



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 31 March 2025
(OR. en)

7165/25

INF 34
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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Draft 23rd annual report of the Council on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents

COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

ON ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS – 2024

I. INTRODUCTION

This is the 23rd annual report on the implementation of [Regulation \(EC\) No 1049/2001](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. It has been drawn up pursuant to Article 17(1) of that Regulation¹. The report describes trends in requests for access to Council documents in 2024 and reviews complaints to the Ombudsman and rulings handed down by the European courts in cases concerning the institutions' implementation of the Regulation.

The statistical data that provide the basis for this report are available as [open data on the Council's website](#).

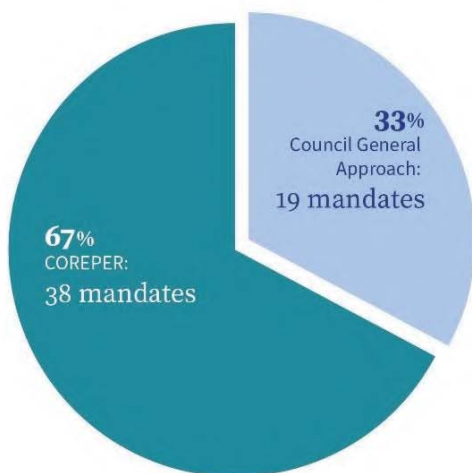
II. LEGISLATIVE TRANSPARENCY

2024 saw a much lower level of legislative activity in relation to previous years, which is typical for the end of the legislative cycle. The European elections process leading to a new European Parliament and a new Commission impacted the time available for negotiations. This can be seen in the number of negotiating mandates granted, 57, which represents a decrease of 41% in relation to 2023. As a result of the European elections, the European Parliament was not in a position to adopt in 2024 its negotiating mandate in 17 files for which the Council already could, thus preventing the opening of negotiations.

In line with the Coreper [approach](#) on strengthening legislative transparency, all Council mandates were public. The final outcome of negotiations was made public for the 23 files concerned, both after Coreper endorsement and with either the offer letter sent to the European Parliament Committee Chair (21) or the letter from the European Parliament Committee Chair in the case of early second reading agreements (2).

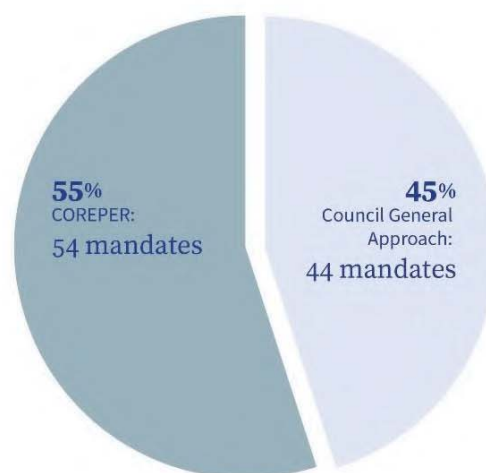
¹ That article states that ‘*Each institution shall publish annually a report for the preceding year including the number of cases in which the institution refused to grant access to documents, the reasons for such refusals and the number of sensitive documents not recorded in the register.*’

Initial Council negotiating mandates granted in 2024 for trilogues



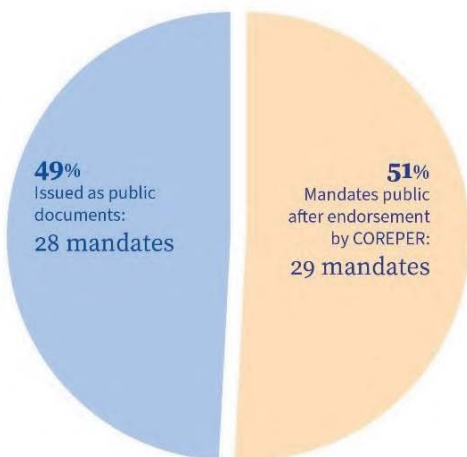
2024

Initial Council negotiating mandates granted in 2023 for trilogues



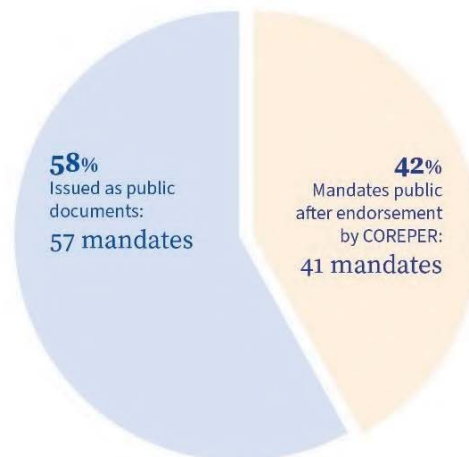
2023

Initial Council mandates granted in 2024 for trilogues and made public



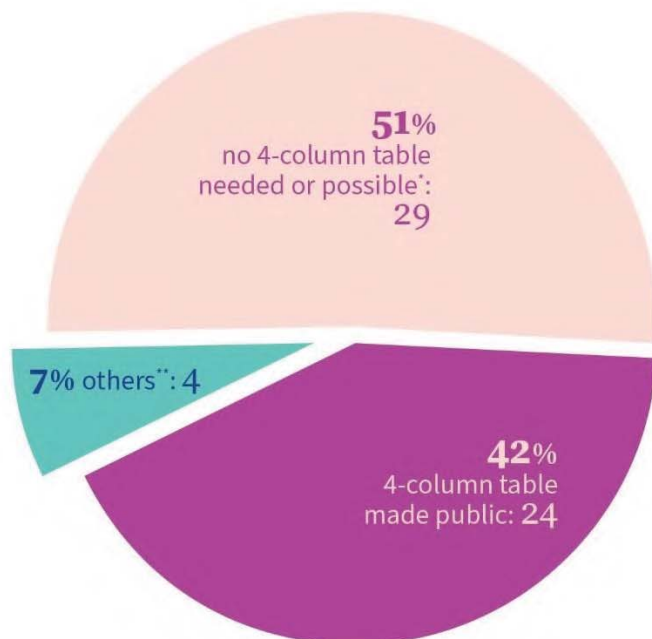
2024

Initial Council mandates granted in 2023 for trilogues and made public



2023

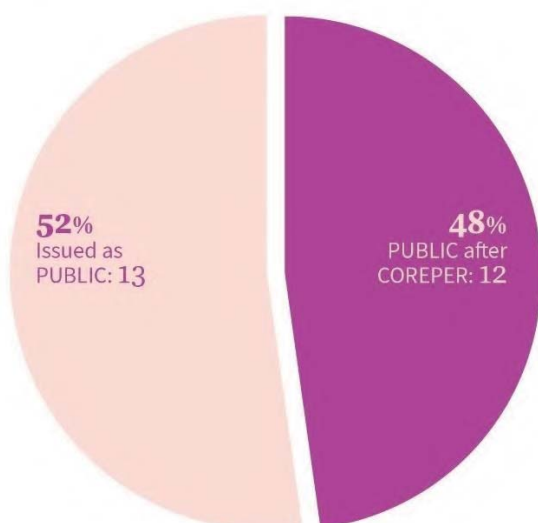
Initial 4-column tables prepared for negotiating with the Council mandates granted in 2024



* Negotiations on a legislative file cannot start before the two co-legislators have each a mandate. In 2024, as a result of the European elections, the European parliament was not in a position to adopt its negotiating mandate in 17 files for which the Council already could. As a result, the 4-column table could not yet be produced for these 17 files. In addition, negotiations do not necessarily require the production of a 4-column table. In particular, in 2024, agreement was reached without trilogues in 10 files, or with urgency in 2 files.

