Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

Brussels. 21 March 2016

UNDERSTANDING THE COUNCIL'S
OPEN DATA DATASETS

METADATA ON REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

METADATA OF THE COUNCIL'S PUBLIC REGISTER OF DOCUMENTS

COUNCIL'S VOTING RESULTS ON LEGISLATIVE ACTS

INDEX

1.   INTRODUCTION

The Council of the European Union participates in the EU open data portal with three linked datasets:

- Metadata on requests for public access to documents;
- Metadata of the Council's public register of documents;
- Council voting results on legislative acts;

These datasets are updated daily.

The EU open data portal was launched in December 2012. It is a single point of access to a growing range of data from the EU institutions and other EU bodies. The data are free for you to use and reuse for commercial or non-commercial purposes, provided that the source is acknowledged.

The EU open data portal aims to promote the innovative use of the data and unleash their economic potential. It also aims to help encourage the transparency and accountability of the EU's institutions and other EU bodies.

(*The datasets are available in RDF Data Format (see:*
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resource_Description_Framework) in the form of Linked Open Data
(LOD see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linked_data) for download and query.

This document explains the published datasets and provides information on how to use the data.

2.   METADATA ON REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

The public's right of access to documents was first enshrined in the EU Treaties on 1 May 1999, with the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty. Two years later, Regulation 1049/2001 regarding public access to the European Parliament, Council and Commission documents was adopted, defining the principles, conditions and limits governing the right of access.

Citizens can address the institutions, in any official language of the EU, to request public access to documents. Within 15 working days, an institution must reply to the citizen - either by providing access to the requested documents or by justifying its refusal. Public access to a document can only be refused based on the exceptions foreseen in Regulation 1049/2001.

Since the adoption of Regulation 1049/2001, the Council receives an average of 2000 requests a year, covering approximately 8500 documents. With the exception of personal data, information on such requests is public. A report containing statistical information on requests for public access received by the Council, is published every year.

This dataset contains information on requests considered by the General Secretariat of the Council as being officially closed, i.e., only data related to requests for which a citizen has received an official reply is included.

Information contained in this dataset may still be subject to change. The dataset is updated daily.

This dataset contains the following information on the requests for public access to documents received by the Council:

- General Information on the Applicant (anonymous)
  - Professional activity of applicant
  - Geographic origin
- General Information on the Request
  - Request number
  - Type of request
    - Initial request
    - Confirmatory application
  - Date of request
  - Deadline to reply
  - Extended deadline to reply
  - Date of reply
  - Effort spent
  - Follow-up
  - Policy area(s)
- Information on the requested documents
  - Document(s) requested
    - Publication status (public or not)
    - Type of reply
    - Document category
    - Document number

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE APPLICANT (ANONYMOUS)

For the purposes of this dataset each entry, i.e. each request, is considered to be put forward by a "new applicant".

This means that it is not possible to identify the geographical origin or the professional activity of *a particular applicant* nor it is possible to know how many requests a particular applicant has put forward.

For example, if a same researcher from Ireland puts forward seven requests for different documents, such information will be processed as follows:

- Country of origin: IRL will appear has having been the country of origin for 7 requests,
- Professional activity: University Researcher will appear has the professional activity for 7 requests.

2.1.1 GEOGRAPHIC ORIGIN

Regulation 1049/2001 foresees that any citizen of the EU or residing in a Member State may address a request for access to documents to the institutions. The Council Rules of Procedure enlarge the right of access to any natural or legal person, independently of residence.

As proof of residence is not required, applicants may fill in their country of origin or place of work or stay. The country is expressed as a two letter abbreviation followed by its full name.

Citizens are also not obliged to provide this information. When the information is not available, the request is registered as "NN Unknown". In addition, the mention "XX other" may also appear; this relates to an internal administrative request.

2.1.2   PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

The following professional activities have been identified:

- Agency,
- Consultant,
- Environmental Lobby
- European Agency,
- Industrial/commercial sector,
- International Organisation,
- Journalist,
- Lawyer,
- Library,
- Lobbies,
- MEP or Assistant to MEP,
- Member State,
- Missions,
- NGOs,
- Other Institutions,
- Politician,
- University Researcher,
- Not specified.

Citizens are not obliged to provide this information. When the information is not available, the request is registered as "Not specified".

2.2   GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE REQUEST

2.2.1   REQUEST NUMBER

This is the unique identifier of each entry of the dataset.

