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Monday, 28 March 2011 15:20

From Access Info

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European citizens can't find out from either Brussels or from national governments which countries are lobbying against [EU transparency](#), according to a report launched by the NGO Access Info Europe.

After submitting access to information requests in all 27 Member States, Access Info Europe reports in "The Secret State of EU Transparency Reforms" that it only has a very partial picture of the positions countries are taking in negotiations in Brussels.

Only 11 countries provided information about either their positions and/or the process of the reform of Regulation 1049/2001. Two of these, the Netherlands and the UK, only provided information following appeals.

Of the 16 countries did not provide any information, of which eight countries formally refused, five referred us back to the Council and four did not respond (administrative silence).

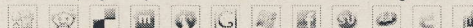
In total 23 countries applied exceptions to all or part of the information requested. Protection of "ongoing negotiations", "decision making" and "international relations" were commonly used exceptions. Also used to shield governments from [accountability](#) were grounds that the information was held in "internal documents" or "might create misunderstanding."

The report "The Secret State of EU Transparency Reforms" reveals wider systemic problems with getting information about how the rules that affect our everyday lives are being developed in Brussels.

"The way the system currently works, makes it easy for governments to claim one thing at home, and to press for just the opposite in Brussels," said Helen Darbshire, Director of Access Info Europe.

"The severe lack of information makes it impossible for members of the European public to engage in decision making and to hold governments to account."

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Upcoming activities

Tue Mar 15 @08:00 - 05:00PM

Meetings of BetterAid and Open Forum coordinating groups

Wed Mar 16 @08:00 - 05:00PM

Meetings of BetterAid and Open Forum coordinating groups

Thu Apr 07 @08:00 - 05:00PM

Consultation on Aid and Development Effectiveness in Agriculture and Rural Development

Fri Apr 08 @08:00 - 05:00PM

Consultation on Aid and Development Effectiveness in Agriculture and Rural Development

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