



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**Digital Transformation Unit**  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
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Website: <https://www.gov.uk/fco>

12 October 2015

Dear

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0621-15**

Thank you for your emails of 25 June 2015 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 related to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) spend on social media sites in London since 2012.

We conducted a search of the paper and electronic records held by the FCO in London, and I can confirm that the FCO does hold information falling within the terms of your request.

Since 2010 there has been a marketing and advertising freeze in place which applies to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Exceptions can be made when there is a business case and public interest in spending public money on advertising and campaigns, for example campaigns that provide travel advice to British nationals at home and overseas.

Your questions have been addressed below.

**NOTE: "Promotion" refers to paying social media sites or other companies with the intention of tweets/posts etc reaching more people.**

**1. How much money has the Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent on Twitter promotion in each of the financial years from 2010/11 to 2014/15?**

The FCO did not spend any money on Twitter promotion.

**2. How much money has the Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent on Twitter promotion since the beginning of the current financial year until the send date of this request (25 June 2015)?**

The FCO did not spend any money on Twitter promotion.

**3. How much money has the Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent on Facebook promotion in each of the financial years from 2010/11 to 2014/15?**

It has not been possible, in the majority of cases, to separate spend specifically relating to Facebook paid-for-campaigns from wider communications spend for financial years 2011/2012 and 2012/2013.

**4. How much money has the Foreign and Commonwealth Office spent on Facebook promotion since the beginning of the current financial year until the send date of this request (25 June 2015)?**

In the current financial year, the central financial spend to date on Facebook promotion has been £270.40 on a Facebook campaign to raise awareness of Her Majesty the Queen's State Visit to Germany. Between 21 May and 10 June 2015 (FY 2015/16), the FCO spent £260.40 on Facebook advertising on the British Embassy Berlin's Facebook page.

The funds were used to 1) advertise the Embassy's Facebook page and 2) promote individual posts on the Facebook page to a German target audience. Page adverts (32% of total spend) directly generated 597 new page likes. Promoted content (68% of total spend) was seen by 92,540 people - generating 7,162 engagements as a direct result of the advertising. The Facebook Ads manager does not offer the facility to calculate new page likes generated by promoted content.

**5. Which other social media tools does the Foreign and Commonwealth Office use and how much has been spent on promotion through these tools since the beginning of the current financial year until the send date of this request (25 June 2015)?**

Under section 21 of the Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you. The information you requested on is available in a previously published response to the Freedom of Information request 0175-15 on GOV.UK. Please see link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-release-social-media-management-platform>

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Yours sincerely,

Digital Transformation Unit



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