For initial requests, the number is composed of the last two digits of the year followed by a sequenced number attributed by date of entry (e.g 15/0115, meaning request number 115 of the year 2015).

For Confirmatory applications, the number is composed of a sequenced number attributed by date of entry followed by the last two digits of the year (e.g. 21/15, meaning confirmatory application number 21 of the year 2015).

2.2.2   TYPE OF REQUEST

2.2.2.1   INITIAL REQUEST

A citizen can address the General secretariat of the Council to request public access to one or several documents. Within the deadline of 15 working days, the General Secretariat of the Council replies, either by giving access to the requested document(s) or justifying its refusal.

2.2.2.2   CONFIRMATORY APPLICATION

A citizen can ask the Council to review the reply to an initial request given by the General Secretariat.

2.2.3   DATE OF REQUEST

A request for access to documents has to be made in writing (letter, fax or electronically). The request is registered on the day received by the General Secretariat. If the request arrives after 17h00, it is registered the day after.

The date is expressed as Day/Month/Year (four digits), e.g.: 02/06/2015

2.2.4   DEADLINE TO REPLY

The General Secretariat has 15 working days to reply to a request for access to documents. The Council has 15 working days to reply to a Confirmatory Application.

The General Secretariat of the Council has its own working calendar. Days where the General Secretariat is officially closed are not taken into account when calculating the deadline (e.g. 9 May).

The date is expressed as Day/Month/Year (four digits), e.g.: 23/06/2015

2.2.5   EXTENDED DEADLINE TO REPLY

In exceptional cases, Regulation 1049/2001 foresees the possibility of extending the deadline to reply by 15 supplementary working days (for example, a request requiring the analysis of a very long document or a very large number of documents).

Days where the General Secretariat of the Council is officially closed are not taken into account when calculating the extended deadline (e.g. 9 May).

The date is expressed as Day/Month/Year (four digits), e.g.: 14/07/2015

2.2.6   DATE OF REPLY

This field refers to the date the General Secretariat of the Council sends its initial reply or communicates the decision by the Council at confirmatory stage, to the applicant (by post or electronically). The initial request and/or confirmatory application is then considered as closed.

The date is expressed as Day/Month/Year (four digits), e.g.: 14/07/2015

2.2.7   EFFORT SPENT

This field identifies the amount of Council working days that were used to reply to the request. The value is given as the number of working days (e.g. 10 working days).

2.2.8   FOLLOW-UP

This field indicates whether an initial request was followed by a Confirmatory application.

2.2.9   POLICY AREA(S)

This field refers to the general policy area of the request. Each request may have one or more policy areas.

The following policy areas have been identified:

- Agriculture/Fisheries,
- Assistance for development,
- Civilian protection,
- Competitiveness,
- Consumer protection,
- Culture,
- DEVGEN,
- Defence and military matters,
- Internal market,
- Economic and monetary policy,
- Education/youth,
- Energy,
- Enlargement,
- Environment,
- Financing of the EU,
- Foreign policy (CFSP)
- Functioning of the institutions,
- General political questions (IGCs and European Council)
- Health,
- Industry,
- judicial Questions,
- Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)
- Parliamentary Questions,
- Regional Policy and Economic/Social Cohesion
- Research
- Social Policy
- Tax Questions
- Transparency
- Transports
- WTO

2.3   INFORMATION ON THE REQUESTED DOCUMENT(S)

A request for access to documents may comprise more than one document.

If no document is identified, the fields 2.3.1 to 2.3.4 will be empty.

If the document requested is found in the Council's public register of documents, all properties related to the dataset *Metadata of the Council's Public Register of Documents* apply (that is, DOCUMENT CATEGORY, DOCUMENT NUMBER, SUFFIX, DOCUMENT TITLE, INTERINSTITUTIONAL CODE (if applicable), SUBJECT MATTER, ORIGINATOR, ADDRESSEE, ISSUE DATE, DOCUMENT LANGUAGE(S), MEETING RELATED TO DOCUMENT (if applicable)).

2.3.1   PUBLICATION STATUS (IN REQUESTS FOR ACCESS DATASET)

This field identifies the publication status of the document *at the moment it is requested*. A Council document can have three different types of publication status:

- **Public**, this means that the public can have access to the full content of the document. Users can consult or download the document through the Council's public Register;

- **Partially accessible**, this means that as a result of a request for access to documents, a previously non-public document was made partially available to the public. Users can consult or download the public parts of a partially accessible document through the Council's public register;

- **Non-accessible**, this means that the contents of the document are not available to the public. The documents cannot be consulted nor downloaded.

The publication status of a Council document may vary in time. While a public document cannot change its status, partially accessible or non-public documents can, at any time, become public.

2.3.2   TYPE OF REPLY

After examination of the requested document, the General Secretariat of the Council, at the initial stage, or the Council, at confirmatory stage, may provide access to a document or parts of it, or refuse access. Partial access or refusals must be based in one of the exceptions to the principle of access foreseen in Article 4 of Regulation 1049/2001.

This field identifies the type of reply and its consequences for the document's publication status. This field may have the following values:

1   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council gave access to the document. If applicable, the document is made available in the Council's public register,

2   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council gave access to the document, however, due to technical reasons the document could not be made available in the Council's public register (e.g. documents dated before 1999).

1.pa   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council gave partial access to the document. If applicable, the document is made partially available in the Council's public register. This value always requires a further value as identified below.

2.pa   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council gave partial access to the document, however, due to technical reasons the document could not be made partially available in the Council's public register (e.g. documents dated before 1999). This value always requires a further value as identified below.

4.1a.1   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect the public interest as regards public security. If preceded by the value 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.1a.2   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect the public interest as regards defence and military matters. If preceded by the value 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.1a.3   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect the public interest as regards international relations. If preceded by the value 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.1a.4   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect the public interest as regards the financial, monetary or economic policy of the EU or a Member State. If preceded by the value 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.1b   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect personal data. If preceded by the value 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.2.1   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect commercial interests. If preceded by the value 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.2.2   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect court proceedings and legal advice. If preceded by the value 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.2.3   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect inspections, investigations and audits. If preceded by the values 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.3(i)   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect its decision-making process during ongoing negotiations. If preceded by the values 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception,

4.3(ii)   this value means that the General Secretariat/Council refused access to protect its decision-making process after the decision is taken. If preceded by the values 1.pa, only parts of the document were refused based on this exception.

The field type of reply may have one or more of the values identified above.

2.3.3 DOCUMENT CATEGORY (IN REQUESTS FOR ACCESS DATASET)

This field identifies the category of document requested. There are the following different categories of Council documents:

ST	standard	AA	accession document
CM	communication	AC	accession document
DS	"document de séance"	AD	accession document
MD	meeting documents	CG	intergovernmental conference
WK	working document	CV	European Convention
SN	"sans numéro"	PE	European Parliament
T	telexes	CP	communication au personnel
T-old	old telexes	DE	decisions of the Secretary-General

COREU CORrespondence EUropéenne

CIRC documents related to the activities of the "Groupe des coordonnateurs Libre circulation des personnes" (active between 1986-1993)

WGI documents related to the activities of the "Ad hoc Working group on Immigration" (active between 1986-1993)

R, S, T, C, I old category of documents (in use until 31/12/1978)

MISC this value is used when a document does not belong to any of the

SP (special) categories identified above. Some of these documents are of a temporary nature and may no longer be available.

2.3.4 DOCUMENT NUMBER (IN REQUESTS FOR ACCESS DATASET)

The Number of a Council document is composed of up to 5 digits followed by the year the document was produced, e.g. 5698/15.

In the case of older Council documents and the categories MISC and SP, the number composition may vary.

3. METADATA OF THE COUNCIL'S PUBLIC REGISTER OF DOCUMENTS

The Council's public register of documents was set up in 1999. The register contains references to documents issued by the Council since that date (exceptions apply regarding classified documents). Public documents are also available for downloading through the register.

On average, around 25 000 documents are added to the register each year (original language). The information related to Council documents is public even if the contents of a document are not available to the public.

This database contains information related to documents issued by the Council, as described below.

Not all the elements identified below are available for each document.

For the content of the documents please consult the Council's Public Register at:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/register/

Information contained in this dataset may still be subject to change. The dataset is updated daily.

