend. If, for example, the council is to discuss environmental issues, the meeting will be attended by the Environment Minister from each European Union Member State.
- The European Commission is made up of 28 commissioners, one from each Member State, who each have responsibility for a specific policy area. This body carries out much of the European Union's day-to-day work. It can propose new laws but the Council of Ministers will decide whether these will be put before the European Parliament.

For a proposal to become a European law it needs to have the support of both the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. This process is known as co-decision.

Timeline

- 1951** – Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Italy and Luxembourg create the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).
- 1957** – These six countries sign the Treaty of Rome, which creates the European Economic Community.
- 1973** – Denmark, Ireland and the UK join the EEC.
- 1981** – Greece joins the EEC.
- 1986** – Portugal and Spain join the EEC.
- 1993** – The European Economic Community becomes the European Union.
- 1995** – Austria, Finland and Sweden join the European Union.
- 1999** – The Euro is launched on financial markets and initially adopted by 11 Member States with Greece joining at a later date.
- 2004** – Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia join the European Union.
- 2007** – Bulgaria and Romania become members of the European Union.

Section 2

What has Europe Ever Done for Workers?

The European Union provides a minimum floor for employment conditions. The Treaty of Rome, signed in 1957, committed Member States to ‘ensure social progress of their countries by common action to eliminate the barriers which divide Europe’.

However, little was done on the ‘social progress’ agenda until the 1980s when Jacques Delors, a French Socialist, became President of the European Commission. Jacques Delors advocated a single market across the European Union – but importantly he had a vision of a social Europe where the single market had to go hand in hand with the creation of European Union-wide basic employment rights.

This idea of basic employment rights for workers across the European Union became the Social Chapter.

Britain initially opted out of the Social Chapter. The Conservative Government led by Margaret Thatcher was in the middle of a bitter attack on the trade unions and did not want Europe giving workers employment protections. The Tories anti-European feelings were summed up by The Sun when the paper ran with a front page with the ‘Up Yours Delors’ headline in 1990.

When Labour got elected in 1997 one of the first actions was to sign up to the Social Chapter; thereby guaranteeing British workers many of the same rights as workers in the rest of Europe.

Today, Europe provides workers in the UK with important basic rights on a whole range of employment issues:

Working Time

The Working Time Regulations are one of the most high profile pieces of European Employment Legislation.

To promote better health and safety in the workplace, the Working Time Directive introduced a statutory right to four weeks’ paid annual leave, breaks during working hours as well as daily and weekly rest requirements. Prior to the Working Time Directive being introduced, many sectors, such as distribution, saw regular working patterns of 70 hour weeks with very few hours off between shifts.

TUPE

The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations protect workers following a business takeover. Before TUPE provisions were put in place, when a business was sold, the transfer ended the existing employment contracts.

The TUPE Regulations mean that employees’ terms and conditions are normally protected following a relevant transfer. The regulations ensure that employees and recognised trade unions have the right to be consulted during the course of a TUPE transfer.

Protection from Discrimination

The European Union also provides a wide-ranging framework of anti-discrimination legislation. The need for a European-wide approach to anti-discrimination protections was first agreed in 1950 through the European Convention on Human Rights.

In the following years, the European Union has legislated to ensure that workers cannot be discriminated on the basis of gender, race, age, religion, belief, disability or sexual orientation. Within the UK, these provisions are now contained within the Equality Act.



Part-Time and Fixed-Term Workers' Rights

Europe has created specific legislation to end discrimination against part-time workers and fixed-term employees.

Prior to such legislation coming into effect, it was common for part-time or fixed-term workers to be given a lower rate of pay, find themselves ineligible for bonus payments or refused access to a pension scheme. It was estimated that 6 out of 10 part-time workers did not receive such contractual entitlements.

The European Union Part-Time Work Directive led to the Part-Time Workers Regulations that became law in 2000. These regulations had a major impact in UK workplaces, especially in sectors such as retail where there are large numbers of part-time workers.

