



**We've got what it takes**

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The SNP cares about Scottish success. Here at home, and in the parliaments in London and Brussels, our focus is first and foremost on economic recovery and jobs for families and communities. We know Scotland's got what it takes to weather the current economic storms and recover strongly – and we are working hard to make this happen.

We are ambitious for you and your family and confident in Scotland's ability to succeed, now and with Independence. We know, with the right approach, our nation will once again prosper.

Our plan for Economic Recovery is already in place, with investment in education and training, jobs and communities – and in the industries of the future. The plan will support 20,000 Scottish jobs and in the months ahead it will secure 75,000 extra training opportunities. It is on these foundations – jobs and skills – that we can build Scotland's recovery.

These are challenging times, and as Scotland's Government and Scotland's Party in Europe, we are determined to do more to make this nation healthier, safer, fairer, greener and wealthier.

These elections are about giving Scotland a strong voice in Europe, about putting the

needs and interests of you and your community to the fore. And it is also about letting the Labour government know when they are making the wrong choices.

Instead of cutting £500 million next year from the money Scotland has already earmarked to invest in recovery – at a potential cost of 9,000 jobs – we believe they should find the savings from those things that most Scots don't want – for example, by scrapping the £5 billion ID card project and the £100 billion replacement for Trident.

Certainly it is time to tighten our belts – but that has to be done without damaging the vital public services we all rely on and the prospects for economic recovery.

That is a powerful message which we in Scotland can send to Westminster on June 4th. By doing so we can make the Labour government change its mind.

These are important elections. Scotland's voice must be heard. Vote SNP – together, we've got what it takes.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alex Salmond". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Alex Salmond, Leader of the SNP**



# Our pledge

Your vote in these elections is important. As Scotland's MEPs, the SNP team will be working hard for the people of Scotland. That means:

## Protecting Scottish jobs

In this time of recession it is more important than ever to have MEPs from Scotland working in Europe to protect and create jobs for communities across Scotland.

## Focused on recovery

Our efforts will be focused on promoting Scottish economic recovery. We will help to identify and develop opportunities for Scottish businesses and Scotland's economy, especially in the industries of the future like renewables and life sciences.

## Opportunities for education and skills

Europe offers many opportunities for Scots young and old and SNP MEPs will work hard to maximise these opportunities for study, for investment in research and skills and for employment across the EU.

## Standing up for rural communities

SNP MEPs provide a strong voice for our fishing and agriculture industries in Europe. We will make the needs of our rural communities a priority.

## Working in partnership

At this time it is important for all nations and all Scottish politicians to be working in partnership for economic growth. The SNP team will play a constructive role for Scotland in Europe.

## Scotland's rightful place in Europe

We will continue to argue that the Scottish Government should speak for Scotland and represent Scottish interests in the EU.

## Supporting the Scottish Government

We will be strong partners for the Scottish Government in Europe – helping them win the best deal for our nation.

## Together, we've got what it takes

The SNP has total confidence in Scotland's ability to weather the economic downturn and recover strongly. As Scotland's MEPs we will take this message to the heart of the EU.

## A strong voice for Scotland in Europe

The more SNP MEPs elected the stronger Scotland's voice will be in Europe.

## Scotland's Party

We will always put the interests of the people of Scotland first.

*The SNP's team of candidates is ready to take the fight for Scotland's jobs to the European Parliament (l-r) Alyn Smith, Ian Hudghton, Gordon Archer, Drew Hendry, Duncan Ross and Aileen McLeod*



# Our priorities

And with your support the SNP can deliver real improvements for Scotland and Europe:

## Protecting Scottish jobs

We will invest £190 million from the European Regional Development fund to support economic recovery with a particular focus on protecting and creating jobs.

## Focused on recovery

The SNP will take forward proposals to allow investment from the European Investment Bank to support growing Scottish businesses in partnership with the recently announced Scottish Investment Bank.

## Opportunities for education and skills

And we will invest £140 million more through the European Social Fund for education, training and skills across Scotland over the next few years.

## Standing up for rural communities

Over this financial year, we will invest around £200 million in our rural economy through our rural development programme, supporting thousands of jobs across rural Scotland.

## Working in partnership

By working with the EU, our proposal for a North Sea Supergrid has now become one of the European Commission's priority projects and the SNP will continue to work to ensure that our nation is a lead partner in this work, bringing jobs and new opportunities for Scotland.

