

MEPs challenge Commission over allegations of Russian influence in referendum campaign



Green Party

29 November 2017

A cross-Party group of MEPs are raising concerns with the European Commission about Russian interference in the EU referendum in an 'unprecedented display of unity'. Green, Labour, Lib Dem and Plaid Cymru MEPs together with an ex-Conservative MEP have signed a letter to the Commission about their concerns [1]. They have asked how much the Commission know of Russian influence in the referendum campaign and of the techniques used; whether they consider such interference was an attempt by the Kremlin to attack and destabilise the EU; and whether they will use EU agencies to investigate the allegations.

Molly Scott Cato, Green MEP, said:

"The EU referendum and the decision to leave the EU has been one of the most divisive our nation has ever experienced. But it is also bridging the political divide. In an unprecedented display of unity, MEPs from across the political spectrum, have united to express our deep concerns over allegations of Kremlin meddling in the EU referendum campaign."

"The allegations of Russian influence cast a long shadow over the Brexit result. This makes it even more essential that the British public are provided another opportunity through a ratification referendum to accept the deal negotiated by the government or choose to remain in the EU."

Clare Moody, Labour MEP, said:

"The Electoral Commission's enquiry shows the evidence is mounting of links between British politicians and the Russian government and we now know there were over [156,000 Russian-based Twitter accounts](#) engaged in a concerted campaign to support the Leave side. It is essential we get some answers about the extent to which this interference influenced the referendum result. That's why, as MEPs, we are asking the Commission to tell us what they know and to investigate further."

Catherine Bearder, Lib Dem MEP, said:

“Theresa May has already acknowledged Russian interference in the General Election, now she needs to recognize the same happened in the EU referendum campaign and offer assurances to the British public by delivering a ratification referendum on the final deal. This must be a vote which is fair, regulated and free from interference from foreign organisations and governments.”

Notes:

1. Letter to EU Commission:

<http://mollymep.org.uk/2017/11/28/wq-commission-russia-ref/>

Full list of signatories: Molly Scott Cato (Green), Julie Girling (former Conservative), Clare Moody (Labour), Catherine Bearder (Lib Dem), Richard Corbett (Labour), Jill Evans (Plaid Cymru), Jean Lambert (Green), Jude Kirton-Darling (Labour), Paul Brannen (Labour)

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