Holiday Pay

In addition to the employment protections laid down in European Directives, UK workers have also benefited from decisions by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU).

The role of this court is to ensure that European Union law is interpreted and applied correctly and consistently across the European Union. A number of important clarifications on employment rights have been issued by the court in recent years.

Two of the most important areas where the CJEU has provided clarification have been in relation to annual leave. As a result of CJEU rulings, workers now have the right to accrue holidays when off on sick leave and, more recently, employers must now take into consideration overtime when calculating holiday pay.

The Conservatives were explicit that part of their renegotiation strategy was to 'address some of the problems caused by European Court Judgements on on-call time, compensatory rest and holiday pay'. Thanks to strong lobbying from the Trade Union Movement, we were able to ensure that David Cameron's renegotiations did not water down any of the workers' rights that Usdaw members rely on.

Workforce Consultation

The European Union has implemented a number of directives that stipulate that employers must consult with employee representatives on a range of issues.

The Collective Redundancies Directive underwrites the need for a company to consult with a recognised trade union over 20 or more redundancies.

The Information and Consultation Regulations gives employees' rights to information and consultation on relevant business matters.

Also, businesses operating in two or more European Union states are obliged to have a European Works Council to inform and consult with reps on transnational business issues.



There is a very important debate to be had about the European Union and what Britain's relationship with it should be. However, many newspapers in the UK only seem to be interested in printing baseless stories about Brussels' bureaucrats.

There have been many thousands of words written about the European Union but some of the most famous stories about the European Union are not true! In this section, we look at some of the biggest myths about the European Union.

Myth: The European Union's freedom of movement encourages benefit tourism

There is a myth that large numbers of Europeans are coming to the UK as 'benefit tourists' – just to claim benefits. The facts are that 15% of UK nationals are on out-of-work benefits whilst only 6.3% of foreign European Union nationals living in the UK are claiming similar payments. The UK has some of the lowest benefits in Europe. Benefits are more generous in at least 14 other European Union states. If you are a 'benefit tourist' the UK would not be a good destination.

Myth: Freedom of movement harms the economy

The UK's ageing population is a major problem for the economy. European migrants help to ease this problem as they are on average younger than the UK-born population. In the past 10 years, European migrants have made a net contribution of £25 billion in taxes.

Myth: The NHS cannot cope with the increased numbers of immigrants

European Union migrant workers tend to be younger than the local population. As a result they tend to be healthier and will use the NHS less. In hospitals and doctors' surgeries, you are more likely to be treated by a migrant worker than meet one in the waiting room.

Myth: There are too many immigrants entering the UK

Britain is not the favoured destination for most European Union migrants. Across Europe, eight other countries have higher proportions of foreign-born residents than the UK. The number of European Union migrants in the UK is roughly comparable with the number of UK citizens living in other European Union countries. There are 2.2 million European Union migrants living in the UK, while 1.8 million Brits live elsewhere in Europe.

Myth: The housing shortage is due to the increased numbers of migrant workers

Over 90% of social housing lettings in the UK are made to UK nationals. In December 2013, the Government issued new statutory guidance to local authorities to set a residency test for social housing. Now, an applicant has to have lived in the area for a minimum of two years before they can go on the local authority's waiting list. Affordable housing is in short supply – but that is a result of Government policy and the failure to invest in social housing.

Myth: Pay rates are under pressure from the free movement of labour

We have seen difficult times in the economy over recent years. Europe has seen even tougher times. It is no surprise that many workers in the UK and across Europe are looking for employment. Pay rates in certain sectors have come under pressure, but it would be a mistake to identify migrant workers as the source of the problem. There should be legal protections to stop employers exploiting migrant workers to undercut existing terms and conditions. The loopholes in the Agency Worker Regulations, that were supposed to deliver equal pay for agency workers, need to be closed.

And then there are the other myths.

