



Marina Yannakoudakis

Conservative MEP for London



LATEST NEWS

www.marinayannakoudakis.com

March 2012

DEFENDING LONDON BUSINESSES

In the heart of the docklands, just yards away from the runway of City Airport, is Tate & Lyle's Silvertown sugar refinery. The refinery opened in 1878 and has survived the regeneration of the docklands area, bombing by the Luftwaffe and the threat of nationalisation. Boats still moor at the same dock and unload cane sugar to be processed at the plant as they have done for more than a century. But this could all be under threat because of inflexible EU trading restrictions. EU rules which were meant to improve the lot of sugar farmers in developing countries are now penalising sugar cane refiners such as Tate & Lyle. The company has already been forced to lay off 30 staff and stop weekend production. Marina has been lobbying the European Commission for an exemption to the EU's preferential access rules, so that Tate & Lyle can source sugar cane in the quantities that it needs for its London refinery. Marina hopes to make the Commission see sense on sugar cane imports, but as is so often the case, the EU is sticking to redundant, nonsensical rules which have lost sight of reality.



GIVE ME SOME SUGAR: On a visit to Tate & Lyle's Silvertown refinery in May 2011

Tate & Lyle is not the only high-profile London company under threat from EU inflexibility. Marina was shocked when she heard that Prudential, one of the UK's oldest and best-known insurers, was planning to leave London for Hong



YES WE CANE: Lobbying European Commission with Tate & Lyle

Kong because of stringent new EU rules. A draft EU directive called "Solvency II" will impose stronger risk management requirements for insurers. The one-size-fits-all style of the directive is not appropriate for the British model and there is a danger that British insurers will vote with their feet. Conservative MEPs are now moving amendments to protect the specific nature of annuity pension investments in Britain and prevent an exodus by companies like Prudential.

London's financial services industry seems to be under constant attack from the European Union. The biggest threat is from the proposed EU Tobin Tax. Marina has opposed this tax which could damage the City of London,

"This pointless levy (EU Tobin Tax) would lose more money than it raises...it would be both a tax on pensioners and a jobs killer."

Marina in City AM, 10 November

Europe's leading financial centre. When Sweden introduced its own Tobin Tax in 1984, the financial services industry left Stockholm. Marina will not let that happen here. (Read Marina's article on the EU Tobin Tax: <http://bit.ly/zSn4TH>)

SECURING EU FUNDING FOR LONDON

Marina is fighting to ensure that London gets its fair share of EU funding. The capital currently receives grants worth over half a billion pounds mainly to fund regional development projects. Marina recently visited sites across London which have won EU grants. She visited the Royal Albert Basin, where EU funding is helping transform the Royal Docks into a world-class business centre. Marina also went to the new site of Ravensbourne College of Design and Communications where a new eco-friendly site in Greenwich was built with EU funds. The college will train the next generation of design and media practitioners. She also saw the site of the new Greenwich to Docklands cable car which has applied for a £8 million grant. The cable car will create over 300 new jobs and help regenerate parts of Newham and Greenwich adding to the positive effect of the Olympic legacy in those boroughs.



EU CROSSING: Greenwich to Docklands Cable Car



Follow Marina on Twitter at: @MarinaMEP



Join Marina on Facebook at: <http://facebook.com/MarinaMEP>



Marina's YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/MarinaMEP>

Published monthly by email. Sign up at: marina.yannakoudakis@europarl.europa.eu or online.

EU RULES DAMAGE WOMEN AND BUSINESS

The EU has a role to play in promoting gender equality such as tackling domestic violence and strengthening the fight against honour killings and Female Genital Mutilation. The UK is already ahead of the rest of the EU in some areas, for example in the criminalisation of forced marriages. A European Parliament report recently covered these issues, but unfortunately it also included references to legislative quotas for women in the boardroom and the EU Maternity Leave Directive. Marina opposed European Parliament proposals for 20 weeks compulsory paid maternity leave and instigated an impact assessment which revealed the cost to the UK economy to be £2.5 billion a year. Marina believes quotas in the boardroom to be patronising and opposes all legislation on this issue at the EU.

“Quotas are both damaging to women and business and are socially regressive,” said Marina.

Marina also opposed EU meddling in the pensions and social security measures in the name of equality. She spoke out against a European Court of Justice ruling banning insurers from applying different premiums according to customers' gender which has seen car insurance prices for women sky-rocket.



WOMEN'S DAY: Speaking at a debate on Equal Pay for Equal Work

AROUND LONDON

Marina has been travelling around her constituency meeting local Conservatives and helping them with their activities or explaining more about how she is defending UK and London interests in the European Parliament.



BATTERSEA: Supporting local Conservatives with Jane Ellison MP

Since her last newsletter, Marina has helped constituency associations with their campaign activities in Westminster North, Putney, Hendon, Ealing Southall, Battersea, Lewisham, Streatham and Chipping Barnet.

She also made presentations on her work in Brussels and Strasbourg to association members in Old Bexley & Sidcup and Ruislip, Northwood & Pinner. Marina took part in a panel discussion with Executive Editor of *The Times* Daniel Finkelstein at

a fundraising event for the Leyton & Wanstead Conservative Association.

Marina also made a speech on “The Future of the EU” to members of the Kingston University Conservative Association. As a former Chairman of the Federation of Conservative students at Brunel University, Marina believes in the importance of encouraging student politics.



HANDY IN HENDON: With Councillor Hugh Rayner



QUEEN OF KINGSTON: Speaking to University Conservatives

The annual conference of the Conservative Women's Organisation included a session on women candidates where Marina spoke about her work as an MEP and why she decided to pursue public office. She talked about her journey as a candidate and how she copes with the work/life balance of being a Member of the European Parliament.

“I support the valuable work of the CWO,” Marina said, “and hope that it encourages more talented and qualified women to run for office.”



CWO: Addressing Conservative Women's Organisation Conference

SAVE THE DATE

Marina will be holding a series of events in the coming months in London and Brussels. These events are open to the general public and all her supporters are cordially invited to attend:

10 May: Event on the health effects of alcohol, European Parliament, Brussels

28 September: Event on Diabetes, Europe House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3EU

7 November: Event on preventing child abuse with National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC), European Parliament, Brussels

ICELAND MUST PAY £195 MILLION IT OWES LONDON



On 14 March, Marina voted against a resolution recommending Iceland's accession to the EU. The resolution states that money owed by Iceland's Landsbanki after the collapse of Icesave “must not be an obstacle” to the country's application to join the EU. Marina said “It's unacceptable that the Icelandic government refuses to pay minimum compensation to UK-based depositors including 6 London councils, TFL and the Metropolitan Police.”

If you would like Marina to attend a London event email: marina.yannakoudakis@europarl.europa.eu