



**An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2**

11 January 2016

Mr Colin Coyle
News Editor
The Sunday Times
4TH Floor
Bishops Square
Redmond Hill
Dublin 2

Re: Fol/Req/2015/117 - Election Observation Roster

Dear Mr Coyle

I refer to your recent application submitted under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, in which you requested the following:

1. Any records explaining the reasons why a new election observer panel was established in 2013.
2. Access to any records detailing explaining changes made to the published competition.
3. Details of how external assessors were selected and how much each was paid for their role.
4. Copies of any representations received in relation to the roster, including appeals and any records created internally to respond to these representations / appeals.
5. Copies of any briefing materials prepared for the Minister and Secretary General of the Department.

Following my email to you of the 21st December 2015, you granted an extension into January to complete this request.

Set out in the attached schedule is a listing of the records. I have identified 5 records. I have decided to grant access to 2 records, part grant access to 2 records and refuse access to 1 record.

Also included is additional information which was previously sent to you as part of your earlier enquiry received in 2015 relating to the Election Roster. This includes information on election missions observed, requirements for same and the roster application requirements relating to the current roster.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade maintains and administers a roster of 200 election observers to observe elections at the request of organisations such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU), who organise Election Observation Missions. The aim is to ensure that, when requested Ireland is represented at an appropriate level in international observation missions for elections and constitutional referendums. This new election observation roster was established in May 2013 for a five year period, following a public call for applications.

The Irish Election Observation Focal Point liaises with OSCE and EU Election colleagues to ensure that the administration of the Roster is operated in line with international best practice.

On the Irish Aid website, at the link below you will find current information in relation to election observation including, listing on an annual basis since 2013 broken down by country of elections observed, numbers of observers, broken down by Long Term and Short Term observers deployed. <https://www.irishaid.ie/get-involved/election-observation/>

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 non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment please contact foi@dfa.ie or 01 4082857.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Crowe', is written over a solid horizontal line.

John Crowe
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade