



Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

Trade and Investment Negotiations
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Our ref: FOI2021/13620

16 June 2021

Mr Myles Hayden
request-756429-d147fa0a@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Mr Hayden,

Thank you for your email of 19 May where you requested the following information:

"I am seeking all correspondence between the UK government and the EU Commission regarding visas for touring etc, including details of all formal proposals made by either side during these negotiations."

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'), you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you require
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

With regard to your request for "all correspondence between the UK government and the EU Commission regarding visas for touring etc", I can confirm that we do not hold any information which falls within the scope of your request.

The UK's approach to social security coordination and mobility negotiations was set out in the 'UK's Approach to Negotiations' document published on 27 February 2020. It stated that social security coordination should support mobility by easing the process for those working across borders, including underpinning the reciprocal arrangements on the entry and temporary stay for business purposes ('Mode 4' provisions).

During our negotiations with the EU, the UK sought a mutually beneficial agreement that would have allowed performers to continue performing across the EU and UK without the need for work permits. Specifically, this would have captured the work done by musicians, artists and entertainers, and their accompanying staff, through the list of permitted activities for short-term business visitors. These proposals were rejected by the EU.

An EU proposal on visa free travel (Article MOBI.4), which the Commission published online on 18 March 2020, was discussed during negotiations. However, we do not believe this is captured by your reference to 'visas for touring' as it only concerns short-term visa free travel.

With respect to the second part of your request, where you have asked for “details of all formal proposals made by either side during these negotiations”, it is unclear whether you are seeking the proposals on permitted activities for performers. However, if that is the case, we do not hold any information that falls within the scope of your request.

We have established that some of this information is held by the Cabinet Office, as the department responsible for the negotiations with the EU. However, this information may be exempt from disclosure under section 27(1) of the Act. Section 27(1) exempts information if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice relations between the United Kingdom and any other state, or the United Kingdom and any international organisation (such as the European Union and the World Trade Organisation). Section 27(1) also exempts from disclosure information which, if disclosed would, or would be likely to, prejudice the interests of the United Kingdom abroad, or prejudice the promotion or protection by the United Kingdom of its interests abroad.

Appeals Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original request and should be addressed to the Information Rights & Records Unit. It would be helpful if you can tell us why you are dissatisfied with the response to your request so we may address this during the internal review.

Information Rights & Records Unit
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
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Email: FOI.Requests@beis.gov.uk

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Complaints can be made to the Information Commissioner via their website at: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>.

Yours sincerely,

Trade and Investment Negotiations (Services)