Every citizen shall have the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union. Decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen.

The public has a right of access to documents of the Union's Institutions.

The public can:
- Watch open sessions *LIVE*,
- See voting results of legislative acts,
- Consult documents related to the public sessions,
- Consult background notes and press releases.

Each EU Institution is required to set up a public register for documents. The *Council's Public Register* has been operational since 1999 at [www.consilium.europa.eu](http://www.consilium.europa.eu).

All Council documents contain a reference in the register (with a few exceptions) and can be requested by the public.

Documents which are over 30 years old are directly accessible to the public (exceptions apply).

Each historical archives of the institutions has a reading room open to the public.
THE WORK

DG F 2 Transparency ensures the consistency in the implementation of the rules on transparency and access to documents. It also houses the archives of the Council. In this capacity, it is responsible for:

- coordinating the overall implementation of the openness of Council sessions;
- monitoring and coordinating the implementation of the policy of public access to Council documents;
- forming the collective memory of the Council and of other bodies for which the GSC is document depository, such as the European Councils, Intergovernmental Conferences (revisions of the Treaties/enlargements) and the European Convention.

DG F 2A is responsible for overseeing the displaying of voting results during Council meetings and its simultaneous transmission on the internet, and for the processing of initial and confirmatory requests for access to documents.

DG F 2B, Records Management and the Central Archives, establish and preserve the collection of documents produced and received by the Council.

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