



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 4 June 2012

10684/12

LIMITE

PE-QE 226

**PRELIMINARY DRAFT REPLY TO WRITTEN QUESTION
E-004374/2012 put by Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)**

from: General Secretariat of the Council

to: Permanent Representations of the Member States

Subject: **"Breakdown of documents by security classification levels"**

1. Delegations will find attached:
 - the text of the above Written Question;
 - a preliminary draft reply prepared by the General Secretariat.

2. If no comments have been received from delegations **by 17.00 on 20 June 2012**, this preliminary draft reply will be submitted to the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1) and to the Council for approval.

Any comments received will be examined by the Working Party on General Affairs.

Question for written answer E-004374/2012

to the Council

Rule 117

Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)

Subject: Breakdown of documents by security classification levels

1. Can the Council say how many documents classified EU RESTRICTED, EU CONFIDENTIAL, EU SECRET and EU TOP SECRET it produced in 2009, 2010 and 2011, broken down by classification level? If not, why not?
 2. Can the Council say how many documents classified EU RESTRICTED, EU CONFIDENTIAL, EU SECRET and EU TOP SECRET it supplied to Member States in 2009, 2010 and 2011, broken down by Member State and classification level? If not, why not?
 3. Can the Council say how many documents classified EU RESTRICTED, EU CONFIDENTIAL, EU SECRET and EU TOP SECRET it received from Member States in 2009, 2010 and 2011, broken down by Member State and classification level? If not, why not?
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REPLY

to Written Question E-004374/2012

put by Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)

The rules governing the handling of EU classified information within the Council are established in Council Decision 2011/292/EU of 31 March 2011 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 141, 27 May 2011, p. 17).

The table below gives the total number of EU classified documents handled by the Council for each of the years referred to by the Honourable Member:

Classification level	2009	2010	2011
RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED	8859	7869	7051
CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL	513	481	468
SECRET UE/EU SECRET	20	31	32
TRES SECRET UE/EU TOP SECRET	0	0	0
Total	9392	8381	7551

As a general rule, Council documents are distributed to all members of the Council, representatives of the Commission and the EEAS and their relevant administrative services which have to ensure that access is granted only to individuals with a need to know. However, in a few cases some documents are not distributed to all EU Member States on account of specific Treaty provisions (e.g. Article 5 of Protocol No. 22). Most classified documents relate to the CFSP, and a significant number are received by the Council from the Commission and the EEAS.

For reasons of confidentiality and the principle of originator control, the Council is not in a position to provide detailed information on how many classified documents it receives from each Member State.