**In some cases, the initial 4-column table included negotiating elements in the fourth column and therefore could not have been made public at the time.

Progress reports in 2024



III. REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS IN 2024

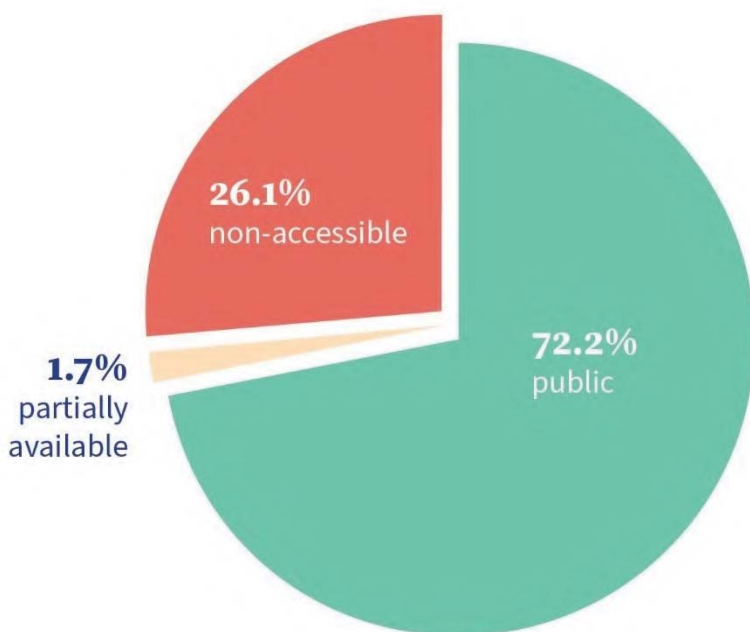
1. The public register

In 2024, the register attracted 2.5 % of the Council website's traffic. It was consulted nearly 522 000 times. Of the total number of visitors, which amounted to more than 348 000, 21 % had arrived at the register through web search engines, 74 % had come via a direct link, 4 % had been redirected from another website, 0.6% from emails and 0.4% from social media. Nearly 21 % of the visitors were based in Belgium, 7.9 % in Germany, 5 % in Canada, 4.9 % in France, 4.2 % in the United Kingdom, 3.7 % in the United States, 3.4 % in Italy and 3.1 % in the Netherlands.

On 31 December 2024, the public register listed 527 057 original-language documents (4 007 813 documents, including all language versions). Of the total number of original-language documents listed in the register, 72.2 % (380 637 documents) were public and available to download.

Since 1 January 2025, WK documents (i.e. documents for specific communities of users created for one of the Council's preparatory body or a specific subject) are directly referenced in the public register which means that the public is aware of their existence straightaway whereas, in the past, they were compiled in lists which were issued later. Usually, these lists were issued twice a year.

Documents available in the public register
on 31 December 2024



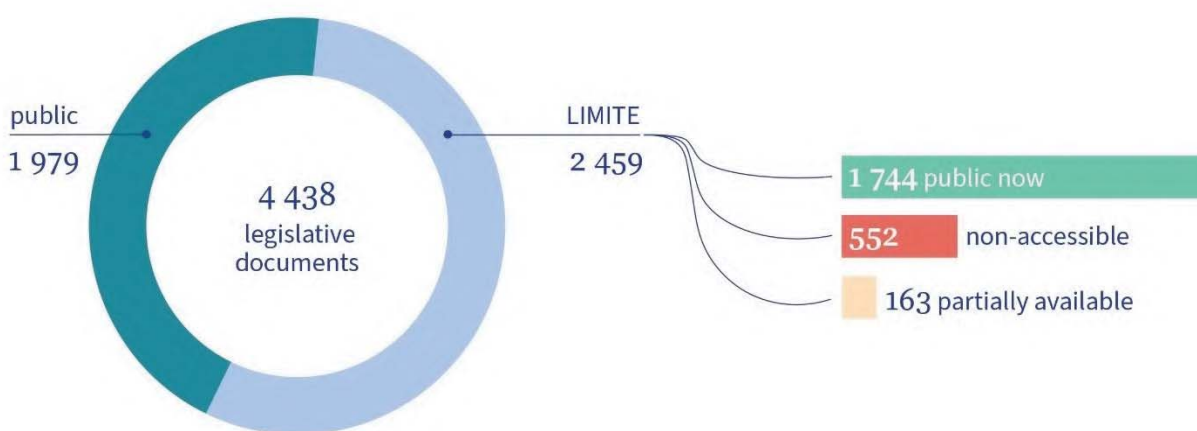
In 2024, 23 780 original-language documents were added to the register, of which 67.4 %, or 16 025 documents, are public and available to download. In 2024, the Council issued 12 287 documents that were available to the public upon circulation and issued 11 136 LIMITE documents. It added to the register 777 documents that are partially available to the public.

In 2024, 357 classified documents² were referenced in the register, and the Council issued 981 classified documents that are not listed in the register.

Legislative documents

During the period covered by this report, 4 438 legislative documents³ were added to the register, 1 979 of which were issued as ‘public’ upon circulation. Of the remaining 2 459 legislative documents issued as LIMITE (with a reference in the register but not directly accessible), 1 744 documents were made public on request. A total of 83.9 % of the legislative documents added to the register in 2024 are therefore fully available to the public.

Legislative documents issued in 2024
total of 4 438 documents



² Cf. [Council Decision 2013/488/EU](#) of 23 September 2013 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 274, 15.10.2013, p. 1).

³ As provided for in Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, legislative documents are documents drawn up and/or received in the course of a legislative procedure.

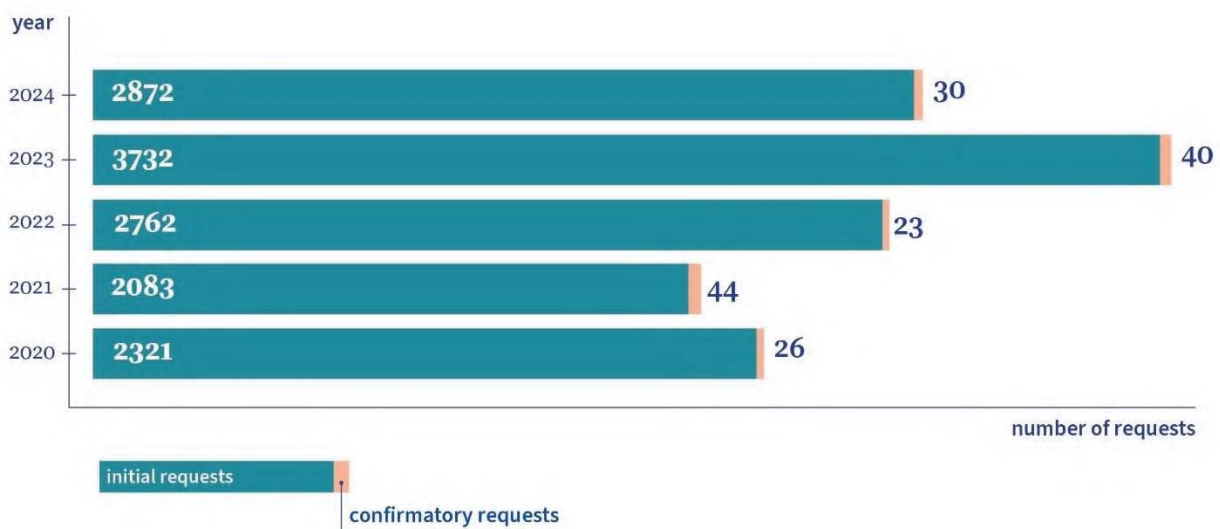
2. Requests for access to documents

In 2024, the Council received 2 872 initial requests for access to documents and 30 confirmatory applications⁴, which required the analysis of 10 096 documents.