This dataset contains the following metadata on documents:
- Publication status
- Document Category
- Document Number
- Suffix
- Title
- Interinstitutional code
- Subject matter
- Originator (author)
- Addressee(s)
- Issue Date
- Meeting related to document
- Document languages

3.1 PUBLICATION STATUS (IN PUBLIC REGSITER DATASET)

This field identifies the publication status of the document *at the time of consultation of this dataset*. A Council document can have three different types of publication status:

- **Public**, this means that the public can have access to the full content of the document. Users can consult or download the document through the Council's public Register;

- **Partially accessible**, this means that as a result of a request for access to documents, a previously non-public document was made partially available to the public. Users can consult or download the public parts of a partially accessible document through the Council's public register;

- **Non-accessible**, this means that the contents of the document are not available to the public. The documents cannot be consulted nor downloaded.

The publication status of a Council document may vary in time. While a public document cannot change its status, partially accessible or non-public documents can, at any time, become public.

3.2 DOCUMENT CATEGORY (IN THE PUBLIC REGISTER DATASET)

This field identifies the type of Council document available in the Council's public register. The following different types of Council documents can be found in the register:

ST	standard
CM	Communication (provisional agendas of working parties)
AA	accession document
AC	accession document
AD	accession document
CG	intergovernmental conference
CV	European Convention
PE	European Parliament
T	telexes

3.3   DOCUMENT NUMBER (IN THE PUBLIC REGSITER DATASET)

A Council document number is composed of a up to 5 digits number followed by the last two digits of the year the document was produced, e.g. 5698/15.

3.4   SUFFIX

This field helps to further define the document. A Council document may be:

- the original (INT)
- a revision (REV)
- an addendum (ADD)
- a corrigendum (COR)
- an extract (EXT),
- a declassified document (DCL)
- an amendment (AMD)

Several of the suffixes identified above can be combined. For example, a revision can have one or more corrigenda (REV1 COR1 or REV2 COR6), a revision can have one or more addenda (REV1 ADD2), an addendum can have one or more corrigenda (ADD5 COR1), an addendum can have one or more revisions (ADD6 REV2), a revised addendum can have one or more corrigenda (ADD3 REV2 COR3), etc..

3.5   DOCUMENT TITLE

This field identifies the subject of the document.

All documents have a subject with the exceptions of some classified documents.

Documents related to the same file may have identical titles.

3.6   INTERINSTITUTIONAL CODE

The interinstitutional code is a number attributed by the European Commission to a draft legislative act to be adopted by the Council in codecision with or in consultation of the European Parliament.

Legislative acts to be adopted by the Council alone do not have an interinstitutional code.

Non-legislative acts to be adopted by the Council alone may have an interinstitutional code.

The interinstitutional code is composed of four digits for the year followed by a up-to four digits number and ending with three letters identifying a specific procedure (e.g. 2015/0236 (COD), meaning proposal 236 of the year 2015 to be adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure).

Main procedures in EU decision making (IMMC Core Metadata):

> In use (after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty):
>> COD - ordinary legislative procedure
>> CNS - consultation of the European Parliament
>> APP - consent of the European Parliament
>> ACC - agreement
>> CNB - consultation of the European Central Bank
>> DEA - delegated act procedure
>> NLE - non legislative,

> No longer in use:
>> SYN - Cooperation procedure
>> AVC - assent procedure

3.7   SUBJECT MATTER

This field identifies the specific policy that the document relates to. The list of subject matters can be found in the Council website, at: [Search in the register - Consilium](#).

3.8   ORIGINATOR (AUTHOR)

This field identifies the author of the document. A document may be drafted by the General Secretariat of the Council, a preparatory body of the Council, a Delegation, the European Commission or the European Parliament, among others.

These are the most common authors (the list is not exhaustive):

- General Secretariat of the Council (GSC)
- COREPER (Committee of Permanent Representatives of the Governments of the Member States)
- Presidency

- Working Party on … (Document 5183/16 contains a list of all Council Preparatory bodies).
- European External Actions Service (EEAS)
- European Commission
- Europol, etc.

3.9   ADDRESSEE(S)

This field identifies the addressee of the document. A document may be addressed to the General Secretariat of the Council, to a preparatory body of the Council, to the Council, a Delegations, the European Commission or the European Parliament, among others

These are the most common authors (the list is not exhaustive):
- Council,
- Coreper,
- General Secretariat of the Council (GSC)
- Working Party on (Document 5183/16 contains a list of all Council Preparatory bodies).
- Delegations
- Secretary-General of the Council
- European Commission,
- European Parliament, etc.

3.10   ISSUE DATE

This field identifies the date that the document is issued.

