

Closing letter on strategic initiative SI/3/2022/LDS on how the Council of the EU ensures transparency of the decision making concerning sanctions against Russia

Correspondence - 15/02/2023

Case SI/3/2022/LDS - **Opened on** 03/06/2022 - **Decision on** 15/02/2023 - **Institution concerned** Council of the European Union |

Secretary-General

Council of the European Union

Dear Ms Blanchet,

I refer to your reply of 18 October 2022 to my letter, in which I asked the Council to consider whether it could make proactively available to the public additional documents related to the adoption of restrictive measures.

I would like to thank the Council for examining in detail the matters raised in my letter. I am pleased that the Council agrees with me that there is a strong and legitimate public interest in the restrictive measures it adopts, which are in this case aimed at putting an end to the unjustified Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

I take note that the Council considers that the special nature of the decision-making process leading to the adoption of restrictive measures, the need to protect the interests recognised under the EU legislation on public access to documents (Regulation 1049/2001) and the very specific circumstances of the current war situation do not enable the Council to make proactively available more documents pertaining to the adoption of sanctions.

I understand that the explanations provided by the Council are without detriment to the requests for public access to documents it may receive on this subject. In the event of receiving such requests, I trust the Council will assess them on their own merits. More generally, I encourage the Council to continue its efforts to inform the public adequately about the restrictive measures, to the greatest extent possible.



Thank you again for your reply and for your cooperation on this initiative, which is hereby closed. Please note that I intend to publish this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Emily O'Reilly European Ombudsman

Strasbourg, 15/02/2023