



Council should give faster public access to legislative documents

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The Ombudsman has asked the Council to grant faster access to legislative documents so that the public can effectively participate in discussions on draft EU laws.

This followed the Council's decision to give access to Member States' initial comments and questions on the draft Digital Markets Act, but over a year after a group of investigative journalists asked for the documents.

By the time access was granted, the legislative discussions on the Digital Markets Act - a key piece of EU legislation - were finished.

Timely access to legislative documents is crucial for citizens to exercise their treaty-based right to participate in the democratic life of the EU.

The network of journalists asked for the documents in March 2021. The Council released only the already-public legislative proposal, arguing that granting access to the other documents would undermine its decision-making process.

It released the documents in May 2022, following a recommendation from the Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman has long emphasized the need for the EU administration to release documents while they are still useful.

In a recent inquiry, the Commission gave access to requested documents but only almost two years after the initial request.