**GET READY FOR BREXIT CAMPAIGN - FACTSHEET**

**What is the Get Ready for Brexit campaign?**

“Get Ready for Brexit” is a public information campaign that provides the facts citizens and businesses need to know about the preparations they need to take to be ready for when the UK leaves the EU.

**What does the campaign involve?**

The campaign uses national advertising including TV, radio, press, digital and outdoor advertising. It also has many direct and local elements including business roundtables, public meetings, ministerial visits and local authority events.

A significant part of the campaign has been the upgrading of the GOV.UK website to provide better and more detailed information enabling people to check what they need to do to prepare for Brexit.

**Why has the creative material changed?**

The third phase of the campaign has now started which includes a new countdown calendar to highlight the number of days left to get ready for Brexit.

Our creative approach was tested across the UK. This research showed that action was more likely to be taken when it was made clear that there were fewer than thirty days to do so.

We continually optimise the campaign to make sure the right messages reach all of our audiences

**When will the campaign finish? Will it continue after we leave the EU?**

The campaign will continue to signpost essential information to businesses and members of the public, who may still need to take action after Brexit.

**Is it right that the taxpayers’ money should be used to promote Brexit?**

The campaign does not seek to promote Brexit. Its objective is to ensure that citizens and businesses are fully prepared for the changes that will come from the UK leaving the EU. Not undertaking such communication would risk significant and unnecessary disruption to people’s lives and businesses.

**The civil service is supposed to be impartial, why is it supporting Brexit?**

The Civil Service Code clearly sets out that all staff should adhere to the standards of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. Impartiality means that civil servants must serve the government of the day, whatever its political persuasion or policies, to the best of their ability no matter what their own political beliefs.

The Government’s policy is that the UK leaves the EU on 31 October. It is the job of civil servants to support Ministers in delivering that policy and to help Ministers communicate that policy factually.

**Why does the campaign include the 31 October date now that Parliament has said the Government must ask for an extension?**

It remains the case in law that the UK is set to leave the EU on 31 October 2019. This is the date fixed by the EU Treaties and by Act of Parliament.

**Doesn’t the Benn Bill mean leaving the EU on the 31 October is now against the law?**

No. The EU Withdrawal (No.2) Act (sometimes known as the ‘Benn Act’) requires that unless, by no later than 19 October 2019;

“a Minister of the Crown has laid before each House of Parliament a statement that the United Kingdom has concluded an agreement with the European Union under Article 50(2) of the Treaty on European Union and a copy of the agreement and the agreement has been approved by resolution of the House of Commons”

or

“a Minister of the Crown has laid before each House of Parliament a statement that the United Kingdom is to leave the European Union without an agreement having been reached under Article 50(2) of the Treaty on European Union and the statement has been approved by resolution of the House of Commons”

then

“The Prime Minister must seek to obtain from the European Council an extension of the period under Article 50(3) of the Treaty on European Union ending at 11.00pm on 31 October 2019 by sending to the President of the European Council a letter in the form set out in the Schedule to this Act requesting an extension of that period to 11.00pm on 31 January 2020”.

The full legislation can be found at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/26/enacted>

The EU would need to agree any request for an extension and if they did not then the exit date would not change.

It is important that businesses and citizens prepare themselves for leaving the EU on 31 October and do not assume that they can put off preparations until a later date.

**Isn’t this politicisation of the civil service?**

No. The civil service must not be party political, but it has a duty to serve the Government of the day and implement Ministers’ policies. The purpose of this campaign is to inform people and businesses of the actions they need to take to prepare for the UK’s departure from the EU in a factual way and does not contain party political messaging.

**What are the rules that govern Government communications?**

The [Civil Service Code](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code/the-civil-service-code) sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all civil servants.

The [Government Communication Service (GCS) Propriety Guidance](https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/propriety/) gives further information to all members of the GCS of the standards that are expected in government communications.

It states that Government communications should:

* present the policies and programmes of the government of the day but not be party political;
* be objective and explanatory;
* be conducted in an economic and appropriate way, and able to justify the costs as expenditure of public funds.

**How much does the campaign cost?**

The costs of the public information campaign will be published monthly on a rolling basis, as part of routine government transparency. This will be broken down by supplier.

**How are you ensuring value for money and how do you define the success of the campaign?**

We will measure changes in public awareness of the campaign and the effectiveness of specific calls to action that direct both citizens and businesses to relevant information. We will monitor visits made to the dedicated GOV.UK Brexit pages and public understanding of changes in key issues that will affect both citizens and businesses.

This will be done through a mixture of online data analysis and in-depth surveys. The campaign will also utilise ongoing polling, metrics and management information from Government departments in order to ensure that we are reaching the right audiences and that our messages are easy to understand, useful and are prompting the required action from individuals and organisations.

Standard HM Treasury principles and guidance on [managing public money](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-public-money) apply to this campaign, as they do to all government activity.

**Has there been a ‘Ministerial Direction’ in respect of this campaign?**

No.

**What would happen to the campaign if there were a general election?**

If a general election is called, the Cabinet Office will publish guidance for the civil service on restrictions to government activity during the ‘pre-election period’ (also known as ‘purdah’).

During the pre-election period, the Government retains its responsibility to govern and Ministers remain in charge of their departments. Essential business is carried on and this includes communication activity where it is appropriate to do so. This campaign would be reviewed in light of any published guidance.