

Most people worse off after Theresa May's year as Prime Minister – Jeremy Corbyn

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, commenting on Theresa May's year as Prime Minister, said:

"A year ago today, Theresa May stood on the steps of Downing Street, saying she wanted a country that works for everyone.

"One year on, most people are worse off, with vital public services cut to the bone, falling wages and stagnating living standards, soaring classroom sizes and a million more on NHS waiting lists under the Tories.

"Under her government, the privileged few have benefited from tax give-aways, at the expense of the majority, who have borne the brunt of Conservative cuts.

"Theresa May now heads a zombie government, with no ideas, no answers and no leadership. This is a government in name only, having to ask other parties to "clarify and improve" its policies and delaying most Parliamentary business until the autumn.

"The Conservatives have no plan for Britain. Labour is ready to fight the next election, whenever it may be, to form a government that will build a country for the many, not the few."

This Government's policies have slammed the door on the aspirations of people across Britain – Angela Rayner

Angela Rayner MP, Labour's Shadow Education Secretary, commenting on UCAS figures for UK higher education applications, said:

"These figures show the worrying impact of a Conservative Government happy to burden young people with over £50,000 of debt just for getting an education.

"From tuition fees rising with no end in sight, to maintenance grants being scrapped, and extortionate interest rates on student debt, this Government's policies have slammed the door on the aspirations of people across Britain, and now we are beginning to see the impact that will have on university

applications.

“The decline in nursing applications is utterly shocking, and shows the results of the Government’s regressive and short-sighted decision to scrap nurses’ bursaries at a time when our NHS will desperately need more staff.

“If the Tories want to see more young people go on to university they would bring back maintenance grants, tackle high interest rates on student debt, and end their plans to see tuition fees rise each and every year.”

[Jeremy Corbyn to meet Michel Barnier, European Union chief negotiator on Brexit](#)

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, will have an extended meeting with the EU’s chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, in Brussels on Thursday, in a move which signals Labour’s growing importance to the Brexit process in the wake of the UK General Election.

The Labour leader will be joined by Shadow Brexit Secretary, Kier Starmer and Shadow Home Secretary, Diane Abbott, for the meeting in which they are expected to discuss Labour’s priorities for a jobs-first Brexit deal and cover Labour’s approach to Phase 1 negotiations.

Phase 1 includes citizen’s rights, exit obligations, and Ireland’s border arrangements. Labour will raise the issue of EU nationals and repeat the party’s support for a unilateral guarantee of the rights of EU nationals currently living in Britain. Labour will extend the hand of partnership and friendship to European Union leaders and outline how a Labour-negotiated Brexit would seek to build on our integrated trading positions and commitment to protect and maximise trade opportunities between the UK and the rest of Europe.

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour party, said:

“Labour is a government in waiting and we are ready to take up the responsibility for Brexit negotiations.

“Labour respects the referendum result and the decision to leave the European Union. But a Labour Brexit would look very different to the race-to-the-bottom tax haven backed by this Conservative Government.

“In contrast to the Conservatives’ megaphone diplomacy, we will conduct relations with our European neighbours respectfully and in the spirit of friendship. Our strong links with our European sister parties gives Labour an

advantage in reaching an outcome that works for both sides.

“Labour would negotiate a jobs-first Brexit deal which puts the economy, jobs and living standards front and centre. Labour would unilaterally guarantee the rights of EU citizens living in the UK because it’s the right thing to do.

“Labour wants to work with other countries to build a different Europe, one which promotes human rights and environmental protections, celebrates the positive and complementary contributions of European nations, and where trade is fair and sustainable.”

[The Labour Party welcomes the Government’s decision to conduct a review into abuse and intimidation in elections – Cat Smith](#)

Cat

Smith MP, Labour’s Shadow Minister for Voter Engagement and Youth Affairs, commenting on the Government’s announcement that they will be conducting a review into abuse and intimidation in elections, said:

“The Labour Party welcomes the Government’s decision to conduct a review into abuse and intimidation in elections. This kind of behaviour has no place in our democracy and the Labour Party condemn any action that seeks to undermine our tradition of free and fair elections.

“Political parties and politicians have a responsibility to set an example, by treating others with dignity and respect, including those with whom we strongly disagree.

“We look forward to working with the Government to tackle this cross-party issue, which takes place for all political parties across the political spectrum.”

Ends

There is great untapped potential here for exports and growth – Gardiner

Barry Gardiner MP, Shadow Secretary of State for International Trade, responding to today's announcement of a partnership between UKEF and high street banks, **said**:

"Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of our economy, but have been neglected for too long. Lack of adequate export finance continues to be a big barrier to trade for British SMEs, which make up to 60 percent of private sector jobs, but currently only one in five exports. There is great untapped potential here for exports and growth.

"Labour has repeatedly called for more to be done to support and ensure that UK Export Finance (UKEF) is broadened away from arms and big ticket items exclusively, and in our General Election manifesto we committed to championing SME export interests.

"Today's announcement from the government is a welcome agreement with us. However, export finance underwritten by British taxpayers should be subject to the most stringent scrutiny, risk assessment and ethical controls. Banks should not be allowed to pass ordinary lending risks to the taxpayer, nor should they be able to undertake undue risk under this scheme.

"This initiative should be used to support the growth in strategic sectors for the future of the UK economy. It should work in tandem with our industrial strategy so that taxpayer subsidised export credit does not put British industries and British jobs at risk."