



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 8 October 2014

Requests for Commission documents reach record high

The latest annual report on public access to documents, adopted today, shows that the European Commission dealt with more access to documents requests than ever before during 2013. There were 6,525 requests – a rise of 8.5% on the 6,014 document requests in 2012. This compares with just 450 requests when the current rules entered into force in 2001. The Commission handles around twice as many requests as the Council and European Parliament combined, and grants access in more than four out of five cases.

At the same time, another 20,108 documents were added to the public register in 2013, a 12% increase on the 17,940 documents added to the register in 2012.

Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič said: "I have made the promotion of transparency a central part of my mandate as Commissioner for administration and inter-institutional relations, and access to documents is a key part of that. So I'm delighted to see that citizens are making ever-increasing use of this important tool."

In 2013, as in 2012, the Secretariat General and Directorate-General for Health and Consumers received the highest number of initial requests (13.88% and 8.26% of total requests respectively). Belgium consolidated its position as the biggest source of requests (24.23% of the total, up from 21.85%), with Germany in second place (12.96%).

In certain limited circumstances defined by the legislation (Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001), the Commission can refuse to supply a document. As in previous years, the most common reason for doing this was protection of the purpose of inspections, investigations and audits.

This reflects the fact that many requests concern a specific, private interest rather than a general, public interest. Complainants in infringement proceedings, competitors or alleged victims of anti-competitive behaviour are among those who request documents of interest to themselves, but which often cannot be made publicly available without harming a legitimate countervailing interest.

Annual Reports on Access to Documents:

http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/access_documents/reports_en.htm

Transparency Portal, with information on access to documents:

http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/index_en.htm

Contacts :

[Antonio Gravili](#) (+32 2 295 43 17)

[Marilyn Carruthers](#) (+32 2 299 94 51)

IP/14/1106

