

OPEN LETTER: MEPs called upon to protect EU transparency

To all Members of the European Parliament

In the coming months MEPs will be called upon to vote on amendments in the recast of Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 regarding access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. The legislation sets out the conditions under which the public may have access to documents held by EU institutions.

Access to information is fundamental to transparency, openness, and the democratic rights of European citizens. According to its founding treaties, the European Union (EU) aspires to create an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as openly as possible and as closely as possible to the citizen. However, the EU Ombudsman and others have warned that a proposal put forward by the Commission would mean access to fewer, not more, documents. The proposal would restrict access most notably by creating a narrower definition of what constitutes a document for the purpose of the regulation; by adding new exceptions to the right of access to documents, in particular in relation to documents drawn up within dispute settlement proceedings initiated by the Commission against Member States; and by granting more discretion to Member States to refuse access to documents they transmit to the EU institutions.

We call on MEPs to amend the Commission's proposal so as to prevent the access to documents regulation from becoming more restrictive than before and to expand the right of the public to have access to EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies' documents.

To this end we call on the Members of the European Parliament to:

Support measures to align the regulation with the Lisbon Treaty to extend the scope of the regulation to all EU bodies, offices and agencies in addition to the institutions.

Maintain the current definition of a document to cover all documents and not only ones that have been formally transmitted to some recipients or registered. The definition should also include all information recorded in all formats, including databases.

Bring the regulation in line with the relevant pro-transparency decisions of the Court of Justice of the EU which has ruled that legal advice from legal services of EU institutions in legislative proceedings should be publicly accessible and that Member States do not have an unconditional right of veto regarding disclosure of documents they have transmitted to EU institutions.

Maintain the deadline of 15 days for EU institutions to reply to confirmatory applications and reject the Commission's proposal to extend this to 30 days.

We call on MEPs to protect the rights of European citizens to access information and ensure transparency of EU institutions.

Signed:

European Region



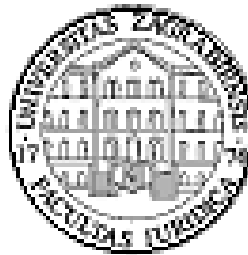




Åbenhedstinget



Voota



Open-data_{es}



Forest Peoples Programme



Pesticide Action Network Europe



Naturskyddsforeningen



Global



official websites the INSTITUTE government bodies rights i-technology
access to information for INFORMATION human rights protection openness
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Organisations

European Region

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Access Info Europe, Spain – Executive Director, Helen Darbishire

Access to Information Programme, Bulgaria – Executive Director, Gergana Jouleva, Ph.D

ActiveWatch, Romania – President, Mircea Toma

Agentia pentru Informarea si Dezvoltarea Organizatiilor Neguvernamentale, Romania – Mihai Lisetchi

Aktion Freiheit statt Angst (Action Alliance Freedom not Fear), Germany - Rainer Hammerschmidt

Aliancia Fair-play, Slovakia – Zuzana Wienk

Amigos de la Tierra, Spain – Environmental Director, Liliane Spendeler

Amnesty International European Institutions Office, Belgium – Director, Nicolas J. Beger

Article 19, UK – Senior Legal Officer, Sejal Parmar

Associação para a Cooperação Entre os Povos, Portugal – Director, Fatima Proença

Asociación de la Prensa de Madrid, Spain – President, Fernando González Urbaneja

Asociación de la Prensa de Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain – President, Juan Galarza Hernandez

BilgiEdinmeHakki.Org, Turkey – Director, Yaman Akdeniz

Birdlife International, European Division – Director, Angelo Caserta

Buhl & Rasmussen, Denmark – Niels Erik Kaaber Rasmussen

Bureau of Investigative Journalism, UK – Managing Editor, Iain Overton

Campaign for Freedom of Information, UK – Director, Maurice Frankel

Campaign for Freedom of Information in Scotland, UK – Carole Ewart

Centre for Advanced Legal Studies, Serbia – Vladimir Vodinelić PhD

Centre for Democracy and Law "Miko Tripalo", Croatia – Professor Josip Kregar

Centre for Development and Democratization of Institutions, Albania – Executive Director, Ilir Aliaj

