

Your data and the targeting of online political ads | Electoral Commission Search
Your data and the targeting of online political ads You are in the Online
campaigning section Home Voter Online campaigning Your location: Change England
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'change' to choose a different location. On this page Your data and the targeting of
online political ads Have further concerns about the use of your data? Information
Commissioner's Office Other questions you might have First published: 11 March 2021
Last updated: 12 March 2021 Introduction Did you know that your online shopping
habits can affect which political ads you see? Online political ads, know them like
they know you Political parties and campaigners use a variety of communication
methods to engage with voters. These methods have developed over time, as technology
has advanced – from doorstep canvassing to town hall hustings, from party political
TV broadcasts to large scale advertising campaigns, from telephone to email marketing
campaigns. The growth of the internet and social media provide political parties and
campaigners with new ways of getting messages to voters. Just like commercial
companies using the latest online marketing techniques to sell products and services,
political campaigners are using personal information and sophisticated data analytics
techniques to target voters. Your data and the targeting of online political ads How
did a political party, candidate or campaigner get my data? Candidates, registered
political parties and registered campaigners are allowed to have copies of the full
electoral register. The register includes your name, address, and nationality. This
data can be used for campaigning activities, but is not detailed enough to allow
campaigners to target you online. about the electoral register Why have I been
targeted with an online political ad? Political campaigners often combine your data
on the electoral register with more detailed information about you that they gather
from other sources. This can include information about your online shopping habits
and other data gathered by electronic tools such as 'cookies', 'social plugins' and
'tracking pixels'. These tools track your browsing habits, likes and social
interactions across the internet in order to build up a profile about you. Political
campaigners (and companies) use this profile to tailor ads to your specific interests
– this is called microtargeting. Microtargeting analyses your personal data to
identify your interests, with the aim of influencing your actions. So, if you 'like'
or follow a political party or show an interest in a particular issue on a social
media platform, personalised adverts related to that party or issue may be displayed
to you. If you're concerned about your data privacy there are a number of things you
can do. The Information Commission's Office (ICO) provides helpful advice to help you
protect your data. Be aware of how and why you are seeing certain messages online The
use of data analytics and targeted marketing is common. It can be beneficial to
users, for example by showing you things that are relevant and interesting to you.
But, if you're concerned about why a certain organisation has targeted you, take a
look at their privacy information on their website and see what it says about how
they use your data. Be aware of your rights under data protection law You have a
number of strong rights under data protection law . The rights likely to be most
relevant to political campaigning practices are your right to get copies of your data
and your right to object to the use of your data . Change your social media privacy
settings The ICO has produced guidance about how to change your privacy settings on
all the popular social media sites. This will help make sure the data you share on
these sites is used in the way you expect. Have further concerns about the use of
your data? The ICO can help. Get in touch with your questions or queries. Contact the
ICO Information Commissioner's Office Information Commissioner's Office The

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the UK's independent body set up to uphold information rights. In May 2017 the ICO announced a formal investigation into the use of data analytics for political purposes. about the ICO's investigation Other questions you might have Who's responsible for an online political ad? Who's paid for an online political ad? Are there limits on how much campaigners can spend online? Concerned about a claim in an online political ad? What is this ad telling me? Your location: Change England Northern Ireland Scotland Wales Overseas We're showing you content for . Select 'change' to choose a different location. Related content Register to vote All you need to register to vote is 5 minutes and your National Insurance number. Our Commissioners Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Report: How the 2017 UK general election was run Read our report about how the 2017 general election was run