



Corporate Europe Observatory
Margarida Silva

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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Datum 10 December 2021

Re Your FOI request

Dear Ms Silva,

In your email of 11 October 2021, you requested information on meetings of the Dutch Permanent Representation to the European Union regarding digital policy issues, invoking the Government Information (Public Access) Act (Wet openbaarheid van bestuur; Wob).

The information you requested concerned the following:

'How many meetings have employees of the Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the European Union had with representatives of companies, organisations and other stakeholders to discuss the digital policy issues since 01 December 2019?

The digital policies we are interested in include but are not limited to the AI Act, the Digital Services Act, the Digital Markets Act and the ePrivacy Directive.

I would like to request a list of these meetings including who was present at the meeting, the names of the organisations and lobbyists present, the date of the meeting, and the subject matters discussed.'

The decision was postponed by four weeks on 4 November 2021.

Statutory framework

Your application falls within the scope of the Government Information (Public Access) Act.

Decision

In response to your application, one document has been created, namely a list of meetings of the Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the

Netherlands to the European Union with stakeholders. This list encompasses meetings in the period from 1 December 2019 until 11 October 2021, the date of your request. I have decided to grant your application and to disclose this document.

Datum
10 december 2021

Onze referentie
BZ-2021.98956

Despite the fact that the Government Information (Public Access) Act does not provide for any obligation to produce information that is not already contained in existing documents, regardless of the degree of effort that this would involve, I have decided to create a document in order to be able to substantively reply to your application and in that way serve the public interest by disclosure of the requested information.¹

With regard to this document, it is relevant to mention that no distinction is made between who took the initiative for the meeting; the Permanent Representation in principle receives every stakeholder. Further it is relevant to mention, that the document encompasses meetings that took place in the building of the Permanent Representation, as well as meetings which have taken place through videoconference.²

In the document you will find:

- the date of a meeting,
- the name of the stakeholder,
- the topic discussed at the meeting and
- the abbreviation of the department of the Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the European Union that is responsible for the topic discussed.

In the document you will not find the names of the persons who were present at the meetings. I do not disclose this information in respect of personal privacy, on the ground of section 10, subsection 2, opening words and (e) of the Government Information (Public Access) Act.

Overall and according to my analysis the document shows the following numbers and percentages:

Manner of disclosure

The document is digitally enclosed with this decision.

¹ See the judgment of the Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State (ABRVs) of 5 June 2013, no. 201204362/1/A3.

² For events that have been organized by the Dutch Permanent Representation, the list contains information about the invitees to these events, not about the stakeholders actually present.

Furthermore, in light of the fact that – due to the pandemic – many meetings have taken place through video-conferences in the period covered by this request for access to documents, it has been decided to also retroactively include these meetings in the list. However, due to staff changes no guarantee can be given that the list is complete in this respect.

Publication

The disclosed document will be published on www.rijksoverheid.nl, so that the document can be accessed by everyone.

Datum
10 december 2021
Onze referentie
BZ-2021.98956

Yours sincerely,

For the Minister of Foreign Affairs,
The deputy permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
to the European Union

[This letter was processed digitally and is therefore not signed.]

Michael Stibbe

Within six weeks after this decision is sent, a notice of objection may be lodged. The notice of objection must be signed and dated and include the name and address of the person submitting it, a description of the decision against which the objection is being lodged and the grounds on which it is based. The notice of objection should be addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Legal Affairs Department, Postbus 20061, 2500 EB The Hague, The Netherlands.