



An Roinn Gnóthaf Eachtreacha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

Our Ref: FoI/Req/15/108

Mark Hilliard

By email:

14 December 2015

Dear Mr Hilliard,

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

“Copy of all correspondence, memos, emails, reports and/or briefing papers held by the department relating to concerns for the economic, trade and other implications of a potential “Brexit” after the forthcoming UK referendum on its membership of the EU. The documents should relate to discussion, policy or strategy which addresses or seeks to mitigate the fallout in relations between Ireland and the UK and should apply for the period Nov 1st, 2014 to Nov 1st, 2015.”

I have identified 201 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made the decision to grant/part grant 17 of these records.

Where access to a record, or part of record has been refused, the records are exempt from release under the following sections of the FOI Act:

Section 15 (1) A head to whom an FOI request is made may refuse to grant the request where – (d) the information is already in the public domain (*where possible links have been provided for public records*)

Section 28 (1) A head may refuse to grant an FOI request if the record concerned—

(a) has been, or is proposed to be, submitted to the Government for its consideration by a Minister of the Government or the Attorney General and was created for that purpose

(c) contains information (including advice) for a member of the Government, the Attorney General, a Minister of State, the Secretary General to the Government for use by him or her solely for the purpose of the transaction of any business of the Government at a meeting of the Government

Section 28 (2) A head shall refuse to grant an FOI request if the record concerned—

(a) contains the whole or part of a statement made at a meeting of the Government or information that reveals, or from which may be inferred, the substance of the whole or part of such a statement

Section 29 (1) A head may refuse to grant an FOI request—

(a) if the record concerned contains matter relating to the deliberative processes of an FOI body (including opinions, advice, recommendations, and the results of consultations, considered by the body, the head of the body, or a member of the body or of the staff of the body for the purpose of those processes)

Section 30 (1) A head may refuse to grant an FOI request if access to the record concerned could, in the opinion of the head, reasonably be expected to—

(c) disclose positions taken, or to be taken, or plans, procedures, criteria or instructions used or followed, or to be used or followed, for the purpose of any negotiations carried on or being, or to be, carried on by or on behalf of the Government or an FOI body

Section 33 (1) A head may refuse to grant an FOI request in relation to a record if, in the opinion of the head, access to it could reasonably be expected to affect adversely—

(c) matters relating to Northern Ireland, or

(d) the international relations of the State

Section 35 (1) Subject to this section, a head shall refuse to grant an FOI request if—

(a) the record concerned contains information given to an FOI body, in confidence and on the understanding that it would be treated by it as confidential

Section 37 (1) Subject to this section, a head shall refuse to grant an FOI request if, in the opinion of the head, access to the record concerned would involve the disclosure of personal information (including personal information relating to a deceased individual). **In these cases we have redacted relevant personal information**

For your interest, the ESRI has recently published a report, commissioned by the Department of Finance, on the possible implications that a “Brexit” could have on Ireland. Should you be interested in reading further on the topic, a copy of the report, entitled “Scoping the Possible Economic Implications of Brexit on Ireland” can be found at: <https://www.esri.ie/publications/scoping-the-possible-economic-implications-of-brexit-on-ireland-2/>

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katie Daughen', written over a horizontal line.

Katie Daughen

Responding Officer