

The Research Executive Agency's (REA) refusal to grant public access to projects that received funding under the Horizon 2020 programme, with ethics requirements

Case 1470/2020/DL - Opened on 07/09/2020 - Decision on 28/10/2020 - Institution concerned European Research Executive Agency (Settled by the institution) |

The complainant sought from the Research Executive Agency a table of applications that received funding under the Horizon 2020 programme, with conditional ethics clearance, as well as the grant agreements related to these applications. The REA argued that the requested information is stored in several databases, and cannot be extracted by a routine search operation. Therefore, the REA stated that it does not hold such a table and therefore the corresponding grant agreements could not be identified. As such, it could not provide the complainant with the documents requested. Over the last months, the European Commission changed the tool used to aggregate and store data under the Horizon 2020 programme, making it possible to extract the information sought by the complainant. In light of this, the complainant could make a new request for access. The Ombudsman therefore closed the case as settled.