## Scotland's rightful place in Europe

We believe that Scotland, like other similar nations, should have a seat at the top table of Europe and the SNP will continue to engage more extensively with the European Commission and Council of Ministers.

## Supporting the Scottish Government

We will work with the Scottish Government to press Westminster to remove the barriers that are currently preventing £150 million of investment in Scottish renewables from the fossil fuel levy.

## Together, we've got what it takes

Together, at this election, we can make the UK government think again on its plans to cut Scottish spending and tell them instead to scrap the £5 billion ID cards and plans to waste £100 billion on new nuclear weapons.

## A strong voice for Scotland in Europe

We believe that the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) has failed and responsibility for Scotland's fisheries should be returned to Scotland. The Scottish Government has already given fishing a higher priority and the SNP in Europe will put Scotland's case strongly as the EU consults on its Green Paper on the future of the CFP.

## A new partnership

It's time for a new partnership in Europe and on these isles – a partnership that gives Scotland the freedom to prosper. Independence is the natural state for nations like our own. We can become one of Europe's powerhouse nations, with our internal market not just the 60 million citizens of the UK, but the 600 million citizens who live in the expanded EU. We can open the door to greater prosperity and opportunity for Scots young and old.

And on these islands, it means enhancing what is important in our social union with England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The United Kingdom will become united kingdoms of equal states. As partners we will be able to work together when that is the right choice and will be free to choose our own path when that is in Scotland's best interests.

As an independent country, within this new partnership, we will have the freedom to give Scotland a competitive advantage – delivering more and better paid jobs to build a wealthier Scotland. We can decide to stop wasting billions on ID cards and new nuclear weapons and instead protect investment in recovery and jobs – helping build a fairer and

Scotland already enjoys some of the benefits of being a part of the EU. But those benefits will not be enjoyed to their fullest extent without the full responsibilities of Independence. Only when our voice is heard at the top table of the EU will we be able to achieve our full potential in Europe and get the best from it.

With Independence, Scotland will gain the right to nominate a member to the European Commission. Scottish ministers already attend European Council meetings regularly and the Scottish Government is speaking up for Scotland in Europe. Only with Independence can these ministers regularly lead national delegations to Europe, which are committed to a positive approach and which are determined to defend Scotland's interests in vital areas - such as fisheries, the environment and transport.

Only Independence will give the people of Scotland a full voice in Europe. The recent referendum in Ireland forced the EU to listen to the Irish - and Ireland has accordingly won concessions and guarantees in areas of importance to them. Similarly, with Independence



stronger nation. And we will be able to choose to invest our national wealth in renewable energy rather than nuclear power stations - making Scotland safer and greener.

The SNP also has a long-standing record of standing up for Scotland in the European Parliament. SNP MEPs such as Winnie Ewing, Allan Macartney and Neil MacCormick have ensured that Scotland has friends throughout Europe who will welcome us as an independent nation. They know Scotland's got what it takes to be a successful member of the EU.

### **Onwards to Independence in Europe**

Recent poll evidence shows that Scots want to be represented by the Scottish Government in Europe. Independence offers that better future. We believe it is the right choice and the best choice for our nation. And you will be able to decide. You will be able to choose a new and more modern relationship when the Scottish Government holds an Independence referendum next year.

Scotland will be able to fight the case for Scotland's interests. It is important that Europe is brought as close as possible to its citizens and it is vital that Europe's politicians and bureaucrats pay heed to Europe's people. We believe there should be a UK-wide referendum on ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. While we are favourable to Scotland joining the Euro when the time is right, this decision will rest with the Scottish people in a referendum.

The SNP is all about success for Scotland in the modern world. That demands Independence for Scotland in Europe. Our nation needs a strong SNP voice in the European Parliament to argue Scotland's case - and prepare the way for Scotland gaining full rights in all the EU's institutions. With Independence, we can put Scotland where we belong, at the heart of Europe.

# Scottish Government – SNP actions so far

## Investment in recovery

Since taking office in Scotland, the SNP Government has been focussed on Scotland's economy. When the economic downturn started to bite we acted to protect jobs, invest in skills and support Scotland's industries of the future. These are just some examples of our actions as part of our Economic Recovery Plan.

