



 UK Independence Party
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FORWORD

By UKIP Leader, Roger Knapman MEP

Dear voter

The UK Independence Party exists because none of the old political parties are prepared to accept that the real government of Britain is now in Brussels. Our purpose is to restore the authority for governing Britain to our elected parliament in Westminster – hardly an unreasonable position. To bring this about we must withdraw Britain from the European Union.

People sometimes tell me that UKIP is a single-issue party. The point is that the single issue of freeing Britain from the EU over-rides all others – no other issues can be properly addressed while we remain in the EU. For instance, we are no longer free to choose our own policy on asylum seekers because this is now subject to EU directives.

None of us in UKIP see ourselves as politicians. Our members are people from all backgrounds who feel deeply what the majority of British people feel – that it is not right to have our country run by institutions across the Channel. We are not anti-European; we just believe the best people to run Britain are the British, and this manifesto outlines our policies in the areas that are of most concern. It sets out our core values and explains our vision of a post-EU, deregulated, prosperous free-trading Britain.

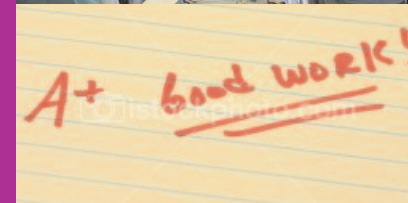
In the June 2004 euro-election, 2.6 million people voted UKIP – more than for the LibDems and more than half the numbers that voted Labour or Tory. This was an immense expression of confidence in an independent Britain, free from the European Union. It was a massive demonstration of distrust of the politicians of the old parties.

Please help us to take this success through to the general election. I urge you to vote for us and elect UKIP members to our national parliament. This will be the most spectacular milestone along the road to rebuilding a prosperous independent Britain.

A vote for any other party will be a wasted vote – it will merely continue our subservience to Brussels.

Yours sincerely

Roger Knapman MEP
Leader, UK Independence Party



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1. Introduction

WHY THE UK MUST LEAVE THE EU

The European Union is not just a trading arrangement. It is a political project designed to take control of all the main functions of national governments. The EU controls farming and fishing, its 'harmonised' rules about everything from food-labelling to taxation already account for 70% of our laws, and it is now setting up Euro-police, systems of justice, common defence and foreign policies even though its new Constitution has not yet been agreed.

This alien system of government is bad for our economy, our self-respect and our prosperity. Yet all the old political parties remain firmly committed to the EU. They still pretend that, despite the experience of 30 years of 'negotiating', it can be shaped in Britain's interests. But the EU is a one-way street towards European government. It is undemocratic, corrupt and unreformable. The only way for Britain is UKIP's way: we must leave.

Until this is done, individuals and our businesses will continue to be strangled by all the ill-conceived intrusive regulation, supposedly to protect our environment, to ensure our health and safety, to uphold all our 'rights' and, most recently, to protect us from terrorism.

UKIP'S AGENDA

Our message in last June's euro-election was simple: SAY NO to European Union. But we also say NO to the culture of paperwork, performance targets and spin, NO to uncontrolled immigration, NO to a society in which everything is regulated and dissent is suppressed by fear and political correctness. Only outside the EU will it be possible to begin rebuilding a Britain which is run for British people, not for career politicians and bureaucrats.

We are the party that will take on board the concerns of those in business, public services, local government, those in inner cities and rural areas, young and old. We are the party that speaks out and is prepared to confront our country's problems squarely and honestly.

UKIP is determined to bring government back within the reach and influence of those who are governed, at all levels, local and national. We shall replace Britain's membership of the EU with the sort of agreement over trade and co-operation that we thought we had signed up to when we first joined the European common market. We

shall restore responsibility for local affairs to local communities. And as a further measure to restore confidence in the democratic process and reconnect with people, we shall provide for the voters' right to call referendums at both local and national levels, where there is sufficient popular support for a particular policy.

UKIP is determined to turn back the culture of regulation, to strive for smaller government and to aim for a society in which the values – of trust, pride, individual responsibility, mutual respect and respect for our institutions – are no longer considered in need of 'modernisation'. It is these basic aims and values that underpin all UKIP policies.

THE INDEPENDENCE TIMETABLE

Formal withdrawal from the EU will be achieved by repealing the 1972 European Communities Act. This will release us from obligations under EU treaties and re-establish the precedence of UK law over EU law. We shall immediately stop paying into the EU budget and we shall resume full independent participation in international bodies such as the World Trade Organisation. It will be possible to scrap some EU rules like the working time directive without delay.

However, many other changes following independence will take more time. We would aim for a transition period of 2 years with the work managed by a cabinet committee, assisted by interested parties from all relevant sectors of the economy. One of its main tasks will be to govern the repeal or amendment of the mass of UK laws and statutory instruments that have originated in the EU, replacing them if necessary with laws that are in British interests alone. Other responsibilities of the transition committee will include the replacement of all the EU's 'common' policies, including farming and fishing, with our own arrangements.

2. The economy

TRADE

Continuing trade with the EU – also stronger trading links with non-EU countries.

When Britain leaves the EU, we can be confident of being able to continue trading with our European neighbours, hence there is no question of threats to the 3 million UK

jobs that are associated with exports to the EU. We consistently buy more from EU countries than we sell them so it would not be in their interests to disrupt this trade – they will still want to sell us their wine and cars. UKIP's preferred arrangement is for our EU trade to be conducted under bilateral agreements, similar to the agreements that the EU has reached with Switzerland and many other non-EU countries¹.

