



Marina Yannakoudakis

Conservative MEP for London



YEAR IN REVIEW

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MESSAGE FROM MARINA

It's safe to say that 2011 has been a bad year for Europe. On 1 January Estonia joined the euro and I'm sure that the people and politicians of this tiny Baltic state have spent the rest of the year kicking themselves as we witnessed a catalogue of disasters for the single currency. We have seen a £65 billion bailout package for Portugal, the downgrade of Ireland's banking debt to junk status, the breakup of Belgian-French bank Dexia, the downfall of Silvio Berlusconi's government and the almost complete collapse of the Greek economic and political establishment. And what is the solution of the Brussels mandarins to this catalogue of disasters? Why, more Europe of course!



I've spent 2011 against fighting plots for EU taxes and fiscal federalism. I've battled against the EU Tobin tax that would harm the City of London and the prosperity of my constituents. I've called for a smaller, leaner Europe with a smaller, leaner budget to match. Have I got what I want? Of course not! But just because we haven't won the battle doesn't mean we haven't won the war! I'll continue to fight for a better deal for Britain and my London constituents in Europe in 2012 and beyond.

Marina

THE YEAR IN LONDON



MAYOR IN THE COMMUNITY:
Boris and Marina

BACKING BORIS & LONDON CANDIDATES

Marina has been campaigning for Conservative council candidates all year from Harrow to Redbridge and Bromley to Islington. Knocking on doors can really make a difference and Marina has spent many a weekend helping local activists canvassing and leafleting to ensure that the Conservatives gain as many council seats as possible.

Of course the big elections of next year are the London mayoral and assembly elections. Marina has been out and about London delivering Boris surveys as well as campaigning with GLA candidates Naomi Newstead and Andy Hemsted. Marina has also attended a number of fundraisers for the Back Boris campaign as well as taking part in telecanvassing for the mayor at this year's Conservative Party Conference.

"Getting Boris re-elected is the number one priority for London," said Marina. "I shall be out on the doorsteps until May to ensure a victory that will allow the mayor to continue to grow the London economy while keeping council tax low."

SAYING NO TO AV

Marina campaigned across London for a "no" vote in the electoral reform referendum on 5 May. It was crucial to ensure that Londoners who supported the first-past-the-post system went out to vote against AV. The capital was one of the areas where support for the alternative vote system was strongest but in the end Londoners rejected AV 61% to 39%. Across the country 68% said no to AV.



FIRST PAST THE POST: Marina & Hampstead No to AV campaign



HARROW BOY: MP Bob Blackman campaigning with Marina



Marina is now on Twitter.
Follow her at @MarinaMEP



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

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THE YEAR IN BRUSSELS

...AND UNFORTUNATELY STRASBOURG

£2.5 BILLION BABY: THE EU MATERNITY LEAVE DIRECTIVE

In July 2010 the European Parliament gold-plated Commission proposals for a revision to the EU Maternity Leave directive. Parliament's amendments called for a fully-paid maternity leave of at least 20 weeks (as opposed to the original proposal of 18) and a two-week paternity leave. At that time Marina warned that the plans would actually damage the job prospects of young women, with small businesses in particular thinking twice before employing them. The proposals have been estimated at costing £2.5 billion to the UK taxpayer. Nevertheless this



NO TO WASTE: Blocking the directive

over-reaching, expensive and unnecessary proposal sailed through the parliament thanks to some Labour MEPs. Marina was able to help block the proposals by asking for an assessment of the directive which allowed the Member States, including the UK government, to leave the bill in legislative limbo. The Maternity Leave Directive is not right for women, it's not right for business and it's not right for EU member governments in a time of economic crisis. "As a mother and a small-business woman I know that 20 weeks of fully-paid compulsory maternity leave and 2 weeks fully-paid paternity and breastfeeding breaks of three hours a day are totally unrealistic. What the European economy really needs is to be more flexible and more competitive." said Marina.

PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURISM AMONG WOMEN

There is so much untapped business potential in the UK and the EU. David Cameron has pointed that "If women were setting up new businesses at the same rate as men we would have 150,000 more start-ups in the UK each year." This is one of the reasons Marina spearheaded the issue of female entrepreneurship through the European Parliament. Also as a mother and a businesswoman, Marina knows exactly how hard setting up a small business can be. Marina's report calls for fair access for women to start-up and expansion grants, and targeting women with the right information about how to launch a business. She believes that this, along with seminars and training sessions, can help produce a new generation of women entrepreneurs. "Many women have to juggle their own aspirations to succeed alongside their commitment to their family," said Marina. "Yet in spite of all the constraints and restrictions upon them, women have proved to be more than capable in the workplace."



I'M IN: With entrepreneur Theo Paphitis

PROTECTING CHILDREN

The EU needs to act to combat the appalling sexual abuse of children. Marina has worked on a European Parliament report which protects children from sexual abuse, blocks access to child pornography and criminalises the sexual grooming of children. Her proposals were based on the "3 Ps" of Prevention, Protection and Prosecution. Marina supported the blocking and deletion of child pornography content online. She believes that everything should be done to stop people accessing illegal images, including blocking. "We need to ensure a zero-tolerance approach to child pornography," said Marina. Marina has organised a number of events with the NSPCC and other child-protection charities.



With Dr. Arnon Bentovim, of child protection charity the Lucy Faithfull Foundation

FIGHTING DEMENTIA

Over 500,000 suffer from Alzheimer's disease in the UK. Marina believes that research is one of the areas where the EU can have a positive impact; she has proposed sharing best practices in the treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's and other dementias and to pool resources in researching and developing possible cures. Marina, who serves as Conservative Health Spokesman in the European Parliament, is committed to finding new ways to tackle Alzheimer's. She has worked on a parliament report on the disease where she consulted widely with Alzheimer's groups in the UK. Marina made a number of recommendations on the rights of patients, family and carers as well as the best ways to raise awareness of dementia. Marina has held a number of events on Alzheimer's in Brussels and in London. "Increasing awareness of dementia can help with early diagnosis, which can help lessen the effects of the disease as well as reducing healthcare costs," said Marina.

 **Marina would like to wish all her constituents a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year** 

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