## Jobs and communities

We have accelerated over £300 million of capital spending to protect 6,000 Scottish jobs and our total capital investment this year is supporting over 50,000 jobs.

Our Economic Recovery Plan will protect 20,000 jobs and as part of that £70 million of European funding will support 8,000 Scottish jobs.

Tens of thousands of small Scottish businesses will pay no rates this year, helping them

The recently announced Scottish Investment Bank will deliver £150 million to support growing Scottish companies, helping them become the big businesses and employers of the future.

## Taking forward our Economic Recovery Plan

As a government we are tightening our belts to direct more money towards economic recovery – just one step, a nationwide public sector electricity contract, will save £10 million each year, which we will invest in recovery. SNP ministers also gave a lead by turning down their salary increase awarded in April 2009.

We are ensuring all government activity, including planning and regulation, supports economic development – our new e-Planning system will save business almost £40 million.

Our capital spending plans have been re-shaped - £100 million is being spent on affordable housing as part of a £3.5 billion annual capital investment that will protect 50,000 Scottish jobs.

survive the downturn and keep people in work.

### **Education and skills**

This year, we are funding 18,500 new modern apprenticeships, an increase of almost 8,000 places on last year.

£25 million of European funding will provide 75,000 new training opportunities.

50,000 pupils have been freed from the difficulty of learning in poor, out of date school buildings and our investment will remove at least another 50,000 from inadequate accommodation by 2011.

### **Innovation and the industries of the future**

The £10 million Saltire Prize has put Scotland at the centre of world efforts to develop transformational marine energy technology.

We have given consent to a record number of renewable projects and Scotland is now well on its way to meeting our renewable energy targets.

We are intensifying our activity and support for Homecoming 2009, to boost tourism – the campaign is expected to deliver £40 million in revenue for our tourism sector with 100,000 additional visitors to Scotland.

We are doing more to help those facing fuel poverty – over the past two years a record number of central heating systems have been installed to keep our elderly warm and we are investing an extra £10 million to make sure those young families most at risk of fuel poverty are able to have central heating installed too.

To help hard-pressed families we are improving financial advice and support to vulnerable individuals – families facing repossession can protect their homes with £35 million now available to support rent or shared equity alternatives and we are expanding our shared equity scheme for first time buyers nationwide with spending increased by 150% to £60 million.

We have strengthened the help for people facing redundancy, including investing an additional £7 million in Further Education colleges to support short-term re-skilling course to get people back into work.

And we are increasing support for businesses – by abolishing business rates for tens of thousands of small businesses and investing £60 million in town centre regeneration for Scotland's small towns.

We have no doubt that Scotland's got what it takes to recover and prosper once again. In the weeks and months ahead we will intensify our efforts to protect jobs and grow our economy.

## Investment in a better Scotland

Of course over the past 2 years, we have taken forward many important measures to make Scotland fairer, healthier, stronger and greener:

- **Lower local tax** - Working with local councils we have frozen the council tax for 2 years.
- **More free nursery education** – We are well on the way to a 50% increase in the number

- **Meeting our energy targets** - By 2011 over 30% of our electricity will come from Scottish renewable energy sources - helping to reduce our carbon emissions and tackling climate change.
- **Free, nutritious school meals** - In 2010, thousands of Scottish children in P1 to P3 will receive free, nutritious school meals for the first time, delivered by an SNP Government which is helping to ease the pressure on family budgets and improving health.
- **Supporting our students** – Access to further and higher education should be based on ability to learn not ability to pay. The SNP Government have abolished the Graduate Endowment fee and invested an additional £84 million in student support, including £38 million to replace loans with grants for up to 20,000 part-time students and £16.1 million for students facing hardship.
- **Investing the proceeds of crime** - £12 million seized from Scotland's criminal gangs is being invested through our Cashback for Communities programme in communities across Scotland to give more than 100,000 young Scots improved opportunities in sport, arts and education.

of free nursery hours every week, giving children a better start to their education.

