

## EU referendum: Campaigner update No. 6

February 2016

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The government has announced that the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU will be held on the 23 June 2016.

We are the regulator of political funding and spending. We register campaigners and regulate their spending and donations at referendums.

Our objective is to ensure integrity and transparency of campaign funding and spending for voters.

We will continue to publish updates, providing additional guidance for campaigners on any changes to the rules, best practice for campaigners and key dates and deadlines.

## About this update

This update covers:

- key dates for the referendum
- advice service and guidance
- the referendum period and the regulated period for the May 2016 elections
- restrictions on public bodies at the referendum

## Key dates

On 20 February, the Prime Minister announced that the UK Government's proposed date for the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union is 23 June 2016. Regulations will now need to be debated and approved by the UK Parliament before the date of the poll is confirmed.

The proposed referendum period is:

Start of referendum period	15 April
Polling day	23 June

The proposed designation period is:

Application period starts	4 March
Deadline for applications	31 March
Designation decision	14 April

The proposed pre-poll reporting dates are:

Reporting period	Deadline for pre-poll reports
1 February – 21 April	28 April
22 April – 12 May	19 May
13 May – 9 June	16 June
10 June – 22 June	29 June

Following the announcement of the proposed date, we have published a statement on the Electoral Commission's assessment of readiness for delivering the poll [here](#).

We will publish guidance shortly on our [website](#) covering:

- timetables and deadlines
- managing spending
- the rules on working together with other referendum campaigners
- pre-poll reporting for EU referendum campaigners
- campaigning at the EU Referendum and May 2016 elections

## Advice service and guidance

You can find our guidance for the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU on this [page](#).

We are always happy to give campaigners advice on how to comply with the rules.

Please contact us on 0333 103 1928  
[pef@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:pef@electoralcommission.org.uk)

Alternatively you can use the email addresses below.

- England and Gibraltar:  
[pef@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:pef@electoralcommission.org.uk)
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- Wales: 0333 103 1929  
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## The referendum period and the regulated period for May 2016 elections

The proposed referendum period starts on 15 April and ends on 23 June 2016. The regulated period for non-party campaigners and political parties campaigning in the following elections started on 5 January and ends on polling day, 5 May 2016:

- Scottish Parliamentary election
- National Assembly for Wales and Police and Crime Commissioner elections in Wales
- Northern Ireland Assembly election

This means there is a period where the regulated period and the referendum period overlap from 15 April until 5 May 2016.

Campaign spending at the EU referendum and campaign spending for the May 2016 elections are regulated under separate rules. We will be publishing guidance that explains how to record and report spending in the overlapping period. You can also call or email us for advice.

## Restrictions on public bodies in the run up to the referendum

Under PPERA, there are restrictions on the material that the UK and devolved Government ministers, government departments, local authorities and certain bodies receiving public funds can publish about the referendum from 27 May to 23 June 2016, polling day.

The restrictions apply to any material, made available to the public, in any form and by whatever means which provides general information about the referendum as well as the issues and arguments for or against the UK remaining or leaving the EU. The restrictions also apply to material designed to encourage people to vote.

We will shortly publish a factsheet that explains the restrictions, and where you can find out more information. It will be available here: [Publicly funded bodies and the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU](#).

## For other information about the referendum

On our website, [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk), you can find:

- more information about our role in referendums
- our key principles for running referendums
- our approach to assessing referendum questions
- our findings on the referendum question
- briefings on the Bill explaining our position on provisions where appropriate