

Public access to Council documents: 2019 report



The Council today approved its annual report on the implementation of Regulation 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents.

The report shows that over 420 000 original-language documents were listed in the public register on 31 December 2019. Of these documents, more than 70% are public and available for download.

In 2019, more than 23 000 original-language documents were added to the register, of which almost 71% are public. The Council's public register was consulted approximately 435 350 times.

Anyone can request access to documents listed in the public register which are not yet public. Access can only be refused on the basis of one of the exceptions provided for in Regulation 1049/2001. These include among others the need to protect the institution's decision-making process and the public interest as regards defence and military matters and international relations. If access is refused at the initial stage, a confirmatory application may be submitted.

In 2019, the Council received 2 567 initial requests for access to documents and 40 confirmatory applications, which required 8 222 documents to be analysed. At the initial stage, full access was granted to 6 145 documents (nearly 75%) and partial access to 470 documents (nearly 6%). Following confirmatory applications, full access was granted to 61 documents and partial access to 50 documents.

The requested documents were related to a number policy areas, most notably justice and home affairs (18%), external relations (15%) and economic and monetary policy (10%).

More than 35% of the requests came from the academic world and nearly 26% came from representatives of various civil society and private sector organisations.

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The pie chart shows that upon initial request, full access was granted to 6145 documents (74.7%), partial access to 470 documents (5.7%). Requests for access to document were refused for 1792 documents (19.5%).