In 2024, the 2 872 initial requests were submitted by 1 054 applicants.

Number of requests

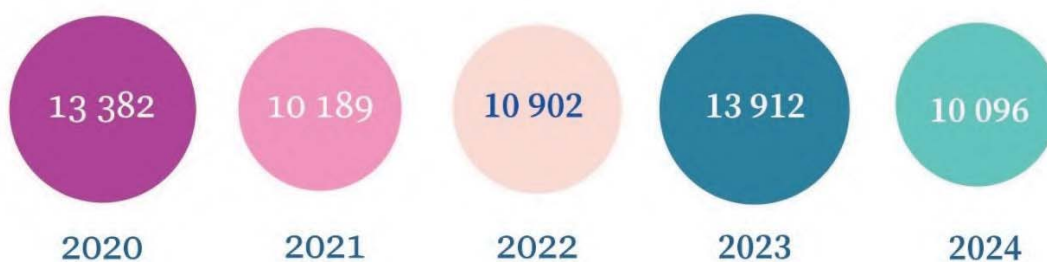
evolution from 2020 to 2024



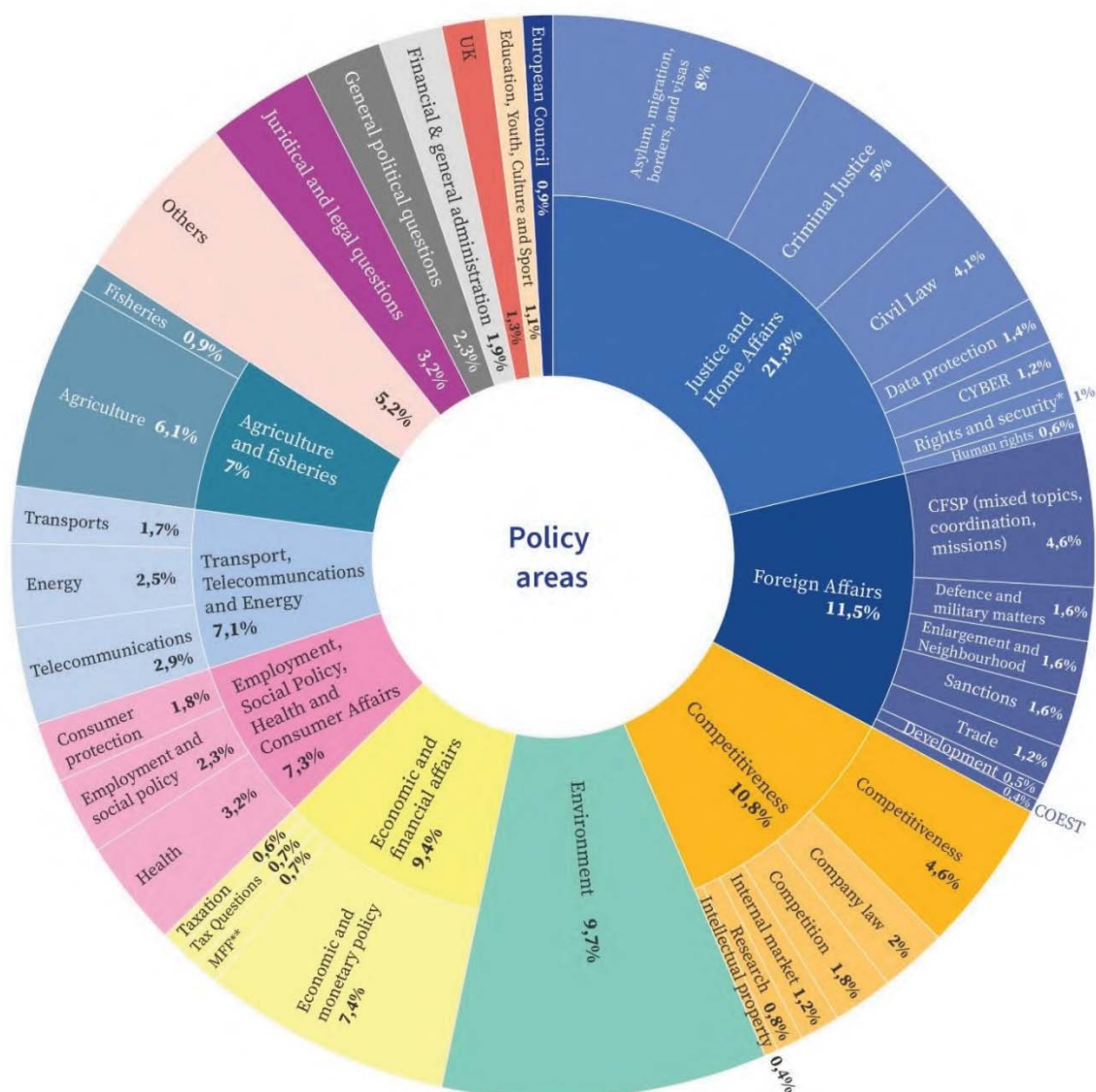
In 2024, the GSC was consulted by the European Parliament and by the European Commission on 528 documents. As regards the individual applicants, the five applicants who requested the most documents requested access to 1 234 documents, which represent 12 % of the requested documents. It should be noted that a large majority of applicants only submitted requests for access to very few documents (between 1 and 10).

⁴ In the event of a total or partial refusal, the applicant may, within 15 days of receiving the institution's reply, make a confirmatory application asking the institution to reconsider its position.

Number of requested documents evolution from 2020 to 2024



In 2024, the policy areas of the requests were split as follows:



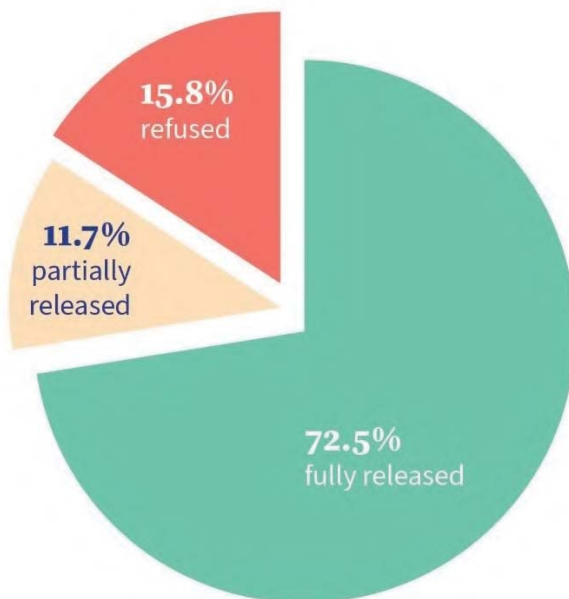
* The section 'Rights and security (1%)' is a combination of 'Fundamental Rights and Values (0.6%)' and 'Internal Security and Counter-Terrorism (0.4%)'.

** MFF: Multiannual Financial Framework

At the initial stage, full access was granted to 7 323 documents (72.5 %) and partial access to 1 181 documents (11.7 %). Access to 1 592 documents (15.8 %) was refused.