The date is expressed as Day/Month/Year (four digits), e.g 02/06/2015.

3.11   DOCUMENT LANGUAGES

This field identifies the language versions available for a document.

Not all documents are available in all EU languages.

There can be the following languages:

BG	Bulgarian	HU	Hungarian
CS	Czech	IT	Italian
DA	Danish	LT	Lithuanian
DE	German	LV	Latvian
EL	Greek	MT	Maltese
EN	English	NL	Dutch
ES	Spanish	PL	Polish
ET	Estonian	PT	Portuguese
FI	Finnish	RO	Romanian
FR	French	SK	Slovak
HR	Croatian	SL	Slovenian
GA	Gaelic	SV	Swedish
MUL : multilingual			

ISO codes

3.12   MEETING RELATED TO DOCUMENT

This field identifies the date of the meeting, either of the Council or of a preparatory body of the Council, that the document relates to.

The date is expressed as Day/Month/Year (four digits), e.g 10/06/2015.

Not all Council documents relate to a meeting.

4. COUNCIL VOTING RESULTS ON LEGISLATIVE ACTS

The Council's voting records are public whenever it votes on a legislative act under the ordinary or a special legislative procedure. On average, the Council adopts 120 legislative acts per year.

This database contains not only the votes of the Council when adopting a legislative act but also information related to that act, such as:

- form of adoption (in a Council meeting or by written procedure)
- Council session
- Council configuration
- date
- policy area
- act type (regulation, directive, decision or position)
- act number (as published in the EU's Official Journal)
- document number (submitted to the Council for adoption)
- interinstitutional code
- action by the Council (according to the steps of the legislative procedure)
- legislative procedure (ordinary or special legislative procedure)
- voting rule (qualified majority or unanimity)

Information contained in this dataset may still be subject to change. The dataset is updated daily.

4.1 FORM OF ADOPTION

A legislative act may be adopted by the Council:
- in session (during a Council meeting);
- by written procedure.

4.2 COUNCIL SESSION

All Council meetings have a session number. In general, legislative acts are adopted by the Council during a Council meeting (this field corresponds to property 3.13 MEETING of the dataset on *Metadata of the Council's public register of documents*).

There are, however, voting results not associated with a Council meeting because as the vote took place by written procedure.

4.3   CONFIGUARATION

The Council can meet in 10 different configurations, as follows:

- General Affairs,
- Foreign Affairs,
- Economic and Financial Affairs,
- Justice and Home Affairs,
- Employment, Social Policy, health and Consumer Affairs,
- Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space),
- Transport, Telecommunications and Energy,
- Agriculture and Fisheries
- Environment,
- Education, Youth, Culture and Sport.

4.4   DATE

This field identifies when the voting took place. The date can correspond to:

- the Council's session (for acts adopted during a meeting),
- the end of the written procedure (for acts adopted in WP).

4.5   POLICY AREA

This field identifies the policy area of the act submitted to a vote. This dataset contains the following policy areas:

- Agriculture,
- Consumer affairs,
- Culture
- Economy,
- Education,
- Employment,
- Energy,
- Environment,
- Finances,
- Fisheries,
- Foreign Affairs,
- Health,
- Industry,
- Institutional matters,

- Internal market,
- Justice and Home Affairs,
- Research,
- Social policy,
- Space,
- Sport,
- Telecommunications,
- Transport,
- Youth

Each voting result corresponds to a single policy area.

4.6 TYPE OF ACT

A legislative act submitted to a vote by the Council can be a regulation, a directive, a decision or a position.

4.7 ACT NUMBER

All entries in the dataset have an act number that corresponds to its number in the Official Journal (act numbers in the dataset do not contain letters, such as /EC or /EU (e.g. Directive 2011/75).

There are a few exceptions as identified below:
- Entries that do not lead to the adoption of an act (e.g. action by Council - non-approval of EPs amendments).
- Entries for acts that are not published in the OJ,
- Positions of the Council on budgetary acts. These acts are published in the OJ without a specific number. In the dataset these records follow this abbreviation system:

    GB: General budget

    DAB: draft Amending budget

    ADAB: Amended draft amending budget

From 1 January 2015, the numbering of EU legal acts has changed. A new method has been developed to harmonise and simplify previous practices. Please see the Publications Office information note on this issue at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/content/tools/elaw/OA0614022END.pdf

4.8   SUBJECT

This field corresponds to the title of the legislative act as it appears in the Official Journal.

4.9   DOCUMENT

This filed contains the number of the document submitted to a vote by the Council.

All properties related to the dataset *Metadata of the Council's Public Register of Documents* apply (that is, DOCUMENT CATEGORY, DOCUMENT NUMBER, SUFFIX, DOCUMENT TITLE, INTERINSTITUTIONAL CODE (if applicable), SUBJECT MATTER, ORIGINATOR, ADDRESSEE, ISSUE DATE, DOCUMENT LANGUAGE(S), MEETING RELATED TO DOCUMENT).

Usually, there is only one voting result per document. However, as some legislative acts are part of a "package", they can be submitted to vote by Council in a single document. As a result, different entries of the dataset may share the same document number.

4.10   INTERINSTITUTIONAL CODE

The interinstitutional code is a number attributed by the European Commission to a draft legislative act to be adopted by the Council in codecision with or in consultation of the European Parliament.

Legislative acts to be adopted by the Council alone do not have an interinstitutional code.

The interinstitutional code is composed of four digits for the year followed by a up-to four digits number and ending with three letters identifying a specific procedure (e.g. 2015/0236 (COD), meaning proposal 236 of the year 2015 to be adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure).

Main legislative procedures in EU decision making that can be found in this dataset:

> COD - ordinary legislative procedure
> CNS - consultation of the European Parliament
> APP - consent of the European Parliament

4.11   LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE

After the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, legislative acts are adopted either by the Ordinary Legislative Procedure or by special legislative procedure.

On this dataset, the following codes are used to identify the legislative procedure:
- COD - for the Ordinary legislative procedure
- CNS - Special legislative procedure
- APP - Special legislative procedure (EP consent)

Occasionally, an entry might have the code NLE (Non-legislative procedure) which votes are published for information purposes.

4.12   ACTION BY COUNCIL

When a legislative act is submitted to Council, the Council can take the following actions (depending on the stage of the legislative procedure):
- Adoption of the legislative act,
- Adoption of the position of the Council at first reading,
- Adoption of the Statement of the Council's reasons,
- Approval of the EP's amendments,
- Non-Approval of the EP's amendments,
- Approval of the Conciliation Committee joint text
- Non-Approval of the Conciliation Committee joint text
- Adoption of the Council's position (budget)

More than one of this options can be combined. For instances, the approval of the EP's amendments also leads to the adoption of the legislative act.

4.13   VOTING RULE

This field identifies the voting rule of the Council's vote. This dataset contains the following voting rules:

Unanimity:

Abstentions do not prevent unanimity from being reached.

Qualified majority (as from 1 November 2014):

Where all 28 Member States are participating in the vote:

When the Council is acting on a proposal from the Commission or the High Representative, qualified majority is reached if at least 55% of members vote in favour (16 members) accounting for at least 65% of the total population of the EU.

However, a blocking minority must include at least 4 Member States not voting in favour, failing which qualified majority is attained.

Where not all 28 Member States are participating in the vote:

There are cases in which, under the Treaties, one or more members of the Council may not participate in the vote (because they have an "opt-out" on the matter being decided) so if fewer than 28 Council members are voting, all the above figures will be affected accordingly.

The calculation for a blocking minority will also be affected. If fewer than 28 Member States are voting, the blocking minority is defined as the minimum number of Member States representing more than 35% of the population of the participating Member States, plus one member not voting in favour.

Qualified majority (before 1 November 2014):

Where all 28 Member States are participating in the vote:

When the Council is acting on a proposal from the Commission or the High Representative, qualified majority is reached if at least 260 votes in favour are cast by at least 15 Council members. In addition, a Member State may ask for confirmation that the votes in favour represent at least 62% of the EU population.

When the Council is not acting on a proposal from the Commission or the High Representative, qualified majority is reached if at least 260 votes in favour are cast by at least 19 Council members. The 62% rule mentioned above also applies here.

Where not all 28 Member states are participating in the vote:

There are cases in which, under the Treaties, one or more members of the Council may not participate in the vote (because they have an "opt-out" on the matter being decided) so if fewer than
28 Council members are voting, the above figures will be affected accordingly.

In this dataset:
- QMV - means "qualified majority voting based on a proposal by the Commission",
- QMV without COM - means "qualified majority voting not based on a proposal by the Commission".

———————————————