

[REDACTED]

From: FOI
Sent: 25 July 2016 09:53
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: FOI 113/16 - 15 Year Rule

Dear [REDACTED]

Our Ref: FOI 113/16

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act dated 27th 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 am a UK citizen living abroad and denied the right to vote in the referendum by virtue of the 15 year rule. I am raising a Government petition on this subject. Under the Freedom of Information Act I would like to ask the following.

- 1. Actual numbers or best estimate of the numbers of UK citizens living abroad who have lost the right to vote because of the 15 year rule**
- 2. The number of enquiries you received about the 15 year rule leading up to the referendum**
- 3. The number of voters or best estimate living abroad who were sent postal votes**
- 4. The number of Voters who requested postal votes either used their vote**
- 5. The number of Voters who requested postal votes but who failed to send in their vote**
- 6. The number of postal votes from abroad that passed the deadline to vote and so were excluded from the count.**

It is possible that the number of excluded votes for any of the above reasons could have materially affected the overall result. Hence my interest

Our response is as follows:

1. The Commission does not hold data on the number of UK citizens living abroad who cannot vote due to the 15 year old.
2. The Commission does not hold this information.
3. The Commission does not hold this information.
4. The Commission does not hold data on the number of postal votes returned by overseas voters. It is possible that individual Counting Officers have recorded votes they received from overseas but once a postal vote is opened there is no way to differentiate an overseas vote from a postal vote sent in the UK. The Commission will have data in September on the number of postal voters in total who were sent a postal vote and returned it.
5. For the same reasons set out above for '4', the Commission does not hold data on this. The Commission will have data in September on the number of postal voters in total who were sent a postal vote and did not returned it.
6. The Commission does not hold this data. We do collect information on the number of postal votes returned too late to be counted which will includes any overseas votes returned late. However, we will be unable to separate specific overseas votes out from the total.

I trust that this information satisfies your request. The Commission strives to be an open, transparent authority, **but in some circumstances we cannot responsibly release requested information, and we ask for your understanding in this regard.**

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
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Putting voters first

From: FOI
Sent: 27 June 2016 16:21
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FOI 113/16 - 15 Year Rule

Dear [REDACTED]

Our Ref: FOI 113/16

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act dated 27th June 2016, concerning:

I am a UK citizen living abroad and denied the right to vote in the referendum by virtue of the 15 year rule. I am raising a Government petition on this subject. Under the Freedom of Information Act I would like to ask the following. 1. Actual numbers or best estimate of the numbers of UK citizens living abroad who have lost the right to vote because of the 15 year rule 2. The number of enquiries you received about the 15 year rule leading up to the referendum 3 The number of voters or best estimate living abroad who were sent postal votes 4. The number of Voters who requested postal votes either used their vote 5. The number of Voters who requested postal votes but who failed to send in their vote 6.The number of postal votes from abroad that passed the deadline to vote and so were excluded

from the count. It is possible that the number of excluded votes for any of the above reasons could have materially affected the overall result. Hence my interest

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 25th July 2016

Yours sincerely

Paul O'Malley
Information Adviser (Records Management)

The Electoral Commission

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www.electoralcommission.org.uk

www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

Putting voters first

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