



Staten-Generaal



FOLKETINGET

## Opening up closed doors: Making the EU more transparent for its citizens

### *State of Play*

Dear colleagues,

A strong European Union is a democratic union. This means that decisions have to be taken in as open and transparent a way as possible. In the past year, we all made an effort to ensure more transparency in the European legislative process, and we were not the only ones. The European Ombudsman and the European Court of Justice, too, were critical about the inadequate transparency of the legislative decision-making process. The European Ombudsman has concluded that there is maladministration and the European Court considered the Council's current working method to be in breach of existing European legislation.

At last, the Council seems to be ready to hear us. Last summer, the governments of the Member States entered into an internal discussion about a more proactive transparency policy.

For the first time in years, the Council is now willing to overhaul its transparency policy. We welcome this step and consider the proposals that are now circulating (Council document 11099/18, *limité*) a sound basis for further discussion. Meanwhile, it is up to us, the national parliaments, to closely monitor the developments. Do the proposals respect the bottom line under treaty law and are they consistent with the desired democratic content of the EU? How do the member states react to these proposals?

We invite you to take note of the proposals that are now circulating. During the upcoming COSAC in Vienna we will be able to meet again in order to reach a coordinated position. During this crucial phase of deliberations, we can thus continue to keep pressure on our governments, who are accountable to us.

We would like to discuss with you, for instance in a video conference or in the margin of COSAC, how we can promote these issues together. Please contact us to make an appointment.

With kind regards,

Foort van Oosten

*Chair of the committee on European Affairs, House of Representatives of the Netherlands*

Bastiaan van Apeldoorn

*Chair of the committee on European Affairs, Senate of the Netherlands*

Erik Christensen

*Chair of the committee on European Affairs, Folketinget, Denmark*

2017

NOV	<b>Plenary COSAC Tallinn, Estonia</b> Adoption by 26 parliamentary delegations of four proposals on improved legislative transparency
26-28	

DEC	
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2018

JAN	
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FEB	<b>European Ombudsman report</b> Council commits maladministration in handling legislative documents, Ombudsman issues recommendations	23	<b>European Commission</b> Positive reply from European Commission towards parliamentary proposals
9			

MAR	<b>Court of Justice of the European Union</b> Judgement in case T-540/15: De Capitani v. European Parliament
22	

APR	
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MAY	<b>European Ombudsman report</b> European Ombudsman submits special report to the European Parliament in view of the Council's failure to reply to the her findings within the set time limits	23	<b>Council of the European Union</b> Council gives cursory reply to parliamentary proposals on transparency
17			

JUN	<b>Plenary COSAC, Sofia, Bulgaria</b> Plenary COSAC adopts conclusions, asking Council for a more detailed response to the proposals and further reflection
17-19	

JUL	<b>Council Secretariat-General</b> Council General-Secretariat presents a series of proposals to the Member States aimed at enhancing the proactive transparency policy of the Council. (Council document 11099/18, Limité)
13	

AUG	
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SEPT	<b>European Parliament</b> EP-draft report on the Ombudsman's findings on the transparency of legislative discussions in the preparatory bodies of the Council of the EU
11	

OCT	<b>Eurogroup</b> Reply from President Centeno of the Eurogroup towards parliamentary proposals
3	

NOV	<b>Plenary COSAC, Vienna, Austria</b> Session regarding: Transparent European Union closer to its citizens in light of the upcoming elections to the European Parliament
18-20	

DEC	
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### Summer and fall

**Council of the European Union**  
Discussions within the Council on concrete measures to enhance transparency.