

Title:

Forename:

Surname:

Representing:

Organisation

Organisation (if applicable):

Mebyon Kernow - the Party for Cornwall

Email:

What additional details do you want to keep confidential?:

Keep organisation confidential

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Additional comments:

On behalf of Mebyon Kernow - the Party for Cornwall (MK), we have no specific views on who should be classed a major party. However, we would request that MK are also allowed equitable coverage.

In particular, I am writing concerning arrangements for Party Election Broadcasts (PEBs) during the upcoming General Election.

MK is a political party, which was founded in 1951. It has contested local elections since 1965 and parliamentary elections since 1970. In the 2015 General Election, MK will be standing candidates in all six Cornish seats. As a Party, we have always been denied the opportunity to have PEBs and we have made numerous representations on this issue, in recent years.

2015 General Election

We are extremely disappointed that the basis of the consultation for the 2015 General

Election is "draft criteria", which states that, as in previous General Elections, a "political party would qualify for one PEB" if it stands in a "minimum of one sixth of the seats up for election" in one of the "home nations" of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

We consider this recommendation, which would deny Mebyon Kernow airtime, is both absurd and undemocratic. How can it be fair that MK, a Cornish political party, would need to stand in all six seats within the historic nation of Cornwall, as well as a further 83 seats outside of Cornwall, in order to be allowed a broadcast?

We believe it is wrong to exclude a political party from being allowed a PEB when it is standing in all constituencies reasonably available to it.

By contrast, the recommendation would mean that political parties in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales would only have to stand in three, ten and seven seats respectively. This has meant that, over recent elections, a host of political parties - including the Christian Party (Wales), Scottish Green Party, Scottish Socialist Party and the Scottish Trade Union and Socialist Coalition - have all been allocated airtime.

It is our view that genuine "regional" or "national" parties, which stand candidates in most (or all) of the seats in a particular region or nation - including Cornwall - should be allowed a PEB.

Further information - European elections

We would also wish to bring to your attention how the arrangements for a PEB for the European Elections are unfairly rigged against Mebyon Kernow.

The guidance stated that in "England", "political parties which are standing a full list of candidates in each and every region in England will qualify for a minimum of ONE broadcast in England." And yet in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, a political party standing a full list of candidates in the single Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales seats would qualify for a PEB.

It is unfair that to be allowed a PEB, MK would have had to stand in all (nine) euro-constituencies in England - an absolute nonsense - whereas "national" parties standing in the (single) Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales seats - such as Plaid Cymru, SNP, Scottish Socialist Party, etc - would be allowed their own broadcasts.

Further information - local elections

We would furthermore wish to bring to your attention how the arrangements for a PEB for the local elections are unfairly rigged against Mebyon Kernow.

With regard to the 2013 local elections, we were informed that the threshold criterion for a PEB was one-sixth of the total number of seats being contested in "England," which they estimated to be 394.

But there are only 122 council seats in Cornwall, which means MK would have had to contest an additional 272 seats outside of Cornwall, which is both ludicrous and unjust.

Further information - national minority status

In April 2014, the UK Government recognised the Cornish people as a national minority through the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM).

The official government press release stated: "The decision to recognise the unique identity of the Cornish, now affords them the same status ... as the UK's other Celtic people, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish."

It is our view that the recognition of the Cornish as a national group gives additional weight to our call for Cornwall's national party to be treated with parity with the parties in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Request for fair access to the media

We would respectfully request that the OFCOM gives full consideration to the above points and allows a Mebyon Kernow PEB to be broadcast.

Question 1: Please provide your views on:

- a) the evidence of current support laid out in Annex 2, and**
- b) whether there is any other relevant evidence which you consider Ofcom should take into account for the purposes of the 2015 review of the list of major parties:**

On behalf of Mebyon Kernow - the Party for Cornwall (MK), we have no specific views on who should be classed a major party. However, we would request that MK are also allowed equitable coverage. We believe this should include a PEB (see above).

Question 2: Do you agree with our assessment in relation to each of:

- a) The existing major parties,**
- b) Traditional Unionist Voice in Northern Ireland,**
- c) The Green Party (including the Scottish Green Party), and**
- d) UKIP?**

Please provide reasons for your views.:

On behalf of Mebyon Kernow - the Party for Cornwall (MK), we have no specific views on the above. However, we would request that MK are also allowed equitable coverage. We believe this should include a PEB (see above).

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed amendment to Rule 9 of the PPRB Rules Procedures outlined in paragraph 3.7 above? Please provide reasons for your views.:

On behalf of Mebyon Kernow - the Party for Cornwall (MK), we have no specific views on the above. However, we would request that MK are also allowed equitable coverage. We believe this should include a PEB (see above).