- **Faster hospital treatment** - Waiting times are on their way down and from 2011 you and your family will have a health guarantee of 18 weeks from referral to treatment in hospital.
- **An end to unfair health charges** – We are reducing Prescription charges year on year and we will phase them out completely in early 2011. We have also scrapped unfair hospital car park charges which were a tax on ill-health.
- **Quicker rail journey times** – We are speeding up journey times between Edinburgh and Glasgow, the central belt and Aberdeen and Inverness, and we have provided more seats and services on key commuter routes.
- **More police on the beat** - We have recruited record numbers of police and put them on the beat. The SNP Government is committed to funding 1,000 extra officers by 2011 and we are already delivering record low crime levels across Scotland.
- **Recycling at record high levels** - The overall recycling rate in Scotland increased by 3.3% to 31.7% in 2007-08 and the Scottish Government has allocated increased funding for green waste treatment.

- **More local healthcare** - The SNP has saved two accident and emergency units in Monklands and Ayr, cancer hospitals for children and neurosurgery units in Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh, and maternity services at Vale of Leven and Inverclyde – keeping healthcare local.

# SNP – Investing for the future

## Opportunities for economic growth

The EU provides the perfect environment for Scottish business to flourish – with access to a market of 600 million people and, with Independence, the ability to tailor our tax system to encourage businesses to set up decision making HQs in Scotland.

And, as the energy powerhouse of Europe, Scotland can be a significant provider of energy to other nations within the EU. There is no doubt Scotland can be a leader in green energy in Europe with the benefit seen in high-quality employment, and new opportunities in manufacturing and research.

When the Scottish Government came to office in 2007 we promoted the concept of a North Sea Supergrid – an electricity interconnector that would allow Scotland to provide secure, competitive, clean energy direct into European markets. The offshore grid has now become one of the European Commission's priority projects and the SNP will continue to work with the Commission to ensure that Scotland is a lead partner in this work. The benefits of exporting power from energy-rich Scotland to the energy-poorer areas are significant not just for Scottish economy but for all European nations and that is why the SNP are

increased investment into our renewables sector and the SNP has given consent for a record number of green energy projects including hydro, tidal and Europe's largest onshore wind farm and groundbreaking offshore wind developments. We will continue to press the UK government to remove the barriers that are currently preventing £150 million of investment in Scottish renewables from the fossil fuel levy.

The Saltire Prize – the world's largest innovation prize for marine renewables - has also received support from Europe's Energy Commissioner and there have been a significant number of expressions of interest from companies across Europe and the world.

We have supported the development of large-scale bio-mass securing jobs in Scottish industry and believe this form of energy has a big future in Scotland, allowing us to make the most of our extensive sustainable forestry resource, while reducing our carbon emissions.

The European Union has acknowledged Scotland's potential - that's why Europe's economic

determined to see this extraordinary opportunity realised.

The opportunity also extends to Carbon Capture and Storage. Scotland is among the countries best placed in the world for the clean carbon potential of carbon capture schemes and could significantly benefit from it. We have the geology and infrastructure in the North Sea to provide capacity to store decades of CO2 output from across Europe. Scotland's economy and the planet's environment will benefit from the creation of a North Sea CO2 Storage Hub, and as Europe looks to invest in this technology the SNP will press for European support for such a project.

### **Europe's green energy leader**

Scotland has a huge comparative advantage in renewable and green energy – and the SNP is determined that our nation makes the most of this potential. Scotland holds 25% of Europe's wind and tidal power potential. That is a huge resource which greatly surpasses Scotland's own energy needs. Coupled with the skills and expertise developed in 40 years experience in the oil and gas industry, Scotland is well placed to be Europe's Green Energy Powerhouse.

Green energy could create 16,000 new jobs in Scotland in the next ten years starting with projects already approved by the SNP Government. The Scottish Government is putting

recovery plan includes investment in Scotland's green energy technology. The SNP team will ensure this excellent opportunity for Scotland is at the forefront of our dealings with other nations across the EU, and we will work to ensure Scotland is well-placed to access any new funds available through the EU for renewable investment.

### **Creating a more competitive country**

Scotland has so many natural advantages and it is the job of the SNP and Scottish Government to ensure we build on these to create a country that is one of the most attractive places in Europe to live and grow successful businesses.

We are working with the European Investment Bank to maximise opportunities for investment in Scotland. We are making full use of European funds, through the Social Fund and our Rural Development Programme. Among other initiatives, we are focusing on employability and long-term sustainability. As part of the Scottish Government's Economic Recovery Programme we are accelerating investment so that more Scottish businesses are able to survive the downturn and then, once again, prosper.

