

# PUBLIC ACCESS TO EUROPOL DOCUMENTS

Transparency is key

## Public Register of documents

Europol has set up a Public Register on its website with the view to enhancing transparency on its activities and facilitating access to Europol documents by individuals. The register contains reference to or makes directly available to the public a large number of documents produced and held by Europol. Filter function tools are available on the webpage to facilitate the sorting of documents by year and category. Below you will also find the key rules on the requests for public access to documents.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The principle of transparency and the rights for individuals to access documents of EU bodies are laid down in Article 15 of the TFEU and Article 42 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 provides the rules for access to documents. Implementing rules for access to Europol documents have been adopted in accordance with [Article 65 of the Europol Regulation](#) by the [Management Board on 13 December 2016](#) and they became applicable as of 1 May 2017.

## How to request access to Europol documents

If a Europol document has not been published on or cannot be downloaded from the Public Register, an individual can ask to have access to it without providing any justification. The application shall be made in writing with sufficient precision so as to enable Europol to identify the document(s) requested. Applications for access to documents can be submitted:

- via the [public access request form](#)
- by mail to the following postal address, to the attention of 'G24 EU and International law':

Europol  
P.O. Box 908 50  
2509 LW - The Hague  
The Netherlands

## Handling of public access requests to Europol documents

The application will be acknowledged and processed by Europol within 15 working days from its registration. In exceptional cases, this time limit may be extended by a further 15 working days. Europol will reply to the applicant in writing and, in the event of a full or partial refusal, will provide the reasons for its decision. Within 15 working days of receiving Europol's reply refusing access, the applicant can make a confirmatory application asking Europol to reconsider its decision.

Access to a document will be refused totally or partially when its disclosure would undermine the protection of public interests, the privacy and integrity of individuals or other interests explicitly protected under Article 4 of the Management Board rules.

Applicants can contest Europol's final decision on their application by bringing an action before the Court of Justice of the European Union or by lodging a complaint with the [European Ombudsman](#).

GENERAL TERMS: [Legislation](#)  
FUNCTIONS: [Management Board \(MB\)](#)

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