

ELECTION 2019 POLICY GUIDE



ELECTION19: BREXIT

The UK Parties



- Start putting a withdrawal agreement through parliament before Christmas and leave the EU in January;
- Negotiate a trade agreement with the EU27 next year and refuse to extend the Brexit transition period beyond the end of 2020;
- Legislate at the same time to underpin workers' rights, environmental protections and consumer rights.



- The party plans to rip up Boris Johnson's Brexit deal;
- Negotiate a new arrangement with the European Union within three months, involving a UK-wide customs arrangement, close alignment with the single market and protection of workers' rights;
- Put the new deal to a referendum with remain as an option.



- Keep Scotland in the EU by supporting a second Brexit referendum with Remain on the ballot paper;
- If it comes to a choice for MPs between revoking Brexit and "no deal" with the European Union, the SNP says it would back revocation;
- In addition, Brexit is being seen by the SNP as such a big change to the UK constitution that it warrants another vote on Scottish independence or indyref2 as it is known.



- The Lib Dems want to stop Britain leaving the European Union by revoking article 50;
- In all other circumstances it says it will seek a people's vote;
- The party plans to extend the right to vote in UK referendums and elections to EU citizens who have lived in Britain for five years.
- Use a £50bn "remain bonus" to invest in public services and tackle inequality.
- The European court of justice ruled Britain could revoke article 50 unilaterally, but the move would be highly controversial, even if it received parliamentary approval.



- Hold a second referendum on Brexit, and pledges to campaign to stay in the EU;
- Push for change to make the EU institutions more transparent, and overhaul the UK electoral system with votes for 16- and 17-year-olds, proportional representation and an elected second chamber;
- The Greens have a pro-remain pact with the Lib Dems and Plaid Cymru in England & Wales, and argue leaving the EU would be a disaster for the environment.



- Seek a "clean break Brexit"
- Promises a £13bn a year "Brexit dividend"

ELECTION19: ECONOMY & TAX

The UK Parties



- Raise the national insurance threshold to £9,500 next year, with an “ultimate ambition” of increasing to £12,500;
- “Triple lock” on personal taxation: no increase in rates of income tax, national insurance or VAT;
- Fund day-to-day spending through taxation, while increasing borrowing to “invest thoughtfully and responsibly in infrastructure”.



- The party pledges to create a £400bn national transformation fund to invest in infrastructure and low-carbon energy;
- The railways, broadband infrastructure, postal services, energy utilities and water to be put in public ownership, paid for by issuing government bonds;
- Free full-fibre broadband would be available for all by 2030;
- The Labour party wants to increase spending, change who spends the money and what it is spent on. Much will be devolved to big cities as well as councils.



- Protect Scotland’s “fair and progressive” tax system;
- Invest £2bn in Scotland’s economy by establishing a Scottish investment bank;
- Oppose any proposed increase in VAT or National Insurance;
- Secure Scotland’s membership of the European single market and the customs union.



- Financial dividend from clean-break Brexit.
- Raise £200bn scrapping HS2, keeping £13bn EU contributions, £7bn from the European Investment Bank and redirecting 50% of foreign aid budget.
- Free broadband, plant millions of trees to capture CO2.
- Abolish inheritance tax, cut corporation tax and VAT on fuel, reduce import tariffs to zero.



- The Lib Dems argue that stopping Brexit would mean a £50bn remain bonus;
- Increase day-to-day spending by £62.9bn and infrastructure investment by £130bn;
- Target a current budget surplus to restrict public borrowing;
- A 1p rise in income tax, raise corporation and capital gains tax, scrap marriage allowance;
- Its spending plans are similar to Labour’s but are more restrained.



- Raise corporation tax from 19% to 24%;
- Universal basic income of £87-a-week for adults and £178 for pensioners, replacing the current income tax threshold;
- Replace council tax and business rates with a land value tax;
- Carbon taxes to accelerate phase-out of fossil fuels and raise revenue for cutting emissions;
- Simplified personal taxation will place more focus on raising revenue from under-taxed businesses, but main thrust closely linked to climate policy of generating green jobs.

