



Brussels, 13 February 2025
(OR. en)

6244/25

INF 17
API 11

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Public access to documents - Confirmatory application No 03/c/01/25

Delegations will find attached:

- the request for access to documents sent to the General Secretariat of the Council on 18 December 2024 and registered on the same day (Annex 1);
- the reply from the General Secretariat of the Council dated 11 February 2025 (Annex 2);
- the confirmatory application dated 13 February 2025 and registered on the same date (Annex 3).

From: **DELETED**

Sent: mercredi 18 décembre 2024 10:18

To: TRANSPARENCY Access to documents (COMM) <Access@consilium.europa.eu>

Subject: access to documents request - Secure Video Conferencing System

Dear Council of the European Union,

Under the right of access to documents in the EU treaties, as developed in Regulation 1049/2001, I am requesting documents which contain the following information:

- Document 16133/24 - "Secure Video Conferencing System (sVTC) – Note to the SPOC – Equipment for sVTC points of presence – Deployment process"
- Document 16367/24 - "sVTC interconnection security accreditation (Phase 1 Justification) – Conceptual security architecture"

Yours faithfully,

DELETED



Council of the European Union

General Secretariat

Directorate-General Communication and Information - COMM

Directorate Information and Outreach

Information Services Unit / Transparency

Head of Unit

Brussels, 11 February 2025

DELETED

E-mail: **DELETED**

Ref. 24/3122

Request made on: 18.12.2024

Deadline extension: 21.01.2025

Dear **DELETED**,

Thank you for your request for access to documents of the Council of the European Union¹.

I regret to inform you that access to documents **ST 16133/24** and **ST 16367/24** cannot be given for the reasons set out below.

Document **ST 16133/24**, which is classified EU RESTRICTED, describes the technical specifications, requirements and deployment process of the secure video conferencing system (sVTC) provided by the General Secretariat of the Council in the context of a project aimed at handling European Union Classified Information. Disclosure of this information to the public would enable malicious circles to circumvent security measures and breach the confidentiality of information exchanged through such systems, thereby jeopardising the operational capacity of the EU. Disclosure of the document would therefore undermine the protection of the public interest as regards public security. As a consequence, the General Secretariat has to refuse access to this document.²

¹ The General Secretariat of the Council has examined your request on the basis of the applicable rules: Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43) and the specific provisions concerning public access to Council documents set out in Annex II to the Council's Rules of Procedure (Council Decision No 2009/937/EU, OJ L 325, 11.12.2009, p. 35).

² Article 4(1)(a), first indent, of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001

We have looked into the possibility of releasing parts of this document³. However, as the exception to the right of access applies to its entire content, the General Secretariat is unable to give partial access.

Document ST 16367/24 relates to the conceptual security architecture of the secure video conferencing system (sVTC) interconnection security accreditation, in particular as regards the phase 1 justification. It includes the technical elements that will underlie the architecture of the future sVTC for the exchange of information up to the classification level S-UE/EU-S, which will be used by different types of users. It addresses the technical specificities and requirements concerning how the systems of the General Secretariat of the Council and the national systems intend to interconnect. The release of such information would indicate the limitations and potential vulnerabilities in the security architecture of the system. This disclosure would reveal how the system can be potentially protected and thus may enable attacks directed to it, which could thus undermine the secure exchange of information of the Council, and thereby impact on the operational security of the EU. The disclosure of this document would therefore undermine the protection of the public interest as regards public security. As a consequence, the General Secretariat has to refuse access to this document⁴.

We have also looked into the possibility of releasing parts of this document⁵. However, as the exception to the right of access applies to its entire content, the General Secretariat is unable to give partial access.

Pursuant to Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, you may ask the Council to review this decision within 15 working days of receiving this reply. Should you see the need for such a review, you are invited to indicate the reasons thereof.

Yours sincerely,

Fernando FLORINDO

³ Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

⁴ Article 4(1)(a), first indent, of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

⁵ Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

From: **DELETED**

Sent: jeudi 13 février 2025 12:10

To: TRANSPARENCY Access to documents (COMM) <Access@consilium.europa.eu>

Subject: Internal review of access to documents request - Secure Video Conferencing System

Dear Council of the European Union,

Please pass this on to the person who reviews confirmatory applications.

I am filing the following confirmatory application with regards to my access to documents request 'Secure Video Conferencing System'.

I accept that there is a legitimate interest in protecting public security by refusing access to the two documents in question. However, I point out that there is a public right to understand how public money is spent. In this case, the Council has spent years, and like hundreds of thousands of euros in public money in setting up a secure video conference system. But despite these efforts, so far this system appears not to have been deployed. I acknowledge that the public security exception knows no public interest override, but I ask the Council whether it could de-redact parts of the document offering insight into the overall progress of the project. I also ask the Council to in general provide a minimum of public information on the matter, so we can understand how public money is spent, and with what measures the integrity of high level Council debates secured.

Yours faithfully,

DELETED
