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[Press release](#) | 17.12.2009

Transparency

European Parliament defends public access to EU documents

Today, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on access to EU documents, reiterating that European institutions should keep moving towards greater transparency and urging the Commission to widen the scope of the current regulation to all EU institutions, as well as update the rules on internal documents. The EU Parliament resolution criticised Council and Commission lack of cooperation regarding its requested amendments on the Commission's proposal for a "recast" of the Regulation (1) on 11 March.

Finnish MEP **Heidi Hautala**, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur and co-author of the resolution, commented:

"The European Parliament has sent a strong message to the Commission that it will not tolerate any backward steps on public access to documents and the transparency of EU decision-making."

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, now an integral part of the Lisbon Treaty, makes clear that citizens have a right to know. There can be no justification for the Commission's attempt to withdraw documents from the public eye."

I am disappointed to see confusion on the transparency of decision-making within the Council. The Swedish government, which helped put important rules in place during their last EU Presidency in 2001, has now been taken hostage by governments aiming to limit access to information. The Swedish Presidency has also failed to engage in early negotiations with the European Parliament on this issue."

With the Council and Commission both gunning against transparency, I am glad that the European Parliament has indicated it will stand firm in the defence of citizens' rights."

Looking into the future, Hautala added:

"If Council and Commission do not budge from their positions, Parliament should reject the whole proposal. The present legal situation is already very satisfactory, thanks to transparency-friendly interpretations of the law in the EU courts."

Notes to editors:

(1) Regulation No. 1049/2001 on Public Access to Documents

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