

## **Leading CBI members do not support the CBI leadership on EU**

New research by Vote Leave shows that:

- Only one in every thirteen (7.7%) CBI members are prepared to support the CBI's position in the EU referendum campaign.
- Of the remaining twelve, six members adopted or are likely to adopt neutral positions, two support EU membership, and the remaining four have reserved their positions.

These new figures raise serious questions about the extent to which the CBI is representing its members on the question of the UK's continued membership of the EU after its own membership survey was called 'pretty dodgy' by the British Polling Council.

### **Vote Leave's questions to CBI members**

In November 2015, the Campaign Director of Vote Leave, Dominic Cummings, wrote to leading CBI members which are either trade associations or sit on its President's Committee with a series of questions. These included what the CBI member in question's position in the referendum campaign would be, and whether it would 'be supporting or donating to the CBI's campaign for the UK to remain a member of the EU'.

Eleven trade associations and two companies have now responded to Vote Leave. Their full responses are contained in the Annex.

- Only the energy giant ExxonMobil explicitly supports the CBI's position.
- The remaining twelve were not prepared to state that they supported the CBI's position.
- Of these, six stated that they would or most likely would remain neutral in the campaign (the British Property Federation, the Council of Mortgage Lenders, the Environmental Services Association, the Glass & Glazing Federation, Oil & Gas UK, and Centrica).
- Only two explicitly supported continued EU membership (the Scotch Whisky Association and techUK).
- The remaining four are reserving their position in the referendum (the British Retail Consortium, the Chemical Industries Association, the Horticultural Trades Association and the British Bankers Association).

The CBI can no longer claim to speak for at least ten out of thirteen (77%) of these leading CBI members. It should now make clear that it does not do so.

## Annex: Responses from CBI members

Trade Association	Person	Comment	Summary
British Bankers Association	Rebecca Park, Director of UK Government Affairs	'You will appreciate, that as a membership organisation, any decision taken by the BBA on the issue will be made in consultation with our membership.'	No support for CBI position
British Property Federation	Melanie Leech, Chief Executive	'[W]hilst the EU Referendum Bill has not yet completed its passage through Parliament, at this stage I do not anticipate the BPF registering as a referendum campaigner with the Electoral Commission. The BPF has well established procedures to consult its members on issues of importance to real estate in the UK, which are summarised on our website. Those procedures have the confidence of our members. The BPF pays an annual subscription to the CBI in order to support its work on behalf of all of its members, which will have varying degrees of direct relevance to BPF itself. We do not fund specific activities, nor according to my understanding does the CBI hypothecate fees in the way you suggest.'	No support for CBI position; neutral in referendum campaign
British Retail Consortium	Helen Dickinson, Chief Executive	'I can assure you that we take governance issues very seriously and as this debate moves forward we shall ensure that any involvement we have, or position that we take, is fully in line with both our internal procedures and policies and with the relevant legal framework.'	No support for CBI position
Centrica	Nick Baird, Group Corporate Affairs Director	'Centrica is a member of a number of trade associations and we work with these groups on a range of important public policy issues. Centrica operates on a politically neutral basis and does not make political contributions. Section 375 of the Companies Act confirms that regular subscriptions to trade associations are not political donations for the purposes of the Act.'	No support for CBI position; neutral in referendum campaign
Chemical Industries Association	Steve Elliott, Chief Executive	'The position that we have confirmed to all CIA member company Chief Executives following consultation with our membership and the approval of our Council, is : a) That CIA uses the following statement, reactively rather than proactively on the issue of EU membership: " <b><i>The UK chemical industry respects that, first and foremost, the EU referendum is a matter for government and individual citizens. The issue needs to be considered with great care and respect for the facts. For an internationally-exposed industry such as chemicals, the free movement of goods, services, capital and people as well as proportionate regulation are critical success factors in terms of global competitiveness. Irrespective of the outcome of a referendum, these success factors remain constant.</i></b> " b) That the Association will continue to review its position as greater detail of any reform package emerges. c) That the Association will re-survey the membership when any "new deal" is made clearer.'	No support for CBI position
Council of Mortgage Lenders	Michelle Vosper, Public Affairs Manager	'To date, the executive committee of the CML has not considered the EU referendum and the organisation is unlikely to take a view on this issue. Should we have any concerns with the CBI's policy on this or any other issue, we will address them directly to the CBI.'	No support for CBI position; neutral in referendum campaign

