

## **Submission to Editors' Code Review**

By Hugo Dixon, Chairman and Editor-in-Chief, InFacts

My submission is based on experience InFacts gained of how the press was operating during the referendum campaign. InFacts took issue with many inaccurate stories in the press during this period. Sometimes our complaints were resolved directly with the newspapers. Sometimes we complained to IPSO.

The pro-Brexit press produced many false front-page splashes during the EU referendum. Even when papers acknowledged their errors, the corrections were never as prominent as the original stories. They were normally small articles tucked away in the inside pages.

When the sanction for a huge misleading story is a minor slap on the wrist, it's hardly surprising that we are living in a world of fake news and post-truth politics. If we want to stop the pollution of our democracy, we need to do better.

As far as the press is concerned, the single most important reform would be to force papers to print corrections that are as prominent as the original story. If the article appeared as a front-page splash, the correction should also be on the front page - and appropriately large.

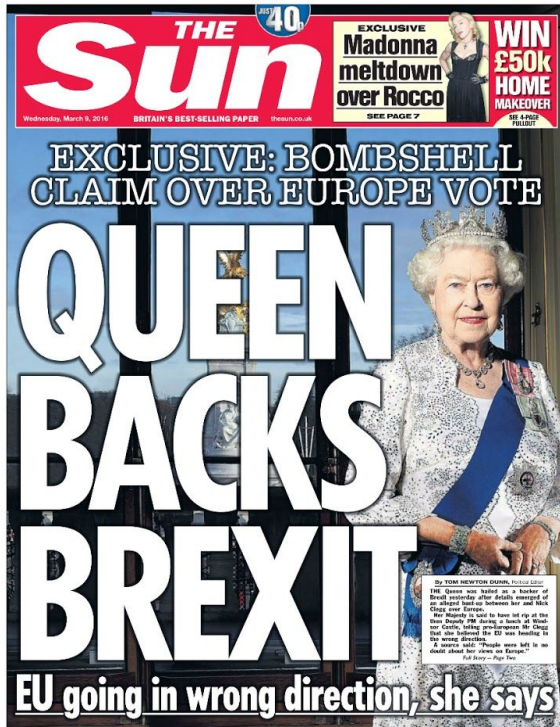
If papers had to make big front-page corrections every time they printed misleading front-page splashes, the psychology around getting the facts right would change dramatically. Such corrections would involve a loss of credibility with readers. They would embarrass proprietors and editors. The journalists who made the mistakes would probably receive dressing downs from their bosses. There would be a much bigger incentive to take care to get things right in the first place.

At present, the code merely calls for corrections to be given "due prominence", a phrase that in practice normally means they are rarely prominent at all. It should be modified to "equal prominence".

The evidence from the referendum debate is compelling. Here are six inaccurate front-page splashes and the accompanying corrections.

### **1. "Queen Backs Brexit" - The Sun, 9 March**





This was a huge story. Stating that the monarch backed Brexit may have influenced how patriotic royalists voted. The Sun was [required](#) to correct the story by IPSO after Buckingham Palace complained. There was a reference to the correction on the bottom of the front page, with the full ruling published on page 2. But the correction was in no way as prominent as the original error.

IPSO has required papers to mention corrections on their front pages following two other inaccurate Brexit stories, both in the Daily Express. These splashes appeared after the referendum - one incorrectly stating that Brexit had [boosted house prices](#), the other that [98% were opposed to an EU deal](#) and wanted to quit without talks. In each case, the references to the corrections were small and at the bottom of the front page, and so much less prominent than the offending stories.

## 2. "We're from Europe, let us in" - Daily Mail, 16 June



## As politicians squabble over border controls, yet another lorry load of migrants arrives in UK declaring...

# WE'RE FROM EUROPE — LET US IN!

**SQUEEZED in among storage boxes, another lorry load of migrants speak into Britain.**  
By James Slack and Jason Groves

Asked where they were from, they replied: 'Europe'.  
The dramatic pictures emerged as the Syrian Arab Republic of migrants were intercepted by police in east London yesterday.

George Osborne insisted there would be no change to European Union rules on freedom of movement.  
But only hours later Theresa May declared further reform was needed.  
Brexit campaigners said the lorry delivery had blown a huge hole in the case to remain by effectively admitting the Government's negotiation with Brussels was inadequate.  
They say the first 'sovereignty' edict, demanding EU citizens enjoy free access to the UK, has been nullified by Britain's own actions.

**More on Page 2**



### Weather

Get the latest weather forecast for your area. Click on your region for more details.