Our release from the EU's common external tariffs will also enable us to strengthen our trade relationships with countries outside the EU such as the countries of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), the Far East and our natural trading partners in the Commonwealth who share our language and business methods. At the same time we shall regain our independent seat in the World Trade Organisation which we shall use to counter any trade restrictions from the EU and to press for further expansion of global free trade. More open trade will also do far more to help less developed countries than any amount of aid or debt forgiveness.

There will also be a shared interest in co-operation with our EU neighbours over other areas of common concern. These include protection of the environment, and mutual arrangements for residence rights for their nationals who live in Britain and vice versa.

Britain does not need to be in the EU in order to trade and co-operate with it. We are the 4th largest world economy with massive trade and investment links worldwide. Freed from the EU straitjacket, an independent Britain will be in a strong position to develop these links further.

REGULATORY REFORM

Wholesale deregulation, particularly for small businesses.

Another substantial benefit that becomes possible on leaving the EU is the removal of a whole range of unnecessary and damaging regulations – a task that all recent British governments have promised but failed to undertake.

The EU treaties give the European Commission the task of creating regulations and directives in the areas of health and safety, the environment, employment and the single market.

And while the European Parliament provides a façade of democracy, our own national parliament merely rubber-stamps all the rules before they are passed into UK law,

often with extra 'gold-plating' by our own officials. This process has given rise to some 100,000 separate UK regulations since 1973, and few businesses and activities escape².

The destructive effect that this flood of regulations has on employment is obvious. Regulation inevitably adds costs to business, and most of all it damages the smaller businesses that provide most of British jobs. Employment regulations, in particular, interfere with job creation, especially part-time jobs which offer opportunities to women, the under-25s and older workers. The bureaucratic burden associated with regulation has also become intolerable, an obvious example being the records required to monitor compliance with the working time directive.

On withdrawal from the EU, the UK Independence Party will repeal or amend inappropriate regulations. In scrutinising each piece of legislation, the over-riding presumption will be that it should be scrapped unless there is an overwhelming case for its retention. And recognising the contribution that smaller employers make to the UK economy, we would pay particular attention to scrapping unnecessary rules for businesses employing fewer than 20 people. Freed from excessive rules and red tape, enterprise will thrive and this will lead to a marked improvement in private sector employment.

Some regulation is necessary in any civilised society, for instance to balance the rights (and responsibilities) of workers and employers. But laws must be respected, easily understood and sympathetically applied, otherwise they invite corruption and dishonesty.

UKIP insists that British law must be designed by our own elected representatives at national or local levels, using our own established democratic procedures. We must never again give away the power to make our laws to an autocratic machine over which we have no control.

THE BUDGET

While the other parties argue with each other about their detailed tax and spending plans, UKIP's policy of leaving the European Union will place us in the uniquely favourable position of having cash to spare. Britain currently pays around £12 billion per year to the EU (£30 million per day), and we intend to use this sum entirely on an increase in the state pension³.

Use our £12 billion per year contribution to the EU to raise state pensions by £25 per week for all pensioners.



There will also be large gains to the treasury in the form of higher tax revenue and reduced welfare spending as the private sector responds to UKIP's post-EU programme of deregulation and other reforms⁴. In addition, the savings claimed by the Labour and Conservative political parties from eliminating waste in public administration, estimated by them as £20 to £35 billion per year⁵, would equally be available to a UKIP government.

The problem is that this extra money will not be available until the above reforms are under way, and this will take time. The other parties will thus have difficulty in funding even their limited plans for tax cuts and extra spending. On the other hand, UKIP believes there is urgent need for immediate tax reduction in several areas and further expenditure, particularly on defence. To fund these short-term demands on the treasury, the UK Independence Party proposes deliberately to raise government borrowing.

Raise government borrowing to provide £30 billion per year for immediate tax cuts and focused spending.

This extra borrowing would push the UK budget deficit up to about 6% which is easily affordable at present, given that our national debt (about 40% of GDP) is much smaller than the debt/GDP of the United States, Japan and all other large developed nations including our larger EU neighbours. Such a policy would not be followed by the other political parties because it would be a gross violation of the EU's 'Stability Pact' rule that obliges governments to hold the deficit/GDP ratio below 3% of GDP.

Rather than viewing such increased borrowing in a negative light, we should see it as a short-term investment. It will be repaid when significant deregulation and tax reform results in a healthier economy which yields higher future revenues for the treasury⁶.

TAXATION

Wholesale reform of taxation is not just wise policy. It is essential. For the average earner, the reward from one pound's worth of extra work is now only 45p of purchasing value after paying income tax, national insurance contributions and VAT. All taxation reduces productive activity and we are reaching the point at which further increases in tax rates will yield no more revenue.

Taxes also need drastic simplification. The whole system has become impossibly complicated as successive governments have sought more ways to raise revenue while attempting to keep voters on side by multiplying the numbers of reliefs and allowances. Because of the high

cost of administering this unwieldy system, the government has been progressively shifting the task of assessment and collection on to the private sector. Individuals and businesses, particularly small ones, need self-assessment, VAT returns and all the other tax-related bureaucracy no more than they need punitive levels of taxation.

Comprehensive reform of taxation is a long term project. There is, however, an urgent need for some tax reduction and we would immediately:

Cut council taxes by a half for all householders, not just pensioners.

Scrap the 10% income tax bracket, removing another 2.5 million people from tax altogether.
Rescue pension funds by reinstating the tax credit.

Raise the threshold for inheritance tax to £500,000.

Taken together, we estimate that the cost of these changes would be £25 billion per year which would initially be funded by borrowing as proposed above.

In the longer term, UKIP would aim for substantial simplification all round and a lower overall tax burden. We would replace VAT with a sales tax payable at the wholesale point and, since national insurance contributions are just income tax under a different name, we would combine these into income tax. We are sympathetic to proposals for a 'flat tax' (a uniform rate on all income above allowances and on companies) as has now been adopted in a number of countries including ten in Eastern Europe. The experience in all cases has been that tax revenue falls initially because the flat rate is lower than average rate that it replaces, but revenue then rises after about 2 years as the reform stimulates economic activity and discourages evasion.

These sorts of reforms are not just sensible policy. They will be forced on us if we wish to have an economy that is strong enough to fulfil expectations of public service and state pension provision, particularly given our ageing population. UKIP is confident that, along with the results of de-regulation following our departure from the EU, these reforms will play a vital role in fostering a faster-growing more prosperous Britain.

3. Health and welfare

THE NATIONAL HEATH SERVICE

The principle of free universal health services is rightly valued by the British people. However, the problems with our National Health Service hardly need listing – waiting lists, postponed operations, hurried consultations, poor cleanliness, staff shortages at all levels, low staff morale and rising costs for compensation.

The reason for this poor performance is that the government is still trying to run the NHS centrally, in all its detail. As in other public services, but probably worse in this case, the government's tools are hundreds of performance targets, inspectorates and 'quangos' like the 'Modernisation Agency', all of which divert energy and money away from the job of healing patients.

These methods do not work. If the government applies penalties for non-attainment of a target, this encourages 'creative' reporting of the performance figures. If it insists on better performance in one area of treatment then treatment suffers in another. Meanwhile, layers of unproductive managers have been created to carry the government's orders and to cope with continually changing centrally-driven priorities. Even our GPs have now lost their independence to local Primary Care Trusts.

This is simply not the way to run any organisation or to get the best out of hard-working, competent and dedicated professionals. It is no wonder that there is low morale and difficulty with recruitment.

The UK Independence Party insists that central government must get out of the day to day management of healthcare, leaving it in local hands but subject to broad objectives being set centrally. If the government would like to apply a performance target that would be of more value than all the others put together, it would be a limit to the budget for bureaucrats and managers.

Remove the government from day to day management of NHS facilities.

Return to the 'matron' system with a single manager responsible for all care and accommodation.

More freedom for consultants to select treatment based on clinical need rather than performance targets and fear of litigation.

Scrap Strategic Health Authorities and return hospital control to local boards.

GP surgeries to re-open in the evenings and at weekends when working people can visit. Leave family doctors free to use their professional judgement rather than dispensing tick-box medicine.

These measures will improve NHS efficiency and staff morale and they will bring healthcare closer to the patient. While they will also release funds, we acknowledge that in the longer term further funds will be necessary as our population ages and new treatments become available.

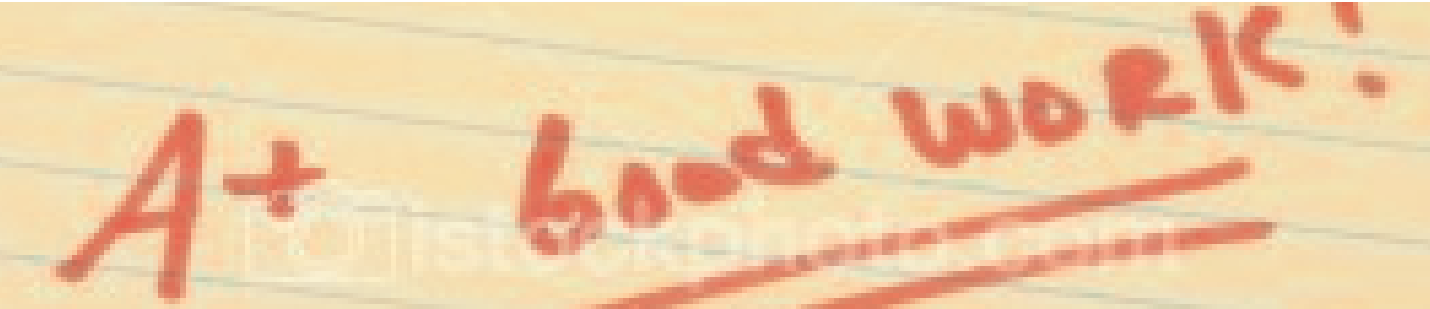
In this respect, compared with other developed countries, Britain is an outlier in two important respects: 1) Our overall health spending per person is lower, 2), our proportion of privately funded healthcare is lower. Private health insurance schemes similar to those in France, Germany and several other countries might provide a valuable supplement to NHS resources.