In particular the SNP will take forward proposals to allow investment from the European Investment Bank to support growing Scottish businesses in partnership with the recently announced Scottish Investment Bank.

### **New investment in economic development, education and skills**

The SNP and Scottish Government will continue to focus European funds on promoting economic recovery. That means £140 million more invested through the European Social Fund for education, training and skills across Scotland over the next few years. And we will also direct our efforts to support jobs and growing businesses, with another £190 million available from the European Regional Development fund for a range of projects and to support economic recovery.

### **Protecting recovery**

These elections are also the first opportunity for the people of Scotland to make their voice heard on the UK government's plans to cut £500 million from the money Scotland has available to invest in our Economic Recovery Plan. This cut will put at risk 9,000 Scottish jobs and is the wrong approach in a recession. We believe the UK government should instead be halting spending on ID cards and new nuclear weapons – that would save £30 billion over the next decade and over £100 billion in the longer term.

The SNP team in Edinburgh, London and Brussels will work to force the Labour government

management. Our conservation credits scheme sees government, industry and science working together to implement effective conservation measures saving jobs and preserving our fish stocks. Our MEPs will continue to play a key role in seeking to secure a fairer deal on fisheries from the EU.

We know the Common Fisheries Policy has failed Scotland and our fishing communities. We believe that power over Scotland's fisheries should be returned to Scotland. The SNP will put Scotland's case strongly as the EU consults on its Green Paper on the future of the CFP.

And for farm businesses we will continue to work to maximise opportunities through the Common Agricultural Policy following success for Scotland in the CAP Health Check process. This year Scotland's voice was heard loud and clear during talks on the future of European agriculture.

SNP efforts helped Scotland's farmers win a more level playing field on "modulation", bringing other countries payments more closely into line with Scotland; a fairer deal on decoupling; avoiding the threat of excessive subsidy cuts for larger holdings through so



in London to think again. Every vote for the SNP in these elections will be a vote to protect Scotland's investment in economic recovery and the vital services in your neighbourhood.

### **Growing the rural economy**

We will continue our work to make sure Scotland's rural economy prospers through effective working at an EU level. Fishing and farming are proportionately more important to Scotland than the rest of the UK and they are issues where Europe has a big say.

We are continuing to work closely with the fishing industry in helping it to meet current challenges such as those posed by the financial crisis and the implementation of new rules. Over the past two years we have committed tens of millions of pounds in helping the fishing industry through research and grants.

We have secured a number of opportunities for the industry such as increased catching opportunities and are working hard to bring full responsibility for fisheries back to Scotland. We are also placing sea food at the heart of our food policy working hard to promote sea food as a tasty healthy food source to consumers in Scotland and elsewhere.

Our efforts in fisheries demonstrate the partnership we are aiming to deliver, with Scotland taking the lead in Europe on the development of sustainable fisheries

called "progressive modulation" and avoiding damaging proposals to change the way we pay single farm payments from historic to flat rate payments. SNP MEPs will continue to work with the Scottish Government to help cut red tape and ensure direct support beyond 2013. We also need to ensure that European rules maintain flexibility in the implementation of rules that recognises Scotland's unique situation.

SNP MEPs working with the Scottish Government are a powerful and positive voice for Scotland's farmers and rural communities. This sets the tone for our approach to the more fundamental reform of the CAP in 2013. SNP MEPs have been successful in promoting Scottish quality goods in the EU and will continue to work towards ensuring food security and promoting local produce such as through country of origin.

This same approach of seeking the right deal for Scotland is reflected in our Scotland Rural Development Programme with funds of around £1.5 billion. After detailed discussion with the European Commission this programme is now able to deliver support for sustainable rural businesses, for diversity and environmental protection. Over this financial year, the SNP are committed to investing around £200 million in our rural economy through this programme, supporting thousands of jobs across rural Scotland.

# SNP – actions for a better Scotland and Europe

The SNP is working hard to make Scotland and Europe safer, smarter, greener and healthier.

## **Meeting the climate change challenge**

Creating a greener Scotland and a greener Europe is not just about developing renewable energies. It is also about reducing our carbon footprint and developing policies with this in mind. The SNP Scottish Government will be the first government in the world to introduce a system of carbon budgeting so that all Scotland's investment will be balanced not just on spending but on the impact it has on climate change as well.