Centre for Environmental Information and Education, Bulgaria – Daniel Popov

Center for Independent Journalism in Bucharest, Romania – Ioana Avadani

Centre for Legal Resources, Romania – Executive Director, Georgiana Iorgulescu

Citizen Control – Animal Defence, Bulgaria – Board Chairman, Georgi Serbezov

Civil Rights Project Sisak, Croatia – Milana Kreca

ClientEarth, UK – CEO, James Thornton

Climate Action Network Europe – Director, Matthias Duwe

Community Media Forum Europe, Belgium – President, Pieter de Wit

Confederación de Consumidores y Usuarios, Spain – Vice President, Ana Etchenique

Corporate Europe Observatory, Belgium – Research and Campaigns Coordinator, Olivier Hoedeman

Cyprus EU Association, Cyprus – Derviş Musannıf

Danish Association for Investigative Journalism (FUJ) – Brigitte Alfter, Jacob Mollerup, Denmark

Dutch–Flemish Association of Investigative Journalists VVOJ, Belgium/Netherlands – Director, Margo Smit

Ecologistas en Acción, Spain – Samuel Martín-Sosa Rodríguez

eGovernance Academy, Estonia – Member of the Executive Board, Ivar Tallo

Electronic Frontier Finland: EFFI, Finland – President, Timo Karjalainen

EsCULcA: Observatório para a Defesa dos Direitos e Liberdades, Spain – President, Fernando Blanco Arce

Eötvös Károly Public Policy Institute, Hungary – László Majtényi and Máté Dániel Szabó

Estonian Newspaper Association, Estonia – Managing Director, Mart Raudsaar

European Environmental Bureau – Secretary General, John Hontelez

European Federation of Journalists (EFJ/IFJ), Belgium – Co–Director, Renate Schroeder

European Public Health Alliance, Belgium – Secretary General, Monika Kosinska

EU Transparency – Executive Director, Jack Thurston

Farmsubsidy.org and Fishsubsidy.org – Co–founder, Jack Thurston

Fonds Pascal Decroos voor Bijzondere Journalistiek, Belgium – Director, Ides Debruyne

Forest Peoples Programme, UK – Responsible Finance Programme Coordinator Tom Griffiths

Foundation Open Society Institute, Macedonia – Dance Danilovska – Bajdevska

Friends of the Earth Croatia – President, Tomislav Tomašević

Friends of the Earth Europe – Director, Magda Stoczkiewicz

Fund for an Open Society, Serbia – Transparency, Accountability and Public Integrity Program Coordinator, Miodrag Milosavljevic

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German Civil Liberties Union (Humanistische Union e.V.), Germany – Sven Lueders

Global Witness, UK – Co–Founder and Co–Director, Charmian Gooch

GONG, Croatia – Executive Director, Sandra Pernar

Govern Obert – GO!, Spain – Juan Perez

Greenpeace European Unit, Belgium – Deputy Director, Mahi Sideridou

Greenpeace International, Netherlands – General Counsel, Jasper Teulings

Health & Environment Alliance, Belgium – Director, Genon K. Jensen

Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, Hungary – Tivadar Huttl

IKME: Sociopolitical Studies Institute, Cyprus – Director, Alecos Tringides

Iuridicum Remedium, o.s., Czech Republic – Helena Svatošová

K-Monitor Association, Hungary – Júlia Keserű

League for Defence of Human Rights LADO, Romania – President, Olimpia Neagu, Ph.D

League for Defence of Human Rights LADO, branch of Satu Mare, Romania – President, Olimpia Neagu, Ph.D

Libertic, France –

MANS: Mreza za afirmaciju NVO Sektora, Montenegro – Director for Citizens Initiatives, Zorica Čeranić

Naturefriends International, Brussels Office – EU Policy Officer, Sandra Roling

Netzwerk Recherche, Germany – Dr. Manfred Redelfs

N-ost: Network for Reporting on Eastern Europe, Germany – Christian Mihr

Observatorio de Responsabilidad Social Corporativa, Spain – Lea Brumter

Open Data España, Spain – Jacobo Elosua

Open Data Network, Germany – Daniel Dietrich

Open Society Archives at Central European University, Hungary – Counsellor, Ivan Szekely

PAN-Europe (Pesticide Action Network) – Hans Muilerman

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Peace Institute in Ljubljana, Slovenia – Brankica Petkovic

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Statewatch, UK – Tony Bunyon

