



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENLARGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS
The acting Director-General

Brussels

Subject: Your application for access to documents – Ref. GestDem 2021/4684

Dear Ms Verheecke,

I refer to your application dated 22 July 2021¹, registered on 23 July 2021 under the above-mentioned reference number² in which you made a request for access to:

“I am requesting for the period between 30 November 2015 to date, a list of all meetings held by your DG with the following representatives: Shell, BP, Total, ENI, Repsol, Galp and Equinor”.

I also refer to your email of 26 July 2021³ in response to our request for clarification where we tried to reduce the scope to a certain region or hierarchical level, in which you stated that:

“I am asking for a list of all the meetings, with all your staff, for the period between 30 November 2015 to date, between your staff members and representatives of the following companies: Shell, BP, Total, ENI, Repsol, Galp and Equinor”.

You have made your request “under the right of access to documents in the EU treaties, as developed in Regulation 1049/2001”, and we have handled it accordingly.

As your request concerned meetings held at all hierarchical levels of DG NEAR and to all geographic areas within the remit of our Directorate General, we consulted the Director-General and Deputy-Directors General offices as well as all the Directorates as follows:

- Directorate A: Strategy and Turkey.
- Directorate B: Neighbourhood South.
- Directorate C: Neighbourhood East and Institution Building.

¹ Ref. Ares(2021)4747377.

² Ref. Ares(2021)4747415.

³ Ref. Ares(2021)4999055.

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- Directorate D: Western Balkans.
- Directorate R: Resources (such as legal issues, finance and contracts, audit).

We also consulted the Cabinet of the Commissioner VÁRHELYI.

I regret to inform you that neither the Cabinet nor DG NEAR hold any documents that would correspond to the description given in your application. However, below you can find some information on workshops and business forums attended.

The EU Delegation Azerbaijan informed that BP and TOTAL have been invited to the EU Azerbaijan Business Forums of 2017, 2018 and 2019 as other companies in country.

At DG NEAR in Brussels, some encounters took place with presence of ENI Brussels office staff in the framework of outreach workshops to private investors around November 2017 and March 2018 on the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD).

DG INTPA (back then DG DEVCO) was on the lead for planning and managing these workshops and organised joint presentations with DG NEAR (current unit A3: “Thematic support, Economic Development & IFIs, Public Administration Reform”) on the EFSD guarantee. To request more detailed information, you may refer to DG INTPA, unit E4 that managed the One Stop Shop for EFSD.

The Cabinet of the Commissioner VÁRHELYI has reported that a meeting took place in February 2020 between Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi and a representative from TOTAL to discuss the role of gas in the energy transition and the Green Deal.

As specified in Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001⁴, the right of access as defined in that regulation applies only to existing documents in the possession of the institution.

Given that no such documents, corresponding to the description given in your application, are held by DG NEAR, DG NEAR is not in a position to fulfil your request.

In accordance with Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, you are entitled to make 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
Transparency, Document Management & Access to Documents (SG.C.1)
BERL 7/076
B-1049 Brussels

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

Yours sincerely,

⁴ 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, Official Journal L 145 of 31 May 2001, p. 43.

[e-signed]

Maciej Popowski