

# Marina Yannakoudakis



Conservative MEP for London



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# SCRAP STRASBOURG



■ £928 million is the cost of 2 seats for the European Parliament over 7 years

■ Once a month 766 MEPs, 3,000 staff and 25 trucks full of documents decamp from Brussels in Belgium to Strasbourg in France to sit there for just three days. Proposals setting out a roadmap towards a single seat, drafted by Conservative MEP Ashley Fox, were approved by 483 votes to 141 this month. Conservatives are delivering on their pledge to put an end to EU waste as we take a step closer to ending the monthly “Strasbourg Circus” which costs hundreds of millions a year. *Marina’s speech:* [http://youtu.be/9orlyz6V\\_iE](http://youtu.be/9orlyz6V_iE)

## TORY MEPS DELIVER

This month Conservative MEPs have:

- Delivered David Cameron’s deal to cut the EU’s long-term budget. UKIP voted against.
- Authored proposals which take a major step towards scrapping the notorious Strasbourg “travelling circus”. UKIP abstained.
- Secured millions in EU research funding for British universities. UKIP voted against.
- Voted against plans for greater harmonisation of EU defence policy and military planning. Lib Dem MEPs voted in favour.
- Opposed Socialist-backed plan for EU “social police”.

## EU BUDGET CUT



■ MEPs hard at work

The European Parliament finally agreed the EU’s long-term budget this month after a long period of wrangling. The deal, which was originally driven through by David Cameron with fellow leaders in Brussels last February, marks the first ever cut in the EU’s long-term budget. The deal also protects the British rebate, worth £3 billion a year and does not allow the EU to give itself new tax-raising powers, such as the proposed EU Financial Transactions Tax. Attempts by some MEPs to renegotiate the Cameron deal, including Labour allies, have failed and citizens will now benefit from a £13bn cut or 3.4% cut on the current framework. Marina and fellow Conservative MEPs voted against the parliament’s budget deal for 2014 because it did not cut far enough. In her speech, Marina said: “We must keep cutting back EU expenditure until the EU is truly accountable, economical and effective.” See: <http://youtu.be/RxV4DWe4iyU> The cut comes not a moment too soon as misspending and waste of EU funds is getting worse, with the Court of Auditors refusing for the 19th year in a row to grant EU accounts a clean bill of health. The so-called “error rate” has even increased from 3.9% to 4.8%, the 4th increase in succession.

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# QUOTA LAW PASSESSES

## SIKH FEDERATION



■ Debating quotas with Labour's Mary Honeyball on BBC Daily Politics

■ In spite of stiff opposition from Marina and Conservative MEPs, the European Parliament voted in favour of plans to impose a compulsory female quota of 40 per cent on company boardrooms. The new rules come with swingeing sanctions for firms that fail to comply, including total liquidation. All British MEPs voted against the inclusion of sanctions which would wind-up companies, but the penalties were included nonetheless. Marina will now be helping the British government to block the measures as they are taken forward to the next round of negotiations. Marina said on the EU plans: "Quotas might address the symptoms but they do nothing to treat the disease itself." See Marina debating this issue on BBC Daily Politics: <http://bbc.in/1hUwKpL>



■ Marina attended an event in Brussels organised by the Sikh Federation (UK) to discuss challenges to the Sikh identity across Europe, especially the experiences of turban-wearing Sikhs in certain European countries, such as France and Belgium. The conference discussed, in particular, the proper implementation of the EU Regulation on searches of the Sikh turbans at airports.

## MALALA'S PRIZE



■ Conservatives in the European Parliament nominated children's education champion Malala Yousafzai for the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for freedom of thought, which she received in Strasbourg this month. Malala is a Pakistani education activist who was shot last October on a school bus, before being moved to the UK for life-saving treatment. She has since become a global figure speaking out in favour of women's rights and education rights. In her speech, she spoke not only about the education of girls, but also forced marriages, child trafficking and sexual and physical abuse, all problems which Marina is working to prevent. Marina was lucky enough to meet Malala and to congratulate her on her work.

# AROUND LONDON



With less than six months to go until the European and London Borough Council elections, Marina has been around London canvassing support and backing our local council candidates. But before May's elections there was a by-election to fight in Harrow-on-the-Hill. While the Conservative candidate Stephen Lewis narrowly lost, he received a positive response from residents on the doorsteps. Your London MEP was out in all weathers helping campaigning including in West Wickham ward (Bromley) and Northwick Park ward (Brent). She also attended a major fund-raising event organised by a number of London constituency associations where Foreign Secretary William Hague was the guest of honour.

## REMEMBRANCE



■ To mark Remembrance Day, Marina attended both the commemoration at City Hall led by Mayor Boris Johnson (pictured above; Marina with the Mayor of Croydon Yvette Hopley, Wandsworth Mayor Angela Graham and members of the The Coldstream Guards) and took part in the annual Remembrance Day service at Hendon war memorial where she laid a wreath alongside local MP Matthew Offord and the Mayor of Barnet Melvin Cohen.