Type of access granted at the initial stage

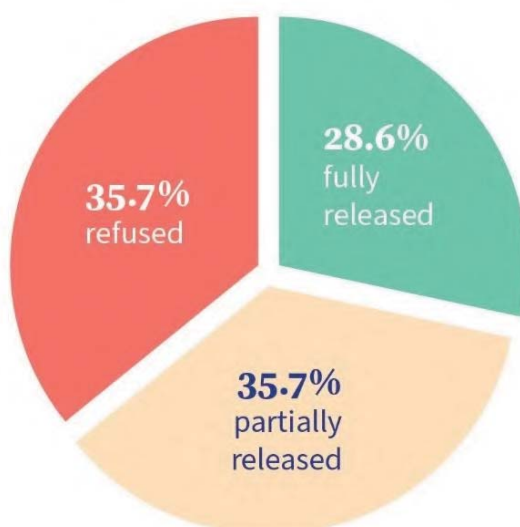
in %



Following confirmatory applications, full access was granted to 36 documents (28.6 %) and partial access to 45 documents (35.7 %). The Council confirmed that access to 45 documents should be refused (35.7 %).

Type of access granted at the confirmatory stage

in %



Exceptions used to refuse access

At the initial stage, access was refused to documents mainly in order to protect the Council's decision-making process (267 times, or 31.3 %), to protect the public interest as regards international relations (211 times, or 24.7 %) or for reasons of public security (33 times, or 3.9 %).

In 37.9 % of cases (324 times), documents were refused on the basis of on a combination of several exceptions. In those cases, access was denied mainly in order to protect the public interest as regards international relations and the decision-making process (52 times, or 16 %), as well as to protect public security, defence and military matters and international relations (46 times, or 14.2 %).

A combination of the protection of the public interest as regards the financial, monetary and economic policy of the Community or a Member State together with the Council's decision-making process was applied 36 times, or in 11.1 % of the cases in which several exceptions were applied.

Main exceptions used to refuse access at the initial stage

in %



In nearly 40 % of the cases, partial access was granted based on a combination of several exceptions.

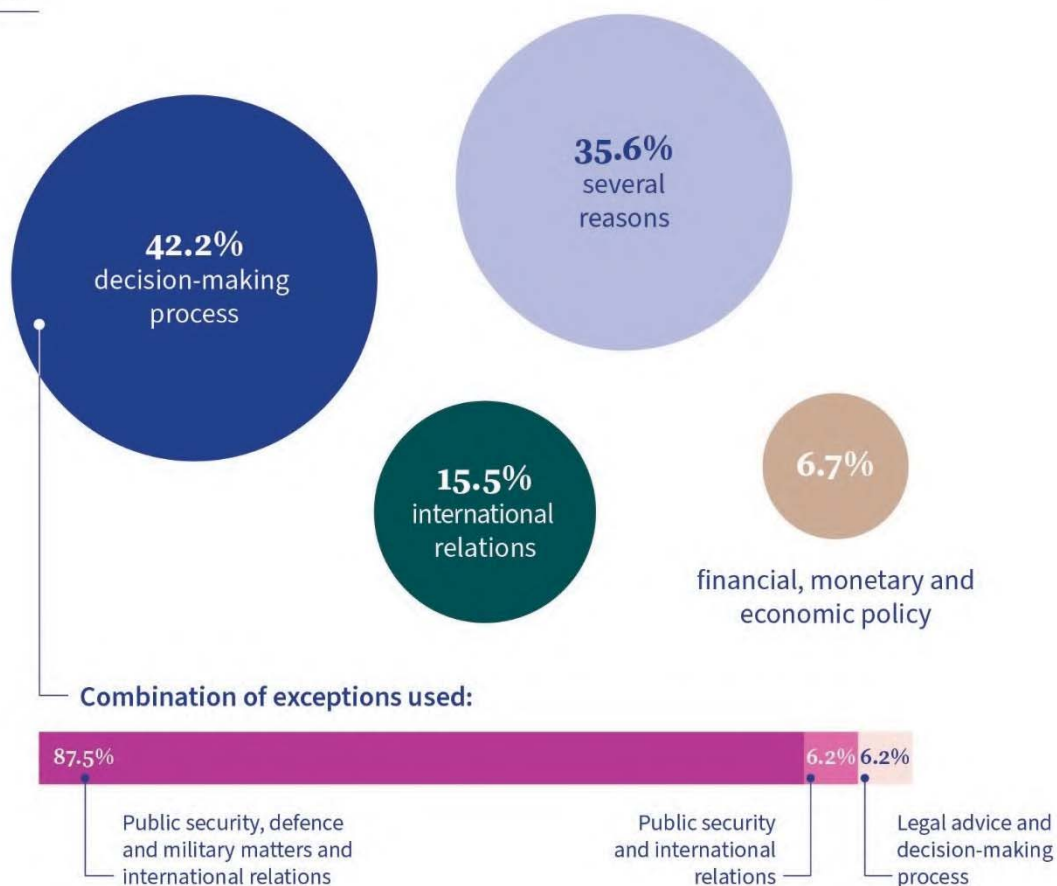
The exception most frequently used to justify the granting of partial access only was the protection of personal data (34.5 %), followed by the protection of the public interest as regards international relations (15.7 %).

At the confirmatory stage, access to documents was totally refused in more than one third of cases (35.6 %) due to a combination of exceptions. Access was also totally refused to protect the decision-making process (42.2 %) and to protect the international relations (15.5%)

Access to documents was partially refused mainly to protect the financial, monetary or economic policy of the EU or a Member State in 44.4 % of cases.

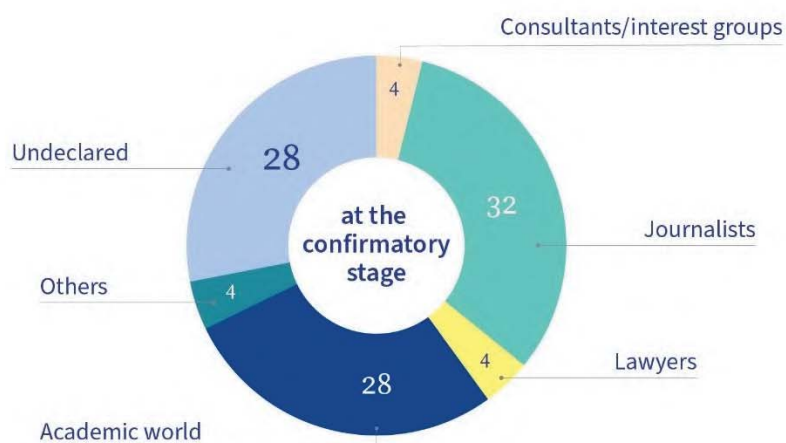
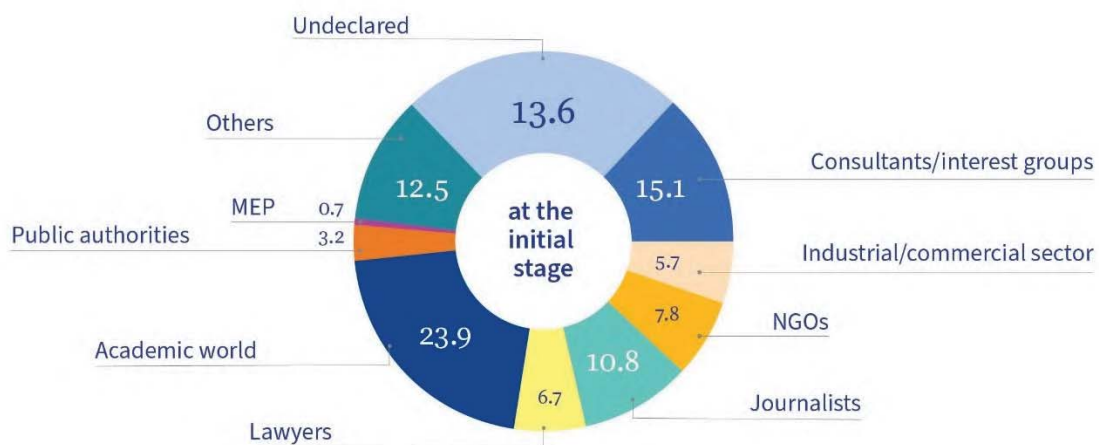
Exceptions used to refuse access at the confirmatory stage

