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 Performance analysis 2019/20: Goal two You are in the Annual Report and Accounts
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 this page Key achievements Performance measures First published: 30 June 2020 Last
 updated: 30 August 2020 Goal two To ensure an increasingly trusted and transparent
 system of regulation in political finance, overseeing compliance, promoting
 understanding amongst those regulated and proactively pursuing breaches This goal
 captures our regulatory role. This work focuses on two areas at the heart of a
 healthy democracy: ensuring transparency and good regulation. Key achievements To
 ensure transparency, we: published annual accounts from registered parties,
 information about donations and loans, and details of campaign spending, which
 parties and others are required to report to us registered political parties and
 other campaigners and published details in online registers continued reviewing party
 descriptions, to ensure that voters can identify the party for which candidates are
 standing continued developing a new online portal for party registration and finance,
 which we aim to launch in 2021 and will improve how parties and campaigners register
 and deliver financial returns scrutinised advertising transparency proposals from
 social media companies including Facebook, Google, Twitter and Snapchat, to ensure
 they provided improved transparency about digital campaign activity at elections in
 2019 To support good regulation we: provided advice and guidance to support parties,
 candidates and campaigners to comply with the rules took action and imposed sanctions
 when the political finance rules were broken defended legal challenges to our
 enforcement decisions developed new codes of practice for parties and candidates
 continued pressing for law changes to strengthen our investigatory and sanctioning
 powers – including increasing the maximum fine we are able to impose for breaches of
 PPERA from the current level of £20,000 worked with the National Assembly for Wales
 to review their Standing Orders and ensure they have a robust plan to develop new
 rules and guidance for the elections in 2021 and to bring dual reporting to an end
 Performance measures Measures Performance We publish routine financial returns from
 parties and campaigners, including statements of accounts, within 30 working days of
 receiving them (target 100%) 100% Achieved We check a minimum of 25% of all financial
 returns for accuracy and compliance each year 57.7% 1 Achieved We publish 100% of
 guidance products on time with no substantive errors 100% Achieved We provide
 accurate advice within five to 20 days of receipt of the request, depending on the
 complexity of the advice (target 90%) 94% Achieved We notify applicants of the
 outcome of their registration applications within 30 days of a complete application
 75% of the time 86.2% Achieved We conduct timely and proportionate investigations of
 which 90% are completed within 180 days 84.3% 2 Achieved We issue 90% of final
 notices setting out our sanctions within 21 days of the deadline for representations.
 We publish the outcome of all our investigations 87.5% 3 Achieved We make timely
 regulatory recommendations that reflect the principles guiding our approach to
 effective regulatory framework 100% Achieved Ensuring transparency Throughout the
 year, we focussed on delivering the responsibilities we are accountable for to the
 UK's parliaments. We maintained the registers of political parties, ensuring only
 parties meeting the legal tests are on the register, and we continued reviewing
 descriptions to help voters identify the party for which candidates are standing. We
 faced two instances of campaigners seeking, via the court, to have their spending
 returns removed from our online database. One campaigner withdrew their court
 application and the court refused the other application. Good regulation Leading up
 to the UK Parliamentary general election, we registered a record number of non-party

campaigners. We also developed our approach to campaign monitoring to be more proactive and quickly identify and intervene when issues came up. This stopped them from escalating and prevented campaigners from breaking the rules. We will continue to focus on this. We continued to use our investigation and sanctioning powers to identify and respond to non-compliance and deter future non-compliance. We imposed fines of £25k and £40k respectively, on two registered parties for multiple failures. The courts heard three appeals against penalties in 2019. One was withdrawn, one refused and one upheld. This brings the total number of appeals against sanctions we have imposed to five, of which the courts have upheld one. The appeals have provided helpful case law and we have learned from each case to improve our enforcement approach. For a number of years we have recommended that the UK's governments should change laws to strengthen our investigatory and sanctioning powers. This year we saw such changes in Scotland, where the Scottish Parliament, through the Referendums (Scotland) Act, increased the level of fines available to us (from £20,000 to £500,000); gave us wider powers to obtain information outside of formal investigations; and established rules to require imprints on digital campaign material.

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[Performance analysis: Goal three](#) 1. The number of returns we check annually varies and is higher in years with electoral events, when we receive more and larger financial returns. ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Where we missed the deadline, the cases were complex and required significant legal advice or evidential analysis. The unscheduled UK Parliamentary general election also required us to re-allocate resource. ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Our need to prioritise monitoring and interventions work during the campaign period for the unscheduled UK Parliamentary general election temporarily drew resources away from sanctions decisions. ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

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