



# Press Release

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For immediate use

## A New Deal for Social Europe

The European Union should provide a minimum standard for universal childcare to make a European social Europe a reality, leading Labour figures said today. In a pamphlet published by the Foreign Policy Centre, Neil Kinnock, Ken Livingstone, Stephen Twigg said that a new deal for a social Europe was an urgent priority.

STEPHEN TWIGG, Director of the Foreign Policy Centre, today said:

“There is now clear evidence that the provision of good quality universal childcare and education for the under-fives helps to boost educational performance and promote social mobility. Participation in education and society boosts growth, advances gender equality, reduces child poverty and increases the birth rate.

“The European Union should set minimum standards covering all member states. Those that already provide a service that meets those standards would receive a rebate on their budget contributions.”

In the pamphlet, ‘*A New Deal for Social Europe*’, the authors set out their vision for a modernised social Europe and warn Labour and the trade unions not to retreat to national isolationism.

“The response to Europe’s current problems cannot be to retreat into the politics of national isolationism or to narrow our agenda to the solitary task of creating an economic market.

“Europeans want the opportunity to thrive in the global era without compromising their prosperity, security, freedom and social standards. Our ability to meet those aspirations has always been the fundamental test of our relevance as a political movement. It is a challenge we can only now realistically face as part of a strong and politically united Europe with a clear progressive agenda.”

**ENDS**

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