in %



Self-declared professional profile of the applicants in 2024

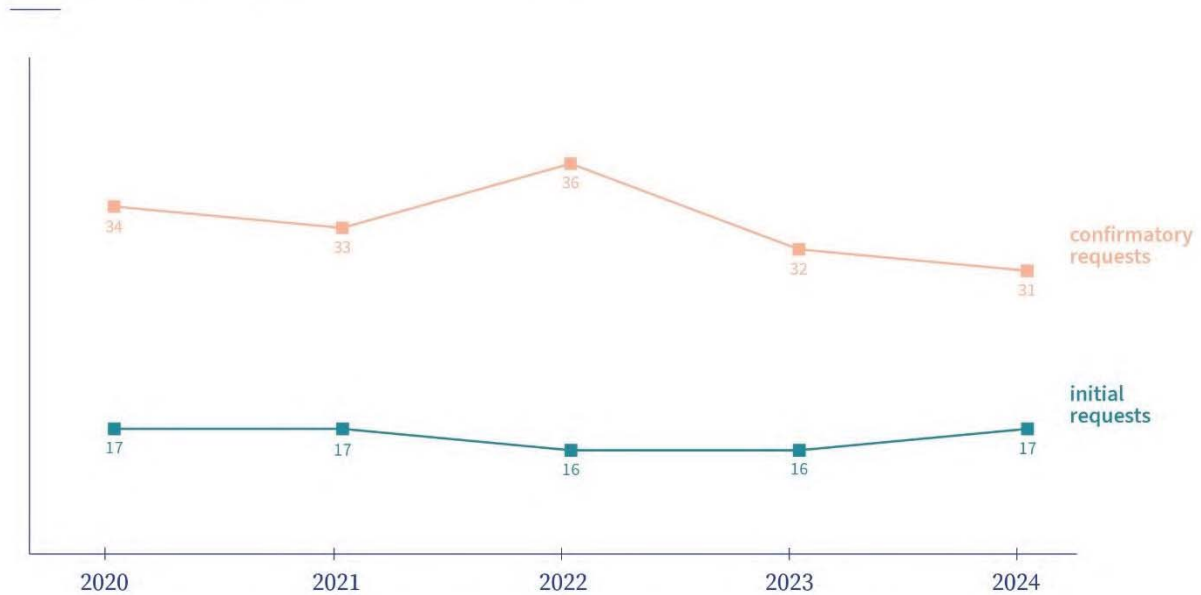
at the initial and at the confirmatory stage (in %)



It took the GSC on average 17 working days to process initial requests and 31 working days to process confirmatory applications.

Average working days for the GSC to process requests

evolution from 2020 to 2024



The deadline of 15 working days for processing initial requests was extended for 975 requests, i.e. in 33.9 % of cases. The deadline was extended for all confirmatory applications (except for one which was withdrawn).

The tables in the Annex give further details on requests for access to documents.

IV. COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH THE EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN, OWN-INITIATIVE INQUIRIES AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES BY THE EUROPEAN OMBUDSMAN AND LEGAL ACTION IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPARENCY/ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

1. Complaints lodged with the European Ombudsman

In 2024, the Council was notified of two complaints lodged with the European Ombudsman following a request for access to documents addressed to the Council. Details of those requests are set out below.

Complaint 185/2024/SF

This case concerns a citizen's request for access to all documents containing information about the hearings of Hungary in accordance with Article 7(1) of the Treaty on European Union made in November 2023. The GSC informed the applicant that all documents were public and available for download in the public register of the Council. The applicant was provided with a link to the register and explained how to search in it.

The applicant submitted a confirmatory application in which he argued that there must be more detailed documents in the form of minutes, transcripts, recordings, written submissions or handwritten notes, and asked the Council to identify them.

In its reply of 17 January 2024, the Council confirmed that it does not hold any other documents. Then, the applicant submitted a complaint to the European Ombudsman.

After careful analysis of all the information, the Ombudsman concluded in its decision⁵ of 20 February 2024 that the Council had provided the applicant with a reasonable reply and that there were insufficient grounds to open an inquiry.

⁵ [ST 6844/24](#)

Complaint 444/2024/PVV

This case relates to a complaint from a citizen addressed to the European Ombudsman following the Council's decision to grant only partial access to three working documents issued in the context of the examination by the Council preparatory bodies of the Commission's Proposal for a Council Implementing Decision on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary.

In March 2024, the Ombudsman opened an inquiry⁶ into the matter and carried out an inspection of the documents to which access had been partially refused. In the course of the inquiry, the Ombudsman inquiry team reviewed the documents in question and met with officials of the General Secretariat of the Council with a view to obtaining clarifications on the Council's reasons for refusing public access.

On 21 February 2025, the Council was notified⁷ by the European Ombudsman that, after her inquiry, she had decided that no further inquiries were justified and that she had decided to close the case.

2. European Ombudsman's own-initiative inquiry OI/4/2023/MIK

In October 2023, the European Ombudsman initiated an own-initiative inquiry on the handling of requests for public access to legislative documents⁸. The Ombudsman asked the Council specifically to provide her with statistical information concerning the processing of access to documents requests on three legislative files. The GSC gathered the requested data on the basis of the information available in the database for access to documents and sent a reply to the Ombudsman on 6 December 2023.⁹

By letter to the Secretary General of the Council of 20 March 2024¹⁰, the Ombudsman asked to inspect a sample of decisions issued by the GSC consisting of all initial decisions in which either a partial access to documents was granted, or access was refused as well as 15 decisions in which full access was granted to all the requested documents. The Council replied to this request on 10 April 2024 providing the documents for inspection.

⁶ ST 8192/24 INIT and ST 8192/24 ADD 1.

⁷ [ST 6455/25](#)

⁸ [ST 13836/23](#)

⁹ [ST 15494/23](#)

¹⁰ [ST 8344/24](#)

The Ombudsman issued her decision¹¹ in this own-initiative inquiry on 3 December 2024. Based on the files inspected, the Ombudsman found that the Council was failing to give full effect to the principle of legislative transparency, as set out in the EU Treaties, Regulation 1049/2001, and related case-law. To help the Council improve its practices in that respect, the Ombudsman made some suggestions for improvement and asked the Council to inform her Office by 3 June 2025 of any action it had taken in relation to her suggestions for improvement.

3. European Ombudsman's strategic initiatives

SI/3/2024/MIG

Following up on her 2019 inquiry into the issue of sponsorship of the Presidency of the Council of the EU, which had led to the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) issuing the “Guidance for Presidency best practice on the use of sponsorship”¹² in June 2021, the European Ombudsman (EO) wrote to the Secretary General of the Council on 15 March 2024 asking for a meeting to provide information on the Council's experience with that Guidance¹³.

The meeting between representatives of the GSC and members of the EO's office took place on 12 June 2024. On 9 September 2024, the EO sent to the Secretary General of the Council a closing note¹⁴ on the strategic initiative on sponsorship of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union .

In this note, the EO called upon the Council to assess how the guidelines are being implemented and expressed two main concerns. The first one was an alleged lack of transparency around the identity of sponsors and the exact terms of each sponsorship agreement. The second one concerned the use by sponsors of Presidency logos, which sometimes may contain the EU flag. Such uses could, in the EO's view, confuse the public (which cannot always distinguish between official Council meetings and informal events organised by the Presidency) regarding the relationship between the sponsors and the European Union and cause reputational damage to the Council. On this basis, the EO noted that concerns remained on that topic and “encouraged the Council to assess how best to address these when taking stock of the implementation of the Guidance at the next possible opportunity.”