The European Union wants to:

- Ban curved bananas.
- Stop the UK using miles, acres and pints.
- Tightrope walkers would have to wear hardhats.
- Mountains to have warning signs to warn that snow is slippery.
- Ban bagpipes.
- Ban prawn cocktail crisps.
- Force farmers to provide toys for their pigs.
- Ban the consumption of cakes entered into competitions in country fairs and fêtes.
- Ban double-decker buses.
- Order firefighters to use stairs instead of the traditional pole in fire stations.

None of the above 10 myths are true and yet many have been widely reported!



Trade

The European Union started out as a Europe-wide economic free trade area. Ever since, the benefits of European-wide trade have been at the heart of the European project. Over the last six decades, the European Union has grown into the largest global trading area in the world. Today, 45% of all exports from the UK go to the rest of the European Union. Access to the European Union's markets means access to over 508 million consumers.

Jobs

Over 4.5 million jobs in the UK rely, directly or indirectly, upon trading with the European Union. The UK is able to attract significant levels of investment from outside the European Union from businesses who want to establish production bases within the European Union. This has helped the UK to attract the second highest level of foreign direct investment in the world, second only to the USA. If Britain leaves, many companies may consider moving abroad in order to stay within the single market. This will put at risk hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Climate Change

The European Union has taken a lead in the fight against climate change, bringing countries together to set targets that will protect the environment for future generations. The European Union is on target to meet an objective of producing 20% of energy consumption from renewable sources by 2020 and reducing total greenhouse gases by 40% by 2030.

Peace

Prior to the creation of the European Union, Europe experienced a series of wars that resulted in the death of millions of people. Today, war in Europe has become by and large a thing of the past. There have been conflicts. The bitter collapse of Yugoslavia, the troubles in Northern Ireland and the more recent conflict in the Ukraine are all reminders that we should not take peace for granted. However, overall, the European Union has made a positive contribution in delivering peace in Europe. In particular, the European Union has helped Europe overcome old divisions after the end of the Cold War. The European Union even got the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012 for promoting peace across the continent.

Free Movement to Work, Live and Travel in any European Union Member State

Official figures from the Office for National Statistics show that there are large numbers of UK nationals choosing to live in other European Union Member States. Freedom of movement across the European Union allows a growing number of UK nationals to retire to Spain or work in France and Germany. Freedom of movement has directly benefited millions of British citizens living abroad.

The European Arrest Warrant

The European Union-wide arrest warrant replaced the previous lengthy extradition system. This warrant, once issued, requires another Member State to arrest and transfer a criminal suspect back to the issuing country. Since being introduced in 2004, over 400 people who have committed serious crimes in the UK have been arrested across the European Union. The years when British criminals could hide out on the Costa del Sol with impunity have gone. The European Union has helped ensure that fewer criminals are beyond the reach of British justice.

European Health Insurance Card

The European-wide Health Insurance Card, previously known as the E111, entitles UK residents to receive state-provided healthcare at reduced costs, or sometimes for free in many European Union States. The card entitles UK tourists to the same entitlements as citizens of that country – so if their medical care is completely free, so is yours.



Cheaper Prices

Items in shops are cheaper than they would be if the UK was outside the Single Market and UK businesses had to pay trade tariffs. The European Commission estimated in 2011 that the benefit to consumers of having a greater variety of goods, without trade tariffs, is equivalent to around £450.

Mobile Roaming Charges

A fifth of UK holiday makers have returned home from a European foreign holiday to find their phone bill, on average, £61 higher than usual. To tackle this mobile phone charge rip-off, the European Union has agreed a set of maximum charges that mobile operators can charge European Union citizens travelling in Europe. From next year, holidaymakers travelling within the European Union will pay the same price for mobile phone usage as they would at home.

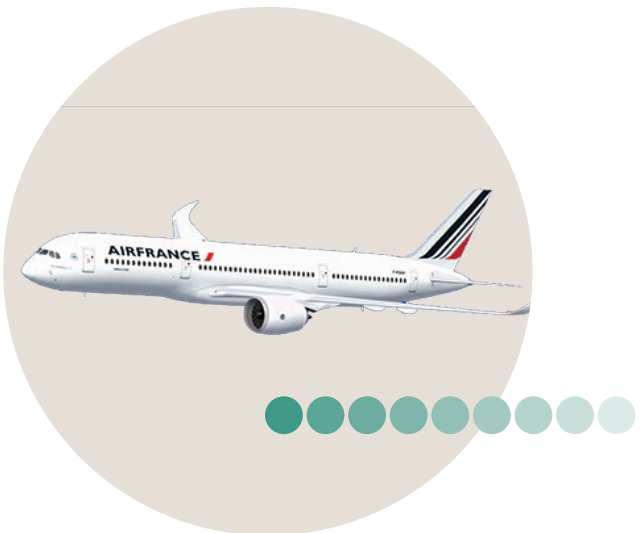
Air Passenger Rights

The European Union offers significant protection for passengers facing delays, cancellations or overbookings on flights within the European Union. Thanks to European Union legislation, if a traveller is denied boarding, has their flight cancelled or their flight arrives at their destination more than three hours later than the time advertised on their ticket, they are likely to be entitled to compensation of between €250 – €600.

The Future

As we look to the future and a more globalised world, it will become more important and a greater benefit to have easy access to the European Single Market.

For example, Britain is at the forefront of digital sector innovations and currently has Europe's biggest e-commerce market. The European Commission is looking at opening the online market and unifying digital rules across the 28 Member States. The UK could be one of the big winners when the Digital Single Market becomes a reality. But if we are outside the European Union, the UK will lose out and will not have the same access to the growing number of online European consumers.

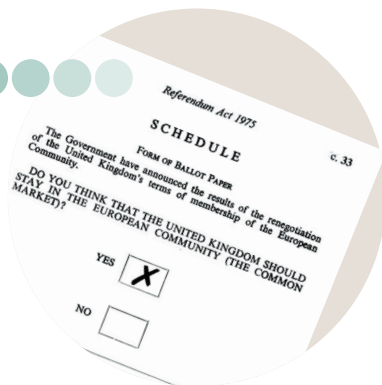


The issue of Europe has featured many times on the Usdaw Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) agenda, with conference debating a variety of propositions.

1975 Referendum

The last referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union was held in June 1975. At that time, the majority of trade unions had adopted an anti-Europe policy. As part of the 1975 ADM, Usdaw debated propositions in favour and against the UK's membership of the European Economic Community, as it was then known. Following a lengthy and closely argued debate, the propositions were put to a card vote where a policy to campaign against continued membership was narrowly adopted.

In the following referendum, the UK voted by more than a two-to-one margin in favour of the UK remaining in the EEC. Millions of workers saw their futures best served by being inside the Common Market.



Social Europe

During the 1980s, trade union attitudes to Europe started to change. Europe was increasingly seen by more and more trade unionists as part of the socially progressive alternative to Margaret Thatcher. The European social partnership model was in stark contrast to the 1980s Conservative Government who viewed the Trade Union Movement as 'the enemy within'.

This developing view was reflected at the 1984 Usdaw ADM with a proposition being adopted which stated:

'This ADM reaffirms its opposition to the Common Market but considers that whilst we are still members we must continue to mount campaigns to get the best arrangements for the protection of our members.'



TUC Congress in 1988 proved to be a pivotal moment for the Trade Union Movement and its attitude to Europe. Jacques Delors, the European Union President, came to speak and told Congress:

"Your movement has a major role to play. Europe needs you."

He went on to say:

"Social dialogue and collective bargaining are essential pillars of our democratic society and social progress."

He received a standing ovation from delegates.

The vision of a social Europe contrasted sharply with Thatcher's Britain. Margaret Thatcher declared:

"We have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain, only to see them reimposed at a European level, with a European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels."

