

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act (Cap. 496) aims to establish a right to information held by public authorities in order to promote added transparency and accountability in Government.

In terms of article 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, every relevant public authority shall publish information describing the authority's structure, functions and responsibilities together with a general description of the categories of documents held and a description of all manuals and similar types of documents which contain policies, principles, rules or guidelines in accordance with which decisions or recommendations are made in respect of members of the public.

Permanent Secretariat - Ministry for Finance - Structure, Functions and Responsibilities¹

The Permanent Secretariat of the Ministry for Finance encompasses the Office of the Permanent Secretary, the Directorate General (Support Services), the Directorate General (Budget Affairs), the Directorate General (Financial Policy and Management) and the Directorate General (Strategy and Operations Support), together with a number of core Directorates as follows:

Directorate General (Support Services)

Corporate Services Directorate
EU Affairs Directorate
Programme Implementation Directorate
EU Paying Authority
Policy Development Directorate
Enterprise Policy Directorate
Information Management Office

Directorate General (Budget Affairs)

Budget Office
EU Budget Directorate

Directorate General (Financial Policy and Management)

Tax, Policy and Social Welfare Policy Directorate
Financial Policy Development and Analysis Directorate

The Permanent Secretariat, through the Programme Implementation Directorate, also coordinates the appointments on the Boards and Committees that fall under the remit

¹ The Ministry for Finance's Organisation Chart can be found at <http://finance.gov.mt/page.aspx?site=MFIN&page=structure>.

of the Ministry for Finance and for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, these shall be considered as part of the Permanent Secretariat.

The Permanent Secretariat, together with these Directorates, provides administrative support to the Minister for Finance in matters falling under his portfolio. The specific Directorates are tasked with duties as follows:

Directorate General (Support Services)

Corporate Services Directorate

Provide support services to other departments, organisations and secretariats of the Ministry in the areas of financial planning and management, human resource management, and customer care.

EU Affairs Directorate

Co-ordinate EU related matters, both at a domestic level and with other EU stakeholders, and Co-ordinate the formulation of the Ministry's position on policies proposed by the EU.

Programme Implementation Directorate

Management of the Ministry's Change Management Programme, including facilitating the implementation of the Ministry's endorsed policies, strategies and change management programmes and monitoring the implementation of the required programs and activities, including Customer Care and Green Initiatives. The Directorate also coordinates and monitors EU funded projects implemented by the Ministry's entities and the appointments on Boards and Committees that fall under the Ministry's remit. The Programme Implementation Directorate is the Office responsible for the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act provisions.

EU Paying Authority

Performs duties relating to the financial management and certification of expenditure in relation to EU-Funded projects under particular EU Programmes with the aim of Maximizing the long-term benefits to Malta within the obligations and parameters as set out in National and EC Legislation. The Directorate is also responsible for the payment of EU Own Resources to the European Commission.

Policy Development Directorate

Promote the development of policies that are consistent with Government's Vision to foster a dynamic, high value-added and innovative economy founded on competence, skills and excellence and capable of sustaining a high standard of living and better employment opportunities for all.

Enterprise Policy Directorate

Build and sustain a framework which focuses on small and micro enterprises and contributes towards creating a positive environment in which entrepreneurs and businesses can flourish. Ensure that enterprise policy complements the country's economic and industrial policies for the benefit of enterprise in Malta."

Information Management Office

Preparation of strategic and operational ICT plans for the Ministry in line with the national ICT strategy. Provide support and advice to the Permanent Secretary on the Ministry ICT matters. Procure and/or lease ICT-related equipment. Co-ordinate the upgrading, development and implementation of new Information Systems and preparation of the ICT budget and the optimisation of ICT resources;

Budget Office

Ensures that the budgetary process incorporating Ministries, Departments and Public Entities, is managed in a timely manner. Advices and supports Ministry for the identification, apportionment and utilisation of the financial resources of government, to enable government to sustain commitments and achieve its objectives, within the parameters of a consolidated financial plan.

EU Budget Directorate

Ensure that all matters relating to the EU Budget are properly monitored and dealt with special note to ascertain that Malta's national interests are safeguarded to the full.

Tax, Policy and Social Welfare Policy Directorate

Contribute to enhance economic and financial well-being by ensuring that professional standards of financial management apply across Government; by promoting tax, welfare and expenditure policies that improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of public service delivery; and ensure a tax and benefit system that is fair, equitable and efficient.

Financial Policy Development and Analysis Directorate

Promote and contribute to the introduction of policies that support the country's financial and fiscal well-being and to ensure the sustainability of these policies.

Directorate General (Strategy and Operations Support)

Maintain a dedicated capability for the planning and execution of long-term and strategic programmes and projects arising from the Business and Financial Plans of the Ministry. These programmes and projects generally have a service-wide application but may also include initiatives limited to the Ministry for Finance.

General description of the categories of documents held

The Permanent Secretariat and the Directorates General and Directorates falling under its remit hold documents falling under the following categories:

- Policy documents and related working documents on themes that fall within the portfolio of the Ministry;
- Studies and reports related to the Ministry;
- Multilateral and Bilateral International Agreements;
- Documents related to the implementation of Ministry's initiatives;
- Documents related to the programming of funds managed by the Programme Implementation Directorate;
- Manuals of procedures, Applications and other documentation related to the financial management, certification of expenditure and claims for EU and EEA Funds;
- Reports and documentation related to the implementation of projects co-funded by the EU;
- Documentation related to the payment of Own Resources to the EC;
- Documents related to customer care queries;
- Dossiers related to procurement (Request for Tender, Requests for Quotations and Request for Information);
- Contracts relating to the provision of IT equipment, information systems and services;
- Explanatory Memoranda, Briefing Notes and Speaking Notes for the Minister and other Government Officials and Instruction Notes for the Permanent Representative and other Maltese representatives;
- Council Documents;
- Personal Files of Employees of the Ministry;
- Minutes of the meetings and other documents related to the workings of the Boards and Tribunals set up under the remit of the Permanent Secretary;
- Draft Legislation up to publication stage;
- Documents in connection with the Budgetary Process;
- Requests for Presidential Pardons;
- Documents related to the issuance of warrants in the accountancy field;
- Documents related to the selection process to fill vacant or new positions within MFIN;
- Documents relating to the issuance of warrants in the accounting and auditing fields.

Description of all manuals and similar types of documents

The Permanent Secretariat within the Ministry for Finance holds the following documents, in accordance with which decisions or recommendations are made in respect of members of the public (including bodies corporate and employees of the public authority in their personal capacity):

- Freedom of Information Manuals;
- Quality Assurance Handbook (Accountancy Board);

Contact Details

The Permanent Secretariat is housed at 30, Maison Demandols, South Street, Valletta and the Freedom of Information Officer and the alternate Freedom of Information Officer for the Permanent Secretariat and all entities mentioned above, may be contacted on 25998285 or 25998401 or by email on foi.mfin@gov.mt.