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Access Info Europe Wins Battle for Greater Transparency of EU Council

## [Access Info Europe Wins Battle for Greater Transparency of EU Council](#)

Access Info Europe has won the legal battle for greater transparency of the legislative processes of the Council of the European Union (EU) in Brussels with the ruling of the European Court of Justice in its favour. The Court rejected the Council's arguments on why information should be withheld from the public.

The final ruling which was delivered on October 17, 2013 placed a demand on the European Parliament and Council to "ensure publication of the documents relating to the legislative procedures."

Indication of the ruling is that national parliaments will find it easy to peruse the EU legislative process especially the positions taken by Member States delegates.



### **Helen Derbishire, Executive Director Access Info Europe**

According to Helen Derbishire, Executive Director, Access Info Europe, "This is a significant victory for transparency and participatory democracy, if the Council applies this ruling to all similar documents, this would finally provide a similar level of transparency at the EU level as one would normally find in national legislative processes."

Derbishire said Access Info Europe calls "on the council to respect this ruling and to a step further by henceforth proactively publishing documents containing legislative drafting positions of Member States on the council's public register as soon as they are created, as this will allow the public to follow the decision making process."

In addition, Onno Brouwer, Legal representative of Access Info said "A normative choice has been made in the EU Treaty for more transparency and legitimacy of the EU decision making. Making the EU legislative process more transparent is crucial to enhance the acceptance by the EU legislation that binds them, and to allow for accountability of Member State positions taken in that context. One often forgets that Member States are key actors in the EU legislative process."

Access Info Europe got the support of the Europe Parliament in its quest for wider access to documents and the long fight ended in victory for Access Info Europe as it won access to the document it first requested in 2008 from the EU Council.

Access to Info Europe is a non-governmental Organization that works to advance and defend the right to know in Europe and globally.

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