



Department
for Exiting the
European Union

Freedom of Information Team
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Jonathan Rush
Via: request-453168-020c90b0@whatdotheyknow.com

Our ref: DEX000949 Extension

18 January 2018

Dear Jonathan Rush,

I refer to your request, where you asked:

I am writing to request disclosure of all documents which you hold relating to this mapping exercise. Please note the following:

1. I am not clear to what extent the mapping exercise was a joint exercise or whether the EU and UK negotiators have effectively conducted their own assessments and then "compared notes". If the latter, then my request relates to the documents which the UK government prepared to inform its assessment of the dependency of North-South cooperation on the EU legal and policy framework. If it was a joint exercise which can only be disclosed with the consent of the EU negotiator, I would be grateful if you would request that consent without delay (referring to the reasons outlined at points 2 and 3 below as to why I believe that disclosure should not be refused).

I can confirm that the Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU) holds information relevant to your request, but I am writing to advise you that I must extend the time limit for our response.

It is occasionally necessary to extend the 20 working day time limit for issuing a response. The Freedom of Information Act (the "Act") does not define what may constitute a 'reasonable' amount of time for an extension, however, guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office advises that extensions should normally take no longer than 20 additional working days.

We require further time to consider the public interest test under the following exemptions of the Act:

- Section 35(1) of the Act, which protects information if it relates to the Government policy-making process and the delivery of effective government.
- Section 27(1) of the Act, which exempts information if its release would, or would be likely to, prejudice International relations.

We have not yet reached a decision on whether the balance of the public interest favours disclosure of this information.

By virtue of section 10(3), when public authorities have to consider the balance of the public interest in relation to a request, they do not have to comply with the request until such time as is reasonable in the circumstances. We wish to fully consider where the balance of the public interest lies in relation to your request.

I hope to let you have a response within a further 20 working days of 18 January 2018. If I can reply before that date, I shall do so. If I need more time to consider the balance of the public interest, I shall write again to let you know.

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.

Yours sincerely,

FOI Team
Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU)