

20 years of the Access to Documents Regulation – what's next?



[Regulation 1049/2001](#) regarding public access to documents governs the fundamental right of citizens and residents of the European Union to have access to documents held by the EU institutions. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the coming into force of this EU 'transparency law' that significantly increased the accountability of the EU administration.

Investigative media, interest groups and civil society activists, businesses both big and small, and, not least, citizens themselves rely on this Regulation to obtain the documents they need, but also to keep the EU Institutions transparent and accountable.

During [the conference on the future of access to documents](#) on 15 November, the [European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly](#) has called for the EU's access to documents law to be updated to reflect the reality of modern communications. With the emergence of new technologies in the last 20 years, this Regulation appears to become outdated. It, therefore, needs to match today's reality while maintaining its core strengths. It also needs to align more closely with the citizen rights enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty, encourage greater proactive transparency and take account of important transparency case law. Moreover, the Ombudsman emphasised the need for a new rule ensuring greater transparency, faster processing of requests and an accessible redress mechanism for citizens.

Did you receive a request for access to EBA documents from the public?

Forward it immediately to [EBA-AtD](#). The Legal and Compliance Unit will deal with it and reply to the requester.
