



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY
The Director-General

Brussels, 20 October 2020
regio.a.2(2020)6459791

Subject: Your application for access to documents – GESTDEM 2020/5323

Dear Sir

We refer to your e-mail of 7 September 2020 in which you make a request for access to documents, registered on 9 September 2020 under the above-mentioned reference number, followed up by email exchanges of 18 September and 21 September 2020.

In your initial request for access to documents, you request access to:

- All submitted entries for the 2017, 2018 and 2019 edition of the Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists;
- The 2017, 2018 and 2019 jury assessments of the applications for the Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists;
- Documents about the budget, criteria and goals of the Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists ;
- Commission e-mail exchanges with the (mentor) journalists involved in the Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists ;
- Evaluations of the 2017, 2018 and/or 2019 edition of the Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists.

The following documents related to the criteria, goals and design of the Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists fall within the scope of your application:

- [2017 Financing Decision on Technical Assistance, Annex I, Working document](#) (Nr action 70);
- [2018 Financing Decision on Technical Assistance, Annex I, Working document](#) (Nr 15/16);
- [2019 Financing Decision on Technical Assistance, Annex I, Working document](#) (Nr 2019-014).

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We regret to inform you that the Commission does not hold any other documents that would correspond to the description given in your application than the documents referred to and provided above.

In addition, please find attached the evaluation of the 2017, 2018 and 2019 edition of the Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists, which we have already provided by email of 18 September 2020.

As specified in Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, the right of access as defined in that regulation applies only to existing documents in the possession of the institution.

Given that for part of your request no such document corresponding to the description given in your application are held by the Commission, the Commission is only partially in a position to fulfil your request.

In accordance with Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, you are entitled to submit a confirmatory application requesting the Commission to review this position.

Such a confirmatory application should be addressed within 15 working days upon receipt of this letter to the Secretariat-General of the Commission at the following address:

European Commission
Secretariat-General
Unit C.1. 'Transparency, Document Management and Access to Documents'
BERL 7/076
B-1049 Brussels, or by email to: sg-acc-doc@ec.europa.eu

In any case, I would like to strongly reaffirm the European Commission's unwavering attachment to editorial independence and more generally to press freedom, which are key pillars of the rule of law that is at the heart of the European project. These principles were recently recalled by European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen at her [State of the Union speech of last 16 September 2020](#).

These principles obviously apply to selection of applicants in the framework of the various Commission's information programmes. Therefore, participants to the Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists are selected strictly in accordance with the publicly-available criteria of the competition. And like for in any other Commission activities, such as the [call for proposals regarding EU support for information measures relating to EU cohesion policy](#), the organisers of Youth4Regions guarantee full editorial independence and do not interfere at any point with the work of the participants or with that of the editors.

Yours faithfully,



Marc Lemaître