

June and July Report from Claude Moraes MEP



Dear Friends

Please find below my Report to you for June and July as one of your Labour MEPs in London.

If you are receiving this report for the first time, it's a monthly round-up of key developments in the EU, a report of my work on your behalf, and a new section - 'Labour Party News and Opposition Watch'. This answers the question I'm frequently asked - what are the Tories, Lib Dems, UKIP, BNP and others doing and saying in Europe on behalf of the UK and how do we take them on? It's information you will not see elsewhere.

I would be grateful for your feedback.

Best wishes

Claude Moraes MEP
Labour MEP for London

Introduction - EU protecting consumers, dealing with monopoly power

In June and July, the EU stepped up its debate, regulation and legislation to continue to be on the side of the consumer.

Bankers' Bonuses Cut – the McCarthy Report

As we all know, the financial crisis of the last few years was the result of fundamental flaws in the banking system, amongst other factors.

A number of consumer-led initiatives are being taken by the European Parliament. For example, new rules introduced by MEPs will ensure that bankers' bonuses are restricted. Banks are now required to defer up to 60% of bonuses for up to five years and in addition must ensure that half of any bonus is paid in a way that is linked to a bank's performance, for example in shares.

The cut in bankers' bonuses is an EU project which speeds up and takes the initiative on a series of national debates within the EU. It was a Labour MEP, Arlene McCarthy, whose report produced this important step, which, had it been left to Member States, would have been more confused, diluted and possibly led to weaker national policies on the banks.

Read more: [Bankers' Bonuses Cut](#)

Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP/Swift) and the European Parliament post-Lisbon Treaty

A data sharing agreement between the EU and United States designed to track terrorists' financial transactions has been re-opened by the European Parliament because millions of bank details of EU citizens were being transferred without adequate safeguards.

This has been an unprecedented use of the European Parliament's increased powers under the Lisbon Treaty.

I worked with other groups in the European Parliament as the Socialists & Democrats spokesperson on Justice and Home Affairs to ensure a better deal, one that strikes a balance between effective security and civil liberties and one that demonstrates the new democratic powers of the European Parliament after the Lisbon Treaty.

Read more: [Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme](#)

Europe-wide consumer rights package

We all know how expensive it can be to use a mobile phone in Europe. And we all know how easy it can be to over-spend by accident. Mobile phone companies have used their monopoly power to over-charge.

MEPs have addressed these problems.

We have introduced new rules that reduce and govern roaming charges, an important result for Londoners in Europe. From on July 1st, prices for mobile calls in Europe have a maximum tariff of €0.39 per minute for calls made and €0.15 per minute for calls received. Receiving a voice mail message in Europe is also now free of charge.

From preferential mobile phone rates, to air travel compensation and reduced cost health care, the European Parliament is on your side.

Socialists and Democrats MEPs including Labour MEPs have been central to creating a series of consumer rights which you can read more about at this link

Read more: [Consumer Rights in Europe](#)

Gallo Report – the consumer, the internet, file-sharing and copyright

Labour MEPs want to strike the right balance between protecting artists and those who access their work on the internet.

The Gallo Report has become a major and controversial legislative report in

the European Parliament. I chair the Working Group on this issue for the Socialists & Democrats group, and there are very complex issues and strong opinions on exactly where products on the internet should be free and how this interacts with copyright law. The EU is involved because we are dealing with multinational corporations and an internet which clearly crosses national borders and national laws.

I will keep you informed. For more information see this link.

Read more: [The Gallo Report](#)

Refugees in Europe – the controversial issue of resettlement

Currently, EU Member States contribute far less to the resettlement of refugees than other developed countries. Here the issue is not about people seeking asylum legally or through clandestine entry, but the simple issue of how the UN organises the resettlement of relatively small numbers of full status refugees in other parts of the world. The world's developing countries take the largest burden by far of such refugees.

I am spokesperson for this issue in our Group, which reached the Parliament in June and July. Of a total of 747,000 refugees worldwide in 2008, the EU resettled only 4,378. This represents 6.7% of the total resettled, with only 10 individual EU Member States taking part in resettlement schemes.

Under a new draft law, EU Member States welcoming refugees could receive a financial incentive.

I have written a report on this issue that is designed to ensure that this proposal is adequately funded. Member States that resettle refugees will receive €6,000 per person for the first year, €5,000 in the second and €4,000 thereafter. In addition, Labour MEPs want to see priority go to the most vulnerable - children and women at risk of violence, people with serious medical conditions, and survivors of violence or torture.

