



Department  
for Exiting the  
European Union

Freedom of Information Team  
Correspondence Unit  
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Andreas Pavlou  
Via: request-402924-8aa6e40b@whatdotheyknow.com

Our ref: DEX000390

25 April 2017

Dear Mr Pavlou,

### Staff Costs

I refer to your request, where you asked:

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- "- the total cost of salaries for civil servants working in the department for exiting the EU
  - the total cost spent hiring external consultants, including lawyers and trade specialists, for Brexit related matters"
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Total staff costs for DExEU will be published in the 2016/17 Annual Report and Accounts. The information you have requested is therefore exempt under section 22(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 22(1) provides that information is exempt if -

- a) The information is held by a public authority with a view to its publication, by the authority or any other person, at some future date (whether determined or not).
- b) It is reasonable in all circumstances that the information should be withheld from disclosure until the date referred to in paragraph a).

Section 22 is a qualified exemption and we have considered whether the balance of the public interest favours maintaining the exemption in section 22(1) or disclosing the information.

#### Information supporting release of the information

There is a public interest in transparency being demonstrated by releasing information to the public. We understand that government transparency increases public trust and it is beneficial for the public to be kept informed about key matters which affect them. There is also public interest in government providing information they hold that falls within the scope of an FOI request as quickly as possible to maintain up-to-date knowledge on key issues.



### Information supporting withholding the information

Transparency is also achieved by DExEU publishing information on our website. There is high public interest in the government achieving maximum cost effectiveness within its delivery of public services. Given the necessary preparation and administration involved in publishing information, including collation and submission of the information to Ministers, we do not deem providing this information in response to an FOI request as the most cost effective way of placing this information in the public domain.

We already intend to release the information, therefore within the public interest test we have to consider whether there is greater public interest in releasing the requested information to the public at large in an organised and efficient manner (through publishing), or releasing it to individuals as it is requested. There is a strong public interest in ensuring that the process is conducted effectively, and in a manner which allows the government to simultaneously address the need for releasing information alongside their normal departmental work.

Since the ICO recognises and encourages the organised publication of information, which DExEU has every intention of doing, and since there is high public interest in the preparations for negotiations being conducted as efficiently as possible without resource being diverted to other tasks, we have concluded that the public interest in withholding this information outweighs the public interest in releasing it with respect to Section 22(1).

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If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the FOI team. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request or wish to request an internal review, you should write to:

Freedom of Information Team (internal review)  
Department for Exiting the European Union  
9 Downing Street  
SW1A 2AG

You should note that DExEU will not normally accept an application for internal review if it is received more than two months after the date that the reply was issued.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by DExEU. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours faithfully

**Freedom of Information Team, DExEU.**