Finally, turning to the matter of EU interference in health, it goes without saying that UKIP would remove the directives that restrict food supplements and herbal medicines, and doctors would no longer need to observe the working time directive.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Benefit payments, excluding pensions, absorb nearly £100 billion per year or 20% of the national budget. Many of the hundreds of available benefits are means-tested, discouraging work, saving, help within the family and within the community. Reform is vital but successive governments have failed to address it because of the large numbers of voters who receive payments and because an increasing amount of our social law is driven by the EU.

Like taxation, the benefit system has grown progressively more complicated as the rules have been revised in an attempt to limit the cost, to prevent abuse and to satisfy particular interest groups. Given this complexity, the cost of administering the system is already over £3 billion per year. Many people do not claim their entitlements because they are unable or unwilling to complete 40-page forms or unhappy to answer demeaning questions. And the more complicated the system, the easier it is for cheats to avoid detection and the more tiresome it is for officials to check up on them.



Reform of Britain's welfare arrangements is a long-term project that UKIP will undertake alongside tax reform and deregulation. The objective will be to free as many people as possible from benefits by making the rules more transparent and cutting down on means-testing. We want to restore people to independence from benefits and to the dignity that comes with it.

We shall be wary of spending on active labour market programmes such as Labour's youth training schemes and the 'New Deal' since there is no evidence that these have had a significant impact on earnings or employment.

PENSIONS

While the benefit system urgently needs reform, our pensions arrangements are in crisis. Promises by politicians have led people to expect that their state pensions will be higher than can reasonably be provided. Backed into a corner of its own making, the current government now tops up the basic state pension with an additional means-tested 'pension credit' and gimmicks such as the winter fuel allowance and free bus rides. Before 1997, private pension schemes were seen as the answer, with many people having saved enough to provide for their retirement, either through their employer or by direct contributions to a scheme. Then our government started taxing dividends paid to pension funds and the stock market fell, causing large falls in the values of the funds' assets. Many private schemes have had to cut their payouts and some people have lost most of their savings.

We are now in a position where personal saving for old age is looking increasingly unattractive. The reward appears to be small and unreliable, especially after the government takes its cut and may take more in the future. Those who have not saved will be helped out by means-tested benefits anyway. Faced with these incentives, the smart thing to do is to spend all your money (or conceal it) and retire destitute.

The UK Independence Party believes it is vital to restore confidence in private pension schemes by replacing the tax exemption. We also recognise that there is a case for an immediate increase in the state pension, with many pensioners also gaining relief from our undertaking to halve Council tax.

Raise state pensions by £25 per week, funded by the contribution we now make to the EU budget.

Reinstate tax credits on dividends paid to pension funds, adding £5 billion a year to their value.

As a further measure to correct an injustice: restore full pension rights to expatriate pensioners whose pensions were frozen when they left the UK

In the long term, there is no escape from the fact that difficult decisions have to be made. As our population ages, we shall have to save more or work longer, or both. Another suggestion is to accept more immigrants so that their taxes will help pay for our elderly. UKIP rejects this suggestion outright.

Let us be thankful that, despite our difficulties, we in Britain are in a much better position than neighbouring EU countries where more people rely on levels of state pension that are rapidly becoming unsustainable.

4. Education

SCHOOLS

The government attitude to state education is like its attitude in other areas of public provision. It prefers centralised bureaucratic control rather than trusting the professionals who do the work. The result is interference in what should be taught, how it should be taught and assessed, an obsession with paperwork and vain attempts to raise standards by means of league tables and performance targets.

While many state schools have managed to maintain standards despite this regime, many more have not. There is poor discipline because there is no apparent penalty for bad behaviour, teachers are demoralised because there is too much prescription about how to do the job, too much paperwork and too much time spent child-minding instead of teaching. Examinations have been degraded to maintain the pretence that education is working well, and too many young people leave school without even basic standards of literacy and numeracy⁷.

What we all want from our schools is to bring up confident well-rounded young people who are capable not just of earning a living but also contributing to society. The aim must be to bring out the best in each child. Parents must be involved in as many ways as possible so that pupils, parents and teachers can share the responsibility for success and take a pride in it. We also regard competitive sports and the teaching of our values and our history as essential.

Give more autonomy to our state schools, to allow teachers freedom over how to teach and what they want to cover outside the curriculum. Leave schools to organise their own intermediate testing: Standard Aptitude Tests must go.

Leave the decision to exclude unruly pupils to the headteacher without allowing governors, parents or bureaucrats to compromise this authority. Provide sufficient specialised facilities for excluded pupils.

Encourage schools to specialise in technical or academic disciplines and allow limited selection of pupils.

Scrap the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to stop interference by government and bureaucrats in setting standards for GCSE and A level examinations.

Insist on school sports, encourage school trips and provide the necessary facilities.

Besides the above measures to improve state schools, the UK Independence Party would go further in exploring a number of possible arrangements involving private schooling. At present, 15% of parents pay for private education and we shall extend this opportunity more widely. We shall introduce a new assisted-places scheme in which the state helps to fund private education for children from poorer backgrounds. We shall consider granting tax rebates or vouchers to help parents to pay for private schools.

While such schemes may be new to Britain, they are commonplace in a number of other countries including the United States and several countries of the European Union. The general experience where parents are able to choose from a variety of schools, some fee-paying and some not, is that more resources are released for the state sector and higher standards are achieved⁸.