¹¹ [ST 16605/24](#)

¹² [ST 10325/21](#)

¹³ [ST 8298/24](#)

¹⁴ [ST 13263/24](#)

The WPI had a brief exchange of views on the EO's note on 4 October 2024.

4. Court cases

In 2024, there were three court cases pending before the Union courts challenging the legality of Council decisions refusing to grant public access pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, all before the General Court.

In Case T-590/23, *De Capitani v Council*, the applicant sought the annulment of the Council's decision to refuse access to certain documents and of 'the implicit or continued explicit decision not to directly publish legislative documents to which access has been granted following a request for access under aforementioned Regulation 1049/2001 in the Council's own register'. The applicant claims that the Council wrongly interpreted and applied the exception relating to the protection of its decision-making process, under Article 4(3), and hence violated the obligation of legislative transparency set out in Article 15(2) TFEU. The case is still pending before the Court.

In Case T-255/24, *Nouwen v Council*, the applicant sought the annulment of the Council's decision to refuse access to certain documents pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001. The applicant claims that the request for access was handled in an incomplete or negligent way. In addition, the applicant claims that the Council did not duly justify the refusal of access and that the exceptions relating to international relations, under Article 4(1)(a) third indent, and financial or economic policy of the EU, under Article 4(1)(a) fourth indent, were wrongly applied. The case is still pending before the Court.

In Case T-376/24, *Daldewolf and EQ v Council*, the applicants sought the annulment of the Council's decision to partially refuse access to certain documents pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001. The applicants claim that the Council was not entitled to rely on the exception for the protection of international relations under Article 4(1)(a) third indent in the present case. In addition, the applicants claim that the Council infringed its obligation to justify its decision when it replied that it does not hold any documents responsive to part of the request. The case is still pending before the Court.

V. PUBLICATION OF DOCUMENTS PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 11(6) OF ANNEX II TO THE COUNCIL'S RULES OF PROCEDURE

The GSC made public 6 516 preparatory documents relating to 183 legislative acts that were adopted in 2024 or earlier.

VI. VOTING RESULTS

In 2024, the GSC prepared voting results for all the legislative acts that had been adopted by the Council over the year (i.e. 160); those voting results are directly available on the [Council's website](#).

VII. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

The General Secretariat of the Council receives requests for information in the 24 EU official languages, not only from citizens based in the EU but also from other parts of the world. These requests are submitted via different channels; including a web form (available on the Council website), emails, and postal letters. The Public Info Service is responsible for replying to those requests for information.

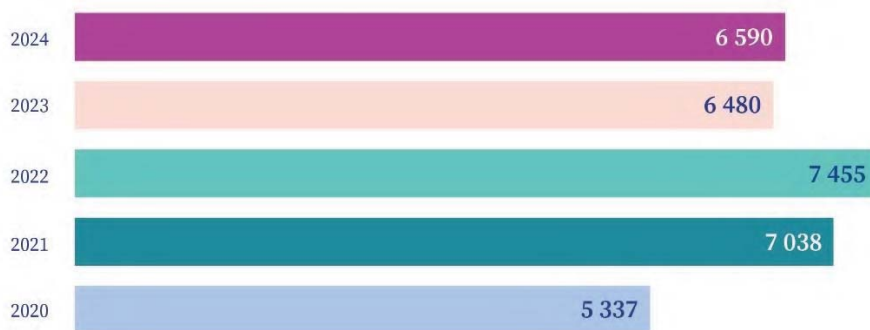
In 2024, the GSC responded to 6 590 requests for information, distributed as follows:

- 6 127 emails (including those received via the web form and email)
- 463 letters.

Of these, 709 requests were specifically addressed to the President of the **European Council (PEC)**.

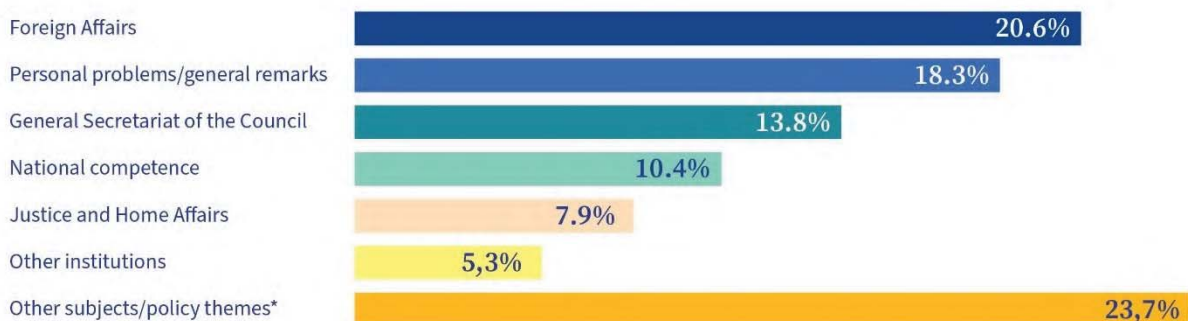
The overall number of requests has slightly increased compared to the previous year.

Number of requests for information
evolution from 2020 to 2024



The requests received by the GSC related to different EU policy themes and a variety of other subjects as well. In 2024, the main areas concerned by these requests were the following:

Main policy areas of requests for information in 2024



*e.g., Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs, Environment, Transport, Telecommunications and Energy, Competitiveness, Economic and Financial Affairs, etc.)

Foreign affairs issues remained at the top of citizens' concerns throughout 2024. The most frequent topics included the war in Ukraine, particularly requests for continued support and inquiries about sanctions imposed on Russia. Other issues, such as the situation in the Middle East and in Georgia also featured high on the list.

Additionally, individuals and companies contacted the GSC for updates on key policy files, such as the Artificial Intelligence act, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and environmental policies.

Practical enquiries

The GSC also received practical enquiries on topics such as:

- How to obtain personal documents;
- How to apply for a European Disability Card;
- Contact points at national level for resolving personal issues.

Requests related to the General Secretariat of the Council

Under the "General Secretariat of the Council" category, requests included:

- Autographed photos of the PEC
- Requests for financial support from the PEC
- Information on careers and traineeships
- Contact details of officials

Unprocessed requests

The GSC also receives a number of emails and letters which are either spam or incomprehensible, or, in the case of letters, do not include a clear contact address. In 2024, the total number of cases with no follow-up was 192.

VIII. OCCASIONAL ATTENDANCE BY THIRD PARTIES, INCLUDING INTEREST REPRESENTATIVES, AT MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL OR ITS PREPARATORY BODIES

Point iv of the Secretary-General's guidelines of 22 July 2021 on the abovementioned topic provides that the Council's annual report on access to documents should include relevant information about the attendance of interest representatives at meetings of the Council or its preparatory bodies.

In 2024, 206 interest representatives were authorised by the Permanent Representatives Committee to attend one or more meetings of the preparatory bodies of the Council. The interest representatives belonged to the following categories:

Non-governmental organisations and charities	125
Think Tanks and academic institutions	26
Associations and networks of public or mixed entities	18
Trade and Business associations	14
Consultancy and companies	16
Trade Unions and professional associations	7

The entities authorised to attend the meetings of the preparatory bodies of the Council are identified in the agendas of the relevant preparatory bodies, which can be consulted in the register of Council documents.

In addition, 18 persons were invited to attend meetings of the preparatory bodies of the Council as individual experts or academics.

