

[Theresa May has U-turned on Brexit. How can we trust her?](#)

Can you believe that's the same Theresa May?

The same Theresa May who today said: "A Britain beyond Brexit is more global and outward-looking. A Britain alive with possibilities, more confident in itself, more united and more secure."

What a truly staggering U-turn. What a cheek! How can the British people trust her?

This disingenuous shift in public message is dangerous. It's a calculated attempt to distract attention from the shark-infested waters which we are now entering, and the fact that Theresa May herself has steered us towards them.

The Liberal Democrats are the only party standing up to this disastrous Tory game-playing. Negotiating Brexit will be a task of monumental proportions. It will do great damage to our prosperity, the state of our public services and Britain's place in the world.

We will give you the chance to change Britain's future via a second referendum. You'll have the chance to reject a bad Brexit deal and even remain in the EU.

If you want a strong opposition that is consistent, honest and sensible on Brexit, vote Lib Dem on 8th June.

[SNP manifesto: what it means for businesses](#)

We have now launched our manifesto for the General Election on 8 June. It's packed full of ideas on how we can protect jobs, boost economic growth and improve productivity.

[EP president Tajani and EESC president](#)

Dassis commit to improving cooperation, helping people regain trust in Europe

The president of the European Parliament (EP) Antonio Tajani joined the [European Economic and Social Committee \(EESC\)](#) plenary session on Thursday 1 June to discuss the EP's priorities and the strengthening of cooperation between the two institutions.

The EP's six priorities for this year are very much in line with the concerns of Europe's civil society, according to the EESC. They include: giving a new boost to jobs, growth and investment; addressing the social dimension of the European Union; better protecting the security of EU citizens; reforming and developing migration policy in a spirit of responsibility and solidarity; delivering on the commitment to implement a connected Digital Single Market; delivering on the objective of an ambitious Energy Union and a forward-looking climate-change policy.

"The three main challenges we need to work on together are unemployment (especially youth unemployment), migration and terrorism. Most citizens want protection from the EU in particular areas, but there is a high percentage of citizens voting for populism, which means there is discontent," Mr Tajani stated.

Mr Tajani and the **EESC president Georges Dassis** pledged to improve the dialogue between the EP and the EESC both formally and informally and to hold regular exchanges, discuss ideas, engage and deepen the cooperation so as to ensure a quality response to what is happening on the ground. This should in turn improve the effectiveness of EU policies, with a clear impact on the lives of ordinary citizens.

Mr Tajani said the improved cooperation was crucial because of the EESC's vital closeness to the people. "The EESC represents workers, employers, SMEs, etc., and because of that you have the finger on the pulse and you can help us transmit the messages to European citizens," Tajani told the plenary, describing the EESC as "the ears of Europe" and adding that "just like the MEPs, the EESC members are in a position to listen and understand what citizens really want and expect".


EESC president Georges Dassis declared that every single action and work of the Committee made it clear that the EESC stands for European democracy and "is truly engaged in making the slogan – for a united, democratic, solidarity-based, peaceful and prosperous Europe, close to its people – a reality".

Jacek Krawczyk, president of the EESC Employers' Group welcomed the fact that a number of EP priorities are aligned with what employers ask for: a stable macroeconomic environment; a stronger culture of entrepreneurship; completion

of the single market; a more efficient and forward-looking industrial policy, championing free trade and, finally, supporting competitiveness as the key for more employment and for maintaining and enhancing the social dimension of the EU.

Representing the EESC Workers' Group, **Christian Bäumler** said that stronger cooperation between the two institutions was crucial to secure a strong pillar of social rights in the future. "The EU should be protecting its citizens against the effects of globalisation in order to be seen as more legitimate. We also need to make progress towards reducing unemployment and put an end to inequalities".

Luca Jahier, president of the EESC Various Interests Group, expressed his support for the EP president's statement made at the recent G7 meeting in Taormina, saying that "it is time for Europe to take the lead in matters such as trade and the Paris agreement on climate". He also urged Mr Tajani to make a detailed programme to engage both the EP and the EESC on a joint communication strategy in the run up to the EP elections in 2019, in order to overcome the distance between the EU and its citizens, and to speak with one voice.