UNIVERSITIES

Our government is aiming for still greater numbers of students in universities, but it is not providing enough funding even for the current numbers. Even after subsidising UK students from the high fees charged to all the students from non-EU countries, our universities are still having to impose top-up fees in order to run their undergraduate courses.

Whilst numbers of students have been rising, standards in many courses have been falling, leading to marked

differences in the quality of degrees between the older universities and some of the newer ones, and between the different subjects (for instance, Physics versus Media Studies). Low standards, both on entering and leaving university, lead to poor student motivation and poor job prospects.

The government's response has been to intervene using bureaucratic methods such as teaching quality assessments that measure paperwork rather than performance, and interference in selection of students through its Office of Fair Access.

The UK Independence Party believes that the university sector has already expanded too far. Some courses should be closed releasing funds for those that remain. Further university expansion should follow if and when there is genuine improvement in grades achieved by school leavers.

Undertake a review of all undergraduate university courses and withdraw funding from those that are of insufficient standard. Fully fund those courses that remain.

Review the standards for grading all courses and ensure that students who do not pass the university's annual examinations are not permitted to continue.

Cancel top-up fees, give maintenance grants as necessary, and scrap the student loan scheme.

Charge the same full fees to students from EU countries as are now paid by non-EU students.

Universities exist to provide a good academic education to those who value learning for its own sake, are prepared to work for it and whose school-leaving grades genuinely merit it. Whilst closing down university courses that do no favours for students, UKIP would expand the availability of 'skills' training at technical colleges both for school leavers and mature students. And when the economy expands as a result of deregulation following Britain's withdrawal from the EU, there will be ample job opportunities to entice marginal students away from wasting three years in some unsuitable university course.



5. Home Affairs

LAW AND ORDER

Crime levels are still rising, especially crimes of violence and public disorder⁹, despite government claims to the contrary. Decent, law-abiding British citizens feel increasingly vulnerable and personal safety is now a major concern, particularly for women and the elderly.

People justifiably complain that the police are less visible and less accessible, police stations have been closed, the law no longer appears to work on behalf of victims, and sentences are too lenient to act as a proper deterrent. The result is a serious loss of respect for our police forces and a lack of faith in the whole process of law and order enforcement.

As in other areas of public service, the UK Independence Party believes that policing can be much improved by greater local control. We need to relieve our forces from too much central direction, including performance targets, the mass of paperwork and politically-correct rules that ignore the realities of the job. UKIP wants to see 'bobbies back on the beat' and the handcuffs on the criminals, not the police.

Review sentencing and require credible minimum and maximum prison terms.

Strengthen the powers of lay magistrates and reopen local magistrates courts.

Relieve our police of unnecessary paperwork.

Make Chief Constables and other senior officers directly accountable to local government and remove Home Office placements from police authorities.

Support the presumption of innocence for homeowners defending their homes from intruders.

Build new prisons as required.

We are confident that these measures will succeed in reducing crime by making it more likely that it leads to an appropriate penalty. But the largest impact on crime will come from UKIP's programme of improving job opportunities, reforming education, restoring local democracy and reinforcing family values. With a greater sense of purpose and belonging, the crime problem will

become easier to manage, even drug-related crime and the anti-social behaviour associated with binge-drinking.

Above all, UKIP will resist being 'harmonised' into the European Union's system of Corpus Juris which would abolish trial by jury, establish a European Public Prosecutor and allow imprisonment without trial. We shall also expose the specious argument that these measures are necessary to protect us against terrorism.

IMMIGRATION

Britain cannot continue to accommodate immigration at its present net rate of a million newcomers every four years. However, while the official statistics are now showing a fall in asylum applications, the numbers of those permitted to enter legally has been rising sharply as a result of both the eastern expansion of the European Union¹⁰ and deliberate government policy. The Labour government's untenable excuse is that we need large numbers of immigrant workers.

The Conservatives have promised to impose quotas on immigration. Given that Britain has accepted EU control over the treatment and assessment of asylum seekers¹¹, this is no more credible than their promise to ignore EU fishing policy.

The first responsibility of a British government is to its own population, not to those who would like to settle here. All British people, including our ethnic minorities, want immigration brought under control. Having taken Britain out of the EU, the UK Independence Party would aim to approach zero net immigration both by imposing far stricter limits on legal immigrants and by taking control, at last, of the vexed problem of illegal immigration.

Adopt a 'points' system for evaluating applications for work permits based on an identified need for specific skills and other tests of suitability. Applicants from EU countries to be treated in the same way as those from any other country. Stricter control of residence rights granted because of family connections.

Reinstate embarkation controls to check those entering and leaving Britain. It is essential to keep proper records of those crossing our borders – the government has admitted it has little idea who is in the country.

'Britishness' tests to encourage those settling here to acquire knowledge of our language and culture and to assimilate fully into our society.

Set our own criteria for determining those deemed to be refugees. No refugee status to be considered for asylum seekers who arrived via some other 'safe' country.

More rigour in deporting those who are refused the right to stay. Only one in five are currently removed.

All those entering Britain with the intention of staying to be subject to health checks for certain communicable diseases.

Some of these measures will require amendments to our human rights law (which UKIP will undertake – see section 10) and the reinterpretation of parts of the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees. However, we believe that greater clarity about the criteria for refugee status, faster assessment and better enforcement will discourage people-trafficking and result in a system that is far more humane than at present. Funding for the above measures will be provided as needed. There will be savings from the £2 billion a year that is now spent on supporting and assessing asylum seekers.

