



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Our Ref: FOI/Req/17/076

Michael Brennan, Political Editor,
Sunday Business Post.

7 June 2017

Dear Mr Brennan,

I refer to the request that you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

1. The number of incomplete passport applications in 2016 and 2017 to date
2. The number of incomplete passport applications in 2016 and 2017 to date where an applicant was required to go back to their local Garda station to get a new passport form signed again
3. The total number of passport applications in 2017 to date
4. The number of incomplete passport applications in 2016 and 2017 to date which were for a) a child under 18 or b) an adult
5. The average processing time in 2016 for a passport application which was found to be incomplete and required new documentation before a passport was issued
6. Any internal statistics held by the Passport Office on the most common mistakes by passport applicants which are causing incomplete applications
7. The cost of hiring 230 temporary clerical officers in 2017 to process passport applications
8. The percentage of domestic passport renewal applications which are being processed by the target date of 15 working days in 2017 to date
9. The percentage of first-time domestic passport renewal applications which are being processed by the target date of 15 working days in 2017 to date
10. The passport revenue in 2016 (from passport application fees)
11. The cost of operating the passport Office in 2016

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 28 April.

Of the eleven requests above, the Passport Service does not hold any data in relation to numbers 2, 5, 6 and 9. I have identified one record that falls within the scope of the remaining seven requests and have made a decision to grant it as per the schedule below.

	Record Description	Granted/Part-Granted/Refused
1.	Passport service data	Granted

Although statistics are not held in relation to request number 6, the Passport Service notes that incomplete applications most frequently lack supporting documents required to verify an applicant's identity and Irish citizenship, such as a birth certificate, passport or marriage

certificate (necessary when changing to a married name). The documents required vary depending on the category of applicant. Poor quality photographs in many cases also prevent the Passport Service from progressing with an application.

Common mistakes in passport applications for minors in particular include neglecting

- to complete Section 8 (i.e. the signature of the minor or, in the event that the minor is unable to sign, of the parent/guardian);
- to include or correctly complete a Sole Guardian Affidavit where required; and
- to include Form A (relevant to applications where a child's citizenship is based on an EU parent's residence in Ireland).

In respect of request number 8, the percentage of domestic passport renewal applications that have been processed by the target of 15 working days in 2017 to date is 61.61%. In the majority of those cases where the target was not met it was exceeded by just one working day, i.e. a passport was issued in 16 working days.

Regarding request number 9 it should be noted that the Passport Service holds statistics on first-time applications as distinct from renewal applications but does not hold statistics on applicants renewing a passport for the first time. The target turnaround time for first-time applications is 20 working days rather than 15 due to the extra identity, entitlement and security checks involved.

Please note, regarding request number 7, the Passport Service has been given sanction for 230 TCOs for 26 weeks in 2017. The number employed at any given time fluctuates as recruitment is phased and TCOs may terminate their employment in order to take up other positions. 214 TCOs in total are currently employed between the Passport Offices in Cork, Balbriggan and Mount Street. It is expected that close to the full sanction of TCO weeks will be used.

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 or by email to foi@dfat.ie. A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfat.ie, or 01-4082857.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Lawlor
Passport Service