The Trade Union Movement signed up to the vision of a social Europe and became pro-European Union.

Usdaw's View

In 2008, Usdaw's annual conference adopted a proposition stating:

This ADM recognises the benefits derived from our membership of the European Union. EU legislation is central to UK labour laws, equality and health and safety.

This sentiment was echoed in a 2014 proposition which stated:

The trade we get from being in Europe is too great to lose for a lot of companies, also members could lose their jobs. Conference feels we must start to learn all we can about the benefits of being part of the European Union.

Working with Europe

In line with the view that the interests of working people are best served through the Social Europe model, the Trade Union Movement began to campaign for the UK to become further integrated into the European Union.

The election of a Labour Government in 1997 saw the UK, at last, signing up to the Social Chapter. UK workers were then given new employment rights on paid annual leave, equal pay, paid maternity and paternity leave and new protections against discrimination at work.

In the following years, the European Union has continued to deliver additional protections for workers across Europe with the introduction of Parental Leave, the Road Transport (Working Time) Regulations and the Fixed-Term Workers Directive. As a result of effective campaigning by trade unions across Europe, workers have also benefited from several positive decisions from the Court of Justice of the European Union.

The employment rights we get from Europe are in many ways protected under the current arrangements. It is noticeable that the recent Conservative-led coalition targeted nearly all of the employment rights not underwritten by Europe. If we win new rights in the UK from a Labour Government they are immediately at risk if the Conservatives get elected. Up to now, if we win new employment rights through Europe they tend to be here to stay.

The Future

The numerous benefits and protections that UK workers receive from Europe are clearly under threat from the forthcoming referendum. The best response is to be supporters and champions of a social Europe.

The most recent TUC Congress, held in September 2015, had a full discussion on Europe and passed a detailed General Council Statement on the European Union referendum. Usdaw was integral in agreeing the wording for this General Council Statement having submitted our own motion outlining the numerous benefits that the European Union has delivered for our members. TUC Congress reiterated its 'support for a European Union that delivers economic prosperity based on social justice.'

'The TUC will continue to advocate a positive vision of a people's Europe and reforms that would promote investment for sustainable growth, decent work and with good wages and a greater say for people at work.'

Throughout the Conservatives renegotiations, the TUC, along with the European TUC, worked hard to ensure that the Tories were not able to water down any of the employment rights that Usdaw members rely on.

Following the completion of the Conservative's renegotiations, the TUC have launched a campaign to highlight the 'very real' dangers of a vote to leave the European Union. The TUC's campaign is tackling the rhetoric of the leave campaign. The TUC is warning trade unionists that many employment rights and jobs would be put at risk if the UK votes for exit.

Labour In For Britain has been launched by Labour to campaign for the UK to remain in the European Union. The campaign is being led by Alan Johnson. In October 2015, he made a speech outlining the case for Labour supporters and trade unionists to vote to remain within the European Union.

UK Economy and Europe

In the speech he highlighted the importance of having access to the European markets:

“Being part of the European Union makes our economy stronger... Today, half of everything we sell to the rest of the world we sell to Europe ... Yes, we are selling increasingly to emerging markets, but our exports to the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) countries accounted for 8.5% of goods exported last year compared to the 45% that went to the EU. We can and should trade with both – we need not be presented with a false choice.

There is also the additional investment in the economy: “And we receive an average of £26.5 billion of investment into Britain every year from EU countries. Companies from outside Europe invest here because they see Britain as a gateway to the rest of the European Union.”.

Employment

Alan Johnson went on to highlight the employment that depends on our connection with Europe:

“3.1 million jobs in the UK are linked to our trade with Europe and that a further 790,000 could be created by 2030 through opening up European markets in tourism, digital services and energy.”.

There are also benefits for consumers:

“The average family saves around £450 a year due to lower prices, achieved through the strength we derive from being part of the biggest consumer market in the world.”.