UKIP does NOT favour the application of quotas either for legal immigrants or for refugees. We believe the above measures, properly applied, will sufficiently limit the numbers taking up residence here and we shall then, once again, be able to make them all welcome.

6. Agriculture and Fisheries

FARMING

Despite recent 'reforms', the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy remains the worst example of centralised, one-size-fits-all management and it still absorbs 45% of the EU budget. Release from the CAP will, at last, allow Britain to organise farming policy in our own interests, not those of other EU countries or large agri-business. The UK Independence Party recognises, however, that British farmers will always merit financial support. We still want them to produce our food in the face of cheaper imports and to play their part in caring for the countryside. They must be fairly rewarded.

Leaving the CAP will also remove a vast amount of

unnecessary bureaucracy that is such a severe burden on small farmers. While we shall raise the standards of bio-security at points of entry into the UK, the detailed recording of animal movements, animal passports and origin-stamps on eggs will all go. And sensible revision of ineffective health regulations will allow the reopening of small local abattoirs, removing a major cause of long distance transport of live animals. This will also help to prevent the spread of disease and promote another of UKIP's aims – the marketing of locally produced food.

Replace CAP subsidies with guaranteed minimum prices, along the lines of the deficiency payments scheme which operated before 1973.

Protect farmers from the excessive buying powers of big business. Consider restoring the Milk Marketing Board.

Reward farmers who use 'green' and 'organic' methods and those who farm in difficult terrain like Welsh and Cumbrian hill farmers.

Relax planning to assist diversification into recreational and other non-agricultural enterprise.

Local authorities obliged to facilitate local farmers' markets.

Financial support for approved young farmers to assist with start-ups.

FISHING

The utter failure of the Common Fisheries Policy, with stocks of several common species now facing exhaustion, is the most glaring example of mismanagement and the futility of the EU vision of 'common' natural resources. Yet the CFP is one of the EU's core 'competences' – the Conservative Party's promise to 'negotiate' out of CFP cannot be fulfilled until Britain leaves the European Union. The UK Independence Party will take back control and put in place an agreed long-term strategy for management and conservation.

Re-establish British control over our coastal waters with sufficient rebuilding of our fisheries protection fleet to enforce this.

Fishing licences to stipulate acceptable practices such as mesh sizes of nets.

Fishing prohibited in temporary 'fallow' zones to allow stocks to recover.



The UK Independence Party recognises that the restoration of our agriculture and fishing industries will take time. However, we are determined that, under our post-EU government, both these sectors will be reliable sources of our food and they will provide stable employment for those involved.

7. Defence and foreign affairs

The first duty of the British government is to defend our country. However, whilst the calls on our forces have been increasing, defence spending has not kept pace. The resulting cutbacks in both personnel and equipment have compromised the effectiveness of our forces even for existing commitments, let alone any unknown future demands.

In spite of this weakness, the government has been making commitments to the EU's rapid reaction force (the nascent EU army) and playing its part in the construction of a common EU defence policy. And whilst the government claims to value our relationship with the United States and NATO, the continuing tension between NATO and EU is making it hard to remain committed to both simultaneously. This has led to indecision as to the future direction of our defence strategy and our foreign policy. The same difficulty applies in procuring military equipment, where incompatibility between US and EU systems means that a choice has to be made, and it is increasingly being made in the EU direction.

The UK Independence Party insists that Britain retains the freedom for independent military action and co-operation wherever we see fit. Since NATO has served Britain well in the past, we shall continue this alliance, without committing Britain to joining the United States in any future military adventures. Withdrawal from the European Union will coincide with withdrawal from the EU's common defence plans and also enable us to retain our independent seat in international bodies such as the United Nations.

British armed forces to be deployed only when this is clearly in the national interest. Our forces are not world policemen or international social workers.

Reverse the planned cuts in all branches of the armed forces, including the EU-driven breakup of our traditional regiments, and increase spending to improve our own independent military capability.

Support our independence and our defence industries by buying British-made equipment where possible.

Preserve our standing within NATO and disengage from any commitment to a common European force. Our forces are not a vehicle for political ambitions or for furthering European integration.

8. Other policies

ENERGY

With output from our North sea oil and gas supplies in decline, very little coal production and no further development of nuclear power, Britain is now more dependent than ever on imported coal and gas. At the same time, the commitment to reducing carbon dioxide emissions has caused hydrocarbon fuel to be viewed with disfavour and the government is now actively promoting renewable energy, notably wind power.

It is hard to see how wind power can ever be viable. Given the capital costs of supply and installation of turbines, wind power is several times more expensive than power from conventional sources, it could never supply more than a fraction of our demand for energy and it is intermittent – no wind, no power. No other renewable sources are showing any signs of making a significant contribution.

While UKIP favours further development of 'clean coal' techniques to make greater use of our own coal reserves, we believe the future has to be nuclear. Most of French power is nuclear and our own nuclear stations have been operating for years without incident.

Put an immediate stop to the erection of wind turbines.

Build more nuclear power plants using standard fission technology and promote research into generation using nuclear fusion.

