



COUNCIL ACCESS POLICY



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

Council Access Policy

All questions or requests for Council access should be addressed to:

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The Council prides itself on being an accessible, welcoming and safe environment. At the same time it has to protect against a range of risks resulting from its political profile, the presence of VVIP's and the volume of sensitive and classified information it manages. An effective access management policy is one of the main preventive measures to help protect people, property, information and the Council's reputation.

This policy simplifies our access arrangements by basing them on clear principles easily understood by delegates, staff and other visitors. Keeping our workplace safe and secure involves each and every one of us being vigilant. Our safety and security teams are available for any assistance you need and to answer your questions.

William Shapcott
Director-General for
Administration

1 Controlling access

Our access controls are built around three control mechanisms:

1. Establishing identity and trustworthiness, depending on the sensitivity of the area to which access is requested.
2. Access control points for entering or leaving each zone involving physical security searches where necessary, mandatory badging in and out, 'no-pass-back' and 'no-multiple-badge-in' procedures.
3. Keeping logs, reports and traceability of movements of people and assets.

The effectiveness of such measures depends on security principles being applied consistently. Every exception decreases the impact of any measure, sometimes significantly.

2 Principles governing access

Access to Council premises under white alert state and non-summit mode is governed by the following general principles:

1. All users (except those receiving protocol treatment) receive a Council ID badge (either full or regular badges giving unrestricted access to controlled zones, or media, visitor, or public badges giving access to public zones).
2. All users except full Council ID badge holders undergo the entry security check (see section 4).
3. Identity and access rights are checked before access is granted beyond the public zone.
4. Permanent staff of EU institutions, bodies and agencies with a valid badge issued by their respective institution or body receive Council ID badges as set out in the annex.
5. Visitors who do not have a full or regular Council ID badge may enter controlled zones only when invited by a GSC department or a Member State, Commission or EEAS delegation¹ and must always be accompanied by a full Council ID badge holder of the inviting GSC department or delegation.
6. Badging-in and out of controlled and public zones is mandatory. especially as Council access control features include 'no-pass-back' and 'no-multiple-badging-in' for all zones.
7. Information on Council ID badge withdrawals or access restrictions for individuals is shared with other EU institutions or bodies whose badges give access to Council premises.
8. All deliveries and goods undergo a security check at the perimeter and at the loading bay.
9. Any failure to respect access rules and procedures is regarded as a serious matter entailing investigation that may result in access rights being temporarily or permanently withdrawn.

¹ The inviting department or delegation is responsible for its visitors and should register them at least one working day in advance with Council security accreditation.

3 Access zones

Council buildings have three layers of access zones:

Access Zone	Who has access	Features of each zone
Public Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · General public / walk-in visitors · Registered visitors · Media representatives · Everybody with a valid Council ID badge 	<p>Public zones are a protected environment in which all users can move freely. The public zones comprise the entrances, the reception, the visitor centre, the shops, and perimeter areas not falling under controlled or restricted access zone rules.</p> <p>The visitor centre can be accessed by the general public interested to find out more about the Council and the European Council.</p> <p>The media area is an area in a public zone to which access is limited to accredited media, staff and delegates accepted by the GSC press service.</p> <p>Restaurants and cafeterias in public zones are accessible to all users with a valid Council ID badge (except general public / walk-in visitors).</p>
Controlled Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · GSC staff / contractors · Member state delegates · Permanent staff of EU institutions and bodies (see annex) · Escorted registered visitors 	<p>Controlled zones are protected areas for GSC staff and delegations and comprise all GSC offices and meeting rooms, delegation offices, dining facilities and cafeterias not open to the public, car parks, and perimeter areas which are not public or restricted zones.</p> <p>Meeting rooms and offices are not public zones. Users who do not have a valid full or regular Council ID badge must be escorted at all times.</p>
Restricted Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Authorised GSC staff / contractors · Authorised Member State delegates · Authorised permanent staff of EU institutions and bodies (see annex) · Escorted and authorised visitors 	<p>Restricted zones include VVIP areas, technical areas, secured areas, registries, catering facilities, security areas, IT and communication areas, and perimeter areas not falling under public or controlled zone rules. Access is restricted to persons authorised by the GSC department in charge of the zone in accordance with Council safety and security rules. Access rules and infrastructure for restricted zones may vary depending on operational and security or safety requirements. All restricted zones are subject to regular inspection and accreditation.</p>

Each zone has a clearly defined and secured perimeter. Restricted zones are located, where possible, within controlled zones. Special arrangements and restrictions may apply in any zone at higher alert states and during summits or other special events (see document 14944/16)

3.2 Public zones

Any person can access public zones without prior registration, unless access restrictions are imposed at higher security alert states. Access to certain parts of the public zone is monitored (e.g. media areas, restaurants and cafeterias) to ensure proper management of these areas.

3.2.1 Media areas

All accredited media representatives with a valid media Council ID badge and all other users with access to controlled zones have access to the media areas.

3.2.2 Restaurant / Cafeteria areas

All users with a valid visitor or media Council ID badge and all other users with access to controlled zones have access to restaurant and cafeteria areas in the public zone.

3.3 Controlled zones

All holders of valid full or regular Council ID badge have access to controlled zones. Users with a valid visitor or media Council ID badge need to be accompanied at all times when in a controlled zone by a full Council ID badge holder from the inviting GSC department or delegation.

3.4 Restricted zones

The GSC department in charge of each restricted zone is responsible for establishing and implementing the access rules. Specific security and access control checks may be applicable. The Safety and Security Directorate works in agreement with the relevant department to validate and help implement and enforce access rules and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place and that the zone is officially accredited.

Regardless of the control mechanisms in place, any person without the appropriate permanent access permission or clearance to these areas must be accompanied at all times by an authorised official or security guard.

4 Security checks and Council ID badges

A combination of up to four types of checks may be carried out depending on the zones to which access is required. These checks are designed to counter threats such as terrorism, espionage, public disorder and crime:

- Entry Security Check (ESC) to detect arms, explosives, dangerous materials or illegal devices.
- Identity Check (IDC) and verification of the validity of badges to ensure that persons are entitled to enter the relevant zones.
- Security Verification (SV) by a competent security authority.
- Security Clearance (SC) for access to high classified information.

Depending on the zone to be accessed and the outcome of the security checks, the Council may issue one of the following three basic types of ID badges:

Council ID badge	User	Access right features
Full Council ID Badge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VVIP • GSC staff • EU Member State delegates working in Permanent Representations or requiring regular access to the GSC • GSC Contractors (approved by DSS) • Certain senior officials from other EU institutions 	<p><u>Public zones:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry without entry security check • Free movement <p><u>Controlled zones:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct entry • Free movement • Can escort registered visitors
Regular Council ID badge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Member State delegates requiring less frequent access to the GSC • GSC contractors • Retired GSC staff • GSC trainees • Permanent staff of other EU institutions and bodies (see annex) 	<p><u>Public zones:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry with entry security check • Free movement <p><u>Controlled zones:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct entry • Free movement • Cannot escort visitors
Visitor / Media / Public Council ID badges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered visitors • Media representatives • Third party delegates • Sub-contractors of GSC contractors which have not been vetted • General public / walk-in visitors 	<p><u>Public zones:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry with entry security check • Free movement • The badges are collected when leaving the building <p><u>Controlled zones:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only if accompanied by a full Council-ID badge holder of the inviting GSC department or delegation • Media representatives only if accompanied by a full Council ID badge holder appointed by the press department of the GSC. • Cannot escort visitors • General public / walk in visitors have no access to controlled zones.

The following table indicates which checks users may undergo before accessing controlled zones. Access conditions for restricted zones are laid down in specific rules for each restricted zone.

User	ESC	IDC	SV	SC	Council ID badge	Access to controlled zones
VVIP (protocol treatment) ²	-	-	-	-	VVIP / Full	Free access
EU Member State delegates working in Permanent Representations or requiring regular access to the GSC.	-	X	-	(X) ³	Full	Free access
GSC staff	-	X	-	(X) ³	Full	Free access
GSC contractors (approved by DSS)	-	X	(X) ³	X	Full	Free access
EU Member State delegates requiring less frequent access to the GSC.	X	X	-	(X) ³	Regular	Free access
Permanent staff of other EU institutions or bodies (see annex)	X	X	-	(X) ³	Regular	Free access
GSC contractors	X	X	X	(X) ³	Regular	Free access
Retired GSC staff	X	X	-	-	Regular	Free access
GSC trainees	X	X	-	-	Regular	Free access
Registered visitors	X	X	-	(X) ³	Visitor	Only if accompanied by a full Council-ID badge holder of the inviting GSC department or delegation
Sub-contractors of GSC contractors which do not have the SV.	X	X	-	-	Visitor	Only if accompanied by a full Council ID badge holder of the inviting GSC department or delegation
Third party delegates	X	X	-	-	Visitor	Only if accompanied by a full Council ID badge holder of the inviting GSC department or delegation
Media representatives	X	X	(X) ⁴	-	Media	Only if accompanied by a full Council ID badge holder appointed by the GSC press department
General public / walk-in visitors	X	X	-	-	Public	No access

² The GSC's head of protocol maintains a list of the categories of VVIP's entitled to receive protocol treatment.

³ Where applicable.

⁴ Media representatives attending high-level events such as European Councils need to apply separately and agree to a SV-check before they can be issued a specific media Council ID badge for such events (see Council doc. 15696/16).

Access to Council controlled zones by staff of other EU institutions and bodies	
European Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Permanent staff, on presenting their COM badge will receive a regular Council ID badge valid for one day which is collected on leaving the building. – Permanent staff who regularly attend meetings may apply for a regular Council ID badge with a longer validity. – Senior officials requiring regular access to the Council may apply for a full Council ID badge.
European External Action Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Permanent staff based in Brussels, on presenting their EEAS badge, will receive a regular Council ID badge valid for one day which is collected on leaving the building. – Permanent staff who regularly attend meetings may apply for a regular Council ID badge with a longer validity. – Senior officials and chairs of working parties or other meetings who require regular access to the Council may apply for a full Council ID badge.
European Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Permanent staff, on presenting their EP badge, will receive a regular Council ID badge valid for one day which is collected on leaving the building. – Permanent staff who regularly attend meetings may apply for a regular Council ID badge with a longer validity. – MEP's not receiving protocol treatment will receive a VIP ID badge if invited to the Council. – MEP assistants are provided with a Visitor ID badge if invited to the Council.
European Court of Auditors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Permanent staff, on presenting their ECA badge, will receive a regular Council ID badge valid for one day which is collected on leaving the building. – Permanent staff who regularly attend meetings may apply for a regular Council ID badge with a longer validity.
Court of Justice of the European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Permanent staff, on presenting their CJEU badge, will receive a regular Council ID badge valid for one day which is collected on leaving the building. – Permanent staff who regularly attend meetings may apply for a regular Council ID badge with a longer validity.
European Central Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Permanent staff, on presenting their ECB badge, will receive a regular Council ID badge valid for one day which is collected on leaving the building. – Permanent staff who regularly attend meetings may apply for a regular Council ID badge with a longer validity.
All other EU institutions, bodies or agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Permanent staff of any other EU institution, body or agency, on presenting their respective badge will receive a visitor Council ID badge if invited by a Council department.