The EP and the EESC, together with the European Committee of the Regions, signed the first [Cooperation Agreement](#) in 2014. 

[Chinese vice premier urges efforts to end all military paid service](#)

Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli urged efforts to terminate all paid services provided by the armed forces and the armed police on Friday.

It is a vital decision aimed at building a powerful army, said Zhang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, in a teleconference.

Party committees, governments and troops at all levels should work together to fulfil the "major political task," adhere to the correct direction of military reform, and root out corruption in the army, Zhang said.

The vice premier asked government departments concerned to coordinate with the military and create favorable conditions to ensure the completion of the task on time.

They were ordered to appropriately deal with various problems that may emerge, promote the reform in accordance with the law, and safeguard the security of military assets as well as the rights and interests of the public.

Fan Changlong, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), warned of the complexity of the task to end all military paid service during the conference.

Resources for terminated paid service will be used to improve the work and living standards of the troops, Fan said.

Since 1998, the armed forces and armed police have not been allowed to run businesses, but were permitted to use surplus resources to provide paid services to the public in 15 fields, as China's service industry was weak at the time, said Jiang Luming, professor at the National University of Defense Technology.

However, with the development of the market economy and imperfections in the paid service system in recent years, corruption cases in the military were exposed due to such services, Jiang added.

In February 2016, the CMC issued a circular on the termination of military paid services. All military paid services will be terminated by the end of June 2018.

[Separate exam sites for HIV students spark controversy](#)

A special school for HIV students has caused controversy by arranging for 16 of its students to take the gaokao exam in separate classrooms from non-HIV students.

The 16 students – 11 boys and five girls – will sit the gaokao, China's college entrance exam, on June 6-7 in two classroom-turned exam rooms at Linfen Red Ribbon School in northern China's Shanxi Province, the country's only school for HIV children.

The students, aged 17 to 21, are the first group of high middle school graduates from the school, previously called "A Tiny Classroom of Love," opened by Linfen Third People's Hospital for medical staff to teach four HIV children. The school was officially founded in 2011, offering both primary and middle school education.

The gaokao is of vital importance to Chinese students, with millions of candidates participating every year.

"We just made the place where they study and live as the exam site," said Guo Xiaoping, principal of the school and former president of Linfen Third People's Hospital.

He said the decision to set separate exam rooms was out of care for the children, who were infected with HIV from mother-to-child transmission.

"The school is a half-hour ride from the general exam site. It is not convenient to take them to go to another place for the exam," Guo said. "If the children take the exams with other candidates, I fear they may feel nervous and others will protest."

However, after many years working against AIDS discrimination, the school underestimated growing acceptance of people with HIV.

"Separate exam rooms objectively create a discriminatory atmosphere," Wang Linghang, a doctor with Beijing Ditan Hospital, told Beijing News.

"Obviously, there is no transmission risk when HIV students take the exams together with other candidates."

"The personal privacy of HIV people should be protected. If these children do not take the exams in separate rooms, who will know they are HIV carriers?" said Bai Hua, leader of a Beijing-based AIDS organization. "The exam rooms are distributed randomly to candidates. Other students will not know they are HIV carriers."

However, some supported the school's decision.

"Separate sites can remove the worry of others and provide free space for people with HIV infection. This is not discrimination," said a user of Weibo, a Twitter-like service. "The social reality is that many people are afraid of contacting AIDS and that cannot be changed currently."

"It is not a matter of discrimination, but the kids' safety. We could not rule out any possibility of infection, such as the virus passing through blood in wounds," said another internet user.

Xiong Bingqi, of the 21st Century Education Research Institute, said the separate exam rooms were meant to provide a good environment, and it was important that the students were given equal education rights.

"There is still a long way to go to completely eradicate discrimination against people living with AIDS/HIV," he said.

In China, about 654,000 people live with HIV/AIDS.