



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

Our Ref: FoI/Req/2016/084

Gráinne Weld,
Fianna Fáil Research,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

Dear Ms Weld,

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:

All briefing material, including memos, circulars, background papers, preparatory advice, minutes of meetings, reports, documents and publications provided to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade in relation to the EU referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union from 6th May 2015 to date [27 June] from Assistant Secretary General level and above.

I also wish to request minutes of meetings and action points agreed between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of the Taoiseach in relation to the aforementioned Referendum and Ireland's preparation for same, from 6th May 2015 to date.

I also wish to request minutes of meetings and action points agreed between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Finance in relation to the potential impact of a British exit from the European Union on the Irish economy; the preparations made for same; and the potential impact on the trade element of the Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio and preparations to be made for same, from 6th May 2015 to date [27 June].

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

I have identified 39 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to grant 3 records, part-grant another record and refuse the remaining records, ten of which are already available in the public domain. I would like to advise you that we have received several other FOI requests similar to yours but with a different scope, which may be of interest to you. The schedules for these requests will be made available online at <https://www.dfa.ie/about-us/accountability/how-we-are-accountable/foi-requests/> and you can request a copy of any of the records which have been released by emailing foi@dfa.ie.

Where access has been refused, the records are exempt from release under sections 15(1)(d), 28(1)(c), 29(1)(a), 30(1)(c), 33(1)(c), 33(1)(d) and 35(1)(a):

- Section 15(1)(d) applies to records which are already in the public domain, and for these ten records I have included a link to the documents in question.
- Section 28(1)(c) applies to records which "contain 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 30(1)(c) applies to records which if released would “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)(c) applies to records which if released could adversely affect “matters relating to Northern Ireland”
- Section 33(1)(d) applies to records which if released could adversely affect “the international relations of the State”
- Section 35(1)(a) applies to records which contain “information given to an FOI body, in confidence and on the understanding that it would be treated by it as confidential [...] and, in the opinion of the head, its disclosure would be likely to prejudice the giving to the body of further similar information from the same person or other persons and it is of importance to the body that such further similar information as aforesaid should continue to be given to the body”.

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



Kate Oliver