Parliamentary Questions

As you know, MEPs have the right to ask Parliamentary Questions (PQs) to hold the European Council (the Member States) and the European Commission to account for what they do and say in the EU. This is a regular opportunity for me to raise questions on your behalf from industry and energy policy to the environment, human rights and international development.

Since my last report, some questions that I've asked are below. One was on the London 2012 Olympics and how the European Commission is planning to support the Games in an overall European strategy for sport. The other related to the quality of water in the river Thames. The full text of both of these questions can be found on my website

Read more: [Parliamentary Questions](#)

Labour Party News and Opposition Watch

This has been an intense couple of months for the Labour Party – adjusting to Opposition and preparing to vote for our new Leader and our candidate for London Mayor.

As Deputy Leader of the EPLP, I was responsible for inviting all the Labour leadership candidates to speak to the EPLP and the large expatriate Labour membership in Brussels. Four of the candidates came to the EPLP and made their case in detail – David Miliband, Ed Miliband, Andy Burnham and Ed Balls. Labour MEPs have the same voting power as Labour MPs in the electoral college for Labour Leader.

For the London Mayor selection I am supporting Ken Livingstone.

Read more: [A serious selection, and a serious candidate for London](#)

For the Labour leadership, I have nominated David Miliband. For my other preferences I will be voting for Diane Abbott and Ed Balls. I have worked and campaigned with David for many years culminating with his work as a pro-European Foreign Secretary in recent months. There are a whole number of reasons why MPs and MEPs will support a candidate. Amongst many reasons, I believe that David Miliband will be the strongest candidate to take on the new coalition government. Please give me your feedback and views.

Read more: [Rainbow News Issue 1](#)

Opposition Watch - June

Former UKIP MEP Tom Wise, says he will 'name and shame' other UKIP MEPs when released from prison for defrauding the European Parliament.

The Conservatives vote against lifting the blockade on Gaza, against Conservative party policy. Their Foreign Affairs spokesperson, Charles Tannock MEP (London) calls the blockade 'legitimate'.

The Conservatives vote against a number of measures on food labelling legislation. They also vote against 'traffic light labelling'. The Conservatives are also completely split on mandatory country of origin labelling, going against the coalition agreement.

BNP - Nick Griffin MEP is elected vice-President of the Alliance of European National Movements pan-European party, cementing the BNP's links to fascist and racist parties in Europe.

Opposition Watch - July

The BNP has joined a European delegation of far right parties to Japan, meeting a Japanese extremist group which denies Japanese atrocities during World War II.

The Tories vote to exempt domestic bus and coach services from passenger rights legislation, in an attempt to delay better rights for disabled passengers for up to 15 years, and vote against obligatory labelling of GMO-fed animal produce.

Meetings

A cross-section of my meetings in May, June and July

May

21 May – Speaker, Ealing and West London CLPs General Election thank you and all members meeting with Virendra Sharma MP and David Miliband MP

June

01 June – LIBE (Justice and Home Affairs) Committee Meeting
02 June - Chairing, Transatlantic Minority Political Leadership Conference
02 June – IMCO (Internal Markets and Consumer Protection) Committee Meeting
03 June - IMCO Committee Meeting
07 June – TULO London Meeting (Unison)
08 June – Chairing, S&D Advisors Meeting
08 June – EPLP Meeting
08 June – Chairing, S&D Taskforce on Copyright
08 June – Chairing, Working Group on Citizen’s Europe
08 June – EPLP Leadership Meeting with David Miliband
08 June – Chairing, EU Briefing on Detention of Vulnerable Asylum Seekers and Irregular Migrants
09 June – Chairing, S&D Anti-Discrimination Legislative Hearing
10 June - LIBE Committee Meeting
10 June – Chairing, S&D Roma Seminar
10 June – LIBE Committee Meeting on Tackling Human Trafficking
14 June – Group Meeting in Strasbourg
15 June – S&D Co-Ordinators Meeting in Strasbourg
21 June – EPLP Leadership Meeting with Andy Burnham
21 June – EPLP Leadership Meeting with Ed Miliband
23 June - LIBE Committee Meeting
23 June - IMCO Committee Meeting
24 June - LIBE Committee Meeting
24 June - IMCO Committee Meeting
30 June – Chairing, S&D Hearing on Asylum

July

06 July – EPLP Officers Meeting
09 July - Oxford & District Labour Party Meeting
12 July - LIBE Committee Meeting and Meeting with Commissioner Malmstrom on the European Protection Order on violence against women
12 July - IMCO Committee Meeting

13 July - LIBE Committee Meeting
13 July - IMCO Committee Meeting