1. Number of initial requests pursuant to Regulation No 1049/2001

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
2 321	2 083	2 762	3 732	2 872

2. Number of documents requested by initial requests

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
13 382	10 189	10 902	13 912	10 096

3. Documents released by the General Secretariat of the Council at initial stage

2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
11 796		9 011		9 019		12 508		8 504	
partial 542	full 11 254	partial 519	full 8 492	partial 955	full 8 064	partial 1 600	full 10 908	partial 1 181	full 7 323

4. Number of confirmatory applications

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
26	44	23	40	30

5. Number of documents considered by confirmatory applications

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
118	210	163	146	126

6. Documents released by the Council at confirmatory stage

2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
66		113		82		98		81	
partial 31	full 35	partial 54	full 59	partial 36	full 46	partial 45	full 53	partial 45	full 36

7. Rate of documents released during the whole procedure (full release / full + partial release)

2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
84,4%	88,6%	83,9%	89,5%	79%	88,7%	80%	92%	78,3%	91,3%

8. Professional profile of the applicants (initial requests)

		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
Civil society/ Private sector	Consultants	7,3%	20,5 %	6,9%	20,9 %	10,7 %	28,2 %	11,9 %	30,6 %	10,2 %	28,6 %
	Environmental lobbies	0,2%		0,2%		0,1%		0,3%		0,1%	
	Other groups of interest	3%		3,3%		4,6%		5%		4,8%	
	Industrial/ Commercial sector	4,7%		5,2%		4,9%		7,4%		5,7%	
	NGOs	5,3%		5,3%		7,9%		6%		7,8%	
Journalists		6,6%		5%		6,8%		8,1%		10,8%	
Lawyers		5,1%		4,7%		4,3%		7,1%		6,7%	
Academic world		34,8%		39%		33,3%		22,9%		23,9%	
Public authorities (non-EU institutions, third-country representatives, etc.)		4,4%		2%		3,2%		2,2%		3,2%	
Members of the European Parliament and assistants		0,5%		1,3%		0,4%		0,9%		0,7%	
Others		13,3%		15%		14,1%		11,9%		12,5%	
Undeclared		11,8%		12,5%		17%		16,3%		13,6%	

9. Professional profile of the applicants (confirmatory applications)

		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
Civil society/ Private sector	Consultants	4%	8%	0%	6,2%	0%	13,7 %	0%	6,4%	0%	4%
	Environmental lobbies	0%		0%		4,6%		0%		0%	
	Other groups of interest	4%		0%		0%		0%		4%	
	Industrial/ Commercial sector	0%		3,1%		0%		3,2%		0%	
	NGOs	0%		3,1%		9,1%		3,2%		0%	
Journalists		8%		18,7%		4,6%		12,9%		32%	
Lawyers		16%		9,4%		4,5%		22,6%		4%	
Academic world		32%		25%		36,4%		16,1%		28%	
Public authorities (non-EU institutions, third-country representatives, etc.)		4%		0%		4,5%		0%		0%	
Members of the European Parliament and assistants		8%		0%		0%		0%		0%	
Others		12%		9,4%		4,5%		9,7%		4%	
Undeclared		12%		31,3%		31,8%		32,3%		28%	

10. Geographic distribution of the applicants (initial requests)

Country	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Belgium	24,7%	28,1%	30,5%	28,9%	30,9%
Bulgaria	0,5%	0,1%	0,1%	0,3%	0,3%
Croatia	0,2%	0,2%	0,4%	0,4%	0,3%
Czech Republic	0,5%	0,7%	0,5%	0,7%	0,3%
Denmark	0,9%	1,5%	1%	0,8%	1,4%
Germany	11,5%	12,4%	11,8%	11,6%	10,3%
Estonia	0,1%	0,2%	0,1%	0,1%	0,2%
Greece	1,2%	0,9%	0,2%	0,5%	0,5%
Spain	4,2%	4,9%	4%	3,7%	3,4%
France	6,5%	7%	7%	6,1%	6,4%
Ireland	10,4%	1%	0,8%	1,1%	1,7%
Italy	5,9%	5,6%	3,1%	4,9%	5,5%
Cyprus	0,2%	0,3%	0,2%	0,1%	0,1%
Latvia	0,1%	0,1%	0%	0%	0,1%
Lithuania	0%	0%	0,1%	0,2%	0%
Luxembourg	0,8%	0,8%	1,2%	0,8%	0,9%
Hungary	0,4%	0,1%	0,3%	0,5%	0,2%
Malta	0%	0,3%	0,2%	0,1%	0,1%
Netherlands	3,5%	5,6%	5,4%	5%	4,1%
Austria	1,2%	1,3%	1,8%	1,5%	1,9%
Poland	1,2%	1,8%	1,9%	1,4%	1,5%
Portugal	0,8%	0,8%	0,9%	0,5%	1,1%
Romania	0,5%	0,5%	0,4%	0,5%	0,4%
Slovenia	0,2%	0,2%	0,1%	0,1%	0,2%
Slovakia	0,5%	0,6%	0,2%	0,2%	0,3%
Finland	1,3%	1,2%	1,2%	1,1%	0,9%
Sweden	1%	1%	0,9%	1,7%	1,9%
United Kingdom	4,6%	4,4%	3,4%	2,4%	2,7%
Third countries	4,9%	5,5%	3,1%	3,1%	4,4%
Undeclared	12,2%	12,9%	19,2%	21,7%	18%

11. Geographic distribution of the applicants (confirmatory applications)

Country	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Belgium	36%	31,3%	18,2%	15,6%	36%
Bulgaria	4%	0%	0%	3,1%	0%
Croatia	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Czech Republic	0%	3,1%	4,5%	0%	4%
Denmark	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Germany	4%	3,2%	18,2%	15,6%	4%
Estonia	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Greece	0%	3,1%	0%	0%	0%
Spain	0%	3,1%	0%	0%	0%
France	0%	3,1%	9,1%	6,3%	4%
Ireland	4%	0%	4,6%	3,1%	0%
Italy	8%	3,1%	0%	0%	4%
Cyprus	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Latvia	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Lithuania	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Luxembourg	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Hungary	0%	0%	0%	6,3%	4%
Malta	0%	0%	4,5%	0%	0%
Netherlands	16%	12,5%	4,6%	9,4%	12%
Austria	0%	3,1%	0%	3,1%	0%
Poland	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Portugal	4%	3,1%	0%	0%	0%
Romania	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Slovenia	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Slovakia	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Finland	4%	9,4%	4,6%	3,1%	4%
Sweden	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
United Kingdom	8%	3,1%	4,5%	6,3%	0%
Third countries	8%	0%	4,5%	0%	0%
Undeclared	4%	18,8%	22,7%	28,1%	24%

