

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála

Oifig na bPasanna, Teach Knockmaun, 42-47 Sráid an Mhóta Íochtarach,
Baile Átha Cliath 2 D02 TN83

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Passport Office, Knockmaun House, 42-47 Mount Street Lower, Dublin 2 D02 TN83

Our Ref: FOI/Req/2019/321

Mr. Stephen McDermott,
The Journal.

2 December, 2019

Dear Mr. McDermott,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

I am requesting the release of figures relating to the number of applications for passports declined by the Passport Office since June 2016, specifically:

- **The number of declined passport applications processed by the office, with a breakdown per year;**
- **A breakdown of the 10 nationalities who had the highest number of declined passport applications (with total figures for each).**

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 14 November 2019.

I am the Deciding Officer in this case. By way of explanation, in order to meet the requirements of the Passports Act 2008, each applicant must demonstrate their Irish citizenship in their application. Entitlement to Irish citizenship is governed by Irish law and in particular the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act 1956, as amended. Irish citizens are not prohibited from holding foreign citizenship in addition to their Irish citizenship. The Passport Office does not compile data on any other citizenships that an applicant may hold.

In addition, the Passport Office does not compile data on the number of applications for passports that were declined (refused) a passport on the grounds that the applicant was not

able to demonstrate their Irish citizenship in their application. Data is compiled on the number of applications there were cancelled but this data, while it includes the number of applications there were refused a passport, also includes applications cancelled for other reasons, for example, if an applicant has used the online channel but was not eligible to so, their online application is cancelled and they are asked to reapply using the paper channel. We are not in a position to separate the number of applications that were refused a passport from the overall number of applications that were cancelled nor separate the number of applications cancelled resubmitted through an alternate channel.

Therefore your request falls for refusal under Section 15 (1) (a) of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014 which states that an FOI request may be refused if:

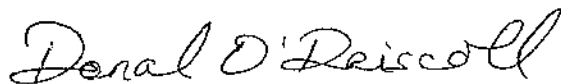
'the record concerned does not exist or cannot be found after all reasonable steps to ascertain its whereabouts have been taken'

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2, D02 DX45 or by email to foi@dfa.ie. A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfa.ie, or 01-4082857.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department.

Yours sincerely,



Donal O'Driscoll
Passport Office.