



European Conservatives and Reformists Group

Guide to the ECR Group in the European Parliament

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Conservatives
in the European Parliament



**European
Conservatives
and Reformists
Group**

An introduction to the European Conservatives and Reformists Group



Introduction by Timothy Kirkhope MEP, Deputy Chairman of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR):

In the European election campaign we pledged to form the first ever centre and centre-right group in the European Parliament committed to an EU of sovereign nation states that cooperate but whose ultimate goal is not a United States of Europe.

We are proud of our new group, which enables us to articulate David Cameron's reform agenda for the European Union and to deliver more effectively for Britain.

This pamphlet acts as an introduction to the new group and its platform. If you would like to know more about the ECR Group, please get in touch.

Timothy Kirkhope

Who we are

The 25-strong Conservative MEP group is the largest UK political force in the European Parliament. Our MEPs sit as members of the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) parliamentary group. The group was formed following David Cameron's pledge to set up in the European Parliament a new centre-right group that sees a non-federalist future for the EU. The ECR Group is the first and only mainstream group in the European Parliament that stands for a Europe of nation states and free markets – and is against the federal Europe favoured by all of the other major groupings.

We believe there is an urgent need to reform the EU on the basis of Euro-realism, openness, accountability and democracy. This should be done in a

way that respects individual countries and concentrates on economic recovery, growth and competitiveness.

Our leadership

The ECR Group is led by Michał Kamiński of the Polish Law and Justice Party. Mr Kamiński spent his teenage years fighting underground against the Communist occupiers of his country and among his political idols are Margaret Thatcher and the late Ronald Reagan. He learnt English by listening to illegal broadcasts of the BBC.

After the collapse of Communism he entered the Polish Parliament, where he was the second youngest member. In 1999 he won an award from the Polish media as the best debater. In 2004, following Poland's entry into the EU, he became a Member of the European Parliament.

He left the European Parliament to become Secretary of State in the Chancellery of the President of Poland and he served as a senior national security adviser to President Kaczyński. In 2009 he returned to the European Parliament and became Chairman of the ECR Group.

The ECR's Deputy Chairman is Timothy Kirkhope (UK) and the Vice-Chairmen are Adam Bielan (Poland) and Jan Zahradil (Czech Republic).



Chairman Michał Kamiński MEP addressing the Global Counter-Terrorism Conference in Herzliya near Tel Aviv



Timothy Kirkhope MEP Adam Bielan MEP Jan Zahradil MEP

The Parties of the ECR Group

Along with the Conservative Party from the United Kingdom, parties and MEPs from seven other EU Member States have formed the ECR Group. They include the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) the largest party in the Czech Republic, led by Mirek Topolánek, a champion of liberal economic and sound public finance in Czech politics, as well as the party of the President of Poland, the Law and Justice Party.

In addition to these two major delegations from the Czech Republic and Poland, the group is joined by two former Finance Ministers, Mr Roberts Zile from Latvia and Professor Lajos Bokros from Hungary, who has been described in the Financial Times as “praised by most financial analysts for saving the country from a Mexico-like financial crisis”. The Group also includes the former senior Commission official and author of *Life of a European Mandarin*, Derk Jan Eppink, of the Belgian Lijst Dedecker Party, Valdemar Tomaševski of the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania and Peter van Dalen of the Dutch Christian Union.

With 7 new British MEPs who have a vast and varied experience in finance and the city, the British Conservative Party and the ECR will have unprecedented influence and expertise.

What we stand for

All 54 Members of the ECR Group have signed up to the Prague

Declaration of Principles, which includes:

- Free enterprise, free and fair trade and competition, minimal regulation, lower taxation, and small government as the ultimate catalysts for individual freedom and personal and national prosperity.
- Freedom of the individual, more personal responsibility and accountability.
- Sustainable, clean energy supply with an emphasis on energy security.
- The importance of the family as the bedrock of society.
- The sovereign integrity of the nation state, opposition to EU federalism and a renewed respect for true subsidiarity.
- The overriding value of the transatlantic security relationship in a revitalised NATO, and support for young democracies across Europe.
- Effectively controlled immigration and an end to abuse of asylum procedures.
- Efficient and modern public services and sensitivity to the needs of both rural and urban communities.
- An end to waste and excessive bureaucracy and a commitment to greater transparency and probity in the EU institutions and use of EU funds.
- Respect and equitable treatment for all EU countries, new and old, large and small.

See full Prague Declaration on inside back cover.

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The Prague Declaration Principles of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group

Conscious of the urgent need to reform the EU on the basis of Eurorealism, Openness, Accountability and Democracy, in a way that respects the sovereignty of our nations and concentrates on economic recovery, growth and competitiveness, the European Conservatives and Reformists Group shares the following principles:

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