

Political parties accept donations of nearly £21 million in first quarter of 2023 | Electoral Commission Search Political parties accept donations of nearly £21 million in first quarter of 2023 You are in the section Home Posted: 8 June 2023

Political parties accept donations of nearly £21 million in first quarter of 2023 Political parties registered in the UK have reported accepting £20,887,106 in donations and public funds during the first quarter of 2023, according to figures published today by the Electoral Commission. This compares to £12,792,415 accepted in the same period in 2022 (January to March). Louise Edwards, the Electoral Commission's Director of Regulation and Digital Transformation, said: "We publish details of these donations so that voters understand how political parties are funded. We know transparency of party and campaigner finance is important for people, but our research tells us that only 24 per cent of people believe party funding is transparent. "It's clear that publishing this information is not enough. We continue to recommend to the UK Government that it reforms the system, to help protect parties from those who seek to evade the law, and give voters more confidence." Political parties are required to submit quarterly donation and loan returns to the Electoral Commission. Within these returns, parties report:

- donations accepted above the £7,500 threshold (over £1,500 for accounting units)
- smaller donations from a single donor which exceed the reporting threshold when taken together
- impermissible donations they have received and the action taken in relation to these.

Parties can also report donations which should have been reported in previous quarters. The political parties to report donations in Q1 2023, including public funds, were:

Party	Total accepted (excl. public funds)	Public funds accepted	Total accepted
Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	£51,281	£15,000	£36,281
Conservative and Unionist Party (GB)	£12,277,478	£12,143,082	£134,396
Democratic Unionist Party - D.U.P	£87,165	£0	£87,165
Green Party (GB)	£215,704	£168,926	£46,778
Labour Party	£5,893,841	£4,407,459	£1,435,826
Liberal Democrats	£1,669,749	£1,335,433	£302,044
Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales	£30,467	£0	£30,467
Scottish Green Party	£9,479	£0	£9,479
Scottish National Party (SNP)	£291,339	£4,000	£287,339
SDLP (Social Democratic & Labour Party)	£50,140	£0	£50,140
Sinn Féin	£182,697	£100,000	£82,697
The Reclaim Party	£75,000	£75,000	£0
True & Fair Party	£87,500	£87,500	£0
Ulster Unionist Party	£18,095	£0	£18,095
Women's Equality Party	£30,000	£30,000	£0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£20,969,934</b>	<b>£18,366,400</b>	<b>£2,520,706</b>

The amount that a political party reports to the Commission may be different to the amount it accepts in a quarter. This is because the amount that a party reports can include donations that were returned because they were impermissible and / or donations reported as part of the wrong quarter. Parties will likely have received other donations, from different individuals or bodies, that are below the thresholds for reporting to the Commission. Taken as a total sum these can amount to substantial sources of income for parties. Three parties failed to meet the reporting deadline for this quarter. The Commission will consider each of these matters, as well as donations reported late, in line with its Enforcement Policy , if appropriate. Any sanctions applied will be published at a later date.

Borrowing There were £156,406 of new loans reported in the first quarter of 2023. Loans with a value of £505,000 were fully paid off. Donations accepted by regulated donees in Q1 2023 The Commission also publishes details of donations accepted by regulated donees. Regulated donees are members of registered political parties, holders of relevant elective office and members associations. In the first quarter of 2023, £1,145,095 in donations were accepted by 93 regulated donees. The total includes cash and non-cash

donations, as well as donations towards overseas visits. Full details of cash and non-cash donations are available on our website. Type of regulated donee Value of cash and non-cash donations accepted Value of donations accepted towards overseas visits Total value of donations accepted Mayor £70,136 £0 £70,136 Member of a Registered Political Party £10,000 £0 £10,000 Members Association £357,750 £0 £357,750 MLA - Member of the Legislative Authority of Northern Ireland £0 £1,989 £1,989 MP - Member of Parliament £423,898 £2,792 £2,792 MSP - Member of the Scottish Parliament £0 £2,792 £2,792 Totals £861,784 £283,311 £1,145,095 Further information A summary of donations reported by parties, including the highest donors and details of late reports, is available on the Commission's website. Full details of donations and loans reported in Q1 2023 are available on our political finance register. Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to editors The Electoral Commission has recommended for some time that the UK Government and Parliament consider with us how to improve the controls on donations and loans to prevent foreign money being used in UK politics. We continue to recommend reforms that would give voters greater confidence in UK political finance, including:

- o the introduction of a duty on parties for enhanced due diligence and risk assessment of donations, adapted from money laundering regulations
- o the introduction of laws to ensure parties cannot accept money from companies that have not made enough money in the UK to fund their donation or loan

The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) requires registered parties to report cash and non-cash donations and borrowing to the Electoral Commission on a quarterly basis. Political parties must report all donations and borrowing over £7,500 relating to the central party, or over £1,500 relating to an accounting unit. This includes aggregates of donations and loans from the same source during the calendar year. Once the central party has reported a donation or aggregate donation over £7,500 it must report each subsequent donation of more than £1,500 from that source. As parties only report donations and loans over these thresholds, the figures do not include all donations and loans to political parties. Donations and loans under these thresholds are recorded in political parties' annual accounts. Information on the political parties' most recent statements of accounts is available on the Commission's database. Public funds are donations from the House of Commons, the House of Lords, the Scottish Parliament and the Electoral Commission. 'Short' and 'Cranborne' grants are available to parties in opposition in the House of Commons or House of Lords respectively. Some donations appear on the register as being from the Electoral Commission. These are Policy Development Grants, which were established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 for parties represented in the Commons by two or more sitting members. The grants are intended to assist parties in developing the policies that they will present in an election manifesto. The legislation provides the total sum of £2 million annually for this purpose. Policy Development Grants became reportable as donations for the first time in quarter three of 2006 as a result of the Electoral Administration Act 2006. There were 350 registered political parties in Great Britain and Northern Ireland during quarter one of 2023. 48 were required to submit a quarterly donation report and 32 to submit borrowing information within the deadline. The remaining political parties have previously submitted four consecutive nil returns. Providing they have not received donations in the last quarter, they are therefore exempt from submitting a report. More information on what constitutes a regulated donee and their legal reporting requirements is available on our website. Members of Parliament report their accepted donations to the Register of Members'

Financial Interests . The registrar then sends these details to the Commission. The Commission identifies any donations that fall within the regulated donee rules and we publish these. The Commission has a regulatory role in relation to the permissibility of donations. Members of Scottish Parliament report their accepted donations to the Register of Interests for the Scottish Parliament. All other regulated donees report their donations directly to us. We then publish this information monthly as part of our role in providing greater transparency in political finance in the UK. The research which found that 24 per cent of people believe party funding is transparent can be found in the Electoral Commission's website: 2023 UK-wide public attitudes research.