



Council transparency: before & after

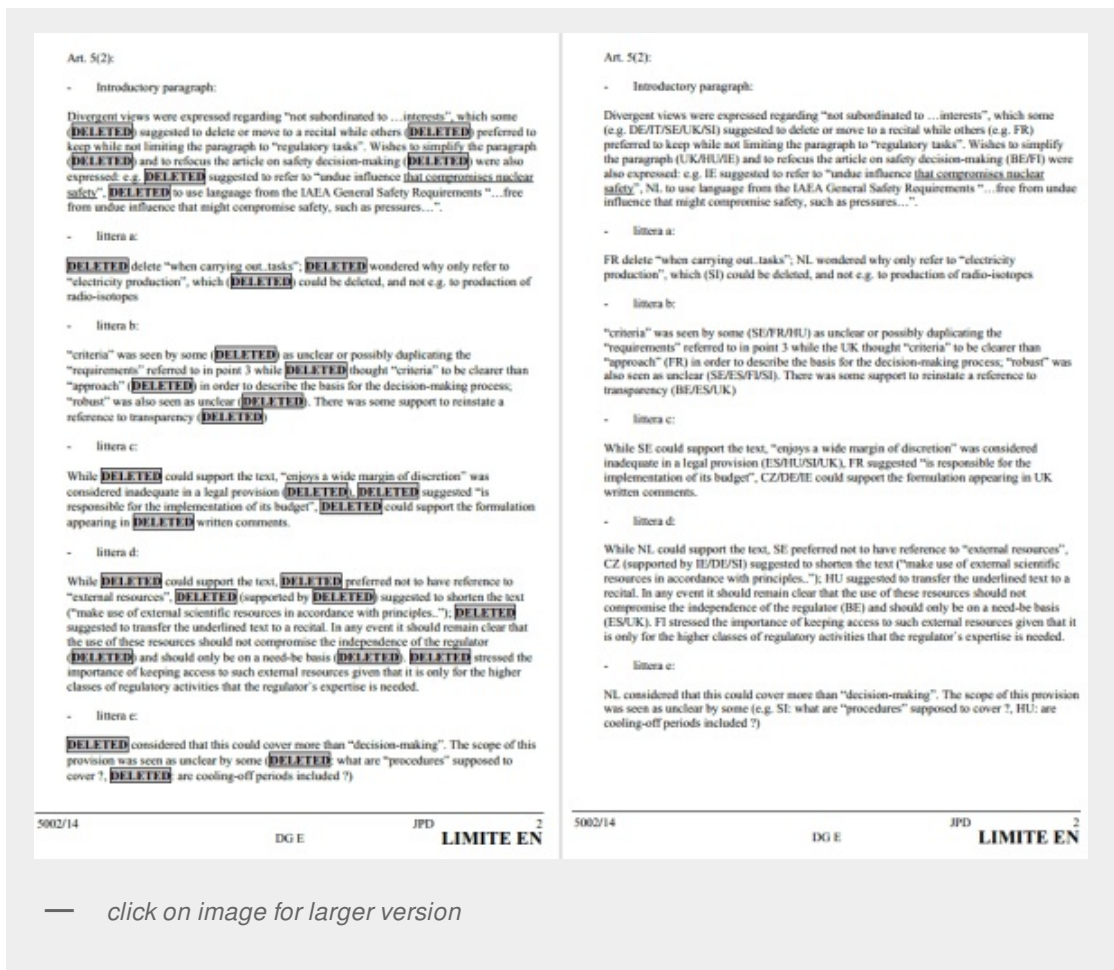
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After the 2011 Fukushima disaster, which exposed the collusion and incompetence among the regulators and regulated, you'd expect that more transparent, accountable governance regimes for important issues such as nuclear safety could not be in question.

Not so in the EU Council of Ministers which until a few months ago still refused to reveal which delegations were adopting what positions during negotiations on new framework laws. Not any more.

Thanks to a key legal victory last year by [Access Info Europe](#), the Council must not systematically withhold such important information. The following example shows the difference this can make.



— [click on image for larger version](#)

In January, I ask the Council for access to the notes of its working group discussions on a revision of the nuclear safety directive triggered by the tragedy in Japan.

Due to an administrative error, the secretariat first replied under the old rules, as you see above left, blocking out the names of delegations by the positions they were taking.

On appeal however, and based on the judgement in the the Access Info case, the Council had no choice but to correct its earlier mistake, so providing official public access to the the same text in an uncensored format, as shown on right above.

Transparency matters for the public credibility of Europe in general as well as in individual policy areas decisions. What EU institutions do or don't do in our names is only accountable if knowing who did what at key moments is not opaque.

For reinforcing that principle, and for its success in the Court of Justice, Access Info team deserves full recognition and credit. You can find, follow and support them here.

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