Scotland will be leading the world and SNP MEPs will take the knowledge and experiences gained at home and press for Europe to follow the Scottish Government's example and begin its own system of carbon budgeting as part of the EU budget process. This will mean the spending we undertake with partners across the EU is clearly contributing to reducing CO2 emissions.

## **Working openly and transparently**

SNP MEPs will publish a quarterly breakdown of all office, accommodation and travel costs, signed off by a certified accountant. The SNP team will press for Scottish Parliament standards to be applied across the European Parliament.

## **A platform for success**

The SNP is focused on helping every Scot achieve their full potential. In these times of economic uncertainty it is essential that we are able to learn and adapt to new challenges that may arise.

The Scottish Government is pushing forward an agenda which is aimed at ensuring success at every stage of life. We are proud to have increased funding for free nursery care, freed students from the burden of debt and restored free education. And our ongoing review of national qualifications will allow our education system to adapt to the needs of the 21st century.

The Scottish Government has also stated its clear rejection of nuclear power as a solution for the future. Scotland has experienced the damage nuclear power can do and the waste it can produce. SNP MEPs will continue to stand against Labour and Conservative proposals for new nuclear power stations and will forge alliances in the European Parliament to put the case for a non-nuclear future.

It is through such direct engagement with the EU and our partner nations that Scotland's interests will be promoted and protected now and in the future. It is the right approach for Scotland after years when our interests in Europe have been under-represented – it is the best approach for a greener Scotland and a greener Europe.

### **A greener European Parliament**

Whilst many good environmental initiatives come out of the EU, the European Parliament itself could do more to protect the environment. One good example is the Parliament's monthly journey to Strasbourg which comes at no small expense - both to the environment and the taxpayer. SNP MEPs have long campaigned to end this absurdity and will continue to do so in the future.

The SNP is committed to a smarter Scotland and a smarter Europe. Cooperation at a European level increases opportunities for individuals and the EU offers added value to the Scottish experience. Thousands of Scots have benefited from the Erasmus programme over the years and to help more Scots students enjoy a European experience the Scottish Government has provided record funding to help with the costs of studying abroad.

The EU is focused upon increasing cooperation and the exchange of good practice in learning systems and, with our unique and world renowned education system, Scotland has played a vital role in this. Our European Green Energy Research Centre is designed to allow Scots academics to tap in more effectively to resources for research available in Europe and is a clear example of the advantages for Scotland and Europe of effective engagement. The SNP will take forward this initiative so that Scotland can harness the expertise developed in the renewables, oil and gas industries to shape the European energy supply of the future.

## **Investing in our health**

The SNP is unwavering in our commitment to have the NHS restored to its founding principles: a publicly owned service free at point of delivery. Effective action by the SNP Government to phase out prescription charges will remove this tax on ill-health, guaranteeing all patients access to the medicines they need. And moving away from PFI contracting means that future hospital developments will remain in full public ownership. In Europe, SNP MEPs will press to ensure that the Scottish Government's work in this area is not undermined by EU policy while protecting our values.

We will continue to work with the EU to ensure that cross-border activities are facilitated while protecting our values and principles at home. We will work to ensure that all EU member states provide good quality health care across Europe so that any Scot, either visiting or living within other EU member states, receives the same rights and excellence in health care as they do at home.

## **Creating a smoke free Europe**

## **Leading Europe in innovation**

Scottish Universities are already at the forefront of European research. Our universities offer world leading medical research. These efforts will be enhanced by the Scottish Government's new apprenticeship in life sciences. With European support, Scottish university projects are becoming Scotland's newest thriving industries, with European funding recently providing £5 million to support Scotland's world-leading translational medicine collaboration. The SNP will continue to seek these opportunities for Scotland's industries of the future.

## **Scotland in a multi-lingual Europe**

Increased mobility in the EU means an increasingly multi-lingual society. The Scottish Government's strategy for English for Speakers of Other Languages has a vision for all Scottish residents who don't have English as a first language to have access to high quality language provision. We are proud to have these new Scottish residents add to our nation's diversity and enrich our society as a whole.

Preventing smoking in public places is an important step to creating a smoke free, healthier Scotland and the SNP is working in partnership with our European neighbours in the fight against tobacco. In addition to the Scottish Government's smoking prevention action plan, a number of initiatives have been taken at a European-wide level and the SNP will continue to work with the EU to make sure that future initiatives are powerful tools in creating a smoke free Europe.

