

[REDACTED]

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**From:** FOI  
**Sent:** 29 June 2016 13:56  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: FOI 66/16 - Nationality of prospective voters

Dear [REDACTED]

**Our Ref: FOI 66/16**

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2016

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and has done so within the statutory timeframe of twenty working days

Your request is in bold below followed by our response.

You have requested:

**I require you to ensure that each man or woman in charge of each polling station on the 23rd June 2014 is aware of the correct method of checking the nationality of each prospective voter.**

**FURTHER I require my right given under the Freedom of Information act to be informed how you intend to do as I require.**

Our response is as follows:

The Electoral Commission is not responsible for training polling station staff, but works to support well-run elections and referendums in the UK, offering support and guidance to those involved.

There were 382 Counting Officers (COs) for the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union, one for each local government area in Great Britain, plus one each for Northern Ireland and Gibraltar. In Great Britain, the Counting Officer for each local authority area was, by law, the person who was the local government Returning Officer for that area, in Northern Ireland it was the Chief Electoral Officer and in Gibraltar it was the Clerk of the Gibraltar Parliament. COs were responsible for the voting process in their area, including the training of all polling station staff.

The Chief Counting Officer for the referendum, who is also the Chair of the Electoral Commission, gave guidance to Counting Officers on the administration of the poll. General guidance on the training of polling station staff can be found in [Part B: Planning and organisation](#). She also provided [polling station handbooks](#) and [quick guides](#) to support COs and their polling station staff, along with resources COs could adapt and use when training staff, including a [template polling station briefing](#), [polling station scenarios](#) and a [polling station quiz](#).

Our guidance and resources made clear that polling station staff had to check that a voter was eligible to vote in the referendum before issuing a ballot paper. Eligibility is confirmed by the polling station staff checking the voter's entry on the electoral register. The electoral register contains the details of everybody who successfully applied to register, irrespective of whether they are entitled to vote at all or only some elections and referendums in the UK. A specific marker is printed next to those electors who are eligible to vote at certain elections and referendums only.

There are different markers for different types of electors, but the purpose of these markers is to ensure that the elector will not be issued with a ballot paper unless they are eligible to vote at a particular election or referendum.

For example, a 'G' marker next to a name on the electoral register indicates that the person is a citizen of a European Union member state (excluding citizens of the Republic of Ireland, Cyprus and Malta). Those electors shown on the register with a 'G' marker were ineligible to vote at the EU referendum and polling station staff will have been instructed not to issue a ballot paper to these electors. You can find an overview of the franchise markers that are printed on electoral registers in the [quick guide for polling station staff](#) which was provided as a reference tool to all polling station staff at the referendum.

The voter registration process followed for the EU referendum was the same as the one for all other electoral events in the UK. For further information on electoral registration, you may wish to refer to the Commission's guidance for Electoral Registration Officers, which is available for download from our website at: [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/running-electoral-registration](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/running-electoral-registration)

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: <http://www.ico.gov.uk>

Yours sincerely

**Jo Crofton-Diggins**  
**Information Manager**

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**Putting voters first**

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**From:** FOI

**Sent:** 03 June 2016 15:12

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** FOI 66/16 - Nationality of prospective voters

Dear [REDACTED]

**Our Ref: FOI 66/16**

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2016.

We have understood your request as follows:

**I require you to ensure that each man or woman in charge of each polling station on the 23rd June 2014 is aware of the correct method of checking the nationality of each prospective voter.**

**FURTHER I require my right given under the Freedom of Information act to be informed how you intend to do as I require.**

However, if you would prefer to clarify this request in any manner, please get in touch with us as soon as possible.

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and within the statutory timeframe of twenty working days.

You may expect to receive a reply sent from the Commission by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016.

Yours sincerely

**Paul O'Malley**  
**Information Adviser (Records Management)**

The Electoral Commission

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[www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)

[www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk)

**Putting voters first**

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