

Freedom of Information Act 2000

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The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (c.36) is an Act of Parliament of the Parliament of the United Kingdom that creates a public "right of access" to information held by public authorities. It is the implementation of freedom of information legislation in the United Kingdom on a national level. The Act implements a manifesto commitment of the Labour Party in the 1997 general election, developed by Dr David Clark as a 1997 White Paper. The final version of the Act is believed to have been diluted from that proposed while Labour was in opposition. The full provisions of the act came into force on 1 January 2005.

The Act is the responsibility of the Lord Chancellor's Department (now renamed the Ministry of Justice). The Act led to the renaming of the Data Protection Commissioner (set up to administer the Data Protection Act), who is now known as the Information Commissioner. The Office of the Information Commissioner oversees the operation of the Act.

A second freedom of information law is in existence in the UK, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 13). It was passed by the Scottish Parliament in 2002, to cover public bodies over which the Holyrood parliament, rather than Westminster, has jurisdiction. For these institutions, it fulfils the same purpose as the 2000 Act.

Around 120,000 requests are made each year^[7]. Private citizens made 60% of them, with businesses and journalists accounting for 20% and 10% respectively^[7]. Journalists' requests took up more of officials' time than businesses' and individuals' requests^[citation needed]. The Act cost £35.5 million in 2005.^[8]

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Freedom of Information Act 2000



Parliament of the United Kingdom

Long title	An Act to make provision for the disclosure of information held by public authorities or by persons providing services for them and to amend the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Public Records Act 1958; and for connected purposes.
Statute book chapter	2000 c. 36
Territorial extent	England and Wales; Scotland; Northern Ireland
Dates	
Royal Assent	30 November 2000
Commencement	30 November 2000 (part) ^[1] 30 January 2001 (part) ^[1] 14 May 2001 (part) ^[2] 30 November 2002 (part) ^[3] 28 February 2003 (part) ^[3] 30 June 2003 (part) ^[3] 30 October 2003 (part) ^[4] 29 February 2004 (part) ^[4] 30 June 2004 (part) ^[4] 1 January 2005 (full) ^{[5][6]}
Other legislation	
Related legislation	Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

Status: Current legislation