

Ending freedom of movement could result in 'meltdown' of health care, warns MEP



Green Party

14 June 2017

Molly Scott Cato, Green MEP for the South West, has said Conservative and Labour plans to end free movement will leave the country struggling to fill places in the NHS and care sectors. Recent [analysis by the GMB](#) shows that the number of EU nationals working in health and social care has increased by 72% in the last eight years and there are now 209,000 EU nationals working in the sector – up from just 121,000 in 2009.

EU nationals now make up more than five per cent of the entire health and social care workforce – including one in ten care home staff. The latest report comes hot on the heels of a leaked Department of Health [study](#) revealed that ending freedom of movement and clamping down on immigration would leave the NHS short of 40,000 nurses by 2026. A Freedom of Information request by Heart Radio further reveals the extent to which NHS Trusts in Devon and Cornwall are dependent on overseas nurses [1].

Molly Scott Cato said:

“The catalogue of evidence should be a wake-up call to the Tories and Labour who both want to end free movement. The GMB has called for an urgent post-Brexit plan for when free movement ends. But the surest way to guarantee our hospitals and care services are adequately staffed is to immediately grant rights for all EU nationals living in the UK to remain here, and to continue to allow freedom of movement. Greens are unequivocal on this – we will continue to defend free movement.

“While we should acknowledge perceptions around immigration were key to influencing the outcome of the EU referendum last year, people did not vote to see their hospitals and care services go into meltdown over a staffing crisis. If we are to keep our health and social care services functioning properly we will continue to rely on people of all nationalities coming to work in the UK.

“Where there are problems associated with free movement in the EU – with some

countries experiencing skills shortages due to the emigration of workers – these should be addressed collectively by all EU countries, working on solutions together. What is clear is that one country shutting the doors on everyone else is a self-defeating policy when it comes to addressing the differing needs of different countries in Europe.”

Notes:

1. **FOI request by Heart Radio reveals** (provided by Carrian Jones of Heart Radio: Carrian.Jones@heart.co.uk Further information on request)

Cornwall Partnership: 22 nurses from the EU, 6 non-EU

Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust: 48 registered nurses and 30 healthcare support workers of non-British nationality. The Trust currently has nurse vacancies of 194.16 FTE (registered nurses) and 116.24 FTE (healthcare support workers).

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust: 116 nurses from overseas, 77 from EU countries

Other NHS Trusts did not respond or said they did not have such information.

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[Green MEP challenges Gove over climate targets](#)



Green Party

14 June 2017

As MEPs today vote on important legislation that sets binding annual greenhouse gas emission targets for EU member countries, Molly Scott Cato MEP has challenged the new Environment Secretary, Michael Gove, to match or better these targets for tackling climate change once the UK leaves the EU.

MEPs will vote on the Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR), the EU's largest climate instrument regulating emissions of sectors not covered by the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), namely transport, agriculture, buildings and waste [1]. The legislation sets climate targets for each country for the period 2021 to 2030. But with the UK set to leave the EU before this time, Dr Scott Cato is demanding Mr Gove set targets at least as ambitious as those of the EU. She said:

"I can think of few people less fit for the role of environment secretary. He has consistently voted against measures to tackle climate change and infamously tried to remove the issue from the national curriculum when he was education secretary.

"However, I welcome the fact he has hit out at Donald Trump over his decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement [2]. Let's now see if action matches words and whether this apparent new-found commitment to tackling climate change means anything in practice. Let's see him pledge the UK to match or even better the rather unambitious targets on reducing emissions being discussed and voted on in Europe. Here is his first real test. Will he take a lead on tackling climate change or follow a climate denying US president wishing to drag us back to a bygone dirty fossil era?"

Notes:

1. https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/effort/proposal_en
2. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/13/michael-gove-says-donald-trump-wrong-withdraw-parisclimateaccord/>

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[Greens call for voting system overhaul as poll reveals 1 in 3 voters want more Green MPs](#)



Green Party

14 June 2017

***A third of all voters and half of Labour and Lib Dem voters believe British politics would be better off with more Green MPs**

***Co-leader Jonathan Bartley: "Our broken electoral system completely fails to represent people's real political choices"**

The Green Party is calling for proportional representation as a new poll reveals one in three voters think British politics would be better off with more Green MPs [1].

A poll of 1,000 people carried out by Survation revealed one in three voters think there should be more Green MPs, including 50% of Labour voters and 57% of Lib Dem voters.

Under a fair, proportional system, the Green Party would have 11 MPs following the general election.

The Green Party has renewed its call for a voting system overhaul as the Tories and the DUP edge closer to a deal. In the general election, the DUP won 10 seats with 292,316 votes while Greens have one seat with 524,604 votes [2].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"This poll reveals the strength of Green support across the country. We know that when people find out about Green policies and meet Green politicians, they like what they hear and see but our broken electoral system completely fails to represent people's political choices.

"The evidence is clear that last week many felt they had to vote tactically, rather than feeling free to vote for the party they actually believe in. But it is also clear that even under the exceptional conditions like the ones saw in the General Election, our broken electoral system does not deliver healthy results. Theresa May's deal with the DUP looks at best unstable and that its days will be numbered. It is time Labour also recognised the new political landscape, the dangerous consequences of an outdated voting system, and made a firm commitment to electoral reform.

"A fair system would ensure politics looks like the people it represents. The Green Party will keep fighting for a fairer, more democratic voting system that accurately represents what the country wants."

Notes:

1. Poll results:

- Survation polled 1,051 people on behalf of the Green Party on June 4 and June 5
- 34.3% of all voters said British politics would be 'much better' or 'a bit better' with more than one Green MP in parliament
- 49.3% of people who intended to vote Labour on June 8 and 57.5% of people who intended to vote Lib Dem said British politics would be 'much better' or 'a bit better' with more than one Green MP in parliament

2. <https://inews.co.uk/essentials/news/politics/number-seats-party-won-vs-vote-share/>

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[Green Party statement on Grenfell Tower fire](#)



Green Party

14 June 2017

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone in Grenfell Tower and to the families and friends of all those affected. We send our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the emergency services who once again have responded so quickly and effectively, and shown how much they are needed.

“The priority right now must be to look after everyone affected. We do not yet know the full details of what has happened but a full investigation must take place as soon as possible. It is clear that residents had previously expressed clear concerns about safety. Their questions must be answered.”

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[Caroline Lucas: Gove unfit to be environment secretary](#)



Green Party

12 June 2017

The Green Party has responded to Theresa May's appointment of Michael Gove as Environment Secretary.

Caroline Lucas MP, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

"It is hard to think of many politicians as ill equipped for the role of environment secretary as Michael Gove. His record of voting against measures to halt climate change and his attempt to wipe the subject from our children's curriculum show him entirely unfit to lead our country in tackling one of the greatest threats we face. And as we enter Brexit negotiations, Gove's past suggestion we scrap vital EU environmental protections becomes ever more concerning.

"This appointment is further evidence of both Theresa May's complete disregard for the environment and her desperation to hold together a Government in chaos."

Notes:

1. https://www.theyworkforyou.com/mp/11858/michael_gove/surrey_heath/votes#environment
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/jul/05/michael-gove-climate-change-geography-curriculum>
3. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-eu-regulations-michael-gove-environment-drugs-a7649041.html>

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