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Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen, Sweden – President, Mikael Karlsson

Tax Justice Network, UK – John Christensen

The Access Initiative European Partner Organizations – Dr. Csaba Kiss

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Transparency International, Latvia (Delna) – Inese Voika

Transparency International Liaison Office to the EU, Belgium – Ronny Patz

Transparency International Secretariat, Germany – Andrea Figari

Transparency International, Spain – President, Jesús Lizcano

Transparency Zero Corruption, Macedonia – President, Slagjana Taseva Ph.D

Transport & Environment, Belgium – Director, Jos Dings

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Voota, Spain – Communications Officer, Javier Yohn Planells

WhatDoTheyKnow.com – Alex Skene

Wobbing.eu – Editor, Brigitte Alfter

World Press Freedom Committee – European Representative, Ronald Koven

WWF European Policy Office – Advisor, Sandra Jen

Global

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Africa Freedom of Information Centre, Uganda – Gilbert Sendugwa

African Network of Constitutional Lawyers – Access to Information Working Group, Fatima Diallo

Alianza Regional por la Libertad de Expresión e Información, Latin America – Executive Secretariat, Karina Banfi

Arab Freedom of Information Network – President, Said Essoulami

Association Green Alternative, Georgia – Executive Director, Nino Gujaraidze

Asociación por los Derechos Civiles, Argentina – Executive Director, Alvaro Herrero

Bahrain Transparency, Bahrain – President, Abdulnabi Alekry

Bank Information Center, USA – Middle East and North Africa Program Manager, Amy Ekdawi

Canadian Association of Professional Access and Privacy Administrators, Canada – National Chair, Sharon Polsky

Centro de Archivos y Acceso a la Información, Uruguay – Edison Lanza

Centre for Independent Journalism, Malaysia – Masjaliza Hamzah

Centre for Law and Democracy, Canada – President, Toby Mendel

Center for Promotion of Freedom of Expression and Access to Information, Moldova – President, Vasile Spinei

Citizens' Campaign for Right to Information, Nepal – General Secretary, Tanka Aryal

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, India – Maja Daruwala's

Egyptians Against Corruption, Egypt – Engi M. El Haddad

Electronic Privacy Information Center, USA – Marc Rotenberg

Freedom Forum, Nepal – Chairperson, Taranath Dahal

Freedom of Information Center, Armenia – Shushan Doydoyan

Freedom of Information Programme at the South African History Archive, South Africa – Support Officer, Gabriella Razzano

Freshwater Action Network, Mexico – M.Sc. Nathalie Seguin

Fundación Directorio Legislativo, Argentina – Executive Director, María Baron

Fundacion Pro Acceso, Chile – Presidente, Federico Allendes S.

Fundar, Centro de Análisis e Investigación, Mexico – Miguel Pulido

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association, Georgia – Tamar Kordzaia

[Información y Sociedad, Iniciativa Ciudadana, Mexico -](#)

Iniciativa Ciudadana para la Promoción de la Cultura del Diálogo, A.C., Mexico – Director, Peter Winkel

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Jamaicans For Justice, Jamaica – Executive Director, Carolyn Gomes

Media Rights Institute (MRI), Azerbaijan – Director, Rashid Hajili

National Security Archive, George Washington University, USA – Director, Tom Blanton

NGO Monitor, Israel – Europe Desk, Karoline Henriques

Open Society Georgia Foundation, Georgia – Deputy Executive Director, Tamuna Kaldani

Open Society Institute – Assistance Foundation, Azerbaijan – Fidan Bagirova

Poder Ciudadano (TI–Argentina), Argentina – Hernan Charosky

Right to Know Coalition of Nova Scotia, Canada – President, Darce Fardy

Socio–Economic Rights & Accountability Project, Nigeria – Executive Director, Adetokunbo Mumuni

Suma Ciudadana, Peru – Coordinator, Javier Casas

Transparency International, Israel – CEO, Galia Sagi

Transparency Maroc, Morocco – Access to Information Project Coordinator, Saâd Filali Meknassi

Transparency International, Russia – Marina Savintseva

Water Governance Institute (WGI), Uganda – Executive Director, Henry Bazira

Zero Corruption Coalition, Nigeria – National Secretary, Babatunde Oluajo

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46 Global Organisations

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