12. Policy area of requested documents

Policy	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Agriculture, Fisheries	4,6%	4,3%	7,8%	4,7%	8%
Internal Market	2,2%	0,6%	1,6%	1%	0,2%
Research	1,3%	1,9%	2%	0,5%	0,4%
Culture	0,3%	0,3%	0,5%	0,1%	0,1%
Education/Youth	1,3%	1,7%	1,2%	0,5%	1,2%
Competitiveness	1,8%	1,4%	3%	9,9%	11,6%
Energy	1,7%	1,6%	1,6%	4,4%	4,6%
Transport	5,4%	4,8%	2,8%	3,1%	3,8%
Environment	5,2%	6,2%	4,9%	5,9%	8,6%
Health and Consumer Protection	1,6%	2,1%	2,4%	3,6%	4,2%
Economic and Monetary Policy	10,1%	16,7%	14,8%	10,3%	7%
Tax Questions – Fiscal Issues	5,6%	4,4%	3,8%	2,5%	1,9%
External Relations – CFSP	15,2%	13,1%	12,1%	13,7%	9,4%
Civilian Protection	0,2%	0,1%	0,1%	0,1%	0%
Enlargement	1,1%	0,6%	0,5%	0,4%	0,4%
Defence and Military matters	1,7%	1,2%	1,1%	0,6%	0,3%
Assistance for Development	0,1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Social Policy	3,5%	2%	2,6%	3,3%	3,3%
Justice and Home Affairs	17,9%	20,4%	17,8%	18,5%	17,6%
Legal questions	3,7%	2,7%	4,3%	3%	2,5%
Functioning of the institutions	3%	1,4%	2,5%	1,3%	1,2%
Financing of the Union (Budget, Statute)	0,3%	0,3%	0,3%	0,1%	0,3%
Transparency	0,7%	0,7%	0,7%	0,6%	0,3%
General policy questions	4,6%	6,7%	4,3%	3,1%	4,1%
Parliamentary Questions	0,8%	0,2%	0,1%	0%	0,2%
Telecommunications			3%	6,9 %	5,9%
Various	2,6%	2,6%	2%	1,2%	2,2%
BREXIT	3,5%	2%	1,9%	0,7%	0,7%

13. Exceptions used to refuse access (initial stage)

Exceptions foreseen in regulation 1049/2001	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Protection of public interest as regards public security	72	4,8%	87	8,2%	78	6,5%	50	4,5%	33	3,9%
Protection of public interest as regards defence and military matters	11	0,7%	4	0,4%	10	0,8%	7	0,6%	0	0%
Protection of public interest as regards international relations	233	15,5%	181	17%	208	17,4%	305	27,4%	211	24,7%
Protection of public interest as regards the financial, monetary or economic policy of the Community or a Member State	6	0,4%	0	0%	1	0,1%	4	0,4%	0	0%
Protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual (protection of personal data)	5	0,3%	10	0,9%	19	1,6%	7	0,6%	12	1,4%
Protection of commercial interests of a natural or legal person, including intellectual property	0	0%	27	2,5%	2	0,2%	1	0,1%	0	0%
Protection of court proceedings and legal advice	9	0,6%	9	0,8%	9	0,7%	23	2,1%	7	0,8%
Protection of the purpose of inspections, investigations and audits	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	0,3%	0	0%
Protection of the Institution's decision-making process	343	22,8%	223	20,9%	307	25,6%	327	29,3%	267	31,3%
Several reasons together	827	54,9%	525	49,3%	563	47%	387	34,7%	324	37,9%

14. Exceptions used to refuse access (confirmatory applications)

Exceptions foreseen in regulation 1049/2001	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Protection of public interest as regards public security	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	8,3%	0	0%
Protection of public interest as regards defence and military matters	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Protection of public interest as regards international relations	3	5,8%	33	34%	55	67,9%	5	10,4%	7	15,5%
Protection of public interest as regards the financial, monetary or economic policy of the Community or a Member State	0	0%	0	0%	1	1,2%	2	4,2%	3	6,7%
Protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual (protection of personal data)	0	0%	0	0%	2	2,5%	4	8,3%	0	0%
Protection of commercial interests of a natural or legal person, including intellectual property	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Protection of court proceedings and legal advice	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Protection of the purpose of inspections, investigations and audits	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Protection of Institution's decision-making process	12	23,1%	13	13,4%	2	2,5%	3	6,3%	19	42,2%
Several reasons together or other reasons	37	71,1%	51	52,6%	21	25,9%	30	62,5%	16	35,6%

15. Exceptions used to justify partial access (initial stage)

Exceptions foreseen in regulation 1049/2001	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Protection of public interest as regards public security	28	5,2%	24	4,6%	70	7,3%	67	4,2%	41	3,5%
Protection of public interest as regards defence and military matters	2	0,4%	5	1%	6	0,6%	3	0,2%	1	0,1%
Protection of public interest as regards international relations	156	28,8%	65	12,5%	95	9,9%	214	13,4%	186	15,7%
Protection of public interest as regards the financial, monetary or economic policy of the Community or a Member State	3	0,5%	1	0,2%	1	0,1%	42	2,6%	28	2,4%
Protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual (protection of personal data)	141	26%	168	32,4%	400	41,9%	727	45,4%	407	34,5%
Protection of commercial interests of a natural or legal person, including intellectual property	1	0,2%	3	0,6%	4	0,4%	0	0%	5	0,4%
Protection of court proceedings and legal advice	19	3,5%	38	7,3%	16	1,7%	28	1,7%	3	0,2%
Protection of the purpose of inspections, investigations and audits	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Protection of the Institution's decision-making process	55	10,1%	71	13,7%	161	16,9%	118	7,4%	43	3,6%
Several reasons together or other reasons	137	25,3%	144	27,7%	202	21,2%	400	25%	466	39,5%

16. Exceptions used to justify partial access (confirmatory stage)

Exceptions foreseen in regulation 1049/2001	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Protection of public interest as regards public security	0	0%	1	1,8%	0	0%	1	2,3%	0	0%
Protection of public interest as regards defence and military matters	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Protection of public interest as regards international relations	0	0%	4	7,4%	24	66,7%	1	2,2%	6	13,3%
Protection of public interest as regards the financial, monetary or economic policy of the Community or a Member State	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2,2%	20	44,4%
Protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual (protection of personal data)	6	19,4%	5	9,3%	1	2,8%	37	82,2%	3	6,7%
Protection of commercial interests of a natural or legal person, including intellectual property	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Protection of court proceedings and legal advice	0	0%	4	7,4%	2	5,5%	1	2,2%	0	0%
Protection of the purpose of inspections, investigations and audits	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Protection of Institution's decision-making process	0	0%	7	13%	0	0%	0	0%	4	8,9%
Several reasons together or other reasons	25	80,6%	33	61,1%	9	25%	4	8,9%	12	26,7%

17. Number of documents (original language version) referred to in the public register by 31 December of each calendar year (and number of public documents)

2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
440 148	313 253 (71.1%)	460 907	330 434 (71.7%)	482 786	346 951 (71.9%)	505 587	364 793 (72.1%)	527 057	380 637 (72.2%)

18. Number of documents (original language version) added to the public register in 2024

	Public upon circulation	LIMITE	LIMITE made public upon request	Partially available
Legislative	1 979	2 459	1 744	163
Non legislative	10 308	8 677	1 994	614

19. Average number of working days to reply to an initial request for access to documents and to a confirmatory application

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
For the initial applications ¹⁵	17 (2 321 requests)	17 (2 083 requests)	16 (2762 requests)	16 (3732 requests)	17 (2872 requests)
For the confirmatory applications ¹⁶	34 (26 conf. applications)	33 (44 conf. applications)	36 (23 conf. applications)	33 (40 conf. applications)	31 (30 conf. applications)
Pondered average (initial + confirmatory)	17,19	17,34	16,17	16,17	17,14

¹⁵ These figures comprise both the initial applications submitted according to Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 and the so-called "6(3) applications".

¹⁶ Confirmatory applications are examined by the Council's Working Party on Information and by the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2). Replies to the applicants are adopted by the Council.

20. Number of applications with extended deadline - Art 7(3) and 8(2)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Initial applications	776 of 2 321 33,4%	623 of 2 083 29,9%	824 of 2 762 29,8%	1248 of 3 732 33,4%	975 of 2 872 33,9%
Confirmatory applications	26 [of 26]	43 [of 44]	23 [of 23]	40 [of 40]	29 [of 30] ¹⁷

¹⁷ Confirmatory application 27/c/01/24 was withdrawn.