



Marina Yannakoudakis
CONSERVATIVE MEP FOR LONDON



LATEST NEWS

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WOMEN LEAD THE WAY ON NEW BUSINESSES

WOMEN often lead the way in setting up new businesses across Europe, Marina heard at a workshop she hosted in Brussels.

The need for flexibility about working hours and childcare is often the inspiration for women to set up their own enterprises.

Marina chaired the discussion at the European Parliament organised by the UK Federation of Small Business (FSB) on the changing role of women in the workplace and how to encourage female entrepreneurs.

The workshop, called What Women Really Want, highlighted a significant difference between the number of female entrepreneurs in different European countries for many reasons, not least culture and tradition.

The audience heard that legislation in the USA has helped ensure women are treated equally when applying for finance and other support to set up a business and a Women's Business Ownership Act, similar to the one in the USA, was proposed.

Tina Sommer President of the European Small Business Alliance said women need positive role models to show them they can succeed in business, while Martina Murphy of the Federation of Small Business said female employers are often the most open to flexible arrangements for their own employees.

Victoria Frankenius related her troubling experiences



THEY MEAN BUSINESS: Marina with Martina Murphy, Andrea Ceskova, Tina Sommer and Victoria Frankenius

as a female entrepreneur in Sweden and said that targeting by the unions had forced her to close her business. Also present were European Conservative and Reformist MEPs Martin Callanan (UK) and Andrea Ceskova (Czech Rep).

Marina said: "Evidence has shown that women starting up in business will provide an immediate contribution to the economy. Given the current economic situation, it would be of great benefit both to Europe and the UK if more women were able to start up their own business."

No **RED** traffic light label for butter and milk!

TRAFFIC light labelling on food should not apply to natural products like butter and milk, says Marina.

She has been working with Struan Stevenson MEP on ways to set out clearer and more consistent food labelling rules, which will enable consumers to make healthy, well-informed choices, while limiting the administrative and financial burden on business.

In June, MEPs backed the European Commission proposal that quantities of fat, saturates, sugar, salt, and energy, must be indicated on the front of food

packs. But Marina does not want the system to work in favour of imitation foods, which tend to be inferior in quality and use artificial ingredients. That is why she wants an exemption for natural products.

Rules on country of origin labelling will also be tightened to give consumers explicit information about the sources of key ingredients. Marina said: "It's our right to know where the meat we buy originated from. Is British beef really from the UK?"



VOTE WINNERS: Marina with Emma Bailie, Charles Tannock, Gio Spinella and Richard Milestone in Frognal

Campaigning & constituencies

IT seems no time since the General Election – but Marina has been busy campaigning again in the by-elections for Camden’s **Frognal and Fitzjohn** Ward and Kensington and Chelsea’s **Holland** Ward. She was joined by fellow London MEP Charles Tannock and activists Emma Bailie and Richard Milestone.

Gio Spinella, who won Frognal and Fitzjohn with a thumping majority, said: “We had an interesting time talking to the voters and getting our message across. Even with the General Election only two months behind them voters were interested to hear what we had to say and keen to meet Marina.”

Rock Fielding-Mellen was elected in Holland Ward.

Marina also visited and spoke to **Beckenham** Conservative Association in July, discussing her work at the Parliament.

Fighting sex abuse and exploitation of children

MARINA has been working hard on a European Commission proposal to combat sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography.

As “opinion drafts person” for the European Parliament’s Women’s Rights and Gender Equality Committee, Marina is currently drafting legislation to stop child pornography online and prevent the identification of victims.

Marina said: “The best interests of the child should be of paramount concern in all legislation.”

If you have something to contribute on this complex and sensitive issue, please get in touch.

Keeping an eye on testing for motorists

REGULAR eye tests for drivers have a major impact on road safety – yet half of British motorists over 50 do not visit the optician as often as they should.

The shocking figures were revealed at a debate held by the European Federation of Optical Industry (EUROM) at the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

Marina discussed the importance of drivers of all ages having the right eyesight for safe driving.

She commented: “It is important for drivers to have a good standard of eyesight, but we should aim to find common ground without having to resort to compulsory re-tests for drivers over a certain age.”

A YEAR OF HARD WORK IN EUROPE

IN her first year as a MEP Marina has made a noticeable impact, working alongside fellow London representatives Charles Tannock and Syed Kamall. She would like to thank all the people who have worked with her over the year.

ON MATERNITY LEAVE: She has taken a stand against proposals to extend maternity leave to 20 weeks on full pay. This would have a severe impact on small businesses and limit flexibility. The FSB estimated this would cost the UK an extra £2.4 billion per year. Marina requested an impact assessment be carried out by the European Parliament before it is voted on by MEPs.

ON FAKE MEDICINES: As a member of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI), Marina has been working on a directive to make it harder for



TOPICAL: Marina debating the maternity directive with Swedish Green MEP Carl Schlyter for BBC World’s *On The Record*.

counterfeit medicines to enter the market and to give more information about medicines to patients.

ON ORGAN DONATIONS: Marina made sure regulations on the quality and safety of transplants applied to live as well as deceased donations. Marina proposed an amendment which increased the original scope of living donations provided they are without payment. This proposal was passed.

LEADING DEBATE: Marina has hosted a number of debates, including on the effects of passive smoking on children and the role of women in business.