

Dear [REDACTED]

Our Ref: FOI 211/18

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **21 December 2018**.

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and regrets it has not **done so within the statutory timeframe of twenty working days**.

Your request is in bold below followed by our response.

- 1. Please provide me with the number of complaints received by the Electoral Commission against a) Brexit supporting groups and b) Remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**
- 2. Please provide me with details of the number of active investigations being carried out by the Electoral Commission against a) Brexit supporting groups and b) remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**
- 3. Please provide me with details of the number staff allocated to these active investigations being carried out by the Electoral Commission against a) Brexit supporting groups and b) remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**
- 4. Please provide me a summary of the cost of investigating a) Brexit supporting groups and b) remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**
- 5. Please can you provide me with information about the number of meetings held between the Commissioners, members of the Executive and Management teams and a) Brexit supporting groups and b) remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**
- 6. Please provide me with the number of complaints received by the Electoral Commission against a) Brexit supporting groups and b) Remain supporting groups from Members of Parliament?**

Our response is as follows:

We hold some of the information you have requested.

- 1. Please provide me with the number of complaints received by the Electoral Commission against a) Brexit supporting groups and b) Remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**

The Commission does not categorise incoming correspondence as 'complaints' about campaigners, but instead about the subject matter. It is not therefore possible for us to answer this request without creating new information.

We do separately categorise allegations of non-compliance with the law, and we publish the outcomes of all of our investigations on our website. You can find that here:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/our-work/roles-and-responsibilities/our-role-as-regulator-of-political-party-finances/sanctions>

We do not however categorise the published information in relation to the political views (or in this case desired referendum outcome) of the subject. You can review the list of registered permitted participants in the EU Referendum, which does indicate the desired outcome of each campaigner, here:

<http://search.electoralcommission.org.uk/Search/Registrations?currentPage=1&rows=50&sort=ApprovedDate&order=desc&et=perpar®ister=none®Status=registered&referendum=5&optCols=CampaigningName&optCols=EntityStatusName&optCols=ReferendumName&optCols=DesignationStatusName&optCols=ReferendumOutcome>

- 2. Please provide me with details of the number of active investigations being carried out by the Electoral Commission against a) Brexit supporting groups and b) remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**

At the time of your request there were three ongoing investigations relating to EU Referendum campaigners. We do not however categorise the case records relation to the desired referendum outcome of the subject.

- 3. Please provide me with details of the number staff allocated to these active investigations being carried out by the Electoral Commission against a) Brexit supporting groups and b) remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**

We do not allocate staff in this way, as investigations are conducted with a team approach drawing on relevant legal and other expertise and senior management as necessary. The number of people working on any investigation can therefore vary on an almost daily basis, and over the duration of the investigation.

- 4. Please provide me a summary of the cost of investigating a) Brexit supporting groups and b) remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**

We do not hold this information. The Commission does not operate a time recording or costing system for individual investigations. In case it is helpful you can find the Commission's last published accounts within our annual report for 2017-18, here:

https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/245000/Annual-report-and-accounts-2017-18.pdf

- 5. Please can you provide me with information about the number of meetings held between the Commissioners, members of the Executive and Management teams and a) Brexit supporting groups and b) remain supporting groups. This should include pressure groups, government bodies, the official campaigns and charities who were perceived to have, or did actually campaign in the EU referendum?**

We do not hold this information. The Commission does not maintain an overall record of meetings attended by Commission Board members and staff. We do however publish on our website a record of external meetings attended by our Chief Executive and Chair.

The meetings of the Chief Executive are published here – <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/our-work/who-we-are/executive-and-management-team#>

The meetings of the Chair are published here –
<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/our-work/who-we-are/the-commissioners>

6. Please provide me with the number of complaints received by the Electoral Commission against a) Brexit supporting groups and b) Remain supporting groups from Members of Parliament?

See response to question 1.

I trust that this information satisfies your request.

If you are not satisfied with this response, please note that the Commission operates a review procedure, details of which can be found on the Commission website at:
<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/about-us/freedom-of-information-requests/how-do-i-make-an-foi-request>

Please also note that if you have exhausted all internal Commission review procedures and you are still not satisfied you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. Details of this procedure can be found on the ICO website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely,

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The Electoral Commission