Region	Forecast
London	12-18
Manchester	10-16
Birmingham	11-17
Edinburgh	9-15
Belfast	10-16

**Summary: Showers or rain**  
A further 12 hours of rain is expected today, with some sun in the afternoon.

**Today's weather**  
London: 12-18  
Manchester: 10-16  
Birmingham: 11-17  
Edinburgh: 9-15  
Belfast: 10-16

**5 day forecast**  
London: 12-18, 13-19, 14-20, 15-21, 16-22  
Manchester: 10-16, 11-17, 12-18, 13-19, 14-20  
Birmingham: 11-17, 12-18, 13-19, 14-20, 15-21  
Edinburgh: 9-15, 10-16, 11-17, 12-18, 13-19  
Belfast: 10-16, 11-17, 12-18, 13-19, 14-20

**Yesterday**  
London: 11-17  
Manchester: 9-15  
Birmingham: 10-16  
Edinburgh: 8-14  
Belfast: 9-15

**Europe forecast**  
Paris: 12-18  
Berlin: 11-17  
Rome: 13-19  
Madrid: 14-20  
Athens: 15-21

**Around the world yesterday**  
New York: 65-75  
Tokyo: 68-78  
Sydney: 70-80  
Melbourne: 60-70  
Auckland: 55-65

## Coe 'misled MPs over doping at Olympics'

He was sent email about scandal



Lord Coe, now the president of the International Olympic Committee, admitted he misled MPs over doping at the Olympics. He was sent an email about the scandal in December 2015, but did not tell them of the extent of the cover-up. The former Olympic champion and president of the London 2012 Games, Lord Coe, was accused of covering up the extent of the doping scandal at the Olympics. He was sent an email about the scandal in December 2015, but did not tell them of the extent of the cover-up. The former Olympic champion and president of the London 2012 Games, Lord Coe, was accused of covering up the extent of the doping scandal at the Olympics.

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## New pension fear at Green company

Business, innovation and skills committee, said the company's pension fund was in a state of emergency.

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The [Daily Mail](#) front-page splash, just days before the referendum, detailed a Metropolitan police operation which found a family of migrants stowing away in the back of a lorry. Saying these migrants were from Europe added to the toxic brew over migration that the pro-Brexit press had been stirring throughout the referendum campaign. The only problem was that the migrants told police they were from Iraq and Kuwait, not Europe. The Mail did acknowledge its error the following day, but the correction was tiny and on page 2.

### 3. "Abu Hamza and latest blow to UK sovereignty" - Daily Telegraph, 6 February















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**DEMENTIA IS THE ILLNESS WE FEAR THE MOST**

SEE PAGE 4

**FAMILY HOLIDAYS £10**

WITNESS THE PONTINS

SEE PAGE 37

# SOARING COST OF TEACHING MIGRANT CHILDREN

## £3bn bill 'another reason to quit EU'

**Thousands evacuated in Old Trafford bomb blunder**

**THE cost of educating 700,000 children from the EU in British schools has hit £3.2 billion a year.**

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### Letters

The Daily Express, Number 10 Lower Thames Street, London EC3R 6EN. Fax 0207 098 2704  
Email: [expressletters@express.co.uk](mailto:expressletters@express.co.uk) (include your address and telephone number)

#### Uncontrolled immigration will destroy countryside

UNCONTROLLED immigration has caused the countryside to be destroyed. The countryside is the heart of our nation and it is being destroyed by the influx of immigrants. The countryside is the heart of our nation and it is being destroyed by the influx of immigrants. The countryside is the heart of our nation and it is being destroyed by the influx of immigrants.

#### Vote for the UK to take control of our own destiny

THEY would succeed in their right mind choice to have the country run by a committee of experts. The country is the heart of our nation and it is being destroyed by the influx of immigrants. The country is the heart of our nation and it is being destroyed by the influx of immigrants. The country is the heart of our nation and it is being destroyed by the influx of immigrants.

#### Cruel EU treats Greece's people with disregard

THE EU is a cruel and heartless organisation. It treats the people of Greece with disregard. The EU is a cruel and heartless organisation. It treats the people of Greece with disregard. The EU is a cruel and heartless organisation. It treats the people of Greece with disregard.

#### Tide will not turn for holidaying complaints

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#### Insurance would save the public from cyclists' folly

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#### Tourists need to take care on hotel balconies abroad

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#### Should parking wardens spy on motorists?

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#### Yes things you never knew about... referendums

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“The cost of educating 700,000 children from the EU in British schools has hit £3.2 billion a year”, said the story’s first paragraph. This was another inflammatory story about migrants, targeting a key issue of concern for voters. It was false because it wrongly described anybody with at least one parent from the European Economic Area as migrant children. Such a definition would include Nigel Farage’s children with his German wife. After InFacts complained to IPSO, the Express published a small correction at the bottom of page 27.

Small corrections tucked on inside pages - and even small mentions at the bottom of the front page - are not remotely adequate to deal with serious errors splashed on the front pages. Although the damage of distorted coverage over the referendum has been done, the press continues to pump out false stories about migration and the EU - and, of course, about many other topics as well. It is therefore vital that the [Editors' Code Committee](#) revamps its code so that corrections have equal prominence with the original offending stories.