THE ENVIRONMENT

UKIP welcomes the long term improvement in the quality of our air, inland waterways and seaboard. But, while there is a case for international co-operation over air and sea pollution, environmental legislation for the island of Great Britain should be a British concern.

However, the EU has produced large numbers of directives on industrial pollution, waste disposal and other matters. In its typical fashion, local conditions and the cost and practical difficulties of implementation have often been ignored. The continuing consequences in the case of waste disposal are stock-piling of waste awaiting treatment (fridge mountains), long distance transport of certain classes of waste, and widespread fly-tipping to avoid landfill charges – which defeats the point of the legislation.

Environmental problems are also sometimes home-made, such as the continuing destruction of 'green belt' to accommodate the questionable need for large numbers of new houses, particularly in the South East, and the misguided insistence on erecting wind turbines.

The UK Independence Party is strongly in favour of measures – imposed and enforced by our own government and local authorities – that minimise the production of waste and maximise the amount that is recycled. We also strongly support 'green' farming methods and the protection of our parklands and wildlife habitats.

Finally, the importation of genetically modified food and the planting of GM crops is another matter over which the EU has assumed control, in consultation with the large biotech corporations. Outside the EU, UKIP would be able to respect the widespread public concern over these matters and we would prohibit the planting of GM crops until exhaustive long-term tests have convinced us that they are safe.

TRANSPORT

There are always going to be calls for better and cheaper public transport but, for many journeys, road will remain the cheapest and most convenient means of transport both for freight and private use. While UKIP recognises the conflict between road building and environmental concerns, there was little justification for the government's cutbacks in road building and maintenance. We regard adequate spending on roads as essential.

The EU is, however, embarking on considerable

interference in our road transport. An extension of the Working Time Directive means increases in costs and a shortage of drivers. The Road Pricing Directive will put an electronic 'spy' in HGV cabs, purportedly for use with motorway tolls. The EU Transport White Paper speaks ominously about the "rational use of the car" and "shifting the modal balance" presumably against car use.

Similarly, our railways have been plagued by continual management restructuring since the EU obliged us to separate responsibility for train operations from tracks and infrastructure. We are now to be subjected to more directives controlling access rights and the "Third Railway Package" opening Britain's passenger networks to rail companies from across the EU.

The UK Independence Party insists that transport in Britain, both road and rail, should be Britain's own business. Outside the EU we shall be free to evaluate which rail management structures are best for safety and efficiency, including a possible return to the position where a single body controls track and train over given routes. UKIP welcomes the current expenditure on upgrading our railways and will continue it.

Regarding road usage, we favour more local autonomy over local traffic management. We shall consider raising some speed limits, particularly on motorways, where this can be done without impairing safety. We shall also confine the use of speed cameras to locations where there is an established safety risk. Maintaining unrealistic speed limits and arbitrarily trapping offenders only brings the law into contempt.

9. British governance

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

The UK Independence Party believes unreservedly in our institutions – our democratically elected House of Commons, our constitutional monarchy, our system of common law and our House of Lords. These institutions deserve our respect not just because they define our system of government but also because they are part of what is British. The Lords, in particular, continue to show their worth in pointing out flaws in draft legislation and performing a check on the Commons.



The Labour government, however, has clearly found the interference by the Lords in the legislative process to be irksome and has sought to diminish its powers. UKIP would resist any further dilution and is not convinced by proposals to include of a proportion of elected members. The virtue of the Lords is their independence from the government and this would be diminished if they had to seek re-election.

Our democratic system of government has not, however, prevented our political leaders from transferring powers to the European Union. To provide some protection from this misuse of office by professional politicians and to restore some confidence in our democratic process we believe there is a place for an additional safeguard. In line with the agreement by our present government to call a referendum on the EU's Constitutional treaty, the UK Independence Party proposes that referendums may be held whenever there is sufficient popular support:

*If, during a period of 6 months, 5% of the national electorate signs a petition demanding a referendum on any matter of policy, then the government is obliged to hold such a referendum and be bound by its result*¹².

The Welsh Assembly and the Scottish Parliament with their limited power, uncontrolled costs and growing bureaucracy, have both caused deep disappointment. Another source of discontent is the pending reduction in EU funding for Wales and Scotland. UKIP believes that the future of these institutions should be a matter for their respective populations. However, while they remain in existence, UKIP will consider establishing 'English days' at Westminster in which English MPs debate legislation that only applies to England. The remainder of parliamentary time will be used for legislation that applies across the United Kingdom, with all UK MPs present.

It goes without saying that UKIP rejects the new EU constitution, since we want Britain out of the EU altogether.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Besides restoring power for governing Britain to our own elected parliament, UKIP will return local government to local control. County and Borough Councils need to answer to their local communities rather than obey orders from central government. They also need to be more transparent, which means an end to secretive cabinet-style decision making. In serving their local communities, they need to be aware that people would rather have their bins emptied than pay for jobs for politically-correct officials.

Councils also need more control over their own budgets. At present, 80% of our Councils' budgets is funded by grants from central government – underfunding by government has been the cause of the massive increases in Council tax (which UKIP will reverse). To provide Councils with more of their own revenue, UKIP will divert business rates back to them.

Greater autonomy for local authorities to serve their communities rather than obeying government orders, particularly on planning matters.

Business rates and transfer duties on houses to be paid into local council budgets rather than to government.

Slash politically-correct appointments.