Stronger Voice in the World

He also pointed to the political benefits for the UK of being in the European Union:

“Being part of the European Union gives us a stronger voice in the world. It is because of our position in Europe that we were able to deliver EU-wide sanctions against Russia; to help bring Iran to the negotiating table on its nuclear program; and to lead on issues such as climate change and international development.”.

Tackling Crime

Crime and the impact of free movement of individuals across Europe are often controversial but Alan Johnson makes an important point:

“Membership of the EU provides an integrated approach that enhances our ability to tackle crimes that know no borders with a response that is equally unconstrained. The European Arrest Warrant gives us the ability to keep our streets and homes safer.”.

Workers' Rights

Workers' rights, and the important employment rights that we have gained from Europe, will be a central part of the Labour In For Britain campaign platform:

“Minimum paid leave, rights for agency workers, paid maternity and paternity leave, equal pay, anti-discrimination laws, and protection for the workforce when companies change ownership: these are all in place thanks to our membership of the EU. These protections need to be strengthened rather than weakened.”.

The UK in Europe

The UK is in a strong position in terms of its position in the European Union:

“We have all the benefits of the single market, but we are not part of the Euro: we have free movement ourselves through Europe without being part of the Schengen border-free area; we have retained our rebate and have ensured that we can't be out-voted by Eurozone countries against our interests... That's not being run by Europe. That's making Europe work for us.”.

Isolation is not the Answer

“The only way in which we can shape the future and control our destiny is by keeping our economy strong and remaining influential across the world. Isolation is not the answer. We are a strong, prosperous country, but we are not so dominant that we can simply dictate to others the terms of any deal. We need to use our strength wisely, and magnify it, where necessary, through the European Union.”.

Looking to the Future

“Of course the EU needs to be reformed. The institution that doesn't require reform does not exist. But reform is a process, not an event ... This referendum will be about hope for the future. Labour's campaign will focus remorselessly on demonstrating that being a member of the European Union is in our national interest and that national interest underpins our personal, individual interests: a stronger economy providing more jobs and lower prices; stronger security, leading to safer streets; stronger social protection, making Britain fairer; and a stronger voice in the world, helping Britain to shape our global future.”.



All quotes are taken from a speech made by Alan Johnson MP, Leader of the Labour In For Britain campaign, on 20 October 2015

The referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union will take place on 23 June 2016. This will be a crucial decision in shaping the future political and economic framework.

The decision on how we vote must be based on what is going to be in the best interests of workers. We cannot afford to let our votes be swayed by myths peddled by sections of the Euro-sceptic press.

The European project was launched to bring an end to the wars and conflict in Europe through promoting a spirit of international political and economic co-operation. We, in the Trade Union Movement, have long been supporters of this European project.

Do we agree with every aspect of how the European project has turned out or with everything that happens in the European Union? No, but we need to decide whether we remain in or leave the European Union based on the full facts.

Usdaw members have benefited from many of the employment rights that have come from Europe. Europe has delivered statutory rights to paid annual leave, breaks, maximum working hours, workforce consultation, protection against discrimination and equal treatment for part-time workers. In the UK, the Conservatives in recent years have rolled back on employment protections but they have not, so far, been able to do the same to the rights that we get from Europe.

The UK economy relies on access to the European market for trade. Many British jobs depend on businesses operating inside the European Single Market.

The European Union enables Europe to act in a co-ordinated manner on important global issues. Our membership of the European Union ensures that Britain continues to be a major political player on the world stage.

There must be real concerns that if the UK leaves the European Union key employment rights and large numbers of jobs will be put at risk.

In the debate on Europe, it is important that the Trade Union Movement speaks out on behalf of workers and addresses the concerns of ordinary working people. Usdaw welcomes Labour In For Britain as this will be a distinctive Labour voice separate from any all-party campaign.

From now until the referendum vote, Usdaw resolves to actively campaign to urge Usdaw members to vote for the UK to remain in the European Union.



Usdaw

*Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers*



Improving workers' lives – Winning for members



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