



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

Our Ref: Fol/Req/18/053

6 April 2018

Dear Ms. Bray,

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:

Copies of all correspondence between departmental staff, advisors and ministers in relation to: The recently published Copenhagen Economics Brexit Report.

I have identified 29 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision part grant access to 3 of the records listed and not to grant access to 6 of the records listed on the basis of sections 28(1), 28(2), 30(1)(c) and 33(1)(d) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, as amended.

As regards records exempted under Section 28 of the Act – *Meetings of the Government* as referenced in the schedule, I am satisfied that the release of certain records would not, on balance, serve the public interest.

As regards records exempted under Section 30 of the Act - *Functions and Negotiations of FOI Bodies* as referenced in the schedule, I am satisfied that premature release of certain records 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 purposes of negotiations carried on or being, or to be, carried on by or on behalf of the Government or the Department. I have considered whether the public interest would be better served by releasing the record in question in terms of the right of the public to have access to information and the need for an open and accountable civil service. However, I am satisfied that on balance the public interest would not be best served by releasing the information.

For records exempted under Section 33(1)(d) - *Security, defence and international relations*, as referenced in the schedule, I have considered the possibility and likelihood that the release of the records could result in negative consequences for Ireland's international relations and their likely severity. This Department is responsible for managing relations between Ireland and 178 countries, in a complex and diverse environment. Based on the Department's direct knowledge and expertise in international relations, its strongly held position is that the mere

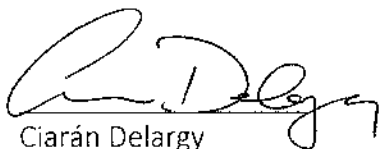
granting of access to scheduled records will adversely affect the State's relations. On balance I am satisfied that the balance favours refusal rather than release.

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@dfa.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@dfa.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



Ciarán Delargy