### **Healthier eating in a healthier Scotland**

Healthy eating is a key ingredient to achieving a healthier Scotland. Effective action from the Scottish Government has led to thousands of Scottish children benefiting, as the SNP delivers on its promise to provide free, nutritious school meals for P1 to P3 classes, and Scotland's exceptional food and drinks industry will benefit and grow as the SNP supports a National Food and Drink Policy as well as promoting health and well-being.

The EU is also working in this area with a yearly €90 million scheme to promote fruit and vegetables in schools across Europe, and an increase in the budget for free milk for schoolchildren in Scotland. The SNP team in Government, Holyrood and Europe will continue to support these moves and look to have as many schools as possible in Scotland take advantage of these initiatives.

In line with developing a secure and sustainable future for Gaelic, and further promoting Scots, we are also taking forward proposals for a languages baccalaureate aimed at encouraging more of our young people to study European and other languages in secondary school. The SNP recognises that the EU offers people from Scotland opportunities to live and work overseas inclusive to making full use of the largest free market with 600 million people, and that language skills are essential to achieving success both for Scots and the Scottish economy.

### **Supporting Scotland's workers**

The freedom of movement of workers is a keystone of the EU and has been an overwhelming success. Thousands of Scots have benefited from job opportunities across Europe, and Scotland in turn has welcomed many newcomers who add to the diversity and cultural mix in communities the length and breadth of Scotland.

The SNP believes that a fair deal for Scottish workers must come hand in hand with the freedom of movement and we will work in Europe to ensure that the correct balance is reached between a fully functioning single market and justice for all.

## **A partnership for combating crime**

Scotland has a unique and separate justice system, and responsibilities for combating crime are largely a matter for the Scottish Government. Serious organised crime does however have an increasingly international aspect and issues such as drug smuggling, people trafficking and money laundering clearly have cross-border relevance.

The SNP supports joined-up action across the EU to combat crime and SNP ministers will work closely with SNP MEPs and ensure the efforts of Scotland's representative office in Brussels is focused on maximising effective cooperation and engagement on these issues with the Commission and in the European Parliament. Scotland's support for the structures which deliver co-operation in crime fighting has already resulted in some spectacular successes and some significant convictions. We will continue such efforts, for example, to ensure criminal databases are shared appropriately between European countries to ensure we fully aware of the backgrounds of people entering Scotland.

## **Animal welfare**

It is increasingly recognised that compassion towards animals is a mark of a civilised society, and that research shows that abuse of animals can also be linked to interpersonal violence and other forms of offending. SNP MEPs will be pressing for legislation that will see the current minimum level of animal welfare regulations raised in order to guarantee that none of Europe's animals suffer needlessly.

The next five year session of the European Parliament will see several vital pieces of legislation debated, as well as the commencement of several bans which were put in place during the previous sitting. Our MEPs will put pressure on the European Commission to make sure that these bans are implemented fully across the European Union, as well as ensuring that legislation such as the review of the Common Agricultural Policy or Animal Experimentation Directive takes animal welfare into account.

### **Scotland's place in a safer and stronger world**

The Scottish Government is already using the responsibilities it has to play a positive role in international affairs and has doubled Scotland's international development budget. This fund is helping Scottish organisations working now on development projects, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa. The EU also plays an important part in promoting global fairness. The EU has a significant programme of international development and the SNP makes use of its voice in the European Parliament to articulate the needs of the developing world. The SNP has a strong track record in Europe on overseas aid issues and our MEPs will continue to speak out for international development.

### **Supporting our creative culture**

The SNP is committed to creating a culturally diverse Scotland where our creative community is fully supported. Homecoming 2009 is providing a showcase for Scotland's abundance of artistic talent and the SNP intends to build on the current success in the longer term. SNP MEPs have long supported Scotland's unique place in a culturally rich Europe. We will continue to work to ensure Scotland's contribution is positive and beneficial for us and for our neighbours in Europe.

A blue and white flag, possibly the Scottish flag, is shown waving in the wind against a solid blue background. The flag's stripes are diagonal, with blue on the top-left and bottom-right, and white on the top-right and bottom-left. The text 'We've got what it takes' is overlaid in white with a slight shadow.

# We've got what it takes