ELECTION19: ENVIRONMENT

The UK Parties



- Make homes more energy efficient, with £9.2bn spend on insulation and similar measures for schools and hospitals;
- Offshore wind is to reach 40GW of capacity by 2030, £800m for carbon capture and storage and £500m to help energy-intensive industries reduce carbon;
- Protect seas with £500m Blue Planet Fund. Ban export of plastic waste to developing countries.



- The party wants to launch a Green New Deal to achieve the majority of the UK's emissions reductions by 2030;
- It pledges 1m green jobs in the energy sector and through nationwide home refurbishments;
- A clean air act to improve pollution levels, including a vehicle-scrapping scheme.



- Reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 at the latest, and to be carbon neutral by 2040.
- Ring-fence future oil and gas revenues in a net-zero fund to boost the transition to a net-zero economy.
- Phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032.
- No support for fracking developments in Scotland.
- Introduce charges for disposable cups, increase charges for disposable plastic bags and take action to remove single use plastics.



- The Lib Dems plan to invest in renewable power so it generates at least 80% of UK electricity by 2030;
- It has pledged to plant at least 60m trees a year;
- Ensure all new cars are electric by 2030 in an attempt to tackle air pollution;
- Insulate all homes across the country by 2030;
- Set a 70% target for waste recycling;
- Provide £4.5bn towards the restoration of bus routes.



- Borrow £100bn a year for the next decade to invest in infrastructure, cutting emissions to a net-zero economy by 2030;
- Insulate every home by 2030; no new petrol or diesel cars to be sold from 2030;
- Frequent flyer levy after more than one return flight a year; ban on airport expansion;
- Plant 700m trees;
- The most ambitious plan of any political party, underpinned by proposals to borrow £1tn to transform economy and society and generate millions of jobs.



- Plant millions of trees to capture CO2 and promote a global initiative at the UN and UK to recycle its own waste;
- New law to prevent waste being exported to be burned, buried or dumped at sea;

* Whilst the environment is a devolved issue for Scotland, SCC felt it appropriate to consider the policies of all parties.

ELECTION19: IMMIGRATION

The UK Parties



- Introduce a “firmer and fairer” Australian-style points-based immigration system;
- Ensure immigrants contribute to the NHS, paying in to it before they can receive benefits;
- An “NHS visa” to fast-track entry for qualified doctors, nurses and other health professionals from overseas, with an NHS job offer to those with good English;
- Unusually, the party has set out the Australian system pledge before the result of Migration Advisory Committee review. Few details on an immigration crackdown.



- Free movement of people within the EU if the UK remains. If it opts to leave, immigration rights would be negotiable under a deal;
- End to indefinite detention centres;
- Improvement in the right to bring relatives to the UK; end to minimum income requirements; changes to the work visa system.



- Campaign for EU nationals to be given automatic right to remain and full protection of their rights.
- Push for devolution of migration powers to the Scottish Parliament or a separate Scottish visa system.
- Push for Scottish government to have a role in deciding the "shortage occupation list" in order to attract the workers Scotland needs.



- Continue freedom of movement with the European Union;
- Scrap the Conservative party’s hostile environment policy;
- Introduce a 28-day time limit on immigration detention and close most detention centres;
- Plans to replace tier-2 work visas for those offered a skilled job in the UK with a more flexible merit-based system.



- Proposes to reduce annual immigration and also address wage stagnation by introducing a points-based system;
- Wants to provide a humane welcome for “genuine” refugees;
- Pledge to launch a “crackdown” on “illegal immigration” and vows to stop human trafficking.



- A pledge to end the Conservative party’s hostile environment policy;
- Abandon minimum income rules for visas;
- Full workplace rights for migrants, including the right to work for asylum seekers;
- A Windrush Day bank holiday to recognise the contribution people from the Caribbean continue to make to British society;
- The party’s internationalist outlook presents freedom of movement as a positive, while assisting those who are driven to migrate through a humanitarian foreign policy.