



## Montenegrin Government Releases EU Accession Questionnaire

*Madrid/Brussels/Podgorica, 14 April 2010:* [Access Info Europe](#) and [MANS](#) welcome the release on Monday, 12 April 2009, by the Montenegrin government of its replies to the European Union's pre-accession questionnaire, which were submitted to the European Commission in December 2009. The two civil society organisations had previously been refused access by the European Commission and the Montenegrin government respectively, and had launched litigation against the refusal.

Earlier this year MANS won litigation at the first instance court which ordered release of the information, but the Montenegrin government stated that it would not comply with this decision until negotiations with EU on the answers to the questionnaire were completed.

Representatives of MANS and Access Info Europe were told in a meeting with DG Enlargement in Brussels on Tuesday 13 April that following receipt of a formal request for the documents from Access Info Europe, it had suggested to the Montenegrin government that it make the documents public.

In parallel with these developments, Access Info presented on Tuesday 13 April an appeal against the Commission's refusal to release the documents. The human rights organisation argues that release of documents relating to non-EU member states should not be determined by those states, particularly where there is a clear public interest for European citizens in scrutinising the accession process. The confirmatory application can be found [here](#). Access Info is calling on the Commission itself to release the relevant documents and also to provide a full and reasoned response to the appeal: the move by the Montenegrin government does not absolve the Commission of its transparency obligations towards the European public.

In other countries such as Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia and Romania, the replies to the questionnaires were made public on or even before submission to the Commission. The Montenegrin government's previous refusal to release the documents had prevented civil society, the media, and the public in Montenegro from participating in the debate about the accuracy of the answers and, more broadly, about the accession process.

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