



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT
Directorate B – Investment, Innovative & Sustainable Transport
B.5 – Social Aspects, Passenger Rights & Equal Opportunities

Brussels
MOVE.DDG1.B.5/RL

Ms Lora Verheecke
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Sent by e-mail:
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Subject: Your application for access to documents - EASE 2022/6690

Dear Ms Verheecke,

We refer to your request for access to European Commission documents registered on 18 November 2022 under the above-mentioned reference number.

You request access to *‘all documentation (including but not limited to all email correspondence, attendance lists, agendas, background papers, transcripts and recordings) and the meeting minutes/notes relating to the meeting between Pablo Fabregas Martinez and Uber on 29th September 2022’*.

We have identified the following documents as falling within the scope of your application:

- E-mail exchange on a request for a meeting with a representative of Uber dated between 20 June and 14 September 2022 (reference number Ares(2022)8206619);
- Minutes of the meeting held between Mr Pablo Fabregas Martinez and Uber on 29 September 2022 (reference number Ares(2022)7044669).
- Thank you e-mail from a representative of Uber dated 4 October 2022 (reference number Ares(2022)8200359).

With regard to the documents listed above, a complete disclosure of the identified documents is prevented by the exception concerning the protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual outlined in Article 4(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001¹, because they contain the following personal data:

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43).

- the names of Commission staff members not pertaining to the senior management;
- the names and contact details of other natural persons;
- other information relating to identified or identifiable natural persons, in particular references to their functions, to the extent that these would enable their identification.

Pursuant to Article 4(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, access to a document has to be refused if its disclosure would undermine the protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual, in particular in accordance with European Union legislation regarding the protection of personal data.

The applicable legislation in this field is Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC² (hereinafter ‘Regulation (EU) 2018/1725’, or ‘Data Protection Regulation’).

In particular, Article 3(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 provides that personal data “*means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person [...]*”. The Court of Justice has specified that any information, which by reason of its content, purpose or effect, is linked to a particular person is to be considered as personal data³.

In its judgment in Case C-28/08 P (Bavarian Lager)⁴, the Court of Justice ruled that when a request is made for access to documents containing personal data, the Data Protection Regulation becomes fully applicable⁵.

According to Article 9(1)(b) of the Data Protection Regulation, personal data shall only be transmitted to recipients established in the Union other than Union institutions and bodies if “*[t]he recipient establishes that it is necessary to have the data transmitted for a specific purpose in the public interest and the controller, where there is any reason to assume that the data subject’s legitimate interests might be prejudiced, establishes that it is proportionate to transmit the personal data for that specific purpose after having demonstrably weighed the various competing interests*”.

Only if these conditions are fulfilled and the processing constitutes lawful handling, in accordance with the requirements of Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, can the transmission of personal data occur.

² Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 205 of 21.11.2018, p. 39).

³ Judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 20 December 2017 in Case C-434/16, *Peter Nowak v Data Protection Commissioner*, ECLI:EU:C:2017:994, paragraphs 33-35.

⁴ Judgment of 29 June 2010 in Case C-28/08 P, *Commission v Bavarian Lager*, ECLI:EU:C:2010:378, paragraph 63.

⁵ Whereas this judgment specifically related to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data, the principles set out therein are also applicable under the new data protection regime established by Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

According to Article 9(1)(b) of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1725, the European Commission has to examine the further conditions for a lawful processing of personal data only if the first condition is fulfilled, namely if the recipient has established that it is necessary to have the data transmitted to you for a specific purpose in the public interest. It is only in that case the European Commission has to examine whether there is a reason to assume that the legitimate interests of the data subject might be prejudiced and, in the affirmative, establish the proportionality of the transmission of the personal data for that specific purpose after having demonstrably weighed the various competing interests.

In your request, you do not express any particular interest to have access to these personal data, nor do you put forward any arguments to establish the necessity to have the data transmitted for a specific purpose in the public interest. Therefore, the European Commission does not have to examine whether there is a reason to assume that the data subjects' legitimate interests might be prejudiced.

Notwithstanding the above, please note that there are reasons to assume that the legitimate interests of the data subjects concerned would be prejudiced by disclosure of the personal data reflected in these documents, as there is a real and non-hypothetical risk that such public disclosure would harm their privacy and subject them to unsolicited external contacts.

Consequently, we conclude that, pursuant to Article 4(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, access cannot be granted to the personal data contained in the requested documents, as the need to obtain access thereto for a purpose in the public interest has not been substantiated, and there is no reason to think that the legitimate interests of the individuals concerned would not be prejudiced by the disclosure of their personal data.

Please note that the minutes of the meeting between Mr Pablo Fabregas Martinez and Uber on 29 September 2022 (reference number Ares(2022)7044669) were drawn up for internal use under the responsibility of the relevant services of the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport. They solely reflect the author's interpretation of the interventions made and do not set out any official position of the third parties to which the document refers, who were not consulted on its content. The minutes do not reflect the position of the Commission and cannot be quoted as such.

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

Such a confirmatory application should be addressed to the Secretariat-General of the Commission within 15 working days upon receipt of this letter. You can submit it in one of the following ways:

by asking for a review via your portal⁶ account (available only for initial requests submitted via the portal account),

or by mail:

European Commission
Secretariat-General

⁶ <https://www.ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-request>

Transparency, Document Management & Access to Documents (SG.C.1)
BERL 7/076
B-1049 Bruxelles

or by email to: sg-acc-doc@ec.europa.eu

Yours sincerely,

Elisabeth Kotthaus
Head of Unit

Enclosures: E-mail request for a meeting
Meeting minutes
Thank-you e-mail from Uber