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## INFORMATION NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Working Party on Information
Subject:	Pilot Project of the Council on Open Data: Voting results dataset - Information from the GSC

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### Pilot Project on Open Data

The European Council concluded in 2013 that "Open data is an untapped resource with a huge potential for building stronger, more interconnected societies that better meet the needs of the citizens and allow innovation and prosperity to flourish." It called for the modernisation of public administrations and requested that interoperability and re-use of public sector information should be promoted actively.<sup>1</sup> It is in this context that the General Secretariat of the Council has recently concluded a pilot project on open data.

Since April 2014, the Council of the EU is participating in the EU open data portal with a dataset containing all Council votes on legislative acts since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009.

The EU open data portal was launched in December 2012. It is a single point of access to a growing range of data from the EU institutions and other EU bodies. The data are free to use and reuse for commercial or non-commercial purposes, provided that the source is acknowledged.

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<sup>1</sup> Conclusions of the European Council (24/25 October 2013), paragraph 9 (EUCO 169/13).

The EU open data portal aims to promote the innovative use of the data and unleash their economic potential. It also aims to help encourage the transparency and accountability of the EU's institutions and other EU bodies. See EU Open Data Portal at <https://open-data.europa.eu>.

The dataset is updated on a daily basis and can also be found in the Council's website. See: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/general-secretariat/corporate-policies/transparency/open-data/>

### **Dataset: Council votes on legislative acts**

The Council's voting records are public whenever it adopts a legislative act under the ordinary or a special legislative procedure. On average, the Council adopts 120 legislative acts per year.

This dataset contains not only the votes of the Council when adopting a legislative act but also information related to that act, such as:

- act type (regulation, directive, decision or position)
- act number (as published in the EU's Official Journal)
- document number (submitted to the Council for adoption)
- subject (the title of the act as published in the Official Journal)
- interinstitutional number
- date of adoption
- form of adoption (in a Council meeting or by written procedure)
- Council configuration
- number of the Council's session
- action by the Council (according to the steps of the legislative procedure)
- policy area
- voting procedure (ordinary or special legislative procedure)
- voting rule (qualified majority or unanimity)

The dataset can be downloaded in bulk, parsed using an API and browsed using the dataset structure.

The dataset is published exclusively for information purposes. Only Council minutes on the adoption of legislative acts are authentic. These are available through the Council's public register of documents.

The dataset contains voting results before they are formally published in the Council's minutes. This information carries the publication status 'published, not verified' and may still be subject to change.

The General Secretariat of the Council aims to keep this dataset as accurate as possible. If errors are brought to our attention, we will correct them.

## **Evaluation**

The General Secretariat will conduct an evaluation of its participation in the pilot project after 6 months. The results and potential new datasets for publication will be presented to this Working Party. Only data that is already in the public domain would be proposed to be made available in machine-readable format.

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