Encourage Council efforts to recycle waste.

The UK Independence Party totally rejects the government's attempts to adopt the European Union's concept of regional government in England. This view is shared by voters as shown by the overwhelming rejection of an elected assembly in the North East (78% against in the recent referendum).

Scrap all English regional assemblies and dismantle other regional quangos.

The UKIP is aware that leaving the EU will mean an end to its 'structural fund' support for regional projects. While we shall be pleased to see an end to projects that do little other than advertise the EU, we shall continue to provide limited regional development aid from the UK budget where a convincing case can be made for it.

10. Conclusion: British society

We live in a prosperous society in which the state takes care of our health, our children's education, our welfare and our pensions. Along with state provision comes state control. The state thinks it knows best how to provide our public services and also how we should all behave. Between them, Brussels and our own nanny-state have made rules, a great many of them, to protect us against health and safety risks, against environmental damage and against ourselves.

Alongside the rules, we have rights. But too often, rights favour the criminal rather than the victim and the unruly pupil rather than the teacher. They create tension rather than relieve it, emphasise differences, set society against itself and diminish the much more precious right to free speech. They encourage anyone with a grievance against the police or the NHS to sue for compensation. All these rights are eagerly exploited by the army of no-win-no-fee lawyers.

The reality is that all these rules and rights are killing off the virtues of trust, initiative, responsibility and respect that make society work. We are all encouraged to be 'consumers' who live for ourselves and live off the state – the state being everyone else in society.

Behind all the mind-numbing arguments of the main parties over their tax and spending plans, the reality is that the state can no longer afford to meet expectations of healthcare, education and pensions. It can only pay out what it taxes or borrows, and tax comes from those who are in productive private sector employment. Too much tax and too many rules kill off the economy that is the source of the tax. In the attempt to make ends meet, the government's response has been to limit the handouts and services by means-testing, which discourages working and saving even further.

A change of mindset is necessary in order to move away from the regulatory culture, the dependency culture and the compensation culture. All these have been fostered by a mistaken over-reliance on state help and protection. We do not believe that smaller government or fewer rules and rights will result in a country which is less safe, healthy or compassionate.

UKIP will repeal the 1999 Human Rights Act, preferring to rely on British custom, our common law and the principles of the European Convention of Human Rights which are based on individual freedom rather than state control. Outside the EU, we shall also avoid our freedoms being overtaken by the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights and its misguided notions of fairness.

UKIP is also deeply concerned about the gross threats to our traditional freedoms posed by the recent hysterical wave of anti-terrorist legislation. A more effective way to counter terrorism is to keep proper records of those that cross our borders, and we shall drop once and for all the plan for identity cards. In the same spirit of upholding freedom, we shall repeal the Hunting Act: the government has no business legislating over such matters.

When Britain is rid of the EU and all the senseless rules and rights, the prospects for businesses, employment and international trade will be bright. We shall be in a better position to afford our welfare state. When proper democracy is also restored, individuals, and particularly young people, will regain a stronger sense of belonging to a society with the family as the basic stable unit and a better set of values.

¹ An alternative would be to conduct our EU trade under the rules of the European Economic Area (EEA), as does Norway which has never been a member of the EU. This would allow a continuation of free trade as if we were staying in the EU, but while we would be released from most EU legislation (farming and fishing, for instance), we would remain bound by the single market rules. This may be an appropriate temporary framework while negotiations are taking place, but UKIP wants freedom from all EU legislation so we should not consider it as a suitable long term option.
² Written answer by Baroness Symons to a question (HL 649) by Lord Stoddard, WA 13, Hansard, House of Lords 13 January 2003.
³ The agricultural and regional grants that we currently receive from the EU will be dealt with separately in the budget and are discussed elsewhere in this manifesto.
⁴ This 'independence dividend' may be estimated as at least £22 billion per year. Taking the net cost of EU membership as 2% of GDP or £40 billion (See I. Milne 'A Cost Too Far', Civitas 2004) and an average marginal tax rate (including income tax, national insurance and VAT) of 55%, tax revenue would rise by £22 billion following reforms after leaving the EU.
⁵ The Gershon report for the Labour Party claims to find savings of £20 billion while David James finds £35 billion for the Conservatives.
⁶ There are no grounds for supposing that this increase in borrowing would significantly raise the inflation rate or interest rates. A precedent is the 'Reaganomics' era in the United States in the early 1980s.
⁷ See Chris Woodhead 'The Standards of today and how to raise them to the standards of tomorrow'. Adam Smith Institute, 2002.
⁸ James Tooley, Pauline Dixon and James Stanfield, 'Delivering Better Education: Market solutions for educational improvement', Adam Smith Institute, 2003.
⁹ In 2004, serious violence against the person rose 15%, and other offences with personal injury by 24% in England and Wales.
¹⁰ 130,000 workers from the new accession countries were registered in the period May 2004 to February 2005.
¹¹ The UK government has accepted a number of EU directives on refugees, including the 'Qualifications Directive' that establishes definitions of who is a refugee.
¹² We suggest that the threshold of 5% is sufficiently high to prevent misuse yet low enough to be achieved when major national interests are at stake. Voters' rolls could be used for verification. Regarding the terms of the referendum, a majority of a minimum of 40% of the electorate may be deemed sufficient to cause the government to legislate for the change demanded.