Environmental Services Association	Jacob Hayler, Executive Director	'ESA and its members believe that, to date, the net impact of EU legislation has been positive for our industry, which has undergone radical change in response to the drivers implemented to meet our European obligations. Whether the UK should remain in the EU from our industry's perspective will largely depend upon what would replace the long-term policy framework established in Brussels. As you know, industry investment critically depends on certainty, a degree of which at least is provided by the EU framework for our sector. ESA will leave it to our individual members to decide on balance their own positions on the referendum question and is not intending at this stage to be an active participant in the campaign.'	No support for CBI position; neutral in referendum campaign
ExxonMobil	John Chaplin, Chairman and Production Director	ExxonMobil is a long-standing member of the CBI and supports its work on a wide variety of policy issues of importance to businesses in the UK. As you identified in your letter, ExxonMobil refrains from making political donations in any nation other than the United States and Canada. As such, we do not make political donations in the UK and I note the CBI's summary of how relevant UK law treats the payment of subscription fees to trade associations. ExxonMobil represents the democratic process. Membership of the EU is a matter for the government and citizens of the United Kingdom. Our investment decisions are based on a wide range of factors which include, but are not limited to, the political climate. ExxonMobil supports the EU Single Market - the free movement of goods and services, people and capital across the EU is important for a business with operations across Europe such as ExxonMobil. Any change to the UK's relationship with the EU that undermined this free movement would be damaging to our business interests. Much of the policy and regulation that impacts our businesses in the UK is determined at EU level. Many aspects of it are challenging from the point of view of international competitiveness. We strongly support developments to encourage the European Commission to consider the impact its policies have on the competitiveness of EU-based business.	Support for CBI position
Glass and Glazing Federation	Nigel Rees, Group Chief Executive	'Whether the UK leaves or remains part of the EU, the GGF will continue to work within the regulatory environment to ensure the best possible representation of our members. Therefore, the GGF will remain committed to the work we undertake on behalf of our membership and are politically neutral ahead of the referendum on UK membership of the EU.'	No support for CBI position; neutral in referendum campaign
Horticultural Trades Association	Carol Paris, Chief Executive	'We are currently awaiting further details of the likely EU reforms and, as a membership organisation, we will then be consulting with our member businesses.'	No support for CBI position
Oil & Gas UK	Deirdre Michie, Chief Executive	'Oil and Gas UK is an apolitical organisation with a broad membership where each company - and their employees - will undoubtedly have their own views on the EU referendum. It is important therefore that we maintain neutrality and it is for our members individually to decide whether or not they voice and opinion.'	No support for CBI position; neutral in referendum campaign

<p>Scotch Whisky Association</p>	<p>David Frost, Chief Executive</p>	<p>'The consistent position of Scotch Whisky Association members over many years, going back to well before the current debate around the referendum, is to support the UK's membership of the European Union. The EU's single market, including its regulation of food and drink, and its single trade policy are central to Scotch Whisky's success. The single market allows distillers to trade across the EU simply and easily. The EU's weight and expertise in international trade helps Scotch Whisky secure fair access to overseas markets. In all these areas, UK influence in Brussels can shape the rules in a way that supports our industry's jobs and growth. We believe of course that some reforms would be useful. The SWA would like a more efficient and freer single market, the elimination of unnecessary national regulations, and for the EU to be even more ambitious and free-trading internationally, and we encourage the UK Government to secure progress in these areas as part of its reform agenda... Our membership list is public and can be found on our website. As you might imagine, we have considerable experience from the referendum on Scottish independence of representing our members' views on constitutional issues. We consult our members constantly on such questions and on the full range of issues on which we take public positions, and you can be confident that our governance arrangements are robust. We will consider our official position in the referendum campaign once the date of the referendum is known and the outcome of the Government's renegotiation is clear.'</p>	<p>No support for CBI position; support for EU membership</p>
<p>techUK</p>	<p>Julian David, Chief Executive</p>	<p>'On the issue of the UK's relationship with Europe, we recently surveyed our members to understand their current position. The results and methodology of the survey are available on our website and the survey has been commented upon in various parts of the media. We will survey our members again once a date for the Referendum has been set in order to understand how views may have changed in light of the Government's renegotiation and the various campaigns for and against the UK's continued membership of the EU.'</p>	<p>No support for CBI position; support for EU membership</p>